


THE COLLEGE YEAR



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BOSTON AND NEW YORK

THE COLLEGE YEAR

WITH HAPPY HOPES AND TENDER WISHES ON
COMMENCEMENT DAY FROM YOUR LOVING
PRESIDENT

CAROLINE HAZARD

June 21, 1910

In memory of
Georgette (Grenier) Lasarte
member of the Wellesley
College Class of 1910, a
member of the Track Team
and Running Team, a
Durant Scholar, and a
member of Phi Delta Kappa -

She died in her 90th
year serving as a very
active Secretary of 1910.

Donated to the Wellesley
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son, Robert C. Lasarte

Leamster, Massachusetts

January 1, 1983

THE COLLEGE YEAR

VESPER ADDRESSES
IN WELLESLEY COLLEGE CHAPEL

BY THE PRESIDENT
CAROLINE HAZARD



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

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FOREWORD

THESE Vesper addresses are selected from those made in recent years in Wellesley College Chapel at the fortnightly service when the music carried on and completed the theme. They are arranged in sequence from the beginning to the end of the year, from Flower Sunday to Baccalaureate Vespers; but it will be understood they were not made consecutively in any one year, as the multiplication of Christmas addresses will testify.

The Office of Music sets forth the ideals sought for. There is often some indication of the anthems the choir sang or of the organ music. The spoken word was brief, only enough to sound a keynote. In publishing it, I hope that it may recall to some of my hearers something of the quiet and peace of those evening hours.

C. H.

WELLESLEY COLLEGE,
May, 1910.

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PRELUDE

To-NIGHT the place was full ; an eager throng
 Pressed round the door, a youthful surging sea
 In serried ordered ranks looked up at me ;
Not only faces which to me belong
But young men's faces in their manhood strong :
 And when the hymn was lifted, harmony
 In full four parts resounded splendidly
And girls' sweet voices sang the angels' song.
The song, the prayer, the words I tried to say, —
 What are they all ? How idle they all seem,
 How at the outer portals they all stay !
True worship waits before the inner shrine,
 Nor throngs nor sermon mark the place divine
 Where souls may catch the far celestial gleam.

I

FLOWER SUNDAY

Love is the fulfilling of the law. — ROMANS, XIII: 10.

THIS first Sunday of the College year has been consecrated from the beginning to a contemplation of the Love of God. Surely, what loftier theme could engage our thought, — into what higher regions of aspiration can we be led, than those opened to us by the very words which we reverently speak? And this day is called “Flower Sunday,” with a tender and wise recognition of the limitations of the human mind. The Love of God! Who can comprehend it in its awfulness, in its perfection? But the love of God as revealed to us in our daily life, — which speaks to us in all nature, which smiles at us in tender flower-faces, and finds its lodging in the hearts of our dear ones, — love made human, love made tangible, love as it shows itself in the life of our Saviour, in His daily walks and talks with His neighbors and friends, this love we may confidently say we know. It is our only stepping-stone toward the apprehension — I cannot say

comprehension, for how can the finite contain the Infinite — of that Divine Love which holds us all in being. It is the power of the sun which not only holds the stars to their courses, but which makes each tiny blade of grass lift itself from the Earth. Just so, whether we recognize it or not, it is the Love of God which literally holds us in being, — for in Him we live and move and have our being, if we have any life at all.

There are endless aspects of the subject which might be dwelt upon, but to-night let us consider the words of the great Apostle in the passage just read: "Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." And observe first that love does not do away with law. Have we not often seen some spoiled child whose foolish mother failed to correct him, — her affection for the child being so great that he was allowed to make himself very troublesome to other people? The poor child himself will have to learn some time, when the correction will not be tempered with affection, — when the law which he breaks will inflict its own penalty. I came "to fulfil the law," Christ tells us. No, love does not abolish law, but it imposes a higher duty in fulfilling it, — not from fear, not from any dread of consequences, but from love of our neighbor, — from

appreciation of the beneficent rule of law, transforming a blind obedience into intelligent coöperation.

Many of you are gathered to-night for the first time on a Sunday evening within the walls of this Chapel. For the first time you are in absolute control of your own actions. You have a sense of freedom and exhilaration, and if you are the wise girls I take you to be, deep in your hearts a certain timidity, — a certain anxiety as to the new experience before you. The days of early girlhood have opened for you into this larger life. How will you enter it? what principles have you to cling to? what hopes and aspirations to be your constant companions and guides?

On this first Sunday of the College year you may well ask yourselves such questions: questions which may never pass your lips, — but questions which must be answered by your lives. And the first principle I hope you have firmly in mind is Obedience. Does this sound cold and formal — even childish — to you? But from what we have just been considering you will see that I do not mean blind obedience, — simply doing something because others do, — but a willing, glad obedience. The apostle has some very plain directions on this point: “Wherefore ye must

needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." It is for conscience sake we must obey, realizing that we are part of a great whole, and that we must bear our part. You remember Kipling's allegory of the ship that found itself. Every screw and every rivet had to be strained and tested till it realized its place and its value to the ship. Never think of yourselves as unimportant. This whole college is for each one of you, as much as if you were the only student. It is for you that thought and care and prayer are every day given and offered. And your part must be to "render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; honor to whom honor."

If to Obedience you add Persistence, you will have two vital principles in the new life you are to lead. Consider what is the main object of your coming. Was it to please your parents, or because your friends came? or deep in your thoughts does there lie the unexpressed longing to be the best kind of woman you can be,—to develop all your powers, to grow in grace as well as in knowledge? If this is the controlling motive of your life, it will not cut you off from pleasures, but it will put them in their right place as secondary matters,— things

to be heartily enjoyed, but not made the main object of endeavor. So you will persist in your efforts after the very best, as it is shown to you more as you go on.

Love does not abrogate law. It imposes a new duty of fulfilling it, until we can truly say, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," for "love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Love then implies respect for the rights of another, in so perfect a way that all the negative commandments are done away with, and "thou shalt not" becomes a superfluous injunction. This must be the law under which we live in such a community as this: a law of kindness, of gentleness, of tender consideration; a law of justice also; a law which upholds the dignity of the person; a law to which each one is responsible. For the law of love is not a passive law. Love is an active principle: it must find expression, it must rule our lives and conduct. It cannot be shut up in our hearts, and be lost to sight. If we have it in ever so small measure and exercise ourselves in obedience to law, in the way we have just spoken of, and if we are persistent in all high and pure endeavor, it will expand and grow, and take full command of the life.

And how can we live by this law of love, how

can we govern ourselves by it, unless our imperfect love is fed from the Divine Source of all love? This is what morning prayers are for, — that we may begin each day in grateful dependence upon our Father's care; that we may bring our hearts to be filled with His unspeakable love. For the religion by which we live is the thing that binds us to God, that shows us our union with the Divine. Jesus declared it to us when He cried, "I and my Father are one"; and "The Father hath not left me alone." It is Jesus who points us the way; it is He who came to live the life of love upon earth which is our pattern and guide; it is He who shows us that here in this present, and in all Eternity, it must be true that "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

Let us pray: —

Our Heavenly Father, fill our hearts we beseech Thee with Thy love, which shall rule and govern our lives. We come to Thee knowing our own weakness, knowing our own liability to fall from our high endeavor, but knowing that in Thee is all fulness, — that in Thee is the Fountain of Love. Fill us with Thyself we pray Thee, dear Lord. We claim Thy promise. We

ask, knowing that Thou wilt give. We open our hearts to receive. Here and now come to us, to enlighten our minds, to kindle our hearts, to awaken all that is best in us. We bring ourselves to Thee, our best offering, our reasonable service. Govern our bodies and our souls, we pray Thee, and fill us with Thy love, which shall teach us Thy Law.

We ask it for Christ's sake.

II

THE OFFICE OF MUSIC

Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. —
EPHESIANS, V : 19.

THE origin of music lies hidden in the remote past. Who was that Jubal, “the father of all such as handle the harp and organ”? What inner necessity of his nature compelled the rhythmic beat of the hammer of the ancient worker in iron and brass, till the feet of the hearer followed the cadence of the sound, and leaped in joyous dance? It was King David, in the height of his power, who took a timbrel and danced before the Ark of the Lord. As far back as there is any history, mention is made of music. Wherever there was a temple, there was also the worship of songs of praise. In victory it celebrated, in sorrow it consoled. In it the heart of man found utterance, speaking a language that was universal.

We are beginning to-night the vesper services of the year, — the vespers with music, as we have simply called them. Let us consider what part

music should play in a service such as this. Let us think of its office, and its influence.

As an art music is the most creative of all arts. Think of a splendid picture, — one of Raphael's Madonnas, that Queen of Heaven, as she stands on the clouds holding the holy child, in Dresden. The picture in its beauty glows before you. There is the canvas, there are the colors. Only a Raphael could blend them so, but even he had to use material means to embody his ideal. One can touch it, one can lift it, — it stands the same after centuries of time. But reflect on a masterpiece of music. The tiny dots on the white paper reveal to the inner ear of the trained musician their harmonies ; but to present it to any one else he has to make it live, and with the vibrations of air caused by vocal chords or reed or string, make it audible, make it truly alive. A man on a desert island utters a cry of despair — a note is born, which can touch the farthest star ! So long as we breathe the air, we have capacity for making sound, from our own being, and the conditions of life, with no handicap of material things. It should be therefore an inspiration to us from its very nature, as the highest joy of man is to create. To create sound with voice and instrument is one of the purest

forms of creative ability, immaterial, the nearest to spiritual creation man can attain to.

The fundamentals of the art of music, as Browning truly says, are everywhere in the world.

Loud, soft, and all is said :

Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought :

And there ! Ye have heard and seen : consider and bow the head !

The artist everywhere takes what is common and universal, and raises it to a higher level.

Art was given for that.

God uses us to help each other, so

Lending our minds out.

The life, the love, the aspiration of the artist, are embodied in the creation of his art. Just so fully as he can realize his vision, just in that measure does he create, and just to that degree does he awaken a response in his audience.

With these elementary facts in mind as to the basis of music, let us consider what its office in worship may be, and of what great service it should be in such a community as ours.

In any college, life is apt to be crowded. Not only the hours of study and stated instruction take the students' time, but there are endless

student activities. There are associations for special study, or philanthropic work. The days are full of delightful employment. And in the main, this is right. Each student must learn for herself what her own limit is, and in choosing become strong. But there is danger of a mental and moral congestion. One is so busy that there is often little time to think — the externals have it all their own way. And life does not consist of externals. We are rich or we are poor according to the fulness of the inner life, the life of the spirit.

In these days philosophers are telling us of the wonderful workings of the sub-conscious mind, the place where dreams are made. It is this unknown and little explored realm which is the seat of the true self. Into this sub-conscious stratum a residuum sinks of all our doing and thinking. At any moment of unexpected trial the real self shows itself spontaneously. It is this real self we are most concerned with, this ultimate *ego*, who does not brook direct instruction, but who unerringly assimilates the real desires of our hearts, and builds up what is our actual character.

The older church recognized distinctly two forms of devotion, — one the active works of

charity, and the other the passive work of meditation on divine things. All religions have honored the practice of withdrawing from active life, to lead a life of contemplation. One must endeavor to "spread one's self before the Lord," to open the doors of the soul to receive of the divine effulgence. In such a life as ours times of such devout meditation are rare; but there can be no true growth of the soul, no enrichment of the real springs of action, unless there is some approach to the Divine Source of all life.

And it is here that the great office of music in worship comes to our aid. On the wings of harmony we are carried to the very gates of heaven. In softest tones the restless spirit finds the answer to some of its questionings; in solemn reverberations it prostrates itself in worship. Never think of these vesper services as sacred concerts. They should be far more. They should be times of refreshment and spiritual uplift, when the everyday life is left behind, and in the peace and quiet of this Chapel the soul can try its wings. "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth," should be our cry; and the still small voice which in our hurried life we almost stifle will speak. We shall know our divine heritage, and

come into communion with the Father of our Spirits.

This is the great office of worship; this is the reason of the prayer and the praise. Music devoutly heard can build a Jacob's ladder, on which the Angels of God ascend and descend. They whisper to each soul the word for each, the word that is unknown to all others. Or it may be too soon for a definite word: if it is only an impulse toward holiness, if under such influence we can catch a glimpse only of the heavenly vision which forever beckons, then let us rejoice. Then will these quiet hours fulfil their mission, and we shall go forth singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord.

Let us pray: —

O Thou who didst create man in Thine own image and breathe into him the breath of life, quicken that life within us by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may attempt Thy praise. Thou whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, yet art mindful of man; Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thine own gifts we bring to Thee: the power of our understandings; the love of our hearts; the worship

of our spirits, to offer at Thy throne. From Thee we came, to Thee we go. O Thou who art our Father, accept the praise and homage which we bring to Thee. We lay hold of Thine own gift of concord of sweet sound, of pure harmony, to utter the emotions of our hearts. Strengthen, fortify, ennoble us. May we claim our high heritage as Thy children ; fill us with pure thoughts and holy desires, which shall find their fruit in our daily walk and conversation. Thus we pray Thee to bless the waiting souls before Thee. Fill us each with Thy grace, and shed upon us the perpetual dew of Thy blessing, for Christ's sake. Amen.

III

MUSIC : A PATH OF THE SOUL

O send out thy light and thy truth : let them lead me. —
PSALM XLIII : 3.

AT the beginning of the College year, what can we take better for our theme of meditation than the prayer of the Psalmist, which has just been offered: "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me." We all need guidance; we all need light; but in new and untried paths these are especially to be prayed for. And so I have read this old lesson, where Joshua was addressing for the last time the children of Israel, whom he had led into the promised land, rehearsing to them the wonderful ways of the Lord in the journey through the wilderness in casting out the hostile tribes which inhabited the land; driving out the kings of the Amorites, "Not with *thy* sword, nor with *thy* bow," as he says to them; and giving them a land for which they did not labor, and cities which they did not build, where they ate of the vines which they had not planted,

and had the fruit of the olive which was tended by alien hands.

Is it not an allegory for us? Have we not come into the heritage of other times? Are we not reaping ourselves, here, fruit which we have not sown? are we not tasting joys for which we have not labored? Truly the Lord has led us in pleasant paths; we have a goodly heritage; a heritage which has been accumulated for us in the thought and endeavor of good men and women of whom we never heard. And it is with joy and with confidence that we can utter this prayer of the Psalmist's: praying for light and knowing that light is come; for guidance and knowing that guidance is waiting for us; asking for mercy and knowing that mercy is enfolding us.

All worship must consist of two factors — the element of petition and the element of praise must join, or it can be no true worship. Do we not all remember how easy it was to ask for things when we were children? When we were hungry, no one needed to tell us that we must ask for food. If we were tired, we soon made it known. But we had to be taught to utter words of thanks. It is so in the larger life of the soul. If we are unhappy, we turn to God in prayer and supplication. We find no difficulty in making our com-

plaint to Him ; but in our thanksgiving do we turn to Him as naturally ? We certainly should, for each one of us can remember how we have been led, perhaps not through literal wildernesses as were the children of Israel, but certainly through times of temptation, through times of uncertainty, till we too have reached a promised land.

If we will but open our eyes, there are so many blessings for which we should give thanks ! It is to foster this atmosphere of praise, of a daily thanksgiving, which should be part of our lives, that these vesper services have been begun. The spoken word of our lips is so incomplete that it has to be lifted by the spiritualizing influence of music to become perfect thanksgiving and praise, the most adequate expression that we can conceive of in our human limitations. When we think for a moment of the evolution of music, from the rude beating of tom-toms, which marked the rhythm of savage dances ; of its gradual unfolding to the time when words were added and it became a monotonous chant ; of the still higher lifting of its office, when not only the whole body had part in the rhythmical expression of music, but words of beauty were added to it as in the choral song which King David sang ; and finally, in its later

days, its emancipation from all articulate words, when it seems to deal with emotion in its purest and most abstract form, playing upon our sense of sublimity, of wonder, of praise and aspiration, using these as the materials of its existence as an art, — then we come to some conception of what the office of music may be in worship. It should purify and elevate and fortify ; it should give expression to the inexpressible ; it should give form to the inchoate.

Holy men of all ages have felt its noble influence. “ Whosoever is harmonically composed,” writes Sir Thomas Browne, “ delights in harmony ; which makes me much distrust the symmetry of those heads which disclaim against all Church-Musick. . . . There is something in it of Divinity more than the ear discovers ; it is an Hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world, and creatures of God ; such a melody to the ear as the whole world well understood would afford the understanding. In brief it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of God.”

With such an ideal of the office of music, with such an assurance of the wonderful realm to which it is the open door, these vesper services have been instituted. In each service it will be

noted that one theme dominates the whole. To-night it is the search — the quest — of the soul, and its dedication, which we consider together.

In the repose and the peace which comes to us at this quiet hour, let us partake of the food of the spirit; let us seize upon the thing by which men live, the Eternal aspiration, the Eternal thanksgiving which should rise in every soul. Let the music bear us to heavenly places, where the Spirit breathes its native air: so will our service be a true service, a service of joy and of praise which shall enter deeply into our lives, and bear its own precious fruit.

Let us pray: —

O Lord, Thou Sun of Righteousness, Thou Light of Life, the Lover of peace and concord, from whom all heavenly harmony doth proceed, we bow the head in awe and adoration, and have no words to utter the deep devotion, the tender reverence, the solemn joy with which the contemplation of Thy glory fills us. We therefore lay hold of Thy gift of harmonious sound to waft us nearer to Thy mysterious presence. On the ascending vibrations of mighty chords we lay our devotion to be lifted like incense to Thy throne. And as the temples of our hearts resound with

the accents of Thy praise, as they are made new and clean with the sweep of stirring harmonies, as they are hushed and stilled with the beauty of perfect cadences, come Thou, O Lord, and fill them ; come Thou and take Thine own place, the light within the temple, the Holy of Holies upon the altar of our hearts. May we not spend ourselves in empty emotion ; but may the offering of praise we bring, having lifted us nearer Thee, having opened the channels for Thy grace, having cleansed and purified our hearts, send us forth renewed in the spirit of our minds, with strong hope and high courage, better fitted for Thy service.

Breathe Thy Holy Spirit upon us. Inspire us with true worship. Sanctify the praise we bring. Complete the offering, Giver of the gift. We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

IV

RENEWAL

He restoreth my soul. — PSALM, XXIII : 3.

THE beautiful Thirty-first Psalm which we have just read, with its “Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that trust in the Lord,” and the portion of the prophecy of Isaiah, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee,” are both amplifications of the idea of rest and security, which finds its expression most perfectly in the most familiar of all the Psalms.

There is one phrase of this beautiful Twenty-third Psalm, which this evening is a part of our worship, which is sometimes overlooked in the multitude of beautiful images which it presents to our minds. We naturally in any difficulty cling to the opening words, “The Lord is my shepherd.” One can dwell upon that phrase in as many ways as there are words in it. *The* Lord, — the one and only Lord; *The Lord*, — the great Creator; *The Lord is* my shepherd, — the actual fact of His existence; *The Lord is my*

shepherd, — the vital connection between the soul and the maker of all things ; and The Lord is my *shepherd*, — the great fact that the Mighty One, who is the Lord, who is ours, does care for us, as a shepherd cares for the flocks in his charge.

But beautiful as is the opening verse, and profitable as might be the thought contained in it, to-night let us turn to another truth which this Psalm voices for us. *He restoreth my soul*, — the need of restoration, the need of constant renewal.

Perhaps the most perfect thing in the world is a beautiful gem. Hidden in the darkness of the mountain it lay for untold ages. Why it is a glowing red, or a heavenly blue, or absolutely clear, no one knows. Cut into tiny facets by skilful hands, it takes the light at many angles, and sends it back glorified by its own beauty. Deep in its heart lies that spark of fire, forever glowing, forever unconsumed. It seems a morsel of eternity, a bit of indestructibility, perfect, secure in its own being, unchanged by time or circumstance. In the very fact of its perfection lies its limitation. With all this beauty, with the hint of life which its light gives, it has no power of growth, it lies in the hand perfect but cold, beautiful but lifeless.

Take another example of beauty : a seed falls into good ground, a tiny plant springs up, the seed-leaves expand and reach toward the sun. A year with its changing seasons passes over it. The shoot from the seed has grown thick and stocky ; a little bush with its twigs and leaves and thorns braves the chill winds of Spring, and with the June sunshine a fresh miracle begins : a tiny green bud, which swells and grows till between the calyx-leaves a hint of color comes ; and at last sun and rain and soil and air have done their work, and a lovely rose uncloses its petals, those soft silky petals, soft as a baby's cheek, lovely as the sunset sky. A day or two it lives — and then it is gone !

Lo, the Gods all are weeping, are weeping the Goddesses
also,

That all beauty must perish, and that the perfected must die.

But that is part of its perfection. It passes on to other forms of life.

Here are two forms of beauty,—one unchanging, the other subject to all conceivable mutations. It is easy to recognize to which of these types we belong ; but we have the added power of self-direction in our growth. We grow, by what wonderful process we know not. Our

physical being develops unconsciously to ourselves, though even in that development our minds have a greater share than we recognize. But in the life of the mind, in the higher life of the soul, we have the capacity for control, for guidance. We are conscious beings. We have eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and we must direct our own lives. And so we come to new problems, — problems of defeat, — problems of fatigue, — problems arising from a failure of courage.

The sin I impute to each frustrate ghost
Is the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin.

We have all felt it. How can we always be girded for the fray? How can we always keep a watch upon our lips? And with each fall comes the little shock of defeat, the possible weakening of endeavor. Then there is but one thing to help us. *He restoreth my soul.* How personal the Psalmist is. *My soul*, he says, my individual soul, wearied as it may be, wounded by falling from its best aspirations; my soul can be restored, put back, made ready to begin again, given fresh courage. We have but to open it to the influx of that Holy Spirit which is ever ready to descend upon us. We can bathe our souls in

the divine love, just as truly as we can steep ourselves in wonderful harmonies. As we are creatures of growth, as we must change by the very law of our being, so with each discouragement, or each lapse from our very best, we need this constant renewal, this constant restoration. Not for once only are we baptized with the Spirit. There must be a daily and hourly renewal of divine influence if we are to live. And so we come to be made pure and fresh and clean, to go back to our Shepherd, to begin again, to be renewed in the spirit of our minds. So we come to Him who alone can restore our souls.

Let us pray : —

O Fountain of life, Inspirer, Restorer, we Thy children come to Thee claiming Thy promises. Give back to us, we pray Thee, whatever we may have lost. Thou who art serenity, give us of Thy tranquillity. Thou who art unceasing activity, impart to us a holy zeal. Give us, dear Lord, the high courage which we need for our daily tasks; Thy business which we must be about demands all our energy. Restore our souls, we beseech Thee, to perfect health and sanity. Make them steadfast because we trust in Thee. Give us unshaken souls that are anchored

in Thy divine love. So bless us this night, we pray Thee. So open our hearts to all holy influences. So grant us Thy peace. For Christ's sake. Amen.

V

THE HEART'S TREASURE

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good.—LUKE, VI : 45.

THIS conception of the heart of man as a treasure-house is one which Jesus often dwelt upon. Saint Matthew repeats this conversation in almost exactly the same words ; and a little later adds to the fulness of the figure. “The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field” ; the instructed man is like a “householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old” ; “a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good.” It is evident from these sayings that the Son of Man, who knew the heart of man, made use of a familiar everyday experience, to emphasize the truth He sought to impress.

A treasure He speaks of, — a store, an accumulation of things old and new, a quantity of anything gathered together, a wealth : that is what a treasure is. The miser works day and night to increase his hoard ; the husbandman labors in

the sweat of his brow to harvest the treasures of the field ; the antiquary searches foreign parts to add to his store of precious relics. Whatever a man really cares for, that he works for, putting forth his best effort, spending all his strength ; for “where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” When Jesus said this, He was simply raising to a higher level common everyday facts, familiar in the experience of His hearers. They all knew of Solomon’s treasure-cities, — the cities of store which he built, — “Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether, and Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness . . . and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen.” And they knew of Hezekiah, who “made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels ; storehouses also for the increase of corn, and oil and wine ; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks.” They knew what treasure-houses were, and the sort of riches which were kept in them ; and appealing to this common knowledge, to these well-known facts, Jesus declares that the heart is such a treasure-house, from which a good man brings out good treasure.

Every part of us, body, mind, and spirit, can

accumulate treasure. We train our bodies in active exercise. We use games of skill to develop our muscular systems, not merely for the sake of the pleasurable activity, but that there may be a resultant power, a remaining accretion of strength, a truer coördination of mind and body, so that the body springs to do the bidding of the mind.

We explore the history of ancient peoples, we project ourselves into the life of to-day, that marvelous life, with the new doors that science is constantly opening, not only for the joy of the study but for the large and comprehensive grasp it gives us of what the life of the mind has been, what wise men have believed and taught, from the time the Psalmist declared "My reins" — which in the early physiology were supposed to fulfil the office which we now know belongs to the brain — "instruct me in the night season."

And what of the treasure of the spirit? Each soul knows its own deep experiences — incommunicable, inexpressible, and yet so real as to be the only vital part of life.

We censure the spendthrift who lives beyond his income, but how much worse is it to live without adding to these intangible treasures of the heart. For it is in the crises of life that these

treasures are drawn upon. When "action springs instinctive, without thought," is it brave action, or cowardly? When one is suddenly confronted with the damaging truth, can one face it? When an immediate decision is needed, is it the generous one? It is in such times that the treasure of the heart is manifest. Is it gold and silver, precious metal? or chaff and stubble?

It is our blessed Lord who points out this treasure-house to us — this house which only He can truly fill. Holy men of all times have longed for His coming. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." It is Christ Himself who must open our hearts to receive the true treasure. He is Himself the Giver and the Gift, for in Him are "hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Let us pray: —

Lord, Thou seest our hearts, — empty store-houses, unless filled by Thee. Thou knowest the faith, and hope, and love which lie there ready to be quickened to life and action by Thy Spirit. Thou, who art so ready to give, open our hearts to receive, we beseech Thee. Amen.

VI

OUR LIFE

To observe to do all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you ; because it is your life. — DEUTERONOMY, xxxii : 46-47.

IN the hymn we have just read Moses had been setting forth the glory of God. He reminds the people that they had been led through a waste and howling wilderness, into a goodly land ; he tells them of the dealings with their enemies, and in an access of devout feeling he cries in the words of God Himself, "I, even I, am he. I kill, and I make alive. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever." It is after this splendid passage that he exhorts the people to observe to do this law, "for it is not a vain thing for you ; because it is your life."

The knowledge of God, the recognition of His dealings with us, — this the prophet declares to be *our life*.

We all of us must reflect upon life in our serious moments, — its mystery, its wonder, its transcendence over the material manifestations

of it. We speak of our hands, of our minds, of our thoughts; I think this, and the other. Who is the I that thinks? Who is the person that controls the bodily action? What is the life we live? And to these questions the prophet replies that the law of God is our life; that His dealings with us declare Him; that to observe His law is our only way of living. And happily the later dispensation carries the thought farther for us. "In him we live, and move, and have our being," Saint Paul declares; and Jesus calls us, with that most intimate call, bidding us to come to Him because He is "the way, and the truth, and the life." It is life we want, — to open the avenues of life, from the Source of life to our lives, is our highest aim. The Spirit travels on unseen wings. No one may observe its approach. To each soul it comes in its own way; but it must come, if so be that it comes at all, to the open receptive mind, to the prayerful spirit. Here and now it may come to us, in our worship, in our prayer, and our praise, — as the mighty influences of harmony open the highway of the spirit.

So may we learn more and more of the Law of the Lord, which is not a vain thing for us, because it is our life.

Let us pray: —

O Thou who art Life, in whom we live, we come to Thee with reverence and holy awe, to be filled with Thy life. Thou who art Spirit, may we worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Open our hearts, we beseech Thee, that we may take of Thy fulness. Thou knowest the desires of each soul: may they be holy desires, longings for a better and fuller life, breathings after our native air. Thou who art the end of all desire, the fulfilment of all aspiration, touch us with strong love for the best things. Give us that holy longing which can only be stilled by the gift of gifts, by the indwelling of Thy Holy Spirit. Purify our hearts that they may be fit temples for Thy grace. As Thy good gift of harmonious sound stirs our spirits, may it prepare the way for Thee. Take away our sins, we pray Thee, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, and sanctify us for Thy service. So may we live in Thee. So may we find our life. We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

VII

THE WATER OF LIFE

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation. — ISAIAH, XII : 3.

If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink ; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. — SAINT JOHN, IV : 10.

To get the full meaning of some of the most beautiful passages of the Bible, we must form some image of the country of Palestine, with its mountains and its lakes, its seacoast, and arid plains, parched and dry a large portion of the year, and bursting into sudden beauty as the early and the latter rains descend. We have the same phenomena in the far West of our own country : barren mountain-sides suddenly changed to banks of flowers ; what looked like dry sticks, in a few short weeks are loaded with blooming roses ; and flowing water fills unsightly gashes in the red soil. One learns to rejoice in the power of water, as the whole earth is renewed under its mighty influence, and the desert literally blossoms as the rose.

It was to a people familiar with this annual miracle that the prophet sang, "With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation"; it was to a woman who ought to have known something of this renewing power, that Jesus declared He would have given living water.

"Living water" — the words arrest us. Most nearly akin to voluntary motion is that mysterious bubbling up from its source of what we call a "living spring." The physicists may explain it to us, — may analyze the gases that make the tiny moving globules which rise silently from the deepest recesses, and find their way to the air, there to break their perfect round, and empty themselves in the upper ether. We may intellectually understand why this happens; but the happening itself remains mysteriously lifelike. Whence comes the endless supply? How is it that for centuries the same outflow has poured forth? What unseen sources feed this constant change?

And so our Lord uses water, with which she was very familiar, as a symbol to catch the woman's attention, to lead her from the material to the spiritual, to give her some conception of that life of the Spirit fed by unseen sources, constantly outpoured, and yet constantly renewed.

“If thou knewest the gift of God,” He says to her, “thou wouldest have asked.” Is not that the trouble with all of us? Do we know the gift of God, when it is at hand?

It is a very common experience to regret an action, in the light of subsequent event. “If I had only known,” we say. A possible kindness left undone, a piece of duty unperformed, are often real sorrows to us. We did not recognize them as a gift of God; not till they were gone, did we know them. And as we come together at this opening of the year, I want to speak a moment of that gift of God, which is like living water, that gift whose elements we may understand, but whose entirety escapes analysis, that gift most spiritual of all gifts, — the gift of music. It is reverence and devotion, it is joy and triumph, it is adoration and love, — a free gift, without form and void, heart-moving and soul-stirring. It comes to us as the rain to a thirsty land, to revive and fructify. Under its mighty power pure thoughts bud and flower. We do well to surrender ourselves to its influence, not in reckless abandon, but reverently and soberly rejoicing in this gift of God.

“If thou knewest the gift of God,” Jesus says; and He leads the woman directly from

the living water which she knew something of to the worship of the Father, — to the worship which is worship in spirit and in truth. And if the natural phenomena, spiritually interpreted, should lead us there, shall not the consummate genius of men who have found their expression in this spiritual art lead us there also? It is spirit that must touch spirit to quicken and vitalize life, or it is mere animal existence. “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation.” These wells of song which are hidden in the very foundations of our being are fed from a divine source. They can purify and renew the spirit, bound to earth by physical ties, by the defeat and failure of our weak endeavor. Salvation is what we need,— a saving from ourselves, a raising to our very best. The fountain of praise leads us to the Throne of God Himself. May He give us of His Spirit, to be in us a “well of water, springing up to everlasting life.”

Let us pray: —

Our Heavenly Father, we pray Thee to accept the offering of praise and thanksgiving which we bring. Bow Thine ear, O Lord, and hear as we lay our devotion on the wings of pure

harmony, to be wafted to Thy mysterious presence. Thou who art the Ruler of the Universe, yet dost vouchsafe to dwell in the hearts of Thy children. Fill them with Thy love, dear Lord, that we may sing Thy praise not only with our lips, but show it forth in our lives. Accept us and our sacrifice of joy, we beseech Thee, for Christ's sake. Amen.

VIII

GOD'S PERSONAL CARE

Ye are of more value than many sparrows. — MATTHEW,
x: 31.

WE often think and speak of youth as a happy time, care free and full of delight. And indeed it is, and should be; but it also has its deep moments of question, its hours of darkness, when the soul begins to realize itself, when the life becomes a self-conscious life, a life to be directed, a life with definite aims, and hopes, and aspirations. Older people sometimes forget their own period of *Sturm und Drang*,— of stress, and revolt from enchaining circumstance.

One is oppressed at times with a sense of one's own insignificance; the littleness of the individual amid the cosmic forces one learns of, brings almost a sense of desolation. It seems a presumption to claim individual care, to pray for personal mercies. We unite gladly in general praise; some beneficent purpose we dimly apprehend; but with the deeper knowledge of the vastness of the universe we almost hesitate to arise and go to our Father.

And yet that is just what Christ bids us do. The very hairs of our heads are numbered, He declares. "Not one sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father"; "Ye are of more value than many sparrows."

To-night I have read one of the most ancient hymns ever sung, — the Hundred and Thirty-ninth Psalm, inscribed to *The Chief Musician, a Psalm of David*. The critics tell us there is some doubt about the authorship: it may not have been David, but it was included in that early hymn-book, that wonderful collection of songs to be sung, — and sung as a part of public worship. The author of this hymn boldly takes the individual attitude. It is not *we* he speaks of — "O Lord, thou hast known *me*," he cries. "Thou art acquainted with all my ways. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"

We come together for a service of worship, a service of praise. How shall we make it a personal song, an expression of the individual heart? For is it not true that all our life should be filled with praise? All that comes to us can be received with thanksgiving. Even sorrow is transmuted to blessing by the wondrous alchemy of praise. Whatever gift our Father gives can be received

with joy, though it is a gift of rue and rosemary. If we once can accept the great truth that He is "acquainted with all our ways," that He clothes us, too often "of little faith," that He cares for us individually, as for the sparrow that falleth to the ground, then life becomes deep and strong, — a single intimate life in which the Divine Spirit and our spirit work together, and we claim our kinship with the Eternal. Then will praise be the breath of our lives, the inspiration of our being.

Do you notice how personal all the great hymn-writers are? Not only David, but the more modern writers.

O Mother, dear Jerusalem,
When shall I come to thee?

St. Bernard writes.

Mine, mine, was the transgression,
And Thine the bitter pain, —

the great German poet Gerhardt sings. And our own English Wesley does not speak of Christ as the lover of souls in general, — he boldly claims Him: —

Jesus, lover of *my* soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly.

We must realize our own individuality, our own personality, and reverently and humbly bring that into the very presence of God, knowing that we are His offspring, — knowing that we too are capable of rising to the height of His children. Then will our praise be more than vague reverence. Then can we bring true sacrifices of joy, which will sweeten and glorify the whole of life.

Let us pray : —

O Love Divine, which was made flesh and dwelt among men, we come to Thee with devout thanksgiving. Thou alone canst cleanse our hearts and make them a habitation for Thy indwelling spirit. Lord, Thou hast searched us. Thy word is quick and powerful. Thou knowest us altogether. May we open our hearts to Thee, the Divine Guest ; not hiding in trembling fear, but throwing wide the door that Thou mayest enter, to cleanse, to purify, to enlarge, to fortify. Come to each soul in Thine own way : in the spoken word, in the sound of praise, in perfect silence ; call us each by name, speak Thou in all our ministrations, that as we raise our hearts to Thee Thou wilt descend to us to fill us with Thine own Light and Peace, to dwell in us, the

hope of glory. May we cast out whatever is impure or evil. Do Thou enter, O Lord, for in Thy presence is fulness of joy. So may we find true communion with Thee ; so may we find pardon and newness of life ; so may we become fit instruments of Thy praise. Amen.

IX

THE SEARCH

Seek the Lord, and ye shall live. — AMOS, v : 6.

THIS is the central thought of the poem of the prophet Amos,— a poem full of warning, of threatening, of exhortation to turn from evil ways; a poem full of wonderful touches of beauty. Seek Him, the prophet cries, that

Formeth the mountains, and createth the wind,
And declareth unto man what is his thought ;
That maketh the morning darkness,
And treadeth upon the high places of the earth,
The Lord, the God of hosts is his name.
He maketh the seven stars and Orion,
And turneth the shadow of death into the morning,
And maketh the day dark with night.

All the wonderful and mysterious processes of Nature the prophet transfers directly to their ultimate cause, and then bids us seek that cause.

David, writing a couple of hundred years earlier, utters the same cry. "Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found." A diligent search is commended to us. The search for the Lord in the minds of both of these inspired poets is

something different from an ordinary search which proposes to itself the finding of a definite object. It is true that Jesus declares the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant man *seeking* goodly pearls. The kingdom is likened in this case to the pearl which can be found and possessed even at great sacrifice. But the older men conceived the search itself as an end. "Seek ye the Lord, *and ye shall live*," the prophet Amos declares. The search itself in his mind becomes a means of life.

Is not this true in our daily occupations? In the study of any science, the more we learn, the more we can learn; the more accurate our observation becomes, the more we see to observe. Our life in that particular direction, as far as regards our capacity for understanding that subject, is increased by the search we make in the pursuit of it. And so of the highest object of knowledge. The prophet uses "the Lord" and "good" almost interchangeably. "*Seek the Lord*," he admonishes; and a little later, "Seek good, not evil, *that ye may live*." The incentive to such seeking in both cases is the same — *that ye may live*.

We are all of us born into the world with no volition of our own. We live in the body as long as we are here, and prophets and sages

from all ages exhort us to distinguish between this mere existence and true life. One can count a good many years sometimes before the dawning apprehension of what life is may begin. We like to cushion ourselves with the familiar externals; we shrink from standing alone. And yet to each one of us there comes a time of realization of the singleness of life, of our own isolation, our complete separateness. It may come in a grief, it may come in a joy, too deep to communicate to any soul. It may come in some moment of danger, when we stand face to face with Eternity, and all the externals drop away. It is then that the true life of the soul is manifest. Are we alone in such a moment, or are we firmly anchored? Are we an atom afloat, or are we held in our Father's arms?

If we have sought the Lord in times of peace, if we have chosen good, in these moments of trial we will know that we live, not in the body, but that our life is hidden with Christ in God. One does not live for emergencies, but the emergency discloses what manner of life we have lived. Now in these happy peaceful days, with the world before us, is the time to begin to live in this true sense. Do not be afraid of being alone, of facing your own problems without

external aid; for if we truly seek the Lord, He shall be found, and we shall begin truly to live.

The externals will still be dear and precious, —indeed will be more precious than ever, because related to reality. A great object will dignify the whole of life; a quest for the highest will glorify the world. It is Christ who says the great word to us. Not only seek ye the Lord that ye may live, but “seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Let us pray: —

O Thou who dost yearn over Thy children, who dost long to bestow the very best gifts, we pray Thee quicken our minds, awaken our understanding that we may see where our true life is. May the precious things of Thy beautiful world but lead us to Thee, the Source of all beauty; may the noble achievements of good men show us the Fountain of all Goodness. Thou, who dost hold the stars in their courses, dost also uphold each tiny flower. We come to Thee, opening the chalice of our hearts. Fill it with Thy fulness, dear Lord. Then shall we gladly run in the heavenly race, knowing that our life must have its consummation in Thee. Amen.

X

ADVENT

And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day,
and shall be my people. — ZECHARIAH, II: 11.

IT is characteristic of all earnest souls to look forward, to complete the day with a vision of the future, to ease present discomfort by anticipations of happiness to come. We all store our minds with pleasant memories, which we may consciously or unconsciously use in times of adversity. The line of poetry that steals unbidden into our mind completes and expresses the dormant thought; we cheer ourselves in moments of depression with the universal causes for gratitude, and pray with George Herbert to have the thankful heart.

Not grateful when it pleases me,
As if Thy blessings had spare days,
But such a heart whose pulse shall be
Thy praise.

This universal experience of looking forward, of reminding his people of the causes for gratitude, of comforting himself and them with

words of hope and cheer, was an experience the ancient prophet had in a high degree. Writing about five hundred years before the Christian era, he saw the troubles of his time, and yet could fall back upon the ancient promises to his people, peculiar to themselves as they were accustomed to think, but with an occasional inclusive and universal note in them, as in the verse we have just read: "*Many* nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day." That day — that day in the future which loomed afar in the devout imagination of Judaism; that day, when the Man whose name was the Branch should come; that day of holiness when He who is the Lord our Righteousness should appear. So long a time! So great a hope!

The chronologists put the birth of Samuel about eleven hundred and seventy years before Christ, and his anointing of David in 1063. It is as if we went back to the time of Charlemagne to look for one definite trend of prophecy foretelling one of the great achievements of modern days. David had the vision: "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" he cries; and from his day onward, though the voice might for a time be stilled, there were men who prophesied the glad birth of new life.

Isaiah, living about seven hundred years before Christ, is full of the joyful thought. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." And "there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. . . . With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity the meek of the earth."

The minor prophets sing of the same lofty theme: "Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH . . . and he shall build the temple of the Lord." This is the great motive of all the sacred poetry of Israel, giving unity to diverse strains,—strains sometimes discordant to our ears, but resolving always into this splendid harmony.

It is often a distinctly Jewish prophecy. The walls of Jerusalem are to be builded again, the literal city of Jerusalem, crowning its hills, whose walls had been despoiled. But in the lesson we have read, the message is widened in its scope. "Many nations" shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be the Lord's people. The inspired writer sees far into the future to nations yet unborn, who should come and drink at these ever-flowing fountains.

So as we approach this Christmas season,

when the material world about us is already making ready with the display of gay colors and attractive wares, when we have the visible and tangible signs all about us in the city streets, let us pause and think of that other preparation of heart and mind which should be made as we approach this holy season. We can count twenty centuries since that holy coming, and we know of at least ten more during which that coming was cherished as the highest hope of holy men; during which the poets of a nation comforted themselves and their hearers with this vision of life, which was to redeem the people, which was to save “not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.”

The event from which what we call the civilized world dates its civilization, was the birth of a new spirit, a new conception of the relation of God and man,—a new revelation of God in man. The shepherds heard and wondered,—the angels sang, as they sing now, if we have ears to hear. The Advent season, the ancient church calls it, the season of coming. What shall come to us? What better glimpse of truth, what higher vision, what anointing of the Divine Spirit?

That day, which the prophet looked forward

to, is *this* day for us: this day to be glad and rejoice in, this day, when we shall be joined to the Lord, and become His people.

Let us pray: —

O Lord, Thou who art truth eternal, invisible, Thou who didst send Thy Son to be the way, the truth, and the life, we come to Thee to enter into life, to know the truth, to be led in the way. Give us the teachable spirit, we pray Thee, the open mind, the eyes that can see, and the hearts that can feel. Heavenly Father, we come before Thee a company of learners; may we learn forever, as Thou dost give us fresh glimpses of Thine own inexhaustible splendor. We would be like Thy blessed Son; help us then to see aright, and as we see, may we be more and more conformed into His likeness, changed from glory to glory, till at last we shall see no more in part, but with open vision face to face.

We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XI

THE BIRTH OF THE SPIRIT

CHRISTMAS VESPERS

That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. — JOHN, III : 6.

WE come again to this joyful season in the midst of winter cold, when the world lies dead about us, this season of the celebration of new birth, this commemoration of the advent of a little child whose life has changed the world. Not in the radiant springtime does this festival come to us, — not when the whole world is rising to new life, but when it lies bound fast with icy bands, when all Nature is quiescent, enduring, slumbering, giving no hint of the glory of the summer. Then it is that our thoughts are turned toward life by this happy time of the Child. All our tenderest emotions are touched by the sight of any helpless infant. The tiny hands, so flower-like in their softness, may hold large destinies in their mature grasp. Vast possibilities lie hidden in that unconscious brain ; those innocent eyes may some day com-

mand an homage far different from that rendered their infant loveliness. Life in little lies within our arms as we hold the child ; life, so mysterious, so vast, so awful in its possibilities ; the whole future enfolded in a tiny infant's form. The birth of every child is a miracle, a new creation. The melancholy Omar may sing, —

The Eternal Sâki from that Bowl has pour'd
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

And yet we know that there is nowhere the person exactly " like us " — that we each are individual. It is not enough for us to know that the world is full of myriads of other beings, that there is the constant miracle of new birth. We sing the songs that have gathered round this Christmas birthday — songs of joyous greeting, songs of the angels' message, of the tender mother in the garden, songs of the kings with their gifts ; and if that were all, there would not have been these centuries of song, this garland of praise woven from pious hearts who dared not touch the deeper mysteries, and therefore decked the external facts with loving and quaint conceits. The angels rehearse the tale in countless mediæval ballads, and painters have expended all their art upon the procession of the kings,

and the radiance of the Holy Child. It is right and fitting we should recall it all, should rejoice in the loving praise of men long since gone to their reward, should vivify to ourselves all the scenes of that night so many hundreds of years ago.

For it was not only a new child, but a new spirit which was born into the world that holy night. Here was the Elder Brother of all those who were born, "not of the flesh, but of the will of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." There had been glimpses of this before. The prophet Joel sings:—

I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;
 And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
 Your old men shall dream dreams,
 Your young men shall see visions:
 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids
 in those days
 Will I pour out my spirit.¹

Here was a promise of the union of the flesh and the Spirit, but until the child Jesus, when but twelve years old, declared that He must be about His Father's business there was no vital conception of the relation of the Spirit of God

¹ Joel, ii: 28, 29.

and the spirit of man. God was a god to propitiate, to offer sacrifices to, to entreat in times of trouble, to sing praises to in times of joy; but that we could be born of the Spirit, could be truly the children of God, — this was a conception of human life which came into the world with that tiny infant, that Christmas night in Bethlehem. There, in lowly state, with the ox and the ass beside Him, a new spirit which was to change the world was born.

And not unheralded — not unrecognized. The angels were His choristers, the kings paid Him their homage. Of their prosperity, of their worship, of their sorrow they brought Him, fit gifts indeed for a ruler of spirits. “My kingdom is not from hence,” He declared when His disciples urged a temporal rule. The finite and the tangible have such a hold upon us! We long to see with our eyes, to touch with our hands. We set up our graven images to worship, we strive so to rest in the temporal, rather than the Eternal! And then comes the voice of Jesus, “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.” Again and again comes that warning cry. He was of the spirit, and came to show us the spirit, to make us know that we are individuals. And when He strikes this deep and

solemn note how every soul responds! This is the heart of the mystery, this is the fount of holy joy, that since that blessed night we know our heritage, — we know that we are born of the Spirit; that we can be heirs of the kingdom, joint heirs with Christ!

What heed then should we take that we quench not the spirit! We are meant to grow in grace, as He did, to increase as St. Paul says, “with the increase of God.” As we sing our songs of praise, as we rejoice in that holy birth, let us thank our Father that through that precious life we know our own high capacities as His children, that through Him we also may be born of the Spirit.

Let us pray: —

Our Heavenly Father, who at this time didst send Thy Son to dwell among us, open our hearts that we may receive Him with solemn joy and gladness. Receiving Him may we receive Thy love, Thy love to be engrafted in us, to grow mightily till it shall conquer in us all that is displeasing to Thy holy will. Cast out every selfish thought, every unworthy desire. Make us free from everything which may hinder our complete surrender to Thy divine presence. Oh Thou

who art light and life, fill us with Thy fulness. Enter each waiting heart before Thee; and as our praises ascend, may we rise on the wings of devotion; may we lift pure souls in adoration, and thanksgiving for this Thy greatest gift in the revelation of Thyself. This day may Thy Holy Child Jesus be born in each of us, — this day may we begin to walk the Christ-like way. Amen.

XII

THE DAYSPRING

CHRISTMAS VESPERS

Whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us.—
LUKE, 1 : 78.

JUST now there is a universal hush of nature, when the world lies waiting for the turn of the year. Cold and darkness are about us, life we are told is at its lowest ebb, and with the first added moments to the winter's day we celebrate that ineffable gift, whereby "through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us." We know the lovely story, we love to read it; it has been the theme of countless heartfelt songs for centuries. It is of universal significance, the joy of the tender Mother in whose joy all mothers find their own joy expressed; the wonder of the shepherds, stirring the worship of our souls; the journey of the kings, type of the search for all truth.

This year, not only from the treasuries of English verse, but from old French *noëls* we have gathered hymns and carols to celebrate the

time. These French carols have probably never been sung in this country before; certainly they never have been sung as we shall hear them, for both the music and the words have been arranged for our choir. The lovely simplicity of these songs is thrown into higher relief by the close harmony of another hymn written for this service. From far and near we have gathered them — songs of joy, of thanksgiving, of worship and endless praise.

The old fable is that on Christmas night the whole world lies listening, waiting for the miracle of life to be proclaimed. The angels sang it in the heavens, and through all these years the theme is repeated on earth. But deeper than the sound of praise, more wonderful than stirring harmonies, is the underlying emotion of joy, which finds its expression in these happy songs. If you should go to the laboratory of some learned physicist, perhaps he would show you his row of tuning-forks — ungainly-looking things like elongated horse-shoes. Large and small, there they hang on their rod. If he should take one of them, strike it lightly and hold it to your ear, you would hear a wonderful sound, soft, pervasive, elemental, — a sound akin to silence in its moving quality, a sound

that stirs you profoundly, for it is the note to which the vibration of your own heart answers, the sound of the life within you. They have found it, this universal note of the human heart, the actual resulting sound of the physical vibration of the engine of our being.

We have always known that we had in us "a piece of Divinity, something that was before the elements and owes no homage unto the sun." We have, since that blessed night centuries ago, known that we were brothers, and here is the common note of humanity, the fundamental tone on which the harmony of life is constructed. If this is true of our physical being, shall it not be infinitely more true when raised to its spiritual power? "Conceive light invisible, and that is spirit," Sir Thomas Browne tells us. In the same way we may say, take away sound from music and we have spirit. In music there is something more of divinity than the ear discovers: it is "a shadowed lesson of the whole world, and creatures of God; such a melody to the ear as the whole world well understood, would afford the understanding . . . it is that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of God." Can we not conceive that that harmony has its fundamental tone also, just as we learn that our

physical being has? And how shall we name that tone, which lies at the base of all spiritual life, but by giving it the great and all-inclusive name of Love, — love which means joy, love which means praise, love which means service? Is not that the great note to which the heart of humanity responds? Is not that the note for which the listening world is waiting?

“The tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us!” The dayspring, Zacharias says, in his rejoicing over his son who was to prepare the way of the Lord. Who that has watched the morning miracle of the coming of light does not recognize the beauty and the truth of the image? How wonderful is the first flush of dawn, with its rosy tints, and promise of color, to that sudden moment when the dazzling disc of the sun rushes up into the heavens, a fountain of light, a splendor of beauty, blinding the eyes of the beholder! So there had been portents, so there had been blessed intimations, in the visions of holy men. And now in the fulness of time, the Source and Fountain of Life was revealed. That is the message to us; the message of the angels, the message of divine love come to dwell in humanity. Light, and Life, and Love, — are they not all one, all come

to us new every day, proclaimed of old at that first Christmas time?

And so we rejoice and come in reverent thought to that manger in Bethlehem, worshipping and giving thanks.

Spirit Divine,
To whom all things are possible,
Pierce our hearts' night
With Thine own living light, —
Move us to praise.
We praise Thee for Thy mercy,
For God Himself hath given
New life, new life,
To make our earth a heaven.

Let us pray: —

Our Heavenly Father, Thou who dost see all hearts, open our hearts, we beseech Thee, that the Dayspring from on High may visit us. We come with holy joy, with the shepherds, with the kings, with Thy people of all ages and all climes, to bless and praise Thee for what Thou hast revealed to us, — for that Thou hast visited us, and shown us that our humanity is a child of Thy Divinity. May we claim our high heritage, and as we come together to celebrate the new birth may we ourselves be newborn, — may we receive of Thy fulness, and know ourselves Thy children. Amen.

XIII

GRACE

CHRISTMAS VESPERS

And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.
— JOHN, 1 : 16.

THIS fourth Gospel goes to the heart of the matter. The other evangelists tell us of the angels' song, of the shepherds and their hasty way to Bethlehem to see the wonders of that night. But Saint John contents himself with saying, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," going beyond the physical person of Christ to His divine office, declaring Him as the great light-bearer, the only source of light to all those who are in the world ; and then he adds, "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

What a wonderful word *fulness* is ! What a sense of opulent completion it brings ! We are told that Jesus was "*full* of grace and truth," and in the next breath, that "of his fulness have all we received." At this dear season of giving gifts, let us think a few moments what it is we

have received, and are to receive, because there is reciprocity hinted at when the Apostle says "grace for grace."

We have to use poetical language to describe the almost indescribable influences which came to us in that Holy Birth. "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." That word "glory" will serve as well as any other to assemble before our minds the nobility, purity, and elevation of thought that dwelt in Jesus. Not in vain did the heavens open that Christmas night to show their glory, for glory was come to earth in a new and living way. In those years of the earthly life of Christ He walked the hills of Galilee to show what a human life in earthly surroundings might be. A new grace, a more absolute truth came to earth.

The very fact of His coming, as an historical event, makes the world a richer place to dwell in. How much more then, if we not only receive of His fulness passively, but grace for grace, our spirit answering to His, becoming attuned to the melody of the angels' song, taking our part in it, — opening our hearts and minds consciously to receive the blessing.

It is grace and truth, the Apostle declares, that

come by Jesus Christ. Grace must result from clear and orderly conceptions added to a sympathetic comprehension. Grace of line, grace of form we speak of, the harmonious union of strength and beauty. It has a larger sense also. The brooding tenderness of love finds its best expression in the phrase dear to the hearts of all Christian people since the days of the Apostles — “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And how can we define truth, that highest, most perfect aim of the soul, that attribute which is a part of the very essence of God? Behind law, behind all material manifestations, a foundation of the universe is truth. Honor and sincerity are included in it. Reverence and worship are fed by it. All our search, all our endeavor, is to find its ultimate abode. Science is perpetually making advances toward its discovery. The devout imagination of holy men is perpetually perceiving new operations of its laws. And yet a little child can comprehend it, — not in its entirety, but in its principle. It is this Grace and Truth that came with Jesus. Are there any other such practical regulators of conduct? They mean gentleness and purity; they mean sympathy and honor. And they came to earth in the person of a little child. This is the fulness with

which He came; this is the fulness which the Apostle declares we have all received, and grace for grace. It remains true that "unto him who hath shall be given." The longing for grace at least must be present, the knowledge that grace and truth have come, and of this fulness we may be a part.

We delight ourselves with the tale of the shepherds. They are dear to us, not only for their devotion, but because they heralded something more than the tender babe, because they heralded a new revelation of God come to dwell with men in this simple guise. It is because of the grace and truth that came by Him, that our Child Jesus is precious to us to-day.

And the call of the birthday is a universal one. Because He brought grace and truth, and taught us to take grace for grace, how wide open should we throw our hearts, that the great gift of Christmas time does not pass us by, — that there may be grace enough in our hearts to receive more grace. For like can only be imparted to like; unless we put our own hearts in the attitude of receiving, we cannot receive. It is of His fulness that we long to receive. The shepherds, the angels, welcomed Him, and shall we be dull and indifferent?

And art thou stone, O heart ?
In all the welcome canst thou bear no part ?
Fling wide thy gates, and welcome Him with praise.

So may He come to us, this little child, as a tender guest. So may we receive of His infinite fulness, and grace for grace.

Let us pray : —

O Thou who didst come to shed the fulness of the Father upon us, we rejoice and give thanks that Thou didst come as a little child. May we open our hearts to receive Thee. May we bear Thee in our bosom. Now in winter's darkness shine Thou with Thy marvelous light, the Day-spring from on High. Accept our praise, we beseech Thee, and fill us with Thy grace. Amen.

XIV

NEW LIFE

CHRISTMAS VESPERS

Behold, I will do a new thing. — ISAIAH, XLIII : 19.
And the Word was made flesh. — JOHN, I : 14.

AT this blessed Advent season, the time of coming, the time of promise, in the midst of the shortest days of our year, it is good to read the wonderful poem of the ancient prophet, written some seven hundred years before the coming of Christ, and full of intimations of some great approach. "Behold my servant, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth."¹ "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness . . . and will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles."² It is a poem full of promise: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth";³ a hymn of praise which must have seemed vague and visionary to the prophet's contemporaries.

The promise of newness always attracts us.

¹ Isaiah, xlii : 1.

² *Id.*, xlii : 6.

³ *Id.*, lxv : 17.

Not only the Athenians spend their time in saying and hearing some new thing: we all want it, the familiar palls upon us, new statements of truth, new aspects of knowledge, new changes in the fashion of our daily living, all attract us. This is but saying that we are alive. We constantly are reaching forward. We literally die daily, and are daily revived. It is even true in more exact expression. Each breath is a new inspiration; each exhalation is a new death; moment by moment we must be renewed. When the wonderful natural process is arrested, this mortal frame dissolves.

And here is the promise from the Lord: "Behold, I will do a *new* thing." He who is the creator, who must delight in creating, who to the finite mind must have exhausted every possibility of creation, will do a new thing. What then is that new thing, for which we are to look? Seven hundred years are but as a watch in the night. "The kings of the East are riding to-night to Bethlehem," that Bethlehem where Ruth gleaned, where David lived, which was not the least among the princes of Judah. And then, when there was no room for them in the inn, while angels sang Glory to God, the tender mother brought forth her first-born son and laid

Him in a manger. A baby's birth, one may say, is always a thing of wonder; but this was the new thing prophets had dreamed of and poets sung. Saint John boldly goes back to the foundations of all things, behind which the imagination of man cannot penetrate. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Then follows the wonderful description of that Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; that bold claiming of the power to become the Sons of God; that first assertion of the unity of the spirit of man with the Spirit of God; and when we have been raised by the power of that matchless imagery to some conception of the splendor of life, the climax of it all comes: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." This is the Christmas message; this is the wonder of wonders, — that He who was one with the Father, uncreated, eternal, was made flesh and dwelt among us!

The wonder of wonders, we devoutly say, and yet the daily miracle. With our human limitations how can we apprehend anything without a body? The thought of the artist must express itself, before he can communicate it. The picture,

the symphony, or the poem must incorporate the beauty which exists in its creator's mind, if another is to share it with him. Love transmutes itself into deeds ; tender thoughts find expression in acts of kindness, if they have any reality. The actual is forever breaking the bounds of the invisible. Even such intangibility as thought on divine things expresses itself in words men have united to call a body of doctrine. The Spirit is continually making itself flesh in new and living ways, as the mind of man conquers new realms ; as the love of man pierces farther and farther toward the Infinite. Not until the devout imagination of the mediæval painters endeavored to tell the story of the life of Christ, did painting become a spiritual art. Not until worship broke the bounds of the ancient plain-song did music clothe the soul's aspiration in garments of praise.

And it is ours to make our individual word flesh. The physicists tell us that for every note produced, for every sound of trumpet or of harp, there is a counterpart. The note goes on through space, through time, and finds and wakens to life its own, the note which can vibrate in unison or in harmonic union with it, which completes and fulfils its destiny. Even so each soul is a thought of God, which must complete itself by expres-

sion, which must find the gentle deeds and the lovely thoughts which vibrate to its own great capacities, which must evermore incarnate and bring to life holy aspiration. Not to devout contemplation only must truth become real. It must declare itself in righteous action, in noble deeds; it must appeal to our senses as well as our sensibility; for not alone must this lower life put on the higher, but immortality itself must be clothed with the mortal. We are sometimes tempted to wish ourselves pure spirit. The body has too long been regarded from the mediæval point of view, a poor beast to be starved and beaten into submission. But in this human life of ours body and spirit must stand or fall together.

Nor soul helps body more than body soul.

The Word was made flesh: This was the new thing. So came to man the most perfect revelation of the life of God. It was a life identical in its helpless infancy, in its eager inquiring childhood, in its subjection to authority with the lives of all children; and a life from the very beginning full of grace and truth, an earthly life without a peer, and yet a life lived in common with us all, subject to like passions and temptations with us all.

And because the uncreated splendor stooped to human limitations, our human life in the flesh is forever glorified. Divinity and humanity once revealed in that Word which became flesh, there is no more a great gulf fixed; our humanity can rise by the same path of obedience to the Glory of the Father. We too may have some divine glimpse of perfection; we too may bring our hearts to Him who

Disdains not his own thirst to slake
At the poorest love was ever offered.

Such a night as this, as we lay hold of His garment's hem, may come to us the poet's vision:—

The whole face turned upon me full,
And I spread myself beneath it
As when a bleacher spreads to seethe it
In the cleansing sun his wool;
Steeps in the flood of noontide whiteness
Some defiled discolored web,
So lay I, saturate with brightness.

“For unto us a child is born,” the angels sang. It was the coming of life they celebrated. “Peace on earth, good-will to men”; it was the reign of Love they heralded. Life and Love, in a new and blessed union; for it was the unending Life and Love of God Himself which came

to earth, when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

Let us pray :—

O Thou incarnate Word of God, who wast made flesh, and dwelt among us, we come to Thee to raise our flesh to some conception of divine life, to show us what the life lived in the flesh may be. Wonderful are the powers Thou hast given to us. We stand in awe at the capacities of our own natures; we would be clothed upon with immortality; we would be raised even here and now to the divine life Thou didst come to show us.

At this season of new birth, come Thou to us, O Lord.

Spring Thou up within our hearts.
Rise to all Eternity.

We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XV

THE KINGDOM

For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. — LUKE,
XVII : 21.

WE have just been celebrating that glad time of new birth, of new life, of new revelation, which reaches beyond this mortal life. We have sung, and to-night we shall sing again, of "the Babe, the Son of Mary,"— of the miracle of God, of the shepherds who heard the glad tidings. The old year has come to its end, and we begin this new year, new with all its hopes, with all its possibilities. Let us all ask ourselves what it means to us. Have we simply sung the songs with a feeling of artistic pleasure in their beauty? Have we entered into the Christmas festivities with gayety and delight? Or, beyond and deeper than all this, have we touched some fountain of joy unknown before in the realization of the sacredness of life, in the blessing of being alive, in the wonder of being a child of God? "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." Have we at this happy time of rejoicing entered into it a little more fully?

What is a kingdom? The dominion of a king, you will say, — the territory over which he has rights of eminent domain. A kingdom must have its own laws and customs, must be ruled by the very best within its own borders, either, as is the case in a constitutional monarchy, with the consent and coöperation of the governed, or, as in primitive nations, by absolute authority. There is order, there is law in it, and the law traces itself back to its ultimate authority, the king himself, whether he represents the majesty of the people, or governs by what was called divine right. We all seek the best conditions of life. We all are lovers of the ideal. The age of gold is put in the far past, or in the dim future. Some perfect state humanity always has looked for, — some ideal life which should be free to man. Philosophers and poets have used their imagination on this theme, conceiving some external conditions which should abolish want and sin and bring in a perfect state. And Jesus says to us, with that voice which sounds with its bell-like tone through the centuries, — “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” It is our own souls, each individual soul, which must

make the kingdom of God, which is by itself a kingdom, which can own no king but the King of Heaven. We are not made to be satisfied with any other allegiance. The world is beautiful and full of wonder; our earthly affections are precious and full of joy; and yet if these are not held as gifts from our King, if our supreme devotion is not to Him, our lives will be barren and empty.

If He, the King of Heaven, is also our King in this individual sense, if whether we recognize it or not our hearts are really His kingdom, what duty do we owe Him? In this new year, what new principle of life should we follow more fully to honor our King, — more fully to become His loyal subjects? The young man who asked Jesus what he was to do to inherit eternal life, said he had kept all the commandments from his youth up. Our external observances have doubtless been correct. We do not lie, and murder, and steal in the grosser sense. But are the laws of the kingdom ruling our hearts? Are we always perfectly sincere, — have we always gentle thoughts, — do we take our neighbor's time if not his money? Above all, have we availed ourselves of the honor our King does us, in allowing us to be His friends, and not His servants? A loving subject delights in the presence of his Lord. Do we

go to Him constantly, in our joys as well as in our difficulties? How patient our Lord is with all the complaints which come to Him, — with all the prayers for comfort and help, — and so few thanksgivings; just the one Samaritan who returns, while the other nine who are cleansed go their way. I am not speaking of stated periods of prayer, necessary and helpful as they are, but of the daily and hourly communion with Him who is the Father of our Spirits as well as our King. “We may make an oratory of our hearts wherein to retire from time to time, and converse with Him in meekness, humility and love”; so a saintly writer of the seventeenth century tells us. God “requires no great matters from us; a little remembrance from time to time, a little adoration.” A brief upward glance of the mind, a recalling of His mercies, a word of trust or thanksgiving, — these take no time, and sanctify the whole time. The thought of God, of His serenity, of His perfection, of His love, can soothe all care, and bring strength to the faintest heart. In some books of devotion you will find it suggested that if we cannot thus feel the presence of God at once, we can at least read of those who have so felt it, and come to this blessing at second-hand. Do not believe it! Do not be sat-

isfied with any one else's experience of God. You must have your own. Each soul is capable of it, — each soul can come into this close and vitalizing communion with Him. Each soul can claim its place as His loving child.

On the far Pacific Coast, in that air of heavenly blue, the older church established its missions, — with a bell hung upon a live-oak tree to call to prayer. There the bells still sound from their towers, soft and clear, at morning, at noon, and at night, and with the sound countless prayers ascend. It is the call to the upward glance, for the open mind to receive the blessing that waits to descend. Can we not each establish for ourselves some moments in the day, just to remember, — just to recall that we have a Father in heaven, — just to submit our conduct so far in the day to Him? This should not make us self-conscious, for it is the Consciousness that holds us in being we come to, — to lose our tiny ego in, to be filled with all fulness. So shall we find light in perplexity and strength to perform duty. So shall we find true help in all living. This new year shall we not each of us realize more and more that the kingdom of God is within us, that its laws are our laws, and that we ourselves are the children of the King?

Let us pray : —

O Lord our Heavenly Father, in whom alone is life, Thou who art the length of our days, we pray Thee help us to choose the new life that Thou dost offer us, the life that is lived in Thee. In this new time, in this new year, Thou dost give us afresh that great choice of good and evil. With our whole hearts help us to embrace the good, to receive abundantly the gifts Thou art waiting to bestow. O Thou in whom we live and move and have our being, grant us some conception of the life of the spirit, that unseen spirit which can find its home alone in Thee. And as we raise our hearts in song before Thee who art our praise, grant us a clearer knowledge of divine things; give us some blessed intimation of Thyself. Lord, we would choose life. We beseech Thee unfold to us what that choice means. Thou who art the only perfect good, impart to us Thyself. For Christ's sake. Amen.

XVI

ACTIVITY

And whatsoever ye do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. — COLOSSIANS, III : 17.

YOU will remember that Saint Paul says in another place, "this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark."

We all want to do things, we have to do them to find any expression of ourselves, to prove that we are alive. The old conception of Nirvāna has ceased to be our ideal heaven; the saint who wrapt himself in devout contemplation, oblivious to all the world, has ceased to be our pattern of devotion. We live in a day of activity, — we rejoice in the conquest of the powers of unseen and unknown forces which we press into service to do our business. The viewless air, the condition of all physical life, has been turned to definite uses, and carries our messages through countless miles of empty space. It is a day of triumph, — a day of

achievement, — a day to awake all the dormant possibilities of our nature, — a day to be glad one is alive.

And yet, with all the varied interests which are presented to us, with all the demands which are made upon our attention, there is great danger of intellectual dissipation, — of being interested in so many things that we are masters of none, — of spreading out in so many directions that the stream of life becomes shallow, with no full free current, bearing us on its bosom to the infinite ocean of God's love.

In a very interesting address given at St. Louis on "The College," President Hyde has pointed out that the great danger in such a life as we lead here together is the loss of individuality. It is wise and right that angles should be rubbed off, — that we should learn to get on with our fellows, — that we should live with our contemporaries. But too often everybody follows the same lead: not only in externals of dress and manner, but there are fashions in study and in reading, intellectual fads; not the expression of the individual, but something taken on from outside. This is the dangerous thing for ourselves and for the community. The individual is the foundation of all society; the development of

the individual must be the aim of all study. "What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" It is one's own soul which must find its activity; it is one's own soul which must come into vital connection with the Author of all life, to make life worth living.

And we live and grow by *doing*. So this word of Saint Paul comes to us, at this beginning of a new year: "Whatsoever ye *do*, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." There must be some dominant purpose, some coördinating unity in our doing, or it becomes frivolous. "This *one* thing I do," Saint Paul says. We can say truly that we have many things to do, and various claims upon our interest and attention. And yet we have only one thing at a time. If we could learn to give ourselves frankly and freely to our one thing, without a double consciousness which carries two or three with it, how much more easily and quietly we should work! We must turn quickly from one thing to another; but that can be done without haste, and yet with promptness,—and change of thought and of occupation is in itself a rest.

But the only true unity of life is to be found in some great controlling aim and purpose. Whatsoever we do, in word or deed, the Apostle tells

us, we are to do in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to the Father. And Christ Himself tells us that the Father is glorified by our bearing much fruit, by our doing to our full capacity. The Glory of God! Does not that include every possible incentive to action? We say we believe in the brotherhood of Man. Is not the work we do for the uplifting of our brethren for the glory of God, — for is not God glorified by every true child of His? The commonest deed done with this thought becomes noble. You remember George Herbert's lines:—

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine.
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
Makes that and the action fine.

We must lay hold on divinity, — we must get divinity into our lives. We must bring the glory of God into our daily round of doing, if we would live at all.

We have been singing the songs of Christmas, — hearing again that message of new birth. The ancient Church with devout love delights to count over those days, to live them again in memory. If it all had happened just this year, the blessed Babe would not be a month old yet. The three kings made their visit only a fortnight

ago. The shepherds still talk in the freshness of their wonder over the angels' song. The year too is young, — it is a time of new beginning, — a time of fresh endeavor.

For God Himself hath given
New life, new life
To make our earth a heaven.

We delight to think of that holy time. The devout imagination of poets and musicians has busied itself with it, and clothed it with a mystical beauty which appeals to our hearts. But this time is no less holy. Here and now Christ can be born in us, the hope of glory. Unless we begin to see Him here, we shall never see Him in His full beauty. Unless we begin to do things now for the glory of God, we shall never see His glory. Let us begin this New Year with the earnest desire to have this great unifying principle running through all our activity. Let us once more with a deeper meaning and greater simplicity of purpose consecrate ourselves — not only our bodies and our spirits, but our thought and our works — to our Heavenly Father, and *whatsoever* we do, do all to the glory of God.

Let us pray: —

Our Heavenly Father, accept, we pray Thee, our desires after holiness, after pureness of life, our intentions of right doing. Thou who dost see our hearts, give us, we beseech Thee, simplicity, that with honest and single minds we may bring Thee the works of our hands and the thoughts of our minds to be blest, to be raised, to be purged from all alloy of selfishness and self-seeking, to be utterly surrendered to Thee.

Touch our spirits with some heavenly flame, O Lord, as they soar upon the wings of devotion, as Thy good gift of pure harmony unlocks the chambers of our hearts. Thou who didst send Thy Son as a little child, give us the tender childlike spirit, that we may truly come to Thee who art the Father of our spirits. Give us Thine own holy calm, we pray Thee, that we may evermore do that which is pleasing in Thy sight. We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XVII

LIFE

This do, and thou shalt live. — LUKE, x: 28.

HERE is a statement that challenges our immediate attention. What is it we are to do, of which the consequence is *living*? Who would not do the one thing which ensured life? For it is life we all want: the life of the body, with its sense of power and joy in physical well-being; the life of the mind in its conquest of new and wider realms of thought; the life of the spirit in its far-reaching search for eternal truth which is the ultimate goal of the soul. Life in its manifold aspects, life with its changes and growth, life in its highest perfection, which calls and beckons us on to fresh endeavor, to fresh hope,— is the final end. We have been thinking at the joyous Christmas season of the coming of life into the world. With that blessed Babe of Bethlehem we too have gone back to the foundations of life, we too have felt new possibilities.

And now comes this new year, opening in such a wonder of sunshine and of beauty as is a fresh

marvel in our cold New England winter. The halcyon days have prolonged themselves, till the very shrubs and trees have been deceived, and many a swelling bud proclaims the new life which struggles to come forth. The air thrills and vibrates with the possibilities of the natural life about us; and our souls, quickened and refreshed by the feast of love we have had in the happy Christmas days, turn with devout hope and solemn joy to the New Year which is opening before us. Whatever it brings, it must bring us life. How are we to live that life? How shall we enter into the time that comes to us?

And as we ask ourselves these questions, — as we wonder what the year is to be, — comes this word of Jesus, sounding clearly, like a silver trumpet call to duty: “This do, and thou shalt live.” What are we to do? You remember how the lawyer came to Jesus, and his question: “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus’ reply, making him answer it himself: “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” And the lawyer quoted literally the law, as he found it written in the books of Deuteronomy and Leviticus: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all

thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." To which Jesus replied, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Then, to explain who is our neighbor, came the parable of the Good Samaritan.

It was no new prescription for life, but a new application of eternal principles. Love to God and love to Man, — and love manifest in acts of service. These two things, Jesus declares, make life.

I think we are often puzzled by the command to love God. How can we love an Infinite Being, a Being of ineffable splendor, Intangible, Uncreated? Our minds stagger at the thought, — our mortality shrinks from the endeavor to comprehend. But we know that we can love a flower. We know that we can rejoice over the works of God. We know that we can think some of His thoughts after Him as we marvel at the wonders of His universe. He is constantly incorporating Himself; He is constantly showing us glimpses of His glory. He reveals Himself to us more and more as our eyes are open to see. As we love whatsoever is lovely and pure and of good report, so we love Him who is the consummation of everything that is lovely and pure and good. All of us here, in choosing to put ourselves under

the influences which awaken our minds to the glory of the world, to its history, to its structure, to its development, declare our love for God Himself. He is the end of all learning; He is the goal. To find Him, even dimly perceived, is the sum of all knowledge.

And the love of our neighbor? That is a far simpler matter, and yet one that demands unselfishness, courage, devotion, every high quality of heart and mind. It is not enough to possess such qualities—they must be used. Indeed, it may well be doubted if they are in possession if they are not in use. Such qualities take no vacation days. And in our busy crowded hours, when each one has work of importance to do, it is no easy thing to keep the love of one's neighbor pure and bright. We are apt to reap our fields too closely, to gather every grape of our vineyard, to use all our strength for our own things, so that there is little left for our neighbor.

The little daily courtesy, the thoughtful word, even a smile of greeting, when one is pressed with one's own affairs,— these words and acts are tests of love few of us would try to pass.

“This do, and thou shalt live,” Jesus says to each one of us. It is life we want, fulness of life we long to have, in this new year which lies be-

fore us. It sounds simple, — Love to God, and Love to Man. It is the angels' message as they sang together when new life came to earth. Let us lay hold upon it as never before, in this new time, as we hear the voice of Jesus speaking to each soul: "This do, and thou shalt live."

Let us pray:—

O Thou to whom a thousand years are but as yesterday, when it is passed, and as a watch in the night, who art the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, we come to Thee with our changing years to rest in Thee, to find our strength in Thee. We come with faith in Thy Fatherly goodness; Thou didst care for Thy holy ones of old; their lives were precious in Thy sight. We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses who lived their lives in faith, who sought a better country, even an heavenly. O Lord, may we too seek that heavenly country. May we do our part in this new year, in these new times, to bring in Thy heavenly kingdom, to make the earth more fit for Thy dwelling-place. To that end, come Thou to each soul, fill us with Thy Spirit that we may be full of Thy life. May we lay hold on Thee as never before; may our faith be the evidence of the unseen

and eternal. So we come to worship Thee ; so with holy words from Thy servants of old we draw to Thee ; so with choral song and harmonious sound of praise we attune ourselves to Thy worship. Grant us strength of purpose, pureness of spirit, newness of life. Open our hearts to receive Thy infinite fulness, to be flooded with the hope, and faith, and love, in which and through which we can only truly live.

Accept our praise, accept our devotion, we pray Thee. Accept the New Year's offering we bring ; and may the peace of God which passeth all understanding keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

XVIII

THE CHOICE

How long halt ye between two opinions? — I KINGS,
XVIII : 21.

How precious to us are the mountains of the sacred story! Mt. Pisgah, from which Moses saw all the promised land, Carmel by the sea, the mountain of Elijah, — or Elias as he is also called, — and Mt. Hermon, where in the vision of the transfiguration the disciples saw both Moses and Elias in converse with our blessed Lord.

The physical eye is satisfied by the wide prospect from such heights: the land lies spread out before one, and in the comprehensive view comparative values appear. From such a height as Mt. Carmel both sea and land are to be seen, the long level plain bordering the blue Mediterranean which fills the western horizon, and the hill-country to the east, with the mountains of Galilee. It is a place to compel thought, the low level of every day is left behind, and the voice of the ancient prophet comes with all the energy

of truth: "How long halt ye between two opinions?"

This is the question which confronts all growth. The child must leave the even plain and climb the hill-top for a wider horizon. As this expands, as new views of life and of duty begin to assert themselves, so do our thoughts and estimates of values change. As children we take simply what is given us. A child has to be taught to return thanks, he seldom has to be taught to ask. But growth involves choice. Freedom is our heritage, our responsibility, no less than our blessedness. One must have moments on the mountain, moments of vision to perceive what opinions we halt between. The scornful voice of the prophet, with his insistent question, struck the people dumb. They "answered him not a word."

No such audible strident questioning comes to us in our modern day, for the conflicts of the soul are not spectacular. But if there is any true life, if there is any growth, each one alone upon a mountain-top has to face them. What do we truly worship? Worship means real devotion: it implies sacrifice, it colors the whole of life. Are we drifting, enjoying the day, gladly taking the pleasant things of the rich and beautiful life

in which we are placed? or, under all the happy externals, is there the real conservation of the spirit, the controlling desire to serve the Lord, to help in any way we can to bring in His Kingdom? The question comes to each one of us, "How long halt ye between two opinions?"

What really comes first? Here and now in this quiet evening hour may come the moment of vision, and of decision. There are always two opinions—one which tacitly worships the things of sense and is satisfied with the outward appearance, and one which seeks the spirit.

The votaries of Baal cut themselves and were willing to hurt themselves for their god. There was no lack of devotion; but their choice was the choice of the unthinking child, for the things of sense, for the tangible, for this world.

And this world is a beautiful world, a world of wonder and of delight, which we can never even begin to know until we recognize it as God's world, until we come to Him, to have our hearts "turned back again," as the prophet said; until we recognize His spirit pervading it all, until we begin to know that our own life can only be lived as it is lived in His. Let us dare to claim Him. God has put us in the world. Why, we may not know. That is the talk of life, to find our reason

for being. But early in our lives, from some mount of vision we may make the great decision. We may no longer halt between two opinions. Shall we live for to-day alone? shall we care for the body and the things of sense? or shall we search for the spirit, shall we be governed by the law of love, shall we approach the Sun of Righteousness, rejoicing that we may walk in His light? For He gives us light; He touches our eyes and we begin to see. He shows us that the end of all effort is to come nearer to Him, that God Himself must dwell with us, for in Him we live and move and have our being. God in us, and we in God, for He is the Father of our spirits. So shall we truly live.

Let us pray:—

Our Heavenly Father, open our eyes, we beseech Thee, that we may see. Purify our minds, that we may know how to decide. Keep us true to the great issues of life and death, and may we choose life, life here and now, because it is the life of the spirit which pervades all life. Blessed Lord, lead us each to a Mount of Transfiguration, and grant us some vision of Thyself.

We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XIX

DAY OF PRAYER

He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him. — LUKE, XX : 38.

To each of us there must come solemn moments, when we ask ourselves, what are we good for? How wonderful that glimpse is, when we see ourselves as a thing apart from ourselves, — when we get some vision of truth! Sometimes a completed action which we know is ours, and yet which has an individuality of its own, confronts and perplexes us. The psychologists speak of the two halves of the brain, and the want of perfect coördination which occasions some such experience, — when one half remembers, while the other acts. Whatever the physical basis for such a state, the moment is illuminating; for we get some hint of what life is, when we see a little portion of it, isolated, apart, complete. For life is our business here; whatever else may be true, whatever objects we may have as our dearest goal of endeavor, whatever aspirations control our action, none of these things are possible if we

have not life. To live, that we may strive, and attain, and accomplish; to live with power, so that life enkindles life, — this is the fundamental thing. Upon life itself our lives must be built.

The Church throughout its history has recognized stated times of inquiry, — times of retreat, of fasting and prayer, when the soul broke away from the ordinary routine of daily living, and searched for foundations. The questions whence and whither must press home to all thoughtful minds. The source and the object of life claim our devout and earnest thought. To such a day have we come, when all over the world, not only in our own country, but in the far East, and in Europe, great numbers of students are united in prayer, in earnest supplication for the advancement of the world, and the coming of the Kingdom of God.

We may consider life in various aspects. We all know the joy of the natural life, the simple physical well-being of our mortal frames. The joy of motion, the comfort of penetrating warmth as the sunshine enfolds us, the exhilaration of mountain air — these delights we share with the animal creation. We have our senses, which, beyond these simple joys, are the avenues of intellectual approach to our minds. The eye and

the ear become the highways of thought. The intellectual life raises the physical to a higher power, a keener delight. And besides these there is the life of the Spirit, lifting and transforming both that of the body and of the mind, opening up the avenues of the eternal, connecting this mortal with immortality. Life to be whole must have these three elements; without either one it is dwarfed and crippled. Body, mind, and spirit must be brought into harmonious relation, or there can be nothing like true life. And this life must have its proper food. We do not starve our bodies. They cry out, and revenge themselves upon us if we neglect them. The fact that we are here as students proves that we do not starve our minds. We give them fresh and stimulating food for thought in the daily routine of our study. But how about the life of the Spirit, which should be the supreme and controlling life, — a life bound so closely to the others, a life of such inherent strength that it is difficult to kill, and yet is often very nearly starved?

Our ancestors had distinct manuals of devotion; they had prescribed forms of prayer, and special seasons of worship, to feed this life of the soul. In our reaction from formalism we

have broken away very largely from these external helps. The young knight prayed and kept his vigil before he joined the noble band; we become weary after a few brief moments. It is prayer alone that can feed this life of the soul. It is prayer that is the avenue between the visible and the invisible, between what we know and what we know only in part. It is through prayer that we come nearest to our Father; it is through prayer that God gives Himself to us.

What is prayer? Is it simply asking? A pathetic story is told of a young boy in a far Western farming country where tools were very hard to obtain, who in tossing hay broke one tine of the iron pitchfork he was using. He was greatly distressed, knowing that sure punishment would be given him. So he carefully put the pieces on the ground, close together, so close he could hardly see the break, and devoutly prayed that they might be made one. When no miracle followed, he gave up all faith! But our Father works by law. Boldly to have faced the consequences of his act would have been far more conducive to growth than his attempt to evade them.

Is prayer worship? See the Mussulman on his prayer-rug, bowed to the earth, with his

forehead touching the ground, inclined toward Mecca — a prostrate figure. That certainly is prayer, though prayer is much more than that.

The end of prayer is not attained till one's own will is brought into unity with the will of God; till all one's desires are purged from selfish insistence; till one can leave one's very self, and all that is dear to one, in a loving Father's hand.

The glory of our lives is our freedom. The old controversies on the freedom of the will no longer form a vital part of our thinking. Our good, and our bad, are the free expressions of our souls. As Herrick said long ago, —

Sin is an act so free, that if we shall
Say, 't is not free, 't is then no sin at all.

It is in this freedom of our spirits that our danger lies. We say we are free, and yet how happy for us that there is an overruling wisdom, which from our chaotic action brings order for the soul. In prayer we must recognize our own littleness and God's Infinitude. We must ask as best we can, but always knowing that there may be a better way; always bringing our own finite wills to be lost in His fulness.

It is life we want, fulness of life we must

have; and there is no life apart from the life of God. "For all live unto him," our blessed Lord declared. The call comes to each one of us. He bids us enter into life. Shall we endeavor to do it without Him, letting the externals take all our time and thought? The Voice came to the Prophet of old: "Whom shall we send, and who will go for us?" And he answered, "Lo, here am I; send me." Shall we not each make that same answer? It is not enough in a general way to want good things. We know that it is not the way to obtain worldly possessions. How much less the things of real value! "Accustom yourself gradually to carry prayer into all your daily occupations," says Fénelon. "Speak, move, work, in peace, as if you were in prayer, as indeed you ought to be." This is true life; this opens to us the real fountains of joy. The current must be strong and deep, and it must *move*; then the surface wavelets are sparkling and clear. Let us not think of the search after God as something afar off, something to begin when we are old. Here and now is the time to begin. *This* is the only hour we have at command.

Let us come to our blessed Lord, who bids us come to Him, for rest to our souls, and ask

that He will show us the path of life. We know so little how to find the way. We need the guiding hand. Our own thoughts are so unstable, so vague. Let us bring them all to Him, asking Him who is the God of the Living, that from henceforth we may live unto Him.

Let us pray:—

O Lord, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, we come to Thee for fulness of life. Lord, Thou dost know our hearts; Thou dost know our inward struggles; Thou dost know our aspirations. Grant unto each soul before Thee the completion that only comes from resting in Thee. Help each soul to resolve highly and firmly to embrace the true life which Thou alone dost give.

We pray Thee to bless all students, all over the world, who at this time are seeking a special blessing. The blessing, O Lord, do Thou send to each one, for every soul is precious in Thy sight. Thou who art life, give us life, we beseech Thee, and help us, from this day forth, to live to Thee. Amen.

XX

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY

Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice ; for the Lord will do great things — JOEL, II : 21.

THIS book of the prophet Joel is a lament over the degenerate state of his times. About eight hundred years before Christ the critics place it, — a poem full of startling imagery, of strong denunciation.

The field is wasted, the land mourneth ;
For the corn is wasted :
The new wine is dried up,
The oil languisheth.
Be ashamed, O ye husbandmen,
Howl, O ye vine-dressers,
For the wheat and for the barley ;
Because the harvest of the field is perished.
.
How do the beasts groan !
The herds of cattle are perplexed,
Because they have no pasture ;
Yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate.

In the true Oriental spirit all this calamity is accepted directly from the hand of the Lord.

Alas for the day !
For the day of the Lord is at hand,
And as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

With moving imagery the poet sets forth the terrors of evil, and then turns with an exquisite and simple transition of thought to the divine compassion :—

Rend your hearts, and not your garments,
And turn unto the Lord your God :
For he is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and of great kindness.

And a little later follows the passage of blessing :
“Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things.”

At this season, when our hearts are stirred with patriotic pride, we do well to read this ancient poem, written for the Lord's ancient people, and take to heart its lessons of warning, its invitation, its triumphant joy. “Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things.”

Our fathers in crossing the sea felt that they too were a chosen people. They too were led through a trackless wilderness. Not for gain, not for personal aggrandizement, did they come. They left home and country, and sought a better, where they fondly hoped the kingdom of God

would have its visible establishment. And it amounted only, in this Colony of the Massachusetts Bay, to the creation of another hierarchy no less intolerant than the one they had left. It was not till sixteen years later that Roger Williams founded Providence Plantations, where "all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God." Then it was that a firm foundation was laid in that precious doctrine of soul-liberty which is the cornerstone of our American civilization. Then it is that we can begin to say of our country: "Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things."

The time would fail me to enumerate some of the great things which the Lord hath done. Think of the two centres of our Western world in the early days: this Colony of the Massachusetts Bay, and the Planters of Virginia. Think of the Cavaliers and the Puritans, with their diverse religious opinions. Think of the ancient grants of land given so freely, inclusive of certain parallels of latitude, overlapping, conflicting, so that at one time Connecticut held a charter extending to the Pacific. Think of the possibilities of confusion from all this geographical ignorance, as well as all these diverse personal

interests. And is it not true that the Lord hath done great things in bringing one homogeneous nation from such discordant elements? But the greatest thing of all which has been done for us, the most precious, is the gift of our freedom. We proclaim it loudly, we assert our belief in it. Are we striving to make it true? We can hardly tell at what cost of effort, what triumph over prejudice, what war against long-established custom, it was won. We say we have no caste-system — that each man stands or falls on his own merit; and thank God that is still largely true. But more and more the influence of older civilization creeps in upon us, — more and more distinctions are made. And they are distinctions largely made and valued by women. We ought to see to it as loyal daughters of our country that we hold unsullied its high tradition of equality; that we make sure of the equality of opportunity for every child born in our wide domain. This means fostering all the agencies of civilization, — the school, the neighborhood guild, the social settlement, — all the agencies for good, the conduct of which lies so largely in women's hands. But more than all, it means our personal attitude toward our fellows, remembering that we are all equally, high and

low, or rich, or poor, — as the world counts us — children of God.

The promise of the prophet is to us: "I will pour out my spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." It is that spirit of the Lord which we want, which we must have if our land is to be blessed. Without that spirit the great things are impossible. We must see the vision to lead us on; we must feel the lure of the infinite to glorify our daily life. When our young men and maidens are truly baptized into this spirit, are ready to live in the light of the heavenly vision, then indeed we can say: "Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice; for the Lord will do great things."

Let us pray: —

O Lord, we come to Thee asking that Thou wilt give us a share in the great things that Thou dost do. We rejoice and bless Thy name that Thou hast placed us in this land of freedom, this land of opportunity. May we rise to our high privilege, may we be faithful to our inheritance. O Thou who dost work by law, who dost carry forward Thy great designs through the operation of human agencies, use us, we beseech Thee, to further Thy great ends. Here we are, with

hearts and minds awake and alive ; may we help to bring in Thy day, to establish the reign of righteousness upon earth.

We thank Thee for the great things Thou hast done ; we rejoice that Thou art constantly doing them ; and we ask that Thou wilt use us in Thine own way. For Christ's sake. Amen.

XXI

HUMILITY

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. — MATTHEW, v: 3.

WE are approaching that season of the year when the Church throughout the world commemorates the fasting and temptation of Christ. Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness, the ancient account says, "to be tempted of the devil." This is simple and forcible language we can all understand. For His soul, that radiant soul which had its union with God in some especial and vital way, the soul of Him on whom the Spirit of God visibly descended, had to be tried and tempered by inward conflict, as ours has to be. It is a striking fact to notice that it was just after His baptism, just after the Voice from Heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son," that He was driven into the wilderness.

The human life of Jesus was a life of growth. We must believe that His great mission as a declarer of God, His great responsibility of sonship, grew upon Him gradually. It may have

been a revelation to Himself as well as to the bystanders — this open acknowledgment that in Him the Father was well pleased. Just as we seek seclusion after some great experience, it is natural to believe Jesus did. The Spirit drove Him into the wilderness, and there alone in solitude the great problems of His life confronted Him. Who may dare to pry into the mysteries of any soul? We are each of us solitary, each of us alone, without either beginning or end that we know of: a tiny spark of light, from the light that enlightens the world. If we hardly dare to speak of each other's mysteries, still less may we of those of our Saviour. He must have told His disciples something of that conflict, — the three-fold temptation on the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual side. Bread for the body, power over the laws of nature, the worship of the world — these were offered Him, Matthew tells us, and He refused them all. Strong in the might of these great victories, He came down from the mountain and began to preach. What preaching should that be? What lessons had He to give from the depths and heights of that great experience, those forty days in the wilderness, those forty days alone with God? Truly it was preaching which has

moved the world, preaching on which the foundations of Christianity are laid.

And the very first thing He taught was Humility: "Blessed are the poor in spirit." One would have thought some of the other blessings would have come first. The great passage upon Love follows a little later; the injunction to perfection, "even as your Father is perfect," comes afterward. Jesus boldly declared the Fatherhood of God, a conception so familiar to us now that we can hardly imagine its novelty in that age. The most spiritual of the Hebrew poets had sung, "Like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." But the Old Testament bears witness to the awe and reverence which surrounded the very name of Jehovah. He was the great I AM, incomprehensible, remote,— the Lawgiver, the strict dispenser of Justice. But it was not the new revelation of God as a Father, which was the first word of Christ's message. It was rather the blessing on the state of mind which can receive the message. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven." It is only the humble who can receive, it is only humility which can learn.

And in this time of haste, of superficial learn-

ing, of hurried acquisition, it is especially needful to go back to foundations. If we think we know, do we wish to learn? If we think we have, do we desire to receive? There must be some true sense of the smallness of our possessions compared to the greatness of knowledge, of the poverty of our achievement compared to the wealth of our possibility. We all are apt to look only upon our own things, to be content with what is only a beginning. Without humility there can be no growth. We sometimes revolt at the expressions of the eighteenth-century writers who dwelt upon humility in a way later years do not. And yet they are true expressions; for truth, which we fondly speak of as absolute, is after all relative, because of the limitations of our vision.

Vile and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of Truth and grace,

sings Charles Wesley. It is well to compare our littleness with the greatest we can conceive of, our finite with the vastness of infinity. Then we get into something like a proper state of mind; then we can begin to grow. For the promise is to us,—for the humble: “theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven.” Not will be, but *is*—

observe the promise reads; not at some time far distant, when we are out of this body, but now, here — “theirs *is* the kingdom of heaven.” As we come to this time set apart by godly men in devout memory and imitation of this struggle of our blessed Lord, let us each keep the fast, — not to the outward eye, but to our Father who seeth in secret. Let us ask Him to give us the Spirit of true humility, the Spirit of Him who was meek and lowly of heart, claiming His promise, “Ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Let us pray :—

Lord, we come to Thee — weak, erring, wilful, full of the pride of life, and the complacency of small things, not even knowing how we ought to ask, realizing but faintly our need, and yet crying to Thee to give us that humble and teachable spirit, that pure and honest heart, without which there is no true life. O Thou who dost bid us come to Thee, may we in truth learn of Thee. Thou who art meek and lowly of heart, give us true meekness and humility. Dear Lord, may we keep the fast so that it may be a feast to our souls. Empty us of self, of all low and vain endeavors. Thou dost call us Thy children ;

may we learn to live as Thou wouldst have us. Give us true repentance for our sins. It is Thy gentleness that doth make us great. Give us the spirit that can rise, we beseech Thee, for the sake of Christ our Lord. Amen.

XXII

WISDOM

But where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding? — JOB, xxviii : 12.

THE poet in the chapter we have just read speaks of all natural phenomena — of the floods, of the action of fire, of the growth of the nourishing produce of the fields; and rises from these visible things, wonderful as they are and impossible to understand as they are (for the principle of growth is still the unknown principle), to the higher realm, to the path which

The vulture's eye hath not seen :

The lion's whelps have not trodden.

And then, in a superb flight even from this vantage point, having considered the usual manifestations of nature on the earth and the unknown ways of the air, he rises still higher: "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?"

To impress upon his own mind the thought of the wonder of it, he tries to measure it; but by the universal law that things are commen-

surate only as they have kindred properties, he finds that there is no measure for wisdom: "Man knoweth not the price thereof." "It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, . . . and the exchange of it shall not be made for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies." And wisdom in this high sense of the word, the wisdom which is above all the ordinary appearances of nature and beyond the highest stretch of man's imagination, this wisdom is the ultimate goal of the search of souls.

We had recently a most powerful and interesting sermon from a distinguished preacher, who pointed out that the Almighty Himself worked by successive stages: that His method of perfection was a constant choice of the most perfect, leading on from one perfection to another perfection, and placing the ultimate perfection far off in the dim ages of obscurity — if, indeed, it is ever reached, even in the infinity of time. This is to say that the principle of growth is an eternal principle; that the old ideal of the ultimate good and the absolutely perfect is put so far from the soul as forever to beckon on to new achievement, to fresh endeavor. It was a daring thought, and an inspiring one, that God

Himself, being a perfect Being, must constantly seek perfection ; that there is a possibility that even fine gold can be refined, since we ourselves have so small a conception of what absolute purity can be. Is not this an inspiration to us as we make our choices, as we strive ourselves for the difficult right ?

The old prophet declares that wisdom is hidden from the eye of all living, and with matchless imagery describes the apprehension of it by powers of darkness as well as powers of light. And having strained his mind and ours to the utmost, as he tried to image some concrete conception of what wisdom may be, of what absolute knowledge is, he comes to the only practical wisdom for ourselves in our finite condition, when, at the end of his splendid poem, he declares : "God understandeth the way thereof, and He knoweth the place thereof." However it may be with an infinite Being, who holds us all in being, whether He Himself in Himself embodies a capacity of growth, for us, He must be our ultimate perfection, our final end.

In the contemplation of divine majesty, we take our humble place as very small creatures of His universe, losing the sense of our unfortunate egotism in the calm of His ineffable be-

ing. In the contemplation of divine goodness our small bits of righteousness are, as Saint Paul says, "but filthy rags." In the contemplation of the serene laws by which the universe is governed, of the unfailing operation of those laws, we ourselves take our place as a part of the whole order of creation, and are lost in humility and wonder and awe. Is this not what the prophet means when he ends, "And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding"?

We may not be able to attain the whole of wisdom; we may be able to understand only in part, in very small part; but we can at least put ourselves in a receptive attitude; we may at least open our minds that they may learn to understand. And so we come, submitting ourselves, gladly, voluntarily, to all holy influences; putting aside the week-day cares; opening our minds to pure and holy influences that we may begin to understand what wisdom is, what this fear of the Lord is in which reverence and love have their due part: the fear which is bred of love and worship, — not a slavish but a filial reverence.

At this Lenten season, as we follow our Lord in thought in the mystery of His solitary strug-

gle in the wilderness, is there any deeper question for us than this old question, "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?" To understand ourselves, to understand our relation with God,—that is what we must attain to. It is the wisdom from above which we want, that is "pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and of good fruits." We are like children seeking some external sign. We try to satisfy ourselves with lesser things, when there is but one complete source of satisfaction. If we like modern phrases, we are told we must be in "tune with the Infinite."—"You are a primary being," an old Greek philosopher declares to us. "You are a distinct portion of the essence of God, and contain a part of Him in yourself." It is this divine part of us that cries out for its completion in Divinity. "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God," the Psalmist exclaims. It is the ancient cry for wisdom, for completion, for understanding. We want to understand, and still more we want to be understood. We need to be strengthened and helped in the divine life by the joy of comprehension of our feeble efforts. Our small beginnings must be confirmed by an infinite fulfilment; and when

with humility and reverence we seek guidance, the serene voice of the Hebrew poet sings in our souls : —

Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom ;
And to depart from evil is understanding.

Let us pray : —

O Thou Fountain of all wisdom and knowledge, we come to Thee for that precious gift which is beyond all price. Empty us of ourselves, O Lord, lest we be wise in our own conceit, and impart to us the wisdom that is from above. We are learners. May we learn the best and highest things. Teach us, we beseech Thee, to take the first step in departing from evil. Strengthen our wills that we may always choose the best ; give us discriminating minds that we may know the right ; give us patient souls that we may follow it with untiring zeal ; give us, we pray Thee, the blessing of being fellow-workers with Thee, the joy of constant growth, the hope of constant aspiration. Hear us, we pray Thee, O Lord, as we ask for these good gifts, not knowing how we ought to ask, and fulfil the desires of our hearts in so far as they are for that wisdom that cometh from above.

We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XXIII

GRIEF

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
— COLOSSIANS, II : 9.

WHAT a depth of meaning there is in the word “fulness”! If we think of height, the eyes of our mind soar aloft; if of depth, we seek to sound an unknown abyss; when we say length, or breadth, we dwell on the surface of things, projecting our imagination to the farthest horizon. But fulness comprises all these. Fulness implies something that can be filled. It must therefore have height, if one regards the vessel from below, and depth, if one looks from above. And its contents have both length and breadth; it is full, complete, perfected according to the measure of its capacity. We say we give full weight, or full measure, — all that can be required. A poem is full of meaning to us, — the faces of our parents are full of love.

Saint Paul, who apprehended Christ perhaps better than any one except the Beloved Disciple, often uses this word. — “For it pleased the

Father that in him should all fulness dwell," he says a little earlier in this same epistle. "Of his fulness have all we received;" Christ was "full of grace and truth," Saint John declares.

At this Lenten season, what better theme of devout meditation can we choose than this great theme of the fulness of God, which dwelt in our blessed Lord, and was His support and consolation — as it may be ours — in the trials of the flesh, and the shrinking of the spirit in the last crowning days of His earthly ministry? The question immediately arises, what place have grief and pain, have anguish of mind and torture of body, in the fulness of God? We think of God as a perfect Being. We bow before the splendor of an infinite Being beyond our comprehension. How is it that pain and sorrow could come to that Elder Brother of ours who was His Beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased? The world seems to be ordered by contrasts. Night and day succeed each other with unflinching regularity. Action and repose is the law of our physical frame. The world of art has recognized this necessity of light and shade: without the shade the picture is flat and unmeaning. The poets give us quick changes of thought, — "from grave to gay, from lively to severe." It has been argued

that good must have its counterpart in evil to maintain itself. Certainly in the slow progress of the world it is the forces of light which are continuously at war with the powers of darkness, and are bringing mankind upward and onward. It is the same with joy and sorrow. We do not know joy until we have tasted of the bitter cup of sorrow. Grief is the great illuminator. Out of the depths of grief comes the tender flower of hope, — the hope which we have “as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.”¹ We do not know our own capacity until the chords of grief are touched. Then, as in the strings of a perfect musical instrument, are heard the wonderful overtones of our nature, pure and high and sweet, reaching beyond our finite ken, into the regions of the immortal.

Each of us who has had a real sorrow, a sorrow to live with, not the passing of a light cloud, but something which obliges us to readjust our lives, knows the hush of peace with which we begin to live again after that great experience. The light of common day is changed, — the “trailing clouds of glory” are about us. We turn with a new desire to that last talk of Jesus with His disciples ;

¹ Hebrews, vi : 19.

we dwell with a new comprehension on the last days of our Saviour on earth. *He* endured, and *He*, we are told, is our pattern. As we think of it we see how impossible it was, if *He* was to live the life of man, that *He* should *not* be "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

And grief and joy are not only not incompatible, they are each other's complement. What a rejoicing of Spirit that was when Jesus said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." He knew the joys of friendship, He knew the joys of a revealer of truth. The capacity for joy is only measured by the capacity for grief. The higher the joy, the greater the possibility of grief.

For grief as well as joy is part of the fulness of God. The only attitude toward grief is that which our Saviour took: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: . . . Father, glorify thy name," in this hour of sorrow, in this hour of pain. When the poor body is torn with anguish it is hard to keep the spirit in control. The flesh is weak, but many and many a martyr to truth in the might of that example has joyfully gone to his death glorifying the name of the Father. In the Infinity of God

are both joy and pain, blessedness and grief. One is no less a part of Him than the other, and in Him in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt both had to be manifest. Utmost love had to know utmost anguish. In that sense Christ tasted death for all men. He in whom the Father was well pleased had to bear the sins of the world.

Such themes are too high for us.

We kneel, and humbly bow the head in awe
And worship, nor may fully comprehend
The strange mysterious workings of the law
Of blessedness and grief.

But we may be sure that our own griefs find a place in the bosom of the Father; our own sadness is taken by Him who carries our sorrows. In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, that fulness which is both joy and pain, love and anguish, grief and peace.

Let us pray:—

O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace. O Thou who wast a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, shed Thy joy upon us, that our joy may be full. O Thou who art the Light of the World, let not our hearts be troubled.

O Thou who art in the Father and the Father in Thee, send us the Comforter. Amen.

XXIV

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword . . . and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. — HEBREWS, IV : 12.

AT this season of Lent, which so large a portion of the Christian world is observing, our thoughts turn to the Temptation in the wilderness, the forty days of that mysterious fast.

Welcome dear feast of Lent ; who loves not thee
He loves not temperance nor authority,

George Herbert sings.

'T is true we cannot reach Christ's fortieth day;
Yet to go part of that religious way
Is better than to rest.

And so for these weeks many devout souls have kept a fast in their hearts, have used this dawning springtime as a time of special communion with the Source and Fountain of all Life.

We sometimes think of that temptation in the wilderness as something so mysterious, so unique, that we can only contemplate it with

reverent awe, not seeking to comprehend its meaning, and putting it aside as something so beyond our souls' experience as to be without special teaching or value to us. And yet the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says expressly, "who was tempted in all points like as we are." Is there any likeness in this great temptation, before the contemplation of which we shrink in perplexity, and humility, and any trial of our own souls?

Saint Matthew uses an expression which throws light on such an inquiry: "Then was Jesus led up of *the Spirit* into the Wilderness"; that Spirit which "is sharper than any two-edged sword, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It was then some trial of the Spirit, some test of the ultimate objects of His life. What those long days of conflict and meditation were, we may not know; we do know the triumphant assurance with which He came down from the mountain, — secure, serene, His life joined to the life of God in a new and vital way, knowing that it was sustained by the Word of God, and confidently treading down Satan under His feet. He came by the way His Father led Him, to the supreme heights of human life, to a realization of His own soul, to its union with

the divine. We cannot conceive that the issue with Him was ever doubtful, and yet there was the prolonged contest between the power of evil and the power of the Spirit.

It is this same temptation which assails every child of God. We cling so to externals, it may be to very good and precious things, to the supporting love of an earthly parent, to the forms of worship in the Church we were born in, — and yet the time comes to each soul when it is led of the Spirit into the Wilderness, — when all earthly stays and supports drop from it, — when it must stand alone, and face its own life. In that awful moment of isolation is there anything to cling to? Do we turn back in terror to the things of this life, or can we live in the Spirit? Can we truly cast ourselves upon the Divine love? In those moments of intense consciousness what is the intent of our hearts which is discovered?

It was this dividing sword of the Spirit which pierced the heart of Jesus, the same sword which pierces the heart of each of His followers. As His love was greater than ours, so was His suffering; but even in its intensity in the last great trial, it was love that triumphed, — the intent of the heart which was discovered was

humility and faith, with tender forgiveness and love.

It is to this sword we must bare our own hearts, this sword which cuts off everything poor and mean, this sword which discovers us to ourselves as we appear to our Lord. May we welcome it, gladly renouncing all that it would take from us; and as we follow our Saviour through His temptation, and through His suffering, in devout thought, as we try to realize what that was, may we take comfort in knowing that He has gone before, that our experiences are known to Him because in higher measure they were His own; that He is the new and living way of approach to the Father, His Father and our Father, His God and our God.

Let us pray:—

O Lord, wilt Thou send Thy Word, which is quick and powerful, to each of Thy children, to renew in us the divine life. Pierce the outer crust of our everyday living, we pray Thee. We comfort ourselves with the happy externals amid which Thou hast placed us; we rely on the precious things of this world. Rouse us from our ease, from our selfishness, with that two-edged sword which separates all that is low

and earthly from Thy Divine Purity. Now, at this holy season, may we make glad surrender to Thee, that the thoughts and intents of our hearts may be trained and guided into newness of life. Amen.

XXV

PALM SUNDAY

Christ in you, the hope of glory. — COLOSSIANS, 1 : 27.

WE come once more to this season of Holy Week, to this Palm Sunday, the one joyful day in our Lord's public ministry, that day when He declared that even the stones would find a voice, should human hearts prove cold; and we ask ourselves, what does it mean to us? "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" It may be a touching and beautiful story to us, it may be a noble example, it may call forth emotions of pity and tenderness, it may inspire us to right action. But if it rests here it is unvitalizing, unavailing; it should mean far more. This Lenten season, this holy tide, crowded with memories and associations, as we live it day by day with our suffering Saviour, should lead us more and more deeply into the meaning of life, our own life, as related to His life; should interpret afresh to us those words of our Lord which He declared were spirit and life; should revive and quicken us, till this

whole mortal acknowledge the immortal which is its completion, till Christ is truly in us, the hope of Glory.

The day is not long gone by since people, and especially young people, were puzzled with abstruse metaphysical doctrines as to the sufferings of Christ. The profoundest experiences of any soul of which we know were labelled and classified, and abstruse doctrines founded upon this classification. But we have the human analogies. Who that has loved, who that loves, has not suffered and does not suffer? It is a condition of loving: where love is, there sorrow is also; love opens the door not only to joy but to pain, and when one comes they both remain. For love enlarges our sympathies, fills our hearts with a tenderness which can easily suffer. And when we raise the best human love we know to the infinite; when we transcend human limitations, we gain some faint conception of what the height and depth of the love of Christ may be. It was this love that was wounded; this was the crime of Judas, this was the wrong that was done our Lord: that Light was come, that love was manifest, and men loved darkness rather than light. It was Love that was wounded for our transgressions; the high-

est assailed by the lowest, bruised and broken for our iniquities.

To any soul with a spark of generosity, what appeal is there so strong as this appeal of patient suffering? The old divines spoke of vicarious suffering. But all suffering that is suffering is for another. An heroic soul can triumph over the material bodily pains till far toward the moment of final dissolution. And as we live over these days of remembrance, we are drawn with an irresistible power to that Holy Sufferer, who tasted of all the bitterness of death, who was despised and rejected, who in the supreme moment bore witness to that terrible isolation of the soul, when even the sustaining Presence of God seems withdrawn. And in the intensity of that experience, as we realize it faintly in devout contemplation, each soul may draw comfort and inspiration. If He in whom was the fulness of the Father tasted of this bitter cup, shall not we patiently drink what is held to our lips? It is a way He has trod that we have to walk in; He has gone before. And as the greatness of His nature is far above ours, so is the greatness of His suffering. To us then, as we live our humble daily lives, He becomes a constant source of inspiration and power.

The humanity of His suffering we speak of? Yes, in that He crowned the universal lot. The inspiration of His sympathy? Yes, for He made the universal appeal of Godlike courage. But there is something more—not only example to be followed or divinity to be worshipped, but a principle of life to be assimilated. “This is that Bread which came down from heaven, of which if a man eat, he shall live forever.” As our natural bodies must be sustained with material food, so must our spirits be nourished with everlasting life, and that life was in Him, a life only made more manifest because it passed through the gates of death. In Him alone is unity of life; it is His life we must all partake of. “Christ in you, the hope of glory,” the Apostle exclaims. Not a Christ worshipped, but external, departed centuries ago from the world,—but Christ living to-day,—Christ the manifested fulness of the Father,—Christ whose only place to lay His head is in the deepest recesses of our hearts. As no clouds can hide the sun, whatever storms may lower, so this hope of glory must dwell in us, illuminating our lives, and even the very tabernacle of our spirits. The *hope* of glory—not yet the fulfilment, but the glad hope which shall forever lead us

upward and onward till we are rooted, grounded, built in Him. Let this be our Easter message, — a better message than even that of the Angel to the holy women of old. Christ is Risen indeed, but Christ is in us, the hope of Glory!

Let us pray: —

O Thou Blessed Son of the Father, who hast taught us to say Our Father, who this day didst come to Thine own, and wast received with joy, may we open our hearts to welcome Thee; may we throw wide our gates, and with songs of praise rejoice in Thy coming. Abide with us, dear Lord, not for the hour or the day, but come Thou to dwell with us, making our lives pure and beautiful by Thine indwelling Spirit. So may we continually cry, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Amen.

XXVI

EASTER

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. — COLOSSIANS, 1 : 19.

WHAT a power there is in the sound of one little word, — a short word with the terse and expressive quality of our Saxon speech ! We say we are *full* of joy, — we are *full* of courage, — we are so *full* of our subject we can speak of nothing else. The image is a simple one: a cup is filled to overflowing ; the rains fill the pools ; there is a giving and receiving. One vessel is to be filled from another ; on one side a passive attitude, on the other an active one. We all have wants, we all have longings ; the best we have leaves us with capacity for more ; the more we know, the more we see is to be known. And in our text Saint Paul, who himself was so great that he could comprehend greatness, declares that in Christ dwelt all fulness. What was that fulness which once walked the earth, — that fulness which visibly showed forth the glory of God ?

This is the season of new life. We see it all about us in the external world, new and beautiful

in the blossoming trees, in the awakening fields. But not only is this true of what we call nature, it is true of us, of all of us who are living at all; for life implies growth, and the life of the spirit as well as the life of the body must develop to prove itself alive. Nature is "that universal and publick Manuscript that lies expanded unto the eyes of all," as Sir Thomas Browne called it, — his second book from which he collects his divinity. But beautiful and suggestive as this open book of the world is to us, we long for the person, the person who shall be like our own personality, the life which shall be the inspiration of our own individual life. "We carry in us the wonders we seek without us"; and in the studies of the wonders of the natural world we long for the clear perception of some personal life, some personal love. And here the great apostle assures us, "for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Is there a fulness in Him which satisfies this longing of the soul?

What does He say Himself? — "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." Life? When with reverent hearts we have been following Him through these last days of betrayal, of shameful trial, of cruel mocking and scourging, of anguish and of death

upon the cross? Do we learn *life* from Him? Ah, yes. For was not He the first to show us what life was? Not to live in a palace as one's childish imagination pictures; not to be of the great ones who exercise authority, but to be servant of all; to minister, not to be ministered unto. Here was a new world added to the life of man. So long as each was only living for himself, for his family, for his own, he was limited, fettered, bound. Now the great and unlimited life of service was opened up to him. However we conceive of God, this must be His life; the Giver, the Sustainer, the Power that upholds all being. It was this life that Christ showed us. In a very literal sense He came to give us more abundant life.

And that life He assured us was a continuous life. Did it ever occur to you that the most precious word, *the* word of Easter Day, "I am the resurrection and the life," was said to a woman? It was to Martha weeping for her brother that Jesus spoke. You remember how she went to meet Him, as soon as she heard He was coming, and her tender reproach, — "Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died." In answer to His reply she said, "I know that he shall rise again at the last day." And then came the great words announcing the continuous principle of

life: "*I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*" Truly here was a fulness of life which no man had ever dreamed of claiming.

The old discussions of the immortality of the soul are a most absorbing topic of study. There were heroes who lit their own funeral pyres and perished in the flames, exclaiming, "Thus do I become immortal!" The search of Orpheus for Eurydice among the shades has had its modern setting through the genius of Glück, but everywhere since men could think at all has been the longing for some assurance, some authoritative word from beyond the grave. Impostors have thriven on this tender longing; men have been deluded with all sorts of trivialities because they were offered in the name of a beloved one. With the advance of scientific knowledge, with the conception of the brain as the organ of thought, the old subject takes on fresh meaning, and a new poignancy is added to the question of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?" The materialist frankly says no: the brain which was the seat of his consciousness dies; he can no longer think without his brain, any more than he can walk without his legs. It is all a material thing — so

many ounces of gray matter, so much personality. The physical brain dies; hence, according to the material philosophy, the man dies—once and for all.

It has remained for science to refute this argument of science, this conclusion arrived at in the first flush of the wonderful physical discoveries of the last century. Read William James and see what he has to say of the threshold of consciousness. See his conception of the brain as a wonderful instrument, but an imperfect instrument, as we may know from the hints and intimations of things which lie beyond our ken,—things we dimly perceive when that threshold of consciousness is lowered. He puts in the latest and most modern scientific language Saint Paul's great truth when he declared, "Now we see in part, now we know in part"; and the modern philosopher looks forward to the triumphant time also, when it shall be face to face, and "we shall know even as we are known."

Or read Hugo Münsterberg: "No science of the universe can say anything about ourselves who make the sciences," he declares. "In reality we are free, and in our freedom we have an interest in thinking of ourselves as mechanisms." We are "beyond time in the reality of our im-

mediate life." Follow his close and exquisitely framed argument ; one follows it with joy, and what does it say but what Jesus said long ago : "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Believeth in me, Jesus put as the test of a man's living at all. It would have made too long a catalogue of virtues to say believeth in honesty, in pureness, in humility, in service, in truth, in a hundred other things for which the life of Christ stood. He simply said "believeth in me" ; the man who believes in Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live, because he is become a part of the eternal truth, because he is of the essence of immortality.

For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell ; and sounding through this chapter like the joyous and solemn pealing of an Easter bell, are those blessed words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Christ in you. There must be that vital union, that perfect conjunction of our lives with His. We must lay hold on immortality by being one with the eternal. "Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible Sun within us," was said by a man who still thought that the sun made its daily round. Now we know that the sun is our centre, that it is our

little earth that revolves. So we each must have our centre. We each must live, and the light within us is the light which comes to us from our Father. This Easter Day with its new joy, its new hope, its fresh assurance of eternal life, should bring us closer and closer to the source of all life. In our blessed Saviour all fulness dwelt. Oh, may it be true of us, that of His fulness have all we received.

Let us pray:—

O Thou Source of all Life, Thou Sun of Righteousness, who dost enlighten the world, shine in our hearts, we beseech Thee! Thou who art eternal, give us of Thine own fulness, for Thou dost call us Thy children. We come to Thee empty to be filled; we come to Thee poor to be made rich; we come to Thee weak to be made strong. Pour out upon us of Thy blessed fulness, we beseech Thee; open our hearts that they may receive, that our cups may truly run over, not only with the blessings Thou dost shower upon us, but with the fulness of Thy Spirit. Make us strong, we pray Thee, in Thine own strength, and clothe us with the power of an endless life.

We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XXVII

ABUNDANCE

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. — JOHN, x : 10.

TO-DAY we stand in the midst of the yearly miracle, the awaking from the winter's sleep, the rising from the dead of Nature. The cold and snow have finally yielded, and the sun asserts its supreme power. It is with us always, though we need to remind ourselves of it. When it is gone, our physical world will be ended, and like the moon, a frozen orb, will move through uninhabited space.

But here our life is warm, personal, close, full of throbbing vitality. We need more for our life than the cold generalizations of nature, more than the beautiful intangible procession of the seasons. As life comes from life it must be nourished by life, and this Easter season brings its ever fresh teaching, its constant inspiration, its literal inbreathing of the life of God into our own lives.

A little book has recently been published,

ostensibly by a Chinese official, containing a tremendous indictment against Christianity, as manifested in the lives of Christian nations. Avarice and greed, the author declares to be the ruling motives of men's lives. In America especially, he thinks, or pretends to think, that all our ambitions are grossly material, that the selfish scramble for riches is the only employ which engages men's minds. If this were true, then indeed we should have fallen upon evil times. Against this view place President Eliot's address last summer on "The New Definition of the Cultivated Man," in which he treats of the fusion which must exist in a man of true culture, of the passion for knowledge with the passion for doing good. The element of service to our fellows must enter into any true culture; and in America this passion for service has found greater development than in any other country. The imagination enters more truly into our lives than into that of other people. Look at the daily wonders of electricity applied to common uses, as an example. In business, too, the man of great success must be a man of powerful imagination. He must foresee conditions with a prophet's eye. And while these spiritual powers are put to material uses, they are none the less powers of the

spirit which are used, and with very small change of direction can be turned and are often turned to the highest themes.

And we who are Americans, who live in an atmosphere quick and vital with growth and change, must see to it that we do not spend all our spiritual force on less than its legitimate object. The very round of our religious observances may become a routine to keep us away from true religion. There is only one kind of religion, and that is personal religion. One may recite all the creeds of the world — the question is, what creed are we living? We say we believe in God the Father: when have we cast ourselves upon His love, and been sustained? And in Jesus Christ: has He borne our burdens for us as our Brother because we took them to Him? And in the Holy Ghost: does that Spirit of Love really dwell in our hearts?

“I am come that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly,” our Lord declares. The whole life of Jesus: His three years of patient ministry; that crowded and terrible week we have just followed in devout thought; His death in suffering, but in triumph, — for with His last cry the centurion was persuaded that He was more than man; —

and then the Glory of Easter morning; all this was to show us what life is: that it is not a thing bound and fettered to a shrinking body, but that the life of the soul transcends all material conditions; that it is one life, continuous, eternal, a life whose only native place is in the bosom of God. This is what Easter Day tells us, with its awakening and arousing power. You are more than mortal, it declares. Why spend your best thought on material things? Why not here and now begin the immortal life you are made to live? Why not glorify the life that now is by the abundance and fulness of the life that is to be!

And the way thereto is in the old and simple way of service, and of love. "Find out men's wants and meet them there," George Herbert tells us. We must have "a heart at leisure from itself," as the beautiful hymn reminds us. The ready sympathy, the bearing and forbearing in our daily tasks, these bring flowers in our path. But the will must be firm, the heart must be set on the very Highest, and then the good treasure will flow from the good heart. Not for the treasure must we walk in the Way, but walk in it because it is the Way Everlasting, — because as children of God there is no other way for us to walk in.

Love and service,—if one were to use only two words, are not these the two to describe the Life of Christ? Love so perfect that there is no greater love than to lay down life itself; service so pure that the little child, and the outcast, shared it. That was life, — that is the life which Christ brings to us; the life to show us how to live, the life which He gives to us abundantly.

Let us pray:—

O Thou in whom all fulness dwells, we come to Thee for Life. From Thee we came, to Thee we go, and Thou alone canst show us the way. Thou hast set us in Thy beautiful world with open eyes, with quick desires, with eager longings that fasten on the wonders around us, seeking food for our spirits. O Thou who art the true sustainer of all life, evermore give us the bread of life, that we may feed on Thee in our hearts. We long for fulness, we long for abundance, we feel the strong powers Thou hast given us to use. Guide us, we pray Thee. May we learn of Thy blessed Son, from His life of sacrifice, what true life may be; and seeing it, knowing its beauty and its power, may we lead it ourselves, dear Lord. May we draw near to

Thee not with our lips, but with our hearts, and enter into the abundance of life which is hid with Christ in God. We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XXVIII

LIGHT

Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. — EPHESIANS, V: 14.

IT is the resurrection call that the Apostle sends us across the centuries, the call to awake, to arise, which points us to the true Source of Light. The cry for light is the cry of all earnest souls. How it sounds through the Psalms! "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" — "Light is sown for the righteous." — "In thy light shall we see light." It was a figure familiar to his hearers the Apostle uses—a call which appealed to every seeking soul.

In this joyous springtime, when we see the literal arising from the dead in the natural world, let us consider for a few moments this beautiful and inspiring call.

Sleep and death have always been closely associated. You remember Sir Thomas Browne's

Sleep is a death; O make me try
By sleeping what it is to die.

And the poets are full of allusions to this "death by which we may literally be said to dye daily," a death "whereby we live a middle and moderating point between life and death." Taking this literal view of sleep, it is easy to raise it as the Apostle does to the spiritual view. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead." But while we awake naturally from sleep, we have no natural power of arising from the dead. And yet we see the intimations of such resurrection all about us. The tender green of the fields, the swelling buds of the trees, the flowers beginning to open in sheltered places—all these natural phenomena are going on about us, proclaiming the arising from the dead in the world of nature. The time of repose and inaction is over. Everywhere new life is flooding the world from the glorious spring sunshine. Are we truly alive? Do we respond to this call to awake, to arise? Have we within us still something of the sleep of winter—something of the bondage of death?

It is the highest possibility of the college to quicken the life of the Spirit. Here not only the world of nature but the world of thought is spread before us. Here the masters of all time speak to our spirits in immortal words; here the recesses of the wonderful processes of nature

yield up secrets to the inquiring mind ; here the noblest forms of beauty in art, and the living power of music, touch the imagination. It is all to awaken us, to bid us use our own powers, to arise. A blind man is dead to color, a deaf man to sound. Have we not still vast tracts within us which are not yet alive, which give no responsive vibration to lofty thought or high emotion, because we are dead to them ?

And with the call to awake and to arise comes the promise of the gift of light. Think for a moment of the power of light in the physical world. Not only does the sun hold the planets in their orbits, but its light gives life to each tiny flower and blade of grass. New and wonderful powers for healing disease are being discovered as properties of light. If it were possible to have forty-eight hours of continuous sunshine, I have heard a physician declare, disease would be banished from the world. The application of light has already changed the whole treatment of several classes of disease. Light is a condition of all growth, a necessity of all health.

Who has not experienced the joy of seeing ? The mountaineer climbs to some topmost peak, and waits for the sun. Dim purple clouds surround him, changing to rose and amethyst, and

soft gold and crimson ; and then, with a shock of astonishment, the dazzling rim of the sun bursts upon him. Or that more subtle joy of search for tiny forms, impossible to see with the naked eye. At last the adjustment is made, and the infinitesimal object lies revealed on the slide of the microscope. Or the mental vision, when after long search for a clue to some knotty argument it suddenly presents itself clear and distinct, and we gladly exclaim, I see !

All these are gifts of light — the light which earnest men have ever sought — the light which is the life-giver, the truth-revealer. Think how we go to a wise person, in perplexity and doubt. If he has passed through our experience, we confidently approach him asking light on our question. In a vastly higher degree, we may approach our Saviour ; *and Christ shall give thee light* is the crowning promise. Light that means life, light that means illumination, light that means power. Of all these the promise assures us. It is Light that we must seek at the Source of Light. It is the quest of every earnest soul ; to know, to see, we must have light.

And here these springtime days give us an analogy. How could we expect growth if our seeds are shut up in a dark room ? We must

open our hearts to the Sun of Righteousness as the fields lie open to the rays of the visible sun. In one way it is a passive act on our part—to lie still and to receive from the infinite fulness. We but open our eyes, and lo, the light is there for us to see. And if we once have had some gleam of this celestial vision, if the dimness of our sight has been a little removed, if we can say with blind Bartimæus, “Whereas I was blind, now I see,” then we too are illuminated by that holy flame; then we too can be light-bearers for our Lord; we too can share in the brightness of His appearing. For it is the light of life He gives us. Let us therefore put off the works of darkness, and having put on the armor of light say to our own hearts, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”

Let us pray:—

Our Heavenly Father, in whom we live and move and have our being, we pray Thee to raise us from the night and death of sin, to the light of righteousness. Make us children of the day, to walk in Thy paths. Oh, send forth Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead us. Bid us awake and put off the works of darkness, knowing that

in Thee there is no shadow, but the clear shining of the perfect day.

We praise Thee, O Lord, as did Thy servants of old. May we rise on the wings of devotion, may we offer true sacrifices of joy; accept the offering we bring, and waken us to newness of life, for Christ's sake. Amen.

XXIX

UNITY

THE SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE ; APRIL, 1906

That they may be one. — JOHN, XVII : II.

IN this final prayer of Jesus, as Saint John the beloved disciple gives it to us, all the great things are included. The high consecration of the soul; the joy which Christ says was His joy; the glory of the Father; all these are spoken of. And yet if one were to choose any single petition as the greatest of them all, the one which embodies the ultimate desire of the soul, it would be this: "That they may be one—even as we are." Wholeness, completion, unity, the part a vital necessity to the whole,—is not all this asked for? Is not this the gift for which Christ longed for His own? There are two deeply opposed theories of life, one which stands exclusively for the development of the individual, and one which sinks the individual in the common good. I say opposed theories,—for one is apt to be selfish, to regard only the things which concern

itself, and the other is apt to be ruthless, to sacrifice personality. And yet true Unity would harmonize and utilize both these views of life. The individual must be developed because he is part of a whole; the whole must be honored because it is made up of living parts. "That they may be one, as we are," is the prayer, — the part made great because it is a part, the whole made strong because of perfect union.

In these last days we have had so wonderful an example of oneness that it dominates all our thinking. We New Englanders often regard ourselves as the oldest, strongest part of the country, and pride ourselves on the part our forbears took in making it. The South has its great history too, and that section called the Western Reserve, granted by a liberal king with scanty geographical knowledge to Connecticut, when the western boundary of that colony reached the Pacific. But all sections are lost in the bond of brotherhood which we find binds us together when calamity comes. There is no East or West — it is all our country.

That far western coast to which our thoughts turn has its own romance, its own great charm. Long before the rush of the gold-seekers it was discovered anew, one might almost say, by a

man with the true missionary spirit, a man who sought to convert the Indians and win the land for the church of his devotion and the sovereign of his loyalty. It was in the lovely autumn weather of 1769 that Father Junipero Serra reached the sea in his journey across the country from the City of Mexico. There, on the low branch of a great live-oak tree, he hung the consecrated bell he had brought with him on that toilsome march, and there sounded the first notes that called to Christian prayer. The gentle Indians gathered about, and in the name of the patron saint of Spain, San Diego was founded. Northward the little company of Spaniards proceeded. The splendid bay of San Francisco had already been discovered, and the fathers sailed, hoping for that port. But either misled by the beauty of the harbor of Monterey, or wearied by the voyage, they stopped short, and in 1770 the Mission of San Carlos de Borromeo was founded. The next ten years saw the establishment of seven great missions. The fathers went into the beautiful wilderness both from the north and from the south, proceeding up the coast from San Diego, and both up and down from San Carlos, when they discovered that Monterey with all its beauty was not the great

inland bay of which they had heard. There in 1776, when on the east coast we were renouncing kings, far in the west the flag of Spain was raised and the Mission of San Francisco Dolores was founded. The Sorrows of Saint Francis they called it, for they were of the Order of Saint Francis of Assisi, that Saint Francis who preached to the birds, who loved every created thing, because it was part of the kingdom of God.

The work continued to prosper. Indians were converted and trained to labor, and mission after mission was built. In 1820 it was the proud boast of the Franciscans that a traveller could start at San Diego and travel thirty miles a day from one mission to another, all the way from San Diego to San Francisco, a distance of over five hundred miles. They chose beautiful places for their missions, as at San Luis Rey, overlooking a splendid valley, or at Santa Barbara looking far out to sea, with the islands of Santa Cruz to the south, and San Miguel to the west. That was the great pastoral era; hundreds of acres were under cultivation around the missions. The lands of San Antonio were eleven square miles, and the Indians were hardly more than serfs. Spanish was the language, and the country teemed with the picturesque life of Spain. Then

came the discovery of gold in 1849, and modern California began. How close, how vital, its union is with the rest of the country, this great calamity proves. It has suffered, and we all suffer. We hear of the destruction of great buildings, and the splendid energy which is already rebuilding.

But to my mind the loss of the little old Mission is the saddest of all.¹ It was built by Christian hands — it claimed the country for the holiest things. Differ as we may in points of doctrine from the ancient church, it was the church which was the pioneer of civilization. They were godly men who made the beginnings of that great state of the West. Those early beginnings were a part which has contributed to our whole, without which our unity could not be complete.

And if unity is necessary in a nation, if the binding together of states in true brotherhood is the condition of growth, no less is it true of all life. The life of the spirit as manifested in creative art demands Unity. A poem must have it, to be a poem. Some central thought must dominate, and inspire. In music it is even more

¹ The first reports prove to have been exaggerated, and the Mission was not injured beyond repair.

essential, for the basis of music, as Browning says, is everywhere in the world:—

Loud, soft, and all is said:

Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my thought:

And there! Ye have heard and seen: consider, and bow
the head!

It is the genius of the composer which must unify—his mind must be the solvent for all diversities.

If this is true of art, it is much more true of the individual life. There must be some great unifying principle, or life will be frittered away. The unimportant lays such claims upon us! And it is so hard to tell what is unimportant. One must master detail, to have a grasp of the whole. We cannot rely on intuition, there must be good honest work. And so we must lay hold of great principles, we must stay ourselves with eternal truth, we must grasp Infinity, if we are to live our finite lives. This mortal here and now must put on immortality. We must pray that prayer of Jesus each for ourselves, asking that we may be one, asking that our conflicting parts may be perfectly united, not in any superficial and transitory way, but because we have the only final and perfect bond, because we are united not only in God, but with Him who is the Father of our Spirits.

Let us pray:—

O Thou in whom we live and move and have our being, Thou who dost hold us all in the hollow of Thy hand, we come to Thee to be made one in Thee. Thou dost bind us together in bonds of country, of home, of tender affection. Bind us, we pray Thee, with still more enduring bonds—hold us in Thine Everlasting Arms. Rule our lives, we pray Thee, O Lord. Guide our thoughts, control our desires, show us the better part, which cannot be taken away from us.

So unite us in Thee, we pray Thee, for Christ's sake. Amen.

XXX

LOVE

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. — JOHN, xv : 13.

IN this saying of Jesus we have expressed the fundamental motive of the great drama of the world. What a power of compassion Jesus had! “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness”:—here the first principle of living is laid down for us. “What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”—here is a supreme test of values. And in the sentence of our text the whole of love and self-sacrifice is expressed. Love and self-sacrifice, we say, as if there were an antithesis, as if love and self-sacrifice were principles which were antagonistic. But think a moment. Love and pleasure may work in opposite directions, one’s own pleasure counting against the love of one’s friend. But the love that gives up, that “forbears for Love’s sake,”—is not this the only true love? And what is it to forbear for love’s sake, but to sacrifice self? to love so

truly that the good of the beloved is the good of the lover, that self-sacrifice is lost in devotion? In the highest sense there is no self-sacrifice for love to make: that exists only on a lower plane. As love becomes perfect it becomes complete, till all lesser motives are lost in the one supreme power that rules our life.

This triumph of love is the great theme of the poet and the dramatist. In all their lesser manifestations, in the interplay of emotion and the clash of personality, all imaginative writers have found the source of their inspiration. The great poem of Mediævalism has the love of Beatrice for its guiding star. Every great work of imagination plays around this central thought, the regenerating power of love. And in modern times surely we have had a great exposition of the ancient theme in Wagner's treatment of the Parsifal legend. Innocence is made wise by the power of sympathy. The devotion of the knights of the Grail to the very highest they can conceive, makes the fall of their leader all the more terrible. The daughter of Herodias, constrained to expiate her crime in ways her true self revolts from, doing penance in lowly acts of service the moment her real nature asserts itself, is a terrible allegory of the endless strife of good and

evil, when even the good in one can tempt to evil. These jarring elements can be brought into harmony only by the supreme power of an overwhelming love. Only in adoration, only in eternal aspiration, only in the love of God, can life find any true fulfilment.

We have heard this again and again; it is a tale that is told; does it mean anything to us?

If there is any one gift which each of us has to be thankful for, it is the capacity we have for loving. We all have it, but it can be enlarged. How can we love what we have not seen or heard of, the Apostle asks; but we can love things we know, things we see daily: a flower, a sunset, a bit of quiet water, may be a real and abiding joy to us. How much more the smile of a friend or the gentle word of greeting! Let us not be ashamed of our love; let us carry it into everything we do. Surely there is no possible position for us to be placed in where there is not some one or some thing to love. We long for love ourselves — do we give it abundantly? This is the function of all beauty, to train our love. We surround ourselves with lovely things, because the love in us is so full it must have its expression. This is the office of music, to lead us up from the daily path, to glorify life. We

each must live our own life, a life single and alone, no matter how surrounded by friends and companions. It can be a full life, or it can be dwarfed and stunted: only by loving can it become rich and fruitful. In every direction it ought to flow out to all that is lovely, and of good report.

O world as God has made it, all is beauty ;
And knowing this is love, and love is duty,
What further may be sought for or declared ?

Love of all nature, love of humanity, the love of our friends, the personal love of God,—these we must have, to lead anything like the rich and full life we are meant to live. Perfect love casts out fear; and as we are more truly absorbed in love we too shall cease to be self-conscious, shall be simple and sincere in our daily life. If love truly rules our hearts, it will give us a frankness and openness of demeanor, a noble confidence, which will stand storm and stress. There will be no such thing as self-sacrifice, for love will vanquish self, and we too may reach that height when it will be simple to give up life itself for love's sake.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.”

Let us pray:—

O Love Divine, Thou who hast implanted all the human love within our hearts, Thou who dost love us with everlasting love, may we rise to Thee, to bring Thee all lesser, smaller loves, to be purified, to be ennobled, purged of earthly dross, to claim their divine origin! Thou dost give us the power of love. May we cherish it as Thy best gift to us, as that gift by which our souls do live! Cleanse us from all self-seeking— from all desire of selfish return. May we spend and be spent freely, bounteously, partaking of Thine own Everlastingness, because sustained and nourished by Thine own Love. O Love Divine, make Thy dwelling-place in these hearts before Thee, that with Thy joy, with Thy gladness, with Thy freedom, we may run in the way that leadeth to life everlasting. We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XXXI

THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Thou blessest the springing thereof. — PSALM LXV : 10.

ONE of the chief joys of what we are pleased to call our temperate zone comes from the procession of the seasons, the change from one into another. The loveliness of the tropics misses this charm : a winter which blooms in roses is not a real winter, even though some trees are bare. The soft dull grays and browns of Southern California have their own beauty, — an autumnal melancholy broods over the land, — but it is a different charm from that of our cheery winter with its honest cold and snow. The rains come as they did in Palestine, the ground is made soft with showers, and blossoms into beauty; but the joy of contrast, the delight of a new awakening, is ours in a far higher degree in our bleak New England.

Fresh Spring, the herald of Love's mighty King,
In whose coat-armor richly are displayed
All kinds of flowers that on earth do spring,

is nowhere more beautiful or more gladly wel-

come than just where we are. If more southern climes can boast their fields of flowers, we can show our violet-banks, in some parts of New England lakes of lovely blue spread on the green; and our masses of mayflower hidden in the huckleberry pastures — themselves lovely with glowing buds and swelling twigs — are worth the finding. It is the moment of new life, the outpouring of the returning power of the Sun. The Earth awakes and we sing with the Psalmist, "Thou makest it soft with showers: thou blest the springing thereof."

Far above us in this lambent air of spring, floating down from unknown heights, comes the strange cry of the migrating birds. In their stately order, an open wedge-shaped column in the blue, they move northward crying their strange cry. Nearer home, unheralded, the humbler birds make their appearance. They too feel the season's call, and the South can no longer hold them. What is it draws them? Why should they undertake these great journeys? You remember the story of the stork who lived upon a house-top in Denmark, and became so tame that the owner fastened a greeting around his neck to his southern home. The next year he came back bearing a message from

India. No one knows why they should take these immense journeys. It is in fulfilment of the law of their being, we say, because we do not understand. As the year begins to approach the vernal equinox they feel the call of the North, and seek their nests. "As for the stork, the fir trees are her habitation," and the forest which has lain deep in winter's snow once more feels the stir of life.

The stir of life we think of as we speak of birds and flowers and all the lovely phenomena of spring. And what is life? Is not that the real question which we are put into this world to find out?

The scientific man has chased it to the tiniest particles. The things once considered simple elements — earth, air, and water — are found to be pulsating and throbbing with myriads of atoms in which is life. Our bodies prove so complex that many sciences devote themselves to their study. But this is only saying that life has many manifestations. It appears in many forms. Life begets life, — it must descend from itself; no mechanical combinations can produce it. And the life which we see all about us is in some way akin to us. Animal life, we all recognize, is; but even the life we call vegetable life,

which has the power of growth and the possibility of long continuance, must have some relation to our human life. We must learn to think of all life as one, — Life permeating all nature, Life which is nature itself.

And it is of this nature, this awaking life, that the Psalmist sings, "Thou blessest the springing thereof." Every year comes with a fresh beauty, with a fresh and new beginning. Every spring opens with boundless promise. Just so each life has the blessed opportunity of growth. For our human lives are more than the combinations of molecules. Wonderful as the tissues of our bodies are, our bodies themselves are but the instruments of our lives. There is that higher life of the Spirit, that life for which we train our intellectual faculties and exercise our power of soul, which must direct and govern all our lives if we can truly be said to live. Our lives must become part of the Eternal here and now, if we are to live eternally. Everlastingness can in the very nature of things be only Everlasting Goodness.

The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound.

It is only righteousness which *can* endure.

We can live only by living. Precept, example, may help, but no one's experience can be like

any one's else. Thank God we are each individual! No one was ever quite the same as his neighbor ever was, or ever will be. So that we each must find our way, feeling after God if haply we may find Him.

And as the visible Sun draws life from all nature, as we see the yearly miracle of newness of life, so does our Father draw us, so does He transform us if we but let Him. He has made us free — even He only leads, for it is willing service He desires. We see the birds seek their home, we see the flowers open to the sun; shall we not also seek our home? shall we not also turn to the Sun of Righteousness?

Let us pray: —

O Thou who dost bless the springing of the visible world into freshness and beauty, we pray Thee to bless the springing of our lives. Thou Dayspring from on High, visit us, we beseech Thee, to show us what true life is. Thou who art life, in whom we live and move and have our being, show us what life may be. Now in the springtime of the year, in the springtime of our lives, may we turn to Thee with holy longing and ardent desire to be filled with all fulness, to grow in grace, to partake of Thine own might

and power. Abide with us, we pray Thee. May we grow in knowledge and in wisdom, we beseech Thee, and finally be received into Thy Heavenly Kingdom.

We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XXXII

WHITSUNDAY

Even the Spirit of truth ; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him : but ye know him ; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. — JOHN, XIV : 17.

WE come again to this beautiful Whitsuntide —this White-Sunday of the year, which has been a festival dear to the hearts of all Christian people since the day of the actual coming of the Holy Ghost. Whitsunday we call it in English, from the old associations of the crowd of white-robed people who came to be baptized upon this day.

But we might make the name more inclusive, especially here in our beautiful New England, where the blooming trees have donned their robes of snowy whiteness, and the air seems to palpitate with the living light. White is the absence of color, they tell us,—the symbol of perfect purity, the intangible creation of light. And so in a very real and true way it typifies the coming of the Holy Spirit. In the supreme

manifestation of the old dispensation, there was a sound of mighty rushing wind ; the mountain was rent with earthquake shock, but was covered in thick darkness. The coming of new life was also attended by a great and mighty concourse of sound ; but there was no darkness, “ and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.”

It is that visible coming of the Holy Ghost that this day of Pentecost commemorates. The promise had been given to men from the ancient days, for the prophet Joel said : “ And I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams.” It is that pouring out of the spirit which came in fulfilment of Christ’s own precious promise of sending the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth who should come to abide with us, the Comforter who is the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost — we repeat the sacred name with awe, as we strive to rise to some comprehension of that wonderful Spirit. And our Lord gives us all we need to know, — the Spirit of Truth, who dwelleth with us, and shall be in us. We all need comfort, we all need refreshment. Did Jesus mean to imply that only in truth itself was there any stable ground of true rest ? The

Spirit of Truth, He says, — the great leader of the soul, in its everlasting quest for righteousness. We are born pilgrims; we seek a country, even an heavenly, and the pure spirit of truth must be our guide. In the old days people used to trouble themselves greatly as to what was the sin against the Holy Ghost which is spoken of. But if we take this very plain statement of Jesus, need we seek any far-off mystical interpretation? To shut our eyes to truth, — is not that to shut out the spirit of truth? What gift can be dearer to any company of learners than this gift of the spirit of truth, — Truth the revealer, Truth the enlightener, Truth the life-giver? This is the spirit Christ says is with us, and shall be in us. The indwelling presence of this Holy Spirit has been not only a doctrine preached by holy men, but a manifestation of a life lived by holy men in all ages. This is the chief glory of those preachers who formed the Society of Friends, that in a time of formalism and ritual they returned to this cardinal teaching of Christ, and declared that men could walk by the Light of Truth within them. Our Apostles' Creed passes over our belief in the Holy Ghost with a very brief statement. It is easy for us to conceive of the Fatherhood of God, from the earthly analogy;

the Life of Him who called Himself the Son of Man touches ours at innumerable points; and the statement of our belief in both these relations is full. Is it that the ancient word for Spirit makes our third utterance of belief seem far away and unreal? But as soon as we translate it into Jesus' words, it becomes close and vital. The Comforter, — the Spirit of Truth, which shall be in you. We all long for truth, — it is the goal of all our endeavor, the final end of our lives. To be true in word and thought and action, — is not this our highest ideal? And is not this belief in the Holy Ghost?

We do well, at this White-season of the year, with the awakening life and renewing beauty all about us, to set aside some special time to dwell upon this greatest of all gifts. Saints and heroes in all time have sung the praise of the Holy Spirit: —

Come Thou Father of the poor,
Come with blessings that endure.
Come Thou Light of all that live.

And so we raise our voices with special hymns of praise and thanksgiving, and unite our modern day with a day gone by centuries ago, as we sing the very same notes which were written by Palestrina and Purcell, and join our praises

with those gone before, whose praises now in unseen realms unite with ours. As the Spirit descended with wonderful sounds, so sound has always been the highest embodiment of Spirit, without substance, intangible, renewed by unseen means, produced by the very breath of life, the cry of the soul springing spontaneously from the life of the soul. So music has always been the most spiritual of all the arts, and can raise us most nearly to the celestial choirs. Here we lend ourselves to its mighty influence, and, as the notes of harmonious praise ascend, pray that the blessing may descend upon us, and that the Holy Spirit, with its living flame, may abide in each heart.

Let us pray : —

Spirit of God, Thou Spirit of Truth, Revealer of all hearts, Inspirer of all prayer, come to us now, we beseech Thee, and teach us how to ask for the best gifts. Thou who art Truth, show us the truth, we pray Thee. As Thou wert revealed in tongues of living flame to the disciples of old, so come to us to consume everything that is unworthy in us. Be Thou the Flame upon the altar of our hearts ; quicken us with holy zeal, warm us with strong desire for truth. Blessed

Comforter, come to each soul with Thine own consolations, and grant to us, O Lord, the spirit to think and to do such things as are right. May our truth ever seek Thy perfect truth, and our light evermore be kindled by Thy holy flame. For Thy tender mercies' sake lay not our sins to our charge, but give us grace that we may walk with a perfect heart before Thee, now and evermore. For Christ's sake. Amen.

XXXIII

THE SOUL'S WANT

Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. —
JOHN, XVI: 24.

WE have all heard the old country phrase used as an exclamation of wonder, "I want to know!" — not an elegant phrase, but one expressing an admirable state of mind, if it is sincerely used. A real desire to know, a truly receptive attitude of mind, must precede all possibility of acquiring knowledge; and in these words of Jesus we have the direct command to ask.

We speak of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, as being the conditions of the life of men. Every one, in the language of our fathers, was entitled to these human rights. Sunshine and air, the light of day and the darkness of night, are universal gifts, the gifts common to all mankind. One may take these gifts blindly, or begin to ask questions of them. When the light of common day is broken up for us into its lovely harmony of color, when we begin to know something of its power in quickening vege-

table life and destroying noxious germs, when we ask and receive answers to some of our questions about it, does not the wonder of light increase, — have we not enlarged our life by knowing something of its mysterious properties?

Wisdom does not force itself upon us. We have to seek it, with both humility and earnestness. These are the characteristics of true search. The undaunted spirit must be ready to profit by all suggestions; ready to receive light from any source. "Treasure up hints," Mary Lyon said long ago; "they are the seeds of principles." To the open mind all things speak of its quest; nothing is too great, or nothing too small, to fit into a great purpose.

Are not humility and earnestness characteristics of the scholarly attitude of mind? We know so little, we see so in part, that we begin to perceive that far above and beyond our ken lie vast realms of knowledge. True learning must make one humble, must put one in the asking attitude. And this is the only attitude of mind that can receive. No one can give to us if we do not take. The supreme personality with which each one of us is endowed may isolate itself, — may shut itself up away from all else. The freedom of our own wills is our greatest glory and our greatest

danger, for it presupposes the divine power of choice. We must make ourselves what we want to become. Too often we drift, and let circumstances decide for us; and here come Jesus' words to us: "Ask, and ye shall receive."

What then are we to ask? Saint Paul tells us to covet earnestly the best gifts. In a general way we all accede to that, we want the best things, all of us—parents for their children, we for each other, and for ourselves. And then comes the question,—What are the best things? What shall we ask and expect to receive?

The period of youth is the time of "the vision splendid." The "light of common day" has not yet darkened it, and there are beckoning dreams, and longing desires for one hardly knows what. Life stretches before one, a shining path; the future will lead to unknown and wonderful heights. Far back in the recesses of the mind of every young person is the longing for the unattained, the desire for the unknown. This is all very vague, and the cynic will laugh at such expression. But it will be a rueful laughter, a laughter full of sadness, because he has turned his back on aspiration. It is the ideal that forever beckons, and the fault of youth is too often that the ideal is put in the future.

In that exquisite fairy play of Maeterlinck's, the Blue Bird has to be sought afar, in the realm of memory, in the kingdom of the future, in the house of death; and it is finally found beside the hearthstone of the seekers, close at hand, made beautiful by sacrifice, its lovely plumage unfading because it gives a noble joy. It is so with us all. We search heaven and earth for contentment, for the inspiration we long for. We pass over the homely details of everyday life. We long for something strange, some portent from the skies, when it is really the humble attitude of mind we should pray for, for that alone can give the open vision.

The very fact of asking implies a want. We know we want something, and that is the first step toward receiving. Can we sum up in any brief form of words what it is we most desire and most want, the thing which will conduce to fulness of life? For you will notice that Christ says we are to ask and receive, that our joy may be full. This is the reason of our asking as He puts it; this is the end of our receiving. What then is the supreme gift for which we must ask, that our joy may be full?

Here we are in this beautiful world, and we have eyes to see. As we see more, as we learn

the beauty of light and shade, the perfection of flower and leaf, the wonder of animal structure and life, does not our joy increase? We have ears, and as we learn something of the laws of sound, as our experience gives us some background for association, as we can add a bit of our own life to the flood of harmony which comes to us, is not that a fulness of joy?

And what is all this but saying that we are able to enter into the mysteries of light and darkness, of flower and plant, of poetry and music, by the might of the power which lies at the basis of them all, the power of an all-embracing love? It is love that must make us wise, love that gives the seeing eye and the understanding heart. It is this supreme gift we must ask for, — no narrow, personal, finite affection, but the love which shall truly put us in tune with the Infinite, the love which can rise beyond the bounds of the immediate to the vastness of eternity. And yet we are persons, and our concern is chiefly with persons. We must make sure that the relations we hold to each other are those capable of indefinite expansion, and of upward development, till the temporal can join with the eternal, till this mortal can put on immortality.

This gift must be the object of our supreme

asking, this gift of holy, patient, omnipotent love. "That your joy may be full," our Master gives as the reason for all asking. It was this gift that our Divine Redeemer showed us by His life of service. It is His voice to which we call upon our souls to listen. Joy is our heritage no less than pain, joy must be the counterpart of pain. We have a right to expect and wait for joy. But to have it at its highest, we must have this best gift, this gift of love which can enter into every experience, which can penetrate even sorrow, and find the joy which lies hidden at its root, this love which partakes of the divine. We must claim our right to the eternal, here and now; in a material universe we must live the life of the spirit, — that life which can be lived only as we receive the best spiritual gifts. As we go out into life, it is this fulness of life we desire. Ask, and ye shall receive, says our blessed Lord, that your joy may be full.

Let us pray: —

Dear Lord, we know not how to ask. Thou must be both the Inspiration and the Fulfilment of our asking. But we do long for the best gifts, we do long to know how to ask, and how to receive. Now, O Lord, here in this quiet hour

before Thee, give us some glimpses of Thine Ineffable Fulness. Speak to us by all the holy associations of this place, in that harmony which resembles Thy Divine Unity, in its many voices, but one Spirit. Speak to us through the friendships of these happy days, speak to us in the way we can hear, to awaken us to fresh desire for the best gifts, for the gift of gifts, Thyself, dear Lord, who art Love, who art Joy, who art Power and Righteousness. We ask for nothing less. We ask for Thy Spirit, for Thy very Life, to dwell in our lives, to live in us. Come Thou, O Lord, we beseech Thee, for the sake of Him who tells us to ask. Amen.

XXXIV

NOT BY BREAD ALONE

BACCALAUREATE VESPERS

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. — MATTHEW, IV : 4.

WE often hear it said that we live in an age of question, when all things in heaven and earth are tried in the balance, when each individual accepts or rejects opinions with an audacity, and with a want of knowledge, that would have horrified men of other generations, bound by authority and tradition. And yet all this unrest, all this casting-off of the method of our fathers, is an assertion of the individual responsibility of the soul, a recognition, faint and dim it may be, of its own sovereignty. The questioning is all addressed to the one great question: What is our life—how shall we live? Shall we make answer that our life is but a vapor, a footprint on the sand, which leaves no trace behind; or shall we boldly affirm with joy that it is something far nobler, hid with Christ in God, nour-

ished by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God?

There is in the mind of man an innate tendency to interpret nature to his own mood. Men have always found "sermons in stones, and books in the running brooks." The astrologers and soothsayers had countless signs and portents by which they ruled their devotees. Men laid hold of natural events and gave them mystical significance. Superstition was the refuge of the childish mind. But here and there one rose superior to it. "If a crow has signified anything to you by his croaking," Epictetus says, "it is not the crow that signifies it, but God through him. And if you have anything signified to you through the human voice, doth not He cause that man to tell it you, that you may know the Divine power which acts thus variously, and signifies the greatest and principal things through the noblest messenger?"

This is what we want to hear, what we must hear if we would live; these great and principal things which God signifies to us, through various messengers.

For these last few moments that we are together, let us consider some of these words of God by which we live, which are being spoken

to the hearing ear; for it is only as we listen, as we attune our spirits to heavenly harmony, that we can hear them.

And the first word is *service*.

If we would truly serve, if we would minister, — which you remember is voluntarily undertaking another's business, not being pressed or constrained to it, but doing it gladly and freely, — if we would serve, we must bring all our minds to the service. For it is another's business, not our own, we are concerned in, and it must please our Master. So all our ability, all our docility, must be called upon. We must serve not as we would, but as we can, making use of all the opportunities which are given us, and rejoicing in them.

And a second word is *joy*.

That is our heritage; we are not under a taskmaster: we are in a voluntary, glad obedience, and the joy of fellowship should be ours. There are too many "worm" hymns; we may be poor creatures, but we have the capacity of rising: we are created in the likeness of the Divine. I give you joy to-day on your accomplishment, on the four years of happy useful life you have spent here. I give you joy on the open door before you, — on the trained minds

and willing hearts you bring to the best that can come.

And when we have said *service* and *joy*, what have we said but the one great word,— the word that includes all others, the word which like the sun holds us all in being—the great word, *Love*. However life may open before us, whether in the sweet human paths of blessed companionship or in the more thorny way of individual achievement, we must still be nourished and literally held in being by love. Without it the spirit would starve and die; it is the supreme word of God by which we live.

And the blessed thing is that we can in our own small measure love also.

God who registers the cup
Of mere cold water for His sake
To a disciple offered up,
Disdains not His own love to slake
At the poorest love was ever offered ;
And because it was my heart I proffered
With true love trembling at the brim,
He suffers me to follow Him.

In all things, even in the most divine, there is still the blessed law of giving and receiving. And as we live by the Word of God, we live, and so must ourselves return to Him some-

thing of His own Life! Ah! to live that life of the Spirit! Really to be nourished by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God!

Let us pray: —

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech Thee to grant us the hearing ear, that we may hear and understand all the blessed words Thou hast for each soul. Thou who art Life, lead us into life. It is the fulness of life which we seek, that fulness which is only to be found in Thee. Let us wait patiently for Thee, dear Lord, knowing that in Thine own time Thou wilt visit us; Thou wilt speak to us in that still small voice which comes to each soul; Thou wilt give us the word by which we may truly live. We would serve Thee, dear Lord, we would rejoice in Thee; with all our hearts and minds we would love Thee, the Supreme Good, who art so far beyond all we can conceive or desire.

As we separate, do Thou go with us, we pray Thee. Fill our souls with Thy joy and our hands with Thy work, that we may be laborers together with Thee, that we may live in Thee. Amen.

XXXV

SIGHT

BACCALAUREATE VESPERS

We shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is. —
I JOHN, III : 2.

THESE words of the beloved disciple contain a profound truth and express a universal law. As we contemplate any great subject, as we learn more and more of it, just so far as we truly assimilate it, so does it pass into our lives, and become part of the very fabric of our being. It is a fact of common observation that people who live together grow like each other. How much more then must it be true of a soul which comes into relation with all that is pure and holy, all that is best that our minds can conceive. It is of Christ that the disciple speaks when he declares we shall be like Him, and gives as the reason for that likeness, "for we shall see him as he is." If we would be like Him it is necessary then for us to see. Let us consider briefly this first privilege and duty of *seeing*.

We all long to see — to see new places, new

inventions, new faces, to add to our world by the wonderful power of sight. Have we not experienced the joy of seeing when the microscope or the telescope revealed new worlds to us—the tiny world in a drop of water, or the heart of a flower, and the immense worlds which swing in the vastness of space! The child longs to see: “Let *me* see,” he cries, as some wonder is explained to him. We know that our powers of observation can be trained. This is a large part of the discipline of life.

And if our physical power of sight can be trained, cannot our mental power? I once heard a wise surgeon exclaim when asked if an operation to discover the condition of the patient was necessary: “No, has not the Lord given eyes to my mind?” Without ocular demonstration he knew as plainly as if he saw the condition of his patient. This is one of the great uses of the imagination, to picture from given premises actual conditions of thought and feeling in those we love. If in doubt or hesitation about any given course, when it is finally resolved, we exclaim: “I see!” The materialists are not satisfied till they see with the actual eyes, not using this inner vision. But it is one of our noblest powers. You remember Browning’s lines, —

God's gift was that man should conceive of truth
And yearn to gain it, catching at mistake
As midway help, till he reach fact indeed.
The Statuary ere he mould a shape
Boasts a like gift, the shape's idea, and next
The aspiration to produce the same;
So taking clay he calls the shape thereout,
Cries ever, Now I have the thing I see!

To take this sight into a higher region, as an instance of what I mean think of Bernard of Cluny, with his mystic vision of the Holy City, which has gladdened the hearts of countless persons ever since.

It is said we are in a materialistic age : that the practical concerns of life engross us ; that the rewards that are most sought after can be measured by commercial standards. If this is true, though I only grant it in part, it is the very opportunity for a new spiritual revival. And this revival is upon us. In no age have so many men been concerned for the welfare of their fellows ; in no age has the bond of universal brotherhood been so strongly felt. But it is for you who go out from college to uphold these great truths, to proclaim this inner vision, to cling to your ideals, to make them real, to bring in the new day.

And so for our last service together we sing the songs of the heavenly Jerusalem, and with

the poet and the musician almost look into the gates of the Holy City, that city of our highest aspiration, while the portals unfold before our reverent gaze.

We mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, all these happy days He has led us together, and then with the prophet Jeremiah lament over the fallen state of the times, in anguish remembering our shortcomings, but listening gladly to the thrilling call: "Oh, turn thee to the Lord thy God!" And the beloved disciple puts it all clearly for us. We speak of tendencies, and there are tendencies; of currents of thought, and there are currents; of community life, and thank God there is a community. But higher than all, more important than all, because an integral part of a whole which must be made of perfect parts, is the individual. We must see individually, we must each pursue individually our highest ideal. And that ideal, that sum of all completion, is Christ, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. We send our minds out in the search for truth, we stretch our imagination to conceive of some small segment of it, we pursue the ever-eluding ideal; and we come back to our resting-place, the C major of this life, the spiritual rock from which all our fathers drank, and that rock

is Christ. Ah, to see Him even as He is! Who may dare to say that this perfect sight has been granted? But we may each become more and more lovers of the vision of truth, — not far away, though forever beckoning on; truth hidden in our own hearts, and yet proclaimed in the universe about us. Pray for the open mind and the seeing eye, that, as we separate, this may be our main purpose in life, that we may learn to see, that as He who is Truth is revealed more and more fully to us, we may be like Him, for “we shall see him as he is.” So may we do our part toward bringing in the new day. So may the Heavenly Jerusalem of our songs take its abiding-place on the earth. So may we turn, body and soul, to seek the Lord our God.

Let us pray: —

Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be turned! Show us the heavenly vision which may evermore lead us on. We long for that City which the glory of God doth lighten, where the Lamb is the light thereof. We long to see, that we may be like Him. And having this hope in us, may we purify ourselves, even as He is pure.

We praise and bless Thy name, and mention all Thy loving-kindness. Accept our offering

of joy, we pray Thee. As our souls ascend on the wings of harmony may they enter the very gates of Heaven, bringing our thanks and praise for all Thy mercies. Bless us, our Father, as we separate. We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

XXXVI

THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT

BACCALAUREATE VESPERS

Yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. — I CORINTHIANS, I: 28.

WE live in a time of invention. All the comforts of life are so increased, and the accessories of living are so multiplied, that we are accused of forgetting to live. The aids to a fuller and larger life become the ends of life itself, and in attending to the mint and anise and cummin, the weightier matters of the law are disregarded. In many respects this is a true indictment. We are thronged with external cares, the advance of civilization puts new tools at our disposal which have to be used. We are so involved in processes that we forget the result.

And it is women who are largely responsible for this state of things. We are endowed with a love of beauty, and we seize on externals to beautify our homes, our dress, all our surroundings. We appreciate perfection, and we strive for perfection in detail, multiplying ornament,

magnifying decoration, till too often all our time and strength are used up. The things that are appeal to us so vividly, that we, and all the world, are apt to forget the things that are not, by which the Apostle says the things that are shall be brought to nought: reduced to nothing that is, put in their proper subordinate position.

It is the old and constant warfare which Saint Paul describes, between the seen and the unseen, the temporal and the eternal. Babylon and Jerusalem both claim us. And our difficulty is that we have to live our lives in the world, while the life of our spirit, if it is a life at all, is hidden in the very bosom of God. Our task is more severe than that of the ancient people, because in Babylon itself we must sing the songs of Zion, to preserve our own lives, and to help the lives about us. We must sing the Lord's song in a strange land; we dare not hang our harps upon the willows. The things that are crowd upon us; we cannot let the songs of Zion grow faint in our ears.

What other theme of meditation could we choose for this last service of the year, than just this, — the power of the things that are not to bring to nought things that are?

If we would simplify our life, we must have some great aim. No ascetic process of elimination will succeed. Arbitrary choice will waver; but the unifying power of a great object is vital. Lesser things fall naturally into the second place — the unimportant drops away. This is the power of a pure love: the world literally becomes new to the lover, for new standards are discovered. Devotion to a great cause strips its devotees of useless burdens. All things, great and small, are made to pay tribute to the one absorbing purpose. A community like ours sets before us several of these great things which are not, — these great simplifying and unifying aims.

And first I mention scholarship. Who that has tasted the delights of real study, that has had the joy of discovery in the realms of knowledge, can ever let the things that are have complete dominion? The world of the mind of man has opened its doors. Past and present can be fused in one entrancing whole; harmony can be traced in involved and complicated movements; we hold converse with kings and sages. In the search for truth the ardent mind finds one of the ultimate ends of life, — a search elusive, enticing, full of disappointment, and full of entrancing hope.

And a second ideal is that of service. The monastic scholar has no place in our modern life. He is secluded, alone, unfruitful. The student must put his study at the service of his fellows, must learn to serve, and by serving learn. Our modern world offers opportunities for service such as have never been offered before. This thing which is not literally brings to nought things that are, when confronted with the conditions of city life for the poor, of evil surroundings of all kinds. Public service and private service call for workers, — workers with trained minds, and consecrated hearts.

But scholarship and service will both be barren and unfruitful unless there is united with them the greatest of all the things which are not, — the spirit of love, not only for the things of the mind, not only for mankind, but the Love of God Himself. Nothing short of this can content us, nothing less can satisfy. It is God who leads us beside the still waters, it is He who restores our souls. His goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives. This we must learn and acknowledge if we are to live. He Himself must fill our cup, till it “runneth over.” It is the Spirit that quickeneth — that last and final gift of God, that Spirit

in which our own spirit can and must find its home.

When we once come into this divine communion, all things grow simple. The men of the middle age have conceived of this true life very beautifully. God "requires no great matters from us," writes Brother Lawrence. "A little remembrance of Him, from time to time, a little adoration. . . . And console yourself with Him the oftenest you can. . . . You need not cry very loud; He is nearer to us than we are aware of."

This divine communion which is the possibility of every child of God, this is the greatest of the things which are not. It is this supreme gift we must pray for, this final blessing we must expect. Then shall we sing here and now the songs of Jerusalem; then shall we dwell in the House of the Lord forever.

Let us pray:—

O Lord, Thou who hast given us eyes to see the wonders of Thy physical world, open the eyes of our minds, we pray Thee, that we may see the things of the Spirit. Show us those hidden invisible things which Thou hast reserved for those who love Thee. May we use the things that are, as Thy good gifts, knowing all the while

the treasures Thou hast to bestow upon us of the things which are not, the gifts and graces of Thy Spirit. Open our hearts that we may receive, open our eyes that we may see, all those precious gifts Thou hast in store for us. And send us forth to be fellow-workers with Thee, — to hasten the day when Thy Kingdom shall be established upon Earth. Amen.

XXXVII

THE CUP

BACCALAUREATE VESPERS

My cup runneth over. — PSALM XXIII : 5.

THIS beautiful Psalm of thanksgiving we may well take as the theme for our last service together. The Lord has been our Shepherd, goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our lives. David declares that a table has been spread for him, — that his cup runneth over. Can we not take every word as applicable to our own case? Our cups have been filled to overflowing. Let us consider what that overflow should be.

And first observe that the Psalmist says *my* cup. It is the personal pronoun he uses in the singular: his own individual cup he declares is full. In these days of combination, of concentration, we cannot too often go back to the individual as the unit of the whole. Society with all its claims is yet composed of single souls, the soul which is aloof and alone, which does not comprehend, which often hardly realizes itself

at all. We shout with the crowd, we sing in the chorus; and yet it is the single voice we have, the one voice which is given us to use. Numbers have their inspiration, but in multiplicity there must still be unity of purpose or any great movement fails. We speak of groups of people, the ignorant, or the educated, and we often fail to remember the individual. The splendid phrases of the German version of the Apostles' Creed express far better than ours this sense of individuality in community.

“*Ich glaube . . . an eine heilige Christliche Kirche*”: I believe in one holy church of Christ. “*Die Gemeinde der Heiligen*”: the commonality of holy ones. “*Ein ewiges Leben*”: one life everlasting. It is holy *ones* who must bring forward the world: it is one life which is eternal; not a life in the future but our present life. It is the single cup of each soul which must run over.

This phrase, “the cup,” has crowded associations. It was a shepherd who sang this hymn; a sheep-folding song it is throughout. The shepherd's rod and staff guide the sheep; the oil was literally used for anointing the face, for healing bruises and scratches. In that land of precious water the dripping cup was held to quench the thirst. The cup figures one of the necessities of

life, the water of life which our Saviour promises. Christ used it in a higher and deeper sense when He gave the cup to His disciples. But always, whether literally or figuratively, it is the life-bringer, this cup which comes to us, from the Life-giver, "worthy at all times of worship and wonder."

Into the chalice of our souls has been poured the very life-blood of those who love us. Here in this college, founded for life, for the varied growth which comes with knowledge, we have been filled with all the fulness of life.

Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop ;
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one,

sings the melancholy Omar. That is true; that is a part of the knowledge we must learn to use. For only as knowledge can be used does it become of value. But there is a higher truth that includes this.

"Whoso is miser of the hoard of pain" can never attain true life. The sweet and the bitter are indissolubly mingled. Because one can taste the bitter, *therefore* is the sweet a better, purer sweet. We go up in the scale of being as we open our hearts to suffering : content, yes, glad to take

the bitter, because in that way only can we enter into the travail of the world. The good is yearning to be born, is clamoring to find expression. Out of the heart of evil it rises, out of the depths of ignorance it constantly aspires. Who shall give it voice, who but women like you, with minds trained to perceive, with hearts open to the call of the invisible?

The overflow of your cups should not only be goodness and mercy as passive virtues, but the activities of goodness and mercy. Courage is one of the essential elements of your lives. If you have attained any true conception of life, you will know that call to the soul, to seek the highest, to leave behind the sordid things of earth, to press toward the mark. This spring I have watched a mother squirrel teaching her young the pathway of the trees. Tiny things they were,—three of them, active and eager, with tails as yet scarcely feathered. They ran boldly after their mother, out on the big branches, jumping over each other, tumbling about in the tree-tops with perfect security. She led them far out to the tiny twigs where one great oak almost met another, and there was the long leap. She made it, and in dismay the tiny squirrels paused. They ran back to see if there was no other way.

They consulted together, and finally approached the airy chasm. The first one jumped, and missed! Down, down he fell, through forty feet of clear space! The other two did not pause, but leaped in safety. I looked to see the little adventurer lying dead, but in a moment he was up again, and climbing the very straightest tree-trunk up to his leafy roadway again.

It is that kind of courage we want, that cannot be defeated, that rises from every downfall. We must trust the unknown, we must have the "courage of our wings."

But the worst of it is that the overflow of our cup is an unconscious one. The alchemy of life makes strange mixtures. The proper ingredients for a soul-refreshing draught may be put in and some subtle element of fusion may be lacking. That universal solvent in the Divine Love; unless our hearts are mellowed and softened by that, no divine overflow can come; unless our cup is mixed with that, the chalice of our life will yield a poisoned draught. It is life we seek, it must be life that feeds life. The well of water springs up to everlasting life within our own hearts, because they themselves are in vital union with the Divine Heart. This is the ultimate source of life. It is love that must answer love,

and what a blessed and wonderful thought it is that our Father needs and can use our love, poor and inadequate though it be; that we are each fashioned "to uses of a cup," that our end is "to slake Thy thirst." And we can each give the cup of cold water to one of these little ones. Each of us has our own cup, a cup different from any that has gone before or any that shall come after. In all the millions of souls created, each has a special stamp of his Maker, each stands alone; alone with his God. If that relation, which exists whether we will or no, is recognized and rejoiced in, then time ceases, space is annihilated, life here and now becomes eternal; then the outpouring of our hearts must be part of the Divine Life.

We come to that Divine Life, to have the little cups of our own hearts filled. We come to offer them and all their overflow, on this last Sunday together. The chalice of our love we bring, — the treasure of our mind.

If in this casket Thou shouldst find
Aught to adorn Thy way, or serve mankind,
Though not myrrh, frankincense, or gold, —
Tribute of star-led caravans of old, —
Take it, O Heart of Love Divine,
And use it as Thou wilt, for it is Thine.

Let us pray:—

Our Heavenly Father, Thou who dost know what is in the hearts of Thy children, fill us, we pray Thee, with Thy love, that our cups may run over with a divine overflow. Pour Thy love upon us, that it may drive out all lower and poorer love, — that it may sanctify and ennoble all the loves of our lives. Richly hast Thou given unto us, freely may we share Thy gifts. And as the days and years go on, deepen our capacity, enlarge our hearts, that the overflow may be ever nobler, purer, sweeter. Thou who art the Fountain of life,

Spring Thou up within our hearts,
Rise to all Eternity.

We ask it for Christ's sake. Amen.

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