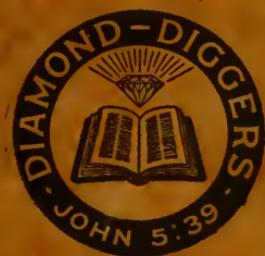


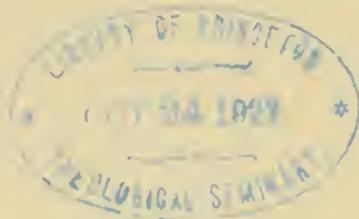
“Diamond-Diggers and Their Mine”

“Search the Scriptures”



BY

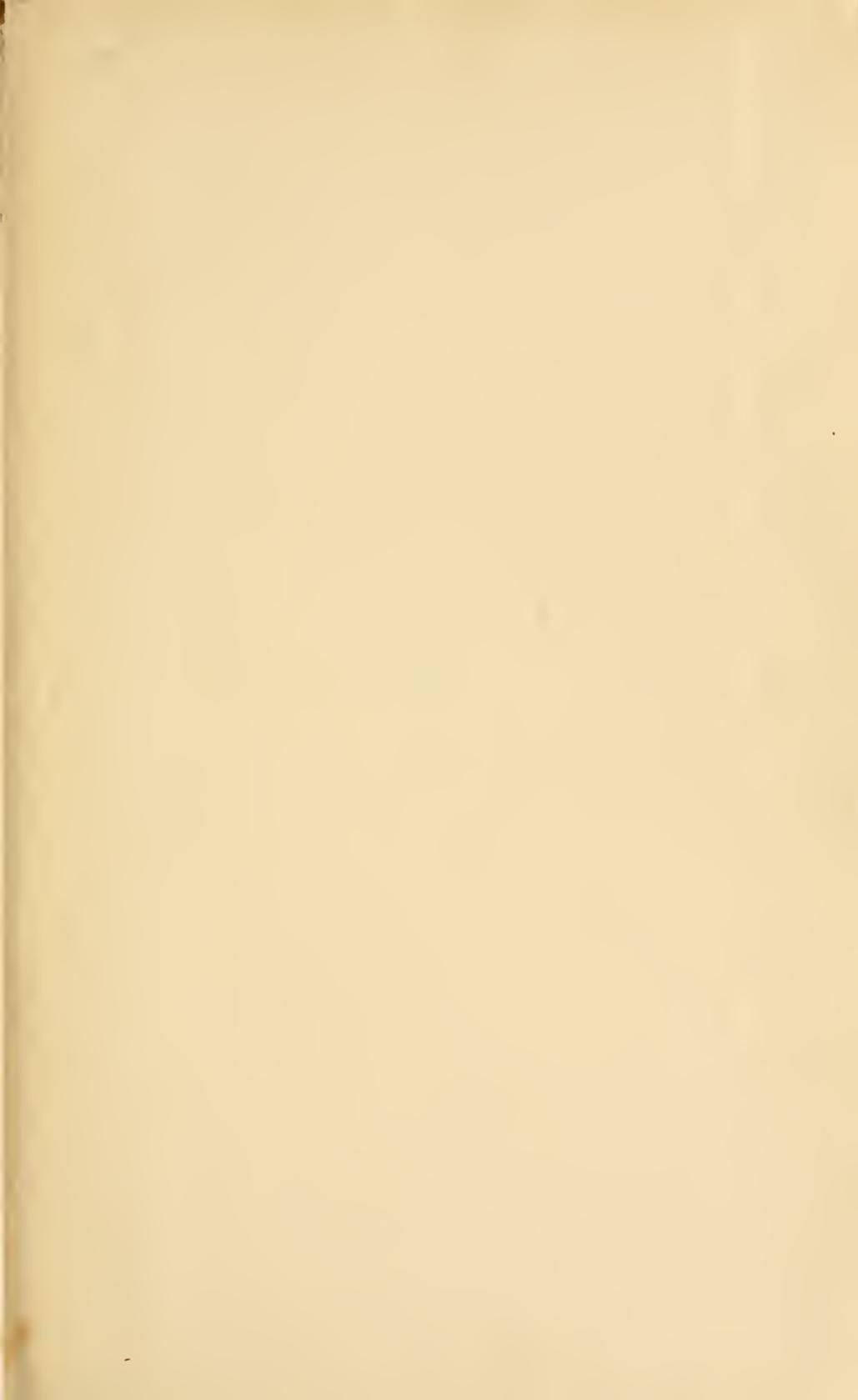
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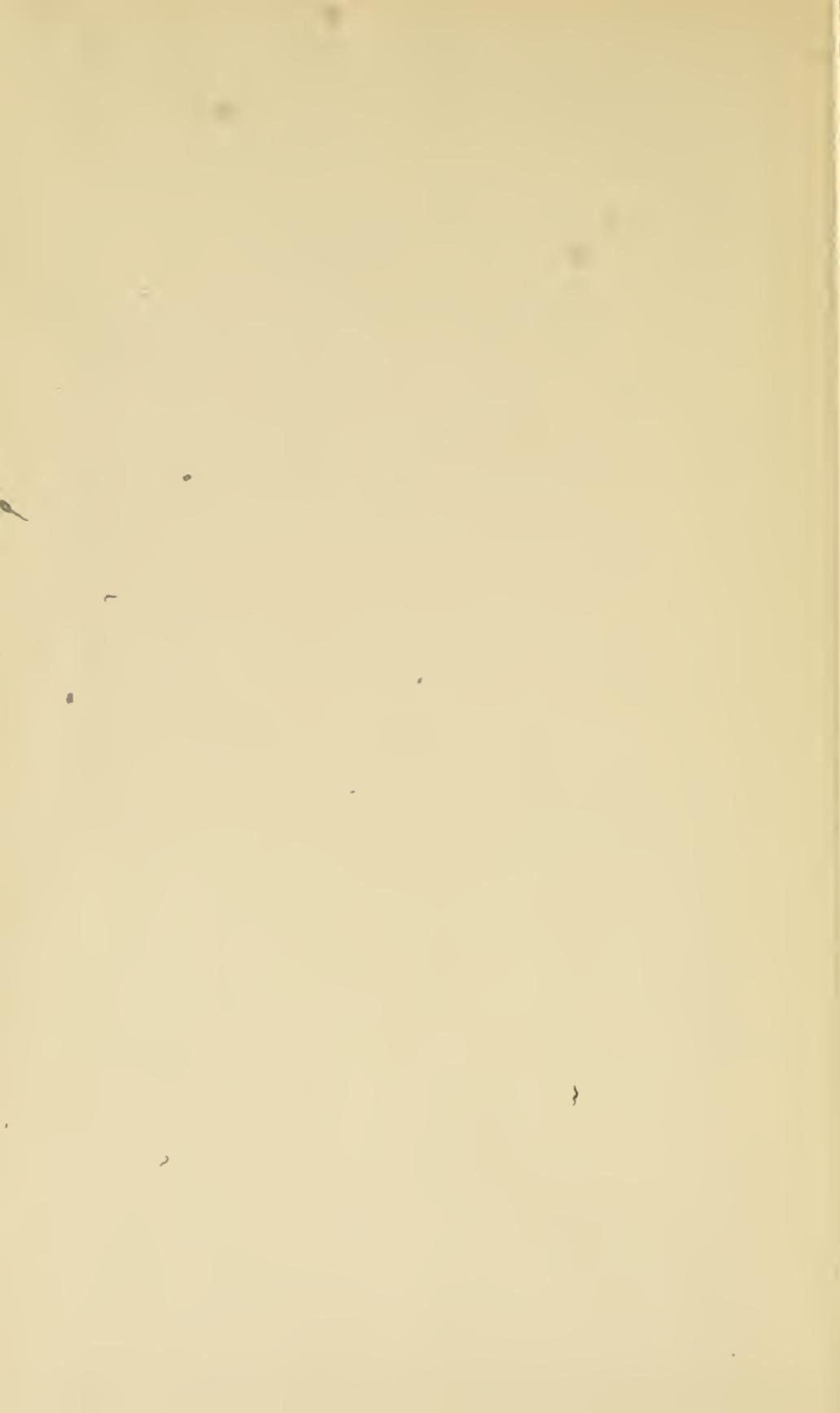


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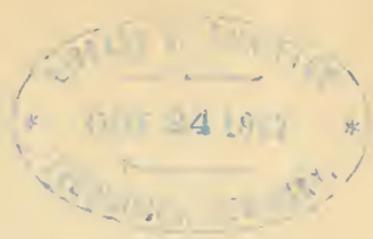
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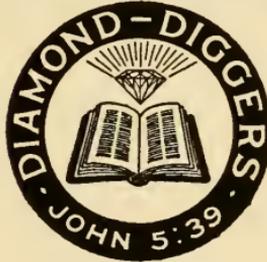
“Diamond-Diggers and Their Mine”

By

WALTER LEOPOLD BENNETT

Minister: First Reformed Church
Syracuse, N. Y.

“Search the Scriptures”



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“Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life ; and these are they which bear witness of Me.”
John 5:39.

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DIAMOND-DIGGERS: HOW THEY HAPPENED

Faithful workers at every craft receive happy inspirations. The "Diamond-Diggers" was one of these. This has been abundantly demonstrated by the blessings with which God has followed it. Wherever they have been started, enthusiastic testimony has been borne to the benefits which have resulted. The first group of Diamond-Diggers happened in this wise.

We were going to a scheduled meeting for young folks in one of our missions on the Pacific Coast. I was thoroughly dissatisfied with our program for such meetings. It generally consisted of songs and a story. Both of these features were very good in their way, but did not get the boys and girls very far. The stories were long on story, and short in their message about God and Jesus. The sacrifice made to conduct missions throughout the length and breadth of our country is great, of which those who are engaged in the job are well aware. It was cheerfully made, but life seemed too precious and the cost too great for the little benefit conferred upon the children. I determined to make some change at once, just exactly what I did not know but confident that the Holy Spirit would direct.

This determination was made on the way to meet a church full of boys and girls. It was then that a story of Russell Conwell's, related in the introduction to his famous lecture, "Acres of Diamonds," popped into my mind. The transition from this story to the Diamond-Diggers was soon made, as we shall see. The story of Ali Hafed, which I shall now tell, is quoted from Dr. Conwell.

ALI HAFED DESERTS A DIAMOND-MINE

“There was a certain Persian named Ali Hafed, who lived on the River Indus. He was contented because he was wealthy, and wealthy because he was contented. A Buddhist priest, who lived in the neighborhood, one day made him a call. He told him of the origin of silver, gold and diamonds. Said he: ‘A diamond is a congealed drop of sunlight.’” (It is important for Diamond-Diggers to remember this, for, even as diamonds are actual deposits of carbon from the sun, so the diamonds which Diamond-Diggers dig, are messages from God, the Sun of our lives.)

“The old priest told Ali Hafed that with a diamond one-half the size of his thumb he could purchase the county; and with a mine of diamonds he could place his children on thrones. Ali Hafed went to bed that night a poor man. He was discontented because he was poor, and poor because he was discontented. He wanted to find a mine of diamonds.”

“He sold his farm. He left his family with a neighbor and went away in search of diamonds. He wandered on and on, until at last his money was all spent. Eventually, in rags wretchedness and poverty, he committed suicide by casting himself into the foaming crest of a great tidal wave that came rolling in from the Pillars of Hercules.”

Always remember, Diamond-Diggers, that should discontentment with your livelihood cause you to sell, give it up or throw it away, as Ali Hafed did his farm, there will always be someone who will be glad to get it. It is said that a man who had built for himself the house in which he lived, grew dissatisfied with it and asked a real estate agent to dispose of it for him.

One morning he read in the "For Sale" column of the local paper a splendid description of his home. "Why," said he, "that is the very kind of a home that I have always wanted." He went to the agent and asked him if the house described was his house. "It is," was the reply received. "Well," replied the would-be seller, "you may take it off your list. I shall keep my house. I did not realize how well it suited me until I read your description of it in the paper."

Dr. Conwell does not tell us that any such feeling ever came to Ali Hafed, but he does tell us that another man purchased his farm.

WHAT ALI HAFED DIED TO OBTAIN IS FOUND ON THE FARM HE DESERTED

"Maybe what happened was not so strange after all, but the new owner saw one day in the sands of a stream that ran through his garden a black stone with a white eye, reflecting all the hues of the rainbow. He picked it up, took it in the house and placed it on the mantel."

"Some days later, the old Buddhist priest dropped in to call upon the new owner of Ali Hafed's home. He noticed the flash of light from the mantel. Rushing up, he shouted: 'Here is a diamond! Has Ali Hafed returned?' Ali Hafed had not returned. The stone to which he referred had been picked up by the new owner in the stream in his garden."

They both rushed out to the stream. They stirred up the white sands with their fingers and found many more beautiful

and valuable gems." "It was thus," Dr. Conwell tells us, "that the famous Golconda mines were discovered, out of which came the Kohinoor and the Orloff of the crown jewels of England and Russia."

THE WORLD'S GREATEST DIAMOND-MINE DESERTED AND FOUND EVERY DAY

Diamond-Diggers are concerned with another diamond-mine. It is the most famous diamond-mine in all history. All the diamonds ever found in the Golconda and Kimberly fields, all the gold of the Klondike, California and Australia, do not approach in value one diamond of the first fifteen which every Diamond-Digger possesses, and which were taken out of this most famous diamond-mine of history.

The mine to which I refer is the bible, the Word of God. In every day and age, ancient and modern, many forsake it as Ali Hafed forsook his farm. But, as in his case, many others come along and find it, rejoicing.

Those who give it up, worse off than Ali Hafed, die; not only physically, as he died, but also spiritually, for this book is the way of eternal life. Without its precious light, we stumble in the darkness; and without its daily manna, we are impoverished and starve.

Some desert it, because they think that this old mine is worked out. Others fail to appreciate its wondrous wealth for the reason that it is free. Others are rich in this present world and have no time to spend getting rich toward God. One such

man told one day that he had accumulated one million dollars. He was asked: "What about your son?" "Ah!" said he, "I have lost my son." Diamond-Diggers underestimate the value neither of this world nor of the next. Realizing values, they seek to get rich toward God by digging in His great mine.

EARLY DISCOVERY SAVES LATER DISAPPOINTMENT

Salmasius, the great antagonist of Milton, once said: "If I had one more year to live, I would spend it reading David's psalms and Paul's epistles." But he had made a discovery of their value when it was too late. To obtain a true sense of the value of this diamond-mine now, will save us from much disappointment hereafter.

There are those who claim that the diamonds in this mine of God are of paste. There have been diamond-diggers who have lost their enthusiasm when the remarks of such people have come to their ears and found lodgment in their minds. Should similar statements come to you, Diamond-Diggers, remember the sad story of Ali Hafed, who, knowing not the value of what he had, lost all in a vain search for what he could not get.

Lest any of you should be tempted in the day when false priests fill your ears with stories of much richer possessions, I shall now tell you some vital truths about our mine, the bible.

DIAMOND DIGGERS: THEIR MINE

MODERN THEOLOGY CANNOT DESTROY ITS VALUE

Those who are familiar with the haunts of deer know how they beat trails through the woods to a salt-lick. When folks first noticed these trails, they naturally became interested in knowing the reason for this habit of the deer. They arrived at the explanation that the deer were in need of salt. So the spots were called salt-licks.

Let us suppose for a moment, that, led astray by false observation and reasoning, they had said that the deer were licking soap. Would the deer have ceased to find that for which their systems craved, salt, because of this false explanation? Of course it would have been strange indeed to contemplate that deer should lick soap. However, the false explanation would not affect the habits of the deer, nor the benefit derived from the habit. They would still satisfy their natural craving at the salt-lick.

We may liken the bible to a salt-lick. Undeniably, men for many ages have gone to it and have satisfied their longing. They have found strength and comfort in the great crises of life. They have been satisfied with it as the deer have been satisfied with the salt. No explanation for salt-licks would have been sought if deer had not frequented them. The explanation was sought because certain facts were evident. In a similar manner, theology sprang up as an attempted ex-

planation of the fact that men went to the bible and received what they needed; and that great results followed. As men would explain the salt-lick, not dreaming that explanations would change the habits of deer or the value of the salt, so theology sought to explain a book which was the cause of such startling phenomena.

That theological scientist who ridicules the bible-habit forgets the original cause of his science. He is wasting his time when he tries to change the customs of men in this respect, just as much as he would, who expected that deer would cease to enjoy the salt, because some would-be scientist, led astray, said that the salt-lick was a poison-lick and wondered why deer thrived on it. Wonder as much as you please about why deer thrive on the nasty stuff, the deer know nothing of explanations and worry as much. Would it not be more scientific, and humbler toward knowledge, to doubt the "poison" explanation, rather than to persist in an explanation which does not explain?

THEOLOGY IS A MERE EXPLANATION: THE FACTS REMAIN

No explanation can destroy the original substance of the bible, any more than it can the salt-lick. All branches of science are just attempted explanations of certain phenomena. They become worse than valueless when they seek to destroy. They find their true justification when they help to find "more salt in the lick," more ways of using the sun's heat, more productivity in the soil.

If the sun was not giving us heat and light, we would have no interest in books on the sun. So much is written because we depend upon it so much. No matter what quarrels scien-

tists get into, we shall still enjoy our heat and light. We once thought the earth to be flat, but it was no less our mother, from whose bosom we took our corn and wine.

Theologies, like scientific theories on other lines, come and go. I am not maintaining by any means that they are valueless, as that is far from my subject just now. What I do maintains is: The facts remain; the facts are still duplicated; the bible *was* and *is* a lamp to the feet and a light to the path.

People pay little attention to dead things. Students of fossils may be honored among scholars, indeed may have a legitimate place among the servants of mankind, but we call them "old fogeys." The general mass of mankind is not interested in them or their discussions, but the universal interest in bible discussions and the warmth aroused is adequate testimony to the "live" quality of the book. Audiences for war-heroes soon melted away after the armistice was signed, but the bible still draws the unnumbered thousands.

No, the bible is not a dead thing. You may leave it and go away thinking so, but you will be extremely foolish; yea, even more foolish than poor Ali Hafed, for he left only temporal riches but you are leaving eternal. All the arguing and theorizing in the world cannot turn milk of magnesia into Carter's blue-black ink. The blind man was not concerned with the question of the pharisee. He said:

"I know not who this man may be,
Sinner or saint, but as for me
Whereas I was blind, now I see!"

The pharisees were enemies of Christ or they would not

have been so eager to demonstrate that a mistake had been made, and that this man was not the man who had been blind at all. Just so, the denial of the bible's power as the Word of God is made by its enemies, our enemies, our worst enemies, not because their statements are true, but because they are the legitimate progeny of their hearts.

Jesus was discounted and denied in His own time, and is in our time. It is so with the bible. Really, would any sane person expect ought else? The staggering blow which the bible delivers to all its would-be destroyers is that it still maintains its life-giving record. It is still the world's most vital book, most living book, most helpful book, most divine book. This is why men argue over it; write about it; theorize upon it; fight over it.

Explanations of the bible have passed into desuetude by the thousands. Any theology, new or old, that is not an adequate one will perish with the perished. Men will keep on denying any explanation that does not explain. This, in reality, is the protest of Truth, divine Truth, that Truth which Jesus claimed to be.

THE EXPLANATION THAT EXPLAINS

The Holy Spirit guides us into truth. He has borne abundant testimony through many witnesses that the bible is the "Word of God." That is the explanation that explains. So do not worry. Bask in the sunshine of the Word; feed yourself upon the manna of God; go to it for inspiration; try it out in trouble; pray to the Father of which it tells; trust the

Saviour who is proclaimed in it; only believe and it will satisfy you as the salt-lick satisfies the deer.

THE REAL TROUBLE

The real trouble is that it is easier to talk about it, and write about it, than to carry out its precepts. To do the latter we need the aid of the Holy Spirit. Moreover it cannot be explained without the same help. Those who would destroy its influence have never figured that in, and those who mournfully leave it have failed to take advantage of what Jesus placed at their disposal.

If we succeed in giving full time to deeds as well as explanations, folks will commence to think that our theology is about right. And they are right. Both go together. To think rightly of the bible is to take the first step toward mastering its ethics in our lives. Your life will be a sufficient answer to what any so-called "learned" man gives out against the bible. Do not worry; the book is in as little danger from that man as the Woolworth Building was from the shells hurled on Paris; or, as the inhabitants of Mars would be from the guns on our battle-ships.

The great audiences went to Jesus. This provoked the pharisees and their scribes to jealousy. They spent their time trying to explain what he did, and to explain it away. Jesus had a bigger job, and many to-day could obtain more lasting fame if they would spend their lives duplicating its effects upon all who adopt it as God's Word. Call Jesus, Beelzebub,

if you please; but, as long as the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers receive cleansing, blessed is he who findeth no cause of stumbling.

Our mine yields diamonds indefinitely. Therefore we refuse to forsake it. When it refuses to work wonders, we shall hang out crepe for the funeral. However, results from its dissemination come in more regularly than election returns in a democracy. They cannot be denied. They are not denied.

The odd thing is, that men, in the face of the facts, persist in explanations that do not explain. One is driven to the belief in the existence of a "Prince of this World," who blinds men's eyes. Is there any other adequate explanation of the obtuseness, the flying in the face of facts, the utter blindness of men's eyes? If so, give it. I have it not.

So remember, they have not hurt the bible. They cannot hurt it. If it was going to die, it would have died of itself. It would have died a natural death, as all other things of men do. "It is an anvil that has worn out many hammers." One is reminded of Robbie Burns' dialogue between the two bridges over the same stream. The fine, up-to-date new bridge says to the ancient span:

"Can your poor, narrow foot-path of a street,
Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet,
Your narrow, formless bulk o' stane and lime,
Compare wi' bonnie brigs o' modern time?"

To which the old bridge replies:

"I'll be a brig when you're a nameless cairn."

Many a theory which sought to demonstrate the unreliability of the bible has become nameless and forgotten, while the bible, like the "Auld Brig," still performs that for which it was sent. The countenance of the bible is not marred. Blessed be God, that it tells us of the story of One whose countenance was marred, but, unlike the countenance of many theological theories, it was marred to save and not to hurt.

IF GOD IS IN THE BIBLE YOU CANNOT TAKE HIM OUT

If God is not in the bible, you cannot put Him in it; if He is in it, you cannot take Him out. If, as the Word of God, the bible is now out-of-date, then it was never in-date. If God spoke to men and the bible is the record of that conversation, the bible was, and the bible still is, the most interesting book in all creation, and absolutely unique and distinct among books.

"These are they which bear witness of Me," says Christ. Christ claims to testify of God and to reveal Him unto us. This is the reason, the prime reason for our interest in this book. If it ever possessed this interest, it is obvious that it can never be lost. It either never had it, or, it has it still. If it is dead now, it was dead then. But its actions have been rather strange for a "dead" thing, have they not?

While sky-piloting in British Columbia in nineteen hundred and two, I became acquainted with Charlie Lindsay, a well-known old-timer, Charlie has been nearly everything, from a Church of England missionary to a scullion in a lumber-

camp. It was when acting as the former that he was visited by the Bishop in the Canadian North-West in the early days. Food was a bit scarce just then, and Charlie asked the Bishop how he liked musk-rat meat.

The reply was that he had never eaten it and that he never would. When they were seated at the dinner-table, Mr. Lindsay asked the cleric if he would have some rabbit-pie. "Certainly," he said. He had shot and eaten many rabbits in the "Old Country" (England), and was very fond of rabbit-pie. He liked this particular rabbit-pie well enough to accept a second serving. When dinner was over, Charlie asked the Bishop, facetiously, how he liked the musk-rat pie. The Bishop replied that he had not eaten any. "O, yes you have!" replied Charlie. "I called it rabbit-pie because you said you would not eat musk-rat pie, and we had nothing else to give you." With this information to work on his digestive tract, the Bishop went out and vomited up his dinner.

Now, the food-value of musk-rat pie differs little from that of rabbit-pie. I would not be surprised if the chemist should tell us that their values in heat, energy and bone-building material were identical. Certainly the food was in it, despite its name. If the Bishop had not gotten upset over names, he would have been just as well nourished for his labors.

So it is with the bible. The theologians, creatures of time, have given new names to express its values. But the name cannot alter the value. If men found God in it when certain systems of theology reigned in the schools of religion, then you and I can find Him there still, regardless of the changing forms of thought.

On the strength obtained from God through this book, men obtained great victories over self, and other selves. They are doing it still on every front where the hosts of God are grappling with the hosts of Satan. Many would-be and so-called scientists congratulate themselves that they have explained these things by explaining them away, but do not let them pull the wool over your eyes. They are just mental jugglers, and too often succeed in making folks believe that it is possible to execute a mental "now-you-see-it-and-now-you don't."

As Paul warned the Colossians, so let us be warned not to be made "spoil" of. What a degrading situation to be in! Carried off by some foolish thinker as an army carries off spoil upon its back. We are led to despise the old book, and whose is the loss? The book's? We might be saved from chagrin if it were, but, sad to tell, the loss is ours alone.

God was in that book at the first. He is in it now. It is His Word. What it was to Paul and Timothy, it can be to us. "It is able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. It is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely for every good work."

GET THE BIBLE CORRECTLY: IT DOES NOT CLAIM TO
CREATE GOD

Let us, for a moment, admit the inadmissible. Let us say that the worst is true: the bible is not what we thought it

to be. How many good people have been heard to say, that, if this last were true, they would give up all faith in God. To all such, let me say: The bible did not create God; God created the bible. The creature is surely less than the thing created. If the bible is not God's Word, then His existence is not argued against, but merely that He has not deigned to speak through this book.

The great witness to God is He of whom the bible itself informs us: the Holy Spirit. "His Spirit witnesses to our spirit that we are the sons of God." The Holy Spirit is the greatest witness to us of God. The bible directs us to that witness. No man can talk with God, or understand Jesus except through Him. We are grateful that the bible introduces us to God's Spirit, but the Spirit's action is by no means circumscribed by any book.

"His Spirit answers to the blood
And tells me I am born of God."

Once that experience occurs, we are independent as far as any witness to the existence of God is concerned. "God appeared unto me at Luz, and blessed me," says Jacob. This experience stayed with him a lifetime. Write in your soul's record-book, as Jacob wrote it, the record of your experience with God. That will be a little God's Word of your own. The bible fulfils its intended use when a human soul commences to write such a book, and it continues to fulfil it as it helps that soul to continue that experience.

Indeed, much of the bible is a record of men's experiences with God, and of God. Jacob's experience at Luz was not

different from that of his brother Esau. Both learned of God and taught us. One learned of the glory of communion with Him; the other, of the sadness of existence without Him. The bible, through the Holy Spirit, is a faithful witness of both.

THE BIBLE TELLS THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

How many kinds of automobiles we have upon our streets! They are of four cylinders, six cylinders, eight cylinders, twelve cylinders. They are black, brown, blue, green, orange, yellow and red. They are square, round and oval. They are made of steel, of wood in varying proportions, and of aluminum. What marvels of design have been incorporated into them by Ford, Olds, Hudson and their ilk. But all these bodies, and all that is in them, would be cast into the junk-pile to rust and rot were it not for one fact, namely, the idea of the gasoline-engine. Blot that idea out of men's minds, and, no matter how beautiful or useful the bodies may be, they will be deserted as men desert bodies of their brothers when the Spirit flees.

It is just so with the bible. If it had not in it the truth of God, it would have been deserted long ago. In fact, it would never have arisen, even as these numerous forms of auto-bodies would never have arisen but for the invention of the engine. The bible did not make God. It did not invent God. It cannot destroy God and you cannot destroy the bible, because its testimony is corroborated in action, just as the value of the gas-engine is corroborated by action when it is put into those multiform things called automobile-bodies.

You cannot destroy the bible. You cannot destroy its power until you can change the nature of men's hearts, just as you will never consign the beautiful designs of automobiles upon our streets to the junk-pile until you blot from men's memories and reach the idea of a gas-engine.

THE BIBLE WILL NEVER HAVE AN EQUAL

It will not be duplicated because it need not be duplicated. Moreover, it cannot be duplicated. The farther history removes us from the story of the coming of Jesus to this earth, the less able will men be to tell aught authentic about Him.

Deny prayer and God all you please, Mr. Sceptic, Mr. Agnostic, but in your extremity you too will be found praying to Him. When you pray, you will discover the truth in like manner as the men of the bible: "I cried out to Him and He answered me." "I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord. Gracious is the Lord and righteous. I was brought low and He helped me. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people."

Our experience and knowledge of God is made complete in Christ, because He is "the image of the Father," and "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This is why we shall keep on going to the old book, because that story need not and cannot be told again. It, therefore, will never be displaced in the affections and regard of men.

THE BIBLE IS OUR WEAPON

“The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.” A defenseless man soon falls victim to an armed enemy. “See! See the faltering ones, backward they fall.” Many of them fall because they are not adequately armed. Every Christian should arm himself with the Word of God.

Our most illustrious example in this regard is Jesus. The words of the old testament scriptures formed a perfect defense for Him from the wiles of the Evil One. Should we not take His method? How can we expect to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, when we neglect the weapon which He commends to us?

Moreover, it is our weapon of offense. There is a science in attacking the strongholds of evil, just as there is a science in the art of physical combat. How often we have failed in personal work for Jesus! “We are not built that way,” is our excuse. It is a false excuse. The real explanation for our failure is our inability to handle the Word of Truth, and the reason for our inability is our lack of familiarity with it.

We hear it said that only certain people have the gift or are fitted for winning men to Jesus in personal work. That is entirely true, but it is no reason for any of us not engaging in it, for fitness is attainable by acquainting ourselves with the bible. We could soon qualify by doing our duty in prayerful study. This excuse reminds one of that parallel one made concerning predestination by certain men who refuse to accept God’s advances for their salvation: “If one is going to be

saved, he will be anyway." It is a fine way for a guilty conscience to shift responsibility.

Why could our soldiers fight against the enemy on the fields of Flanders? Because properly armed. Can we hope, in the much greater war between Good and Evil, to win victories without proper preparation? Our inability on many lines will soon disappear with thorough and honest effort to feed upon and learn from the Word of God.

TRUST IT TO GET RESULTS REGARDLESS OF SELF

It was related recently by a trustworthy editor that a minister in the Old Country was asked to go to a public-house in Nottingham, to see the landlord's wife who was dying. He said: "I found her rejoicing in Christ as her Saviour." When I asked her how she found the Lord, she replied: "Reading that," and she handed me a torn piece of paper. I found that it was part of an American newspaper, containing part of one of Spurgeon's sermons. When I asked her where she had found the newspaper, she answered: "It was wrapped around a parcel sent to me from Australia."

We all know Spurgeon. How true he was to God's Word! She got it faithfully expressed in his sermon. But how diluted it was! A fragment of a fragment, yet it did its work. God's Word will do the work. That is what it was sent for. Do not worry about fitness, just let it have a chance and the results will be surprising. "My word," said the Lord, "will not return unto Me void." But how can it return when it is not first sent? We must see that it is sent.

Did you ever know intimately a sea-captain? One whom I knew I shall never forget: Captain Kerr of Bridgeport,

Connecticut, who has gone to meet the captain of the good ship, Salvation. Many times he circumnavigated the globe, one of its wisest marines, for few knew the seven seas as well as he.

Often he told me that a skipper always trusts his chart. On a bad night off the coast of Africa he had to go between a certain island and the mainland. His chart allowed but the barest margin of safety, but it said enough water was there to float through. He had never been in that spot before. Necessity demanded its passage. Said he to me: "I trusted my chart and we came through as it indicated." So we must trust the bible. We must rely upon its power; not unto us, but unto it will be the glory; for as the earth beareth fruit of itself, so will the bible accomplish its work. It is God's chart for us to sail through unknown seas and the testimony to its failure has yet to be found.

What a poor opinion we have of an officer, who knows a battle to be imminent and neglects to arm his men. Our commander knows that the battle never ceases and has ordered us always to be ready. Do we heed His command? No. Is it any wonder that His forces are put to rout in confusion and dismay? Arm for the fray, my christian brother. The tide of battle will soon pass by the little day of your short life and your contribution to the victory will be nothing.

"Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against

flesh and blood but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace: withal taking up the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and **THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD.**" All the others were for defensive armor, for protection while fighting, but the Word of God for action. Take it, my brother ; take it up with a will.

CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR YOUR BIBLE

Criticism of the bible, malignant criticism, is rooted in atheism and unbelief, of both of which there is a large quantity of which we are not conscious. Many are guilty of it who do not realize it. As one's faith withers, one becomes increasingly critical of the bible, while the faith and its loss has been due to the life and the will ; and not to any known unworthiness in the book of books. To this many of us can bear personal testimony from our lives. Unbelief looks for arguments for, and slights arguments against, atheism. It also blinds the eyes and renders a fair decision from the evidence, impossible.

Unbelief and criticism go hand in hand, a marriage made in hell and solemnized by the devil, who, in this case, has

united a couple that will never be separated. They shall have, moreover, their legitimate progeny and will increase naturally. This is not a matter of *opinion* but *fact*, to which many redeemed saints can testify, who have gone through the fire of the so-called "modern" teaching, not without scorching. If a correct diagnosis were made, more of the symptoms of faithlessness would be found than those of an injured intellectual point-of-view.

Alienation of our affections by the world caused us to argue strenuously against the bible. In all fairness, we should contend earnestly for it when God has weaned back our straying hearts.

NON-ASSERTIVE CHRISTIANS ARE A DELIGHT TO THE DEVIL

The commander-in-chief of the forces of evil delights in non-assertive christians. If he can only keep them still, he is satisfied, even as he knows that a swarm of hornets are harmless when undisturbed. He is glad to have people believe that IT IS NOT GOOD TASTE to testify about Jesus. It recalls the old saying: The devil will gladly go to church with us if we take no action on what we hear preached.

How vehemently atheism talks! The devil need not be ashamed of his cohorts. How they condemn the bible! A baptist minister relates of one loud-mouthed fellow, who said to him: "I do not believe in heaven!" "Believe in the other place then," replied the clergyman, "and go there quietly." But did you ever find them obeying that behest?

In his autobiography, Dr. Joseph Parker tells of a similar incident, concerning a non-believer who came frequently to his study to argue with him. His exasperating persistence at last overcame the great doctor's patience. So, one day as the visitor went out of the clergyman's study, slamming the door as he remarked, "There is no other world! When I die it is the last of me!" Joseph Parker fervently ejaculated: "Thank God for that!" One never hears the last from these folks; why do we not hear more from those who believe?

In a series of addresses which I gave under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. in the railroad-shops of Winnipeg shortly after the Bolshevistic strike which so stirred the continent, I discovered that the topic which most greatly disturbed my audience, and with it the ire of quite an active group, was the bible. They jeered and railed at all allusions to it, much as I think the enemies of Jesus railed at His teachings. Their venom was quite a revelation to me. The christian workmen told me that the men most vocal in the anarchistic program were those who continually denied the authority of the bible. Those in high places in this land are playing into the hands of strange people in attacking this book and its Christ. The anarchist and the atheist know their greatest enemy, and they know it is the Word of God.

TALKING VERSUS DOING

We hear much these days about talking less and doing more. Deeds count more than words, we are told. This is another wise stroke of the devil. The real fact is that the best

deed we can do for our faith and our bible is to speak for it. A sure sign of a waning faith is a quiet tongue; and enthusiasm for work generally wanes with our speech. As convictions die, the desire to testify passes away.

Talking is a deed, a great deed. Those who do it with the most conviction are those whose hearts are fullest. There are hypocritical exceptions, but every true preacher knows that his tongue is never so lame as when his heart cherishes some unforgiven and unconfessed sin. We need, not less, but more talking. The early church, so rich in doing, was a talking church and there is no valid reason why the present church should be otherwise.

The inability to talk is generally due to neglect of the great mine, the bible. Faith, like a plant, needs water and sunshine, and its water and sunshine come from God's Word. Why cover up our shame and ignorance by specious arguments? Let us look within. Maybe we shall discover very different reasons for our silence than the ones we name. The christian psychologist might well spend some of the time now devoted to explaining away experiences recorded in the bible, to explaining why they are not oftener duplicated in the modern christian.

Talk it up! Be familiar with it that you may know how to talk! Trust it! Try it out! Its response will amaze you.

THE LAKE OF THE MIRAGE

Sir Samuel Baker in his "Travels in Africa," tells us of the terrible desert between Korosko and Abou Hammed. It

is known as the graveyard of the camels. A few furlongs before the Vale of Moorahd is reached, are the bones of innumerable camels, who fell exhausted in the final efforts to reach water. A heap of bones, which told a terrible tale, was found some distance from this vale by a band of Arabs.

When the conquest of Nubia was first made by the Egyptian troops, a regiment was ordered across the desert under the guidance of an Arab. Thirsty under the terrible heat of the sun, tired out by a long forced march, with their water all gone, they were in a terrible state. Their only safety was to hasten on until they reached the other side of the desert.

Suddenly, away on the sands in front of them, appeared the great vision of the desert. It was a lake, beautiful and fresh, with green trees all about it. The soldiers asked their guide to change the course and make for the lake. He knew the desert and he refused. He told them that what they saw was a mirage; that it was not real. When he refused to change the course, crazed with thirst, they killed him and made for the beautiful lake of the mirage.

On and on they went, but it seemed ever in front of them. Hotter and hotter grew their feet, drier and more parched their throats. At last, overcome by the heat, too worn to go any farther, they died on the plains that had been reddened with the blood of their guide.

How suggestive this is of another happening. We are traveling through this country, hoping to find a better one.

As a guide we have been given the bible. Without it, we are in darkness. In it alone can we find the light which we need to direct us in the pathway. Like Ali Hafed, we have something real, but we leave it to our destruction.

The devil's mirage seems mighty real at times. But do not follow it. You will be lost, if you do, in the waterless and verdureless sands of life.

THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH ABOUT THE BIBLE

Old Gamaliel's words of many centuries ago are true: "If this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will be overthrown." It may be that this truth was spoken by him because, in his inmost soul, he believed that this Jesus of whom the apostles spoke was a striking illustration of his statement. Anyway, it turned out that He was. The bible is also such an illustration.

If the seeds of decay were in this book, it would die of itself. Stronger than all the arguments of men would be these seeds of decay. But, these being absent, the words of the would-be destroyers fail, even as the snarling waves that fall back from Gibraltar's brow, fail to dislodge the solid granite. "My Word shall not pass away." No, dear Lord and Master, never. The bible is God's Word.

THE MAIN CAUSE OF OUR DOUBT OF ITS POWER

We read too much about it and too little in it. Commentaries, notes on the sunday-school lessons, articles and

essays, all are consulted, when the real fact is that the bible itself is its own best commentary, read, as suggested already in these pages, looking to the Holy Spirit's revealing power. Those who know it best bear the strongest testimony to this fact.

Let us be clearly understood on this point. We wish to cast no reflection, but rather to render the deepest thanks to the scholars of the bible records and texts. They have their place but not the place that we give to them. They speak about it; the bible speaks for itself. Give it a chance to do what Priscilla told John Alden to do: to speak for itself.

As is the case with most of the great lessons of life, I myself learned what has just been stated because I was forced to do so. My work caused me to travel continuously for more than a year. Baggage had to be extremely limited. With what regret I left behind my dictionary, my commentary, my notes, my library, no one but the student can know. With so many addresses to be made upon bible texts, how could I get along without my "helps"?

Well, I did get along and the experience led me into a freedom that meant great joy afterwards. I had thought commentaries absolutely necessary. Bless you, I discovered that the bible reveals its own meanings, discovers itself to one. Now I read it alone because I possessed it alone.

I shall never cease being grateful to God for that experience. I seemed to get new power every day from its pages. It became a new book to me. I had discovered my

bible. I commenced to consider writing a commentary myself, because so many fresh thoughts came to me, which I had not read anywhere. I discovered the reason why men wrote such wonderful commentaries: they had spent much time reading the bible itself.

Change your program. Read less about it, and more in it. It will become of absorbing interest. The time will pass too quickly for you. The experience related above was told in a church in which I was speaking. When I was leaving the city, the splendid, scholarly minister of that church thanked me for my work, but, said he, "the best thing for me that you said was the advice to read the bible itself and forget one's commentaries upon it." It had changed his whole viewpoint, and, in the course of two weeks' meetings, he had changed his views of scripture from those of the modern, alert but undevout, scholar to that of a believing reader. The bible had wrought the change. It did the same for me. It will do it for you, if you will let it speak for itself.

DIG, DIAMOND-DIGGERS!

There are poor workmen at every business. I suppose the diamond-diggers in the various diamond-fields of the world are no exception, even though their findings are so precious and valuable. Even the man who makes the richest strikes is likely to let up at times. But to you, I say, Be not poor diggers. You have made rich strikes, at times. Do not forget them when your attitude toward the great mine tends to become a bit skeptical. Remember the past; remember what you found before with

diligent digging. Go at it again, and you will duplicate the experience. Each time you take up this great book, your wonder at it and faith in it will increase. "These are they which bear witness of Me."

"We search the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful
From graven stone and written scroll,
From the old flower-fields of the soul;
And, weary searchers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the book our mothers read."

THE ORIGINAL FIFTEEN DIAMONDS

One may think of diamonds singly or in groups. One diamond is beautiful in itself; it is more beautiful, however, in its setting. Each separate christian truth is beautiful, but, as in the case of diamonds from the mines of earth, it is more beautiful with others to which it belongs. As a group of diamonds in their settings make the combination called a diamond-necklace in which the wondrous effects are much greater than all the effects of the individual diamonds, so a group of the verses of the bible, taken together and making up a system of truth, gives an enhanced value to each individual verse. It is so with the original fifteen diamonds.

These fifteen verses of John became the first fifteen verses for the beginners among the Diamond-Diggers, in the series of meetings in the first of which we started in the gospel of John on a winter day in British Columbia.

They did not just happen, like Topsy; but, like Topsy, they were something in themselves once they had arrived and they made up a little system, quite full-orbed, of our precious christian heritage of truth. As religion must, we begin with God. By a natural process of thought, each verse grew out of the one preceding. Each is beautiful in itself, but, as the light from all the facets of a diamond unite in a beautiful sparkle of glorious beauty, so all these beautiful verses seem to make one splendid whole.

THE FIFTEEN FORM A COMPLETE SYSTEM

If one never went any further, in these verses he would have sufficient light from God to guide him through his earthly journey and lead him into life eternal. As in the meetings we conducted our time was limited to three weeks at the utmost, the limited number of verses made it possible for each Diamond-Digger to acquire all the verses in this particular group. Thus a real job was performed before we left. If the work languished when we left, something definite had been accomplished. If the soul of the beginner had been deeply moved, the whole expanse of the great diamond-field of the bible lay before the seeker.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DIAMOND-DIGGER GROUPS

To help those who may desire to inaugurate classes of Diamond-Diggers in their parishes, or schools, or neighborhoods, I shall add, as I give in order the first fifteen verses, little items of thought which I associated with them, that they might gain the more interest in the young mind. Of course one must make use of all the skill, energy and tact that he possesses, when instructing or leading a class. Every quality that qualifies one to make teaching interesting will find its outlet here. The ability to attract and keep the interest; to keep the mind alert; to stir the imagination that it may the more readily make progress will be found very vital to the work.

The plan is especially valuable with the young; those under sixteen and over eight years of age seem to make the best progress but the adult mind has always shown an eager interest.

There are several items in the Diamond-Digger's Creed which I shall mention on the final page, but let it suffice here to say that text-books are never used in their classes. The leader must know everything taught, and know it well. Just as the sermon acquires added power from the preacher with a perfect mastery of his thought, so the teaching of verses from the bible can be done with greater efficiency when one is thoroughly familiar with them. Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon this point. *Absolute mastery makes a good master and develops good pupils.*

DIAMOND-DIGGERS' HYMNS

Of course we must have hymns. No work for God can prosper without fervor, and fervor is gained by singing. But again, we must use no book, excepting, of course, that of the pianist. A book spoils the meeting. The idea of the whole plan is the use of memory and it works as well with the hymns as with the verses.

Hymns of one verse are best because they contain one christian thought even as one verse of the bible. These hymns are "diamonds" in themselves. They serve to drive home the verses of the bible in the minds of the young audiences. Try to learn a hymn a minute. It can easily be done and the little jingle of words with the precious thought undoubtedly will stay in many minds as long as life shall last.

The nasty verses and rhymes learned by school children stick in their minds for years, contaminating their thoughts. So will these little verses stick and all the better for the reason that a tune goes with them. There are many of these one-verse

hymns to be found in the various hymn books, and a good song writer can compose more of them to suit the particular meetings.

Mr. Alexander's No. 3 has a number of good ones. We found that they appealed as well to great adult meetings as to those of children. They were picked up with spirit and power, and the tabooing of hymn books always increased the interest. The only requirement is that the leader read the verse aloud a couple of times.

The blackboard may be used for the verses, to write down the chapter, book and verse, but never for the hymns. It is not essential even for the former, but positively injures the meeting for the latter. In introducing a new hymn, it helps to know the story of its composition. For example, one of the hymns we used mostly was "Traveling Home," by Mr. Harkness in the No. 3 mentioned above. The author composed it especially for a great meeting out west for commercial travellers. The gladness with which they turn home after a merchandising trip is analagous to that with which christians look forward to going home to Jesus. Also the words illustrate well the general length of a Diamond-Diggers' hymn. These are the words:

"Traveling home, traveling home,
Led by Jesus we are traveling home."

All hymns are not suitable but we found fifteen or more which we used constantly to inspire and prepare audiences of young folks in Diamond-Diggers' meetings. The hymns get the mind ready to quickly absorb and memorize bible verses. For this is the one aim of all such meetings, of all Diamond-Diggers, to *learn bible verses by heart.*

A FACETIOUS SUGGESTION

D. D. stands for Diamond-Digger. It suggests Doctor of Divinity, a suggestion which is not inappropriate for such a person as a Diamond-Digger. I often told the classes that it took one minute to learn a verse; three minutes to clinch it and a verse a day would make, allowing for rests, three hundred a year. Continue that for five years and a Diamond-Digger would know more about the bible than nine-tenths of the doctors of divinity in the land. Continue it with an accompaniment of God's grace and understanding and a modest amount of natural talent and a Diamond-Digger could become quite distinguished in this line of christian service. I believe this last to be absolutely true. How few have worked it out. The way to great usefulness is plain but the will-power to continue it is lacking in most cases. With the incentive of being useful for Him we love, we should be able to become very rich in the number of diamonds from God's Word that we have stored up in the houses of our minds.

THE VALUE OF A GROUP LIKE THE FIFTEEN

The fifteen verses can be learned by two-thirds of an average audience in six meetings, if driven into the minds by pointed explanations and constant repetition. On the last day of two weeks meetings, with the holding of three meetings a week, the audience can go over the fifteen verses twice in twenty minutes. The advantage of going over them together in one meeting lies in the complete view of christian truth seen in them at a glance. They are infinitely more impressive all at once and thus produce a climax to the series which an audience never fails to see.

HOW TO GET OTHER GROUPS OF VERSES

Similar groups from other books, indeed quite possibly from the same book, can be worked up by any logical thinker. Always be careful to make the group short, to have each verse follow the last in logical sequence, and to have a neat little system of christian thought in the completed group. Thus we shall have frequent climaxes, and maintain interest by introducing constantly new groups. Not only books of the bible but topics can be dealt with in this way.

One good one of this kind is "the soul-winner's verses." Beginning with verses from Christ's commands, one leads off to results in the lives of the apostles and concludes with a verse or verses that tell of the blessings accruing to those who lead many to righteousness. One splendid verse to include in this group is John 5:24, which, with others, tells the exact mode of salvation. Once the method is mastered, one's own groupings are more vital in the teaching just as one's own sermon can be preached with infinitely more power than that which one might take bodily from the sermons of another preacher. This is why I have given but one group. It makes a good starter for the Diamond-Digger teacher.

Continued throughout life, the acquirement of many groups will result in a bible as beautiful to the Diamond-Digger as the stars of the heaven to the devout astronomer, who beholds them, not as the ordinary beholder, but as groups or systems each with a glory of its own; all making up the great glorious vista of the heavens.

THE FIRST FIFTEEN VERSES

The Foundation Verse: The God Verse

John 1:1

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

It is important to know and believe in God, because this, in its fullness, is that “Eternal Life,” for which we all seek. Do not believe those who would tell you that it is more important just to be good and not to worry about One whom no man can know. Goodness is impossible without belief in God. Without faith, we are told, it is impossible to please Him. This is why we call the first the “Foundation Verse,” because all the superstructure of duty, judgment and immortality can be built only on this foundation.

The God-Man Verse: God Becomes Man

John 1:14

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father) full of grace and truth.”

A very great philosopher, Plato, said, many, many years before Jesus came,—We must wait until some God-Man comes to teach us our religious duties and take away the darkness from

our eyes. What he said we should wait for, we know to have come. Jesus was He.

Full of grace: Mr. Moody defined grace as "unmerited kindness." How kind was our dear Master Jesus. And truth: Truth about God in Jesus truly drove away our doubts and darkness. We speak of "the Light of Truth." Jesus was this very thing which this heathen philosopher prayed for—A Light in Darkness.

"Once on the raging seas I rode
The storm was loud, the night was dark,
The ocean roared and rudely blowed
The wind that tossed my foundering bark;
Deep horror then my pulses froze,
Death-struck I ceased the tide to stem,
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the Star of Bethlehem."

The Witness Verses: Men Who Saw the God-Man

John 1:29; John 3:2

John the Baptist—"He seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

Nicodemus—"The same came unto Him by night, and said to Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou are a teacher come from

God; for no one can do these things that Thou doest, except God be with him."

The character and number of the witnesses to the bible-claims in regard to Jesus confound the atheist and unbeliever. It is essential that we should find these if the claims are true. They arose in startling array and from the most unexpected quarters. These witnesses establish the truth. Blackstone, the great author of the celebrated "Commentaries" is quoted as saying: "No event in history is more amply substantiated by competent testimony than the resurrection of Christ." But this is not more surely corroborated by testimony than the fact that Jesus was the God-Man.

The Reason Verse: Why This Wonderful Event

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

The reason for Jesus' coming was the LOVE of God. The profound dismay and despair, which has come over the hearts of so many who have been led to doubt the Christ whom they once accepted, is the deepest and most profound testimony to the wisdom of God in sending Him.

We needed just such a gift. Love always responds to need. So God's love responded to our greatest need.

The Duty Verses: What Devolves Upon Us

John 3:14 and 15

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth, may in Him have eternal life.”

As the physician’s knowledge in itself makes him a debtor to minister to the sick whether financially able to pay for it or not, so the fact that we know and accept Jesus with all His infinite meaning, forces us by its divine and inward compulsion to tell the good news to others.

Jesus tells us that He must be lifted up. This force to which I have alluded is what sends us forth in His name. If we do not respond to this, it is a strange fact that our own hearts cease to respond to the influence, the sweet beautifying influence, of the very Christ in whom we have professed to believe.

There are then two words, and they come in this order: “COME”; “GO.”

The Hell Verse: For Those Who Believe Not

John 3:19

“This is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil.”

This is the profound fact of all judgment: we cannot keep our evil works and have Christ too. The result is the absolute necessity of a choice. We may have many reasons to offer for deciding against Christ but these reasons are just excuses, the excuses sought that we may continue in our evil ways. Such a choice, our own desires rather than this wonderful Saviour, is its own condemnation.

The judgment is God's in that His goodness excludes evil automatically, but it is also our own in that we have a free and full opportunity to accept Christ with the promise of God's help through the Holy Spirit.

The Heaven Verses: For Those Who Believe

John 14:1 and 2

“Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in Me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.”

So many say, when one approaches them about the Master, “I shall have to think about it.” Christian experience teaches one supreme fact: Thinking never gets one into the kingdom. It is an act of WILL. One must have the “*will to believe.*” Notice in these verses, which are quoted from the American Revised Version, the difference in the rendering. It makes belief virtually a command. “Believe in God! Believe also in Me!” This is in accord with psychology and tallies absolutely with christian experience. *Stop thinking! Act!*

It is also correct to connect the belief in an eternal home with belief in God. When one weakens, the other fades. We hear much of the *here and now* in these days. Look into your own and the lives of others and behold the subtle change in life and actions when belief wanes. *No thought has such weight on the "here and now" as the "there and the thereafter."* All life is one as God is one. "A whole I planned," says Browning of God. We must not mar the whole, and the whole includes the Here and the Hereafter.

'Tis by our faith in joys to come
We walk through deserts dark as night
Till we arrive in heaven, our home,
Faith is our guide and faith our light."

The Second-Coming Verse: Jesus Will Come Again

John 14:3

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

The coming of Christ to the Bethlehem manger was not more plainly foretold than His second coming. The religious world of His day rejected His first coming, and it is natural to expect of that same world that it will reject His second. Jewish unbelief of that day is duplicated in christian unbelief today. When a part of God's whole truth is omitted, is it not reasonable to suppose that the effects will be disastrous?

“Be ready,” says our Lord. Who in their life and testimony are more likely to be ready than those who look for Him? Christian history, christian hymnology, christian testimony is filled with this great christian hope: We shall see Jesus again coming on the clouds of heaven.

The Work Verse: Our Job in Jesus' Absence

John 14:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, shall he do also; and greater works than these shall be do, because I go unto the Father.”

Jesus had His opportunity; the present is ours. During His absence, we must be faithful as He was faithful unto the end. Christian achievement baffles all historians, it is so tremendous. “All History is His Story.” History is the story of Jesus. The regrettable history, e. g. wars, is the story of our failure to follow Him; glorious history is the story of our success. It has but one question: Has Christ failed or succeeded in His followers? This is the first question discussed after every great lapse of civilization.

Your life and mine has but one question upon which is based its success or failure: Was it devoted to Him? In His absence it is our business to carry on His business.

The Help Verse: When We Workers Get Into Trouble

John 14:13

“And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

These verses follow one another as logically as the steps in an argument, do they not? Folks who work, get into straits hard to pass through. Jesus foresaw and prepared for every emergency. We have a place to get help for every trial: prayer is its channel: to God's Son at the right hand of power is the appeal. All God's resources are ours because we are Christ's and Christ is God's. “In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.”

“Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”

from “The Passing of Arthur.”

The Other-Companion Verses: While Jesus Is Away

John 14:15 and 16

“If ye love Me, ye will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever.”

A little boy on a farm in the mountains of Kentucky, fully dressed with a pair of trousers and one brace over a shoulder, watched with absorbing interest a city visitor as he performed his morning toilet at the pump at the back of the house. The country lad of the poverty-stricken district was much interested in all that was done: the face-washing, the shave, the tooth-brushing, the hair-combing, the collar and tie fixing. When it seemed to be through with, he interestedly inquired: "Do you'se always give yo'self so much trouble in the mornings?"

Do we not sometimes wonder about the christianity of folks who seem never to get any comfort, but only worry and trouble out of their religion? Are we not prone to ask, does not the world often unconsciously and consciously ask: Is religion such a troublesome thing?

The best word I know for the Holy Spirit is the Comforter. Many never "get the Holy Spirit, the Comforter." This is why their religion gives them so much trouble. To such, the complacency of the unbeliever is often enviable. The Holy Spirit is much more but He is also the Comforter. Religion ceases to be a joy-killer when the Comforter comes to abide with a human soul.

Preachers and teachers need Him especially. All preparation is valuable, but most of it vain without the Holy Spirit. Trust Him. Without Him, the Saturday before preaching or teaching is "blue Saturday" and the Monday following it "Blue Monday." But neither will be so blue if the comforting conviction abides in the soul that *He* was given the guidance of the

teaching or the sermon. The command is: "Be not anxious how or what ye shall speak or what ye shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say." Luke 12:11 and 12. Compare with this Luke 21:14 and 15. These two quotations will be found very helpful to the two classes of workers mentioned. They are rich diamonds with much comfort in their sparkle of promise.

"Our blest Redeemer ere He breathed
His tender, last farewell,
A Guide, a Comforter bequeathed
With us to dwell.
And His that blessed voice we hear,
Soft as the breath of even
That checks each thought, that calms each fear,
And speaks of heaven."

This completes the first group. Those who own a diamond can testify that this stone always seems to give out a never-ending beauty; one seems ever to catch new gleams of light. So there is a never-ending joy in the old verses, the ones we found long ago. Their depth and beauty seems never to be exhausted. However, much and inexhaustible riches remain in this great mine of God. Neglect it not. Let the digging be never-ending and glorious surprises will ever await us. We shall never cease praising the God who gave us such a mine of diamonds.

THE DIAMOND-DIGGERS' CREED

Diamond-Diggers may be distinguished by four simple features:

I. THEY APPROACH THE BIBLE PRAYERFULLY.

II. THEY MEMORIZE IT, BY BOOK, CHAPTER AND VERSE.

III. THEY POSSESS THE ORIGINAL FIFTEEN DIAMONDS.

IV. THEY ENDEAVOR TO MAKE OTHERS DIAMOND-DIGGERS.

I.

THEY APPROACH THE BIBLE PRAYERFULLY

There is a method to diamond-digging. The method is to submit to the Guide. In John 16:13, we learn who this is: The Spirit of Truth shall guide you into all truth. This guide is ours for the asking: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Luke 11:13.

We often pray *after* the reading, why not *begin* the reading that way? This is the Diamond-Digger's method.

II.

THEY MEMORIZE THE BIBLE BY BOOK, CHAPTER AND VERSE

The bible is "The Sword of the Spirit." Of what use is a weapon in an emergency, in an attack, if one cannot put his fingers upon it? Therefore Diamond-Diggers *memorize*. They also *memorize by book, chapter and verse*. Thus they can put their hands right on the sword when needed for offense or defense.

Thousands are weakened in their christian work by a total inability to put their fingers on bible texts. There is a sense of power in the worker which is communicated to the person with whom the worker is working, when the worker confidently quotes from book, chapter and verse. Is this not true, Mr. Christian? This is the way to disconcert the one who attempts to destroy the power of the Word and strengthen the one who is seeking the light. Therefore, again I say, Diamond-Diggers memorize by book, chapter and verse.

The chagrin of ignorance is a demoralizing thing to experience. Maybe your experience contains something analagous to this of mine. Early in my christian life, I was walking home with a fellow christian one evening after church. On the way we encountered a fit subject for the preaching of the Word. We did our best with him and he seemed affected by our earnestness and desire on his behalf. As we parted, he asked to be referred to an appropriate chapter or verse which would be helpful to one in his situation.

Previous to this request, I had found myself peculiarly handicapped by my inability to refer to "book, chapter and verse," but now, as Bill Nye said in a poem of my youth, I was "kafflum-mixed." However, something must be done. I did it. To me John was a likely book for him and it was better near the end. So I told him to read the twenty-second chapter of John.

He would have some trouble finding that alright. I looked for it when I got home, anxiously, but I never found it. Can you find it?

That experience alone justifies this rule. It was sickening to me. May this rule save you from just such errors.

III.

THEY POSSESS THE ORIGINAL FIFTEEN DIAMONDS

Complete mastery of the bible is impossible; it is too rich a mine for that. Unlike the mines of copper and gold, its reserves are exhaustless. However, one must not therefore neglect to make certain diamonds in this mine, his own. One may own a mine and know that in it are many diamonds, but the riches of that mine are useless except as they are mined.

Dig definite truths out of your bible. Do not wander through it as some folks wander through an art gallery, staring at the wondrous pictures as they pass down the halls, "taking them all in." The fact is that, although they have succeeded in taking it all in, the paradox is that they take nothing away

with them. But the one who spends time absorbingly at one or two pictures, takes much away with him.

Diamond-Diggers must therefore make a start: what start is better than these fifteen? Many better ones exist, maybe. But the fine thing about these verses is: they are a *start*, and a good start, as experience has demonstrated. However, the important thing is a start has been made in real diamond-digging in the scriptures. Having mastered these, keep on. Make your first attempt after these in a mastery of "soul-winners' verses."

IV.

THEY ENDEAVOR TO MAKE OTHERS DIAMOND-DIGGERS

"Blessed are the doers!" said the Master. Once accepted the gospel makes the acceptor a debtor to proclaim it. This activity is inevitable. One may well ask if he has a saving knowledge of the bible, if this activity does not follow the salvation which is claimed.

"YE SHALL BE MY WITNESSES UNTO THE UTMOST PART OF THE EARTH."

THE END.

