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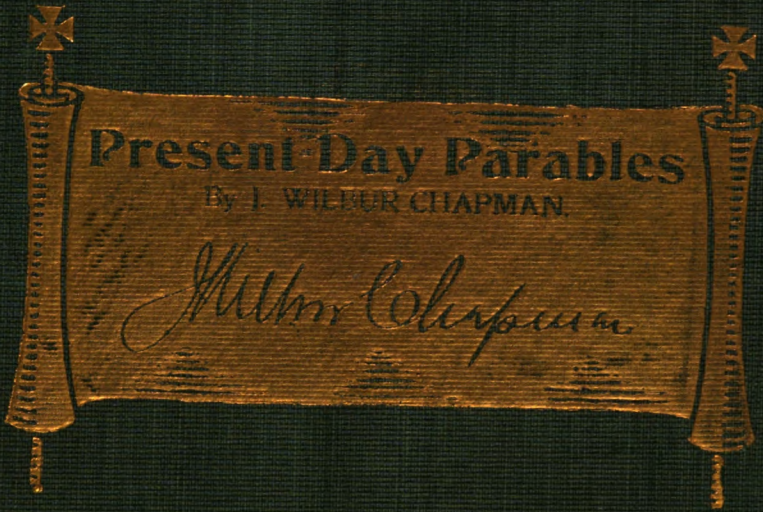
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Present day parables



PRESENT DAY PARABLES

By J. WILBUR CHAPMAN

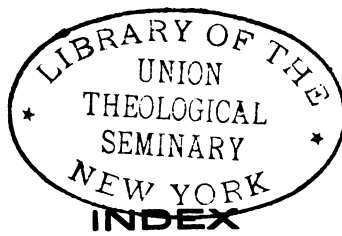
AUTHOR OF

"THE SURRENDERED LIFE" AND "THE SECRET
OF A HAPPY DAY"



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INTRODUCTION

PRESENT DAY PARABLES is a rare collection of clear-cut, spiritual, truth-illuminating illustrative stories, incidents and short expositions of scripture. In addition to those prepared by Dr. Chapman, he has included some gems from men of power in preaching.

J. Robertson, C. H. Spurgeon, J. R. Miller,
A. Maclaren, D. L. Moody, B. F. Mills.

Those who know of Dr. Chapman's evangelistic work, will realize the value of this collection of illustrations that illustrate the saying: "A sermon without illustrations is like a house without windows."

Commenting on the author's qualifications for such work, the Allegheny Herald says:

"We know of no one so effective in the use or selection of an illustration for making clear or enforcing a scripture truth as Dr. Chapman. A volume of illustrations coming from such a teacher certainly will have great value to anyone engaged in religious work."

The author desired that the special indexes be prepared so that the illustrations should be available for the Christian Endeavor topics and the International Sunday School lessons for 1901. These indexes are furnished on a card so that the permanent value of the book should not be impaired.

THE PUBLISHER

PRESENT DAY PARABLES

CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY. 1

I said to a French soldier on the streets of Paris, who was showing his wounds, an old Crimean veteran, "What about the Alma? What about Malakoff?" He said: "We took it with a rush." So God's messengers everywhere take things with a rush. Jehu drives furiously because he has got a commission of God, he puts all his strength into it. His horses' feet seem barely to touch the ground; more like with wings does that steed make his way across the plain. The king's business requireth haste.

ACTS DONE CANNOT BE UNDONE. 2

I was in a museum and saw some slabs there which had existed ages before the creation of man. I could see in that sandstone block the three-webbed feet of a bird. Once the stone had been a slimy, sandy beach, and that bird walked in its solitariness across it. God's law laid hold of it, and the indent of that bird's feet is made in the rock, and you cannot jostle it out. Oh, dear young fellow, our deeds become granite and cannot be undone. Many a deed is lying on a burdened conscience. Many a deed done long ago is bringing the tears to a Christian's eyes—deeds forgotten by God, but deeds never forgotten by himself. There will be a minor tone of pathos in that man's heart throughout eternity. You cannot recall the past. And Esau for years regrets his bargain. He sought his birthright with tears. He came before his father and the big, manly heart of him said: "Oh, my father, hast thou but one blessing? Bless me, even me, O my father!" But Jacob has got it. And Esau, stunned, went away—John Robertson.

AIM-TAKING.

3

Did you ever see a company of soldiers going through their exercises? Well, if you have, you will remember that, after their muskets are loaded, the officer who is exercising them calls out, "Make ready—take aim—fire."

The aim of each soldier is the thing which he tries to hit when he fires his gun.

When soldiers are engaged in what is called target-shooting, or firing at a mark, they have a large board set up, at some distance from them. The surface of this board is painted all over in black and white rings or circles. In the center of the board is a small black circle, sometimes called the bull's-eye. Every soldier, as he takes aim, tries to hit the bull's-eye, or black circle, in the center of the board. The aim of the soldier is that which he tries to hit with his gun.

And in the same way we use the word aim as referring to anything a person undertakes to do. If a new scholar enters your class in school, and says to himself, as he enters, "Now I am going to be the head of this class," and if he begins to study his lessons with great diligence and care, so as to get above the others, then you may say the aim of that scholar is to be the head of the class. The aim of Christopher Columbus was to discover a shorter way to India. The aim of Sir John Franklin and his companions, who perished in the Arctic regions, was to find out a passage by sea from the Pacific to the Atlantic ocean. The aim of Dr. Kane, in his voyage to the north, was to find out what had become of Sir John Franklin. The aim of Dr. Livingstone, in his long journey through Africa, was to find out the best way of carrying the gospel into the interior of that vast country.

There are a great many aims that people set before them in this world. Some aim to get great riches; others to get a great name; and others to enjoy great pleasure. But St. Paul tells us of an aim that is much better than all these. He says, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—Richard Newton.

ANXIETY HURTFUL.

4

And what does your anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow, brother, of its sorrow; but, ah! it empties today of its strength. It does not make you escape the evil, it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes. It does not bless tomorrow, and it robs today. For every day has its own

burden. God gives us power to bear all the sorrows of his making; but he does not give us the power to bear the sorrows of our own making, which the anticipation of sorrow most assuredly is.—Ian Maclaren.

BEETHOVEN'S LAST MOMENTS. 5

The little sketch of Beethoven's last moments given in *The Evangelist* of November 11th, so interested me that I desire to give you a little different account of the same incident. It gives the same facts, with the different view of another writer. It is from *Harper's Monthly*, July, 1854, by an unknown author. The story is full of deepest pathos connected with one of the greatest of musical geniï the world has ever known. I hope you will give it a place in your Music Department.—J. H. Vance, Erie, Pa.

He had but one happy moment in his life and that killed him! He lived in poverty, driven into solitude by the contempt of the world and by the natural bent of a disposition rendered almost savage, by the injustice of his contemporaries. But he wrought the sublimest music of which man or angel ever dreamed!

Beethoven had but one friend and that was Hummel. But he had quarreled with him, and for a long time they had ceased to meet. To crown his misfortunes he became completely deaf. Then Beethoven retired to Baden, where he lived isolated and sad, in a small house that hardly sufficed for his necessities. . . . In the midst of his solitude a letter arrived, which brought him back, despite himself, to the affairs of the world, where new griefs awaited him. A nephew whom he had brought up and to whom he was attached by the good offices he had performed for the youth, wrote to implore his uncle's presence in Vienna. He had become implicated in some disastrous business from which his elder relative alone could release him.

Beethoven set off upon the journey and, compelled by the economy of necessity, accomplished a part of the journey on foot. One evening he stopped before the gate of a small mean-looking house and solicited shelter. He had already several leagues to traverse before reaching Vienna, and his strength would not allow him to continue any longer on the road. They received him with hospitality, and after partaking of their simple supper he was installed in the master's chair by the fire-place.

When the table was cleared, the father of the family arose and opened an old claverin (the primitive piano men-

tioned in The Evangelist). The three sons each took a violin, and the mother and daughter each occupied themselves with some domestic work. The father gave the key note, and all four began playing with that unity and precision, that innate genius which is peculiar only to the German people. It seemed that they were deeply interested in what they played, for their whole souls were in their instruments. The two women desisted from their occupation to listen, and their gentle countenances impressed the emotions of their hearts. To observe all this was the only share that Beethoven could take in all that was passing, for he could not hear a single note. He could only judge of their performance by the movements of the executants, and the fire that animated their features. When they had finished they shook each other's hands, as if to congratulate each other on a community of happiness, and the young girl threw herself weeping into her mother's arms! Then they appeared to consult together, and resumed their instruments. This time their enthusiasm reached its height, their eyes were filled with tears, and the color mounted to their cheeks!

"My friends," said Beethoven, "I am very unhappy that I can take no part in the delight which you experience, for I also love music. But as you see, I am so deaf I cannot hear any sound. Let me read this music which produces in you such sweet and lively emotions."

He took the music in his hand; his eyes grew dim, his breath came short and fast, then he dropped the music and burst into tears! Those peasants had been playing the Allegretto of Beethoven's Symphony in A!

The whole family surrounded him with signs of curiosity and surprise. For some moments his convulsive sobs impeded his utterance. Then he raised his hand and said: "I am Beethoven;" and they uncovered their heads and bowed before him in respectful silence! Beethoven extended his hands to them, and they clasped them, kissed, wept over them! (Imagine that scene!) For they knew that they had among them a man who was greater than a king! Beethoven held out his arms and embraced them all, father, mother, young girl and her three brothers!

All at once he arose, and sitting down to the claverin, signed to the young men to take up their violins and himself performed the piano part of this *chef d'œuvre*. The performers were alike inspired! Never was music more divine or better executed! Half the night passed away thus and the peasants listened. Those were the last notes of the man!

The father compelled him to accept his own bed, but during the night Beethoven was restless and fevered. He arose; he needed air, he went forth with naked feet into the country. All nature was inhaling a majestic harmony; the winds sighed through the branches of the trees, and moaned along the avenues, and glades of the wood. He remained some time wandering in the cool dews of the morning, but when he returned to the house he was seized with an icy chill. They sent to Vienna for a physician. Dropsy of the chest was found to have declared itself, and in two days, despite every care and skill, the doctor said Beethoven must die. And in truth life was every instant fast ebbing away.

As he lay upon his bed pale and suffering, a man entered. It was Hummel, his old and only friend. He had heard of the illness of Beethoven, and came to him with money and succor. But it was too late. Beethoven was speechless and a grateful smile was all he had to bestow upon his friend. Hummel, by means of an acoustic instrument, enabled Beethoven to hear a few words of his compassion and regret.

Beethoven seemed reanimated; his eyes shone; he struggled for utterance and gasped: "Is it not true, Hummel, that I have some talent after all?"

Those were his last words. His eyes grew fixed, his mouth fell open and his spirit passed away. They buried him in the little cemetery of Doblin.

A MERRY BEGINNING.

6

A member of a college class, soon after graduation, was admitted to the practice of his chosen profession, the bar. Leaving the court house, he was met by a brilliant young man, who took him by the hand, saying: "Now you have been admitted to the bar, let me give you a little advice. Have your name taken from the church roll, burn your Bible, and you will make your mark." It was a moment of supreme temptation. Turning from him, the young lawyer walked straight to the depository and invested almost his last half-dollar in a pocket Bible. A quarter of a century passed, and this lawyer met, on the same spot, the wreck of this same brilliant young man. With blood-shot eye and matted hair and beard—extending the same hand, he said, "Colonel, for God's sake, give me half a dollar, and let me get out of this town to get off this spree." As he drew from his pocket the coveted coin, he thought of his former investment.

THE HEATHEN IDEA OF THE BALL. 7

Nothing is less intelligible to a high-bred mandarin than the desire of foreign females to be introduced to him. At Hong Kong, when English ladies were brought to see the ex-commissioner, Yeh, he turned away and refused to look at them, and on their departure expressed his annoyance and disgust. He was invited at Calcutta to a ball given by the governor of Bengal. Inquiring what was meant, he was told by his Chinese secretary that a ball was a sport in which "men turned themselves round, holding the waists and turning round the wives of other men," on which he asked whether the invitation was meant for an insult. There was an amusing scene at Canton, when Chinese ladies were for the first time introduced to some of our British fair. The Chinese kept for some minutes tremblingly in the distance, afraid to approach, when one was heard to say to another, "They do not look so very barbarous after all," and they moved a little forward to meet their guests; "Surely they have learned how to behave themselves. Is it not wonderful?" and a third voice replied, "Yes, but you know they have been for some time in Canton!"—Cornhill.

THE BIBLE AND THE EFFECTED. 8

Do you remember the story of the blind girl whose friends gave her a Bible with raised letters? You know she lost the acuteness of touch in the ends of the fingers, and so she could not read the book; but she would take it to another friend, that that friend might get the sweet messages that had made her heart burn. And then it was that its sweetness was revealed in a new light. As she was carrying it over to the home of her friend, it was like giving up her best friend, and she raised it to her lips to kiss it once, and when the Bible touched her lips, she felt on her lips the words, "The Gospel according to Saint Mark." I have found that when I read with the mind only, I get nothing compared with what I receive when I put my heart up against it. I can feel the throbbing of the heart of the infinite God. Have you learned it?—J. W. C.

THE BIBLE DISTINGUISHED. 9

Despite all the assaults of the destructive higher critics, the "old book stands." Of it the British Weekly well says: "The Bible is distinguished from all books of devotion, even from books of such rare quality as the *Imitatio*

Christi,' by its wholesome realism and sense of the divine order of life. - Not a line of it was written in a cloister or in a church—not a line of it, therefore, by a saint, in the ecclesiastical sense; not a line of it could have been. The breath of the world is in it, of the actual realities amid which men live, as well as the breath of God. It never forgets that when God came to bless us in his son, he came eating and drinking, accepting the natural structure of society and all that it involved, and leaving us the unpretentious example of his holiness in a life whose outward fashion was that of all mankind."—J. W. C.

BIBLE READING NOT ENOUGH. 10

Bible reading is not enough—with the open page in your hand, my friend, you may go to hell! I noticed the other day on the roadside a signpost with on it the words, "To Edinburgh 7 miles." For Edinburgh was I bound, and here was the welcome instruction from the dumb signboard. What would you think if I, footsore and weary, and eager to be in your bonny city, had mounted that signboard, straddled stride legs upon it, and given the "Hech me!" of contentment and resolution to stick on its top? You would come by, and salute me first, as usual, about the weather; then Scotchman-like, it would be about the whither! "Oh, I'm going to Edinburgh." "To Edinburgh? What are you doing up there then?" "Why, can't you read? Read, read and see." "To Edinburgh 7 miles." "Yes, isn't it grand to be here? On this signpost that speaks this blessed speech!" Well, you begin to feel eerie-sort and slip by and you report to the policeman that there's a queer-looking chap squatting on the roadside signpost seven miles from Edinburgh, and you're sure he must have escaped from Morningside Asylum! Ay, you would think rightly, and do rightly in that case, but oh! dear, dear soul, examine yourself, are you in your Bible-reading and resting just as silly and insane? Are you straddled on the signpost to Calvary? Are you content with your chapter and chapter and chapter that but point you "Behold the Lamb of God"? Are you resting in your daily portion, your family-worship? Have you used this Bible just for what it was meant for—to direct you to the Christ, the A and Z of it? Have you arrived at the signalled salvation? Are you converted, born again of this water of the word, and of this spirit of the person? Are you a Christian, Christ's one?—J. W. C.

SECRET OF BIBLE STUDY.

11

Prof. W. G. Moorhead of Xenia Theological Seminary, told me that one day he was returning to his home from one of his journeys, and wanted to take with him some present for his children. He decided at last that the present should be a dissected map. When he gave it to his two girls he said, "Now if you can put this together you will know more of geography than if you studied a book." They worked very patiently, but at last one of them rose to her feet, saying, "I cannot put it together," and said the great Bible teacher, "it was an awful jumble." They had a part of North America in South America, and other mistakes quite as serious were made. Suddenly, however, the larger, who was still on her knees, discovered that the other side of one piece of the map was a man's hand. Curiosity prompted her to turn over the other piece and there was a part of his face, and then her fingers working rapidly she turned over every piece of the map, and called to her sister, saying, "Come back, there is a man on the other side, let us put the man together first," and almost instantly, said the father, the figure of the man was completed, and when the map was turned over every river and lake, every mountain and plain, was in the proper place. And this said Dr. Moorhead, is the secret of Bible study. Put the man, Christ Jesus, together first. Jesus in Genesis is the same as Jesus in the Revelation. The fact is there is one name that binds the book together. Learn the meaning of that name, and you have gotten hold of the power of the Bible.—J. W. C.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.

12

In the heart of Africa, it is related by an Englishman, that a slave procession passed by, and the king called out a poor slave who displeased him in some little way, ordered his men to put their arrows to their bowstrings and avenge the offense with his blood. He went up to the native chief and begged for the poor slave's life, offered him a great deal of money and costly bribes, but the chief turned to him and said: "I don't want ivory, or slaves, or gold; I can go against yonder tribe and capture their stores and their villages; I want no favors from the white man; all I want is blood." Then he ordered one of his men to pull his bowstring and discharge an arrow at the heart of the poor slave. The young man, with the instinct of a moment, threw himself in front and held up his arm, and the next

moment the arrow was quivering in the flesh of his own arm. The black man was astonished. Then he pulled the arrow from his arm, and the blood flowed, and he said to the chief: "Here is blood; here is my blood; I give it for this poor slave, and I claim his life." The native had never seen such a spectacle before, and he was completely overcome by it. He gave the slave to the white man. He said: "Yes, white man has bought him with his blood, and he shall be his." In a moment the poor slave threw himself at the feet of his deliverer, tears flowing down his face, and said: "O, white man, you have bought Lebe with your blood; Lebe" (for that was his name) "shall be your slave forever and ever," and ever after he could not make him take his liberty; wherever he went poor Lebe was beside him; no drudgery was too hard, no task too hopeless. He was bound by the mercy of his deliverer as his consecrated servant. O, friends, if a poor savage heart can thus be bound by the wound of a stranger's arm, what should you and I say for those deeper wounds in those two living hands and feet and the heart that was opened by the spear? If we believe that we are redeemed, how can we but be consecrated to him.—J. W. C.

A GRANDFATHER'S BLESSING. 13

When General Grant was nigh unto death, he dictated a formal letter "To the President of the United States," asking that his namesake and grandson, Ulysses III, be appointed to a cadetship at West Point upon application. Col. Frederick D. Grant, the young lad's father, recently took the priceless missive to Washington and personally delivered it to President McKinley with an indorsement from the warrior's comrade, General Sherman. General Grant's original letter, with General Sherman's indorsement across the bottom of the page, furnishes a unique souvenir for the war archives at Washington, which will be treasured as a sacred memento. It goes without saying that the appointment will be made. There are multitudes of young men whose fathers and grandfathers were famous soldiers of Jesus Christ who would, if they could, direct their children and grandchildren into the same noble and joyous service. Any young man who envies this youthful scion of an honored family may well congratulate himself upon the opportunity of becoming a "good soldier of Jesus Christ."

A BOY WHO WORKED UP.

14

One day many years ago a bright boy found employment in a photograph gallery in Nashville, Tenn. His wages were small, but he took good care of them, and in course of time he had saved up a snug little sum of money. One day a friend, less thrifty than he, came to him with a long face, and asked for a loan of money, offering a book as security. Although the other knew there was little probability of his ever being repaid, he could not refuse the request.

"Here is the money; keep your book and repay me when you can."

The grateful lad went away in such haste that he left the book behind. The kind youth examined the volume with curiosity. It was a work on astronomy, by Dick, and it so fascinated him that he sat up all night studying it. He had never read anything which so filled him with delight. He determined to learn all that he could about the wonders of the heavens. He began thenceforth to read everything he could obtain relating to astronomy.

The next step was to buy a small spy-glass, and night after night he spent most of the hours on the roof of his house studying the stars. He secured, second hand, the tube of a larger spy-glass, into which he fitted an eye-piece, and sent to Philadelphia for an object glass. By and by he obtained a five-inch glass, which, as you know, is an instrument of considerable size.

Meanwhile he worked faithfully in the shop of the photographer; but his nights brought him rare delight, for he never wearied of tracing out the wonders and marvels of the worlds around us. With the aid of his large spy-glass he discovered two comets before they were seen by any of the professional astronomers, whose superior instruments were continually scanning the heavens in search of the celestial wanderers. This exploit, you may well suppose, made the boy famous. He was invited by the professors in Vanderbilt University to go thither and see what he could do with their six-inch telescope. In the course of the following four years he discovered six comets. He was next engaged by the Lick observatory. With the aid of its magnificent instrument he discovered eight comets, and last summer astonished the world by discovering the fifth satellite of Jupiter. He invented a new method of photographing the nebulae in the milky way, and has shown an

originality approaching genius in his work in star photography.

Perhaps you have already guessed the name of this famous astronomer, which is Prof. E. E. Barnard (now in charge of the Yerkes observatory of Chicago University), and this is the story of how he worked up.

BUILD HIGH.

15

A lady sat at her window a bright, balmy spring morning. The sun was out without a cloud, the blooming flowers were sending forth their fragrance to perfume and bless the earth, and the birds sang their songs of gladness as they went forth to their daily toil. Soon the lady saw that a little worker had chosen a rose-bush for its home and was very busy bringing in sticks and hair and feathers and other material to make its house.

"Ah, you pretty little creature," said the lady, "you are building too low. Soon the destroyer will come and break up your sweet home."

And so it was. The days passed by; the nest was finished, and then there were eggs in the nest, and then four great big mouths were open whenever the low chirp of the mother announced that she had something for them to eat.

One day the lady sat by the window sewing. Suddenly she heard the cry of the birds, in the deepest distress, and she looked out to see what was the matter. There was a great snake that had crawled up and was devouring the helpless little ones, while just above them the poor heart-broken mother fluttered about in the wildest distraction. But it was too late; her children were gone, and her home was left desolate, a sad reminder of her folly in building so near the ground.

So I think it is with people who have no higher ambition than earthly pleasures, wealth or honors. They build too low. Their heart's home is in easy reach of death and the devil, and depend upon it the destroyer will come, soon or late.—H. M. Wharton.

BEARING OTHERS' BURDENS.

16

It is related of Leonardo da Vinci, that in his boyhood, when he saw caged birds exposed for sale on the streets of Florence, he would buy them and set them free. It was a rare trait in a boy, and spoke of a noble heart full of genuine sympathy. As we go about the streets, we find many caged

birds which we may set free, imprisoned joys that we may liberate, by the power that is in us of helping others. Naturalists say that the stork, having most tenderly fed its young, will sail under them when they first attempt to fly, and, if they begin to fall, will bear them up and support them; and that, when one stork is wounded by the sportsman, the able ones gather about it, put their wings under it, and try to carry it away. These instincts in the bird teach us the lesson of helpfulness. We should come up close to those who are in any way overburdened or weak or faint, and putting our own strength underneath them, help them along; and when another fellow-being is wounded or crushed, whether by sorrow or by sin, it is our duty to gather about him, and try to lift him up, and save him. There is scarcely a limit to our possibilities of helpfulness in these ways.—Miller.

HOW I CAME TO GIVE UP BUSINESS. 17

The way God led me out of business into Christian work was as follows:

I had never lost sight of Jesus Christ since the first night I met him in the store at Boston. But for years I was only a nominal Christian, really believing that I could not work for God. No one had ever asked me to do anything.

When I went to Chicago, I hired five pews in a church, and used to go out on the street and pick up young men and fill these pews. I never spoke to those young men about their souls; that was the work of the elders, I thought. After working for some time like that, I started a mission Sabbath school. I thought numbers were everything, and so I worked for numbers. When the attendance ran below one thousand, it troubled me; and when it ran to twelve or fifteen hundred, I was elated. Still none were converted; there was no harvest. Then God opened my eyes.

There was a class of young ladies in the school, who were without exception the most frivolous set of girls I ever met. One Sunday the teacher was ill, and I took that class. They laughed in my face and I felt like opening the door and telling them all to get out and never come back.

That week the teacher of the class came into the store where I worked. He was pale and looked very ill.

"What is the trouble?" I asked.

"I have had another hemorrhage of my lungs. The doctor says I cannot live on Lake Michigan, so I am going to New York state. I suppose I am going home to die."

He seemed greatly troubled, and when I asked him the reason, he replied :

"Well, I have never led any of my class to Christ. I really believe I have done the girls more harm than good."

I had never heard anyone talk like that before, and it set me thinking. After awhile I said: "Suppose you go and tell them how you feel. I will go with you in a carriage, if you want to go."

He consented, and we started out together. It was one of the best journeys I ever had on earth. We went to the house of one of the girls, called for her, and the teacher talked to her about her soul. There was no laughing then! Tears stood in her eyes before long. After he had explained the way of life, he suggested that we have prayer. He asked me to pray. True, I had never done such a thing in my life as to pray God to convert a young lady there and then. But we prayed, and God answered our prayer.

We went to other houses. He would go upstairs, and be all out of breath, and he would tell the girls what he had come for. It wasn't long before they broke down and sought salvation. When his strength gave out, I took him back to his lodgings. The next day we went out again. At the end of ten days he came to the store with his face literally shining.

"Mr. Moody," he said, "the last one of my class has yielded herself to Christ."

I tell you, we had a time of rejoicing. He had to leave the next night, so I called his class together that night for a prayer-meeting, and there God kindled a fire in my soul that has never gone out. The height of my ambition had been to be a successful merchant, and if I had known that meeting was going to take that ambition out of me, I might not have gone. But how many times I have thanked God since for that meeting!

The dying teacher sat in the midst of his class, and talked with them, and read the 14th chapter of John. We tried to sing "Blest be the tie that binds," after which we knelt down to prayer. I was just rising from my knees, when one of the class began to pray for her dying teacher. Another prayed, and another, and before we rose the whole class had prayed. As I went out I said to myself: "Oh, God, let me die rather than lose the blessing I have received to-night!"

The next evening I went to the depot to say good-bye

to that teacher. Just before the train started, one of the class came, and before long, without any prearrangement, they were all there. What a meeting that was! We tried to sing, but we broke down. The last we saw of that dying teacher, he was standing on the platform of the car, his finger pointing upward, telling that class to meet him in heaven. I didn't know what this was going to cost me. I was disqualified for business; it had become distasteful to me. I had got a taste of another world, and cared no more for making money. For some days after, the greatest struggle of my life took place. Should I give up business and give myself to Christian work, or should I not? I have never regretted my choice. Oh, the luxury of leading some one out of the darkness of this world into the glorious light and liberty of the Gospel!—D. L. Moody.

A RIPE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER. 18

A ripe Christian character is simply a life in which all Christian virtues and graces have become fixed and solidified into permanence as established habits. It costs no struggle to do right, because what has been done so long, under the influence of grace in the heart, has become part of the regenerated nature. The bird sings not to be heard, but because the song is in its heart, and must be expressed. It sings just as sweetly in the depths of the wood with no ear to listen, as by the crowded thoroughfare. Beethoven did not sing for fame, but to give utterance to the glorious music that filled his soul. The face of Moses did not shine to convince the people of his holiness, but because he had dwelt so long in the presence of God that it could not but shine. Truest, ripest Christian life flows out of a full heart—a heart so filled with Christ that it requires no effort to live well, and to scatter the sweetness of grace and love.

It must be remembered, however, that all goodness in living begins first obeying rules, in keeping commandments. Mozart and Mendelssohn began with running scales and striking chords, and with painful finger-exercises. The noblest Christian began with the simplest obedience. The way to become skillful is to do things over and over, until we can do them perfectly, and without thought or effort. The way to become able to do great things, is to do our little things with endless repetition, and with increasing dexterity and carefulness. The way to grow into Christlikeness of character, is to watch ourselves in the minutest things of thought and word and act, until our

powers are trained to go almost without watching in the lines of moral right and holy beauty. To become prayerful, we must learn to pray by the clock, at fixed times. It is fine ideal talk to say that our devotions should be like the bird's song, warbling out anywhere and at any time with sweet unrestraint; but in plain truth, to depend upon such impulses as guides to praying, would soon lead to no praying at all. This may do for heavenly life; but we have not gotten into heaven yet, and until we do we need to pray by habit. So of all religious life. We only grow into patience by being as patient as we can, daily and hourly, and in smallest matters, ever learning to be more and more patient until we reach the highest possible culture in that line. We can only become unselfish wherever we have an opportunity, until our life grows into the permanent beauty of unselfishness. We can only grow better by striving ever to be better than we already are, and by climbing step by step toward the radiant heights of excellence.—Miller.

CHRISTIANS

19

are bound to maintain a twofold relation to earth and to heaven.

Very beautiful and suggestive is the law by which the trees hold fast their connection with the earth while ascending towards heaven. Roots draw upwards the finest essences of the earth out of their imprisonment; while the branches with their breathing leaves draw down the virtues of the heavens. Tree-development depends on the co-operation and unity of ascending and descending currents of energy.

How could the trees produce heaven's fruit for the use of the world if their roots quitted their hold of the earth? Very cunningly the trees breathe their escape from the soil, and at the same time, very tenaciously, very determinedly, cling to it. With the same breath they say, we will leave the earth, and yet we will not quit it. We will go in for the ascensive life; but the higher we go, the more deeply will we root ourselves in the earth; and they do both.—John Pulsford.

THE HEROISM OF CHILDREN.

20

The heroism of childhood is remarkable. Every week the newspapers tell of some child's self-sacrifice that is almost beyond belief, were it not substantiated by facts. Even very young children do many brave acts that older persons

would shrink from. A short time since a young lad sat reading a new book which had just come out, entitled, "Under Dewey at Manila." He was exceedingly interested in the story of those brave heroes and said to his mother, who was in the next room, "O, mother, how I wish I could be a hero!"

A very short time afterwards he heard his mother scream and rushing to the kitchen found her enveloped in flames. He tried to save her, and his presence of mind enabled him to do so, but he was so badly burned that he died from the effects of his burns. The daily papers wrote up the case, and the reading public in the great city of New York spoke of that boy's bravery in giving his own life for his mother's, and then like other notable instances of such courage, it passed out of thought and gave place to newer startling facts.

But that young lad was as true a hero as those he had been reading about in the line of battle and we are sorry that the item regarding the sad affair has been lost so that we cannot at this writing give the name of the boy. It is pathetic to see the devotion of the children of the poor to their parents and sisters and brothers.

In front of one of the large stores in the city at holiday time a little boy stopped to look at the show windows. He was wheeling his baby brother out for an airing and stopped in the crowd with the baby carriage. The little care-taker was feasting his eyes on the pretty things in the window, which would make many children happy at Christmas time. All at once he heard the voice of a lady say, "That child in the carriage looks as if he were dead." The boy turned and looking at the face of what he thought was his sleeping brother, saw a look he had never seen there before. A crowd gathered and a policeman came up and said, "The child is dead. Take him home," and the little heart-broken brother, amid his sobs, took the little dead baby home, the policeman and some of the kind-hearted people going with him.

In the tenement house where they lived it was learned that the baby had been ill, but he seemed so much better that morning that the mother thought it would do him good to get out into the sunshine and fresh air and had taken that opportunity to go away from home to work that she might earn a little extra money. It was pitiful to see the older brother's great grief when he found the little baby he loved

so much was really dead. He was afraid he had not done as he ought, perhaps he had kept it out too long in the cold air.

The home-coming of that afflicted mother was indeed a sad one. But she said to the older brother, "Don't cry so, dear. You were always good to the baby and always willing to give up your own fun to take care of him." We do not realize as we should the struggles and heroism of these children of the tenements.—J. W. C.

CHILDREN ARE OLD ENOUGH. 21

I have no sympathy with the idea that our children have to grow up before they are converted. Once I saw a lady with three daughters at her side, and I stepped up to her and asked her if she was a Christian.

"Yes, sir."

Then I asked the oldest daughter if she was a Christian. The chin began to quiver, and the tears came into her eyes, and she said:

"I wish I was."

The mother looked very angrily at me and said, "I don't want you to speak to my children on that subject. They don't understand." And in great rage she took them away from me. One daughter was fourteen years old, one twelve, and the other ten, but they were not old enough to be talked to about religion! Let them drift into the world and plunge into worldly amusements, and then see how hard it is to reach them. Many a mother is mourning today because her boy has gone beyond her reach, and will not allow her to pray with him. She may pray for him, but he will not let her pray or talk with him. In those early days when his mind was tender and young, she might have led him to Christ. Bring them in. "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

Is there a prayerless father reading this? May God let the arrow go down into your soul! Make up your mind that, God helping you, you will get the children converted. God's order is to the father first, but if he isn't true to his duty, then the mother should be true, and save the children from the wreck. Now is the time to do it while you have them under your roof. Exert your parental influence over them.—J. W. C.

CHRIST'S POWER TO LIFT UP 22
THE WORLD.

Two men met on the dikes that surround the city of New Orleans two years ago during the great flood, at which time the city seemed doomed. The water from the Mississippi on the one side and from the gulf on the other, seemed almost certain to overflow the city. One man said to the other, "What would you do for this city if you had the strength and money?" It took the one addressed by surprise and turning to his questioner, said, "What would you do; as you seem to have been thinking about the matter?" "Oh," said the first man, "I would, if I had the power and the money, build these dikes so wide and so high that no flood could endanger this city." This would seem to be the heights of philanthropy. "But," said the second man, "I would not do that; if I had the strength I would get my arms beneath this city and lift it above the dikes so that no flood could ever endanger it."

Jesus Christ does for our world just what the latter man said he would do for the city. He puts his everlasting arms beneath this doomed world and lifts it above all the currents of sin.

THE LIKENESS OF CHRIST. 23

The old legend of St. Veronica tells us that after the crucifixion, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, had gone away from the tumult and strife of Calvary her friends gathered in a little room to give her comfort. While they were visiting together there appeared one who had followed him up the hillside to the cross, and who tradition says gave him the napkin to wipe away the blood from his face when he had fallen fainting beneath the weight of his cross. She thought that it would be a comfort to the mother of the dying one upon the cross to have anything that he had used in the time of his agony, and so the famous painting represents her as holding this napkin; when, behold, as they looked upon the piece of cloth is seen the likeness of the Saviour.

This is tradition, of course; but it is an illustration of the fact that those of us whose lives may be counted by the world common and even ordinary, may have pressed upon us the likeness of Christ, and those who look upon us may take knowledge of us not only that we have been with Jesus, but may be persuaded of the fact that we have come even here and now to bear about his likeness.—J. W. C.

JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST. 24

A dying judge, the day before his departure to be with Christ, said to his pastor, "Do you know enough about law to understand what is meant by joint-tenancy?"

"No," was the reply. "I know nothing about law, I know a little about grace, and that satisfies me."

"Well," he said, "if you and I were joint-tenants on a farm, I could not say to you: That is your hill of corn, and this is mine; that is your stalk of wheat, and this is mine; that is your blade of grass, and this is mine; but we should share and share alike in everything on the place. I have just been lying here, and thinking with unspeakable joy, that Jesus Christ has nothing apart from me, that everything he has is mine, and we will share and share alike through all eternity."—J. W. C.

THE CIRCLE MUST NOT BE BROKEN THAT
KEEPS US IN RELATION TO CHRIST. 25

I have seen a heavy piece of solid iron hanging on another, not welded, not linked, not glued to the spot, and yet it cleaved with such tenacity as to bear, not only its own weight, but mine too, if I chose to seize it and hang upon it. A wire charged with an electric current is in contact with its mass, and hence its adhesion. Cut that wire through, or remove it by a hair's breadth, and the piece of iron drops dead to the ground, like any other unsupported weight. A stream of life from the Lord, in contact with a human spirit, keeps that spirit cleaving to the Lord so firmly that no power on earth or in hell can wrench the two asunder. From Christ the mysterious life-stream flows, through the being of a disciple it spreads, and to the Lord it returns again. In that circle the feeblest Christian is held safely, but if the circle be broken, the dependent spirit instantly drops off.

The electric wire is the spinal cord of civilization. Wherever now we may wander the electric wire runs by our side and murmurs the music of great joy. Familiarity is said to breed contempt, but it seems impossible to become familiar with this ethereal cord which binds together the ends of the earth, and places any one locality in immediate correspon-

dence with all other localities and peoples. It seems a fairy thing belonging to the region of romance rather than a tangible fact of this everyday world. And yet it is very real, and, as we say, go where we will, greets our gaze, being the most suggestive thing in the landscape, whatever else the landscape may contain. Not in ponderous masses of steel, but in a delicate needle do we become conscious of the existence and set of the great magnetic currents which silently modify the world; and not in the more noisy and obstructive events and institutions of society do we become conscious of the master forces which shape the character of the nations and determine their destiny, but rather in the trembling string which runs along the hillside, spans the streets, surprises us in solitary places, and which, in fact, seems omnipresent, never being long out of our ken. Vast and delightful is the significance of the metallic film. It is the symbol of the unity of the nations. Not only do we behold it in our utmost wanderings, but we know it extends to regions we may not penetrate—mountain paths searched by the eagle's burning eye, ocean depths unseen, unsounded, snowy wastes, desert solitudes. It girdles and intersects the whole earth. If the orator, dwelling on the comity of nations, wishes to concentrate his great argument in a single image, he points to the electric wire, and the rudest audience perceives at a glance the force and grandeur of the illustration. It is, however, not only the symbol, it is also the organ of the unity of the nations. On this wire do we specially practically realize the unanimity of the various climates and nationalities. As the silver cord in our physical organization binds together hand and foot and eye, and gives the sense of unity and community amongst the many different organs and powers of the one complex system, a sense of unity which is immediately lost if that cord be seriously injured or broken, so the electric wire, pulsing with messages from a thousand different quarters, transmitting to great centers of sensation the facts, pleasing or painful, concerning the various people of the wide, wide world, ascertains graphically the unity of the race. No cord of silver, no thread of silk, no bond of gold, was ever half so significant as that common wire by the modern roadside traversed evermore by the vital spark of the universal human life. It translates sublime theory into sublime fact, and sets forth in practical form the unity of the many-tongued earth, the identity of the apparently conflicting interests of all peoples.—William Arnot.

CHRIST EVERYTHING.

26

An aged minister in Edinburgh, whose name, if I were to mention it, you would all know, some time ago addressed a great gathering of young converts. In most thrilling and pathetic terms did he refer to his own long experience. "Young men," did the old saint say, "when I came first to Christ, now long, long ago, I had an idea, unexpressed but real, that by and by I would become so inherently holy, I would not need to bemoan myself in this debasing way before the cross. I would not need to bring myself always down as a foul, polluted soul, a beggar in filthy rags before the holy God. Ah! I was proud, and so are you, dear young convert. Take care. But now I am an old man, the snows of time are on my head, more than a whole half-century has rolled by, and as I stand before you I can hear, but a few paces in front of me, the low dash-dash of the wave of eternity on the beach where I'm soon to embark for the other side. I can hear the flap of the sail as the pale boatman, Death, grates his waiting keel on yon ready strand. Ay, I'll very soon be in eternity, and this morning what did I do? Well, after sixty years of knowing and loving my Saviour, I came to the Lord Jesus this morning, as I came at the first, as a poor, perishing, hell-deserving sinner, pleading his own precious blood, with no hope but his death, no trust nor rest in anything else. Christ was the beginning, and he will be the end." A grand testimony this to the Lord's degree. Yes, Christ all the way, the A and Z of the human heart, first, last, and forever.

"When I draw this fleeting breath,
When mine eyelids close in death,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!"

—J. Robertson.

THE NEED OF CHRIST.

27

It is said that Ole Bull and John Ericsson met for the first time in the city of New York, and the great musician said to his new found friend, "Come around and hear me play tonight." The invitation was not accepted. It was given the second time and again was not accepted. The third time Ole Bull said if you do not come and hear me play I will come and play for you, and John Ericsson said, "Do not bring your violin into my shop for I do not care for music." But the next day Ole Bull was there and he said,

"There is something the matter with my violin," and they talked about tones and semi-tones and fibres of wood, and then he said, "I will show how it is." He strung up the instrument, drew the bow across the strings and began to play. In a little while the building was filled with waves of harmony. The men left their work and gathered about the great musician. John Erricson rose from his desk, stood for a moment in the outer circle, then came close to Ole Bull and listened to every note that came from the violin. At last the player drew his bow across the strings for the last time and stopped, the men turned back again to their work; not so John Erricson. With tears streaming down his cheeks he said, "Play on, play on, I never knew what was lacking in my life before." Thus it is with many a man who thought he knew the needs of his soul, and sought to be satisfied with honor, and wealth, and power, but only Christ can satisfy, and until we learn this and claim him, we shall be devoid of peace.—J. W. C.

CHRIST—"YE DID IT UNTO ME." 28

Among the Saxons the custom prevailed of burning the yule-log at the Christmas-tide. "A selfish man, who had plenty of money but no sympathy, was keeping his Christmas all alone; and out of deference to the day, he kept a little log burning with a very feeble flame. As he snivered in the chilly atmosphere of his desolate room, he fell asleep and dreamed. In his dream he heard a voice which drew his attention to a beautiful child who stood near him, and said, 'Jesus is cold.' With an impatient movement the selfish man stirred the fire a little, and said, 'Why don't you go to the farmhouse down the lane? You'll be warm enough there.' 'Yes,' replied the child; 'but you make me cold, you are so cold.' 'Then, what can I do for you?' 'You can give me a gold coin.' With a great deal of reluctance, the money-chest was opened, and a gold coin was given to the child. He took it. Instantly the dingy room became bright and cheerful, as the child hung up some laurel and holly, saying, 'These are for life;' and placed two candles on the shelf saying, 'These are for light;' and stirred the fire saying, 'That is for love.' Then the door was thrown open, and a poor widow and a sick man, and orphan children, were brought in and seated at a bountiful repast, while the child kept saying, 'Jesus is warm now;' and the selfish man found that he also was enjoying the scene, so that he presently confessed, 'I think that I am warmer, too.' Then the

child suddenly disappeared, and in his place there was a divine presence; and solemnly the words were pronounced, 'Although I am in heaven, I am everywhere; for everywhere is heaven if I am there. I cannot suffer as I once suffered; but whenever my children are cold and hungry, or persecuted or neglected, I suffer with them; and whenever they are warm and fed, and sheltered and loved, I rejoice with them; so that Jesus is often cold, and Jesus is often warm.'"—Miller.

DEVOTION TO CHRIST.

29

I have heard of a story of a visitor who was supposed to be a resident of heaven, who spent some time with a family on earth. The people of this family noticed that whenever this heavenly visitor went abroad he seemed to find even in the lowliest and most repulsive men and women something that was exceedingly attractive and toward which his heart went out. Upon asking him what it was that caused him to love these seemingly unlovely persons, he answered, "I have spent all of my time with Jesus, and I love him with all my heart and soul. I have been with him so much that I have come to know the demeanor of his form and the look of his eye and almost every one of his gestures; and as I looked at these people that seemed to you so repulsive I could detect in every one of them some gesture or some expression of the face or voice that reminded me of Jesus, and I could not help loving them."

Let us ask God to teach us this secret of the eternal love, that we may be able to do the work of Christ in the manner of Christ. And how shall we receive this love? By receiving God. "God is love." Love is not only a part of God, or God only a part of love, but all there is of love is God, and all of God is love, and "every one that loveth is born of God." Let us realize that it is as we receive God that we may receive that spirit of love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and which never fails. And let us remember that we may receive God just so far as we are willing to lose ourselves—that if we die unto self we may live unto God; and let us this night give ourselves away in a new and completer surrender unto his blessed will, that he may baptize us with love and send us forth to share with him the sufferings of love, and to join in the final and certain triumph of the sacrifice of Christ.—B. F. M.

CHRIST IN US.

30

"What is your minister like? Is he eloquent and intellectual?" What answer can be true of you? "Well, I cannot tell you about his sermons; I always think of Christ when I see him." Is that true of you? Then, to you to live is Christ. In a famous Russian palace, in the salon of beauty, a certain artist was asked to paint a great number of pictures for the salon. Eight hundred and fifty of the most beautiful women were chosen as subjects. He finished his work, and in so doing paid a marvelous tribute to the empress. In every individual picture he painted something like Catherine. Here, Catherine's hair; there, a dress like Catherine's; over there, Catherine's favorite flower. This one had Catherine's pose; that one some feature of Catherine; some other one had Catherine's eyes or Catherine's hands; and so, you could go over the canvas, and, taking the different parts, you could have made a picture of Catherine. It would be a marvelous thing if people would say to me, "Show me Christ," and I would take them to the man who wrote "My Jesus, as thou wilt." You know how he wrote it. He was blind, but he wrote, "My Jesus, as thou wilt." I would take him to the poor old woman whose heart was broken and whose head was bowed with shame because of her boy's sin. I would take him to see her when her son gave his testimony in the church, of God's saving power, and she came up and put her arms around his neck and sobbed in her joy, "You never was bad; you never was bad." That is the spirit of Christ.

Campbell Morgan used this text at Winona, and he said: "Suppose I change it—for to me to live is myself. It is my sermon, my house, my family, myself." Then, for me to die, what is that? "For to me to live is pleasure." A Christian might say that and still be a Christian; then what is it to die? "For to me to live is sin"; then what is it to die? If there is sin in your heart and mine, whether it be great or little, it amounts to the same thing then. If to me to live is sin, what will it be to die?—J. W. C.

CHRIST, A VISION.

31

There was a man in the streets of Chicago who was next to an imbecile, but he was regenerated, and the power of God came upon him. He could not do what many others were capable of doing, but he went up and down the streets

begging money, and gave it for the furtherance of the gospel. And reading the Bible, he wore out two Bibles. He became a marvel; so much so that one of the prominent Presbyterian editors went to interview him. He heard him read the third of John, and as the poor man read, the power of God seemed to fall upon him as on the early disciples in the beginning. After he finished, the editor said, "Would you tell me the secret of this? I want to write it in my paper." And all the answer he could get to his question was, "I have seen Jesus Christ; I have seen him." Oh, that our eyes might be opened tonight, that every sin that has obstructed the vision may be taken away tonight, and we can say, "I have seen God face to face"! "And Jacob called the name of the place Penuel."

CHRIST OUR LIGHT.

32

I read the other day that the chief kind of goods that the slaves in America ordered, when they had liberty to order anything for themselves, were looking glasses and candles. When I saw a colored gentleman on the other side in love with his dusky self, I could understand about the looking-glass, but what about the candle, why was it bought? I will tell you. In the days of slavery no slave could have a light, no candle could burn in a slave's hut—it was the privilege of the freedman. Oh the poor weary hearts, when Lincoln's proclamation reached them, they would have the looking-glass, and a grin from ear to ear and a flash of white teeth in it, but, oh light up the huts on the Ohio and the Tennessee, light them up, for we are free!

That is what we do when Christ comes to us, we light up before heaven, we rescue our lives from waste and failure, but the Christless life is always dark, never lit up. He that followeth Christ shall not walk in darkness; and if you follow Christ, and have the light of life, you are safe, safe from all the hell bats that are in the darkness!

You notice how our jewelers' shops in Glasgow, and London, and New York, do not guard their great treasures with iron bars and steel shutters. They do not, because there are jemmies and burglars' tools that can make a way through steel and iron; but I notice that the plate-glass of these jewelry stores is from roof to street, and inside they are all alight. There is safety because you cannot go into that store without being seen. That is the best safety, that is what Christ does with a soul. He does not send merely

angels to guard me, he gives, as his safety, the lighting up of the soul; and the devil cannot get into your heart without being seen by God. Praise his name! "He that followeth the Lord shall not walk in darkness."

Light up in the light of life, and one day you will be lost in his light, which is love. The Lord help you. Oh souls, you will live for ever in darkness, or for ever in light, which shall it be? Eternal darkness, or everlasting light! Choose Christ. Let your heart speak, and say, "Lord, I accept thee." Just say it. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness. He that cometh unto me shall never, no never, see death." Oh poor heart, accept him.—Amen.
—J. Robertson.

DEVOTION TO CHRIST.

33

A shepherd one night when the storm was fierce, counting his sheep that had gathered into the fold, found that two were missing. Going to the kennel where his shepherd dog was lying with her young, he pointed to the wilderness which was ever growing darker, and said, "Two sheep are missing, go." She looked a moment at her little ones, then up into her master's face, and hurried away into the night, and came back with one of the sheep that were lost. The storm had grown fiercer and the night darker, and the shepherd came again to his dog and pointing out, said once more, "One sheep is missing, go." Looking down once more at her crying little ones and up into her master's face with mute despair, she arose and hurried away. Hours passed by, and the shepherd heard a scratching at his hut door. Going forth he found the dog, and she had the sheep that was lost. Leaving the same at her master's feet she staggered back to her little ones, and fell dead at the kennel door.

And when I read this story I said, oh, the shame of it; here is a dumb brute, with never a thought of God, and never a hope of heaven, obedient to her master's command when he speaks but a word, and we have permitted our Master with nail-pierced hands, spear-thrust side, and thorn-crowned brow to plead and plead again, and we have refused to do his bidding. Let us catch one glimpse of his face anew, and go where he would send us.—J. W. C.

CHRIST THE ATTRACTION.

34

"Souls touched with the divine life persistently turn towards Christ."

"The needle that hath been touched with the loadstone may be shaken and agitated, but it never rests until it turns towards the pole."—(Manton.) Thus our heart's affections, when once magnetized by the love of Christ, find no rest except they turn to him. The cares and labors of the day may carry the thoughts to other objects, even as a finger may turn the needle to the east or west, but no sooner is the pressure removed than the thoughts fly to the well-beloved just as the needle moves to its place. We are unable to rest anywhere but in Jesus.—C. H. Spurgeon.

CHRIST, WHEN HE COMES TO REIGN.

35

I wonder if the trees are glad
 When spring-time comes again,
 And winter's chill yields to the thrill
 Of life in every vein—
 When the leaves unfold their dainty robes,
 Till twig and branch are clad,
 And flowers look up from dark brown beds,
 And over the fields soft greenness spreads?—
 I think they must be glad.

I'm sure the birds are very glad
 When winter melts away;
 They carol so—songs soft and low,
 Songs sweet and loud and gay.
 And swallows come from their other home,
 And build their nests anew;
 While down from gable and tree-top floats
 The happy murmur of soft love-notes
 In music the whole day through.

Will not the earth be very glad
 When Jesus comes to reign?
 And the thorns he bare, man's curse to share,
 Shall be turned to flowers again.
 Oh! the earth will sing, from her bonds set free,
 And the floods their voices raise;
 Instead of the thorn shall the fir-tree be,
 Instead of the brier the myrtle-tree,
 For an everlasting praise.

I know the angels will be glad
 When Jesus comes to reign:
 They sang that morn, when earth was born,
 And aye, they sang again
 When in the city Bethlehem,
 "To us a child was given."
 How they will sing and the chorus ring
 When the Lord comes back to be crowned as King
 On earth as he is in heaven!
 —The Morning Star.

A TITLE OR CHRIST?

36

Baron Von Welz was so mastered by the missionary idea that, after pleading pathetically, but in vain, with the state church to give the gospel to the heathen, he renounced his title and his estates, and gave himself, going at his own charges to Dutch Guinea, where he soon filled a lonely missionary grave. He vindicates his renunciation of his title thus: "What to me is the title 'well-born,' when I am born again in Christ? What to me is the title 'lord,' when I desire to be a servant of Christ? What to me to be called 'your grace,' when I have need of God's grace, help and succor? All these vanities I will away with, and everything besides I will lay at the feet of Jesus, my dearest Lord, that I may have no hindrance in serving him aright."

ONE WITH CHRIST.

37

"Crucified together, quickened together, raised together,
 seated together, heirs together, suffering together,
 and glorified together with Christ," Gal.
 ii: 20; Col. ii: 13; Eph. ii: 6;
 Romans viii: 17.

Wonderful! glorious! past comprehension!
 I, so unworthy, once ruined and lost,
 Am now one with Christ, through his grace and his mercy,
 Purchased by blood, at an infinite cost.
 In the beloved accepted, forgiven,
 God, looking at me, sees only his Son;
 That blessed one, who, for me, has been smitten,
 And not what I, a poor sinner, have done.
 I have been crucified with my redeemer,
 So I am dead to the law and to sin;

We have been quickened together, forever,
 So I am bearing the new life within :
 Risen with Christ, yea, and sitting together,
 With my beloved in places above ;
 So doth the father behold me forever—
 Oh ! how amazing, what wonderful love !

Suffering together in fellowship holy,
 Sharing his sorrows, his treatment, his shame ;
 Though man despise me because I am lowly,
 Mine is an honor which no one can name.
 I am an heir to all treasures immortal,
 Heir to the Father, joint heir with the Son ;
 And just beyond, where I stand on the portal,
 I shall reign with him, because we are one.

Glorified with him, forever and ever,
 Oh, what a future in store through his grace !
 Naught from his love can my soul ever sever,
 I shall be like him when I see his face.
 Lord, grant that now I may faithfully serve thee,
 Since I am one with thee, help me, I pray ;
 That by my life, and my words, I may praise thee,
 And may exalt thee, dear Saviour, each day.—A. E. R.

FREE IN CHRIST.

38

In Boston they were selling birds, birds that had been transported, or imported, from this country; but the canaries would not sing. I never heard a bird sing in America. The woods are dumb. There are no Dr. Norman Macleod when he was waxing enthusiastic linnets, no larks there; and as the old Scotchman said to about the forests of Canada, "Ay, but there are nae linties in the wuds." Of the birds they were selling in Boston not one would sing; yet one was got to sing. When the buyer, who had tried in vain to coax a song from the immigrant bird, set it free, you should have heard it when it felt itself on its wings, even though it was to it a foreign air. How it sang when it felt the free air about it! So, soul, when the law is realized to be fulfilled in your substitute, when you get grace to lay hold of him as a sinner, and appropriate what the Saviour has done once for all, you rejoice in God, as living in the faith.

"Free from the law, oh, happy condition!
 Jesus has bled, and there is remission."

CHRIST NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS. 39

A few Sundays since a lady with her two sons went to hear one greatly honored of the Lord in the conversion of sinners. The mother was deeply desirous that her two dear children should be brought to a knowledge of the Lord. They came to the service in a cab; and the cabman was driving away, when he was accosted by an active Christian brother, connected with the meeting, with the remark, "What's good for the lady is good for the cabman; won't you come in and hear?" "Well, sir, I shouldn't mind if I did; but what's to become of the horse?" was the reply. "Oh, I'll soon find a place for the horse," said the other; which he did, and the cabman went in to the service. The address was very solemn, and the cabman was deeply impressed. At the prayer meeting afterwards special remembrance was had for the youths, and the hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood," was sung, given out by the same brother who had brought in the cabman. The latter was touched to the quick, and the Lord enlightened his soul, and the following day the preacher had a letter from him stating that he had become a Christian, and was rejoicing in the Lord. "The wind bloweth where it listeth." The cabman was taken and the lady's sons were left.

CHRIST LIVETH IN ME. 40

Dr. Gordon used to tell a little circumstance which came beneath his eyes in New England, which presents to us a picture of this truth. Two little saplings grew side by side. Through the action of the wind they crossed each other. By and by the bark of each became wounded and the sap began to mingle, until in some still day they became united to each other. This process went on more and more until they were firmly compacted. Then the stronger began to absorb the life from the weaker; it grew stronger while the other grew weaker and weaker, until finally it dropped away and then disappeared. And now there are two trunks at the bottom and only one at the top. Death has taken away the one, life has triumphed in the other.

There was a time when you and Jesus Christ met. The wounds of your penitent heart began to knit up, with the wounds of his broken heart, and you were thus closely bound to him. How is it now? Has the old life been growing less and less? Has he been increasing and you decreasing? If so then you have learned Paul's lesson when he said: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST.

41

On the English seacoast there is a certain fountain which is within the tide mark. Twice each day the tide spreads over it, and the pure sweet waters are defiled and spoiled by the bitter wave. But the tide goes down and the fountain washes itself clear from the defilement. This is the emblem of a life that is in daily contact with the world and its defilement. Again and again it is touched by the evil one, but I bring you the cure today. Live close to Christ by faith, and in the midst of trials most perplexing, great peace shall fill your soul. What an influence we might have over others if we were thus taking advantage of our privileges! I think one might be a Christian, that is, just simply be saved, and not have much of a positive influence over the world about him; but it would not be possible to live in close communion with Christ without having the greatest possible power for good over all with whom he might come into contact.

WITNESS FOR CHRIST.

42

Von Zealand, Frederick the Great's greatest general, was a Christian, and the king was a scoffer. One day the king was making his coarse jokes about the Saviour and the whole place was ringing with guffaws of laughter. It was too much for old Von Zealand, the general that had won the most numerous and the greatest battles for Prussia, who had almost put the crown on the king's brow. The old general, with his German militariness, stood up, and, amid the hush of the flatterers and parasites, shaking his gray old head solemnly, he said, "Sire, you know I have not feared death, you know I have fought for you in thirty-eight battles, and thirty-eight battles I have won; but, sire, my hairs are gray, I am an old man, and I shall soon have to go into the presence of a greater than thou—the mighty God, who saved me from my sin, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom you are blaspheming against. Sire, I cannot stand to hear my Saviour spoken of as thou hast spoken of him. I salute thee, sire, as an old man, who loves the Saviour, on the edge of eternity," and he sat down. Frederick the Great, with a trembling voice, said, "General Von Zealand, I beg your pardon, I beg your pardon." The company dispersed in silence, and the king reflected that night as he never had done before, on the greater than the great Frederick of Prussia, whom his general revered even above

his visible sovereign. Ah, stand up for Christ! be noble in it! You never gain anything by sneaking. Stand up for Jesus! testify as this man did, and the power of the living son of God your Saviour will be upon you in your home, in your heart, in the market, in your soul, and in all eternity.—J. Robertson.

A CUBIC CHOICE.

43

Our choice in life must be a cubic choice. It must have three dimensions. First, it must be very high—as high as I can reach with my life. Next, it must be very broad, covering all the powers of my life—mind, voice, hands, feet. And then it must be very long—run out seventy years, if that be the sum of my days on earth. I cannot afford to swap horses in the middle of the stream. I cannot afford to change my course at thirty or forty. We are to make the choice the highest, the broadest, and the longest.—Alexander McKenzie, D.D.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

44

A man's church membership has not the commercial value of one dollar. There are thousands of men in our churches who do not tell the truth. I was reading the other day of an old Hard Shell Baptist down in Georgia who walked into a store one day and said to the merchant: "I want a couple of hundred dollars' worth of goods this year on credit." The merchant looked at his old hat and jean pants, and concluded that he was not the sort of man to trust, and he told him he would not give him the goods. The man walked out and the merchant asked the clerk in the store, "Who is that man?" "That's Mr. So and So, and he belongs to the Hard Shell church up here." The merchant went out after him and said, "Friend, come back here. Are you a Hard Shell?" He said "yes." "Well," said the merchant, "you can have all you want; you can have all here in this store on credit for as long as you need." And down in Georgia the Hard Shells will turn defaulters out of the church just as quickly as they will drunkards.

CHARACTER IS CAPITAL.

I hope to see the day when you may sell the last thing a man has who can but won't pay his honest debts. How can you keep the things that the people ought to have? If all our church members would pay their debts the world would have more confidence in the church and Christianity.

As a mere matter of selfishness "honesty is the best policy." But he who is honest for policy's sake is already a moral bankrupt. Men of policy are conscientiously (?) honest when they think honesty will apply better, but when policy will pay better they give honesty the slip. Honesty and policy have nothing in common. When policy is in, honesty is out. It is more honorable for some men to fail than for others to succeed. Rather be like Longfellow's honest blacksmith, who "looked the whole world in the face and feared not any man," than enrich yourself at the sacrifice of conscience and the blessing of heaven! Part with anything rather than your integrity and conscious rectitude. Capital is not what a man has, but what he is. Character is capital.

THE LIVING CHURCH.

45

If you would have your church be much, make much of it. Talk it up. Live and give for it. Be short-sighted as to its weaknesses and far-sighted as to its possibilities.

When church operation means co-operation, with singleness of heart and aim, look out for results.

Our churches are full of latent forces. These forces latent must be made forces potent if the kingdom is to come.

To draw people to church you must lead the way. The only way to get is to go. To get outsiders in, the insiders must go out; but they must go out after others, and come back. If the insiders stay out, they will never get the outsiders to come in.

Much depends upon how the people back up the pastor. When he invites people to come, he must know what they are coming to. To come to a warm Christian welcome will mean to come again, and probably to remain.—Watchman.

THE MACHINERY CHURCH.

46

Two or three young men who were visiting in Washington city recently, went into the National Museum. Passing a cabinet they glanced at the label on it, on which were the words: "The body of a man weighing one hundred and fifty-four pounds."

"Where is the man?" one of the young men asked.

No one answered him. In the cabinet were arranged an odd assemblage of heterogeneous articles. Among them were two large jars of water; also jars containing different

kinds of fats; other jars in which were phosphate of lime, carbonate of lime, a few ounces each of sugar, potassium, sodium, gelatine, and other chemicals.

Another section held a row of clear glass jars filled with gases—hydrogen, nitrogen and oxygen; a square lump of coal, and more bottles separately labelled phosphorus, calcium, magnesium, potassium. In a little jar was a fraction of an ounce of iron, and near by was a lump of ill-smelling brimstone.

The materials in these cabinets are given in exact proportions as combined in an ordinary man.

Thus we may have all the machinery to make up a church and have no power.

Just as the materials need the touch of God,
So we need the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

SILENT TIMES OF COMMUNION.

47

In Wellesley College a special feature of the daily life of the household is the morning and evening "silent time." Both at the opening and closing of the day, there is a brief period, marked by the strokes of a bell, in which all the house is quiet. Every pupil is in her room. There is no conversation. No step is heard in the corridors. The whole great house with its thronging life is quiet as if all its hundreds of inmates were sleeping. There is no positively prescribed way of spending these silent minutes in the rooms, but it is understood that all whose hearts so incline them shall devote the time to devotional reading, meditation, and prayer. At least, the design of establishing this period of quiet as part of the daily life of school, is to give opportunity for such devotional exercises, and by its solemn hush to suggest to all the fitness, the helpfulness and the need of such periods of communion with God. The bell that calls for silence, also calls to thought and prayer; and even the most indifferent must be affected by its continual recurrence.

Every true Christian life needs its daily "silent times," when all shall be still, when the busy activity of other hours shall cease, and when the heart, in holy hush, shall commune with God. One of the greatest needs in Christian life in these days is more devotion. Ours is not an age of prayer so much as an age of work. The tendency is to action rather than to worship; to busy toil rather than to quiet sitting at the Saviour's feet to commune with him.

COMFORTERS.

48

Hast thou been taught of God
 The secret he tells to his own?
 The presence of God hast thou known
 When passing through the waters deep?
 Dost thou know the consolation
 Flowing from Christ's salvation?

Up from earth comes a wail,
 A cry of agony rising
 From hearts that are sorely aching;
 Sorrow has touched them, and left them
 Broken in spirit, full of woe,
 Christian, go comfort them, go.

Tell them there is a balm
 That can heal the world's sharpest pain,
 Whose virtue ne'er was tried in vain;
 Comfort unfailing, abundant,
 From God in Christ ever flowing,
 Go, your Lord's comfort bearing.

—R. A. Shipman.

THE BLOOD OF CONSECRATION.

49

How about the talents? Will you give them to God? The consecrating blood in the Old Testament used to fall on the tip of the right ear, that it might hear only what God had to say; it used to fall right on the right hand, that that hand might do only what God wanted to do; it used to fall on the great toe of the right foot, that the feet might go where God would have them go, and nowhere else. O blood of Christ, fall on ears and touch the hands and the feet of the people here this afternoon—ears to hear, hands to do, feet to gladly run, but never to run until God says "Go!" You may remember that old tale about the caliph of Bagdad, against whom a rebel had set up his banners. The caliph had surrounded this rebel chieftain in the mountain fastnesses, until it seemed as though he could not escape, and then he sent a messenger and summoned him to surrender. Before the chieftain answered he stretched out his hand and made a motion to a man, and the man cast himself over the edge of a precipice and was killed. He beckoned to another soldier, and when the soldier came he handed him a dagger and said, "Take this and plunge it into your

heart"; and the soldier took the dagger and plunged it into his heart, and fell down dead. "Now," said the chieftain, "go back to the caliph and tell him what you have seen. Tell him I have five hundred men like these, and that before tomorrow night I will have him chained among my dogs." And he did. Oh, for the men and women like that, for the people who have no wish to live, no will to be, only to wish what God wishes, to will what God wills, and to be satisfied with Jesus! Bring out your ambitions today; bring out your pleasures; bring out your business; lay them all on God's altar, and never take them off unless God bids you. Turn everything over. Let everything be new, nothing old. If it be an old thing, let it be newly given unto you and it will be a new thing to you. If your right hand offend you, cut it off, and cast it from you. It is profitable for you to enter into life maimed rather than, having two hands, to sink into the fire of hell. I have heard men disputing about the effect of the death of Christ upon us. Let us say today, as Paul said, "He died for all, that they who live should henceforth live not unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again."—B. F. M.

CONSISTENCY.

50

I remember going down stairs in a hotel about midnight, with some letters in my hand that I wished to mail. The clerk was not in the office, but a policeman was there, and he said, "I will take your letters and mail them for you." I thanked him and handed them to him, and started up the stairs. As I went I heard a voice say, "Why did you not speak to that policeman about Christ?" I said, "It was because it would not do any good." The voice said, "How do you know?" I kept going up all the time. "Why did you not speak to him about his soul?" I said, "Lord, he did not look as though he had a soul." He was a very fleshy-looking sort of a man. The voice said, "Are you going to preach to others and then be cast away yourself?" I said, "No, Lord; I will go back." I started down the stairs, but I heard the door shut, and when I came into the office the policeman had gone. I had a sore heart that night and a sore heart the next day. I said, "If I see that man again I will preach Christ to him, if it is a possible thing." To my great surprise and joy, he came into the afternoon meeting and sat down on a back seat. There was a throng there, and I tried after the benediction to go back where he sat, but the aisles were filled too quickly and I could not do it.

I thought I had missed another opportunity. As I stood, talking with some people, in a few moments the aisle was cleared, and as I looked down it I saw the policeman coming up toward the front. The tears were streaming down his cheeks, and he said to me, "I have never known what it meant to be a Christian, but if you will tell me I will commence now." Oh, I believe that all about us, touching our elbows today, waiting in the store and in the street, looking into our faces across the table, are people who are waiting for the touch of a living, earnest Christian in order to be led into the kingdom of God.—B. F. M.

CONTENTMENT.

51

It was a stifling evening. The asphalt pavement breathed out all the gathered heat and irritation of the day, and a group of eager city dwellers stood on the corner to take the car that would bear them into a better atmosphere. In they crowded till there was left only an undesirable end seat whose occupants must ride backward. A plain old man and his wife slipped into it.

"This is 'most as good as the other seats, ain't it?" chirped the wife after a few moments.

"Better," responded her husband promptly, "you don't get the gnats in your eyes this way."

On went the car with its full complement of passengers, but none of them looked so happy or so content as the couple who faced away from the gnats. They were old, their faces were worn and wrinkled, and their possessions were evidently few. After a time the car stopped and some better seats became empty. The old man and the old woman stepped into them.

"Ain't we lucky," exclaimed the wife as they did so, and her husband beamed assent. They had been observed, and their divine content and cheerfulness had taught its lesson. "What a beautiful world if we were all like you," muttered a fellow-passenger as he got down.—J. W. C.

NOT A COWARD.

52

"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword and a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thus hast defied." 1 Sam. xvii: 45.

In the battle of Bull Run a lad had been dreadfully wounded, but he was borne to the hospital, where his father

visited him. The surgeon was there probing for the bullet that had done its fatal work, and the father, as he seated himself by the bedside, said, "My poor boy you are terribly hurt, I see, in the back." "No, father, I am wounded in the breast. The bullet went in here," and he laid his hand on his breast, "not at the back." The bullet was not received in the back, though it was being searched for there. He showed the bleeding wound to his father, and it was in the breast. So with David. Whatever the issue be today, whether he kills Goliath or Goliath kills him, I know that his wounds will be in the breast. If you be slain before the foe, let your dead corpse tell that you died facing the enemy. Fronting the foe is a stiff position for the shepherd lad to take up. Whatever the issue, the fight will be a fair and square one; there will be no wounding in the back. David has committed his cause to God, and that is better than committing it to man. Is David alone when he stands there before that giant? God, the living God, is with him, and he is all right. If you have God, what does it matter whether you have man or not. If you have Jesus Christ with you, let others applaud or hiss; it is all the same to you, you will go forward.—J. Robertson.

THE TRAINING OF NEW CONVERTS. 53

There is no more important work committed to the church than the proper care and nurture of those who have recently accepted Christ. Because of neglect just here, many have drifted away from the house of God, and, instead of being useful members of the church, are almost a hindrance to her progress.

If this service be rightly performed, it will not matter what the age of the convert may be, nor what his past record in sin, he may easily be held and trained for a life of blessing. We frequently hear church members say, concerning recent converts, "We will see how they hold out," and if they stand well, they say nothing, while if they should fall by the way-side they may be heard to say, "It is just as I expected." This is an unchristian speech, and shows anything but the spirit of Christ, who said, "Feed my lambs."

It is every Christian's duty to help "hold out" faithful to the end those who are but babes in Christ. Certain principles, however, ought to be borne in mind in the work of training:

1. The new members of the church will naturally absorb the spirit of the old members. If the church is

worldly, they will become worldly, while if it is spiritual, they will naturally partake of the same character.

The young convert longs for the sympathy and help the older Christian may give him. There is no time in all the experience of the child of God when he will more gladly receive instruction than when he has taken his first step in the light. The following suggestions may be made, among scores of others, as to his training :

(1) Create in his mind a desire to know God's word. Some simple suggestions may be made as to Bible study, such as

(a) Study one new verse of scripture daily.
 (b) Commit to memory a whole book, like Ephesians or Hebrews.

(c) Put into practice the promises of the Bible.
 (d) Live by the day, its principles and teachings.
 (2) Make him understand his responsibility to the church.

(a) Its services, to attend them.
 (b) Its prayer-meetings, never to be absent without an excuse which could be given to Christ.

(c) Its support. No Christian really grows until he knows the grace of giving.

(d) The peculiar doctrines of the church should be taught him. He ought to know why he is a member of this particular church.

(e) Stir his soul with a desire to help others. This stimulates his own growth.

(3) Teach him at once that he may be filled with the Holy Ghost.

- (a) This is his birthright in Christ.
 (b) This is the secret of victory over self and sin.
 (c) This is the secret of Bible study.
 (d) This is the real inspiration to service.
 (e) This is the joy of service.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

THE CONSCIENCE AND FUTURE JUDGMENT. 54

I sat alone with my conscience
 In a place where time had ceased,
 And we talked of my former living
 In the land where the years increased.
 And I felt I should have to answer
 The question put to me,
 And face the answer and question
 Throughout an eternity.

The ghosts of forgotten actions
 Came floating before my sight,
 And things that I thought were dead things
 Were alive with a terrible might.
 And the vision of my past life
 Was an awful thing to face—
 Alone with my conscience sitting
 In that solemnly silent place.
 And I thought of a far-away warning,
 Of a sorrow that was to be mine,
 In a land that then was the future,
 But now is the present time.
 And I thought of my former thinking
 Of a judgment-day to be.
 But sitting alone with my conscience,
 Seemed judgment enough for me,
 And I wondered if there were a future
 To this land beyond the grave;
 But no one gave me answer
 And no one came to save.
 Then I felt the future was present,
 And the present would never go by,
 For it was but the thought of my past life
 Grown into eternity.
 Then I woke from my timely dream,
 And the vision passed away,
 And I knew the far-away warning
 Was a warning of yesterday,
 And I pray that I may not forget it,
 In this land before the grave,
 That I may not cry in the future,
 And no one come to save.
 And so I have learned a lesson.
 Which I ought to have known before,
 And which, though I learned it dreaming,
 I hope to forget no more.
 So I sit alone with my conscience
 In the place where the years increase,
 And I try to remember the future,
 In the land where time will cease.
 And I know of the future judgment,
 How dreadful soe'er it be,
 That to sit alone with my conscience
 Will be judgment enough for me.

—Anonymous.

EARNESTNESS IN DANGER.

55

In the city of Albany a number of years ago, early in the morning, a certain family was startled by the cry of fire. They were taking their breakfast in a basement dining-room, and the fire came so rapidly upon them that they were instantly driven into the street. For some reason outside the dining-room windows strong bars had been placed. Looking through these bars the father of the household noticed one piece of furniture which he desired to save, and calling to one of his boys, made his way back to the dining-room. The father going along, and the son going after with the large piece of furniture, got it as far as the door where it could not be moved either one way or the other. The flames were too hot for the man to stand and he was obliged to leave his boy in the room a prisoner. Going outside and looking through the iron bars he saw that there was but a moment for action, and as if by superhuman effort he took hold of the iron bars and pulled upon them until casement, above and below, gave way, and the boy was saved. We can understand such desperate effort in case of this danger, but when the Bible says our loved ones without Christ are lost, we cannot understand how it could be that scores of parents, whom we know, should never have spoken to their children of their danger, nor made an effort to lead them to Christ.—J. W. C.

DANGER IN DELAY.

56

Prof. Agassiz, a great geologist, was in the habit of going through the mountains of Switzerland accompanied by his attendants, who would let him down by the side of the great precipice by means of a rope and basket, that he might carry on his work of discovery. They were always instructed to weigh him before the descent began so that they could be sure of his being safely lifted up at the end of his day's work. But one day the descent was deeper than ever, and they let out all the rope fastened to the basket. When the day's work was done and the signal was given to let him up he could not be raised, and it was necessary for the attendants to make their way up the mountain higher and secure additional help. When Prof. Agassiz was at last raised, they found out that the reason why they could not lift him was because, while they had tested his weight as he stood in the basket they had forgotten to take into account the weight of the rope. It is thus that it becomes a difficult

thing for one to be a Christian after he has constantly refused to accept of God's mercy, for every time he refuses at the next invitation he must pull against the last refusal. "To-day if ye will hear his voice harden not your heart."
—J. W. C.

DANGER.

57

Each man must discover for himself what particular things are temptations to him.

Among the evil growths in my garden, there is one which I dare not lay a hand upon. The slightest touch of it, or even approach to it, would cause me weeks of suffering, unless an antidote were promptly applied. I watch with wonder the laborer, for whom I send when a sprout of it appears, as he handles it with the utmost impunity—a power which few possess. Of course there is nothing about its appearance that denotes a poison; that it is such is simply a matter of knowledge, or, lacking that, of most painful experience.

Nothing, however, has been more helpful to me in the solution of some of the painful problems of life. There are certain errors, both in doctrine and practice, which, judging from mere appearance, are no more harmful than others, but the least approach to which is perilous to the soul. That such has been their practical working in the lives of others ought to satisfy us, without presumptuously proving it, by our own added experience. That a few singularly constituted souls escape unharmed does not affect the general law.

In dealing with all such poisonous plants, and here the analogy is very plain, exactness of knowledge is of the utmost importance. To an untaught or careless eye, this poison-ivy (*Rhus toxicodendron*) might easily pass for the Virginia creeper. I have often mistaken it for a moment, as I caught sight of a leaf or two only. One point is decisive; the creeper has five leaflets; the poison-ivy only three. But having one such certainty, it is sufficient.
—Sarah Smiley.

A HOPELESS DEATH.

58

The Rev. S. C. Dickey, D.D., of the Winona Assembly, going out one Saturday night to an Indiana town to preach the following Sunday, was walking along the streets from the station to the house where he was to be entertained, by the side of his host. Suddenly they came within hearing

of the most awful chies, and his friend said, "Listen, the most bitter infidel in our town is dying in that house, and for all the afternoon he has been crying as you hear him now," and over and over he heard the cry "O, Jesus, can't you help me?" "O, Jesus, can't you help me?" Before the morning came the cry was no more, for the man had gone into the presence of him whose mercy he had spurned, and whose love he had trampled under foot. "And their rock is not as our rock, their enemies themselves being judges." —J. W. C.

THE DEATH-BED OF TOM PAINE.

59

Editor The Ram's Horn:

I recently noticed in The Ram's Horn, among the answers, a doubt expressed in regard to there being any proof that Tom Paine recanted on his death-bed. I have not now at hand nearly all the evidence I have had, but there lies before me a volume entitled, "The Life and Gospel Labors of Stephen Grellet, containing a reference to Paine that I wish to offer for publication in your excellent paper. Grellet was a remarkable man; a minister of the gospel among "The Friends," who several times traveled all over Europe preaching a pure gospel to princes, kings and emperors, as well as to the common people, and finally declared the plain truth to the Pope at Rome, calling his attention to the unchristian acts committed in his name.

His saintly character forbids the thought that what he says of Paine should be anything but the simple truth. I quote from "Grellet's Life:"

"On account of his wife's health, they had resided for some time previous to his last journey, out of the city, at the village of Greenwich. At the same place lived the notorious Thomas Paine."

An authentic account of the death of such a man may have some historical value and interest, and S. G. thus notices his decease:

"I may not omit recording here the death of Thomas Paine. A few days previous to my leaving home on my last religious visit, on hearing that he was ill, and in a very destitute condition, I went to see him, and found him in a wretched state; for he had been so neglected and forsaken by his pretended friends, that the common attentions to a sick man had been withheld from him. The skin of his body was in some places worn off, which greatly increased his

sufferings. A nurse was provided for him, and some needful comforts were supplied. He was mostly in a state of stupor, but something that had passed between us made such an impression on him that he sent for me, and on being told that I was gone from home, he sent for another friend. This induced a valuable young friend (Mary Rascoe) who had resided in my family, frequently to go and take him some little nourishment. Once when she was there, three of his deistical companions came to the door, and in a loud unfeeling manner, said: 'Tom Paine, it is said you are turning Christian, but we hope you will die as you have lived,' and then went away. On which, turning to Mary Rascoe, he said: 'You see what miserable comforters they are.' Once he asked her if she had ever read any of his writings. And on being told that she had read but very little of them, he inquired what she thought of them, adding: 'From such as you, I expect a correct answer.'

"She told him that when very young his 'Age of Reason' was put in her hands, but that the more she read in it, the more dark and distressed she felt, and she threw the book into the fire.

"'I wish all had done as you,' he replied, 'for if the devil has ever had any agency in any work, he has had it in my writing that book.'

"When going to carry him some refreshments she repeatedly heard him uttering the language, 'Oh, Lord! Lord God! or Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me.'"—E. C. Cook.

DANGER IN DELAY.

60

On board a steamer I met a fruit grower from California. We were talking together, and he said: "Did you notice that White Star liner was two minutes late in starting?"

"No," I said, "I did not notice it." For these big steamers go away to the minute, with the precision of a railway train.

He continued: "There was a detention of two minutes."

"I saw excitement on the wharf," I said, "but I did not know what it was."

"Well," he said, "my friend and I raced from California to catch the steamer. We had just five hours between the advertised time of arriving in New York and the sailing of the Teutonic. For days our train ran exactly to the minute,

and we reached Albany, only a few hours from New York, exactly on time—five days' traveling to the minute; but at Albany a snow storm came on. The conductor wired the White Star Company that there were two passengers on board their train who wanted to catch the Teutonic, and would they just wait a bit? On the train raced; we came to Jersey City, and the very ferryman had been advised to wait for us. We got across the river and got a cabman, and told him to hurry, hurry—we had just about fifteen minutes, and we found as we swung into the wharf that we were half a minute behind time. There were two officers of the Teutonic, all was ready, every rope had been lifted, every gangway but one away, steam up and the Teutonic facing seaward, and the mighty racer across the deep was anxious to be off. Two minutes! There we are. I wanted to give the cabman something extra, but I could not get my hand into my pocket. They said: "Come away, come away, or you will be left behind," and I shouted to my cabman: "I'll see you when I come back," and he replied: "Ay, many of them tell me that, but they never see me;" and the fruit grower said: "When I get back to New York, in 21 days, I am going to find out that poor cabman and let him know that I mean it when I say 'I'll see you again.'"

But the point is that hardly had they got over the gangway, hardly had they got their feet on the deck, when the vessel swerved from the shore and swung out into the deep. No more to get on board, no possibility of getting on board.

Do you see it? The ship of salvation is alongside the wharf, you may be saved tonight, but it is a matter of haste, for I believe that the gangway is about to be flung ashore. I believe that the passageway into grace is soon to be dropped, and the church of God, the saved in the ark of salvation, are to be taken away.

Look at that steamer that went down in the Channel. When the lifeboat was alongside one of the survivors said: "I saw a rope that hung over where the lifeboat was, and they had dipped their oars into the sea when I caught hold of that rope and swung myself out to the boat." The boat went away to safety, the doomed vessel sank. Ay, but there is no rope, no dangling margin possible. When the lifeboat leaves the ship, no return. For God's sake, for your never-dying soul's sake get on board, for as soon as the ark is filled it is off. And it is filling up. They are coming from China, and from India, and from Japan, and from the isles of the sea—and the ark is filling up, and soon the angel will

get his instructions to put one foot on the sea and the other on the shore, and to swear that time shall be no longer. O soul, go aboard. Are you safe in the arms of Jesus? That will stand. Saved and safe.—John Robertson.

THE STREAM OF DEATH. 61

It is computed that one of the human family dies every second. Thus, every tick of the clock, an immortal spirit, as if with the outspread wings of an angel, is flying over the boundary line of time, and is entering the great world of spirits on the other side. There is thus a river of living souls continuously flowing from time into eternity. In the bed of that stream we are all sooner or later to take our place, and to pass away; for "as the waters fail from the sea, as the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not till the heavens be no more; they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."—Christian Scotsman.

DECEPTION. 62

Many there are that are good, nay, very good towards men, who are bad, yea, very bad towards God. Some there are who are very kind to the creature, yet very unkind to their creator. Many men's goodness towards the creature is like the rising sun; but their goodness towards the Lord is like a morning cloud, or as the early dew, which is soon dried up by the sunbeams. But Abijah's goodness was towards the Lord, his goodness faced the Lord, it looked towards the glory of God. Two things make a good Christian—good actions, and good aims; and though a good aim doth not make a bad action good, as in Uzziah; yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, as in Jehu, whose justice was approved, but his policy punished, Hos. i: 4. Doubtless Abijah's actions were good, and his aims good; but this was indeed his glory, that his goodness was towards the Lord.—The Christian Scotsman.

SELF-DESTRUCTION. 63

Genesis iii.

Pierre Hurlat, one of the keenest eyed gunners in the French army, gathered together by his thriftiness to buy a little cottage at Sevres Bridge. Beautiful to look at was the cottage, the honeysuckle climbing up the wall; and Pierre was proud of his home in which he and his wife looked forward to spending their old age. But 1870 came, and the

Franco-Prussian war broke out and old Pierre, the most expert gunner in the French army, was conscripted for the war. The Germans are in possession of Sevres; and Pierre is at the back of the gun on the heights of Valeria that overlook the town. General Neil rides up to the famous gunner and says, "Pierre." He salutes the general. "Do you see that little house?" The cold sweat came over the poor, old gunner. "Do you see that little house at the end of the bridge? Well, that is a nest of Germans. I just want you to point your gun on that house, and let us see what you can do." Pierre primed his gun, and the old skill was in his nerve, and muscle, and eye; and through the yawning embrasure the gun is pointed at the cottage. Smoke! A roar! "Well done, Pierre! Well hit! It is demolished." The tears were stealing down Pierre's cheeks. General Neil turned to him and said, "Pierre, what is wrong?" Ah! he replied, "it was my own house." Ah! point your gun at your own house; your heart is a nest of devils. If you learn that lesson, that alone is worth your gathering together this Lord's day afternoon. Point your gun to your own soul, for the devil is there; he has got entry to your heart, and there men feel him to be most successful.—Christian Scotsman.

DEGRADATION.

64

The following incident, the truth of which is vouched for, is a striking illustration of the fact that the evil tendency in our nature is away from God if it be unhindered. A sadder story could hardly be written.

"We ten became members of a degradation club."

"This sentence, in a written confession found since the mysterious death of Hattie Thetford in a hovel in an Ohio town, gives the only rational explanation yet received of a tragic story. A week ago Hattie Thetford, 16 years of age, pretty, refined, and showing all traces of having been well educated, died in the hovel of a laborer. After her death a paper was found in the hovel on which was written the following story, which is in her handwriting:

"What more degrading and low can anyone find than this? I have been here six weeks, and it seems that I have reached the bottomless pit. I wish I could die. Life here is awful. I feel sometimes like running away and beginning life anew. But what is the use? I am lost forever, and to leave here would be to break my pledge, which was made less than a year ago.

RESOLVED TO PLUNGE IN VICE.

“Oh, that awful night! It comes to me like a nightmare. Ten of us—reared in ease and luxury, schoolmates together, belonging to the same social set—in just one night dared each other to pledge themselves to do the things later to be determined. We talked about a suicide club, a single woman’s club, and finally I suggested the awful life that brings me here. What started in fun was sworn to in solemn vow. We ten became members of a ‘degradation club,’ as we chose to call it.

“I suggested that we form the club, and that we cast lots to see who should be the first to carry out the pledges made. The unlucky one was to leave home, friends, everything, and become the most degraded individual possible. In fact, the deeper down into the depths we could go the better the fulfillment of the pledge. Oh, what a nightmare, as it all comes back to me. We sat about a table and dealt cards, the queen of hearts was the fatal pasteboard; it came to me and here I am.

“I left home that night, took a Lake Shore train from—no matter where—came east, stopped here, found a doctor in the slums, came here with him, burned my purse, and have spoken to no one since.”

Here the paper is torn and the writing cannot be made out. It apparently speaks of a home of luxury left behind. Continuing, it says:

“God forgive me and my chums in times gone by. And my poor mother and father! God pity them! How they must have suffered and how they must have searched for me. I hope that they think I’m dead and I pray that death may come to me soon.”—J. W. C.

TRIUMPH OVER DIFFICULTIES. 65

1. What if the clouds are above you? Remember that ever since that day when “a cloud received him out of their sight” he has been behind every cloud. James Whitcomb Riley’s verse is full of truth—

“But always keep rememberin’, when cares your path enshroud,

That God has lots of sunshine to spill behind the cloud.”

2. Remember that it is a “walk through,” and you need not stop today where you halted yesterday.

3. What if you did fail? His love has not in any way

wavered toward you. Those were sweet words of Brown-
ing's:—

“Have you found your life distasteful?
My life did, and does, smell sweet.
Was your youth of pleasure wasteful?
Mine I saved, and hold complete.

“Do your joys with age diminish?
When mine fail me, I'll complain.
Must in death your daylight finish?
My sun sets to rise again.

“I find earth not gray, but rosy;
Heaven not grim, but fair of hue.
Do I stoop? I pluck a posy;
Do I stand and stare? All's blue.”

—J. W. C.

NOAH'S DOVE.

66

But when I say the spirit of God came at Pentecost, I do not want you to think he was not in the world before that. You have only to turn over the pages of the Old Testament to see him in his mighty power. I have a friend who says you have in the dove an emblem of the spirit, and whenever you find a dove in the Old Testament, you have some picture of the third person of the trinity. And he said, when Noah opened the window of the ark and sent out the dove, it flew out over the water, and found no resting-place, and returned again to the ark; then he let it fly again, and the little dove flies here and there, and finds an olive-leaf, and comes back and rests upon the hand of Noah. (The olive in the Old Testament and in the New, is the emblem of peace.) Then the third time the dove flew forth, and came back no more forever. Just so the spirit of God came. He came to teach Moses, and Isaiah, and Abraham in the Old-Testament time. He came when Christ was crucified. He plucked, as it were, the olive-branch of peace from the cross, and bears it back to God to say peace has been made in the death of the Son. But when Pentecost—the fullness of time—was come, he came, and he has not gone back since that day. He is in the world today, finding his resting-place in the hearts of the believers; and so I don't speak of him as one far away, but as one near at hand, and right here among us.—J. W. C.

MORAL ELEVATION.

67

Moral elevation is necessary if we would behold Christ's glory.

We can only discern the glory of Christ, so as to be kindled by it into admiration and worship, as we ourselves rise above the ordinary levels of our life. A mountain may be very magnificent, towering to a sublime height, its sides covered with rugged grandeur, and its summit crested with shining snow, but much of its magnificence will be lost to the beholder who simply looks at it from the depth of the valley, or the level of the plain below. Mountain heights reveal their massiveness and their splendor only in the degree in which they are viewed from some proportionate elevation. We may read in the scriptures of the glory of Christ, of the wondrous majesty that belongs to his person, of the numerous and incomparable excellences that adorn his character; but our hearts will never be stirred to rapture or moved to adoration until we gaze upon "the King in his beauty" from the lofty attitude of our own spiritual experience. It is one of the grand characteristics of the Christian life that the more we rise up towards Christ, the more we discern of him, and the more we discern of him, the more do we rise up, by the law of attraction, towards him.—B. Wilkinson, F. G. S.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

68

People are generally too forward in examining others, and are so taken up with impertinence and things that do not concern them, that they have no time to be acquainted with themselves, like idle travellers that can tell you a world of stories concerning foreign countries and are very strangers at home. Study of ourselves is the most useful knowledge, as that without which we can know neither God nor anything else aright; as we should know them.—Rev. Adam Littleton.

THE FAMILY SAFE.

69

"It is getting night," said an old Scotch woman ninety years of age; "is it getting night?" and her husband, older than she, responded, "yes, Jennette, it is getting night." She thought it was the close of a day; he knew it was the end of her life. With her eyes closed for a moment she said, "Are the boys all in," for it was time for them to come from their work, and he quickly answered, "They are all in," for the last one had gone home to heaven three years

before. After a moment's silence she spoke again, "and I will soon be in." "Yes, Jennette," said the old husband, "you will soon be in," and when they thought she had gone she came back as from the skies to say, "and you will soon come in." "Yes, Jennette," said he, "by the grace of God I will soon come in," and then she said as she left, "The Lord shut us all in forever." And this is a possibility for everyone—fathers, mothers and children may be all shut in for eternity.—J. W. C.

FAITHFULNESS.

70

A bit of written biography fits in here. A young man, away from home, slept in the same room with another young man, a stranger. Before retiring for the night he knelt down, as was his wont, and silently prayed. His companion had long resisted the grace of God; but this noble example aroused him, and was the means of his awakening. In old age he testified, after a life of rare usefulness, "Nearly half a century has rolled away, with all its multitudinous events, since then; but that little chamber, that humble couch, that silent, praying youth, are still present to any imagination, and will never be forgotten amid the splendors of heaven, and through the ages of eternity." It was but a simple act of common faithfulness unostentatious, and without thought or purpose of doing good, save as the prayer would bless his own soul; yet there went out from it an unconscious influence, which gave to the world a ministry of rare power and value.—Miller.

FAITHFULNESS IN THAT WHICH IS LEAST. 71

It is a secret worth knowing and remembering that the truest, and, indeed, the only possible, preparation for life's duties or trials, is made by simple fidelity in whatever each day brings. A day squandered anywhere may prove the dropped stitch from which the whole web will begin to ravel. One lesson neglected may prove to have contained the very knowledge for the want of which, far along in the course, the student may fail. One opportunity let slip may be the first step in a ladder leading to eminence or power, but no higher rounds of which can be gained, because the first was not taken. We never know what is important, or when we are standing at the open doors of great opportunities in life. The most insignificant duty that offers may be the first lesson in preparation for a noble mission; if we despise or neglect it, we miss the grand destiny, the gate to which was

open just for that one moment. Indeed, every hour of life holds the keys of the next, and possibly of many hours more; to fail of our duty in any one of them, may be to lose the most splendid opportunity through all life to the end.—Miller.

BY FAITH.

72

Let me begin by quoting one or two instances in which great modern preachers have used church history for interesting and effective illustrations. I select modern instances because this illustrative use of history is by no means common in the great classic preachers of past days. I find few or no instances of it in such preachers as Barrow, South, Tillotson, or even Jeremy Taylor.

There were some most interesting and effective pages with which Archdeacon Hare ended his sermons on "The Victory of Faith." After mentioning apostles and martyrs, he went on to St. Polycarp; and the Syrian hermit Telemachus, and St. Ambrose, and St. Chrysostom, and St. Athanasius; and then continued to enforce his subject by such instances as these:

"By faith Gregory, when he saw the captive Angles, exclaimed that, were it only for their beauty, they ought to be received into the brotherhood of the angels, and sent Augustine to preach the Gospel in this land.

"By faith Boniface, leaving his home and refusing high ecclesiastical honors, went into the wilds of Germany to convert the heathen natives. By faith he cut down the huge oak of Thor while the people were raging tumultuously around, expecting that the vengeance of the god would burst upon his head. By faith he baptized one hundred thousand souls, . . . and met his martyrdom with patient joy. By faith the hermits Peter and St. Bernard stirred up the nations of Europe to march as one man, . . . and deliver the tomb of the Savior from the unbeliever.

"By faith Bonaventura, being asked in what books he had learnt his marvelous wisdom, pointed to his crucifix.

"By faith Elizabeth of Hungary, the daughter of kings, . . . being left a widow at twenty, gave all she had to the poor, and dwelt among them as their servant.

"By faith the Waldensians retired among mountain fastnesses and dwelt in the caves of the Alps that they might keep their religion in undefiled purity. . . .

"By faith Wycliff, the morning star of the Reformation, rose out of the darkness, and heralded the coming daylight.

"By faith Luther proclaimed his Theses, . . . burnt the Pope's Bull, . . . went to the Diet at Worms, . . . translated the Bible.

"By faith Rogers, the protomartyr of the Reformation, when his wife and his eleven children met him on his way to the stake, and an offer of life and pardon were brought to him in their sight, walkt on with a stout heart and washt his hands in the flames. . . .

"By faith Oberlin went forth among the Vosges, . . . and spread the blessings of religion among the wild inhabitants.

"By faith Clarkson and Wilberforce overthrew the slave trade.

"By faith Simeon preacht the Word of God in this town (Cambridge) through a long life of persevering activity. . . .

"And what shall I say more? For the time would fail me to tell of Ignatius, and Justin, and Cyprian, and Perpetua, and Basil, and Patrick, and Columban, and Bede, and Anselm, and Huss, and Melanchthon, and Zwingle, and Calvin, and Knox, . . . and Penn, . . . and Zinzendorf, . . . and Howard, and Henry Martyn."

I have greatly abridged a long passage, but this passage was remembered for years, and few University sermons produced greater effect than this.

FAITHFUL IN THAT WHICH IS LEAST. 73

When Major-General O. O. Howard was on the Pacific Coast, some of his friends wanted to honor him by having a reception, and they decided to have it on Wednesday night. It was to be a great affair, and the President had given it his sanction. Then some one said, "We had better let him know, so he will be ready on Wednesday evening"; and finally they went and told him, "General, Wednesday night we want to see you on a matter of business." "Well, gentlemen, you cannot see me on that night; I have a previous engagement." Finally they said, "It is a reception, and the President of the United States has given it his sanction." And the old veteran, his eyes flashing, stood up and said, "You know I am a church-member, and I promised the Lord, when I united with his church, that from time to time on Wednesday night I would meet him in prayer-meeting, and there is nothing in this world can make me break that engagement." They had the reception, but they had it on Thursday night. When I was out there I

asked, "Where is the man who has the greatest influence?" And they said, "It is not a minister of the gospel; it is Major-General Howard."—J. W. C.

FAITH AND PRAYER.

74

"O, Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee all flesh shall come."—Psalm lxxv. 2.

There had been a drought for weeks in America, and the farmers had arranged to gather in the little prairie church and plead for rain. Men of God they were, and the crops were languishing, so they resolved to petition the Almighty that he should send rain. The day was appointed, and the Sabbath dawned on which in their little church they would have public prayer to God for rain. The minister, a good man, was astonished, that cloudless summer morning, to see on the way to church one of the smallest of his Sabbath school scholars carrying a big family umbrella. Oh, what a size it was. The morning was hot and blistering; there was no sign of rain. Aye, but that little heart had heard the intimation given that prayer was to be made for rain, and in the simplicity of her faith she came prepared for the answer to that prayer. The minister had no umbrella; he was dressed in summer costume; and, as he patted the little girl on the head, he thought that in her childish innocence—though in reality it was her superior faith—she had made a mistake. The service proceeded, the prayer ascended. Look at those clouds as they gather and roll up on the horizon. What is the meaning of that lightning flash—of the torrents of rain that are pouring down on the roof of that prairie church? The little girl has the best of it. The minister was glad to go home under the little girl's despised umbrella; and as she sheltered the pastor in his summer costume, do you think that her faith was justified and greatly strengthened? Ah, man; many a time you have been laughed at for carrying a big umbrella in a time of drought. Pray on, though the skies be as brass. Pray on in times of trouble. "O, Thou that hearest prayer"—it is true, it is true about God; and all flesh shall come to him that beareth prayer.—Christian Scotsman.

THE DISCIPLINE OF FAILURE.

75

Bunyan's conception that the way to the celestial city lay through the slough of despond, over the hill of difficulty, and beyond the valley of the shadow of death was not a haphazard guess nor the fancy freak of an over-excited

brain. It was a conception true to the nature of things—a conviction in harmony with human nature and earthly environment.

It is the sharp click of the steel against the flint that “makes the fire fly.” So it is the contact of heroic souls with great obstacles and repeated failures that brings out the true grit that is in them. Ordinary men yield to difficulties and abandon their purposes because of one or two failures, while to the extraordinary these are but the fuel that fires the flame of their ambition, but the athletic sport that develops the muscle essential to the performance of extraordinary feats on the day of exhibition.

Not until he had failed three times as a lecturer and had passed his forty-fifth year, did that most renowned of all American humorists, Josh Billings, achieve fame. Many of Edwin Booth’s first efforts on the stage were flat failures. The early poetic aspirations of James Russell Lowell were crushed by the merciless criticism of Margaret Fuller. The first years of Washington’s career as commander-in-chief of the Continental army were conspicuous for his defeats. Not until his masterly strategic move on Trenton did his achievements begin to augur hope of success.

General Grant retired from the army after the Mexican War, and failed in every business pursuit in which he engaged. But for the great Civil War he might have died in obscurity, and the world never have known of the superhuman capabilities as a commander of armies that were stowed away in his brain. And right here come to mind the beautiful, suggestive lines of Thomas Gray:

“Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

But to all these great souls, with many others that might be named, failure was only discipline. They held themselves together; they kept their courage and their common sense well in hand; they continued to do the best they could each day. Then, when the opportunity came, with their powers thoroughly disciplined by the experiences and failures through which they had passed, they took hold and achieved greatness by doing great things.

So it is not so much the genius to do brilliant things at the first effort, but the genius to keep on trying to do something that wins in the race of life. Professor Hutton, of the School of Mines in Columbia University, rates the

students who learn slowly and with much effort much higher than he does the "smart boys" who master their lessons with but little struggle. And why? Because the slow students are workers and stick to their work. They are early schooled in the important exercise of surmounting difficulties by much honest effort.

It is given out as a fact that of all the West Point students who graduated at the head of their respective classes prior to the Civil War Robert E. Lee was the only one who became a great general. Grant, Sherman, Sheridan and others who achieved renown in that war as commanders ranked quite low down. This is stated not to discourage the students who take first honors, nor to dissuade students from striving for such honors, but to encourage the great mass of boys and girls who master the lessons of the books slowly and with difficulty. The extra effort required to make amends for lack of aptness is often the very thing needed to develop a genius for honest, thorough work; and after all, that is the genius that wins in the long race of life.

The admonition of Park Benjamin fits in right here:

"Press on! there's no such word as fail;
 Press nobly on! the goal is near—
 Ascend the mountain! breast the gale!
 Look upward, onward—never fear!
 Why shouldst thou faint? Heaven smiles above,
 Though storm and vapor intervene;
 The sun shines on, whose name is Love,
 Serenely o'er life's shadow'd scene.

"Press on! If Fortune play thee false
 Today, tomorrow she'll be true;
 Whom now she sinks she now exalts,
 Taking old gifts and granting new.
 The wisdom of the present hour
 Makes up for follies past and gone;
 To weakness strength succeeds, and power
 From frailty springs—press on! press on!"

—J. W. C.

FEAR NOT.

76

"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, thou shalt thresh the mountains."—Isaiah xii., 14-15.

In the west of America, at the foot of the Rockies, on the Pacific coast, there are very strange and very interesting

gullies. Geologists go from all parts of the world to see them. You can sail for miles inland in narrow, canal-like creeks, great fissures in the Rockies into which waves of the Pacific wind for miles, right into the heart of the country. As the steamer goes into the narrow creek, behold, there seems right before you a precipice of beetling rock. Yet full speed is registered. There is no reversing of the engines; you seem as if steered to go to pieces on that frowning rocky crag. The captain is on the bridge, unconcerned; and the screws are churning the water beneath the vessel and "straight ahead" you are going, when, lo, just as the prow seems to touch the rock, and you wonder that they are not reversing the engines, the crag splits, and you see right at its base a waterway that would almost float the navies of the world, nestling in the heart of the mountain. You never saw it till you went straight up. A timorous man would have turned, would have signalled with the bell to reverse the engines, to go full speed astern. It was faith, the faith of knowledge, the faith of having been there before, that made the steamer go right ahead, into the cleft where it could go sailing through. Go straight on; God will provide for the difficulty. Oh, I can say this Sabbath morning from my heart: "Go straight on; never slacken speed. Go right ahead." Never the brain of a Christian was scattered on a rock that he went straight ahead against. Never; God will rather whirl the earth from his path than have you come to harm. Go right ahead, thou worm Jacob; thou shalt thresh the mountain.—J. W. C.

PSALMS AND FIGHTING.

77

When Frederick the Great was leading his band against the Austrians in Teuftan, he heard the grand battle song of the Reformation rise from ten thousand throats. It was Luther's hymn. Frederick asked, "What is that noise?" "Oh," said one of his staff, "it is the soldiers singing Luther's hymn." "That is all right," was the reply, "plenty of psalm if they will only fight." No psalm without the fighting, but plenty of psalm if we will fight. Those men who sang the psalm could fight too, and the Austrians were scattered as chaff before the wind. They were like Cromwell's Ironsides. The men who sang the psalms could wield the sword, as did our Covenanters, who were men that made the hills echo with their psalm of trust in God, and who shed their blood on the heather sod. Do not give up your psalm, only fill it in in intervals with fighting.

God's workmanship, God's renewed soul, must bring out God's works.—J. Robertson.

CHRISTIAN FIRMNESS.

78

They tell us that at Waterloo, when our gallant soldiers were there, and the "thin red line" had to stand the fire of the enemy hour after hour, and no charge sounded—when silently the soldier had to take the place of the fallen, as comrade after comrade fell beneath the withering fire—they tell us that as the Duke of Wellington rode up and down the lines, whenever he appeared, the soldiers whispered, "Here is the Duke!" and they stood firm. Oh, how they stood! So let us say, "Here is Jesus Christ," and stand firm. Salute the Son of God, my heart. He is here; he will save you. Christ has come; the Lord Jesus is my Savior; why should I fear the devil? Get Jesus into your heart; get him, the Almighty Conqueror, the Son of God, and you are safe. Have you got him yet? If you have not, you are as certain to go to hell and be damned as God exists; for the devil is an angel and stronger than you.—Christian Scotsman.

FORGIVENESS.

79

One of the Queen's soldiers had broken every law of the army and every form of punishment had been exhausted upon him. He had sinned once again and the officer in charge knew not what to do with him, and called in a brother officer and explained to him the situation, saying that he was at his wit's end; What could he do? Said he, "I have tried everything and failed." Then said his brother officer, "Suppose you try forgiveness," and they called the poor trembling soldier in and asked him if he had anything to say, any excuse for his conduct; to which he replied, "Nothing, except that I am very sorry." "Well," said the officer of the day, "we have made up our minds to forgive you." The offending soldier looked at him but for a moment, then burst into tears, saluted and walked out of his presence, never again to be the weak soldier of the past, but to be one of the best soldiers her majesty, the Queen, ever had.

Thus our Father meets us, and though we have sinned ten thousand times, broken his law again and again, he meets us, not with punishment, but with the pledge of forgiveness.

May his spirit today win our hearts and bend our stubborn wills to his.—J. W. C.

"FORGIVENESS."

80

One day Mr. S. H. Hadley, the leader of the McAuley Mission, 316 Water street, New York, was standing outside the door of the mission, when a little fellow came along and said: "Will you please give me a needle and thread and a piece of cloth?" "For what?" said Mr. Hadley. The boy replied, "To mend my trousers with;" and my friend looked at him to say, "It seems to me you have hardly trousers enough to mend." The boy burst into a sob and started on down Water street, when the great hearted Christian worker said, "Come in the house and go upstairs and Mrs. Hadley will be a mother to you." After a little while he came down to the street and was passing on toward Brooklyn bridge when Mr. Hadley called him back and said, "What is your story?" He said, "I am a boy from Philadelphia. I have stolen money from my father and the money's gone; I have not a friend in the world, and no place to go." "Why," said the man, "go back to your home and your father," and the boy replied, "He will not receive me." "Then stay here until I send him word." That night a letter made its way to Philadelphia and early the next morning as soon as the letter could be delivered a reply came by telegraph, "Mr. S. H. Hadley, 316 Water street, New York city. 'Tell the dear boy he is forgiven and I want him to come home.'"

And this is the message which God sends to the sorrowing, sinful world. Tell them, "Though their sins be like crimson; I will forgive them and I want them to come home."—J. W. C.

FOLLY AND PHILOSOPHY.

81

Think, indeed, somewhat more than a little upon the words, "folly and philosophy," and if you can see any way into a mist or a stone wall you will perceive that the same radicals are found in both.—The Doctor.

THE BLOSSOM AND THE FRUIT.

82

This life is the bud of eternity.

You have seen the tiny blossoms of the fruit trees opening in early spring. After basking a few days in the sun it fades and falls. A germ is left behind on the branch, but it is scarcely discernible among the leaves. It is a green speck that can hardly be felt between your fingers. If a hungry man should pluck and eat it, the morsel would not satisfy;

the germ as to present use is a sapless, tasteless nothing. Grasped now as your object and end, it is the most worthless of all things, but left and cherished as the germ of fruit, it is the most precious.

This life is the bud of eternity; if plucked and used as the portion of the soul, that soul will be empty now and empty forever. But while thus abused it is worthless; rightly used it is beyond all price. Here is generated, cherished, ripened, the life that will never die.—William Arnot.

GOD'S CALL.

83

One of the foremost ministers in Glasgow, in his unconverted days, was once surrounded by his "fast" set on the Rothesay pier in a Clyde Sabbath excursion. What a scene! Drink on board, and here they are swearing, fighting, tumbling, lying and spewing in all directions. Ugh! What a beastly pack! To the heart of the "chosen" youth from the prayer-surrounding home on yon Ayrshire hills, swift from the Holy Ghost like the flash of the torrid lightning, there came this thought—here's your set for eternity! Ah, it stunned him, felled him to the ground, and he cried from the very soul of him for mercy, mercy! There's no Jesus here, and no Jesus forever. Mercy he found, Jesus he found, and today in yon great city he points the masses to Zion, and he leads the way.—J. Robertson.

CALLING ON GOD.

84

Some old divine has pictured Peter preaching on the day of Pentecost. A man pushed his way through the crowd, and said: "Peter, do you think there is hope for me? I am the man who made that crown of thorns and placed them upon Christ's brow; do you think he will save me?"

"Yes," said Peter, "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." You are a 'whosoever'; if you call he will hear your cry. He will answer your prayer and save you." The man might have cried then and there, and the Lord saved him.

Another man pushed his way up and said to Peter, "I am the man who took that reed out of his hand, and drove it down upon that cruel crown of thorns, sending it into his brow; do you think he will save me?"

"Yes," said Peter, "he told us to go into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and he did not mean any to be left out; salvation is for you. He did not come

to condemn men; he came to get his arm under the vilest sinner and lift him up toward heaven."

Another man, elbowing his way through the crowd, pushed up to Peter and said, "I am the Roman soldier who took the spear and drove it to his heart, when there came out blood and water; do you think there is hope for me?"

"Yes," said Peter, "there's a nearer way of reaching his heart than that: 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" And the Roman soldier might have cried then and there, and might have obtained forgiveness and salvation.

If the Lord heard the cry of those Jerusalem sinners whose hands were dripping with the blood of the Son of God—if he heard their cry and saved them, do you think he will hear your cry and save you?—D. L. Moody.

SURRENDERED TO GOD.

85

It is said that Ole Bull was making his way at one time through one of the great American forests, and he came upon a hut in which dwelt a hermit. He had left his city home because disappointed in business, and had been living alone for years, his only companion being his old violin, on which he could play a few homely pieces of music. Ole Bull stopped in the hut over night and in the shade of the firelight, to entertain his guest, the old hermit took down his violin and played the simple pieces, with which he had whiled away his long hours of loneliness. When he had finished playing the great musician asked him if he thought he could play; the reply was, "I hardly think it possible; it took me years to learn," and yet, said he, "you might try," and so the great violinist took the instrument, drew his bow across the strings and instantly the room was filled with harmony. He played America and Home, Sweet Home, until the old hermit sobbed like a child, and then putting the instrument back again in its place, the old hermit was made to understand that he was in the presence of the greatest violinist of the day. But what a difference of the violin when in the hands of the hermit and in the hands of the master. The tones of one were anything but complete, the music of the master was perfect, and so it is not so much a question as to what our lives have been, nor what we are ourselves, but altogether the question is as to whether we are controlled absolutely by Christ. This is the surrendered life.—J. W. C.

NOTHING SMALL WITH GOD. 86

A distinguished preacher has said, "There is a definite and proper end and issue for every man's existence, an end which to the heart of God is the good intended for him, or for which he was intended; that which he is privileged to become, called to become, ought to become; that which God will assist him to become, and which he cannot miss save by his own fault. Every human soul has a complete and perfect plan cherished for it in the heart of God—a divine biography marked out, which it enters into life to live." Surely this is a great thought, and one that gives to life—to each and every life, the smallest, the obscurest—a sacred dignity and importance. Nothing can be trivial or common which the great God thinks about, plans and creates. The lowliest place in this world, to the person whom God made to occupy that place, is a position of rank and honor glorious as an angel's seat, because it is one which God formed an immortal being in his own image, and with immeasurable possibilities, to fill. George MacDonald says, "I would rather be what God chose to make me than the most glorious creature that I could think of; for to have been thought about, born in God's thought, and then made by God, is the dearest, grandest, and most precious things in all thinking."—Miller.

GOD HAS PROMISED. 87

It is said of Blucher, that when he was marching to help Wellington at Waterloo, his troops faltered. "It can't be done," said they. "It must be done," was his answer. "I have promised to be there—promised, do you hear? You would not have me break my word." He was at Waterloo to good purpose; he would not be hindered, for his promise was given.

We praise such faithfulness; we should think little of one who did not exhibit it. Shall the Lord God Almighty fail in his promise? No, he will move heaven and earth, and shake the universe, rather than be behind hand with his word. He seems to say: "It must be done. I have promised—promised, do you hear?" Sooner than his promise should fail, he spared not his own Son.

GOD'S PROMISES ARE SURE. 88

A man crossed the Mississippi on the ice, and, fearing it was too thin, began to crawl over on his hands and knees in great terror; but before he gained the opposite shore, all

worn out, another man drove past him gayly, sitting upon a sled loaded with pig iron. And that is just the way most Christians go up to the heavenly Canaan, trembling at every step lest the promises shall break under our feet, when really they are secure enough for us to sing with confidence as we march to the better land.

GOD'S WAY OUT OF DOUBTING CASTLE. 89

On Saturday, about midnight, they began to pray, and continued in prayer till almost break of day.

Now, a little before it was day, good Christian, as one half amazed, brake out into this passionate speech: What a fool, quoth he, am I to lie in a dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty! I have a key in my bosom called Promise that will, I am persuaded, open any lock in Doubting Castle. Then said Hopeful, that's good news; good brother, pluck it out of thy bosom and try.

Then Christian pulled it out of his bosom, and began to try at the dungeon door, whose bolt, as he turned the key, gave back, and the floor flew open with ease, and Christian and Hopeful both came out. Then he went to the outward door that leads into the castle yard, and with his key opened that door also. After that he went to the iron gate, for that must be opened too, but that lock went desperately hard, yet the key did open it. Then they thrust open the gate to make their escape with speed; but that gate, as it opened, made such a creaking that it waked Giant Despair, who hastily rising to pursue his prisoners, felt his limbs to fail; for his fits took him again, so that he could by no means go after them. Then they went on, and came to the king's highway again, and so were safe, because they were out of his jurisdiction.—From *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

GOD'S PROMISE AND POSSESSION. 90

"My grace is sufficient for thee." I have heard of life in which that sentence was a great spiritual turning point. In the middle of an agonizing prayer, "Let thy grace be sufficient for me," the eyes of the overwhelmed Christian were casually raised towards a text upon the wall where this sentence appeared. The word "is" stood out conspicuous in color, and with the sight of it came, through the spirit, the simple but divine intuition that what was implored was possessed already. Reader, have you that "is"? Does your experience this hour include faith that rests as well as seeks?

GOD'S PROMISES.

The way is dark, my Father, dark and drear ;
 My feet are weary and my soul oppressed ;
 I faint beneath the burden that I bear,
 "Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

I fain would come ; but oft my wandering feet
 Turn from the narrow path that leads to thee ;
 For blinding are the storms that round me beat.
 "As the day is, even so thy strength shall be."

So chill the wind, so barren is the soil,
 So weary am I that I fain would cease
 From scattering seed. It seems a fruitless toil.
 "Plant thou, and water. God shall give increase."

Weak, faithless, murmuring, wasting time in tears,
 What have I garnered? Lord, my spirit grieves
 That I have gleaned so little through the years.
 "Thou yet mayst come rejoicing, bringing sheaves."

Appalling shadows gather round my way ;
 Lost in the darkness of a starless night,
 Perplexed, bewildered, I may go astray.
 "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light."

Foes press me round. My heart is filled with dread
 And earthly terror, as my way I wend ;
 Must I alone this fearful pathway tread?
 "Lo, I am with you alway to the end."

The end is near. The river, deep and wide,
 That I must cross my coward soul alarms ;
 My feet are slipping in the rushing tide.
 "Beneath thee are the everlasting arms."

—S. O. Dudley.

GOD'S NAME THE RIGHT KEY.

You have lost the key of a chest, and after trying all the keys you possess you are obliged to send out for a smith. The tradesman comes with a huge bunch of keys of all sorts and sizes. To you they appear to be a singular collection of rusty instruments. He looks at the lock, and then he tries first one key and then another. He has not touched it yet; and your treasures are still out of your reach. Look, he has found the likely key; it almost touches the bolt, but not quite. He is evidently on the right track now. At last the chest is opened, for the right key has been found.

This is a correct representation of many a perplexity. You cannot get at the difficulty so as to deal with it aright, and find your way to a happy result. You pray, but have not the liberty in prayer which you desire. A definite promise is what you want. You try one and another of the inspired words, but they do not fit. You try again, and in due season a promise presents itself which seems to have been made for the occasion; it fits as exactly as a well-made key fits the wards of the lock for which it was originally prepared. Having found the identical word of the living God, you hasten to plead it at the throne of grace, saying, "O my Lord, thou hast promised this good thing unto thy servant; be pleased to grant it!" The matter is ended; sorrow is turned to joy; prayer is heard.—C. H. Spurgeon.

GOD'S PROMISES.

The mercies of God are not styled the swift, but "the sure mercies of David."—Thomas Brooks.

God's promises must drive us to his precepts as our rule, and then his precepts must send us back to his promises for strength, for without his grace we can do nothing.—Matthew Henry.

God's promises are dated, but with a mysterious character; and for want of skill in God's chronology we are prone to think God forgets us, when, indeed, we forget ourselves in being so bold to set God a time of our own, and in being angry that he comes not just then to us.—Gurnall.

Every promise is built upon four pillars: God's justice and holiness, which will not suffer him to deceive; his grace or goodness, which will not suffer him to forget; his truth, which will not suffer him to change; his power, which makes him able to accomplish.—Salter.

Every promise is a staff—able, if we have faith to lean

upon it, to bear our whole weight of sin and care and trouble.—C. Bridges.

In thee God's promise is Amen and Yea;
 What art thou to us? Prize of every lot,
 Shepherd and door, our life and truth and way—
 Nay, Lord, what art thou not?

—Christina Rossetti.

You have no right to reckon on God's help and protection and guidance, and all the other splendid privileges which he promises to "the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ," until you have this first blessing, the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, for it is "in" Jesus Christ that all the promises of God are yea and amen.—Frances Ridley Havergal.

GOD'S LOVE.

94

What is infinite love? The purest, sweetest, tenderest thing known on earth is the over-hanging heart of a mother over the cradle that contains her babe that can give nothing back; receiving everything and returning nothing—yet the love of the mother is but a drop in the ocean when compared with the love of God. It is infinite, infinite!

There's a wideness in God's mercy
 Like the wideness of the sea;
 There's a kindness in his justice,
 Which is more than liberty.

For the love of God is broader,
 Than the measure of man's mind,
 And the heart of the Eternal
 Is most wonderfully kind.

Over in England an archdeacon, having reached almost the end of his life, had his home so constructed that he could spend his closing days in sunshine. In the morning they placed his chair so that he could turn his face toward the east and see the rising sun; at noontime they wheeled his chair into the south window, where he could behold the sun in his meridian; but in the evening hours they would place him in the west window, where he could behold the king of day sinking behind the distant hills. So let me ask you in the morning of your life to keep your faces toward the east window, and at noontide live in the south window, but when evening comes, turn your face toward the west window, so that all your journey through you may live in the sunshine, and thus keep yourselves in the love of God.

PRAISE TO GOD.

95

Away near Stonehaven a Norwegian vessel was caught in the storm, and the coast guard vessel came out and they did their best, but it did not save the men, and all night they struggled in that surging ocean, clinging to the rigging, nothing but death before them. They watched the morning dawn. How slowly the stars withdrew their shining. How slowly the gray light crept from headland to headland. And the coast guard are out on the shore, and after some hours' work the poor Norwegians, wet and dripping, are brought from the shroud of the vessel, and when they got ashore what do you think they did, those hardy seamen? They knelt down, every one of them, before they thanked the coast guard men, and with clasped hands and uplifted eyes they thanked God for their deliverance. I think some of us, when we are rescued by the heavenly coast guardsmen, will thank God for our deliverance. I think in the storm God sends out an advance steamer to bring us in. When we feel the pavement of heaven beneath us—solidity instead of the swelling surge of the sea—I think we will thank God. A burst of praise will go up from our hearts at the feeling of our safety—at being home at last.

GOD WILL SPRINKLE SUNSHINE.

96

If you should see a fellow-man with trouble's flag unfurled,
An' lookin' like he didn't have a friend in all the world,
Go up and slap him on the back, and holler "How d'you
do?"

And grasp his hand so warm he'll know he has a friend in
you,

Then ax him what's a-hurtin' him, an' laugh his cares away,
And tell him the darkest night is just before the day.
Don't talk in graveyard palaver, but say it right out loud,
That God will sprinkle sunshine in the trail of every cloud.

This world at best is but a hash of pleasure and of pain;
Some days are bright and sunny, and some all sloshed with
rain,

And that's just how it ought to be, for when the clouds roll
by

We'll know just how to 'preciate the bright and smiling
sky.

So learn to take it as it comes, and don't sweat at the pores
Because the Lord's opinion don't coincide with yours;

But always keep rememberin', when cares your path en-
shroud,

That God has lots of sunshine to spill behind the cloud.

—James Whitcomb Riley.

GOD IS GOD.

97

Once a prince came over from India when it was simmering in rebellion to pick up a few ideas and go back and set the jungle on fire. But when he came to London that strange awe that comes upon us when the mighty, mammoth city is seen for the first time—the awful eerie big place crowds down on your spirit as you shoot off at Euston or King's Cross—he said, "Drive me to the country!" and the coachman drove through street after street, crowded thoroughfare after thoroughfare; houses and parks; the sun mounted high and began to get low, still streets and streets. Are we near the country yet? No; you will need to drive to midnight, to the next morning before you see the green fields. As night fell and the gas lamps in this mighty world's capital were lit, the prince told his coachman to stop, to wheel round, to drive back, and from that day there was no more humble, dutiful servant of the Queen than that prince. Oh, that is how I feel with God. When I hated God, when I cherished designs against him, when I resisted his claim on my life, then I had to retrace my steps back to the feet of Christ.

GOD'S WILL MASTERS GRAVITATION. 98

Nature finds abundant illustration of law counteracting the working of law.

If there be a law of nature which is universal it is surely gravitation. Stones never rise into the air, unless a force superior to gravitation lifts them; and if thrown into the air by force, they alight again as soon as the force is spent which threw them up.

But look at the trees, how they persist, in spite of the law of gravitation, in lifting themselves out of the earth, holding themselves perpendicularly, and throwing out branches skyward, in great freedom.

To the stones who do not know the secret, it is a perfect miracle, that the trees lift themselves towards heaven, and make such a flourish of their liberty. Bury a pebble, and it will obey the law of gravitation forever. Bury an acorn, and it will obey a higher law; and that law is in itself. Is the law of gravitation suspended? Never for one moment.

But in the buried acorn, and the buried wheat corn, there is a vital force which is superior to the attraction of the earth.
—John Pulsford.

THE FULNESS OF GOD.

99

A great many people come into this Christian life just as though they moved into a house with one room in it; and they have lived in it for years. God's house is a seven-roomed house. It is not only a refuge from the storm, but it is a banquet house, where his people can be fed; it is a chamber of rest, where they can repose on his bosom; it is a library where they can study and know his word and will; it is an observatory where they can look out over all the landscape. I am sorry to say that I lived a long time in the kitchen. It was a long time before I got into the chamber of peace; it was a good while before I got into the work room. I am only beginning to get into the observatory, where I can look abroad and see God's great horizons. But this morning I put in your hand the key to every part, and on that key is written "Jesus." You can go then just where you please. Come, dear friends, into this full salvation.
—J. W. C.

GOD STILL REIGNS.

100

We are mad—grown mad in the race for gold,
We are drunk with the wine of gain.
The truths our fathers proclaimed of old
We spurn with a high disdain;
But while the conqueror's race we run
Our rulers should not forget
That the God who reigned over Babylon
Is the God who is reigning yet.

Would we tread in the paths of tyranny,
Nor reckon the tyrant's cost?
Who taketh another's liberty
His freedom is also lost.
Would we win as the strong have ever won,
Make ready to pay the debt;
For the God who reigned over Babylon
Is the God who is reigning yet.

The ruins of dynasties passed away
In eloquent silence lie,
And the despot's fate is the same today
That it was in the days gone by.

Against all wrong and injustice done
 A rigid account is set;
 For the God who reigned over Babylon
 Is the God who is reigning yet.

The laws of right are eternal laws,
 The judgments of truth are true;
 My greed-blind masters, I bid you pause
 And look on the work you do,
 You bind with shackles your fellow-man,
 Your hands with his blood are wet,
 But the God who reigned over Babylon
 Is the God who is reigning yet.

SINNING AGAINST GOD. 101

I have heard of a hunter who carried with him a deer-charm—a whistle which imitated the voice of the fawn—and one day when he blew upon it there came a beautiful doe and put her head out from the thicket and looked this way and that, wondering where the child was that was calling for its mother. She saw the hunter standing there and knew that he was her mortal enemy, seeking her life; and although she trembled with fear she did not stir. And when the hunter saw that great exhibition of mother-love he could not bear to take advantage of it. So he put down his rifle, and lifting up his hand frightened the doe back into the thicket. But, O friends, what shall be said of the man who, because he thinks God is so compassionate and long-suffering, and has borne with him so long that he will bear with him still, will selfishly try to keep the control of his own life through his days upon earth, and then cast the dregs of his wasted life into the face of God with a pitiful cry of mercy, and thus endeavor to get into a place of peace after death? Does that meet your idea of manliness? My brother, never cherish a thought like that and lay any claim to being a man.—B. F. M.

DOING THE WILL OF GOD. 102

It is said that a celebrated bishop of the Church of England, who had been passing through a deep spiritual experience, reached the place where he was willing to surrender everything to God, except his special care and devotion to his wife, who had been for many years an invalid. He was quite sure if he should yield up his will that God might call him to go to some foreign land to preach the

gospel, and this he felt he could not do, because of the condition of his wife. But at last one day he came into her presence to say that he had won the victory, and that he was willing to take his hands off from everything, even the control of her own life. Looking up into his face she told him that she too had passed the crisis and won the same victory.

In the night time she was taken very much worse, and before the morning came she was dead. But when they went to call the old bishop that he might stand beside her, he too had suddenly been summoned into the presence of God, although apparently there had been no premonition of his sickness.

How like God this is—he did not want them to be separated from each other, but he did want their wills, and so when they had thus yielded, he would not permit them to be separated even in death, and he is like this always in his dealings with us. It is not a hardship to do the will of God, but to the contrary, as the scripture declares it is a constant delight.—J. W. C.

GOD'S CERTAIN ESTIMATE. 103

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.”—Psalm xxxi : 1.

There is a machine in the Bank of England that in a very wonderful way sifts the sovereigns. You could hardly believe it. There is a whole case of sovereigns there by the man, who, like an ordinary miller at an ordinary mill, takes his scoop and shovels up these sovereigns that men have tumbled the one over the other to get hold of, and he puts them in his machine. He feeds his mill the same way as the old farmer feeds his threshing machine, and it takes hold of the coins and tests them. It weighs and poises each, throwing the light ones to one side, and allowing those that are good and solid and up to the mark to flow into another receptacle. It is a marvellous bit of human ingenuity, but its testing qualities are nothing beside the bar of the judgment of God; nothing to the final assize, when the dead, small and great, shall stand before God. You had better put it right. The Spirit says you are a happy man if you realize your shortcoming in time and get it covered.—J. Robertson.

GOD IS OUR ROCK. 104

Luther was sorely down-hearted. The battle, as he thought, was running against him; the Goliaths by the hun-

dred, clad in ecclesiastical robes and electors' garments, were upon him; and he had lost the joy in his heart—not lost his faith, his soul was all right; but he had let slip the blessed consciousness that God lives. The Pope was alive enough, and the dukes and princes that were against the Reformation were all alive, but Luther was down, down, down. The Eliabs had depressed him. Next morning his wife appeared, clad in deep mourning. He asked, "Wife, what is this? I have not heard of anybody being dead; why have you put on the crape? Why are you in mourning?" "Oh," she said, "I am in mourning for God. You have looked so sad this week, I thought God was dead." The lesson went to his heart. He said, "Forgive me, God; forgive me, wife!" It was then that he gave forth in German that fine old hymn, "A strong rock is our God." If you have got hold of the truth that God lives, you Christian worker, you can do without men. "God lives," was the armor that David had on. You cannot see it, it does not glisten in the sun, but he has it; God is with him.—J. Robertson.

Wide is the sea through which I have to steer my course, and high its swelling waves; but grace is the breeze that fills the sails, my compass is faith, and my pilot Christ.—Tholuck.

ALONE WITH GOD.

107

"And Jacob was left alone." It is a good thing for a man to be left alone with God. I ask you again, as I did last night, have you a quiet hour? It may be only ten minutes, but do you go alone with God every day? If you have not learned this lesson you have not reached the beginning of peace. I said to Dr. McCarthy, who is Hudson Taylor's representative in this country, "Can you tell me the secret of Hudson Taylor's power with God?" He answered quickly, "I can do it easily. When Mr. Taylor first went to inland China he found the Chinese so inquisitive that he was hardly ever alone, even for a few moments of the day, and this was robbing him of his fellowship with God. So he got into the habit of rising every morning at 3 o'clock and going into his room alone for an hour, sometimes to sit for the hour in meditation, sometimes to read God's Word, sometimes to plead his promises, but always to come forth with burning heart and radiant face." This is the secret of blessing.—J. W. C.

GOD FOR US.

109

They told me of a case in the American Civil War when the blockade of a river had to be run. The river was all filled with planks chained together, and yet food had to be brought to a starving city; and I was told how they ran the blockade—how, in the dead of night, when the enemy was off guard, the great steamer got up steam. She rocked on the wave as they held her back, until at last they let her go, and with one mighty crash the blockade was run—she was in. So the devil has blockaded many a church built very magnificently. When the fires of Smithfield were going, when the troopers' muskets rang on the hills of Scotland, there was, I dare say, a great deal of blockade by hell, but the voice of prayer was never held back. There was more trade with heaven in the killing time than there is today; there were more sailing for the port of heaven in that time of storm than there is today, in this time of ease and prosperity. If God be for you, who can be against you?—J. Robertson.

THE GOSPEL OF GOD.

110

Some weeks ago there was a man who, speaking about a house, said, "It was built for the proprietor," and he meant that as a recommendation. I asked him, "What advantage would he have?" "Well," he replied, "you surely know that if a man put up a house for himself, he would put it up better than if he were doing it for another. In a house that was built for the proprietor I expect extra conveniences, I expect no shoddy workmanship, no jerry masonry, I expect that when the proprietor built the house for his own occupation, it was worth going in for." I said to the man, "You reason rightly, my friend." For the same reason I am going to stick to the gospel, that is why I am not going to flit. You may flit if you like. The Gospel of God was made and fashioned for his own occupation in the person of the Holy Ghost. I claim this, whatever your new doctrine, whatever the doctrine you are peddling in our country today may claim, the Holy Ghost will seal nothing but the Gospel of God, nothing but the atonement of Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost will not inhabit your philosophy, will not dwell in your man-made theology.—J. Robertson.

VALUE OF MISSIONARIES. 111

Outside her porthole on a North German Lloyd steamer from Shanghai to Southampton, the editor one day last May overheard this conversation:

Who is that man standing aft and leaning against the ship-rail?"

"Oh, he's a missionary, I suppose—looks about insignificant enough to be one."

"Yes, they don't amount to much."

But this is what Minister Conger in a letter to the American missionaries who shared with him the terrible life of the siege of Pekin, says:

"I beg in this hour of deliverance to express, what I know to be the universal sentiment of our Diplomatic Corps, the sincere appreciation of and profound gratitude for the inestimable help which you and the native Christians under you have rendered toward our preservation. Without your intelligent and successful planning and the uncomplaining execution of the Chinese, I believe our salvation would have been impossible."—*Woman's Missionary Friend.*"

GOD'S WILL NOT OUR OWN. 112

Two preachers in Wesley's time listened to his exhortations to sink their own wills and let God rule their lives. The exhortation of the great preacher went to the souls of the young men, and they resolved to let God direct them. They would have God first. They were in their room just before they retired to rest, and were telling their experiences in the good old love time of the early days of the Methodists. One of the young preachers was about to be married. John Wesley's exhortation had gone straight home to his heart, and this was his prayer: "O Lord, I wish my will to be sunk in thine concerning this step that I am about to take, and I do pray for thy guidance—thy guidance alone—in the choosing of a wife; but, O Lord, let it be Sarah." "Ah," said the other preacher, "that is an inconsistent prayer; the last paragraph is not in the line of a heart given up to God." I have detected myself often, in the various circumstances of life, using just such a prayer. I have put down a groove for Almighty God to work in; I have attempted to put shackles on the freedom and sovereignty of Almighty God; and he had to remind me that the choosing was altogether

his—that the controlling of the destiny of my soul was his part alone.—J. Robertson.

PRAISE TO GOD.

113

The bird praises God by singing; the flower pays its tribute in fragrant incense as its censor swings in the breeze; the tree shakes down fruits from its bending boughs; the stars pour out their silver beams to gladden the earth; the clouds give their blessing in gentle rain; yet all with equal faithfulness fulfill their mission. So among Christ's redeemed servants, one serves by incessant toil in the home, caring for a large family; another by silent example as a sufferer, patient and uncomplaining; another with the pen, sending forth words that inspire, help, cheer and bless; another by the living voice, whose eloquence moves men, and starts impulses to better, grander living; another by the ministry of sweet song; another by sitting in quiet peace at Jesus' feet, drinking in his spirit, and then shining as a gentle and silent light, or pouring out the fragrance of love like a lowly and unconscious flower; yet each and all of these may be serving Christ acceptably, hearing at the close of each day the whispered word "well done."—Miller.

GRACE EVER WAITS, READY TO
FILL UP ALL NEEDS.

114

Grace abhors a vacuum as Nature does; and, just as the endless procession of the waves rises up on the beach, or as the restless network of the moonlight irradiation of the billows stretches all across the darkness of the sea; so that unbroken continuity of strength gives grace according to our need, and as each former supply is expended and used up, God pours himself into our hearts anew.—A. MacLaren, D. D.

POWER OF HABIT.

115

In one of the celebrated insane asylums of an eastern city, there is today an inmate whose mania is that he cannot get ready to do anything, and his whole life is spent in fruitless efforts to promote himself for something which he imagines may give him satisfaction. As a boy in one of the best families of the city, he was absolutely without restraint. He could rise in the morning as he chose, could breakfast with the family or eat alone. From morning to night there was no word of command spoken to him, and under the influence of such a life he became careless and indifferent,

acquired the habit of listlessness, which after awhile developed into the mania of which I have spoken. His keeper told me he would plan early in the morning to visit his old home, but when the day was done he would still be in the act of preparation, and the visit could never be made. It is a sad warning, given to every one who has allowed himself to become controlled by the least habit. There is really no proper control of any life save the control of Jesus Christ.—J. W. C.

THE RED HAND.

116

Charlotte Elizabeth, the writer, tells of a half-witted man who could hardly speak, and who lived all his life with the vision, as he said, of the Red Hand, and she puts down in a beautiful writing her interview with him. She calls it "The Vision of the Red Hand." The poor, nearly speechless, half-witted man, tells her that God will come at the last, and he will say, "Jack," and I shall get up, and shall stand before his judgment seat, and God will take the book of his remembrance, and all my sins are there, all my thoughts and acts, my whole life, my bad heart. Jack's record is there; and God will hold the book up to the light, and something will be wrong with his eyes, for he cannot see any of Jack's sins. Do you know why? Because the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, will get up, and take from the mark of the wound in his hand, that which is stopping the flow of his blood; and he will say to God, "Please give me Jack's book," and he will turn over the leaves and, as he turns, the blood will drip; on every page the blood will go, and Jesus will pass the book to God, but God cannot see any of Jack's sins, for the "red hand" had been over it all. I wish to spend my life with no other vision. As a poor guilty sinner, the "red hand" of the Crucified is over all my record, and the past is gone in the meritorious atonement of the Son of God. That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that is the gospel. It is all done, and do you know, faith will rise in your heart when you begin to thank him for what had happened, for the fact that Christ died.—J. W. C.

HEAVEN OUR HOME.

117

Various indeed are the ideas and conceptions of God's people about that new home of theirs they're to flit into at the term day of earth's removing. "What do you think heaven is?" asked Wilberforce, the Christian statesman of Robert Hall, the Christian preacher. "Well, heaven is rest."

Ah, Robert Hall was a great sufferer. In the ruthless grip of an internal disease, writhing hours of the acutest agony were his daily lot. Rest, rest, for that poor, wracked, pained body of his, to him was heaven. Said Wilberforce, "I think of heaven as love;" a happy home had he; a life large, generous and free from distress was his; the very image of bliss was his "ain fireside," and as he looked around it and caught the bright reflection of that cozy dancing fire on the glad-some looks of the dear home-loves, he naturally thought, why, heaven is just "this present" transplanted, purified, glorified, and made eternal; love with the loving, my home! It's true. There are many, many facets on that gem of the universe that catch, each a different ray of the sunlight of God, and each ray is beautiful and glad and healing to our blear and reek-filled eyes. There's the touch again of the "vanished hand," there's the sound again of the "voice that is still," there's the light-up again of the dear old faces that faded away in the chill gloom of the grave, there's life from the dead by yon crystal sea. Ay, but statesman and preacher alike were agreed with the Apostle on the fact that the highest, the chief, the one crowning attraction of heaven was "to be with Christ." "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."

"Oh, heaven without my Saviour
 Would be no heaven to me;
 The pearly gates were darkness,
 And dark the crystal sea!"

—J. Robertson.

AN UNNAMED HERO.

118

Chaplain Cassard of the Indiana recently contributed a bit of unwritten history of the naval fight off Santiago when Cervera's fleet was smashed. It was just after the Maria Teresa had gone ashore on the rocks. She was on fire and flames were shooting from her in every part. Dead and dying sailors were lying on her decks, the dying fearfully watching the flames and offering up prayers for salvation. Those who had escaped had made their way to shore, some panting to liberty up the mountain side; others stood

awaiting capture by the American ships' crews then coming to their succor. A boat load from the Indiana had put off and was the first to reach the shore after the Teresa had struck. Chaplain Cassard was one of the rescuing party.

The Teresa's sailors on shore, most of them naked, others with but a thin garment, gazed in fear at the Jackies, many expecting to be killed. But they had come on an errand of mercy and soon made their mission known.

In the midst of this carnage of war the chaplain saw an American sailor put off toward the Teresa, two hundred feet distant, in a small boat. Guns were then going off on the broken ship, shells were exploding in every direction, and through the rents in the vessel's side the dull glare of flames showed only too clearly the sailor's peril from the explosion of the Teresa's magazines. Yet he kept on. Up a dangling rope he went, hand over hand, and reached the deck.

Those on shore saw him pull a revolver. Presently its sharp crack was heard and the sailor, oblivious to danger, walked along shooting at regular intervals.

"At the risk of his life," Chaplain Cassard said, "this hero had gone aboard that Spanish vessel, knowing cattle were confined there with no possibility of escape. Thinking not of himself, knowing he might never come back alive, he went into that volcano of death that the poor brutes might not suffer. I saw the heads of the great oxen. They were standing with their backs to the fire quivering with fear. I saw him going from one to another, shooting all. There he staid until the last dumb brute had been killed. Then with the flames curling around him, the sides of the ship a red heat, he calmly went down the rope into his boat and came ashore, where he disappeared among the crowd of sailors. None of us ever found out this man's name. He is an unnamed hero, and shows of what stuff the men of the American navy are composed."

HEROISM.

119

A surgeon relates that before Santiago he (the surgeon), going to the front, came upon a young officer, sitting beside the road, trembling like a leaf, and whiter than the dead men around him. At sight of the surgeon he began to talk. "I'm a coward, I'm a coward, I'm a coward," he said; "I knew I'd run, and I did. Oh! I wish you'd kill me! I'm disgraced forever. I just got scared. I knew I would. I was going along all right, not thinking of anything but getting at the Spaniards, yelling to my men to come on, and

running ahead as fast as I could, when all of a sudden I stubbed my toe, or something, and then I can't remember being scared, but I must have been, for I came galloping back here, sick as a dog. Oh, I feel so awfully gone. I'm a low coward, and I wish I were dead! Oh! why don't somebody shoot me? I've got such an awful goneness right here," and he put his hand to his stomach. The surgeon gave him a quick look and caught him as he plunged forward in a faint. Where the awful goneness was a Mauser bullet had found its billet. They carried the wounded man to the field hospital, and he chuckled all the way. "Oh my! oh my!" he said, over and over; "I wasn't scared! I wasn't scared!" And then he would laugh delightedly: "I wasn't scared. I was hit—I was just hit. I ain't a coward after all."

HEREDITY AND DRINK.

120

Far worse than the effect of strong drink upon the man himself is its effect upon his posterity. A writer gives a striking illustration of this. He says:

A specialist in children's diseases, who has for twelve years been carefully noticing the difference between twelve families of drinkers and twelve families of temperate ones, reports that he found the twelve drinking families produced in those years fifty-seven children and the temperates sixty-one. Of the drinkers, twenty-five children died in the first week of life, as against six on the other side. Among the children of the drinkers were five who were idiots; five, so stunted in growth as to be really dwarfs; five, when older became epileptics; one, a boy, had grave chorea, ending in idiocy; five more were diseased and deformed, and two of the epileptics became by inheritance drinkers. Ten only of the fifty-seven were normal in body and mind. On the part of the sixty-one of the temperates two only showed inherited nervous weakness, while four in later years of childhood had curable nervous diseases, and fifty were in every way sound in body and mind. There could scarcely be a more conclusive demonstration in favor of abstinence from intoxicants on the part of those who assume the responsibility of parentage.

HEART NOT REGULAR.

121

We grieve the spirit by failing to keep our hearts clean. The late John MacNeil, of Australia, said that a new heart is not necessarily a clean heart, but many of us have been thinking that it was. David committed a great transgres-

sion, and was pardoned, and prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." John says, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

MacNeil uses the illustration of a mother who puts a clean dress on her child in the morning, and tells her to keep it unspotted all day long. When night comes, the child's dress is so soiled that it is hard to tell whether it is white or black; but the mother cleanses it. The child had the will to keep it clean, but the nature of the child made her get it soiled. The same thing takes place every day, but if that mother could only impart some of her own spirit to that child, so that the child would not only have the will but the ability to keep clean. That is exactly what God wishes to do for us and will do. This is the secret of victory over sin.—J. W. C.

A CLEAN HEART.

122

Our hearts make our lives. What we are in heart, in spirit, in the inner life, we are really before God; and that, too, we shall ultimately become in actual character, in outward feature. The disposition makes the face. Every creature builds its own house to live in, and builds it just like itself. Coarseness builds coarsely; taste builds tastefully. A corrupt heart works through in the end, and changes all without into moral decay like itself. Jealousy, envy, bitterness, selfishness, all write their own image and signature on the features, if you give them time enough. A pure, beautiful soul builds a holy and divine dwelling for itself. In one of Goethe's tales he tells of a wonderful lamp which was placed in a fisherman's hut, and changed it all to silver. The lamp of Christ's love, set in a human heart, transforms the life from sinfulness and earthliness into the likeness of Christ's own spirit. To make good wishes come true, we must first get them into our heart, and then they will soon become real in our life.—Miller.

HEAVEN.

123

I saw one evening in Glasgow what seemed to be a window set with diamonds. It was flashing from afar. It seemed to be set all round with jewels. The window blazed forth in an effulgence that made you stop on your heel. What is that magnificent window? You discover it is but an ordinary skylight of an ordinary house; the diamonds are but the sun's rays. The glory on that window did not belong to the house. The sun had kissed the window and

flung his glory all round that ordinary structure, and I have seen a life like that, an ordinary life, an ordinary man, an ordinary woman, who never got a newspaper paragraph in their life, spent and being spent for others. Unknown they lived, unknown they died, and I have seen hundreds of passersby stand before that humble life and say: "Whence came those jewels of effulgence, whence this glory of self-sacrifice, of likeness to Christ?" They came from heaven; those jewels belonged not to life. The shining came from the other shore, and whatever the material, however ordinary your life may be, if you only get into the rays of the sun of glory, if you can take your humdrum duty, your monotonous daily toil, and let it bask in Christ's face, the angels will stop on flitting wing and behold with admiration thy glory—yet not thine—Christ's.

DON'T WORRY.

124

"The world is wide
 In time and tide,
 And—God is guide;
 Then do not hurry.
 That man is blest
 Who does his best
 And—leaves the rest,
 Then do not worry.

A NEW HEART.

125

"A new heart will I give unto you; and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of you and I will give you an heart of flesh."—Ezek: xxxvi, 26.

I heard the missionary to the Red Indians in our Canadian territories tell how it felt to be in the grip of the death-freeze. It was seventy degrees below zero, and as the traces of the dogs that carried the sleigh across the black wastes got broken, he jumped off to repair them. Perspiring with the exertion, he felt his garments suddenly stiffen, and a chill such as he had never before felt in his experiences in these high latitudes seemed to creep to his very bones. It was intensely cold, "and all at once," he said, "music such as I had never before heard, seemed to descend from the skies. Oh, it was rapturous music! Can the angels, with their heavenly harps, equal what I heard? The snow began to appear as if covered with the jewels that deck the city, and the twigs of the frozen trees seemed all kinds of colors. It was just fairy-land. A sensuous delight, a physical pleasure,

began to steal over the whole body. The marks of the Indian attendants who had gone before, the tracks left by their snow, got transformed into beautiful couches, and a voice said, 'Lie down and rest, and listen to the music.' I was looking round to choose the couch upon which I should rest, when I heard a soft voice say, 'Stop! you are freezing to death!' I had only time to take the rope that bound my dogs to the sleigh and bind it around me, attaching myself to the sleigh, and to say in the Canadian French to the dogs, 'March!' They started and dragged me unconscious through the snow, battered and bruised, but safe." Ah, man! to freeze is sometimes just delicious. The devil takes care that the cold heart should never feel cold. He tells the birds to sing, and the flowers to bloom, and the demons to transform music. There is many a soul just freezing to death amid the pleasures of a sensuous religiosity that will only damn him forever. The human heart is a stone until God warms it and regenerates it.—J. W. C.

HIS ONLY HOPE.

126

The sainted A. J. Gordon tells of a man in Boston whom he met one day, and he said to him, "I want you to go with me to the burial ground with my child." He stepped into the carriage, and there on the front seat was the white coffin. They rode away through the city of Boston to the cemetery, but not a word was spoken. They came to the grave, and the father, after carrying the little casket to the grave, held it in his arms, and, taking the little key from his pocket, unlocked the casket and raised the lid, and fastened his eyes upon the face of his child. He said not a word, but looked long and steadily; then he closed the lid, and gave the coffin into the hands of those at the grave, turned, entered his carriage, and rode back to Boston, never speaking a word. But just as he got out of the carriage he said, with a breaking heart, "She was all I had." "Poor man," said Dr. Gordon, "he had not the hope that you and I have, and his heart was breaking because he felt the separation was for eternity."—J. W. C.

THE HOME.

127

A home is the abode of love, or rather should be so—the place of union, and of peace, and of holy brotherhood. In this it is the very image of heaven. Around the very word "home" what holy and sacred associations cluster and hang; what young, joyous, and refreshing thoughts; what

hallowed imaginings! What soul-gladdening, cherished remembrances hover around that word! In what heart does it not awaken these emotions? Yes! it does this even in the hearts of those who have disgraced their home by their misconduct. Amid their scenes of vice and misery they have fond recollections of it, even as our first parents still had loving and holy associations hovering around Eden, after being driven out of it.—Christian Scotsman.

HUMILITY.

128

When our Master came into the world, how did he come? He came as the babe in the manger. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and dwelt in the obscure town of Nazareth. It would seem that because of the way he came, and the way he lived among men, it would be necessary to have many texts to prove that he was God as well as man. Did you ever get the seven steps down that he took in coming to this earth? I want to point them out. Turn to Phil. 2: 6-8. I will read it for you: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He was "equal with God," and he began to step down, down, down, unto the lowest depths. Notice the steps:

First step, "Made himself of no reputation."

Second step, "Took the form of a servant."

Third step, "Made in the likeness of men."

Fourth step, "Found in fashion as a man."

Fifth step, "Humbled himself."

Sixth step, "Became obedient unto death."

Seventh step, "Even the death of the cross."

Now, isn't it a marvelous thing that it is when we find him at the lowest depths—as low as he could have gone—then God exalts him.

HUMILITY.

129

Dr. Mark Guy Pearse says: "I watched an old man trout-fishing the other day, pulling them out one after another briskly. 'You manage it cleverly, old friend,' I said; 'I have passed a good many below who don't seem to be doing anything.' The old man lifted himself up, and stuck his rod in the ground. 'Well, you see, sir, there be three rules for trout-fishing, and it is no good trying if you don't

mind them. The first is, keep yourself out of sight; and the second is, keep yourself further out of sight; and the third is, keep yourself further out of sight still. Then you 'll do it.' 'Good for catching men, too,' I thought, as I went on my way."

HUMILIATION OF THE HILLS. 130

If we are brought low it is only that we may render better service.

Traveling on the Continent, seeking for renewal of health and energy, I was one day taken through the narrowest pass between the hills that I have even seen. As the train moved on, it seemed as if the bare rocks were close on either side, and when I looked out of the window, I could scarcely see the tops of the hills, they seemed so far away toward the clouds. I thought of the particles of rock up there on the sunshiny summits, loosened by the frost and the thaw, driven to and fro by the free wild winds, falling ever a little lower down the hill-side, caught by the rain, and carried lower still, and yet lower still; and they seemed to complain of being borne thus away from their high home in the sunshine, and from their free life on the everlasting hills. They seemed to repine at their humiliation, as they were carried into the shadows of the plain. But we passed out into the valley rich with its foliage, beautiful with its flowers, and glowing with its harvests of food and fruit for man, and then I knew that the disintegration of the rocks above, and the humiliation of the particles of sand, only meant service instead of enjoyment. We may think ourselves happy up on the high hills of privilege and honor, but it is better, far better, for us to be brought down into the plains, if there we can serve our generation.—Bishop Vincent.

INVITATION TO COME BACK. 131

There sat one day upon the platform of the Bethany Sunday School an Englishman who told the story of the young girl who had gone away from her home to live a life of sin. Her broken-hearted mother came to the home of the rector of this Englishman and besought him to help her find her child. He said, to her, "If you will bring me every picture you possess I will do my best." The pictures were brought and the clergyman wrote underneath the face in red ink just two words: "Come back." These pictures were placed in the mission stations and the haunts of vice. Weeks passed by until at last one day the young girl was passing into a

place of sin when she saw this face of her mother. She paused to look, and the tears so blinded her eyes that she could not for a moment see the words. Then, brushing the tears away, she saw the invitation; turned her face toward her home on the edge of London. She reached her home in the night time, put her hand upon the latch of the door, and behold, it yielded to her touch. She had no more than crossed the threshold when she found herself in her mother's arms, greeted with this salutation, "My dear child, the door has never been fastened since you went away."

And this is God's message to his wandering children, to those who have forgotten him and yielded themselves up to the life of sin: "The door has never been shut since you turned away; return unto me, and I will have mercy upon you. Come back to me and I will abundantly pardon."—J. W. C.

THE INDIFFERENCE OF CHRISTIANS. 132

I had just closed a noon-day meeting in the city of Detroit when we were startled by the cry of fire as people rushed along the streets, and one said to another the great Edson-Moore building is in flames. The most of the men working in the business house had escaped, but several men were imprisoned in the upper story. The stairway was a mass of flame, and the elevator shaft full of fire so they could escape neither way. At last they came to the upper windows and looking down upon the multitude shouted for help which could not be given. For some reason the fire appliances would not work and no ladder could be raised. At last the men stood on the outside casing of the windows and shouted again, and when the flames became too hot they let themselves down and held on to the casement with their fingers. This lasted only a moment when they loosed their hand grasp, shot down through the air and struck upon the hard stone pavement. They were carried to the hospital where they died soon afterward, and that night when in the great meeting I made the announcement that in these homes there was desolation because the little children were fatherless and the women were widows, there was scarcely a dry eye in the building. We are greatly concerned when men are in physical distress, but when we realize that souls are lost, we seem positively to be indifferent.—J. W. C.

IMMORTALITY. 133

I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest once cut down; the new shoots are stronger and livelier than

ever. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with reflection of unknown worlds. You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. There I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets, and the roses as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and in verse; history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode and song—I have tried it all. But I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others, "I have finished my day's work." But I cannot say, "I have finished my life." My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight; it opens with the dawn.—Victor Hugo.

INTERCESSION.

134

In 1517 there was a great riot in London, in which houses were sacked and a general insurrection reigned; guns in the tower were thundering against the insurgents, and armed bands were assailing them on every side. Three hundred were arrested, tried and hanged; five hundred were cast into prison, and were to be tried before the king, Henry VIII. As he sat in state on the throne, the door opened, and in they came, every man with a rope about his neck. Before sentence could be passed on them, three queens entered, Catharine of Aragon, wife of the king; Margaret of Scotland, sister of the king, and Mary of France. They approached the throne, knelt at the feet of his majesty and there remained pleading until the king forgave the five hundred trembling men.

But there is a better intercession than that going on for you and for me at this moment.

IDEAL REALIZED.

135

Probably the most perfect piece of marble ever wrought by human hands is the statue of the Christ by Thorwaldsen. Those who have seen it in the Metropolitan Church at

Copenhagen say that the whole light of the story of the gospel seems to stream down upon them from the stone as they look at it. The artist wrought a long while upon it, and with intense joy and enthusiasm; but when at last the statue was completed, a deep melancholy settled over him. When asked the reason for this, he said that his genius was decaying. "Here is my statue of Christ; it is the first of my works with which I have ever felt satisfied. Till now my ideal has always been far beyond what I could execute, but it is no longer so; I shall never have a great idea again." To Thorwaldsen, satisfaction with his work was the sure indication of the limit of achievement. He felt that he would grow no more, because there was now no longing in his soul for anything better.

MAN'S INFLUENCE.

136

That was a most striking incident which occurred not long ago, when the miners of Colorado had left their work, and in great anger at what they thought was the oppression of their employers, had gathered themselves together to resist by violence all attempts to force them into submission. It was when it seemed as though a terrible conflict was certain that President Slocum, of Colorado College, one Sunday morning went into the mining district, and passed the sentries who were posted along the cañon, and gained access to the leaders of the armed bands of miners, who were awaiting attack. Dr. Slocum said that he was received very kindly by the leaders, and that after he had told them that he came upon a mission of peace, they granted him permission to speak to the men; and several hundred men were gathered before him, with angry looks, evidently seeking an opportunity to vent their rage upon the first person who should try to thwart their will. Rifles and revolvers were pointed at the speaker as he commenced to say in the gentlest possible manner that he had come there on an errand of peace, as their friend and because he loved them; when one of the leaders cried out, "Boys, this man is our friend." And almost instantly the guns dropped, and the ears of the men were opened to listen to his plea. And not only that, but they gladly responded to his proposition that the questions that were disturbing them should be submitted to arbitration. And then, having gained a similar concession from the owners of the mine, it was permitted to this follower of Christ to see a peaceful issue of the seemingly irreconcilable contention.

JESUS OF NAZARETH PASSETH BY. 137

When Governor Pollock was the Chief Executive of the State of Pennsylvania a young man high in social life killed a friend of his in the city of Philadelphia. The result of his trial was his conviction and sentence to death. Then every influence was brought to bear upon the Governor to change the sentence to life imprisonment, but without avail. At last, the mother of the boy made her way to Harrisburg to plead as only a mother could for the life of her child, and the Governor was obliged again to refuse interference. She fell in a faint upon the floor, and then the tender-hearted man of God turned to his secretary and said, "There is one thing I could do; I could go and see the boy and prepare him to die." He made his way into his cell, gave him God's promises, offered up a fervent prayer in his behalf and heard him say that he was not afraid of death, and then he left him. With his white face pressed out between the bars of his cell door he watched the retreating form of his friend, and as he still stood in the same position the warden passed by, and the condemned boy said, "Warden, who was it in my cell a moment ago," and the warden said, "Why, that was Governor Pollock." He threw himself back at arm's length and then fell upon the floor crying out as he fell, "Oh, my God; the Governor in my cell and I didn't know it." "Oh, warden," said he, "if you had told me that it was the Governor I would have thrown my arms about him and never let him leave the cell until he had given me my pardon."

But one who is better than the Governor stands near to every one condemned because of his sin and offers a pardon freely. It would be an awful thing to wake up in eternity and say with bitter crying, "The Lord Jesus Christ was near me and I would not let him in."—J. W. C.

JESUS PAID IT ALL. 138

Two young girls came to my office the other day and asked me if I would pray for them. I said: "Why cannot you ask for yourselves?" and they said: "Why, we are not worthy to ask for ourselves;" and then they told me about a dear friend and a cousin of theirs, and one of them said: "The Major could ask things from God, because he is good, but I could not ask so much." I said: "God would not give Major anything because he is so good. If he gives him anything, it is because he has put to his credit his own righteousness. If he should ask for anything according to his own merits he would be cast out, a poor, undeserving

sinner, and so would I." Then I said: "Suppose you had a kind friend visiting you in New York, who was pretty well off, and after she was here two or three weeks she should say 'I am going to leave two hundred dollars with Mr. Macy for you to purchase goods, and I want you to get whatever you wish;' I said: Suppose you should go down there, you would not say 'I should not dare to buy a hundred dollars' worth here; I will buy four or five dollars' worth.' Who would get the benefit of that except Mr. Macy? Why, he would say to you 'This money is paid, the same as if you had paid it; it is to your credit, and you are very foolish if you don't get the benefit of it.' Now you are entitled to two hundred dollars' worth, and I will venture to say that you would not let any of that money be lost, but it would all be claimed to the last cent, and you would feel that you were entitled to it, although you hadn't paid a penny yourself. That is the way we go to God. We have nothing to present to him as a claim, but on the books of God to our credit the infinite righteousness of Christ has been deposited, and God comes and says: 'In his name, ask my help as far as that credit will go. You have not any right, but he has a right, and he gives it to you.' 'Oh!' she says, 'I see it. Why, I think I could ask anything of God now.'"

This incident illustrates the meaning of justification; it is not that you are pardoned and slipped through on sufferance. That is not very creditable; but you are lifted right up into the peace of Jesus himself, and you stand where he stands. The very moment after you have come to him he puts you in his place and represents you to the Father. Now that is justification. We are made righteous through the righteousness of Christ. There is no difference between Major and his little cousin; no difference between George Muller and you poor sinners. Both are perfectly justified as much as Christ is, the moment you accept Jesus as your righteousness.

MY JESUS.

139

A preacher asked his congregation to repeat with him one word, the word "Jesus." And they all said it together, "Jesus." Then he said, "Will you repeat with me two words, all who can honestly do so, 'My Jesus?'" Not so many could repeat the words this time. Could you say them this morning, "My Jesus," "My Jesus?" You are redeemed. There is no excuse for your continuance in sin. You may be made a new creature in Christ Jesus if you will submit

yourself unto the loving righteousness of God as it is manifested in Jesus Christ. Give yourself unto his spirit, to be filled with his love, and you will be delivered from your transgressions. God is not willing that any should perish, and the bitterest drop in the dregs of the impenitent sinner's cup of woe will be that it was needless, and worse than needless, because of the world's redemption through Jesus Christ.
—B. F. M.

LITTLE KINDNESSES.

140

If you were toiling up a weary hill,
 Bearing a load beyond your strength to bear,
 Straining each nerve untiringly, and still
 Stumbling and losing foothold here and there,
 And each one passing by would do so much
 As give one upward lift and go his way,
 Would not the slight reiterated touch
 Of help and kindness lighten all the day?

There is so little, and there is so much,
 We weigh and measure and define in vain.
 A look, a word, a light, responsive touch
 Can be the ministers of joy to pain.
 A man can die of hunger walled in gold,
 A crumb may quicken hope to stronger breath,
 And every day we give or we withhold
 Some little thing that tells for life or death.

—Susan Coolidge.

JOY.

141

Burroughs tells of a great friend of his in England who sent him a cage full of skylarks, which he set at liberty in a field near where he lived and never saw again, but one day a Scotchman called on him in great excitement. He had heard a skylark, he was sure that he had heard it, and that he was not dreaming. He had not heard one since he was on the banks of the Doon in Scotland, and yet many another man might have passed with him on the road and never noticed the song of the bird.

So here is this book, the Bible, thrilling with a better song than ever skylark sang—listen to it, receive it and live in its power and the result will be joy.

CHRISTIAN LOVE.

142

An old woman living in one of the Ohio towns had broken almost every law of her State, and at last being

guilty of murder, was sent to the penitentiary. In the days of my childhood when the nurse would frighten the children the story of this old woman's misdeeds was repeated. While imprisoned she had broken every law of the institution, and they had exhausted every form of punishment upon her. One day there went up from the town near my old home an old Quaker lady, who asked permission to see her suffering sister. She was brought in, the perfect picture of despair, with chains upon hands and feet. The old Quaker walked towards her and called her my sister, but she said with an oath, "I am not your sister." She said, "I love you," and the response with a greater oath, "No one loves me." Then the old saint bent over and kissed her, and she said, "God loves you." Instantly the downcast eyes were raised, tears rolled down the cheeks of the woman, who was a sinner. She rose to her feet, and vowed that if God loved her she would serve him, and they took off her chains, never to put them on again, and until the day of her death she went up and down the corridors of the prison, herself an angel of mercy.—J. W. C.

THE STORM OF LIFE A RAINBOW 143
SUGGESTION.

The storm and shine that, going together, cause the rainbow, give a picture of the mingled gladness and sorrow of human life.

I was once travelling on a Union Pacific train across the great Western plains, when we were overtaken by a storm. Off to our right the rain descended with such fury that it obscured earth and sky. The ragged margin of the rainfall reached as far as the railway, and beat against the windows of the cars. On the opposite side of the train the sunlight poured through the windows with summer intensity and brightness. The result was that for several miles we sped along under a rainbow. It was indeed a striking picture of the mingled storm and sunshine of this life of ours. At one moment of our pilgrimage there is gladness, at another grief. Nay, in the same moment there will be on the one side the buffeting of care and adversity, and on the other the sweetness of love and success. But above all this commingling of storm and sunshine it should never be forgotten that for every soul there may be, and there should be, that bended bow of God radiant with the promise of a hope whose beginning brightens this life, and whose eternal continuance is the glory of the life immortal.—H. C. McCook, D.D.

THE UNSURROUNDED LIFE.

144

I had the opportunity a little while ago of riding over the famous Vanderbilt estate, Biltmore, at Asheville, North Carolina. Fifty miles of perfect driveway stretch out before the vista, and hundreds and hundreds of acres in a perfect state of cultivation are on every side of you. The house in which Mr. Vanderbilt lives is a palace, and everything about the house or stables or landscape is a thing of beauty. But just in the center of the famous estate is a little plot of ground of nine acres which is owned by an old colored man. He could not give a clear title to his claim, and therefore could not sell it. Lying as it does just in the heart of the property he can compel Mr. Vanderbilt, according to law, to give him the right of way across the estate to his little home; and while other people, even of renown, must ask permission to pass through the gates this old colored man goes with perfect liberty.

Is there any spot in your heart which is not yielded to God. If so, it is Satan's property, and while it may be as small in comparison as the nine acres to the many hundreds, yet it gives Satan the right of way through your heart and life, and this is the secret of your failure.—J. W. C.

FOLLOWING AFTER LONGINGS.

145

When Raphael was asked how he painted such wonderful pictures, he said, "I dream dreams, and see visions; and then I paint my dreams and my visions." With marvelous skill his hand wrought into forms of radiant beauty the lovely creations of his mind; otherwise they would never have brightened the world with their wondrous splendors. Longing not only sees the heavenly visions, but is obedient to them, and strives to realize them. It struggles up toward the excellence that shines before it; it seeks to attain the fine qualities which it admires. It is not satisfied with good resolves, but sets forward to make them come true. When Joan of Arc was asked what virtue she supposed dwelt in her white standard that made it so victorious, she replied, "I said to it, 'Go boldly among the English,' and then I followed it myself." The white banner without "the lily-white maid" herself would have won no victories. So, when we send out the white banners of pure and noble longings, we must be sure to follow them ourselves, if we would win the blessings which our hearts crave.—Miller.

TOO LATE.

146

I have read of a captain of a ship, who, with his wife, was on a vessel, wrecked not far from shore, but too far to reach it unaided. They found footing on a ledge of rock perhaps the size of the top of a small organ; but as the tide was coming in and the storm was increasing in its fury, they almost gave up hope of rescue, when, just in the moments of their despair, they were discovered from the shore. The people upon the shore knew just what to do, and they sent out rockets into the sea with cords attached to them, until at last one of the rockets fell beyond the rock upon which this imperiled couple stood, and the line fell where the captain could reach it. He knew what to do with it. He drew upon it until he had a stouter cord, and a stouter line, until at last he had in his possession a good strong rope. He took that rope and tied it about his wife under her arms; and then he called to her above the fury of the sea and reminded her of the mighty force of the undertow; how the water comes rushing shoreward and breaks upon the coast, and then pours back again into the sea with seemingly greater force. And he told her that she must spring into the water at the time of the incoming wave, and that he would give her the signal. He waited until he saw a larger billow than the others come toward them, a great mountain of water, foaming and tossing its crest, and seemingly about to break upon them; and then, just as it was breaking, he called to her, above the fury of the sea, and said, "Now! Now!" The poor woman hesitated, she shrank back, she tried to cling to her husband, she tried to hold on to the rock; but she found that she was to be swept over, and so she let go and cast herself down into the sea, only in time to be caught by the fury of the receding wave, and the life was dashed out of her on the rock where her husband was standing. There was another rocket and another line, and the captain took this and bound it about himself. He could not tell his wife's fate as yet. And again he cast his eyes seaward, until he saw another great towering billow, and as it came upon him he cast himself with it toward the shore, and helping hands pulled upon the rope and brought him there in safety, where he found the dead body of his poor wife, who had been just one moment too late.

And tonight the word of God, and the providence of God, and the spirit of God, and the minister of God, are all joining in saying to the men who are gathered here, "Now! Now! Now! Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."—B. F. M.

"A CHANGED LIFE."

147

Some years ago when I had closed a series of meetings in Minneapolis an old Welsh preacher followed me to the train and put in my hands a volume of sermons by Christmas Evans, saying, "Read the sermon of the man in the tombs," and I did so.

You will remember that everybody was afraid of this poor insane creature, everyone save Jesus, and he went straight after him, drove the evil spirits out of him, and Christmas Evans said there were enough in him to fill a herd of swine, and enough swine to fill the sea. And then the great Welshman describes his going home. He says the little children look through the windows and see him coming and with trembling lips cry out, "Mother, father's coming home." The mother exclaims, "Then bar the windows and shut the doors, for your father is a maniac," and every door is fastened and window shut. Then he describes how they look through the chinks and the windows and say once again, "Mother, it is not father; it looks like him, but he is walking up the path and coming quietly toward the house." But the mother exclaims: "Keep perfectly still, for your poor father is not himself." Suddenly there is a hand placed upon the latch of the door, and it does not yield, and then a quiet knocking is heard, and at last a voice which they have not heard for years, "Mary, open the door and let me come in, for I have seen Jesus of Nazareth, and he has set me free. Let me come in and I will be a good husband to you and a good father to the children," and Christmas Evans says the door was instantly thrown wide open, and when the husband and father came in he brought heaven in with him.

This is not a fanciful story, but has been realized in ten thousand homes and may be realized in every life.
—J. W. C.

LOVE, WHERE IT IS DEEPEST.

148

A little more than thirty miles from the coast of Japan the Pacific ocean has been found to be more than 4,643 fathoms deep. Some officers who were surveying for a telegraph-cable found their wire broke at this depth without reaching the bottom. This is said to be the deepest sounding ever made, and so deep that the two highest mountains

in Japan, placed one over the other in this abyss, would leave the summit of the upper one two-thirds of a mile below the surface of the water. It is at the cross that the ocean of Christ's love is the deepest.

RESURRECTION LIFE.

149

Dr. Charles Hodge, writing of Laura Bridgman, the famous deaf mute, said: "I can imagine on the resurrection morning, when God will touch her eyes and say 'Daughter, see.' And she will open her eyes and see the face of her beloved. And he will touch her ears and say, 'Daughter hear.' And she will hear the voice of the angel choir, like the voice of many waters. And he will touch her lips, and she will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, sweeter than them all." Our future will be like that. That is what "glorified" means. Every part of our being touched with his power and filled with his fullness.—J. W. C.

A YIELDED LIFE.

170

What is a yielded life?

'Tis one at God's command,
For him to mould, to form, to use
Or do with it as he may choose—
Resistless in his hand.

What is a yielded life?

A life whose only will
When into blest subjection brought
In every deed and aim and thought
Seeks just to do his will.

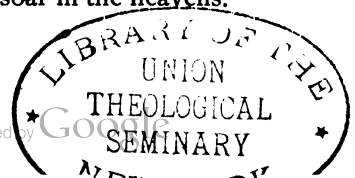
What is a yielded life?

A life which love has won,
And in surrender, full, complete,
Lays all with gladness at the feet
Of God's most holy Son.—W. A. G.

LOOK AND LIVE.

151

John McNeil tells the story of one of his friends who had raised an eagle with the chickens about the barnyard and for this reason the eagle had never used its power of flight nor had it understood its ability to soar in the heavens.



The friend made up his mind to move to another part of the country. He had sold his other possessions, but did not care to sell the eagle nor to give it away, and so he determined to teach it the art of flight. He lifted it up in his hands, held it for a moment, but the eagle fell quickly to the ground. He threw it above his head, but the fall was only the more severe, and at last in desperation he put it upon the fence and was holding it for a moment, when the eagle lifted up its head and caught one glimpse of the sun. Its eyes had ever been turned downward and it seemed to be in ignorance of the sun and the sky. Suddenly it pushed out one wing, then another, lifted its head, and with a shriek and a spring bounded away from the fence, soared higher and higher until it was lost in the very face of the sun.

Alas, many of us have gone with our eyes downward fastened upon the world. We have never really caught a glimpse of Christ in his beauty, nor understood him in his fullness. If we could but see him by faith we should soar above the things of this world and dwell in the holies, which it is our privilege to do.—J. W. C.

THE SURRENDERED LIFE.

152

Over in London a noble woman died. God touched her heart and it stopped its beating; her pulses, and they were still, and they carried her into one of the greatest auditoriums in the city that people of great renown might pay her honor in her death. A representative of the Queen came to see her face. Lords and ladies walked quickly past the coffin with tear wet cheeks. Finally the poor people were given the building and they surged a great mass of people through the auditorium. At last down the aisle there came a poor woman with every mark of poverty about her dress, a little shawl pinned over her head, carrying a baby in her arms, and leading an elder child by the hand. When she reached the coffin she put the baby down, loosed the hand-clasp of the elder child, bent over the coffin, and as she did so the shawl fell back from her head. Stooping thus, she kept back the crowd that surged behind her, when one of the attendants quietly put her hand upon her shoulder and said, "Madam, you must move one; you are stopping the people." She turned and faced the great crowd, pushing back of her, and lifting her hand, she said: "I will not move on; I have walked forty miles and carried my baby that I might see this woman's face. She saved my boys from hell, and I have a right to look and to weep." And then she

bent and covered the glass that was over the face with her kisses while all the people sobbed in sympathy with her.

The woman sleeping in the casket was Mrs. Catherine Booth, mother of the Salvation Army; great, not because her mind was superior to that of many another woman, nor because her social position was better, but because she was absolutely surrendered to God, and Christ lived in her.—J. W. C.

CONSISTENT LIVING.

153

Mrs. Pomroy was counted a member of President Lincoln's household. One day when he had grown weary with the affairs of state he suggested to her that she should occupy with him that night the President's box at Ford's theater. She courteously declined. He gave her a subsequent invitation which was again not accepted, and finally, with some degree of irritation, he said to her, "Mrs. Pomroy, it is counted an honor to sit in the President's box; I should like to ask you why you have refused." Hesitating a moment as if she were afraid that she might hurt the feelings of the President, she said: "Mr. President, I am a Christian, and when I became such I promised my Lord that I would go no place where I could not take him with me or ask his blessing. I could hardly do this at the theater, and for that reason I do not go." It is said that Abraham Lincoln never again asked her to accompany him to such a place, but it is known that again and again when they were driving together on some mission of mercy in the various hospitals, he would say to his coachman, "Drive a little slower," and then say to Mrs. Pomroy, "Tell me more of this Christ whom you serve."

Such a life always has power, and this is simply being consistent, not in any sense fanatical.—J. W. C.

A FATHER'S LOVE.

154

I read the other day of a father whose wayward son had treated him with a vileness almost surpassing belief, and seemed to be filled with insatiable malice toward his loving parent. The father in some way heard that the son was planning to take his life in order that he might inherit his fortune, and, going to him, he asked him to grant him one request, and to come with him in the night-time into a forest. He led him into the depths of the wood, and then he told him what he had heard, and that he loved him so much that if he must kill him he would allow him to do it in such

a way that he might not be forced to suffer the penalty of the law for the crime. And, then, taking out a keen knife, he handed it to his son and told him that he was ready to die by his hand. This act upon the father's part so smote the son with deep contrition that he fell sobbing upon his face and became reconciled not only to his father, but was led by that father's hand to commit himself to the service of Jesus Christ and to become a faithful witness for the love of God that had been so manifested to him by his father's act.—B. F. M.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

155

I remember seeing a mother once weeping over the dead body of her boy; and, as I stood there in dumb silence and heard her tell how she loved him, borne him, sacrificed for him, served him; how she had given for him all the joy of her life, how she had trusted him to be the stay of her closing years, and how only yesterday, after a life of sin, he had broken her heart by taking his own life, after refusing for months even to speak one word to her; and, as she wrung her hands and told me how he had disappointed her heart and blighted her past, I thought I had never seen such heart-breaking grief.

O, beloved, how must God feel about us after he has given his heart's blood, put so many advantages in our way, expended upon us so much grace and care, if we should disappoint him. It makes my spirit cry: "Who is sufficient for these things." The Lord help us to be faithful; help us never to put him to shame, but at last be able to say: "Blessed Lord, I have finished the work thou didst give me to do." Evermore I see before me the time when you and I shall stand on yonder shore and look back upon the years that have been, these few short years of time. O, may we cast ourselves at Jesus' feet and say: "Many a time have we faltered, many a hard fight has come, but thou hast kept me and held me. Thanks be unto God who hath given me the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ."

THE CHANGED LIFE OF JOHN VASSAR. 156

Some of you used to know that little man who was called by the title of "Uncle John Vassar." He was a man of God. He was not a minister; he never preached in the pulpits, but he was a man that had to win souls for Jesus Christ. He was converted when he was about twenty-five years of age, when he was at work in his uncle's brewery in

Poughkeepsie. In those days people thought that a man could make beer and still be a Christian. After he was converted, John made a little rack above the vat where he was at work, on which he kept his Bible. He wanted to have his Bible there so he could study it. But soon there came an explosion. There will always be an explosion when you take the Word of God wherever there is any kind of intoxicating liquor. This one blew John clear out of the brewery, and he never went back. His wealthy uncle offered to raise his wages, and finally offered to take him into partnership, but John said, "No, I will have nothing to do with this accursed thing." He became, as he used to say of himself, legs for good men. He was employed by the American Tract Society to carry around Bibles and good books, and he used to say of himself that he was the shepherd's watch-dog. He would go into a parish and find out the minister and say, "Let us go out and see if we cannot find some lost sheep." So it was the shepherd's dog that led the shepherd around. If he came to see you and you were not quite ready to see him he would go into a neighbor's house and get the whole family down on their knees before you had brushed your hair. I remember that when I was a boy a number of us were coming back from skating, and he said to us, "Have you given your hearts to God?" I shall never forget that as long as I live. He was always at it. He spoke to everybody to whom he spoke about anything about Jesus Christ. His nephew, who was his biographer, says he never knew him to be repulsed but once, and that was when he spoke to a professing Christian by mistake. He went into the army as a tract-distributor, where he had the modest salary of twenty-five dollars a month. When the chaplain died the soldiers wanted Uncle John for their chaplain, and they elected him to that position. But he was not an ordained minister, and, in order to be chaplain, he would have to be ordained. As chaplain he would get a salary of some twelve or fifteen hundred dollars. People in Poughkeepsie heard about it, and they asked John to come back, and said they would make him an ordained minister. He went back, and they called a council of the Baptist churches to ordain him. But he heard some people say that John was just like the rest of them, he would do anything to get money. So he said to the council, "Brethren, you will have to forgive me. I am sorry that you have come together in this way," and told them what he had heard. He would not do anything that by any

possibility would bring discredit on Jesus Christ, and he went back to his old salary of three hundred dollars a year. Once the Southerners captured him, and they thought he was a spy. They took him up to the headquarters, but all the way he preached to them Jesus. They brought him into the presence of the colonel and the other officers, and he went right up to the colonel and said, "Colonel, I see by your uniform what side you are fighting on; but are you on the Lord's side or against him?" The colonel said, "We won't speak about that just now." And he turned to another and said, "Major, how is it with you?" So he went the round of the officers, speaking to them about Jesus, until one of them said, "Colonel, you had better let this man go. If you don't turn him loose we will have a prayer-meeting all the way from here to Richmond." It is a fact that they let him go with no other guarantee than that he would not tell for forty-eight hours what he had seen. They saw the spirit of God was upon him. He was full of him all the time. He came into a hotel in Boston, looking for a friend, and in the parlor there were two fashionably dressed ladies. He went right up to them and said to one of them, "Excuse me, madam, are you a Christian?" She said, "Of course." He said, "I didn't mean that kind of a Christian. Have you been born again?" "Why, no; we have gotten all over that in Boston; we do not believe in being born again any more." "Have you gotten all over the Bible in Boston, or do you believe that some more?" "Oh, yes, we believe in the Bible, of course." "Will you let me read it to you?" And he took his Bible and began to pour the Word of God into her heart until her soul burned within her and the tears came into her eyes. His friend came and he had to go, but he said, "Before I go, may I pray with you?" She answered, "I wish you would." He knelt down by the side of that proud woman and asked God to save her then and there. Her husband came in afterward, and seeing signs of tears in her eyes, he asked, "What is the matter?" She said, "There has been a strange little man here. He came up to me and asked me if I was a Christian—if I had been born again; and then he preached to me and read the Bible; and, husband, I never in my life felt as I feel now." He said, "Why didn't you tell him it was none of his business?" She said, "Dear, if you had been here, you would have thought it was his business."

Would anyone think it was your business to preach Jesus? Is it your business? Will you let it be? I am sure

this afternoon if you say to God, "Lord, show me what to do, and I will do it," He will do one of two things; either he will show you some sin to abandon or he will show you some duty that you can successfully perform. Are you willing to pray: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Show me and I will do it."

THE INFLUENCE OF A CONSISTENT LIFE. 157

I have read a very touching incident concerning Madame Guyon, who lived at a very dark time in the world's history, and yet was one of those few saints that never bowed the knee to Baal. She touches today the springs of holy living, after the lapse of more than a century, in thousands and hundreds of thousands of lives. She had a husband who was a very prominent man; and on one occasion twenty-two claimants for an estate brought to him their intricate case and said they would agree to abide by his judgment. They did not dare to take it into court, it was so complicated. He took the papers under advisement, and while he was considering the case he died. They then brought the papers to his wife, and said to Madame Guyon that if she would undertake to settle that estate they would all abide by her decision. She was not a business woman; she had always said she did not have a head for business; she could not transact anything in the line of business affairs. But the thought came to her that this would give her an opportunity to be a worker with God, if she could prevent quarreling and disturbance and dissension. So she said that if they would agree formally to accept her decision she would settle the case. They did so, and she shut herself up with God for thirty days. She did not go out of her room except to go to her meals or to the house of God. After the thirty days she brought down an outline of what seemed to her just. She had solved every problem, she had made every complicated point clear, as no godless lawyer on earth could have done; and when she presented her decision to these claimants they not only each of them accepted her decision and said that it was perfectly just, but the entire twenty-two united in saying that they were perfectly satisfied with what she decided. I do not believe that God would give such a faculty to you unless he put you in just that place; but when everything is given into the hands of God he will manage the business, and God's business always succeeds. That household always runs smoothly which God is managing.—B. F. M.

MISSIONARY SPIRIT.

158

When Dr. Duff, the great Scotch missionary, came home after his life work in India, a crowded meeting was held in Edinburgh to hear him on the claims of India upon the Christian church. For two hours and a half the old man went on, holding the audience by his eloquence. Then he fainted, and was carried out of the hall. Presently he came to, and asked: "Where was I? What was I doing?" In a moment memory returned, and he said, "Take me back; I must finish my speech." "You will kill yourself if you do," said his friends. "I shall die if I don't," exclaimed the old man. They took him back. The whole meeting rose, many in tears. His strength failed and he could not rise, but gathering himself up for one final effort, he said, "Fathers of Scotland, have you any more sons for India? I have spent my life there, and my life is gone; but if there are no more young men to go, I will go back myself, and lay my bones there, that the people may know there is one man in Christian Britain ready to die for India's deliverance.

FAILURE OF MORALITY.

159

One of the finest steamers afloat on Lake Champlain is the steamer "Champlain," and when she began her first voyage she was the admiration of all who looked upon her. Cheer after cheer rent the air when she floated over her moorings on the dry-dock into the waters of the lake. Her machinery was perfect, her crew well trained, and the passengers upon her enthusiastic; when suddenly something seemed to be wrong with the machinery and a stop was ordered that the fault might be remedied. The captain ordered them to let down the anchor and because of a wind that was blowing she was seen rapidly to drift toward the rocks. The captain shouted again, "Down with the anchor," and the sailors responded that the order had been previously obeyed; but still she continued to drift. At last, because of the fact that the machinery was repaired the awful drifting was stopped and then it was found that while the anchor had been cast out, the chain was three feet too short to touch the bottom of the lake.

Thus it is with men who claim mercy independent of faith in Christ. It is all right so far as it goes, but falls short of the righteousness of God. And no man can ever see God until by faith he is linked to Christ. It is not what we do,

nor what we are, that saves us, but what he has accomplished and what he is today at the right hand of God.—J. W. C.

A VERY, VERY, VERY HAPPY MAN. 160

Yet he had trials, both many and heavy; but if I were asked, "When have you seen him most triumphant and joyous in his trust in God?" I should reply, "When, with a beaming face, he has expressed his unbound confidence in God that the trial must be one of the 'all things' that 'work together for good.'" Every weakness or trial, being cast upon God, became to him a source of strength. In response to that infinite love which called him from a life of sin as a young man, he loved him, everybody and everything; so that the highest pleasure was found in seeking to please him whom he esteemed it his highest privilege to serve.

Again, the Bible was no mere text-book to him, but the medium of constant communication between him and his heavenly Father. Nor was the expression, "Praying always," a mere figure of speech, but his daily practice.

Another special characteristic was his great humility; always was nothing—Christ everything. Not long ago a friend said to him, "When God calls you home, Mr. Mueller, it will be like a ship going into harbor in full sail." "Oh, no," he said, "it is poor George Mueller, who needs daily to pray, 'Uphold my goings . . . that my footsteps slip not.'" Some may be ready to say,

"A spiritual giant has fallen."

He has not fallen; he has been raised to his reward.

Wednesday was the first time he allowed that he was weak or weary, and that same night a heavenly escort was sent to take him in triumph up, up into the presence of the Lord, who would not let him labor with any sense of weariness after seventy and more years of such faithful service. The precious casket that had held his spirit so long fell back to our loving care, and we reverently place it to rest until the resurrection morn.—Address at Funeral of George Mueller.

IN MORAL WORK. 161

It is more hopeful to melt than to break. You may hammer ice on an anvil, or bray it in a mortar. What then? It is pounded ice still, except for the little portion melted by heat of percussion, and it will soon all congeal again. Melt it in the sun, and it flows down in sweet water, which mirrors that light which loosened its bonds of cold. So

hammer away at unbelief with your logical sledge-hammers, and you will change its shape, perhaps, but it is none the less unbelief because you have ground it to powder. It is a mightier agent that must melt it—the fire of God's love, brought close by a will itself ablaze with the sacred flow.—A. Maclaren, D.D.

THE TIME OF PROSPERITY IS THE 162
TIME OF MORAL PERIL.

The moon is never eclipsed but when it is at the full. Certainly God's people are then in most danger.—(Manton.) When all goes well with them in house and field, in basket and in store, then should they look, lest they be full and forget the Lord, and so become eclipsed. For the world to come between us and our Lord is very easy, but very terrible. When all is apparently prosperous as to soul matters, and neither doubt nor fear nor temptation comes in, then also should the heart look well to its bearings, lest at this very moment some evil should interpose between God and the soul, and darkness should be the fearful result.—C. H. Spurgeon.

OBEDIENCE. 163

In India one of our regiments, the Twenty-third, had been swindled out of their pay by an under officer in command. They had received their rations, but their pay had been kept back by the men who had spent it in gambling, and that the soldiers knew. They resolved that next morning, as a protest, they would disobey that officer's orders and march to the general's house, which was a distance of about six miles, and there lodge a petition against the officer. The morning dawned, the regiment was gathered, but when the officer gave the word of command there was not a movement—a regiment in insubordination, in rebellion, refusing to obey the word of command. Every tenth man was put in prison, yet the regiment stood fast without obeying orders. Then falling into line, without the word of command, with regular military tramp, that regiment went off the six miles to the general, and they presented their petition before him. The general thought their petition was righteous, but the mode of presentation could not be allowed. "What shall I do?" he asked himself. "I want to grant the petition. I have known about it, and I shall grant the petition, but not this way. It cannot be." So he said, "You will get your answer in the morning in the barrack

yard." Next morning the bugle sounded to call the men of the Twenty-third to fall in. The men appeared. The general was there, but he was not alone. At his back was a black Sepoy army. Cannon with muzzles grim and bare, and cavalry with drawn sabres, were there in full force. The general lifted his voice and addressed them: "Twenty-third, handle arms!" They did it. "Ground arms!" It was done. Then he ordered the bugles to be sounded, and the Sepoy army drove the Twenty-third from their weapons; and then, when they were stripped and dishonored for their disobedience, and made prisoners of war, he said, "I forgive you. Your petition is granted."

Ah! the prayer-hearer demands the same thing. You cannot clamber up to the covenant without Christ. You will not get it, but by way of obedience. He has said it. He said it, over the head of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him."—Christian Scotsman.

EVERYTHING HAS ITS OWN PARTICULAR PURPOSE. 164

We are told that in the prairies of South America there grows a flower that always inclines in the same direction. The traveller may lose his way while crossing one of those prairies, and he may have neither compass nor chart by which to steer his course; but, turning to this lovely flower, he will find a guide on which he can implicitly rely; for no matter how heavily the rains may descend, or how violently the winds may blow, its leaves and petals invariably droop towards the north. If, whilst we live, we subserve a purpose analogous to that of this humble flower, we shall not have lived in vain. If we live to God, if we turn to him in faith, and love, and prayer, and service, as the prairie-flower turns toward the north, some seeing our good works, our comely life, will be led to "Glorify our Father who is in heaven."—B. Wilkinson, F. G. S.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE. 165

There was a trifling accident to a railway train one day, which caused an hour's delay. One lady on the train was greatly excited. The detention would cause her to miss the steamer, and her friends would be disappointed in the morning when she should fail to arrive. That night the steamer on which she so eagerly wished to embark was burned to the water's edge, and nearly all on board perished. Her feeling of grieved disappointment was changed to one of grateful

praise to God for the strange deliverance he had wrought. A carriage drove rapidly to a station one afternoon, just as the train rolled away; it contained a gentleman and his family. They manifested much annoyance and impatience at the failure to be in time. Important engagements for tomorrow could not now be met. Sharp words were spoken to the coachman; for the fault was his, as he had been ten minutes late in appearing. An angry scowl was on the gentleman's face as he drove homeward again. All the evening he was sullen and unhappy. In the next morning's papers he read an account of a terrible bridge accident on the railway. The train he had been so anxious to take, and so annoyed at missing, had carried many of its sleeping passengers to a horrible death. The feeling of bitter vexation and sullen anger instantly changed to one of thanksgiving. In both these cases the goodness of God was shown in not suffering his children to do what they considered essential to their happiness or success.—Miller.

A PENALTY NECESSARY.

166

A person once said to me: "I hate your God; your God demands blood. I don't believe in such a God. My God is merciful to all. I do not know your God."

If you will turn to Lev. xvii, 11, you will find why God demands blood: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Suppose there was a law that man should not steal, but no penalty was attached to stealing; some man would have my pocket-book before dinner. If I threatened to have him arrested he would snap his fingers in my face. He would not fear the law, if there was no penalty. It is not the law that people are afraid of; it is the penalty attached.

Do you suppose God has made a law without a penalty. What an absurd thing it would be! Now the penalty for sin is death; "the soul that sinneth it shall die." I must die, or get somebody to die for me. If the Bible doesn't teach that, it doesn't teach anything. And that is where the atonement of Jesus Christ comes in.—J. W. C.

PRAYER.

167

Nothing tunes the soul like prayer. He that is able to go and plead his case with God shall soon "mount with wings as eagles; shall run and not be weary; shall walk and

not faint." We should pray for a spirit of prayer; we cannot expect a favor we do not ask for. I am persuaded that God will honor every species of prayer. It is a sad thing to let the devil persuade us to stand still or go backward because we cannot do all we wish. Prayer is the key that unlocks every blessing. Beware of general requests; it is a sign of a cold, unfeeling heart. Come and specify what you would have; carry your real concerns to Christ; and be satisfied with his care and management of you. The government is upon his shoulders, not yours. It is enough that he undertakes for you; therefore transact all your affairs with him. A Christian who is sometimes found sitting still as a man of faith, is at other times found wrestling as a man of prayer.—Christian Scotsman.

PRAYER.

168

At Hussea, the state of Antioquia, is separated from the State of Cienzenamarco, by the Hussea river. The river is about sixty feet wide and the supposition is, or rather tradition has it, that the Indians many years ago fastened twine to their arrows, and then with their bows shot the strings across the stream from mountain to mountain, and making them fast, planted and trained vines which have grown and formed cables from six to ten inches thick, and so matted together that it forms a perfect bridge, and it is the only means of crossing the stream. As I have said the bridge is about sixty feet long and about eighty feet above the level of the stream. The first time that I crossed over on it, when I reached about the center, it began to sag and swing and to sway from side to side, so much so that I lost my head and became so dizzy I felt that I must fall off the sides into the water below. My guide, seeing me, and knowing how I felt, called to me to get on to my knees and look up. And almost instantly I regained my self-control and crossed the bridge. This was a live bridge or bridge of living vines. And when crossing the bridge of life and we feel that we must fall, and we become dizzy with temptation, get down on your knees and look up, and we will be all right, we can cross the bridge with safety.—J. W. C.

IMPORTANT PRAYER.

169

One of my friends in Cincinnati had just closed his special service in his church, when the door opened and a young man slipped into the last pew. The minister felt impelled to make one more appeal, and as a result the newcomer lifted his hand for prayer. Before the night was

ended he had accepted Christ as a Saviour, and now said the minister, "Tell me your story," to which the young man replied, "I am a prodigal son. My home is in New York City, where I have the best father and mother in the world, but I have sinned against them and so left home vowing never to return until I could go back a Christian, or was taken home dead." By the advice of the minister that night he sent away the good news to his mother that he had accepted Christ. No answer came to his letter for eight days, and when it did come it was in an envelope bordered with black. He broke the seal with trembling fingers and read this letter, which afterward he carried to the minister.

Dear Son:—You can't imagine what filled my heart when I received the news that you are a Christian. It was only quickened by the sadness which was there at the same time. For the same day you say you became a Christian, and as nearly as I can estimate the same time, your poor father was going out into the eternity. Over and over through the hours of the day we heard him praying for you, "O, God, save my boy, and when night came he died praying that God would save you. My boy you are a Christian tonight because your old father would not let you go." O for a faith like that!

POWER OF MORALITY A FAILURE. 170

"Henry," asked the elder of two men, of whom the younger had been helping the other in some religious work, "do you know what became of Noah's carpenters?"

"Noah's carpenters!" exclaimed Henry; "I didn't know that Noah had any carpenters."

"Certainly, he must have had help in building one of the largest and best-proportioned ships ever put upon the stocks. There must have been many ship-carpenters at work for a long time to have constructed such a vessel in such an age. What became of them, think you, when all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened?"

"What do you mean by such a queer question?" Henry asked.

"No matter what, just now. Please answer the inquiry, and you may also tell me, if you will, what you would have done in that dreadful hour, when the storm came in its fury, and Noah's prophecies were all fulfilled and all but the family of the preacher of righteousness were ready to be engulfed in those black waters?"

"I don't know," said Henry, in a half-thoughtful, half-trifling manner, "perhaps I should have got on the rudder."

"This is human nature exactly, Henry. It would climb up some way rather than enter the fold by the only door. It would 'get on the rudder,' in its pride and short-sightedness, rather than go into the ark of safety. It would 'save itself,' by hanging on at the hazard of being swept away into the gulf of despair, instead of being saved by the provision of infinite love."—R. S. Cook.

PROCRASTINATION.

171

Archias was chief magistrate in a Grecian city of long ago, and there was a revolution plotted against him. One night in a brilliant gathering with his courtier throng, at a feast on a high day, Archias was drinking with the rest of the magnates of that Greek town, and there came from Athens a messenger all dust-bestained. He would give the message to no underling at the door, but he would press his way by his official authority, right up to the steps of the throne to the Governor, and hand the missive to the Governor himself. Archias, in his wine and merry-making, took the packet and listened to the messenger that it was urgent. The messenger said, "Examine the packet, and read the letters, for they are about—" and he cannot say more, for they are all looking, "they are about serious matters." "Serious matters," said Archias, with a laugh, and they all chimed in with clinking of glasses, "serious matters tomorrow, on with the feast." That night Archias was slain with the assassin's dagger. The packet contained an account of the plot; it brought before him all the plan.

"Serious matters tomorrow," and many a soul shoots into hell from the same procrastination. "Tomorrow, or next week, some other day." But Sergius Paulus, glory be to God, said, "Now! Now I have seen the hand of the Lord, I have listened to the gospel, and he believed in God's 'Now.'"—J. W. C.

REAPING.

172

I was at the Paris exhibition in 1867 and I noticed there a little oil painting, only about a foot square, and the face was the most hideous I have ever seen. On the paper attached to the painting were the words "Sowing the tares," and the face looked more like a demon's than a man's. As he sowed these tares, up came serpents and reptiles, and they were crawling up on his body, and all around were woods with wolves and animals prowling in them. I have seen that

picture many times since. Ah! the reaping time is coming. If you sow to the flesh you must reap the flesh. If you sow the wind you must reap the whirlwind.

And yet it must not be thought that indulgence in the grosser vices is the only way of sowing to the flesh. Every desire, every action that has not God for its end and object is seed sown to the flesh. If a man is sowing for a harvest of money or ambition, he is sowing to the flesh, and will reap corruption, just as surely as the liar and adulterer. No matter how "polite" and "refined" and "respectable" the seed may be, no matter how closely it resembles the good seed, its true nature will out, the blight of corruption will be upon it.—D. L. Moody.

THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN REGENERATION. 173

I was in the Soldiers' Home at Erie, Pa. I had spoken to the old soldiers in the chapel. As I came down from the platform, the chaplain said to me: "There is one room I want you to visit. We have had in this institution the captain of the old Merrimac. He came into this institution an atheist. He never would come into the services, and when he was asked to read the Bible, he just scorned the thought of it. When he was in his room here, before he died, I brought in a Bible and said, 'Captain, would you like to read this Bible?' and he scorned the proposition; it looked as though it was useless to say anything more to him. But I said: 'Suppose you read the Bible and see whether there is anything in it that you could believe, and if there is not, you tell him so. But as you read, whenever you find anything that you think you might receive, suppose you mark it with red ink.' He thought that was a good way to prove there was nothing in the Bible for him. I had him begin with the Gospel of John. He read two chapters without marking anything. He began on the third chapter and read fifteen verses without being moved. He began on the sixteenth verse, and then the old captain marked the verse red. He could receive a text like that." By this time we had reached the room where the old captain had died a few weeks before, and there was the pasteboard anchor the old man had cut out for himself, and the words were his own, printed in red ink, "I have cast anchor in a safe harbor." The very floor seemed to be like holy ground. They sent his Bible home, but they tell me you would have a hard time to find a page without red on it. He had come to receive the whole book. That is the work of the spirit. His work was

just that. The old captain would have nothing to do with a minister, and he would have nothing to do with a person who spoke of Jesus Christ; he didn't want to have anything to do with Christ. It was the work of the Holy Ghost.

HE WHO IS LOYAL TO DUTY WILL 174 SURELY GAIN HIS REWARD.

When the young astronomer Horrocks had made all his arrangements for observing the transit of Venus, and anxiously awaited the critical moment, the church bell summoned him to worship. What was to be done? If he responded to the bell, the transit might occur in his absence, and thus the grand spectacle would be missed, the great secret lost! After one moment's hesitancy the sense of duty prevailed; the service was celebrated; and, returning to his room, the devout astronomer beheld on the screen the coveted sign of the star. Thus it is with other secrets of the heavens; they are made known to us not when we forsake practical duty for abstract intellectualism, much less when we forsake goodness for libertinism; but when we persist in walking in the path of conscience and duty and worship. Curbing our pride, chastening our impatience, denying our passions, and waiting on God, we shall see light in God's light. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."—W. L. Watkinson.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY. 175

One of the very successful women evangelists of New England noticed one afternoon that a great Vermont wagon drove up to the church and discharged its load of people eager to attend the service which she was to conduct. The minister said to her, "If you will speak to the deacon who is driving the wagon he will tell you an interesting story." When the service of the afternoon was over the following was related. Said the deacon, "My father was one of the most upright men in this county. I inherited his farm, and had for a neighbor a man who had always lived near us, but was as ungodly as it was possible for one to be. I have had him work on my farm and labor in my marble quarry. I knew he was not a Christian and I never spoke to him about his soul. One day there was a great explosion in the quarry, and this man was taken out bruised and bleeding and dying. They carried him to his home and called a physician who told him that there was no hope, and then asked him if he was prepared to die. When he found that

he was not he said, 'I would get a minister, but the distance is too far,' and then suddenly he exclaimed, 'I will go to your next door neighbor and ask the deacon to come in and speak to you.' The poor man, who was fast passing away, lifted himself from his couch, and then fell back in weakness, exclaiming, 'You must not go after him. I would not let him speak to me. He has known all these years that I was not a Christian and he never warned me.' 'But,' said the doctor, 'I must go,' and as he started the man raised himself once again, and said with his last breath, 'If you see him tell him I died cursing him,' and he was gone. The doctor made his way to my house and told me that my neighbor was injured, and I said instantly, 'I will go and see him,' but the doctor put his hand on my shoulder and said, 'Wait a moment, I have come to bring you a little of the day of judgment. The man is dead and died cursing you because you never told me of Christ.' 'And,' said the old deacon, 'I made up my mind that I would be faithful the rest of my life. I gave up my farm and I have been going up and down the county ever since beseeching people to be reconciled to God, and shall continue to do this until I am called home. No one in this county shall ever have it to say that I was unfaithful.'"—J. W. C.

A REPRIEVE HELD BACK TILL AFTER 176 THE EXECUTION.

In the stirring story of the Scotch Covenanters a thrilling incident is told of Captain John Paton. After being apprehended he was led to Edinburgh for trial and execution; and on the way he met an old comrade in arms who had fought with him under Gustavus Adolphus. His comrade was surprised and grieved to see him bound. "I will write to the king and get a pardon for you," said he. Paton replied, "Ah, you won't get one for me, I'm afraid." "Well," answered his friend, "if I do not, I will never draw sword for his majesty again." So he made intercession for the Covenanter captain, and the pardon he asked for was granted. It arrived at Edinburgh. But it was held back by the lords of the congregation, and Paton went to the scaffold. Now, you brand that as a most heinous crime, and you do well. But what better is the man or woman who receives the Divine message of peace and mercy and refuses to pass it on to those who may be delivered thereby from the bondage and death of sin?

THE RAIN TREE.

177

Travelers tell us about the rain tree. It grows to be about sixty feet high, with a diameter of about three feet at the root. It has a singular quality. It imbibes and condenses moisture from the atmosphere, as no other tree does, and so it is called the rain tree. Generally its bark is dripping wet, and this is not only in the damp season, but in the midst of summer, when the rivers run low and the brooks roundabout run nearly dry. Then it imbibes the moisture. This is a picture for us all. I am very sure that if we did but know the lesson of faith in God, we might live in the very midst of desolation and despair, and say with Paul: "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

THE RIGHT ROAD.

178

"I have lost the road to happiness—
Does any one know it, pray?
I was dwelling there when the morn was fair,
But somehow I wandered away.

"I saw rare treasures in scenes of pleasures,
And ran to pursue them, when, lo!
I had lost the path to happiness—
And knew not whither to go.

"I have lost the way to happiness—
O, who will lead me back?"
Turn off from the highway of selfishness
To the right—up duty's track!

Keep straight along, and you can't go wrong;
For as sure as you live, I say,
The fair, lost fields of happiness
Can only be found that way.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

ON A ROCK.

179

I remember at Stonehaven, when I was a minister there, I was out in the clear, cool bay, when the water got suddenly choppy and my strength was soon exhausted. You that are swimmers know the sensation. The waves playing on your face, as if beating you back to the current that was about to take hold of you. No one in sight. Warily on and on, and the body gets almost erect. You cannot swim any

longer; you have lost the power of prostration and progression, and you are nigh erect. I had almost gone, when suddenly there came to my foot the sensation of solid amid the waves. Oh, to describe what I felt as I stood there, rescued from death. How solid the rock seemed. How I thank God that that rock had just been placed out there amid the waves for me, and that he had taken my feet and fixed them there. That is the nearest that I can give to the sensation of the soul when Christ lays hold of you, saves you, and sets your feet on a rock.—J. Robertson.

RAIN MARKS IN STONE SLABS. 180

The permanence of early impressions.

It is the law of the human nature that, when it is beginning to grow, it shall be soft as wax to receive all kinds of impressions and then that it shall gradually stiffen, and become hard as adamant to retain them. The rock was once all fluid, and plastic, and gradually it cools down into hardness. If a finger-dint had been put upon it in the early time it would have left a mark that all the forces of the world could not make, nor can obliterate now. In our great museums you see stone slabs with the marks of rain that fell hundreds of years before Adam lived; and the footprint of some wild bird that passed across the beach in those old, old times. The passing shower and the light foot left their prints on the soft sediment; then ages went on, and it was hardened into stone, and there they remain, and will remain for evermore.—A. Maclaren, D.D.

REST IN NATURE. 181

Nature teaches the need of Sabbath-rest for souls.

For all organic life God has provided periods of repose, during which repair goes on in order to counteract the waste caused by activity. In the spring-time we see movement and stir in gardens, fields and hedgerows, which continues till the fruits are gathered in and the leaves fall; but then winter's quiet again settles down over all, and nature is at rest. Even the flowers have their time for closing their petals, and their sleeping hours come so regularly, and yet are so varied in distribution among them, that botanists can construct a floral clock out of our English wild-flowers, and tell the hour of night or day by their opening or closing. The same God who created the flowers and appointed the seasons, ordained the laws of Israel, and by these definite seasons of rest were set apart for the people—the Sabbath,

the jubilee year, and the annual festivals. Indeed, in every age and in every land, the coming of night and the victory of sleep are hints of what God has ordained for man.—A. Rowland, LL.B.

THE SPIRIT OF REVIVAL.

182

Some years ago a pastor said to me that there had been a revival in his church. I said, "How did it come about?" He said, "I sent for neighboring ministers and laymen to help me in a series of meetings." I asked him who helped him the most, and he said, "It was Deacon N—." I said, "What could he do? I have heard him speak about the love of Christ and his interest in lost men, and he never seems to be able to do it without breaking down and crying." "That was just it," replied the pastor. "The ministers had good sermons prepared, which they delivered well, but they did not seem to move the people very much; and some of the laymen made excellent speeches, but they did not seem to stir the people deeply. But when Brother N— would stand up and begin to talk about Christ's love and of the opportunity of men, it would seem as though he could not control himself in his deep interest, and the tears would begin to come, and then the sobs, and then the people would be weeping with him and numbers would express their desire to find Christ."—B. F. M.

SIN IS DEADENING.

183

I heard of a woman who was ill, who took five grains of morphine when she meant to take five grains of quinine. She immediately became very sleepy and begged her friends to let her sleep. Something in her appearance so alarmed them that they sent for a physician, and he discovered the error and joined with the husband and other friends in endeavoring to arouse the woman. They shook her and sprinkled water upon her, but she begged them to leave her alone. She said, "If I only get to sleep I will get well." But the doctor said, "If she gets fairly to sleep she will never wake up," and lifting her from the couch, the physician, on one side, and the husband, on the other, walked with her up and down the room through all that night, until when the morning light was breaking signs of consciousness came back to her, and the doctor said, "Now I think she may live." You have the wrong name for the thing that has made you unconcerned about the way of life. It is sin itself, some deadening form of sin—a sin of avarice, a sin of selfish-

ness, a sin of pride; and if you have come to the place where the terror of the law of God will not move you, and where the tenderness of God's love and mercy will not melt you, this in itself is an indication that your heart is not right in the sight of God. Brother, if your heart is not right you are all wrong; if you do not want good things and love good things and have not the yearning after God that you ought to have and that can be satisfied alone by God, you are wrong. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart." "Out of the heart are the issues of life."
—B. F. M.

LIKE SIN.

184

I remember in my school days, a loch that fed a mill down in the valley, which was kept back by a sluice; and that sluice was just a torment to the young Scotch boys on their way home from school; because there was a board that threatened that, if they touched the sluice, they would be prosecuted with the utmost rigor of the law. That was enough to make the fingers of those school boys itch to touch the sluice. One day two of us took a look round, and not seeing anyone we went over and touched it. Oh, how easily the screw mounted to the top; but there it stuck, and we could not get it down again. That is just like sin. We got the sluice up, and the water began to roll through the opening, which we were unable to close. What is to be done? Bolt! And down the road these two boys showed their heels. I will ask of you what arrested us before we got down the valley. The road ran alongside the burn, and the water rushed down the stream, keeping pace with us, and we could not get away from it. Oh, if the road had only taken another track, but there, as if with the hiss of sarcasm, it kept up with us.—John Robertson.

RESULT OF SIN.

185

Some time ago there was a young fellow, a minister's son, found with a revolver beside him in a Lancashire town. He started life with all the prospects that you, young fellow, have just now, and he thought he would sin. He listened to the voice of the tempter, and the more he sinned the more intense the pain became. The comparison between his state then and his past innocence and happiness was unsupportable, and he shot himself, and went to the place where there is no hope. A letter was found on him and read thus: "This has nothing to do with my brother officers. I ask them to forgive me for disgracing the regiment; but I was worn out

with vice after I joined. God alone knows the life I have led for the last ten years. A loathing of myself; manhood and honor gone, and other priceless gifts lost that will never come back, and I am now in a fathomless hell without a ray of hope." Oh, pain; expect pain, if you are going to sin. If you are going to sin, hear it from Almighty God, you are laying up for your poor heart and soul inexpressible pain, that is the beginning of the woe of hell.—Christian Scotsman.

"A SAVIOUR AND A JUDGE."

186

Some years ago a man driving down the streets of one of the great cities lost control of his horses and was in danger of being dashed to death. Suddenly, there sprang out into the streets a man who, seizing the horses by the bit, stopped them in their mad career and saved the driver's life.

By a singular coincidence, years afterwards the man whose life was saved was on trial before the one who had stopped the horses, who sat in the judge's chair. The trial was ended; the lawyers had made the plea and the jury had returned with its verdict, when the judge said, "Have you anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced upon you?" Then, rising, trembling with great emotion, he said: "Judge, don't you remember me?" And the judge said once again, "Have you anything to say why sentence should not be pronounced?" And then he said, "Why, Judge, I am the man you saved; have mercy, have mercy." And with a look full of pity, his honor replied, "I do remember you and I am very sorry for you, but then I was your saviour, and today I am your judge;" and the sentence of death was passed.

Today our Saviour stands waiting to be merciful. With tears in his eyes he stands knocking again and again at the door of our hearts. But one day the picture will change, and he will be our judge to say, "Depart, for I never knew you." God save us from that day.—J. W. C.

SALVATION OF JOHN B. GOUGH.

187

II Kings, iii: 12.

John B. Gough, in Worcester, Mass., was down as low as any man could be. So low and miserable he was that there was none to look at him. He was an outcast from the respectable churches, and the raging devils of the craving for drink were in his heart and soul. He went out one day, he said, determined to do away with himself, a poor drunkard, lost to everything; and a young lad, called Joel Strat-

ton—John B. Gough never forgot it—put his hand on the poor shoulder, and said, “John, man, I believe you’ll give up the drink yet.” John B. Gough staggered away from him; both went to their knees, and the trembling hand of John B. Gough wrote the pledge; but, better than that, he said, “Lord, save my soul;” and Joel Stratton’s hand never left the shoulder of John B. Gough in Massachusetts till John B. Gough stood erect, till, with a tongue of clarion peal, the rescued one spoke for God. When multitudes came round him in America, and in this country, amid his oratorical triumphs, John B. Gough said that he felt to his dying day the hand of Joel Stratton on his shoulder. Blessed be God, if there be one that cares for you, to direct you to God. What is the influence of your comrades today, you boy from the north, as I was? It is good to have Christian companionship. Speak it out, Jehosaphat. You were cowardly in your testimony, but God really brought salvation from the trouble to Jehorum in your presence.—John Robertson.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN. 188

In this tree the blossoms appear before the leaves, and they are of brilliant crimson. The flaming beauty of the flowers attracts innumerable insects, and the wandering bee is drawn to it to gather honey. But every bee that alights upon the blossoms imbibes a fatal opiate, and drops dead from among the crimson flowers to the earth. Beneath this enticing tree the earth is strewn with the victims of its fatal fascinations. That fatal plant that attracts only to destroy is a vivid emblem of the deceitfulness and deadliness of sin. For the poison of sin’s bewitching flowers there is but one remedy. It is found in the “leaves of the tree of life” that groweth on Mount Calvary.—Theodore L. Cuyler.

THE SELF-CENTREDNESS OF COAL. 189

Some persons receive and absorb all the good that comes within their reach.

A piece of coal does not reflect any light; all the light that falls on it is swallowed up and kept to itself. This is what makes it look so black, so dark, so disagreeable. Selfish, miserly people are like coal in this respect. They don’t reflect or scatter about them anything they receive. Whatever God gives them they swallow up and keep to themselves. And the sparkling diamond and the dull, ugly-looking piece of coal are not more different from each other

than liberal, generous-hearted Christians like Lady Huntingdon and John Wesley, are different from such miserly people as most of us know, I dare say.—Rev. Richard Newton, D.D.

THERE IS RUINOUS POWER IN A SINGLE SIN. 190
(Eccles. ix: 18.)

During the summer of 1853 (writes a gentleman) I was an invalid, and was induced, on recommendation of my physician, to go to the hydropathic establishment at Sudbrook Park, near Richmond, in Surrey. During my sojourn there, I was one day walking through the romantic grounds and park with some friends and the proprietor, Dr. Ellis, when the doctor drew our attention to a large sycamore tree, decayed to the core. "That fine tree," said he, "was killed by a single worm."

In answer to our inquiries, we found that about two years previously the tree was as healthy as any in the park, when a wood-worm, about three inches long, was observed to be forcing its way under the bark of the trunk. It caught the eye of a naturalist who was staying at the establishment, and he remarked, "Let that worm alone, doctor, and it will kill the tree." This seemed improbable, but it was agreed that the black-headed worm should not be disturbed.

After a time it was found that the worm had tunnelled its way a considerable distance under the bark. The next summer the leaves of the tree dropped off very early, and in the succeeding year it was a dead, rotten thing, and the hole made by the worm might be seen in the very heart of the once noble trunk.

GOOD SERMONS. 191

Good sermons are born, not made. Thought which takes hold of men's souls comes from men's souls. One whose mind is on others to lift them spiritually must spend great resources of vital energy. "I perceived that power had gone forth from me," Jesus said, when one had been healed simply by contact with him. So does every minister true to his calling perceive that his own life is drawn on to give to his people. Rev. John Watson (Ian Maclaren), after he had decided not to leave his people in Liverpool to accept a call to London, told them of the temptation he had felt to make a change after seventeen years' continuous ministry to that church. He said: "No one who is not a preacher

can ever imagine the agony of production. To preach to the same people three times a week, and to depend upon so fickle, and, in my case, so slow an instrument as the brain—how can one continue without losing power and becoming stale and unprofitable?" Such a minister cannot preach at his best unless power proceeds from his people to him as well as from him to them. Paul wrote often, "Brethren, pray for us." He meant just what a pastor means today when his heart yearns for the sympathy and support of all those who have covenanted with God together with him to give to the community the spiritual life which they seek to replenish from God under the leadership of Christ's minister, whom they have chosen to be their pastor.—The Congregationalist.

SINNER OR SAINT, WHICH IS YOUR KIND? 192

Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

There are two kinds of people on earth today,
Just two kinds of people—no more, I say.

Not the sinner and saint, for 'tis well understood
The good are half bad, and the bad are half good.

Not the rich and the poor, for, to count a man's wealth,
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.

Not the humble and proud, for in life's little span,
Who puts on vain airs is not counted a man.

Not the happy and sad, for the swift-flying years
Bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.

No; the two kinds of people on earth, I mean,
Are the people who lift and the people who lean.

Wherever you go, you will find the world's masses
Are always divided in just two classes.

And oddly enough, you will find, too, I ween,
There is only one lifter to twenty who lean.

In which class are you? Are you easing the load
Of overtaxed lifters who toil down the road?

Or are you a leaner, who lets others bear
Your portion of labor and worry and care?

FOR HIS SAKE.

193

At the close of a battle in the days of the war, a young man was found dying on the battle-field. A soldier stopped to render him assistance, and as he moistened his lips and made his head rest easier, the dying man said, "My father is a man of large wealth in Detroit, and if I have strength I will write him a note, and he will repay you for this kindness."

And this was the letter he wrote: "Dear father, the bearer of this letter made my last moments easier, and helped me to die. Receive him and help him for Charlie's sake."

The war ended, and the soldier in tattered garments sought out the father in Detroit. He refused to see him at first on account of his wretched appearance. "But," said the stranger, "I have a note for you in which you will be interested." He handed him the little soiled piece of paper, and when the great man's eyes fell upon the name of his son all was instantly changed. He threw his arms about the soldier, and drew him close to his heart, and put at his disposal everything that wealth could make possible for him to possess. It was the name that made the difference. And thus we stand on redemption ground, before God in the name of Jesus Christ, and he speaks for us as did Paul for the Roman slave Onesimus.

STRAIGHT AHEAD.

194

When railways were first introduced, the Czar of Russia was asked how he would like the railway from Moscow to St. Petersburg. The autocrat said, "Let me see the map." It was brought to him. "Pass me that ruler." It was handed to him. Ruling a straight line from town to town, he said, "That is how I want the railway to run," and that is how it runs. God has planned my life straight for his throne. I know that Jesus, the surveyor, has gone through it, down into the darkness, down into the depths. When the cloud came about me, when the sudden dip of bereavement was felt, I said, "All right; Christ has laid the rails here, straight ahead, for God has ordained and planned my life in grace." Have you got on the rails yet? Have you your soul saved?—J. Robertson.

THE BREATH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. 196

Coming across in the steamer, I was talking to one of Lloyd's men from the Bahamas, and he was telling me how

he could bargain with the winds of heaven for a daily force. He said: "We could run electricity in the Bahamas cheaper than you could do anywhere else." I did not understand it, and he explained. "In the Bahamas there are the trade winds, months of a steady rush of wind. We have the wind that never varies, the steady, blowing trade wind." That is like the cross. There is a trade wind at the cross of Christ, the ever-moving breath of the Holy Spirit. Oh, soul, get into the trade wind. Give way, and follow up, and lie down as a poor sinner at the foot of the cross, and the Holy Spirit will regenerate you, and your heart will instinctively exercise faith, and the application of the redemption purchased by Christ will be yours. You will be saved by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.—J. Robertson.

DECEPTION OF SIN.

197

"In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Prov. iii: 6.

I shall never forget my first day in the city of Paris. The friend who came to meet me had been in the city for years, and knew all about it. On the Boulevard Bon Nouvelle the young Scotch boy was arrested by the sight of the most beautiful gateway that he had ever beheld. Multi-colored lights were all about the entrance, and the fragrance of the spices of Arabia seemed to float in the air, and the sound of music and dancing broke upon the ear. The glitter and dazzle of fairyland was at the door; and the Scotch boy said, "What's that?" The body of the friend to whom he spoke now moulders in the dust; the voice that answered is now singing praises to God on high; but the hand of that Scotchman came like a vice to the wrist of the lad who was with him, and the voice hardened to a tone he never forgot, as he said, "Man, that is hell!" "What?" It was a new idea to the country lad. Hell with an entrance like that—with all the colors of the rainbow; with all the flowers and beauty, and the witching scenery and attractions. I thought hell was ugly; I thought I would get the belch of sulphur at the pit's mouth; I thought harpies on infernal wing would be hovering above the pit; but here—like this? Yes, I saw above the gate—and I knew French enough to know what it meant—"Nothing to pay." That was on the gate; but, though there be nothing to pay to get in, what have you to pay to get out? This is the question. Character blasted; soul lost. Mind that. Just examine

your ways. Do not be taken in by the flowers and music, and the beautiful path that is at your feet this afternoon. Here is the secret of a successful life. "In all thy ways acknowledge him."—J. Robertson.

A STEP AT A TIME.

198

If you were in Mr. Moody's home, and asked him about a certain clock on his mantel in the sitting-room, he would probably tell you a story. This clock was given him by a lady in London, who came to one of Mr. Moody's meetings and was very angry at some things he said. She came back the next night, however, and was angrier still; she came back the next night, and her anger began to vanish. The night after she was also there and became deeply convicted of sin. The next night she was in the inquiry meeting, and she came night after night, until one night she said to Mr. Moody, "I realize that I am a sinner; I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; but I believe that I cannot be a Christian. Whether it is my sin, or what it is, I do not know. But I do not believe that if I commenced to be a Christian I could ever hold out." Mr. Moody tried every way he could to get her to decide to try. But he failed, until he thought of that old story about the pendulum. On the first day of January the pendulum began to count up what it had to do. It had to tick so many ticks in a minute, and there were so many minutes in an hour, and so many hours in a day, and so many days in a year, and it would likely have to keep on ticking for so many years. When it found out the millions of times it would have to tick it said, "It's of no use; I will stop right now." Then this thought occurred to the pendulum: "It is only one tick at a time." So it began to tick, and it ticked the next tick, and the next, and the next, and it is ticking yet. This lady said to Mr. Moody, "I will tick the first tick now," and she is ticking yet. She gave that clock to Mr. Moody—she is now one of the most earnest Christians in the city of London—and asked him if anybody should refer to it, to tell them the story, that it is only a tick at a time. Blessed be God, it is as simple as that! "As the ten lepers went, they were cleansed."—B. F. M.

TAKE AWAY THE STONE.

199

I remember, in one place, right in the middle of the sermon, an aged minister, who had been for twenty-five years pastor in that place, rose up and stood by my side on

the front of the platform. But he did not say anything, and I commenced again. And he said, "Wait—wait!" And then I saw that he could not command his voice. We waited, and after a few moments he said, "My dear people, when I rose up this morning I asked God to make this the best day of my life; and he is doing it. I have preached sermons enough, and I have made calls enough, but I have never known in my life what it was to have a tender heart; and I ask your forgiveness." And a man rose up in the rear of the room and said, "I am an officer of this church, and the idea of my pastor talking like that when I am here! I have been immersed in my business, and I have not been living as I ought, and it is my fault that people are not turning to Christ. I ask my pastor's and the people's forgiveness," and he sat down. And then a lady rose up and said, "I am a member of this church, but no one would have thought it from the way I lived. Only a little while ago I gave a ball at my house to introduce my two daughters to society, but I have never introduced them to Christ. Do you think there is hope for me?" Two young ladies arose and said, "We want to be Christians." And those two young ladies were the two daughters of this lady. Just the minute she was willing to get right, her two daughters came to Christ.—B. F. M.

SELF-DENIAL.

200

What is self-denial? We have used that term so much that we have blunted its meaning. What does it mean to deny a thing? It means to affirm that it is not so. A man comes to you and says, "How do you do, Mr. Jones!" You reply, "My name is not Jones, it is Smith." You have denied that your name is Jones and confessed that your name is Smith. The literal interpretation of the denial of self and the confession of Christ would be to say, "I am not myself, but I am Jesus Christ." This is to come to that place where you can say, as did the great apostle of the Reformation, "Martin Luther does not live here—Jesus Christ lives here," or until you can say, with a greater apostle than Luther, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Augustine had lived a profligate life, but after his conversion he kept away from his former associates. One day on the street he was seen by a woman with whom he had associated in his life of sin, and as he

saw her he started to run. She ran after him and cried, "Augustine, why do you run? It is I!" And Augustine said, "I run because I am not I." Blessed be God! There may be such a transformation where a man may say, not only "I am not my own, but I am bought with a price," but where he may say, "I am not myself, but I am Jesus Christ." —B. F. M.

SOME SECRET SIN.

201

One of the famous springs of Saratoga, N. Y., was seen to be failing in its supply, and at last the flow had almost entirely ceased. It was thought by those who owned the spring that its usefulness was over forever, but at last they began to dig down under the vein, and they found that the root of a tree had grown across it. As the root had grown the flow of water had been hindered, until at last it had almost entirely ceased. When the root was removed the water supply was abundant. And many a man had lost his power both with God and with men, because of some secret sin in his life. A sin which a few years ago was but a thought, today is an awful reality. A sin which a little while ago hindered one's peace and power but very little, today causes them to be almost extinguished. It is a good thing for a child of God again and again to pray "Search me, O God," and a better thing to ask God to make him clean. —J. W. C.

SIN IS DANGEROUS.

202

A miner in one of the Western mining districts, who had been most successful in his operations, invited all his friends to a house-warming, and in the midst of his sumptuous feast, thinking of something that he wanted which was not on the table but in the cellar, he called an attendant and ordered him to procure it. Taking a lighted candle he descended the steps into the cellar, and soon returned with the article, but without the candle. "Where is the candle," said his master, and the careless answer was, "I left it sticking in a barrel of sand." The master of the house rose instantly, walked quietly to the cellar door and when it was closed after him sprang down the steps and hurried across the cellar floor to snatch the candle which was flickering, not in a barrel of sand but of blasting powder. A minute more and an explosion would have occurred which would have shaken the very foundations of the mountain. The feast of the sinner is very much like this. The next sin may settle the question of his eternity,

the next sin may snap the cord that binds him to God. The Word is right when it declares there is but a step between me and death.—J. W. C.

UNCONFESSED SIN.

203

In a meeting conducted in an Eastern city, I had made the statement in the first service that if one cherished in his heart any unconfessed sin he could not expect God to use him. One of the prominent men of the city, a member of the church, immediately rose and left the building. His pastor was quite disposed to criticize the shortness of the statement, while he admitted the truth of it. For three days the man was away from his home, but when he came back he sought me in my room to say that twelve years before as a young business man, he had taken at the close of the year about \$125.00 which did not belong to him. At the close of the second year he did the same thing, and then realizing his awful danger he resolved that ever afterward he would be strictly honest, and, said he, "When I heard your statement in your first sermon it went through me like a knife, and I determined that I would seek out my partner, against whom I had sinned and make a full confession. I was obliged to travel to a neighboring city, but when with sobs and tears my confession was made I came away home filled with the peace of God. For all these twelve years, while I have been a nominal member of the church, I have been able to do nothing in the way of service. Two or three days later there came in a request from one of the neighboring pastors that some one should come to help him over Sunday. No minister could go, but this business man, whose lips had been sealed, volunteered to go, and when his report was made by the minister Monday morning it was as follows: He said, "He arose to announce his text and then stopped. Said it again, and was too full of emotion to go on, then standing before the congregation he told of his sin, of his confession, and of God's gracious forgiveness, and as a result of his plea almost every unconverted person in the building came to Christ." And the prayer of every Christian ought to be in the light of such a story, "Search me, O God, and get my heart," and his determination ought to be, to be clean at any cost.—J. W. C.

SERVICE RECOGNIZED.

204

From the battle-fields of the Peninsula, a little band of veterans came forth, and they received each a medal with

the names of all their battles on one side, and on the other side this little sentence, "I was there." O, when that hour shall come, may it be a glad, glad, glad thought to look back on this life we have lived, and on the toils and sacrifices of these days, and remember, "I was there; I was there, and by the help of God and the grace of Jesus, I am here."—J. W. C.

"SATISFIED WITH PAST EXPERIENCES." 205

So many Christians are like the old oak tree that said in the fall of the year, "I am perfectly satisfied with my this year's leaves, therefore I will not allow them to fall to the earth; I will hold on to them." As a result the north wind blew and the leaves faded, but the old oak clung to its last summer's leaves. In that unsightly condition it passed the whole winter through, the wind rustling through its dry dead leaves.

Thus it is with a great many Christians, instead of allowing their past experiences to fall, they cling to them and do not prepare for a new and better experience as it may come daily. It is only by the tree shedding its leaves that it can hope to put on the beautiful foliage in the springtime.—W. R. F.

THE SON OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR. 206

During the days of the Civil War Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation that for a certain time no soldier should go home on furlough, it mattered not what the excuse might be. One day there came to the White House grounds a man whose heart was breaking because he had received word that his wife was dying, and unless he could come quickly he would not see her again. He had heard of the President's great heart and set forth to see him. Strangely enough, he entered the White House, climbed the steps and stood at the door of the Executive Chamber. There met him there a sentinel who told him he could not enter in, and with tears flowing like rain down his cheeks he started down the steps and was walking over the White House grounds, when one of the President's boys met him and said, "Mr. Soldier, what is the matter?" He paid no attention to him for a moment. When the question was repeated he told his story. Instantly the boy's face brightened and he said, "Why, I'll take you in." The man looked at him incredulously, saying, "I am a soldier and can't get in; surely a boy will fail." "But, I am the President's boy,"

said the little fellow, and taking him by the hand he led him up the steps until he came to the door of the President's room. The sentinel met him and told him he could not go in. He was not in the least dismayed, but stood for a moment outside the door until at last it opened and he caught sight of that face that every American loves, then lifting up his little voice he shouted, "Father, tell this soldier to let me come in with my friend." Instantly President Lincoln's face changed. He forgot that he was the President and remembered that he was the father of his boy, and laying down his pen he said, "Officer, let him come in." And when he heard the story from his child's lips he took up his pen once more and signed the order that sent the soldier home.—J. W. C.

YIELDING TO THE TRUTH.

208

You may have heard the story of the conversion of Dr. Horace Bushnell, when he was a skeptical tutor in Yale College. There was a revival in the college, and this brilliant young teacher was a stumbling-block which kept many of the students from entering the kingdom of heaven. He felt this burden of responsibility somewhat himself, and as he afterward expressed it to a friend of mine, he said he thought he was "like a great snag in the river that caught the shipping as it came down, and held it fast." He could not bear this responsibility, and so one night he sat down in his study to take stock of what he really did believe. He concluded that he knew two things; first, that God was God; and second, that right was right; although he did not believe in the divinity of Christ nor in the inspiration of the Bible. The thought occurred to him, "What is the use of my trying to get further knowledge, so long as I do not cheerfully yield myself to do that which has already been revealed to me?" Moved by this thought, he knelt down and prayed a prayer something like this: "O, God!" he said, "I believe there is an ineradicable, eternal distinction between right and wrong, and I hereby give myself up to do the right and to refrain from doing the wrong; and I believe that thou dost exist, and if thou canst hear my cry and wilt reveal thyself unto me I pledge myself that I will do thy will; and I make this pledge fully and freely and forever." And God took him by the hand and lifted him up and led him where he gained a magnificent conception of Jesus Christ, and made him worthy, in some respects, to be a teacher of teachers for the coming generations. I speak

of this man, as I might have spoken of any one of a hundred others, because he was said to have had the greatest brain of any man of his generation, and that I might compare him with the savage in the depths of the forest, who had never heard even the name of Christ, but who was convicted of sin, and who cast himself upon his face, crying, "O, Great Spirit, I will give up my sin, and I will do anything you would have me." And the Great Spirit, the Great Spirit, the God whom he ignorantly worshipped, took him by the hand and led him where for the first time the members of his tribe were hearing the story of the cross. He pressed eagerly forward and said to the missionary, "What is this that your God would have me do?" And when he was told of self-surrender he said, "This is what I have already done."
—B. F. M.

TIME ENOUGH.

209

You may remember the allegory of the council of the devils in hell, at a time when Satan heard that a revival had commenced in a certain community. According to the story, he called his counselors together and asked them for advice as to how this spiritual atmosphere might be changed. One said, "I could break up this revival. I would go and laugh at the people, and tell them they were a pack of fools; that there was no God, no devil, no heaven, and no hell. And I would say, 'Eat, drink, for tomorrow you die.'" Satan said, "You need not go. You would not find anyone that would believe you." Another, shrewder than the first, said, "Let me go. I would go to them and tell them that a portion of the Bible is true; that there is a God and a heaven, but no devil and no hell, and that no matter how they might live here they would go to heaven when they died." And Satan said, "You need not go. You might find some people that would try to believe you, but not many, especially at this time of spiritual awakening." "Let me go," said a third, the shrewdest and meanest of them all. "I will go and tell them that the Bible is all true; that there is a God and a heaven, a devil and a hell, and that the people are making their choice in this life as to where they will spend the future ages. And then I will say, 'But you have plenty of time. Put this off. Wait until tomorrow.'" And Satan said to him, "Go!" This is only a parable, but I think that it is true tonight. I believe that this emissary of Satan's has come into this audience, and has been going down these aisles and into these seats, and say-

ing to this man and this woman, and that young man and yonder maiden, "Put it off. Wait till tomorrow." You will heed this voice at your peril.—B. F. M.

LOOK UP.

210

The way to get ready for trial is to look up. A sea captain once sent his boy into the rigging of the ship, and as he began to look down into the dizzy depth below him and tremble, the father shouted to him: "Look up." The child obeyed him and went on in safety. So Peter says to you, "Beloved, look up; yonder is the prize." The trials here are not worth looking at. There is the incorruptible inheritance. Keep your heart fixed on things above. That is the way to overcome trouble. Jesus himself would have succumbed if he had looked down. I have sometimes wondered if that is the reason why, just before the cross, he said not a word about his trial. He told his disciples: "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but he said not a word about his own terrible trial that was so near. "He endured the cross, despising the shame." He looked through it and saw the glory of the throne beyond, and the rest and joy laid up there for him and for us. You must keep your eye upon the heavenlies. Think of the mansions yonder. The disciples were able to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing there was something infinitely better awaiting them. What if you lost fifteen thousand dollars last week, you have not lost that inheritance. What if you should lose twenty thousand next week; you are richer than Jesus was. You talked about trials here; there it will be, "I will confess your name before my Father." You think people do not understand you here; there "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," for he hath promised to bring forth thy righteousness as the light and thy judgment as the noonday. What though you have been full of pains and aches here, the body won't know what pain means there; it will forget how it feels to be sick. What, though scalding tears have flowed down your face here, his own hand shall wipe them away, forevermore, and every tear shall become a jewel in your crown if they were shed for Jesus. Look up! Look up! I am so glad Peter hangs the crown in the sky, and bids us look beyond the cross. There is real comfort in this for you and me. Let us keep our eye upon it and lose sight of the trial.—J. W. C.

IT STANDS THE TEST.

211

A man in London bought a cheap umbrella, and afterwards brought it back to the maker, complaining that it had gone to pieces. The man looked at it and then, turning to the purchaser, gravely raised his spectacles and said, "You must have been taking it out and getting it wetted." The religion of Jesus is not for fine weather and sweet seclusion. It will stand wetting. And if it won't we don't want it.—J. W. C.

HELPFUL THOUGHTS.

212

"The Christian's life down here is a state of combat, not of rest. A call to duty, not discharge from care. Hereafter we shall enjoy such a blessed rest, as will make all our present trials and troubles appear but as momentary."

Purifying work is painful work. The refining furnace needs a well-established confidence in, and love to the great Refiner.

"Great characters are not made by walking on carpets."

A true revival is a divine operation and will produce a true fruit. There will be a heavenly taste, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

To suppose that anyone will turn from the love of this world to the love of eternal things, without an operation of the Holy Ghost, is to be as bad a philosopher as a divine; for it is to expect an effect without a cause.—Christian Scotsman.

MAN'S TITLE IS NOTHING.

213

Man's title is, then, nothing. It means nothing. It is nothing. But is Christ's title like man's? Here he affixes to his name a title he has won, and right royally do stand these letters of success in the "capping" of Messianic graduation. In the calendar of grace he is inscribed, "The Lord Jesus Christ, A. Z." "I am Alpha and Omega" to the Greek; "I am A. and Z." to you. "I am A. and Z., the beginning and the end, the first and the last," "the all and in all." And this title A. Z. is full of meaning. The Lord used it himself, and he used it because it means what he says, and it says what he is. Let us look at it this evening, and may God the Spirit guide us into its "all truth."

Three times in three different connections does the title occur, and the fact is very remarkable, for a grand and glorious truth lies in each setting. Legh Richmond, in his "Dying Cottager," tells of his last visit to the death-bed of

that young convert he had led to Jesus. He asked the girl in the valley of the shadow what was her hope for eternity. Putting her thin, wasted fingers on the Bible that lay beside her she said, "Christ here!" Then, placing her nigh transparent hand on her bosom she said, "Christ here!" And then pointing upward, she said, "And Christ there!" Glorious hope! Sure three-fold pledge of the safe arrival in glory of that passing soul! And, my friends, even just so, it is most striking to notice, has this Jesus himself done. Three times to express the same identical truths he has used this title: First, Rev. i, 8, "I am A. and Z." of the written book; second, Rev. xxi, 6, "I am A. and Z." of the thirsty heart; and third, Rev. xxii, 13, "I am A. and Z." of the coming home. The Lord Jesus Christ, the all and in all of that Bible, this soul and yon heaven!—J. Robertson.

UNCONSIDERED TRIFLES.

214

Years ago, a young fair-faced, golden-haired English girl, who had struggled through an experience of restless and unsatisfied desire, and at last had found peace through the blood of the cross, sat down and wrote some verses. She read the manuscript over,, and her eyes were holden that she could not see its worth. She says: "I was so little impressed with it that I threw it on the fire, thinking it not worth preserving, but a friend sitting by rescued it just in time to save it, and after it had lain away in my friend's portfolio for a year or two it was brought out and given to the world." That young girl lived on through years of useful, pleasant, happy service till she died in June, 1879, at the age of forty-two years. She sang sweet songs, she composed many poems, she wrote numerous volumes, her name is known around the world; but nothing she has ever written is so widely known or will be so long remembered as that little scrap which she valued so lightly that she committed it to the flames; for the hand that snatched that paper from the fire preserved to us the hymn of Frances Ridley Havergal, beginning,

"I gave my life for thee."

So little do we know what our true work in this world is. Some deed done under the promptings of a divine impulse, though we may not recognize its importance or its value, yet has in it the breath and power of the living God.

THE FAILURE OF UNBELIEF.

215

I want something better than the best disbeliever in Jesus Christ ever possessed. God forbid that I should ever

say an untrue or unkind word about any of the sons of men—least of all that I should seem to tear aside with ruthless hand the veil that hides the secret place of sorrow! But the occurrence to which I am about to refer was not done in a corner, and I only bring to your mind what you all know when I mention the time when Colonel Ingersoll endeavored to fulfill the promise made to his brother, who was also his boyhood's playmate, and pronounced his funeral address. It was in June, 1879. This brother had died in Washington, and Colonel Ingersoll stood by the coffin and tried to read his address. His voice became agitated, his form trembled, and his emotion overcame him. Finally, he put down the paper, and, bowing himself upon the coffin, he gave vent to uncontrollable grief. When at last he was able to proceed he raised himself up, and among other words he said these: "Whether in mid-ocean or 'mid the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck must mark at last the end of each and all; and every life, no matter if its every hour be filled with love and every moment jeweled with a joy, will at the last become a tragedy as sad and dark and deep as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death. . . . Life is a dark and barren vale between the cold and ice-clad peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We lift our wailing voices in the silence of the night, and hear no answer but the bitter echo of our cry." Could ever words more sadly hopeless have been uttered at a time like that? And then he added what to me were the most pathetic words of all—something about "hope trying to see a star, and listening for the rustle of the angel's wings."

Mrs. Browning most truly writes:

"There is no God,' the foolish saith,
 But none, 'There is no sorrow.'
 And nature oft in bitter need
 The cry of faith will borrow.
 Eyes which the preacher could not school,
 By wayside graves are raised;
 And lips cry, 'God be pitiful!
 Which ne'er said, 'God be praised!'"

I think I should like greater comfort and a better hope than that.

Dwight Moody had a brother, and after his own conversion he earnestly pleaded with him, until the brother also yielded himself to Christ and became such an earnest

worker that he was the means of leading a number of his friends at his home into the kingdom. And then this brother died and was buried. A few years ago, as I spent a day in Northfield and was driven through its beautiful streets by one of the old residents, I said, "I wish you would tell me something about Mr. Moody that may not be generally known." And as we passed the old white church he said, "I remember his brother's funeral." He said that there were a number of ministers in the pulpit, and that after they had finished the usual services and the coffin-lid was about to be put in its place, Mr. Moody arose, and, stepping forward from the seat where he had been sitting, with a shining face, he laid one hand upon the coffin, and then lifting the other he poured out such a stream of thanksgiving unto God for the life that was gone, and for the wonderful comfort and joy and hope that came to him in Jesus Christ, that it was said by this onlooker that it almost seemed as if the heavens were opened and they could see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. At last he ceased, the coffin-lid was placed in its position, and the body was carried out and laid in the grave. On one side of the sepulcher stood fifty young men, many of them led to Christ through the influence of this one who was gone, and they held in their hands beautiful white flowers, which they cast down upon the coffin in token of the glorious resurrection. And on the other side of the grave stood Mr. Moody; and he said that as he stood there and thought of his brother, being dead, was yet speaking, he felt that if he were silent the very stones would cry out, and he cried with a loud voice, "Glory to God! Glory be to God! O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?"—B. F. M.

UNBELIEF UNREASONABLE. 216

I have heard of a young lady who sat down to write upon paper the reasons why she should be on God's side and the reason why she should not be on God's side. The pen flew rapidly down the paper while she was writing the reasons why she should serve God, but when she came to the other column she could not think of one. You could not think of one. I have heard thousands and thousands give reasons why they were upon God's side, but I never saw one man in this world that could give a real reason for not being upon God's side. It is the reasonable side, and it is the best side. Who would want to live in any city if

you took the Christians out of it? Some infidels founded a town in Minnesota a few years ago, in order to have a town in which the name of God or Christ should never be mentioned except in terms of profanity and vulgarity. They hung Jesus Christ in the streets in effigy, and the place was full of blasphemy. I had to stay there all night some years ago in passing through that region, and I trembled for my life while I stayed in the best hotel in the place. The town was destroyed by fire, and they tried to build it up again. Then came an Indian massacre, with an awful retribution of bloodshed, and they tried to build it up again. It was again partially destroyed by fire; and at last, after there had been a riot and bloodshed and anything but purity and peace for years, the citizens of that town sent to the American Home Missionary Society and said, "Can you send us a minister of Jesus Christ?" And if you were to go there today you would not know that community with its church spires pointing heavenward, and its children going to Sunday-school and learning about Christ. It is almost as orderly there today as in any town in the land, because of the influence of the church.—B. F. M.

UNFAITHFUL.

217

Mrs. B. is one of the most cultured women in the New England States. She has devoted her life for many years to the outcast and the down-trodden. Many of her days she gives to those who are in prison. And one day, making her way to a New England prison, she was met by the warden, who said, "We have a little boy who is in the hospital dying. We have sent for his mother; there has been an accident on the Old Colony Road, and she cannot reach him before his death. I should like to ask you to be a mother to him." She made her way up the iron stairway until she sat by the cot of the boy. She told him the story of Christ; bowed with him in prayer, and heard him say that his faith was in Jesus as a Saviour. And then he said, "The warden tells me that my mother cannot reach me before my death; there is only one request I want to make of you, and you ask my mother when she comes to bend over and kiss me and say that she forgives me for all my sin."

The little fellow died. The Old Colony train came in, and Mrs. B. met the mother at the station. She told of the boy's last request, and almost carried the mother up the steps to his room. She stooped down, took the covering from his face, and said as she kissed him, not once, but many

times: "Joe, your mother has come and she forgives you," and then lifting her eyes toward heaven, she said, "But, oh God, his father;" and then she told the story that when the child was nine years of age she had found him one day intoxicated, and as she held him in her arms until the stupor was gone he had said that the one who gave him the drink was his father. She said, "That was the beginning, this is the end;" and bending down she said once more, "Your mother has come and she forgives you; but, oh my God, the father."

God keep every man with a boy from saying or doing a thing that might lead that boy to take one step astray which might lead him into perdition.—J. W. C.

THE UNIVERSE.

218

The great universe is the house of God—which he more than fills, for he made it, and the Creator must be greater than the creature—in which he walks in his majesty to and fro, and in every part of which he manifests by the works of his hands, and the evolutions of his providence, his awful presence. The earth—the church—every believer's soul—is the house of God, in which he now reigns in grace and through grace. Heaven is the home of the sanctified, where his scattered children are all at last to meet, and in which they are to dwell together in love forever.—Heaven our Home.—Christian Scotsman.

VISIT TO AN INVALID.

219

Upon a certain occasion, when the Queen was at Balmoral, she went out unaccompanied, visiting the cottages. On entering one, she found an old man bedridden and quite alone. "What," said the Queen, "have you no one to keep you company?" "Na," said the old man. "My folks be all away, seeing the Queen; they thought they might get a glimpse of her." Her majesty talked to the old man for a time, and read him a chapter from the Bible. On leaving, she handed him a five-pound note, saying, "When your people come back, tell them that while they have been to see the Queen, the Queen has been to see you." It is by such kind acts as these that Queen Victoria endears herself to her people.—J. W. C.

UNREST—REAL.

220

There was a lady who had a fortune, but alas, she had a craze, and the craze was the tearing up of silk. She could

afford to indulge her fancy because she had a fortune, and it was a fine thing for a silk mercer. Nothing pleased this lady more than to take the most expensive silk that was ever spun on the looms of earth and rend it, and she spent all day in doing so. Piles of silk were taken to her, and she tore them, until at last she tore herself into a lunatic asylum. It seems to me today there is a kind of theological unrest, a kind of insane dealing with the Word of God, just for the pleasure of tearing it. The Pentateuch, tear it up; the Book of Job, break it up. Bring it out in four colors, and such verses as "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and other similar verses that tell of the hope of the church, put them into footnotes as being too pronounced to be true, too far advanced in New Testament conception to be honestly literal. Ah, beloved, you young man, God pity you, the day of trial is at hand, and the Word of God is being wounded in the house of its friends. Inspiration is like a tenantless house, a drug on the market. It is being flung out of the conceptions of our students of theology, at the bidding of the men who ought to know better, and they are all removing, all flitting, and the generation that is to come will only see the folly of it when it is too late.—J. Robertson.

VICTORY IN LAST DAYS.

221

I am old and blind;
 Men point at me as smitten with God's frown,
 Afflicted and deserted by my kind:
 Yet I am not cast down.

I am weak; yet, dying,
 I murmur not that I no longer see;
 Poor, old, and helpless, I the more belong,
 Father supreme, to thee.

O merciful one!
 When men are farthest, then thou art most near;
 When men pass coldly by, my weakness shun,
 Thy chariot I hear.

Thy glorious face
 Is leaning toward me, and its holy light
 Shines upon my lowly dwelling-place,
 And there is no more night.

On bended knee
 I recognize thy purpose, clearly shown,
 My vision thou hast dimmed that I might see
 Thyself—thyself alone.

I have naught to fear ;
 This darkness is the shadow of thy wing :
 Beneath it I am almost sacred, here
 Can come no evil thing.

—Milton's Last Poem.

LOVE VICTORIOUS.

222

When Christ came with his heart of love, there was a grim chuckle in hell. "We have seen love in the human heart before," and the grim angel of death fluttered his black wings and said, "I'll settle it. Has the strange mysterious man brought only love with him? I have annihilated love a million times, and I will do it for him also." And the men surrounded him, and the traitor's kiss was planted on his cheek, and the priests got hold of him, and the soldiers took him away, to death, and his pale lips say, "It is finished." And, true, they did bring him from the cross, a limp, lifeless body. The arms hung by the side, and the head fell on the breast of the bearer. They put him into a grave and rolled a great stone there, and they went about saying, "He is dead—dead!" O love in the Saviour's heart, thou art blotted out after all! Death has interfered with love. And on the way to Emmaus there are two disciples. They are very downhearted this morning. They are saying one to the other, "What an awful thing! We trusted it had been he who should have redeemed Israel, and today is the third day, and he is in the grave." Was he dead? The Divine sleeper stirs in his sleep. A tremor of returning life runs through his frame. He rises and calmly puts aside the cerements of the grave, and on the Sabbath morning he is risen. Death has lost its power, and with the love in Christ's heart death has been defeated. "O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory?" Where is it? Christ hath brought life and immortality to light! And it is that love that you and I need this morning, the love that death hath no power over, a deathless love, a love that is to exist and be strong when yonder sun flickers out into eternal midnight. It is that love that my longing soul craves for, and it is that love that is in Christ's heart. It is

a deathless love ; it is a love that you can allow yourselves to sail in. Human love!—why, we dare only creep from headland to headland ; we cannot launch out into the deep, for death is nigh. How many go forth in the morning and never come back at night ! But in Christ's love you can let your soul go. You can sail into the mighty ocean assured that there is no limit, that there is no further shore to it, that there are no shoals to tear the ribs of the vessel of your heart asunder. The deathless love of Christ, can you sing it? "Unto him that loved us" with a deathless love.—J. Robertson.

KNOWING GOD'S WORD.

223

When I was a boy there was a young man one night walking up and down the street all night in front of the residence of the Governor of the State in the city where I lived. When the morning light was breaking a messenger came to the door and said, "The Governor is dead." This young man went to the police station and delivered himself up, self-accused of having taken the life of the Governor of that State. He did not mean to kill him, but he had killed him. He was a clerk in a drug-store and he had placed a wrong ingredient in a prescription, through ignorance or carelessness, and that killed the Governor of New Jersey. What is one man's medicine is another man's poison. "To the word and to the testimony." Oh, for a Bible-educated church ; for a people who are able to commence at the same scripture and preach unto men Jesus, the Saviour of the lost world!—B. F. M.

WARNING NEGLECTED.

224

I was in the north of England, 1881, when a fearful storm swept over that part of the country. A friend of mine, who was a minister at Eyemouth, had a great many of the fishermen of the place in his congregation. It had been very stormy weather, and the fishermen had been detained in the harbor for a week. One day, however, the sun shone out in a clear blue sky ; it seemed as if the storm had passed away, and the boats started out for the fishing ground. Forty-one boats left the harbor that day. Before they started, the harbor-master hoisted the storm signal and warned them of the coming tempest. He begged of them not to go, but they disregarded his warning, and away they went. They saw no sign of the coming storm. In a few hours, however, it swept down on that coast, and

very few of those fishermen returned. There were five or six men in each boat, and nearly all were lost in that dreadful gale. In the church of which my friend was pastor, I believe there were three male members left.

Those men were ushered into eternity because they did not give heed to the warning. I lift up the storm signal now, and warn you to escape from the coming judgment.—D. L. Moody.

IGNORANCE OF GOD'S WORD. 225

I came up to Boston from the country and went into a Bible class where there were a few Harvard students. They handed me a Bible and told me the lesson was in John. I hunted all through the Old Testament for John, but couldn't find it. I saw the fellows hunching one another, "Ah, greenie from the country." Now, you know that is just the time when you don't want to be considered green. The teacher saw my embarrassment and handed me his Bible, and I put my thumb in the place and held on. I didn't lose my place. I said then that if I ever got out of that scrape, I would never be caught there again. Why is it that so many young men from eighteen to twenty cannot be brought into a Bible class? Because they don't want to show their ignorance. There is no place in the world that is so fascinating as a live Bible class. I believe that we are to blame that they have been brought up in the Sunday-school without Bibles and brought up with quarterlies. The result is, the boys are growing up without knowing how to handle the Bible.—D. L. Moody.

IGNORANCE OF GOD'S WORD. 226

A professor in a Western University asked certain questions of ninety-six college students, men and women, with the following results:

Thirty-six were unable to tell what the Pentateuch is; eighty were ignorant of the nature of the higher criticism; forty did not know that the book of Judge belonged to the New Testament; thirty-five could not name a single patriarch of the Old Testament; fifty-one failed to name one of the Judges; forty-nine were unable to name three of the kings of Israel; forty-four failed to name three prophets; twenty were unable to repeat a beatitude, and sixty-five could not recall any verse from the Letter to the Romans.

In answering the question as to the Judges of the Old Testament, of whom the students were asked to name one,

Solomon, Jeremiah, Leviticus and Daniel were all named. Among the prophets appeared Matthew, Luke and John. Herod and Ananias took the role of Kings of Israel. The Pentateuch was confused with the Gospels—in one case with “the seven Gospels.” Among the beatitudes were the following: “Blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God;” “Blessed are the law-givers;” and “Blessed are the hungry, for they shall be fed.” Several writers agreed substantially with one of their number who defined the higher criticism as “The criticism by scholars who attempt to overthrow certain doctrines as taught in the scriptures.”—J. W. C.

THE WAVES AND THE WIND. 227

Steady gracious influence is needed to ensure the Christ-like life.

The sea can only be kept heaped up in waves by the constant pressure of the wind. Take away the pressure and it soon flows back into its old level. If we want, therefore, to get water to keep a higher level, we must do it by filling up underneath. Apply this to our hearts. If we want the tone of our minds' lives to rise to a really higher level, to be more Christ-like, more peaceful, more holy, it must be done by filling up, not merely agitating the surface by excitements and emotions. We may get great waves in this way, but we shall have great hollows between them if we do, and a great commotion perhaps, but no real gain. For it is God's grace in the heart, the gradual filling up of all our needs and deficiencies by the Holy Spirit of God, which can alone raise our hearts and lives to a higher level of purity and holiness. As we cast off bad habits, we need to be acquiring good ones in their places; as we are stirred up by sermons and services to wish to live more holy lives, we need to be acting as well as wishing rightly if we want to get on. And this is no hopeless, heartless task, for the Lord's promises are ever sure.—F. C. K. W.

PERIL WROUGHT BY STAGNANT WATER. 228

“Indolence breeds morbid conditions in every part of the soul.”

The mischief of water is not that it does not run, but that, not running, it corrupts, and corrupting, breeds poisonous miasma, so that they who live in the neighborhood inhale disease at every breath. The mischief of indolence is not that it neglects the use of powers and the improve-

ment of the opportunities of life, but that it breeds morbid conditions in every part of the soul. An indolent man is like an unoccupied dwelling. Scoundrels sometimes burrow in it. Thieves and evil characters make it their haunt; or if they do not, it is full of vermin. A house that is used does not breed moths half as fast as a house that, having the beginnings of them, stands empty. Woe be to them who take an old house and carry goods into it. A lazy man is an old house full of moths in every part.—H. W. Beecher.

A WHIRLPOOL ON THE COAST OF NORWAY. 229

A TYPE OF THE YOUTH CAUGHT AND DRAWN INTO DESTRUCTION BY VICIOUS HABITS.

On the coast of Norway there is an immense whirlpool, called by the natives Vaelstrom, which signifies the navel, or the center of the sea. The body of waters which form this whirlpool is extended in a circle about thirteen miles in circumference. In the midst thereof stands a rock, against which the tide, in its ebb, is washed with inconceivable fury, when it instantly swallows up all things which come within the sphere of its violence. No skill of the mariner, nor strength of rowing, can work an escape. The sea-beaten sailor at the helm finds the ship, at first, go in a current opposite to his intentions; his vessel's motion, though slow in the beginning, becomes every moment more rapid; it goes round in circles, still narrower, till at last it is dashed against the rock, and entirely disappears forever. And thus it fares with the thoughtless and hapless youth that falls under the power of any vicious habits. At first he indulges with caution and timidity and struggles against the stream of vicious inclinations; but every relapse carries him down the current, the violence of which increases, and brings him still nearer to the fatal rock in the midst of the whirlpool, till at length, stupefied and subdued, he yields without a struggle, and makes shipwreck of conscience, of interest, of reputation, and of everything that is dear and valuable in the human character.

WORLDLINESS. 230

It is said that in Japan there is a certain kind of spider which throws its web over the telegraph wires, sometimes from tree to tree, and frequently from the ground over the wire to the ground. When a sufficient number of these

webs have been spun it is impossible to send a telegraph message from one Japanese city to another, and so the line-men must go out and snap the webs which seem so insignificant in themselves, and instantly connection is again restored, but it is likewise true that things in our lives, as insignificant as the spider's web, have caused us to lose both peace and power, while many of them together have shut us off from all communication with heaven. Not until we come out from the world and be separate, can we expect to know the secret of the Lord.—J. W. C.

GOD LOVES US IN SPITE OF WEAKNESS. 231

When I first began to preach, I shall never forget one of the first sermons I preached. A woman walked down the aisle with a child most miserably deformed. Not very long after I was called upon to go to her home, for a little child was dead. As I walked along the road wondering what to say, I thought it was, of course, this deformed child, and I wondered what I could say to comfort the mother, for I had had very little comforting to do up to that time; but when I entered the little house, poor as poverty could make it, there in the middle of the room was the little deformed child, and there in the casket was the face of one of the most beautiful children I had ever seen. I said to the mother, "Would it not have been a good thing if God had taken this child and spared the one in the coffin?" And then she sprang to the center of the room and caught the little one in her arms and said: "I know you mean it well, but if God had taken her it would have killed me. Why, there is not a day since she was born that she has not been in my arms, and not a night that she isn't on my heart. I sometimes think her very weakness draws her to me." And thus it is with my Father; in spite of my sin, he loves me. Then if you have had a hard struggle with sin, as many of us have, remember, second, God always takes your part against sin, if you give him the right to do so.—J. W. C.

GOD'S WORD.

232

One of the members of our household, not long ago, went as a missionary to take the place of her grandmother in a home in Shanghai, China; and when she sailed it was a question what we could put in the box to please her when she reached China; it was finally decided to put in a phonograph, into which each one of us would speak some farewell

message. And so, from the aged man, her father who talked in his blessing with a sob, to the little baby of the household, who could hardly make herself understood, we all said something which she should hear again when she opened her box. The other day we got a letter back from China, "I hear your voices, and it made my heart burn and the tears flow when you spoke to me." With all reverence for this Book, it is God's phonograph; he talked into it, and any one of us can sit at the feet of our Master and hear him speak his words to our hearts. We cannot read it without having our hearts filled with joy.—J. W. C.

IGNORANCE OF GOD'S WORD. 233

I wonder if some of us realize that it is criminal ignorance to be ignorant of the Word of God. I heard a man on one of the northern railroads—I think it was the Northern Pacific—who was on a train that was making its way as best it could against the force of a blizzard. The storm was so terrible that as people looked out from the car windows they could not tell whether there was a station there or not. If you could see this man's head today, you would see a man that seemed about seventy or eighty years old, his hair being perfectly white; but if you could look upon his body you would say that the man did not seem to be more than thirty or forty-five years of age. Every little while the train would stop and the brakeman would call out the name of the station, and some people would get out, and then the train would go on. There was a lady with a little child who was very much concerned lest she might not leave the train at the proper place. This man noticed her anxiety and said: "You need not give yourself any concern. I know the road perfectly well. I will tell you when you come to your station." The train stopped at the station before the one at which this woman wished to alight, and the brakeman called out the name. They went on, and after some minutes the train stopped again, and this man leaned over and said to the woman, "Now is your time; get out quickly." She took her child and left the car, and the train went on. In a few minutes it stopped again and then the brakeman called out the name of the station at which this woman had wished to alight. This man ran up to the brakeman and said, "Why, you have already stopped at that station." The brakeman said, "No, there was something the matter with the engine and we stopped for a few minutes to repair it." "My God!" he said, "I put that woman and her child off in

the storm!" They went back—some of the men on the train—to try to find them, and they found the woman holding her child in her arms, and both of them were frozen to death. O friends, it is an awful thing for us to give people wrong directions concerning the truth of God.—B. F. M.

STRENGTH OUT OF WEAKNESS. 234

An old man sat thinking, one day, about his past, recounting to himself his mistakes and follies, and regretting them, wishing he had never committed them, and that there was some way of undoing them. He took his pen, and on a sheet of paper made a list of twenty things in his life of which he was ashamed, and was about to seize an imaginary sponge and rub them all out of his biography. He was thinking how much more beautiful his character would have been at the close of his years if these wrong things had never been committed. But to his amazement, as he thought of wiping out these evil things, he found, that, if there were any golden threads of beauty running through his life, they had been woven into the web by the regrets he had felt over his wrong-doings; and that, if he should wipe out these wrong acts he would at the same time destroy the fairest lines of nobleness and worth in his present character. He learned in his meditation that he had gotten all his best things out of his errors, with the painful regrets, the wise lessons, the true repentings, and the new life, which followed.—Miller.

THROUGH A PNEUMATIC TUBE. 235

In the presence of one hundred distinguished persons the first official trial of the pneumatic tube for mail transit in America was successfully given in the Philadelphia post-office in 1893.

The Postmaster-General, after declaring that the system meant rapid communication between cities all over the world, himself sent through a Bible wrapped in an American flag, and a message which he composed, as the initial package. The message read: "The first use of the first pneumatic postal tube in the United States is to send through it a copy of the holy scriptures, the greatest message ever given to the world.

"Covering the Bible is the American flag, the emblem of freedom of sixty-five millions of happy people."—J. W. C.

A PARTING WORD.

236

The late Dr. A. J. Gordon concluded his last pastoral letter to his church (Clarendon Street, Boston), with these words:

"Forget not that your first and principal business as a disciple of Christ is to give the gospel to those who have it not. He who is not a missionary Christian will be a missing Christian when the great day comes. Therefore, ask yourself daily what the Lord would have you to do in connection with the work of carrying the news of salvation to the perishing millions. Search carefully whether he would have you go yourself to the heathen if you have the youth and fitness required for the work. Or, if you cannot go in person, inquire diligently what blood mortgage there is upon your property in the interests of foreign missions—how much you owe to the heathen, because of what you owe to Christ for redeeming you with his precious blood. I warn you that it will go hard with you when your Lord comes to reckon with you if he finds your wealth invested in superfluous luxuries or hoarded up in needless accumulations instead of being sacredly devoted to giving the gospel to the lost.

"But remember that consecrated giving will be impossible unless there be first a consecrated giver. Therefore, I counsel you to seek the special grace and anointing of the Holy Spirit, that he may work in you that consecration of heart and life on which so much depends."

LOVE FOR THE WORD. '

237

I have been for sixty-eight years and three months, viz., since July, 1829, a lover of the Word of God, and that uninterruptedly. During this time I have read considerably more than one hundred times through the whole Bible, with great delight. I have for many years read through the whole Old and New Testaments, with prayer and meditation, four times every year.

I also state, to the glory of God, as his witness, that in my inmost soul I believe that all the books of the Old Testament, and the Gospels, Epistles, and the Revelation of the New Testament are written by inspiration. This I have to the full believed, ever since my conversion in the beginning of November, 1825. Before that time, though brought up from my earliest days to be a clergyman, I cared nothing at all about the Bible, and from my fourteenth to the twentieth year never read a single chapter of it.—Geo. Mueller.

GEORGE MUELLER'S IMMORAL YOUTH. 238

The wonderful story of Rev. George Mueller's beneficence (see *Literary Digest*, April 2) is well known in many lands—his expenditure of over seven million dollars, received without any application by him for aid, except that made in prayer to his Creator. Less well known is the story of Mueller's youth, and of the gross immoralities that preceded his conversion. Mr. Stead, in the *Review of Reviews* (London), tells of Mueller's boyhood and of his reformation in the following words:

"If ever there was a youth who seemed predestined to end his days in a convict prison, George Mueller was that lad. He seemed to be a born thief. He went astray, if not from the cradle, speaking lies and stealing money, at least from the days when he put off petticoats and wore breeches. He himself tells us, with characteristic frankness, in the very first page of his delightful autobiography, which is far more interesting even than Bunyan's 'Grace Abounding for the Chief of Sinners,' that he was an habitual thief before he was ten years old. And, mark you, this was none of the petty larceny of the orchard or the cupboard; it was deliberate, systematic stealing of money. He began by falsifying the little accounts he had to render to his father as to the way in which he spent his pocket-money; he went on to rob his father of the money he collected as taxes. 'Before I was ten years old, I repeatedly took of the government money which was entrusted to my father, and which he had to make up.' He was detected at last, being caught with the stolen money under his foot in his shoe; but although he was soundly flogged, the only lesson he learned from his beating was not to be such a fool as to be found out next time.

"John Bunyan, poor soul, in the excessive tenderness of his Puritan conscience, accused himself of being the chief of sinners on account of his love for bell-ringing, the playing at bowls, and a perverse habit of profanity. Compared with the lad George Mueller, John Bunyan in his worst estate was a perfect saint. On the day his mother died, George, being then fourteen years old, sat playing at cards till two o'clock on Sunday morning; and while she lay dead in the house, he spent Sunday in the tavern, and scandalized the little village by staggering half-drunk through the streets. He was then only a boy of fourteen. On the next day he began to receive the religious instruction preparatory for confirmation; three or four days before taking his first com-

munion he was 'guilty of gross immorality.' The very day before he was confirmed, when he went into the vestry to confess his sins to the clergyman, he cheated him out of eleven twelfths of the fee which his father had given him to pay the parson. After his confirmation he continued to lead a dissipated, dishonest life. When he was sixteen his father entrusted him with the collection of a considerable sum of money from persons who were in his debt. 'My habits soon led me to spend a considerable part of this money, giving receipts for different sums, yet leading my father to suppose I had not received them.'

"No one can be surprised after this on learning that the young scoundrel was landed in jail before he was seventeen years of age. He went off on a spree one fine day, spent six days in Madgeburg 'in much sin,' emptied his purse at Brunswick, where he had a sweetheart, had to sacrifice his best clothes to meet his hotel bill at one place, and then, when trying to bilk the landlord at Wolfbuttell, he was arrested and clapped into jail as a rogue and vagabond. There he was kept under lock and key for three weeks, and as usual came out a good deal worse than he went in. After he came out his father flogged him harder than ever, but the lad was incorrigible. But while he lied and cheated and drank, and was 'habitually guilty of great sins,' he did begin seriously to apply himself to his books.

"For this young reprobate was designed by his father for the Christian ministry, chiefly, it would appear, in order that when he retired from the Excise he might find a comfortable retreat in his son's parsonage. Not even a thirteen-weeks' illness produced any impression on him, beyond leading him to read Klopstock's works without weariness. When he recovered he went on his swindling way, narrowly escaping a much more serious imprisonment for a barefaced fraud. When he was twenty his debauchery again laid him up on a sick bed. When he recovered he forged his father's name, pawned his books, and set off on a tour in Switzerland with some fellow students as racketty as himself. How utterly lost he was at this time to even the rudimentary sentiments of honor and honesty may be judged from this confession: 'I was in this journey like Judas, for having the common purse I was a thief. I managed so that the journey cost me but two-thirds of what it cost my friends.'

"Such was George Mueller when, in the year 1825, he was studying at the University of Halle, one among nine

hundred young men, who as divinity students were all permitted to preach, although, as he remarked afterward, 'I have reason to believe not nine of them feared the Lord.' If they, the other eight hundred and ninety, were like George Mueller this judgment is probably not uncharitable. He says that although, according to custom, he took the Lord's Supper twice a year, he had no Bible and had not read for years. 'I had never heard the Gospel preached up to the beginning of November, 1825. I had never met with a person who told me that he meant by the help of God to live according to the holy scriptures.' Nevertheless he was ill at ease, and when, in November, 1825, a comrade told him of a Saturday evening meeting at a friend's house where they read the Bible, sang, prayed, and read a printed sermon, 'it was to me as if I had found something after which I had been seeking all my life'—which is peculiar, to say the least of it.

"Nevertheless, most things are peculiar in this odd world, and we must take things as they are. George Mueller went to this Saturday evening prayer-meeting. At that time in Prussia 'no regular meetings for expounding the scriptures were allowed unless an ordained clergyman was present,' so they only read a chapter and a printed sermon. But that night's meeting changed the whole of George Mueller's life. How, he frankly confesses he does not exactly know. He had never seen anyone on their knees before in prayer. The prayers made a deep impression on him. 'I was happy, though if I had been asked why I was happy I could not have clearly explained it.' When he returned home he does not remember whether he so much as knelt in prayer. 'This I know, that I lay peaceful and happy in my bed.' He seems to have had very little sorrow for sin. He certainly had none of John Bunyan's agony of remorse. He says: 'I obtained joy without any deep sorrow of heart and with scarcely any knowledge. That evening was the turning point of my life.'"

REACHING HOME.

239

When you are crossing the ocean, homeward bound, sea-sick, forlorn, jaded and faded, you stagger up from your berth to the cabin door, and you read on the registering board there the number of miles yet to be pierced and bored by that revolving screw ere the hills of the Fatherland dot with their crimson welcome the sunrise of the landing-day. You've waited long, but now at last

the bell rings, commotion on board, the gangway flung to the shore, and see! there's the dear one down at the quay ready waiting for you. Home! home at last! Just so with you and me, dear believer in Jesus. But a few knots more, and the anchor is dropped in the haven of heaven. Round the last headland do we swiftly, steadily steam on this rolling vessel of life, and lo! yonder is home! and see! Who's that on the quay, his garments glorious, his countenance shining as the sun in its welcome love and longing for our stepping ashore? Don't you see him? "He with yon chariot of gold and horses of fire? with all that caparisoned equipage of immortal glory?" Yes, he! That's Jesus waiting for you. That's Jesus waiting for me. "Lift up your heads; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in" with his Son! "Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory!" Who is this son of the King? You, dear believer in Jesus! and I! Blessed, blessed be God!

"I know not the song that the angels sing,
I know not the sound of the harp's glad ring,
But I know there'll be mention of Jesus my King,
And that will be glory for me!

I know not the form of my mansion fair,
I know not the name that I then shall bear,
But I know that my Saviour will welcome me there,
And that will be heaven for me!"

—John Robertson.

I KNOW NOT WHAT TO ASK FOR. 240

I knew not what to ask for,
For the spirit voice seemed dumb.
As I bowed in prayer and lingered there,
For the wish I prayed might come.

I knew not what to ask for,
For my heart was sorely pressed;
'Mid the fluttering wings of a thousand things.
I knew not which was best.

I hardly liked to ask him,
For I hardly seemed to know;
In the winding ways of a tangled maze
I wandered to and fro.

What would'st thou have me do, Lord?
 Was all that my heart could say;
 But the what or where, or the here or there,
 Was more than I dared to pray.

What would'st thou have me be, Lord?
 Joyous, or sad at heart?
 Silent and still, at thy holy will,
 Or anxious to do my part?

What would'st thou have me say, Lord?
 A "Yes," or a final, "No"?"
 I am waiting near, that my heart may hear
 Thy whispering soft and low.

I know not what to ask for,
 For the spirit voice seems dumb;
 And I cannot plead in my unknown need,
 O Master, in mercy come!

He knoweth what I should ask for,
 As I stand at the open gate;
 For the lips I close, he fully knows;
 So in silence I rest and wait.

—William Luff.

LIGHT THROUGH CHURCH WINDOWS. 241

Effects of light depend on receptiveness to light.

You have seen one of the windows of a great church perfectly filled and saturated with sunshine. It might have seemed to an uninstructed eye, to have the glory in itself. But what really caused the beautiful dazzling brilliance was the combination of two things—the direct incidence of the sun's rays, and the perfect transparency of the window's glass. The window "shone" because the sun was opposite, and because the window was so made as to be receptive of light. Receive God's light. Drink in at every pore the rays of the sun of righteousness.—C. J. Vaughan, D.D.

THE SOURCE OF THE SUN'S HEAT. 242

The all-sufficiency of the love of Christ.

They tell us that the sun is fed by impact of objects from without, and that the day will come when its furnace-flames shall be quenched into gray ashes. But Christ's love

is fed by no contributions from without, and will outlast the burnt-out sun and gladden the ages of ages forever.—A. Maclaren, D.D.

GOD'S LOVE.

243

Because he loved us he has washed us in the precious blood of Christ. Strange effect of love, the washing! strange result of the affection of the Lord! The washing—you, mother, can understand it. Your little son has been out all the summer day. He has had splendid fun. Oh, what enjoyment! And he has stayed out till the shadows have fallen, and he is very tired, tired even of amusement. He comes into the house where love is, and what does love do? Oh, he is very sleepy; just let him go to bed. "Mother, I am awfully sleepy; I am not for any supper; indeed, I am so tired." But love has something to say, love has some action to go through before the dirty little boy can get between the clean sheets. Love draws out the bath into the middle of the floor, and love puts the towels there, and love puts the soap there, and love catches hold of the little fellow's collar, and in spite of grumbling, in spite of the little fellow's bad temper—for he is sleepy, God help him—plunges him into the bath, and love takes him out spluttering, but clean. So with God. Oh, how foul we were, how the streets of time had left their defilement on our spirit. What must love do in the first place? "Oh," says one, "love will just please wink and take us, bad as we are, into heaven; love will open wide the pearly gates and let us all as we are, unwashed, foul, unclean, into heaven." Would love do such a thing? How can a soul in all its vileness get into heaven without washing? That is the problem that God had to set to solve. How can man be just with God? How can the sinful soul get into heaven without washing? Nay, nay. There must be ablution, there must be washing, and what is to do it? A thousand rivers—have they water enough to cleanse a sinful heart? What is necessary? What did God find and feel to be necessary? What is that awful tinge that reddens the waves of the laver of regeneration? What is this mysterious chemical, thou God, art putting there? Why this agony of thy beloved Son? Why the open side, why the pierced hands and feet, why the blood? "Without shedding of blood there is no remission," says God. Do you think that God would have shed the precious blood of his Son had it not been necessary? Was it super-

fluous? Was it a mere superfluous reddening of the laver? It was necessary, God saw it.

“What can wash away my sin?
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
 What can make me whole again?
 Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”

—John Robertson.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

244

A number of travelers were making their way across the desert. The last drop of water had been exhausted, and they were pushing on with the hope that more might be found. They were growing weaker and weaker. As a last resort they divided their men into companies and sent them on, one in advance of the other, in this way securing a rest they so much needed. If they who were in the advance guard were able to find the springs, they were to shout the good tidings to the men who were the nearest to them, and so they were to send the message along.

The long line reached far across the desert. They were fainting by the way when, suddenly, every one was cheered by the good news. The leader of the first company had found the springs of water. He stood at the head of his men shouting until the farthest man had heard his cry: “Water! water!” The word went from mouth to mouth, until the whole company of men heard the sound, quickened their pace, and soon were drinking to their hearts’ content. I have found the Water of Life; it is flowing fully, it is flowing freely; and so I stand and cry: “Water! water!” Take up the cry, every one, until every thirsty soul shall drink and live.

I LIVE IN HIM.

245

“Nevertheless, I live.” There is now a new life. It has descended from above. It is a new creation. It is born out of Christ’s very heart. It has no ingredient of the old nature in it. It is as if we had just come down out of heaven, and never lived here before. It is “the heart of flesh,” “the new man,” “the seed” that remaineth in him that is born of God; the life that is “hid with Christ in God,” the mystery of the new birth. Into the flesh of a caterpillar the ichneumon drops an egg with its long and pointed

lance-like sting. Warmed by the body of its victim, it hatches and springs to life, and then begins to feed on the caterpillar's flesh. Slowly the caterpillar declines, until it is but a crawling shell. The little ichneumon lives within, grows to maturity, and then bursts its shell and goes forth unto the fullness of perfect life. So within this encompassing house of clay the Holy Spirit drops the seed of life divine. It seems at times almost hid, but it is imperishable and eternal. It has no more part with the old natural heart than the ichneumon with the caterpillar. And so it grows to its maturity, and at last will burst even the worn-out fetters of clay, and spring into life immortal above.—J.W.C.

A BLIND MAN'S MISTAKE.

246

In the little town of L., where I was first pastor, there lived a little old blind man, who was always one of my most attentive hearers. He had a most peculiar way of going about the city and rarely if ever made a mistake. He carried a little stick in his hands, and touched the trees and fences and houses as he walked, and seemed always to know exactly where he was. But one day when I knew he should be going home, I saw him moving with great haste in exactly the opposite direction, and said to him, "Which way?" Without stopping he replied, "I am going home." I said to him, "Your home is exactly behind you and every step you take is away from it." It was hard to convince him, but as I had eyes and he had none, finally I persuaded him, and he said, "Then turn me about," and I turned him squarely about and every step he took led him home.

Do you see the difference between the blind man in the first picture and the second? Mechanically he was walking the same whichever direction he took, but in the first picture he walked away from home; in the second, toward it. And many men say as they trust in their morality, "Why insist on the acceptance of Christ when my life is as it is;" and, as the world would judge it, not infrequently the man seems to have the advantage. But everyone who trusts in his own morality has turned his face away from Christ and walks exactly from him in his blindness. While everyone who submits to Christ, though he may stumble and sometimes fall, stumbles with his face Godward and his feet Christward. This is the difference between the morality of man, and the power of the life of Christ in us.—J. W. C.

EVERY MAN IN HIS OWN ORDER. 247

You drop twenty different seeds in the same garden-bed, and they spring up into twenty different kinds of plants, from the delicate mignonette to the flaunting sunflower. No skill of gardening can make all the plants alike. The fuchsia will always be a fuchsia, the rose will always be a rose, the geranium will always be a geranium. In the same soil, with the same sunshine and rain, and the same culture, each grows up after its kind. In like manner divine grace does not make all Christian women either Marys of Marthas, or Dorcases or Priscillas, nor all Christian men either Johns or Peters, or Barnabases of Aquilas; but each believer grows up into his own peculiar self. Regeneration neither adds to nor takes from our natural gifts; and since there is infinite variety in the endowments and qualities originally bestowed upon different individuals, there is the same variety in the company of Christ's followers.—Miller.

NOT TOO OLD.

248

George Washington was 43 when he drew his sword under the historic elm at Cambridge as "captain general and commander-in-chief" of the Colonial forces. He was just the age of Julius Cæsar when he took command of the army in Gaul, of Napoleon when he made the mistake of his life and started in to conquer Russia, and he was ten years older than Alexander was when he wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. Charlemagne was just his age when he overcame Wittikind, the Saxon chief, and made all Germany Christian, and the "captain general of the Continentals" was just as old as was Constantine when he determined to make himself master of the world. He was as old as Sesostris, the pharaoh, when he conquered the Hittites and persecuted the children of Israel; as Hannibal when he gave up the hope of conquering Rome and left Italy to defend Carthage against Scipio.

PRAYER.

249

Andrew Murray's book on "With Christ in the School of Prayer" is a good book for all of us. This is the school-room for the school of prayer, and this is the first lesson. Let us read Matt. 6: 6, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

In a Bible of one of my friends not long ago I found on the margin this outline of Matt. 6: 6.

“Period for prayer—‘When thou prayest.’

“Place for prayer—‘Enter into thy closet.’

“Privacy of prayer—‘Shut thy door.’

“Persons in prayer—‘Pray to thy Father.’

“Promise for prayer—‘He shall reward thee.’”

Have you a closet in your home for prayer? “Enter in, shut the door, pray to thy Father.” “Why,” you say, when you rise from your knees, “I don’t believe he heard it. I don’t believe he heard a word.” I don’t believe he heard it, either. The trouble is with your haste, my brother. You cannot enter unceremoniously into the presence of the President of the United States; how much more must you revere the presence of God? My prayer-life must be the life that Jesus Christ would live. Then it must be in his name. When I have “surrendered all,” as we sang, I have the right to use his name, and “he shall reward me.” He has promised it. There are three things that give us the right to use a name:

1. A legal union. I have the right to use the name of my partner.
2. A life union. It is my privilege to use the name of my father.
3. A love union. My wife has a perfect right to use my name.

For all of these reasons we have the right to the use of the name of Christ.

There is a name that is above every name. It sets the angels singing. Plead it; plead it. “Lord, teach us to pray.” Oh, teach me. Thou didst teach George Mueller and Andrew Murray—teach me. Can you say it, my brother, and mean it—“Lord, teach me to pray”?

—J. W. C.

GOD’S PROMISES.

250

When General Booth was in this country he told the story of a man who was starving to death, and the man received a check from a friend, promising to pay a certain amount of money to him. He held it up and danced around the room in his glee. His wife looks at him and says: “Poor man, I was afraid it would be too much for him. He has suffered until he is unsettled mentally.” “Wife,” he

said, "I am going to have it framed and hang it up. I will have it set to music, and we will sing it every day." And General Booth said he could have it framed, and could have it set to music and sing it every day of his life, sing it hour after hour until he died, and it would not do him any good if he did not take the check and demand payment. It is thus we treat God's promises. They are valueless without we present them to Him and believe them.—J.W.C.

PRAYER.

251

A lazy man's prayers are not very apt to be heard, for he doesn't undertake to help to answer them as far as he is able. As Spurgeon used to say, "Though God steers the ship, we must pull the ropes."

252

The requests we make to God are not unheard because we do not receive the answer when we expect them. "If the ships of prayer do not come home speedily," says a writer, "it is because they are more heavily freighted with blessing."

253

An excellent analysis of the familiar text, Matthew xviii. 20, has recently come to my notice. Perhaps this text is the most oft quoted reference ever given in the average prayer meeting, but few of us have ever realized all that this analysis enfolds as being necessary to the best meeting.

"Where.....In the Divine Place.
Two or three.....In Divine Testimony.
Are gathered.....In Divine Separation.
Together.....In Divine Fellowship.
In My Name.....In Divine Authority.
There am I in.....Divine Presence.
The midst of them".....The Divine Center.

254

Obedience is the only path that leads to the glory of God. Not obedience instead of faith, nor obedience to supply the shortcomings of faith, but faith's obedience.—Anon.

255

True prayer is the living experience of the Holy Trinity. The Spirit's breathing, the Son's intercession, the Father's will, these three become one in us.—Andrew Murray.

POWER.

256

A man who is truly filled with God's Spirit will be an easy person to live with and work with. These "touchy," jealous people who are ever being slighted and whose dignity is ever being injured, are too much interested in their own glory and not greatly absorbed in Christ's. Let a piece of iron become heated, and if you then touch it you will only feel the heat and not the iron: so when a man is thoroughly a holy man you become conscious of the indwelling Power before you discover any selfish jealousy or pride.

THE EJACULATORY PRAYERS OF THE
BIBLE.

257

A Father's Prayer for a Son: "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" Gen. xvii. 18.

Sampson's Prayer: "Oh Lord God, remember me." Judg. xvi. 28.

Moses' Prayer: "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." Ex. xxxiii. 18.

Jabez's Prayer: "Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed." I Chron. iv. 10.

Hezekiah's Prayer: "Lord I am oppressed, undertake for me." Isa. xxxviii. 14.

Christ's Prayer: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke xxiii. 34.

The Thief's Prayer: "Lord, remember me." Luke xxiii. 42.

POWER.

258

Power accompanies salvation. If anyone is a child of God and shorn of power it is entirely the fault of himself, and never of God. Christ is the power of God, and if we have him in his fulness it is as natural for us to have power in the estimation of God as it is to breathe. Settle, then, first of all, the question as to whether he is yours. If so you have the accompaniment of power. Second, you shall receive power, the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and, since it can be proven that the Holy Ghost is in the world to make Christ real to every believer, it naturally follows that we may receive him and be filled with all the fulness of God. If, therefore, he has come, and we are still powerless, the fault is entirely our own.

A young engineer was asked in examination the following question: "Suppose you had a steam pump con-

structed for a ship with everything in perfect order, and you should throw out the hose and no water would be drawn, what would you think might be the difficulty?" "I would think," said the student, "that there must be some defect in the pump." "But," said the professor, "that is not admissible, for the supposition is that it is perfect." "Then, sir," said the student, "I should look over to see if the river had run dry."

This is the position for us today. We have the promise of power, we have Christ, the Holy Ghost has come, the reservoir is filled to overflowing. If we are without power it is because we have not appropriated what is our birth-right privilege in Christ.

THE PREACHER: WHERE IS HE? 259

Wanted—

A preacher with most handsome face,
And beaming eyes, and earnest look;
His every gesture full of grace—
Perfection he, without a crook.

His voice must be of sweetest sound,
And not too soft, nor yet too loud;
The pulpit desk he must not pound—
Be not too meek, nor yet too proud.

A young man with an old man's head,
And free of sickness and of pain;
A man of whom it can be said—
"How learned he is, how deep, yet plain!"

Two sermons every Sabbath-day
This man of ours must always preach;
For he must work and earn his pay,
And in the Sunday school must teach.

Then he must visit all around,
And call upon the sick and well;
Yet at his home be always found
To hear the news we have to tell.

He must not wear a tall silk hat,
Nor sport a cane, nor wear a ring;
His body neither lean nor fat—
Too loud and strong he must not sing.

His people he will never scold,
 Nor talk too much of sin and hell;
 And never, never be so bold
 As of their weaknesses to tell.

But all the promises, like flowers
 Done up in bouquets fresh and sweet;
 With pleasant words in fragrant showers,
 He'll cast them at his people's feet.

Where this man is we do not know,
 But we must search and look around;
 And if he's on the earth below,
 Perhaps we'll call him when he's found.

—Lynn Regis.

POWER OF ONE TO CHASE A THOUSAND. 260

When Napoleon first started to fight our country and Austria, do you know what our soldiers called him? It was "Wee One hundred thousand men." That was a fine name. It was a grand testimony to the power of the little Napoleon in the midst of his army. They asked one another, "is 'Wee One hundred thousand men' in the army today?" He was worth that number of men. Please tell me at what figure you rate the Son of God. Is he in the battle today? He is, and he says he has overcome the world. Why should we fear? The world is defeated. I think he just brings us forward to get a share in the glory, but the world is defeated. It is as at Waterloo. The bloody, gory struggle was ended, the French power was broken, and they had turned, when the rumble of the German was heard, and Blucher completed what the British had begun. Tired with the struggle of overpowering the forces that were against us at Waterloo, the British lay where they had fought, and Blucher followed up the defeated, scattered regiments as they fled. Christ has conquered the alien forces, and they are now fleeing; pursue them and finish the defeat. It is child's play compared with Christ's work. Talk about tribulation. Have you ever sweat blood yet? Have you ever agonized with a broken heart for the sins of the world? Have you ever been crucified? Have you ever had that awful black cloud of separation from God come down upon you? "Be of good cheer," says Christ, "I have overcome the world," and they are fleeing. Follow up, follow up.—J. Robertson.

STEP OUT ON THE PROMISE. 261

If any of you went to the World's Fair, you will remember the electrical building, the door of which could only be opened in one way; no one could open it as an ordinary door. There was only one way to get in, and that was to step on a mat outside the door, and an electric current opened the door, and you could walk in. God throws down before us his promises, "Ye shall receive power." Step out on the promise, and claim it today.—J. W. C.

THE WEALTH AND FREENESS OF THE DIVINE
PITY. 262

If one had art to gather up all the golden sunlight that today falls wide over all this continent—falling through every silent hour; and all that is dispersed over the whole ocean, flashing from every wave; and all that is poured refulgent over the northern wastes of ice, and along the whole continent of Europe, and the vast outlying Asia, and torrid Africa; if one could in any wise gather up this immense and incalculable outflow and treasure of sunlight that falls down through the bright hours, and runs in liquid ether about the mountains, and fills all the plains and sends innumerable rays through every secret place, pouring over and filling every flower, shining down the sides of every blade of grass, resting in glorious humility upon the humblest things—on stick, and stone, and pebble; on the spider's web, the sparrow's nest, the threshold of the young foxes' hole, where they play and warm themselves; that rests on the prisoner's window, that strikes radiant beams through the slave's tear, that puts gold upon the widow's weeds, that plates and roofs the city with burnished gold, and goes on in its wild abundance up and down the earth, shining everywhere and always, since the day of primal creation, without faltering, without stint, without waste or diminution; as full, as fresh as overflowing today as if it were the very first day of its outplay—if one might gather up this boundless, endless, infinite treasure, to measure it, then might he tell the height and depth, and unending glory, of the pity of God! The Light and the Sun its source, are God's own figures of the immensity and copiousness of his mercy and compassion.—(Psa. ciii, 11, 12; Isa. lv. 6-13).—H. W. Beecher.

263

Teachers in Bible classes and Sabbath schools point their pupils to the Lamb of God but do not lead the way,

are like guide-books that tell the road, but are not travelers on it; or like Noah's carpenters, who build an ark, and were overwhelmed in the waters that bore it aloft in safety.

Careless parents, who instruct their children and servants as every parent should, in the great doctrines of the Gospel, yet fail to illustrate these doctrines in their lives, and seek not a personal interest in the blood of Christ, are like Noah's carpenters, and must expect their doom.

Printers, sewers, folders, and binders, engaged in making Bibles and religious books; booksellers and publishers of religious newspapers, who are doing much to increase the knowledge of the Gospel, and to save sinners, but so many of whom are careless about their own salvation, will have the mortification of knowing that, while their toils have been instrumental of spiritual good to thousands, they were only like the pack-mules that carried a load to market without tasting it; or like Noah's carpenters, who built a ship in which they never sailed.

Wealthy and liberal, but unconverted men, who help to build churches, and sustain the institutions of the Gospel, but who "will not come unto Christ that they may have life," are hewing the timbers and driving the nails of the ark which they are too proud or too careless to enter. Perhaps they think they will be safe "on the rudder;" but they may find, too late, that when they would ride they must swim—that when they would float they must sink, with all their good deeds, unmixed with faith, as a millstone about their necks.

Moralists who attend church and support the ministry, but who do not receive into their hearts the Gospel they thus sustain, are like Noah's carpenters.—Rev. R. S. Cook.

POWER AND PRAYER.

264

At the close of a meeting in a Vermont city, in which I had spoken of the power of prayer, an old deacon came forward to say that he could give me another illustration. Said he, "My son was in Albany in a medical college. We always thought him a good boy until one day a neighbor met me on the street, and said, 'I saw your boy in Albany yesterday intoxicated.' I thought the news would kill me. I went home to tell his mother, and when the other children had been put in bed, we got down on our knees and began to pray. At midnight we were still in prayer, but at one

o'clock my wife rose from her knees and said, 'God is going to save him.' The next day about noon when the first train came in from Albany my son was a passenger. He came to say that he had been living a sinful life and that all the night before he could not sleep, that at one o'clock in the morning he had risen from his bed determined to seek God and then to come to us for assistance. Instantly we were on our knees by his side and almost instantly he was converted." Then he took me back to the church and introduced me to his son, a practicing physician, and said as he did so, "This is my boy and he is a monument of the fact that God hears and answers importunate prayer."—J. W. C.

TRANSPLANTED SEEDS.

265

Men may need transplanting in order to secure their full development.

If you take a seed that has ripened in Nova Zembla, and bring it into the tropics and plant it, it will not be what it would have been in Nova Zembla, with a short growing season and a scanty supply of food. It will have, with a long summer and an abundant supply, a growth to which no one would suspect it could attain who had only seen it grow in the frigid zones. Many things that are shrubs in the frigid zones are high, waving, century trees in the tropics. And so men in this life are in conditions which, though fitted to develop the earlier stages of human growth, are not fitted to develop the full estate of that idea which God has expressed in the creation of man.—H. W. Beecher.

WEARING THE STONES.

266

God's patient grace can triumph over hard natures.

Stones are charged with the worst species of hardness—"as stubborn as a stone," it is said—and yet hardest stones submit to be smoothed and rounded, under the soft friction of water. Ask the innumerable myriads of stones on the seashore, what has become of all their angles, once so stern and sharp, and of the roughness and uncouthness of their whole appearance. Their single reply is, Water wrought with us, nothing but water, and none of us resisted. Hear, then, the sermon of the pebbles: You are souls, and we are pebbles; water is water, and God is God; if we yield to be fashioned by water, and you do not yield to be fashioned by

God, be not surprised that the very stones should cry out against you.—John Pulsford.

SACRIFICE.

267

Fifty years ago there was a war in India with England. On one occasion several English officers were taken prisoners; among them was one man named Baird. One of the Indian officers brought fetters to put on them all. Baird had been sorely wounded, and was suffering from his weakness. A gray-haired officer said: "You will not put chains on that man, surely?" The answer was: "I have just as many fetters as prisoners, and they must all be worn." Then said the old hero: "Put two pairs on me." Baird lived to gain his freedom; but the other man went down to his death doubly chained. But what if he had worn the fetters of all in the prison, and what if voluntarily he had left a palace to wear chains, to suffer the stripes and endure the agony? That would be a poor illustration of all that Christ has done for you and for me.

SOME LITTLE SIN.

269

It is a fact that we may be saved and still have some small sins in us that will hinder the work of Christ in us and stop the work of sanctification. In the year 1876, when the great Corliss engine was to be tested at the Philadelphia Exposition, and they gave the signal to the engineer to start, the engine would not move. They looked her over; they could see nothing wrong, but she would not move. They sent for the maker. He came and made an examination, and said everything was in place and in good condition, but when they tried again, the engine could not be started. Finally, as he was walking across the engine-room he heard the clinking sound of a little piece of steel, and, stooping down, picked it up, walked quickly across the room and slipped it in place, then he gave the signal, and the great engine seemed to be a thing of life, and every wheel in the Exposition Building felt its power. I take it for granted that the most of us are Christians, but it is well that each one of us should see if there is any small thing wrong in our life, for if so, we are going contrary to the will of God. We are hindering the work of God in us, and through us.—J. W. C.

THE JOY IN SOUL WINNING. 270

When General Booth was in this country, he told of a man leaving Australia who had been working in the gold-fields, and had acquired a fortune. They were on the ship, when a leak was sprung, and the life-boats were lost, and the people were without hope. This strong man thought he could fight through the waves to the island, and he was about to spring into the water, when a little bit of a girl, whose mother had been lost in the storm, asked of him, "Sir, can you save me?" He looked at his belt of gold, and then at the child, and then at the belt, and then at the child again. And then he threw the belt of gold away, took her on his back, and threw himself into the sea. He struggled through the waves and with life almost gone he reached the land. The next day, when consciousness returned to him, and the little girl put her arms around his neck, and her lips to his cheek, and said, "I am so glad you saved me," that was worth more than all the gold in Australia. That is the soul-winner's crown. It is for some man whom you have won for Christ to meet you on the streets of gold and say, "I am so glad you preached that sermon, or sung that song; it saved me."—J. W. C.

UNCONFESED SIN. 271

If there is an unconfessed sin in your heart or in your home, of course you will have to get that out of your way, or there will be no light or power in your home. I shall never forget how my little daughter did a certain thing repeatedly, and I said, "If you do that again, I shall have to punish you." After a while one of the maids in the house told me she had done what I had told her not to do, and now I felt that I should be obliged to punish her and keep my word, or lose all influence with my child. I called her in, and she said, "I didn't do it." But there was the testimony of the maid, and I punished her, for I was sure that she had disobeyed me. She was a sensitive child, but she shut her lips tight together and never a tear was in her eye, and got down from my arms and went out. Before long I heard her upstairs, at her play, laughing as though she had forgotten all about it. A little later, I learned that the child was perfectly right and she hadn't done the thing at all. A conversation something like this seemed to go on within me: "You have made a mistake with that child, and she doesn't quite think the same of you; you had better

make it right." I said to myself, "I know the child has forgotten it; I will let it go." The Spirit of God said, "She may not have forgotten." I called her down to me and said, "My child, I punished you a little while ago; I have found that you did not do it. I was wrong, and I want you to forgive me." She looked at me just a moment, and her little arms went around my neck, and she sobbed as though her little heart would break. And I want to tell you that I have not lost my influence with her from that day to this. I am sure you must put away everything that comes between you and God. Yes, it goes deeper than that. We need to learn the lesson in the fifteenth of John. When the vine-dresser prunes the vine for fruit, he cuts away the real wood on the branch. There must be a cutting off if there is to be produced much rich fruit. If we are to produce fruit for God, we must cut away the things that are simply questionable.—J. W. Chapman.

SUMMER HEAT.

272

Man vainly attempts to resist the working of the Divine love.

You may shut up your house and exclude the light; but, in spite of you, summer heat will permeate the roof and the walls and get inside. So may men shut up their souls against the light of Truth; but to make themselves proof against Love is more than they can do. Love is the sole omnipotence. The spirit-ocean of God's love, without let or hindrance, flows into and through the angelic heavens, and is thence propelled down into the souls and bosoms of men. In due time a perfect balance between heavenly and earthly conditions will be the result of this ceaseless endeavor. All commotions, whether of elements, nations, or churches, should be ascribed to this secret pressure of heaven on the hearts and minds of men, and thence on the corrupt atmospheres of the earth.—Dr. John Pulsford.

SOULS.

273

Souls thrive that grow up clinging to the cross.

The vine which trails along the ground, and twines its tendrills round any rubbish which it may come upon, is sure to be trodden under foot. If it lift itself from the earth and fling its clasping rings round the shaft of the cross, its stem will not be bruised, and its clusters will be heavier and sweeter. The tendrills which anchor it to the rubbish-heap are the same as those which clasp it to the cross.—A. Maclaren, D.D.

NOT BORROWED TROUBLE. 274

I saw a delicate flower had grown up, two feet high, between the horses' path and the wheel-track. An inch more to right or left had sealed its fate, or an inch higher; and yet it lived to flourish as much as if it had a thousand acres of untrodden space around it, and never knew the danger it incurred. It did not borrow trouble, nor invite an evil fate by approaching it.—Henry D. Thoreau.

DISCOURAGED CHRISTIAN WORKERS. 275

Have you noticed how the engine-driver in charge of a train, when he stops at a station pays hardly any attention to the traffic at the station, no attention to the passengers—whether some millionaire is traveling or not? But when the train stops, he is out with the oil-flask, lifting the little brass covers and pouring in a few drops in one place, then another, to prevent friction and to make everything work easily; for friction means breakdown, and breakdown may mean disaster. So with Christ. Are you, my brother, the engine pulling and tugging away at some church in a back-woods district or in a very godless town? My sister, are you an engine in your own way, pulling and tugging at some Bible class or Sabbath school or tract distribution in some wretched slum? You do not mean to give it up, but you feel as if the wheels are barely turning, you are making nothing of it. Think of this: The Lord looks after the engine especially. He comes with the oil of comfort and pours it on your overheated spirit.—John McNeill.

RESULTS OF CRIME ON FUTURE GENERATIONS. 276

At the recent meeting of the Congress of Criminal Anthropology at Geneva, Switzerland, Dr. Legrain, physician-in-chief of the asylum of Ville-Evrard, gave the results of his investigations, which extended over a period of years and showed how sin, like disease, is transmitted from drunken father to appetite enslaved son; how in such soil the seeds of crime and madness develop and ripen in the last generation into sterile idiocy and the extinction of the race.

FIRST GENERATION.

He traced the course of four generations of drinkers in 215 families. One hundred and sixty-eight families showed

unmistakable symptoms of degeneracy; 63 cases of mild insanity; 88 were mentally unsound; 45 at times dangerously insane; many of the children were weaklings and died at an early age, 6 out of 8 in one case, 10 out of 16 in another. These 6 latter who remained, were all feeble-minded and had epileptic fits and a prey to evil instincts. Thirty-nine families found convulsions; epilepsy in 52; hysteria in 16; meningitis in 5; 108 families out of the 215 counted one out of every two individuals victims of periodical alcoholic delirium; 106 families of the 215, insanity had developed.

SECOND GENERATION.

Ninety-eight observations gave the following: 54 families had one or more members who were imbeciles or idiots; 23 families there were those who were morally irresponsible, untimely births, extraordinary mortality and hereditary diseases caused the children to die in appalling numbers. At this stage fathers and mothers had become common drunkards with but eight exceptions. In 42 families he found chronic cases of convulsions, and epilepsy in 40. In 23 families insanity exists.

THIRD GENERATION.

Seven observations, or families, gave him a total of 17 children; all were mentally unsound and physically stunted; 2 were insane, 4 subject to convulsions, 2 epilepsy, 2 hysteria, 1 meningitis, 3 scrofula.

Summing up the 814 cases found in the 215 families, he found 42.2 percent. were alcoholics, 60.9 percent. are degenerates, 13.9 percent. morally irresponsible, 22.7 percent. have convulsions, 19 percent. are incurably insane; 174 disappeared from this world before or almost before having drawn their first breath; 93 cases of tuberculosis, which bring the total of those who died from hereditary alcoholism up to one-third.

There is no fifth generation, for the last line is a microcephalous idiot. Thus Moses was right, as proven by science, when he said, "God visits the iniquities of the parents unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him." There is no fifth.

SPIRITUAL POWER.

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Text: "And Jacob was left alone and there wrestled a man with him." Genesis 32: 24.

In all the history of the church it has been found by those who were seeking after spiritual power that the blessing was not theirs until first of all they had come in close touch with God. This is necessary, first in order that they may behold his beauty and catch a glimpse of all that there is for the believer in Christ. We are so much taken up with the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches and the fascination of pleasure, that we are apt to be blinded to the beauties of the life of blessing, and it is when we get alone with God that we really appreciate all that he has for us.

It is necessary for us in the second place that we may submit to his close heart-searching, for doubtless between many Christians and power there is something standing as an obstacle so small that they have passed it by, whereas in the light of the countenance of God it becomes a very serious hindrance, and so my message to the children of God today is, get alone with him quickly, ask him to open your eyes that you may see something of his beauty, and then make you willing to give up anything that stands between you and the possession of his power. Rest assured that when you do this he will be more than willing to show you where you are wrong and make you right.

This is a part of the story of Jacob, the man in the Old Testament, who really appeals to us as much as Peter in the New, when we read of his failures and his many grievous mistakes. And yet when we read that our God is called "the God of Jacob," we certainly take heart, because we know that whatever may be our wanderings and failures, God will help us to overcome them. There are many things about the life of Jacob that would apply to us. First of all, his failings; he deceived his father, he cheated Esau, and he was exactly like ourselves, except for the grace of God. Let us not be too critical of the men who have made awful mistakes in their lives, for were it not for God's sovereign grace we, too, doubtless would have been worse.

His aspirations speak to us; we, too, have had our Bethels, when we have been almost face to face with God and have heard him speak. His sorrows touch us, for we also have had our struggles and our lessons, and many of us are living today because of some great sacrifice we have made, of some great burden we have borne. But the story

of Jacob ought to lead us, every one, from the place where, like him, we may not only have a new name given to us, but have a new nature as well.

1. This event in his life is most striking. He had stolen his birthright, as you know, and he had gone away, a fugitive from his home. He had stopped at Bethel to sleep, with stones for his pillow and a condemning conscience to disturb his dreams. He had gone into the far country and served fourteen years for the woman he loved, and he is now homeward bound once more after these many years. As he journeys he hears that Esau is coming, and as "conscience makes cowards of us all," so Jacob at once became afraid. He sent messengers ahead to meet his brother, and he divided his men and his flocks, so that one messenger after another should come before Esau, and be thus impressed with the greatness of his erring brother. Finally Jacob reaches Jabbok's ford and he sent his family over while he tarried on the opposite side of the stream, and one of the most suggestive texts in all the story is this: "And Jacob was left alone."

It was a very solemn place. Two gentlemen determined some time ago to spend the night at Jabbok's ford that they might enter more fully into the experience of Jacob, and they waited until the midnight hour and then fled. But it may be more solemn by far for some of us in these days to come into close quarters with God and allow him to deal with our shortcomings and our sins, than for Jacob to meet the angel and struggle as he did. But may God help us every one to be perfectly honest and ask him to deal with us very faithfully.

2. Jabbok was the crisis of Jacob's life. Bethel was like his conversion, and he might have yielded himself to God that all the story of his after years would have been different. But instead of so doing we find him having his varied experience, his sorrows as well as his joys, his days of rapture as well as his hours of depression; his was a very checkered career.

And you, too, at the day of your regeneration might have apprehended all the blessing of God, for the day of your birth into the Kingdom you became "a child of God, an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ," and it is because you do not apprehend your spiritual blessings and live up to them that you have had a dreary experience, days when you were hot and again cold; near to him, and again

far away from him; consistent, and then inconsistent. But this never was God's plan for your life, and if this has been your experience may God bring you to some crisis at this present time when you shall ask him to put his finger upon the thing that has been in your life, and, even though it be giving up the dearest thing in the world to you, ask him to give you strength to let it go. Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of power. Claim it if you have fulfilled the conditions.

3. "There wrestled a man with him." This is not a story to describe Jacob's earnestness in prayer; it has too many times been used in that way. Jacob did not wrestle with the angel, but the angel wrestled with him. Jacob only struggled; the angel of the Lord did the wrestling. It is a picture of God's faithful dealings with one of his own, and doubtless he has been dealing with many of you in the same way. If there has been in your life constant discontent and oft-repeated experiences of unrest these are clear indications of the fact that God is having a struggle with you, and that he would lead you out of your old position of half-heartedness and forward into the place of victory, and beyond. It is a sad thing when we know that the angel was the angel of the Lord, to see Jacob struggle as he did, but it is a more awful thing by far for one to hold out a minute against God's plan for one's life. I know how very many times we think that if we were to surrender to him we should be called upon to do some hard thing, to bear some heavy burden, to dwell frequently in the darkness and altogether have anything but a happy experience, but the testimony of God's Word is quite the opposite—"I delight to do thy will, O God."

If one of my children should give me the privilege for one day of choosing for him everything that would enter into that day I would not put upon him the things he did not like nor bring before him the things that were distasteful to him, but I should spend hours trying to determine what would be his greatest joy and minister to him his greatest happiness. "Like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." We may as well learn quickly. We can well afford to trust God in all this matter of the surrendered life.

And after Jacob had struggled for all this time, the angel "touched the hollow of his thigh," and his sinew shrunk away. There must be something between you and God if you are not at rest and filled with peace. It may be

as small as a sinew and counted as useful as a sinew, but God must touch that thing before he bestows power upon you. With some it may be pride; with others temper, and with still others an evil tongue or an unforgiving spirit. But whatever it is God will reveal it to you if you wait honestly before him, and he will put it out of your life if you will give him the privilege so to do.

4. The clinging comes next, when Jacob simply yields himself to the embrace of the angel and struggles no more. "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," he cries; "and he blessed him there." Have you not learned that God always waits for you to perfectly put yourself in his hands to be controlled by his mind, dominated by his Spirit, instructed by his Word that he may give you all his power to be used in your life? A man made his way to California in the days when gold was being discovered in great quantities and stayed away from his eastern home for years, but he never allowed a month to go by that he did not send back to his loved ones some token of his love. The finest pictures were in their home. The finest adornments of every sort were in every room, but at last, after years of separation, his wife wrote to him, saying, "My husband, we are pleased with your offerings, but the time has come when we want you," and this is what God is saying. We have offered him a little of our time and a very little of our money, and occasionally displays of our strength, but he is saying to us today, "My child, I want you and all there is of you; throw yourself into my arms and rest and I will give you power."

5. "And when God touched him he began to limp." If anything has stood between us and God and we have held it as a cherished treasure in our minds, doubtless when God touches it he will leave upon us the mark of it all. And some of us today may be forced to limp away from our close embrace of him; but it would be better ever to limp so far as the world is concerned and be counted maimed if only we might have God's power and his blessing upon us. It is not so much a question of what the world thinks of us in these days, but altogether a question of how we stand in the estimation of God. "Search me, oh God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me" should be the Christian's constant prayer.

6. Did you ever notice the result of the angel's wrestling and Jacob's yielding?

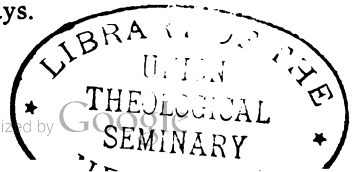
(1) Jacob received a new name. "What is thy name?"

said the angel to him, and I could imagine how Jacob would hesitate for a little, but then he made confession and said, "My name is Jacob." This by interpretation means supplanter and cheat. But the confession of his weakness brought the display of God's strength, for the angel said, "Thy name shall be no longer Jacob, but thou shalt be called Israel."

If you have come to the place of crisis today in your life and you have yielded to God, rise and claim his blessing and his power. You will not need to talk much about it to those who are round about you, but they will give you the new name, too. For they will notice your gentleness and take knowledge of your peace and bear witness to your power. It is not possible for one to be a Spirit-filled man or woman without having his name changed in the world.

(2) The angel said, "Thou hast power with God and with men." But you will notice that it was "power with God" first. We ordinarily put it the other way, and many of us would like power that we might be able to preach, and others that we might be able to sing, and still others that we might for some selfish reason come into the possession of a great fame; but a man can never really have power with men in this world until first of all he has power with God, and only the life that is right and the heart that is clean and the will that is really surrendered may claim this.

But after one has surrendered and received the new name and the baptism of power, the more serious problem is, how shall he keep it? It is a good thing to have a crisis in one's life and a date of definite surrender, and while the memory of such experience is very blessed, it is a fatal mistake to try to make it last for all the future days. It is said that the Frazier gun hurls a projectile of a thousand pounds, using 500 pounds of powder at a blast, and that this projectile may be sent through armor plate 17 inches thick; that it is also possible with this same gun to throw a shell thirteen miles, and when the gun is discharged it is automatically thrown back again for reloading, and when it is thrown back it charges the air chamber, which, when the gun is loaded and again released throws it back again in position. So that the gun in use is always being fired and always being charged. This is the picture for the Christian. He is always giving forth of that which God has given him if he is really his child, but he must ever be back again at the feet of the Master receiving a fresh infilling, a new anointing, another vision of the face of the risen Christ. This is the picture of continued blessing always.



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