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AMITE OF GOD

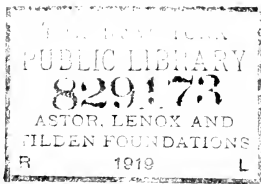
WILLIAM A. QUAYLE

The Dynamite of God

BY
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I

THE DYNAMITE OF GOD

“Christ the dynamite [*δύναμις*] of God.”—1 Corinthians
1. 24

CHRIST was at once a revelation and a revolution. He came to turn the world upside down, and was the chief iconoclast of human history. Himself was the sower who went forth to sow. Jesus came and went. Now, as we look back, his passage across our sky seems swift as the flight of falling star. Brief years included his ministry. We were but getting ready to entertain him when he left us and the heavens received him from our sight. Jesus came and went; but the world to which he came and the world from which he departed were not the same, for he had seeded our earth down to new ideas.

On coming, Jesus found nothing to his hand. Though he had waited so long, so long, yet nothing seemed ready for his coming. He had waited through the weary centuries, expectant, eager, saying as he looked earth's way, “Is it not ready yet? is it not ready yet?” and at the last, coming, he found himself an unexpected guest—nothing ready for him. No home to be born in, no Bethlehem to shelter his boyhood, no Palestine to let him grow from its soil as a “root out of dry

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ground," but he must needs go into Egypt for safety, seeing his very life was beset. So barbarous and inhospitable his welcome. His Nazareth would fling him from its cliffs. His Father's house was not ready for him. The church gave him scant tolerance, then menace, scorn, hisses, maledictions, crucifixion. Society was not ready for him, save that it was so apathetic it needed waking, so depraved it needed redeeming, so foul it needed a troubling of its waters, that health might follow its disease. O, it shames us now to think nothing was ready for him—and he had waited so long! I wonder his heart did not break. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Not a door open, nor a voice crying, "Welcome!"

And he found not even a speech ready to convey his meaning, so bankrupt was our world in the appliances of noble thought and life. The Greek speech had risen and matured. It was the most exact, versatile, vigorous, and poetic tongue any race had ever used as a vehicle of ideas.

Greek was a matchless dialect among human vernaculars. Philosophers, orators, and poets had glorified it. The Greek language had learned to express conquest with Alexander, eloquence with Demosthenes, poetry with Æschylus, and philosophy with Plato. The world has been proud of the Greek tongue all these centuries. Most apt and adequate it was to express the intricacies of the most abstruse philosophies, and used by Soc-

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rates, Plato, Zeno, and Epicurus in apprenticeship until it became saturated with philosophy as sea air with odors of the wave. God was bringing a speech toward readiness for the coming of the Christ. Then for two centuries or more, this adequate Greek language had been brought into contact with the Jewish theism and monotheism. At Alexandria the Septuagint had made the Greek tongue bear the weight of psalm, history, and prophecy, and God was making the Greek language go to school to himself, trying to get it ready for his Son. Yet when Christ came he found a speech as incompetent to express his thought as is a broken flute to express the music in the musician's dream. Jesus took this instrument, fingered all its stops, put lips to it, and found discord so that at the outset he must renovate language. He took the lexicon of the unsurpassed Greek tongue, ran down its columns from alpha to omega and said, "I cannot find the word I need." So common our world we could not offer God's Son even a word wherewith he should speak to us. Thus does sin shame us all. What pathos is here? Nothing ready for Christ. Yet there is a view which palliates our case a little. How could human speech hold God's thought? Can you pour the oceans into your drinking cup? Can you empty the skies with their azure and stars into the hollow of a child's hand? This figure is paltry when considered in relation to the putting the infinite into

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the finite, God into a man's words. Yet, ought there to have been some words competent for divine uses.

But consider when Jesus begins that exaltation we name the Sermon on the Mount, he revolutionized speech in the introductory word. "Makarioi" was a term applied, not to men, but to gods; and Jesus transports this word into a new zone of thought, applying it to man. What Jesus says as his first word to the world is, "Blessed like the gods are the pure, the meek and the hungry-hearted after righteousness." The ordinary Greek word for "life" was "bios," but the Greek thought of life as a perishable commodity, a thing which had morning, noon, and night. Sunset was more certain than sunrise. Is it not apparent when Jesus would say he was "The Life," he dare not in fealty to truth to use such a word? Christ, when he would say he was the eternal life, "from everlasting to everlasting," the life which had morning, but whose sun hung forever at celestial noon, the life which might run the gauntlet of the grave and get no hurt, took another word. He said, not "I am the *bios*," but "I am *Zoa*," and thus gave a word with which they were conversant, but flooded it with a heavenly meaning. So with love. God is love, how should Jesus say that? Love is polluted as earth has made it. He dare not use the word "Eros." This meant Venus, and the Grove of Daphne, and was polluted like air filled with

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corruption. And so Jesus gave us a clean word fresh as the first breath of morning waking with the dawn—not “eros,” but “agape.”

And Jesus came for the revelation of God and the revolution of the world. His word is “I make all things new;” and so he did. No great fact was left as he found it. He gave us new ideas of love, society, and man and God. Does not everybody know that when Jesus left the world man’s notion of manhood had been revolutionized? As God created man, so God’s Son created manliness. He revolutionized our conceptions, using the old pedestals, but setting upon them new figures. God, seen from Sinai, was one; God, seen by the light of Sinai and Calvary, was another. Christ showed us man and God.

But surely, though in many things our ideas are such as need revolutionizing, one thing we rightly conceive—we know power. If we know not the love of God without Christ’s exegesis, we do know “the power of God.” We have seen man’s creation and wondered. The pyramids are high, but God’s foothills are higher. The Ferris Wheel, when its circumference is placed alongside the perimeter of this old world, becomes pitiable. Man’s huge creations are trivialities with God. Power, God’s power? Do not his forces fling continents above the menace of the seas? And are not mountains thrust so high as to be the roofs of continents from whose eaves drip the rains which create rivers? And does not gravitation’s

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might grip all the stars and hold them as if God's own hand were on them? Is not this plainly "The power of God"? No, this is *a* power of God.

But man, he is the power of God. How mighty he is! God crowned him king of the world, and rulership is in him. He feels himself born for sovereignty since such might is his. He is a miracle-worker in the physical realm. He bridles lightnings. He harnesses Niagaras. He stands by ocean's shores and contemplates the conquest of the seas and executes his contemplation. He thinks and frames systems of philosophy so intricate as to bewilder him who follows them. He thinks and computes the periodicity of suns, and finds the path trod by the lost comets. Man is majestic in his power of reason, and bewilders us as oceans cannot do. Man is the power of God? No, Christ is the power of God.

And Christ came, God's power. We knew man's use of power. It was brute strength; dogged, vicious, overbearing. Athens had power and tyrannized over the Hegemony. Cæsar had power, and with his might desolated nations and conquered states. Germany had power, and enslaved men of a conquered country and ravished the womanhood of a kingdom. Her garments are red with the blood of slain ten thousands. This is man's notion of power. Man's power is terrible enough. Make way, then, in fear, for God's power is come, make way! make way!

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But he comes, God's power, and his voice is sweet as the whisper of love. He comes, and his hand-touch is not hurt, but healing. He comes, God's might, and little children rest upon his breast like birds. Tenderness, solicitude, and love—this is God's conception of power. Since, then, these things are so, is it not clear that Christ was as necessary to revolutionize our idea of power as any other idea in the category of our thinking?

1. *Christ is the power of God in the entirety of man's life.* Christianity differs from other religious systems, not in that it monopolizes all nobilities of thought. Every religious system has noble precepts, since God's light has illuminated all souls. Christianity has all exalted precepts of all systems outside itself, though this is not its distinctive glory. Other systems give good advice: Christianity gives power. "Christ is the power of God." And if this Christ is to be a Saviour for the soul, he must be ample enough for its extremest need. Of partial saviours the world is sick. Give us a potent Christ—nay, give us an omnipotent Christ. Christ must be a subduer. In him must be might and to spare. Standing by him we must feel we neighbor with the Infinite. The power of God should in reason suffice. Jesus says, "All power is given unto me"; and all power is enough. But quadrature this might with our need. Inquire, "Is it commensurate?"

And Christ must master intellect. Christ must

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satisfy the reason. He must do more: he must satisfy the profoundest thought of the profoundest thinker. He must set thought on fire. He must make narrow thought drive barriers back to the horizon. He must put fire in the reason's blood. In other words, Christ must not dwarf intellect, but enlarge it. Standing beside Christ, the tallest reason of the sons of men must feel he is a pigmy and that the Christ lifts an immeasurable height above him. My appeal is to history to declare that since history began no such intellectual quickener has set foot on earth as Jesus, the Christ. He has created a literature, a theology, a sociology. Men have loved him, feared him, hated him, antagonized him, but have thought about him. Christ is reason's Lord. He is God's power in the domain of pure reason. This man's name is Newton. He is an athlete. He is the greatest wrestler that ever bent to wrestler's toil—no common athlete, no Samson with Gaza's gate on his shoulders; this is an intellectual athlete. Once we saw beads of sweat gather their dews upon his forehead and watched the passion of him, when lo! he comes, victor; and he had wrestled nature down and from her clinched hands had taken the secret of the primary colors. Rest wrestler, rest! Once more we saw him bend his powers to toil. His former feats are trifles now. He wrestles with the invisible. Might and he are met. Fifty-five centuries of men have been wrestled down,

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when at the end, our athlete is not mastered, but master, and brings away as trophy of his triumph, gravitation. Rest, victor, rest. Now, can Christ answer to this vast intellect's needs? Let himself answer. Christ was at his right hand. In life Christ was his strength and stay; in his consummate years he essayed to write a comment on God's Book; and in his dying hour his failing sight beheld the Christ and his eyes were lighted. Biography attests Christ to be "the power of God" to intellect. And, too, this is significant. Christ does this without apparent effort. The wonder of the ocean tides is not that they fill all creeks and inlets, and wash all shores clean, and lift all boats lying like wrecks along waterless channels, and cover shoals, and wrath upon the rocks, but the wonder is how easily 'tis done. No effort; but the tide rises and the shores are full! Charles Lamb was right. A company debating what they would do if great Shakespeare came, the verdict was unanimous: they would all rise. The further question raised, what they would do if the great Christ should come, Charles Lamb stuttered, "We would all kneel." Wisely answered, Elia. All wise reason kneels at the feet of Christ.

And Christ as God's power must master imagination. Man is poet and prophet. He has wings and knows how to outsoar eagles. What can Christ do for man, the dreamer? If he abates imagination's flame and dulls it to ashes, he can

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be no adequate Christ. Well, time was when we must theorize concerning things like these. Happily, that time is past. Christ has been here so long we know his might. His biography is written in the lives of men. We have seen him enter imagination's dwelling; and immediately the room has been lighted up as if the sun had suddenly risen. What is told of Cædmon is true of all. A servant became a poet because he had a vision of Christ. His case may serve as an allegory. Christ makes poets of us all. He colors our skies with rainbow tints. And in history Christ has created painting, he has shaped an exquisite poetic architecture, he has created music, he has given to earth Edmund Spenser, and Dante, and Milton, and Browning. More, he has with gracious democracy made all that love him to "see visions and dream dreams."

Further, God's power must answer to the subduing of the will. He must not break this royal faculty as one would break a sword across his knee. Man's life must not be reduced to fragments, but restored to entirety. Christ came, "not to destroy, but to fulfil." Two opposing labors must be wrought by Christ in the will. First, the stubborn will must be made pliable. Some men are as ragged as the edge of a hacked sword. They lacerate all they meet. Their gentleness is cruel. They delight in naming themselves firm; their wives, with less rhetoric and more truth, declare them stubborn. Man takes a

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ground and holds it because he has taken it. Even Pilate would answer, "What I have written I have written." Some men are so imperious as not to be bearable. But Christ is power. He can make brusqueness gracious. He can bend obduracy, but he does it by getting within the will and filling it full of himself. He does it as you have seen steel rails bent. Cold, they resisted your strength, but heated to red heats they bent to meet the requisition of the desired curve. Christ makes will pliable by flinging divine heats within, and so leads whithersoever he will. But this other thing, God's power must do in will. He must strengthen the emasculated will. He must become a cure for vacillation. Some men drift like leaves when wind-pursued. Some men and women are born with weak volition. They are mercurial as air. Others are born strong, but by misuse of will, or by narcotics or alcoholics they weaken the will. This is pitiful but true. A ship bereft of rudder is no more a sport of ocean currents than they; and what for them? Whence comes their strength? The answer is, "It comes from heaven." His name is Christ. I make no arraignment of Keeley cure, but praise it rather. Yet to any drunkard with his weakened will I commend "Christ cure." He is the establisher of the will. The weakest volition that ever stumbled like a drunkard along the path may walk a man, since Christ is "the power of God."

Yet what of love? This vigor of life, what if it

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becomes dwarfed? Atheism, either theoretical or practical, dries up the blood. Infidelity withers love like hot winds the fields of corn. There is in my observation a callousness and settled hardness in an aged infidel face. What can Christ do for a man's love which is dried like a leaf whose summer and autumn both are past? Let me answer by a fact. Past my study window one day an old man shambled. I had seen him often before. I had been at his home, and was greeted by him with winter's frigidity. I had seen him when his little grandbaby lay dead; and not a tear watered his cheek or gathered in his eyes. He was hard. Adamant seemed not so hard to me. For fifteen years he had not been in a house of prayer. O, he was hard. Cruelty was written on his face. Barren alike it was of pity and intelligence; and seeing him shamble past I ran to the door and into the street and asked him to come in. He came. We talked of "the power of God." I told him there was a cure for sin. He had been wicked. He was dismissed from city service for the contemptible crime of stealing goods at a fire. He sat and listened to me listlessly, inanely as I thought, but I reaverred, "There is a cure. Christ is able."

And we prayed, kneeling in the study. First, I, in poor fashion, told his case to God. Then he prayed. So listless was he, so lacking in apparent interest and tenderness, that when we rose, he saying he accepted Christ, I followed him to the

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door, then to the street, fearing he had misconceived me, and had not found "the power of God." No light kindled in his eyes or shined upon his face. But that night, entering the pulpit, on the front seat I saw him. He looked at me. His face was melted like a winter thawed to spring. His eyes were wet with tears. His lips twitched with feeling pent up these long years; and I shall see that man in heaven. So tender he became, a woman could not be tenderer; and beyond peradventure Christ is God's power to bring love to her regnancy again.

2. *Christ is God's power to master sin.* Sin is what ails the world. This world is fair enough to live in forever if sin could be banished. Sin is the nightmare which makes life terrible. Sin it is that makes history a tragedy. Sin is not quiescent, but restless like Napoleon and planning of an expanded empire. And sin has might. What truthful heart does not know this? Sin is here. It thrusts us sorely. It menaces our every step. Paul was accurate when he framed this phrase, "Where sin abounded." This is no chance utterance but terribly concrete. A Salvation Army group was singing on a street corner in St. Joseph, Missouri. The music, musicians would have considered discord! but God's angels listened and thought it sweet. The music or the word which helps the gospel to a hearing is sweeter to the ear of God than angels' songs; and, the music done, a man began to speak. He was huge of head and

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form and might have sat for a picture of Hercules. You would not have wished to meet him in the dark, or when his wrath waxed hot. And as he began to speak tears were in his voice, and soon tears began to gather in the eyes of many. His story was this: "A time ago I was a drunkard, huge in body as you see, and gifted with strength. I was a walking danger. No two policemen but would give me wide room. I was a brute. My children ran and hid like scared birds when I came home. My wife was pale and dressed in rags. Scant bread was on our table. My house was a hovel and no home. One night, half drunk or more, I came along this street and heard these instruments going. I stopped. A man rose and began talking—something about 'salvation.' He told how God could make a drunkard a man. I listened in a poor way with my addled brain, but said at my heart, 'That's what I need,' and the man closed saying, 'All you who want to hear more about sal-va-tion come down to the barracks.' And I went, sat in a back seat, heard about Christ, sought him, and found him. Neighbors, I knew then what sal-va-tion was. Friends, come down and see me now. I've got a home now, and a tidily dressed wife; and my children do not run from their father any more, but run to meet him and kiss him, and my wife has color in her cheeks and laughter in her eyes, and my daughter has an organ now and plays gospel hymns, and all you come up to my house and see what salva-

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tion did for me." Brothers, Christ is the power of God to save from sin.

3. *Christ is the power of God to slay death.* When Prince Guatama, in *The Light of Asia*, would have comforted a bereft woman, he sent her to find a hearth where death had not sat down. She found death had always been before her. Poor consolation this, yet here is a truth. Longfellow was right:

"There is no flock, however watched or tended,
But one dead lamb is there;
There is no fireside, howso'er defended,
But has one vacant chair."

Each draped chair empty beside me says, "Death has been here." And who of you has not a chamber of mourning in your heart? At home is a little trunk, locked; you carry the key. It is a sacred place. What have you hidden there? Rubies and gold? No, nothing worth while to look at. A shoe, a baby's shoe out at the toes, and little garments scarcely worn at all, and a child's playthings, most of them broken, and a lock of hair. And you sit beside and drop your tears on these fragments. Yes, death has come and you cry:

"But, O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still."

Death is so surly. He walks in at your door with never a knock. He knows no courtesy. He

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takes somebody of yours by the hand and goes out with him and your heart is broken. O, if only somebody will kill death! "Christ is the power of God" to slay death. He came to Jairus's palace saying, "Death begone, for I have come." He came to Nain, and standing weary at the gate, was yet not so weary that he could not dispossess death of the widow's son. He came and cried, "Lazarus is mine." But himself, God's power, is dead! The sepulcher is sealed. The soldiers keep watch. The Marys are weeping, and John and Peter hold each other's hands in mute anguish, saying no word, but only shedding bitter tears. And Saturday is ended and Sabbath is past, and the morning begins to dawn, when "very early" the grave trembles, and the guards fall like men dead, and with vast composure, such as befits him who is God's Son, Christ walks out of the grave and leaves death dead at his own door. Assuredly "Christ is the power of God" to slay death.

Your dear old father, with his furrowed face, and snow-white hair, and white tangle of beard, and hands scarred with labor and with battle, how dear he was, how passing dear! And one night an angel beckoned and with a smile as sweet as heaven upon his face he went; and you said, "He is dead," and bore him to the grave with unutterable anguish. When lo! what time the preacher said, "Earth to earth, and ashes to ashes, and dust to dust," there stood beside the

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grave an uninvited Guest. He stood strong and benignant. To look at him brought rest; and he beckoned and said, "He is not dead, but sleepeth," and took the father from the grave, and held him on his bosom, saying, "I am the resurrection and the life." "Lo, I am Christ, the dynamite of God." Amen.

II

CIVILIZATION'S DEBT TO GREECE AND PALESTINE

“I am debtor.”—Romans 1. 14

BROTHERS, the question I raise is, Where lies our debt of debts? Is our civilization's “sweetness and light” to be credited to Greece or to Palestine? Is the culturist's position, as defined by Arnold, truth or half truth, or no truth? In other words, who has given our civilization most?

A great soul is always a great debtor. He owes much to many sources. The small soul has few debts, but he is narrow and insignificant. Enlarge narrowness until it becomes huge as the girth of the world, and you have placed the man thus enlarged on the credit rolls of earth and heaven. Enlarged capacity requires enlarged supply. We are debtors to all the past. The world's business, we are told, is carried on, not by moneys, but by credits. Five per cent, or less, of the actual complex business interchange is touched by absolute money supply. It is thus in the marts of the soul. Man's greatness is measured by his debt. The noblest spirits who have made the world the stage for the display of their amazing

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powers are those who have fairly bankrupted the world by their drafts upon it. Show me the Mississippi and I will write its biography. Toward its delta it amplifies into a sea. It spreads waters over areas whose aggregate would create states like Holland. What is the Mississippi's biography? Answer, a catalogue of debts. From the time it silvers its way from Itasca till it thrusts its avalanche of waters into the Gulf, as if to give a drink to the thirsty sea, it has received, received, received. This greatest river of the world is one stupendous debt. It drains the greatest arable region on the globe. Its lips suck waters from the base of every icy precipice in the far mountains, and drink like a thirsty traveler at every wayside spring; and the river holds its face up like a man in a desert in time of passing shower for the splash of the rain in every field and pasture. It is like a mendicant, who asks alms of every passer-by. Its largesse at its far-away delta is its debt to innumerable rivulets. Every tiny rill helped it in its growth. The Mississippi issues from Lake Itasca twelve feet wide and less than a foot deep. It drains one and one-fourth millions square miles. It has fifteen hundred navigable branches. It is navigable for thirty-nine hundred and fifty miles. It has a length of forty-five hundred miles; and has as affluents Red River, Yazoo, Arkansas, Ohio, Missouri, and such streams, which are great rivers in themselves. Mississippi is but a synonym of

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debt. Indeed, sometimes debt becomes fortune, as when William III's distinguished minister of finance, Montague, made the debt of England to be hostage for the stability of constitutional government as introduced by the glorious Revolution of 1688. Now modern civilization is a debtor more largely than the Mississippi, and its debt is its glory and its stability, as was the debt of England under William III.

In the advance of life debts multiply. The plant owes to the soil and sun and shower. The animal owes to soil and sun and shower, but adds to its list of debts its debt to the vegetable. Man, enlarging his debt, asks all below him for sustentation. He uses sun and shower and soil and plant and animal. He is not herbivorous nor carnivorous, but omnivorous. He is, in other words, what the combined animal life below him is. He is obligated to sea and land and air. He uses all the physical elements of earth; but earth does not suffice him, and he must needs have heaven as purveyor to his immortal life. His debt is to physical and spiritual, to social and civil, to man and God. He is, in brief, a debtor to the universe. Think over the men whose names will be the last to fade from human memory—I care not whether they are poets, philosophers, or statesmen, or generals or kings, or religious leaders, great known names, or anonymous helpers to the growth of soul—and I will take oath that all these men put themselves most in debt to the

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world, and so, therefore, made the world most in debt to them.

Every invention is a debt; every poem is a debt. A keen ear, catching symphony of sea and storm and spirit, and amazing the race by its reproduction—this is genius. Such a master of men and matters was Napoleon, who took unlimitedly from the world about him as a plant takes nutriment from the elements of its life. Debt, debt, debt—that is the biography of intellectual life. Articles are often current, "Books That Have Helped Me," which is another way of saying, persons to whom I have become indebted. The Bible and Shakespeare and Plato and Newton and Dante and Browning—these are men of whom we have borrowed. They have our notes in their possession, and will have them in their possession forever. And in any case of a great life you will find a man who boldly and with delight avows himself a debtor.

Civilization, as we now possess it, is a debt to all centuries and all civilizations. Our law, literature, philosophy, ethics, religion—all are contributed. As Israel, leaving Egypt, borrowed from every neighbor, so our age borrows from every century. In Justin McCarthy's *History of Our Own Times*, we read that the Canadian legislative system was borrowed intact from the United States. In like manner we, as a civilization, have borrowed the furnishings of our house from the past. Who originates new styles of

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architecture? If we build a church, we pay our architect, but borrow our architecture. Gothic architecture is the poetry of religion, and the noblest cathedral, to my mind, that ever lifted spires toward the far stars, is fashioned after the art that grew out of the rise of the Christian system.

We are now come to the point of urging our question, To which is our civilization more indebted, to Greece or to Palestine? That all the great races and peoples have had missions no one will argue. Rome taught men how to rule. The Phœnician was the greatest of early navigators and the inventor of the European alphabet and the disseminator of the same. Greece taught men to think. The Jew was the schoolmaster in religion, and the Anglo-Saxon is the custodian of human liberty. But not to enter into argument, I think it may be allowed that, of all ancient peoples, the Greek and the Jew have impressed the world of our day most profoundly. And, save Rome only, no ancient nation can dispute this elect-place of potent influence in our civilization. Greece and Palestine are the soils out of which grew such amazing growths as have been the wonder and help of the multitudinous centuries.

And is it not strange that these two preeminently influential countries of the world were so insignificant in their geographical limitations? The area of Greece was 21,000 square miles; the area

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of Palestine (including Peræa) was 12,000 square miles, or (excluding Peræa) was 6,600 square miles. In other words, at their greatest extent, these two immortal lands were less in area than the State of Ohio. Greece lay as the gate to Europe; Palestine was roadway from Babylon to Egypt, and from Tyre to Arabia; each land thus standing in the way of the world's travel. Greece lay in Europe; Palestine lay in Asia. The inhabitants of Greece were Japhetic; the inhabitants of Palestine were Semitic.

In topography there was between these two lands a great similarity. Both were mountainous; both were arid; both were intersected by streams, which, in the main, ran dry in the summer time. The inhabitants of both were not in all points unlike, for both were in practically perpetual struggle, either with neighbors, or, in default of neighbors to quarrel with, they struggled with each other. Greece had three tribes: the Æolian, the Dorian, and the Ionian, and had twenty-two kingdoms. The Jew had twelve tribes and two kingdoms. The Jew was superior to the Greek as a patriot; for, while the Greek in theory held Hellas as a term sacred as Jerusalem to the Jews, in practice he was much less faithful as a patriot.

The authentic history of Greece begins when that of Palestine was shading into night. In B. C. 721 the ten tribes were carried into a perpetual banishment, while in B. C. 776 the first Olympiad is recorded. The wars, each waged for

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liberty, have become epic in history. Thermopylæ, Marathon, Plataea, Mycale are immortal. And the splendid pageant of the Maccabees and the Jewish uprising against the Roman eagle placed over the temple gates of Jerusalem, and the tragedies of heroism wrought when Jerusalem fell before the onslaught of Titus's legions, are among the world's precious inheritance of heroic achievement.

To Greece we owe logic, speculative philosophy, aesthetics, sculpture, architecture, oratory, and literature. To Palestine we owe much of our governmental idea, individualism, the family idea, ethics, religion, the Bible, and Jesus. Beyond parley, modern civilization has come into deep waters of obligation.

No people approximates the Greek in wealth and scope of its intellectual achievements, nor in the comparatively limited era into which is crowded its unequalled history. Greek art, philosophy, eloquence, poetry, history, heroism seem crowded into scarce more than one and one-half centuries. Aside from Homer, Greek literature belongs to this epoch. From the Battle of Marathon, B. C. 490, to the rule of Alexander the Great, B. C. 340, is what one may term the productive era of Greek literature and Greek life; and between those two points poet, historian, orator, Athenian Hegemony, Peloponnesian supremacy, Theban glory, sculpture and generalship seem crowded together as people at a gala

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day. The triumph of the drama in Jovian Æschylus, in tragic Sophocles, and in human Euripides; the Acropolis, with its renown of sculpture and architecture—these belong in this era. In the wars for mastery over the Persians, Socrates fought; during the Anabasis and the Retreat of the Ten Thousand he died. And Aristotle had Plato for a teacher, and was himself the schoolmaster of Alexander the Great. So that, in this epoch, the greatest names of Greek philosophy burned like suns in the sky. Aristotle was the inventor of logic, as known to modern thought; Homer was the father of poetry; Herodotus, the father of history; Demosthenes, the peerless political orator; and the Parthenon is the *ne plus ultra* of architecture.

From the Greeks the Romans borrowed their literature; for Horace and Catullus, the sweetest of the Roman lyrists, imitated the Greek measures as well as the Greek ideas. The world has studied the oratory of Demosthenes; and literature's dramatists are, in the main, disciples of the incomparable trinity of Greek tragic writers; and Aristophanes stands as the Gamaliel of comedy writers until the coming of William Shakespeare. Since Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, Epicurus, and Pyrrho, who has invented a new thought in philosophy? These men seem to have drained the cup of philosophy to the lees. Philosophy has and can have but four schools—idealism, realism, materialism, and skepticism. Plato is easily

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the philosopher of the centuries; and the Greeks were preeminent in and founders of the various schools. That is to say, no school of philosophy has been discovered since the days of the Greek philosophers. In all the domain of speculation the Greeks have preempted the ground. We think our thoughts after them. Along the lines in which the mind depends upon the sheer intellectual lift, the Greeks have never been surpassed, nor yet equaled, unless we except that single-handed combat between Newton and gravitation. Moderns excel in the application of ideas; the Greeks excelled in the discovery of ideas.

In sculpture and architecture Greece is incomparable. Phidias is not equaled even by Michael Angelo. The metope and the frieze of the Parthenon are the dream and despair of all time. Herodotus was peerless in the romance school of history. We study Greek in the colleges because we are thus let into the interior life of the most virile intellectuality the world has yet beheld. Shakespeare is the only dramatist who ever contended with Greece. He stands alone among all the nations in his ability and valor to grapple with these elect intellectual giants. Demosthenes is solitary. Homer is unapproachable in the vigor, simplicity, and ocean-music of his verse.

In government Greece has taught the world little. The Greeks were too fickle. Their mercuriality made it impossible for them to do great things in government. We speak of them as a

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democracy, which is scarcely true at all. They were aristocrats, and not democrats. But in literature, logic, philosophy, and æsthetics Greece is unapproachable. Greece furnishes us with a standard of taste. For exquisite sense of proportion, whether in verse, architecture, sculpture, or oratory, no one is applicant for this palm which Greece holds in its hands. Æsthetics as a fact and not as an art of criticism belongs to them by right of creation. The renaissance in literature began with the sowing of the Greek scholars throughout Europe, by the fall of Constantinople, thus bringing the world up to comparison with the old standards. Thus our debt to Greece is vast and monumental and enduring.

Palestine was not the producer of navigator, nor political orator, nor profane history, nor philosophy, nor sculpture, nor architecture. It produced a general betimes, as in the case of Joshua and David; but this was not Palestine's specialty. Many things the Hebrew was not, but likewise many things he was. He was a poet. Doubtless the sublimest poem ever written is the drama of Job. But the genius of the Jew was somber, not light, sprightly, airy, which were such distinguishing characteristics of Greek genius. The Jew's lyrics were gracious, but sublime. His odes were nobler than Pindar's "Olynthiacs," but he was constantly and magnificently moral. Anacreon had been an impossibility to Palestine,

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and an anachronism unforgivable. There was the touch of the seer in all poetry coming from the Hebrew heart, and from Palestine comes the noblest devotional literature yet known to the worshiping heart. The prophecies contain sublimest declarations attuned to the loftiest poetry. With the Greek, poetry was ultimate as an expression of form. This was an end. With the Hebrew, on the contrary, poetry or eloquence was secondary, and the divine element, the moral purpose, were ubiquitous and important. Palestine's contributions to modern civilization are government, individualism, the family idea exemplified, ethics, religion, the Bible, and Jesus.

From the necessary brevity of this discourse I shall discuss individualism and government together, and say, whereas, the Spartan and Athenian lost the man in the state, the Hebrew always made it clear that the state was the servant of the man. The Jew was never lost in the Jews. The individual in personal purity and obligation was central. Individual freedom was a central truth, and the Hebrew's original form of government was a nearer approximation to modern democracy than any constitution known to ancient governments. The politics of Palestine taught that each man and the state belonged to God; and there is no man in our day who is so distinguished in legal ability as to be able to certify with definiteness how much and how important is the Hebrew as Christian contribution

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to modern law. One thing, however, is patent to us all: that the spirit of modern legislation in civilization is not Greek, but Christian; and Christian legislation and Christian codes sprang out of the soil of Palestine.

We dare not forget in our most hurried moments of thinking that Palestine had the only place worthy the name of home in ancient life; and we cannot forget that Christianity, amplifying the old conception of home as the Hebrews knew it, has given to our modern life a home such as is known nowhere this side of heaven.

The ethics of the present are not heathen, certainly not Greek; they are Christian. Humanity to brutes and humanity to man are credentials of the Christian system. Spartan ethics allowed theft, and Athenian ethics, adultery, which Socrates justified. Greek ethics allowed exposure of weakly children and the aged for death. Greek ethics allowed the grossest personal impurity as a religious rite. There seemed not to be in Greece an elevation of spirit sufficient to lift even the noblest intellect to the ordinary levels of the ethics taught of God in Palestine. The ethical standards of the present are written from the standards of the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule, and Christ's epitome of the Ten Commandments.

However hostile a man may be to Christianity, he borrows his exalted code—if such he has—and borrows it from Christianity, and uses it as

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if it were his own. The ethics of mankind at its best are of Palestinian paternity. The teachings of Christ, inculcating the idea of culpability inhering in the motive, and not in the act, is revolutionary, belonging to Christ's concept, and not belonging to any ancient heathen code; and, besides this, no system of ethics can live without a religion behind it and in it.

And the religion of modern civilization, at its best, is from Palestine. The Greek polytheism is dead; but the Jewish monotheism has mastered the world. Whether God be named as some science names him, Law, Nature, or the Unknowable, still is it not apparent that the conception is monotheistic, and not polytheistic?

“One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves,”

may stand for the *de facto* motto of scientific conclusion. Whatever they deny, or however they understand themselves, this thing is clear as the light, that the old many gods are dead.

The Jew was alone among ancient religionists in asserting the oneness of God. The Parsee was really dualistic, and the Jew, with his faith in but one God, antagonized the world, but has given religion to modern civilization. The civilized world is Christendom. This no sane man will deny. The Greek mythology excites ridicule as a religion and delight as poetry. In fact, the Greek

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rose in religion nothing above the poetic. Palestine gave us Christianity. Every apostle was a native of this soil. Christ, after the flesh, was a Jew. The Christian system is the consummate flower of the Jewish faith; not an evolution but a consummation. Does Christianity permeate civilization and government and codes? Does the law of equality not come from Jesus? Are not slaveries abolished by Christianity? Does not Christianity swing its censers of sacred odors for the world? We may well bless God, it does!

But ethics and religion are the last mighty efforts of the human soul. And Palestine has given us these transcendent products. Intellectuality is not the equal of spirituality. Religion is the supremest effort of the soul of man. Religion is the essential of the world. It appertains to here and yonder. It is practical; it is poetic, but not mythical; is full of opportunities as heaven of stars; answers to the moan of wounded hearts and spirits. The Christian religion declares unhesitatingly, not as a dream of speculation, but as a matter of imparted truth, the great facts necessary to human life; and contemporaneous religion emanates from Christianity.

Two other things Palestine has grown: one of these is the Bible, the other of these, Jesus; either of which is a wealth so incalculably great as to put it beyond the power of any thinker to compute. The Bible cannot at this point be discussed, save to say that it is a solitary book;

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it has neither kith nor kin. Whatever inspiration as touching the Scriptures may mean, this thing I hold to be true and clear, that the inspiration in the Bible is such a quality as separates the Bible as a moral guide and as a revelation from any other book and all other books. The Bible is the one book sufficient in its ampleness to make life illustrious and hopeful and heroic, and to make death not a sorrow, but an hour of triumph and delight. And Palestine is the home of the Bible.

But Palestine's chief glory is that it is the home of Christ. Ours has so repeatedly been called an age of doubt as that to affix any other cognomen would be considered intellectual heterodoxy or innocent ignorance. Nevertheless, let us tentatively rechristen this an age of faith. Nor is this attitude captious. In it is at least some degree of sanity. Christ never had an age in his calendar of ages when he was foremost in so many people's thinking as at this present. "Phenomenal" is a weak word to characterize that fact. Much faith is hesitant, much hostile, some virulent, much grossly naturalistic, some boldly materialistic, some literary, and some (if I may coin a word to touch a truth) literesque, but the thing everywhere visible is that all these critics, diversified as they are, are looking at Jesus. He is visible to thought as he has never been. Christ is monopolizing attention. Thinkers are gathering about his cross and him, some denying him, some

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denying his cross; but looking at him and his cross they certainly are. Now, this attitude is immensely significant. Christ is so far away from his day as that for the world to have forgotten him would not have been strange. We cannot forget him. That is the perpetual wonder and the miracle ever renewed. The soldiers about his grave thought Jesus surely dead; the Jewish hierarchy thought him dead; the broken-hearted women and the apostles who loved him and lost him thought him dead; but the third day the grave was empty, and himself stood the authenticated Lord of Life. His enemies thought themselves quit of him, then and since; but, behold, he is the most vital personality of the twentieth century.

You talk of a Napoleonic revival, and such there is, and cannot be denied a significance; but what is the Napoleonic revival and its literature in bulk or meaning compared with the Christ revival and Christ Literature? Stupendous libraries have been built about Jesus. He not only knew how to read, "never having learned," but has taught the art of reading and writing to the centuries. Men are thinking about Jesus. He is in the sky as the sun is. Every dawn reaffirms the sun, so does every dawn reaffirm Jesus. He is present, evident, undeniable, efficient, puissant, vitalizing. In all movements for the betterment of man Christ is the fructifying force.

The antagonisms that Jesus excites are his cer-

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tificates of character. Who is writing innumerable volumes on Mohammed or the Koran? Or who is dissecting the Koran with every art of critical analysis? In other words, who are those outside of Mohammedism concerned in Mohammed or his book, but who is not concerned in Jesus and his book? People are angry at him, but they think of him and attempt to abolish him, or love him and die for him. Who is arguing over Zeus, or Thor? They belong to mythology and theologies. Jesus belongs to history and life. You cannot be rid of him as you cannot be rid of the sun. The sun rises, breaks darkness from the hills, conquers the sky at a breath and all life cries, "The sun, the sun!" Christ comes; the centuries feel him. Civilization answers to the thrill of his presence; codes are reshaped to fit his purpose. Christ is the major fact of contemporaneous history, civilization, thought, and theology. Much of the scientific movement of the last quarter of a century was a methodical and definite attack on Christ and supernaturalism, with intent to rid the world of one or the other, or both; but supernaturalism is still here. Christ stands gigantic.

Greece has given us dreams beautiful as the morning. Palestine has given us deathless truth and heavenly verities.

The Greek had a Parnassus and an Olympus; the Hebrew had Sinai and Calvary. And the clouds are lifted from the crown of Olympus, and

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we look, and lo! its summit is bereft of gods. Those divine habitations are as empty of divinities as the palaces of Petraea of kings. But Sinai thunders in our ears forever the name of God, and we see its summit majestic with the divine presence.

Greece had an Epaminondas and Themistocles; Palestine has Joshua and the Maccabees. Greece has Demosthenes and Pericles; Palestine has Peter and Paul. Greece has Athens and the Acropolis; Palestine has Jerusalem and Mount Zion. Greece has Plato; Palestine has John. Greece has Æschylus; Palestine has Isaiah. Greece has Pindar; Palestine has David, with his golden harp. Greece has Solon; Palestine has Moses. Greece has given us a temple; Palestine has given us a God. We see Calvary, and in the light of it, what of honeyed Hymettus? What of Parnassus, with its poet's speech? What of the Parthenon, with its Minerva and her blazing shield? Calvary! Calvary! Thou shalt be remembered when every name of Grecian geography is washed from the memory of the world. Calvary! Thou hast become immortal in the skies! Greece has given us books; Palestine has given us the Book! Greece has given us Socrates, the son of Sophroniscus; Palestine has given us Jesus, the Son of God.

III

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“I am the beautiful Shepherd.”—John 10. 11

I HAVE deemed it wise to read the Greek as it is. The Greek text is “*poiman ho kalos*,” “the beautiful Shepherd,” and not “*poiman ho agathos*,” “the good shepherd.” While “*kalos*” often means “good” and is rightly enough so translated it is the legitimate and usual word for “beautiful.” And so I have rendered the text, “I am the beautiful Shepherd.”

Sometimes the Greek is so pungent, so persuasively accurate, as that it is a mistake not to render it as it is. Our King James translators were men of genius, and they have mixed their genius with music. I think the Bible the greatest translation in the English speech, and this is not forgetting Chapman’s Homer. Anybody who has not read Chapman’s Homer has yet left a day of his life fathomless for beauty and music. Nobody ought to die without reading Chapman’s Homer. A good many will, but they ought not to. We ought to read it if for no other reason than that John Keats, one of the sweetest poets in all English literature, was lifted into raptures by it and

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wrote that sonnet which makes a man stand tiptoe on the heights of life. Chapman's Homer is so beautiful, so altogether pervaded by ocean and battle music, everybody ought to read it. Still, in the face of Chapman's Homer, I will say that the Bible is the greatest translation in the English language. I have not forgotten Fitzgerald's "Omar Kháyyám's Rubáiyát," which for power of interpretation of a dead speech and a dead poet's hopeless phrase and hopeless thought, and for felicity of rendering it into the language of the times in which we live is a superb achievement. I have not forgotten that. But still I think that the Bible is the greatest translation in the English speech. And I have not forgotten three master translations in our American literature. I do not know how it will appear to you, but to me it appears that, all told, the three greatest translators of three great poets are American poets. Bayard Taylor's "Faust" is the noblest rendition of the German masterpiece in the English speech. Longfellow's "Divine Comedy" I think to be easily the incomparable rendition of that strange, fascinating, hazy morning light, dark-night, death-night, heaven-light poem. And William Cullen Bryant has given the noblest renditions of the Iliad and the Odyssey. And yet in the face of these great translations by the noble poets, I would still maintain that the Bible is the greatest translation in the English speech.

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And it is so because the Bible is the most rapturous book ever written, and because it is spoken in the dialect of the ground and of the sea and of the sky; and the ground and the sea and the sky can be put into universal tongues. There are not hidden meanings in them. They open their lips and babble like the brooks do; they lift up their voices and clamor like the seas do; they open their lips wide like the skies do. And then the translators of our King James version lived in the time when everybody talked poetry and eloquence; when men sailed the seas and fought their battles on the land and did their menial toil to the music of great reverberant speech.

And so, nights and mornings, these Elizabethan days did not lack pervasive music; and in men's work you could hear the pounding on battle drums, and in men's hearts was the lightning charge of a great storm. And that age undertook to translate God's great, winsome, glorious book; and they produced the noblest translation that was ever dreamed out. And it is not often that this King James rendition needs to be tampered with; but now and then there is a touch in the Greek speech or the Hebrew tongue which seems tinted like a flower and hath the ground odor on it; and then I always hold it to be permissible and desirable that the radiancy of the flowers and the smell of summer winds bathe us with their delight. And I have rendered, therefore, "*poiman ho kalos*"—"Christ is the beautiful Shepherd."

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If I were painting a picture of Jesus, I should not paint him as a King with a crown of gold and a garment of purple and a retinue and life guard. I wouldn't do that. That does not appeal to me. It may to others. I do not say that it is a cheap appeal. I simply say that to me it is not a magnetic appeal. Christ appeals to me when his arms are bare and browned with the sun; when his head is naked open to the light; when his tunic buttons at the shoulder; when his feet are touched with the burning soil and in his right hand a shepherd's crook and on his left shoulder one lost sheep. Now, when Christ comes so, he touches every fiber in my personality that hath music in it. I answer to him as the pine answers to the wind. There he stands bronzed, magnificent in might, crowned with love, sweet with comfort, infinite with tenderness. Then that Christ makes my heart ache, and if he wanted to he could with a lift of his hand and a look of his eye make my heart break.

And I would have him wear that shepherd's crook for scepter. When a man is at work that is a sign a man is kingly. When his hands are dirty with the soil and when his face is sweaty with the sunlight and the toil, then that man stands up regal. And what I would have you consider is that this Christ shepherd, this Man with help in his left arm, this Man with help in his brawny right hand, this Man with the springtime wonder of life in his eyes, this Man with summer wild

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smells at his heart, this Man has regality. He is what man ought to be. He does what a man ought to do. And when we find Christ so vested and so seen and so engaged, then a Hercules at his task, we know him not; and Atlas holding up his sky, we do not see. This man that comes to put his arm through the shield of the world and carry the earth into heaven, that is the man that ravishes our souls and lifts us to highest praise. And beside him they who thought themselves great have found they are very little. "The Beautiful Shepherd." And on the Bethlehem hills and out over the smooth rocks and down in all the dungeons of the deep billows of yellow canyons and out on Galilee's shore and across the green earth, this Christ, the Beautiful Shepherd, is coming to help the world. O, beloved, beloved, I want you to look at him! Is he not the Beautiful Shepherd?

He is the Beautiful Shepherd because he is the wisest coming after the witless. Some men take to smart folks, I am told. But here is the incredible wisdom of the world coming after the incredible folly. Anybody that knows anything about sheep knows that they are witless. They have not wisdom. They follow they know not what. At the sea cliff that hangs like a despairing hope over the boiling Atlantic on the Isle of Man just back of my mother's old home house, on that leaning, wicked, perilous cliff the sheep feed, and they might stop on the cliff and not go edging

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down where danger may be hiding, but they will not. And on a summer's day I have gone along this dangerous path where the bleating flock had come and gone, not called into danger, but going witlessly into danger. And it is a fact much known and pitifully known to people who take accurate account of the facts of this world, that men and women are silly like the silly sheep. A foolish shepherd can woo the foolish flock amiss. A wicked shepherd might woo the foolish sheep to death. No shepherd were better. We might as well leave the flock to the wild wind with death in its wicked hands. And Jesus never touched such elementary sadness in his words, I think, as when he said he had compassion on them because they were as sheep not having a shepherd. The wisdom of God come down to witless folk. Do you deny that people are silly? You don't; you have neighbors. You don't deny that? Could your neighbors deny that people are silly? They have you; they could not. But there are silly folk. I don't let on to be, but others are silly folk. I could stand here hours running and rehearse anecdotes of how wise people are sometimes silly. Ought there to be civil law? There ought. Ought there to be leadership to a government? There ought. Ought there to be a government? There ought. Ought there to be prisons for the bad? There ought. Ought there to be penitentiaries for anarchists? There ought. And for people whose morals are altogether gone amiss? There ought.

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Is the safety of good more benefit than the lewdness of evil? It is.

That is the verdict. That is the sort of governmental philosophy the world has been working at since making governments began. Long ago people knew that an unruled or a wrongly ruled world, that a government that had not powers, makes for the bad and not for the good, that the rights of good demand that there shall be in somebody's hand a sword and that the sword hand shall be loose and used—that is what it says. And you would think, therefore, that people who are versed in history, that people with the history of the ages before their faces—for history is not slow of talking and slow of tongue—you would think that people who have opportunities to make renderings of history would know that by how much in love with the present and the future they are and by how much they believe in the betterment of the world, by so much will they believe in the maintenance of law. And yet people stood on the day when the veterans went past—when these men, once young, went out where the battle flaunted, then these men with blood dripping from their wounds like wounded eagles fought until with the sheer desperation of patriotism on them they washed rebellion into the sea—and the anarchists when they saw the remnant of those battle days, hissed, hissed!

We are foolish folk. This country is not run for anarchists. This country is not run for an

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anarchist and her paramour. It is run for decent folks yet. And yet the marvel is that reputable people sit still and keep silent and let people like this attempt to circumvent the glory of their soul. I tell you, men and women, the world has been too long a-growing this country that is the free-man's bliss and the poor man's paradise, too long a-growing it to let people who haven't anything to lose and everything to gain by the despoiling of the world do anything they wish. We are foolish. I could argue that for a week; but it is the first of the week and I won't. But I am giving this one illustration to suggest we are a witless folk. And that is not other than a symptom, just a symptom. And the wisest of heaven came to the witless of earth. What do you call that? I call that Beautiful—Beautiful! "The Beautiful Shepherd." Now, people have brains enough if they would just use them. My observation of people is that people are pretty smart. The trouble with most folks is not brainlessness, not at all. It is characterlessness. The Good Shepherd might say to people: "I have given you brains; use them. Be not indolent with the intelligence you possess." He might say that, and let us be. But he comes to witlessness. O Beautiful Shepherd, come over to my house and sit!

Then he is the Beautiful Shepherd because he goes to hunt up the lost sheep. This matter of getting lost, you know, that is our business. No, neighbors, that is God's business. We have lost

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ourselves, I don't forget that; but it is his business. He is looking after the sheep. He is out watching for the lost. He cares about the lost lamb of the fold gone wrong, and gone astray. He cares. There is a story in one of Bret Harte's books to this effect: A little laddie and his sister in Kansas wrote to their brother, a gold miner of the Sierra slopes, saying: "Dear Tom, hurry up and send some money, because if you don't, Pickins won't keep us no more. Hurry up and send money. Your lovin' brother." And then this man wrote: "Look out for me any day. Any day you may see me coming with five white horses and a coachman. Look out for me any day." And so the little lad and his sister, as the story runs, used to go out to the little wayside station of the Kansas Pacific Railroad and watch every train, and watch every train, and watch. Every train, the little lad and his sister were there; and then by and by to the train came a little lad and not sister; and she was sick in the little room over at Pickins'. Every day down to the train the lean-faced and ill-dressed laddie came, standing close to the step eagerly eyeing everybody who came down, wondering it it wasn't the man coming with the five white horses and the driver. And the little girl was growing thin and weak, and the pink on her cheek was gone, but only for a little while, and each time as the brother came in she would weakly call, "Did he come?" And one time when the storm was on and the snow falling, and the wind

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blowing, and the train stopped; and a man got off the train and there was the little face. "Be you the man?" And it was he.

What a pitiful thing it is to have somebody out watching, watching, and nobody coming. But listen a little. Don't you think it is a pitiful thing to have a great Body out watching, watching, watching for us and us not coming? And the Beautiful Shepherd's commanding loveliness I take to be this, that when we will not hunt him up, he hunts us out. He will not stay at the door of the house beckoning and calling. He does both. Calling out unto the sheep, "Whither going?" Calling out into the daylight, "Whither going?" Calling out in the storm, "Whither going?" Calling out: "Here is the Shepherd of the fold. I am the Shepherd of the fold." Don't have to find him; he is calling out into the storm, in the darkness, out into the wilderness, calling forever. O, Beautiful Shepherd, come on and see my door and come in! The Beautiful Shepherd—if he hadn't come looking us up, we had never been found. Our inclinations for good haven't been enough to force us out of where we want to be to where we ought to be. And the Beautiful Shepherd comes like the south wind comes and woos all the flowers awake and sings to every grave of winter, "Open, resurrection is here." So the Beautiful Shepherd doeth. And I miss my reading of this company's face and heart if there are not those here to whom the Beautiful Shep-

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herd came and took them in his arms of kindness and love and brought them back to the purity of a good life. "The Beautiful Shepherd."

And then he is the Beautiful Shepherd because he is the Best come to the worst. If you think human nature needs nothing but just a kind of certificate of character, you don't know; you don't. Human nature isn't needing a certificate of character; human nature needs to be made good. That is what it needs. Certificates won't do. Did you ever have some one come to your house and want you to write a certificate for a book; to say how good a book it was, and no one could keep house without it, no one should keep house without it, and every one should buy the book? I have had from ten to twelve at me in one week about a matter of that kind. You have had the like I shouldn't wonder. You know all about that sort of thing. Will a certificate that a bad book is good make a bad book good? No, it won't. It is some people's way of trying it, but it won't. Will a little bit of face paint on a homely face make it pretty? No, it won't. It won't do the job. It is a foolish man that does not know when a woman's face is painted. What is wrong with human nature? You say, "You don't have confidence in it." No, that is not it. What is wrong with human nature? What is wrong with nature is that it is lost, it is bad.

There is a man less than a million miles from here who is ranting about how good human na-

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ture is if we only trust it. If we only trust people—how very good they are if we only trust them! And that same man has violated the most sacred tenets of the Decalogue. He has ruined the fairest institution God has planted in the world. That, and then the man has the effrontery to go through the land and deliver what he chooses to call an apostolate to the effect that everybody is good. Christ didn't think that. Christ took the pains to come from heaven, to come to earth because the worst needed the Best. O, beloved, beloved, that is what will regenerate the world! It is the Best coming to the worst.

And I call him the Beautiful Shepherd because he is come with the intent to make the bad good. And I appeal to the honest hearts of this congregation to answer whether or not you need a certificate of character or whether you need a character that is worthy of a certificate. You cannot laud people into goodness. You cannot do that. You cannot take people and venerate them into goodness. And Jesus came, the Beautiful Shepherd came, from his throne in paradise and died for our infirmity with the purpose of making us good. Now, some of the meanest people in the world can be made into the best people in the world. The best people are not the people who are born the best and fight the least. The best people have to do the biggest fighting. O Beautiful Shepherd, hear me and come over and help me in my battle? And he will.

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He is the Beautiful Shepherd because he takes us all as we are. I was down at the stockyards the other day, standing along the road, when a flock of ill-assorted sheep came wandering out. And I looked at them. They didn't strike me as being really reputable members of the sheep family, though I am not a sheep man. It was such a vagabond, tatterdemalion crew of sheep—stunted sheep, ill clad sheep, lean sheep; not one well kept, not one. I said as a friend of mine came along, "What is this?" He said, "These are the 'cast-offs.'" O, the "cast-offs"! And I stood watching them come by, and I forgot about the sheep; I forgot the inspector had been among them, and said, "These are not worthy." But the thing I remembered and didn't forget, and haven't forgotten, is that this band of cast-off sheep is the flock of sheep that nobody wanted; and that is where I belong. And the beauty of the Beautiful Shepherd is that he comes out and loves all that company that nobody else loves. When children are good anybody who has a heart will like them; but when children are good for nothing, then it is a chore to like them. When a boy is bright and athletic and natty and semi-reputable, it is no chore to love him; but when he is mean, sneaking, and thieving, and drunken and has the cigarette habit and belongs in the workhouse or reformatory gang, who is going to love him then? I don't know. I will not answer for that. Maybe you won't, maybe I won't; but if he has a mother,

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she will. She will love him, she will answer for him, she will plead for him, she will bring things to bear for him, she will say, "He will do better if he has another chance!" She will hold him to her heart. There are not many mothers who, even if their sons are executed as the direst penalty of the law, won't get their coffins and weep over their blue faces and remember when they were laddies.

But what I am telling this company is that the Beautiful Shepherd never loses interest in the worst of us, or the drunken of us, or the shameless of us, or the despairing of us, or the wrecked of us. An Apollo people will admire; but the drunkard in the ditch with the flies gathering on him and the dirt of the ditch in which he is on him, who will esteem him? I will tell you who. The Beautiful Shepherd will. If he were here, he would go down and take him up in his arms and take him away and whisper in his dull ear, "You may be a man if you try."

Now, men and women, this is a Beautiful Shepherd that has a heart big enough for us all. It wouldn't be a strange thing if there were some bad man in this house. There is nobody too good. Not you nor the preacher, none too good. It wouldn't be a strange thing if there were a bad woman in this house to-night. None of us too good. But the message I bring from the Beautiful Shepherd's lips is, However bad you are he has not lost interest in you, and however lost he

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has not lost you. And he is out watching the flock, "the cast-offs," and he wants every one in his fold and he says, "There shall be one fold and one Shepherd." May we be in the fold and may the Beautiful Shepherd lead us over there to-night. Amen.

PRAYER

O Lord Christ, we thank thee for thy leadings and thy beauty. Abandon none of us; endure us yet a little longer; and better than all, love us and trust us and help us, and may we love and trust thee from to-night forward, for Christ's sake.

IV

THE CITY OF GOD

“The city of God.”—Psalm 46. 4.

THE city of God. Where is the city of God? The city of man we know. We know its name; we have read its signs, we have done business over its counters, we have drawn checks on its banks, we have boarded its street cars, we have entered its station, we have tramped its streets looking for work, we have dug foundations for its houses, we have seen its niggardliness, its poverty, its impotency, its diabolism. And then, thank God, we have seen its virtue and its kindness and its philanthropy and its houses builded to the worship of God. We have elbowed our way along its crowded thoroughfares, we have been jostled in its public places, we have seen its struggles, we have watched its skyscrapers, we have noted the digging of their deep foundations, we have seen the building of its walls, we have noted its locomotives steaming into the stations, we have watched the barges ride at the wharves, we have seen its people, dull-eyed with drunkenness and dissipation, we have heard its laughter of drunken ribaldry and jest, we have marked its abandon of lust, we have noted its parsimony and

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we have heard the good-natured laughing of the throng; we have watched the faces of the multitude, we have seen the crowd of happy folks—father, mother, brother, and sister on the front porches on summer evenings when the sun has set; we have heard the sound of singing, we have heard the sound of the city's lute and harp, we have heard the dull crouch of its ten thousand feet; we have felt the beating of its heart like hot, fevered billows; we have seen the glaring of its wild, weary eyes; we have seen it holding its head in pain, we have seen its frenzy and its faith, we have seen its colossal industry—O the city of man! We know the city of man. We have seen the smoke of its factories, making a cloud God hath not made. We have seen the bulging out of its mighty infamies, we have seen its lashing to and fro like a drunken ship on a drunken sea. The city of man—we know it! We have seen its schoolhouses and been educated in them; we have seen its kindnesses and been helped by them. We have seen its smile and felt and saw the graciousness of the coming of its spring. And then, again, we have felt the dull crush and infamy of pain when the wicked city, with a leer in its eyes, has taken the hand held out for bounty and has crushed the bones to a pulp. The city of man we know—we know its name. The city of man is called London, the city of man is called Edinburgh, the city of man is called Paris, the city of man is called Constantinople, the city of man is

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called Yokohama, the city of man is called New York, the city of man is called Chicago.

The city of man is like a thief that goes under many aliases, and, whatever name it wears, we know the city of man. We dare not be careless with it, we dare not overlook it. The city of man spreads its inhabitants out to the skyline. The city of man is feverish and lecherous, is good and gracious. The city of man—O, it is so big, so vastly spacious, so lonely, so hardening. All sorts of things are in the city of man—smiles, tears, and tender face that is like a mother's face; and hard face, which is like the face of winter; and fierce face, which is like a marauder with his dagger digging deep and hard.

O city of man, we have dwelt in you; we know the names of your streets; we have walked your wearisome blocks; we have entered your houses of trade and we know your fun and your pathos. O the city of man!

We know the city of man, we know where it lives, and we know the name of the city of man—but—the city of God—where is that? The city of God—where's that? The smoke that clouds the plain and hangs its curtain over the city of man, and the chimneys that run up clean to the blue skies, they are from the city of man; and the locomotives that scream, they are from the city of man; and the frenzy of riots along the streets is in the city of man. But did I read in the book "the city of God"? We haven't seen

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it. We haven't seen its spires nor its foundations, nor its streets, nor its glory, nor its peace, nor its passion, nor its powers, nor its resurrection. O the city of man! You are so near; but the city of God, where are you? And when we see the one we see not the other. The city of man!

And I wonder whether or not the city of man could be adjacent to the city of God: and I wonder if the city of God is a myth, and if the city of man is a fact; and I wonder if man has a town and God has no capital; and I wonder if man can congregate in great, seething companies, but if God has a lonesome time in a lonesome land. What did I read you? Listen, you remember: "The City of God." Now, there are three men that I think had more of the passion of the city magnetizing every fiber of their spirit than any other men belonging to the biographies of the world. One of them was Socrates, and when they asked him to go into the country he said, "There are no men there." Socrates was an arguer. He was cut out to be a lawyer, but fell from grace and got to be a philosopher. And the lawyers have to argue. I have known them to argue with their wives—temporarily. They don't often do it—never do it twice—but they tried. Socrates had to have somebody to argue with; and he stayed around where folks were get-at-able and arguefiable; and he loved the city and would not go out and watch the green of the country. He would not have cared if you had said, "Socrates,

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the lilacs are in bloom.” He would have said: “What’s that to me? Show me a man to argue with.” He would have loved Chicago, but he would have gotten tired because the blocks in Chicago are so long; and the blocks in Athens were little bits of things—jokes. They never had more than twenty thousand native population in Athens, anyhow. And the city instinct was on Socrates and he loved the city of man, and he was lonesome in dying, because in dying he had to leave the city of man and move out to the city of the dead. And then there was another man—a quite unadjacent neighbor in time—his name was Charles Lamb. And you couldn’t subtract Charles Lamb from London to save your life. Quaint “Elia,” with pale face, stooped shoulders, and stuttering speech, Elia, whose words bubbled up and the bubbles broke on his lips—you couldn’t scare him out of London. I may be mistaken, but I think I have met Charles Lamb, a ghost along Fleet street and the Strand, fingering with ghostly fingers some books he used to finger at and looking with his eager eyes at some shelves he used to look at. And you cannot subtract Charles Lamb from London city; he loved that city of man. And there was another man, great of bulk and bold of walk, and stamping of feet and gusty of speech, and pockmarked of face and huge of brain and heart. Lexicographer Johnson was his name; and he used to stumble along the streets with his huge body swaying; and he loved the

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city, and you could hardly induce him to leave. Once in a while he would go out, but would fairly run back. The love of the city of man was on him.

And the love of the city of man is the love of folks. People who love the city, though they never stop to make psychological analysis of it, love people; for the love of the city is the love of people. They want to see the dirty hands of the multitude, and they want to see the crushing throng of the streets, and they want to get their toes stepped on, and they want to go along and be jammed in between folks; they want to go through the streets and see the city folks. They love to see the women with their new rigging, and the men with their old rigging. They like to see people with their things on that they have had a long time, and the people with their things on they just got last night to wear to-day. They love folks. And I suppose the two best exponents of city life are Victor Hugo and Charles Dickens. Charles Dickens could have written an autobiography of the city. He loved it: its slums, its Tiny Tims, its Little Dorrits, and its dirt, its lurking smokes—he loved the town. Where are you going, Charles Dickens? He would say, “Where but to the town.” Where have you been, Charles Dickens? And his answer, “Where but in the town.” And his books are exponential of the city. It may be that Balzac may be added to the list; I cannot altogether say.

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His study was humanity; and he lived where people crowded on him, and from his garret window looked out on the crowded thoroughfares of a metropolis. And Hugo had the city in his blood; and when his hot blood boiled it was the city boiling in him. And this man Hugo one time wrote a story of the city, but he didn't call it a biography of the city. He called it "Les Misérables"—people housed in the gutters, and the people palaced in the cellars, and the people lying shivering cold on the pavements, and the little Gaveroche that climbed into the wooden elephant on the street with its raggedness of exterior and interior, to court a little slumber for his leaden eyes. And this city man wrote "Les Misérables." O Hugo, what are you writing? And he said, "The city's story." What's the name of the book? And his tears dropped down into the empty bottle, and he used his tears for ink and dipped his pen into this ink and scrawled clean across the book and wrote "Les Misérables," "Les Misérables." After all, maybe—I don't say it, I say maybe—the best thing to do with the city is to do what Jesus did—weep over it. He saw the city and wept over it, and said, "How often did I want you, but you didn't want me!" Do you see his arms empty? And he said, "How often did I call you and you would not listen!"

The city of man, where is it? Here. The city of man, where is it? In Illinois, along the lake. The city of man, where is it? In Indiana, at the

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center of the State. The city of man, where is it? Along the fringes of the calm Pacific; San Francisco is its name. The city of man, where is it? The port of entry for the western world Columbus found—New York. The city of man! What about that other? I thought I heard the preacher read about the city of God. And has God a town? Likely enough. And has God a capital? Maybe so. And has God got folks of his own? O, I shouldn't wonder if he has. And has God got a building lighted, not with electric lights, but with day dawns and day noons? Well, I shouldn't wonder. But, singer, singer, you man who wrote this poem men call a psalm, what did you see? "Hush! hush! I saw the city of God!" Did you? I wish we could have a seat beside him and look, don't you? I wish we could borrow his spectacles, don't you? City of God! I wonder how he saw it? Maybe he saw it in a mirage; maybe it flared like a dancing flame; maybe it spurted against the sky, as I have seen on the horizon of Utah, the unmistakable, far-off places of distant mountains. Maybe it was like a mirage of the mountains; maybe it was like a bank of fog, which, when you look, you don't know whether it is a bank of fog or the coast line you sail to. When we have been away from home and were sailing back to good and blest America, and sat on the ship's prow and watched to see the fog banks of America and home; and out of the fog banks into the land of liberty and under the stars and stripes, I have

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leaned on my elbow on the bulwarks of the ship and watched and watched, and my heart would shout to my heart in echo: "Land ahead! America!" And then I would lean and lean to watch the coming of the stars and stripes, and I couldn't tell whether it was land or fog. Maybe that was how this old poet saw the city of God. Sometimes in London, while London lies wrapped about by an impenetrable fog, the dome of Saint Paul's is smiled on by the sun, and underneath the dome the temple, and underneath the temple the organ, and by the organ the player, and by the player the choir, and in the aisle the congregation. Did you see the temple? Maybe. O, poet, I wonder if you barely saw the spires of the city of God and guessed at the rest.

It isn't any odds, to tell the truth—only a curious question, but not much odds. This poet told us the name, that's the discovery. Give us the name, that's what we want. You tell me the name of America and I will hunt the continent until I die. Give us the name, that is what we are after. The name that makes us dream, that's the name we need.

Did you ever see Ruth—that frail, girlish figure, in the harvest field, when the harvesters have gone past and she is picking up heads of wheat—Ruth, that one woman we know about who liked her mother-in-law? Let nobody forget her—Ruth, with her woman's arms full of wheat heads; so, now, if when you think of Ruth you

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don't dream, I shouldn't like your thinker; I shouldn't want it as a gift, with deference to you. I think about that girl and wish I were an artist—I'd paint her, with her dusky face and her hands work-scarred and her eyes tear-dimmed, working for somebody. She makes you dream. You don't have to see Ruth. All you need to know is the name.

There is the word "prairie." You have crossed it, and you say, "I have traveled a whole day across the prairie." You have not pronounced that word right—it is prai-rie. Once you get the prai-rie into your blood, as I have—I have sniffed the prairie winds and loved the prairie widelands and have been delighted beyond words with the billowing of the chrysophrase, and when you say "prai-rie" it sets my blood dancing like a brook, and after you say that word, then I begin to dream. That is the big thing, something to make you dream. You don't need to see things. That is the least necessity. Blind folks get on well. They don't need to see with these dull eyes, these big eyes or eyeballs. They see without staring. They have eyeballs of the soul. There is Dante's face. How it makes you dream! Those tight-drawn lips, tight as a bowstring, those eyes that are too hot to weep and too angry to mourn.

I have heard intermezzos on the organ that break and dream and stutter as of storms in inclement weather. I have heard intermezzos that dreamed for me.

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It is not in itself what the poet saw. He gave us the phrase, "the city of God." We never have forgotten it; we couldn't. It is like a bird's note heard in the woods; you never heard the note before and may never again. It may be the vanishing voice of a vesper sparrow. You heard it, that is all. The city of God—Poet, what did you say? And he says: "The city of God." And he is busy. What is the poet doing? He is busy setting that phrase to music. "The city of God." And, to tell you the truth, as becometh the preacher, that phrase has gotten into everybody's blood that has red blood. Congealed blood it hasn't gotten hold of, but hot blood, it has. It got hold of the writer of Hebrews, and he said: "Mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem." And it got hold of Saint Augustine, and he talked about the City of God and wrote a book, and that phrase fired his heart until it was like to the conflagration of a great city. Bernard of Cluny wrote about "The city of God."

"Jerusalem the golden
With milk and honey blest.
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice oppressed.
I know not, O, I know not, ——"

You shall read it out; it is in the Hymnal; a long sea wave of heavenly music. And in Pilgrim's Progress, when the Pilgrim had gone a long journey and was barred out from every

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other where, coming from the City of Destruction, on a morning they let him look and see "The city of God." O, hearts, hearts, that know the city of man, I thought maybe you'd like to take one morning to take a look at the city of God. I thought maybe your feet were so tired you would like to walk for a half an hour on the streets of the city of God. I thought maybe your eyes were so weary weeping you'd like to turn them on the sky and the temple contour of the city of God.

The city of God is populous. There are hosts of people there. No lonesome place, no land of the lonesome-hearted; no place for the hermit, thank God. Hosts of people there. Next door neighbors in plenty there. God won't keep a lonesome place. If he has a prairie, he sows it to flowers so that when he comes through he won't be lonesome; when he has a sky he studs it with stars so that he won't be lonesome; and when he has a city he fills it with children so that when he walks there it won't be lonesome; and when he has an earth God puts his people there so he won't be lonesome. And the city of God. O, it is so populous—so many people, and when you go there all the crowded city streets of Paris and of London and of the earth will seem as if they were emptied by a plague compared with the multitudes of the city of God. Some people think that the city of God is to be a sparsely populated place and the city of the devil a populous place.

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But I thank my God this morning that when we get home to heaven, if we do, we will find the city of God such a crowded place it will take the breadth of the universe to hold it.

And this city of God? It stretches from star to star and from sun to sun; and it stretches as deep as the rhythm of the great sea and as high as the rhythm of the stars; and it is full of folks. Thank God, we are not going to a deserted city, but to the great metropolis—the city of God.

And the city of God is clean. There entereth into it—hear this; this is what entereth—the poet saw; his name was John; and the psalmist poet gave us the name, and John saw the place—a hundred and forty and four thousand. How many more, John? “Thousands of thousands,” and all of them clean; for, hear him: “There shall in no wise enter into it anything that maketh a lie.” John, can’t fishermen get in? John, honestly, can’t fishermen get in? And he said: “I am in,” so that fishermen can get in. And all clean? And he said: “For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters,” and within “clean, white garments.” Why? Because they have white hearts. It is no use in heaven to wear white garments unless you have white hearts; for there the heart will make the garment foul itself. The garment takes color from the heart. Clean—O, my heart! are you journeying toward the city of God? Heart, clean every room, wash it white with the blood of Christ

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and keep all cleanness in; for if thou wouldst be a candidate for the citizenship of the city of God thou must be white like the snows that wreath their drifted skeins about the mountain crests. Clean, thank God! And within the city of God is the city of man. I am glad that it is so.

Now, Christ is so reticent—you must have noticed that—he never told us much, but he told us the thing we sorely needed to know. He said: “I am going to prepare a house for you”; and then John took us out on a sea island and said, “Look at the house, look at the house.” It is garnished with all manner of precious stones, jasper, and jacinth, and beryl, and chalcedony, and emerald; and the streets are gold, like transparent glass, and the gates are solitary pearls, and the foundations are rapture, and the place is song. What is it? It is home. Everybody will have his home there; nobody will live in flats. Aren’t you glad? You won’t have to go and squint and look at the card to see who lives up yonder. The other day I went to call on somebody I wanted to call on; I risked my life and I put my hand to the button and my ear to the tube, and pretty soon a woman’s voice came down the stairway—not through the tube, mind you, but down the stairway. “What do you want? Well, it is a curious thing to me that people will be always ringing the wrong bell. No, she isn’t here.” I writhed. You know I left. She couldn’t see me. She would have had to look

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quickly to see me. She was no member of mine. I tell you, she couldn't come into my church on suspicion. But, mark you, these flats are in the city of man; but we can have our solitary house in the city of God. Everybody can have his own house, and Jesus said: "I go to prepare a house for you." It is a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Thank God! And it is going to be our own house.

The city of God, who will be there? Knock at the door, son, and the door will be opened by a shining angel and you will go in, and will say: "Why, mother, you here!" It will be your mother. O, won't that be sweet, to have your mother for a portress at the gate of the city of God? You will say: "I thought some seraph was at the gate." You couldn't know; it was some angel, and it will be your mother, and you will say when you kiss her lips: "Why, mother, you here?" And she, "I am here, waiting for you." And maybe when you knock at the door, daughter, you will say: "Why father, you here?" "Yes, daughter, here waiting for you." And maybe, you father, you mother, when you knock at the gate a winsome, wee angel, with wide-open sweet eyes, will look at you tearless and smiling. Baby hands, but big enough to open the gate of heaven. Father in heaven, baby in heaven, and, beyond all, He will be there. Who? Don't you know?

In another place in the Book it says, "the city of the living God." What is that? "The city of

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the living God, the new Jerusalem." And you know that the old poet said, the city of God; and John looked and saw the "city of the living God." He will be there. Knock at the door and you won't be half done knocking when the door will be opened and you will say: "O, Christ, you here?" And he will say, "Of course." "You there, blessed Master?" "Dear heart, of course I am here." And he will lean over and kiss you on the forehead and tell you the "new name" and put on your brow a crown, and you and he will go chanting up the streets and he will be singing "Hallelujah" and you will be singing, "Now unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own precious blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory and honor, majesty and dominion," and all the angels shout the song, in mighty antiphon, "Honor and majesty and dominion." "Now unto him that loved us!" And above you shall smile the face of the sweet Christ. Beloved, beloved, let's not miss being citizens of the city of God.

And the door is open. And I will thank my God for this, that there are twelve gates to the city of God, three on every side, so there is always an open door to heaven on your side of the city, and you won't have to walk around to get it. They are there, all open, and there is one straight in front of your house; and if your eyes are blind with weeping and you can't see, you will stumble

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not against the wall, but through the gate that is open; and somebody will say, "Here's your gate."

The city of God! I see its blue sky of sapphire, and I see its splendid burning blue amethyst, and I see its strange grass-green chrysoprasus, and I see its smoky topaz—well, give place to this other glory.

I see Him at the gate. The city of God, the New Jerusalem, the city of the living God. O, gate, swing open; I am running for the gate. Let me not miss coming in to meet the living God!

PRAYER

Lord God, help all of us this morning to get in love with the city of God, for Christ's sake.

V

SCIENCE AND CHRISTIANITY NOT ENEMIES, BUT FRIENDS

“And oppositions of science falsely so called.”—
Timothy 6. 20

GENUINE Christianity has no quarrel with science, and genuine science has no quarrel with Christianity. And my contention shall be that up to date every accredited fact of science is not only not antagonistic to Christianity, but is in total agreement with Christianity. And my justification—if any justification were required—for this inquiry is that not a few people, even persons of culture and reading, because there has been much babble and the sound of many voices, and some of them very clarion, have in their hearts some settled fear lest Christianity and science are enemies. This morning, then, as God may help me, I do not bring an evangel, but I raise a question, and summon those who are competent to make reply. Now, science is rigidly defined as “systematized truth or fact.” It is the arrangement in relation of things that have been discovered to be indubitably true.

This definition of science it is essential we keep in mind if we are to think lucidly and to pur-

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pose on the matters now in hand. Science is the correlation of knowledge in the universe and not the correlation of suppositions.

Now, a science is a clansman, and Christianity is a clansman. And when I say that Christianity and science are both clansmen I do not slur them. I do not purpose in my deepest intent to asperse their character; but I do suggest that, being clansmen, their veins are not filled with water, but with blood, and it is a prerogative of a clansman to love and a prerogative of a clansman to stand for the thing he loves or the person he loves or the land he loves. And one of the most assured heresies ever prevalent is the assumption or supposition that science is more candid than Christianity.

I was reading this week, by the kindness of a brother, one of Crockett's novels. I always read every one of them I can borrow, being of economical turn, and if this congregation will take this suggestion and wants the preacher to be intelligent, it will lend him books. I read Crockett because he is much of a man, by which I mean that he has muscularity and tenderness. I mean that while Crockett is around—well, there is liable to be plenty of ruction and killing. There is a man around who knows the sternest and does the sternest while he is at it. And all books like that qualify a man in both body and soul. His book is not only tragical, but truthful. It is like reading out of Scotch annals of the deepest dye,

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and the thing which impresses you back there is the strenuosity of that tidal wave of the old Scotch clannish life.

Now, science is a clansman. Whenever science says it is colorless in its intention, that it has no bias, that it has no strong leanings which color the conclusions to which it comes, science misconceives itself or misrepresents itself, or both. Because, thank God, scientists are men, and men have blood in the heart, and blood pumped into the veins, and blood pumped into the brain, and all things human are colored with human attributes. Now, Christianity is a clansman. It has its preferences; it has its loves; it has superior fealty to its divine Head. Christianity is not a stalagmite which stands and lets the winds whistle past it, but it is a warrior who fights and, on occasions, hammers with the cross.

I am saying nothing against science. The scientist's business is to find the truth and tell it. That is a very gracious business; it is a divine business. It is what God is at. It is what God is an expert in, getting at the truth and telling it. And, all things considered, I assume that the honest intent of science is to honestly inquire for truth and honestly make exposition of the truth inquired for. But let science never forget that it has its weakness as well as its strength. Because a man is a scientist is not reason to assume that he has no blood in his veins. He is a clansman, and any man who has kept track of and inter-

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ested himself in scientific questions or scientific belligerencies knows that science fought till its veins were bleeding and its knuckles broken for the things for which it thought it had a right to contend.

Now, science has a right to inquire after truth, and science has a right to be honestly heard when it tells the truth; but science must not arrogantly assert when it dreams a strange dream that all the people ought to receive that vagrant dream as if it were scientific.

I shall speak a few words concerning Huxley. Huxley I esteem to be one of the most noted scientists that ever lived. But nevertheless he was truly a man while he was truly a scientist. He was an Englishman, which is another way of saying that he liked to fight as well as he liked to breathe, because the English people are filled with pugnacity, with the result that they hammered a way for freedom clean across the world. And Huxley fought for science. He was, if you will, the d'Artagnan of the three scientific musketeers of his time. There were Darwin and Huxley and Tyndall; and Huxley stood out on the edge a little and leaned with his scientific shillalah in his hand and said, "Arrah there!" Huxley was a clansman. He had a right to believe in the thing for which he contended, but he had no right to assume that in his findings he was absolutely clement to all truth, and others who antagonized him were inclement to truth. And it ought to

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be remembered that he was English, and by how much he was English he was that much a man. Huxley was a clansman to the sinew and to the bone, and I am here at this particular moment to underscore the proposition that a scientist is a clansman, and a clansman is a man who may be wrong, and who is not an absolute authority to say that some things are true.

Mr. Huxley one time found somewhat which by the ship *Challenger*, as I remember, was dredged from the bottom of the sea; and he claimed that this somewhat was the place where life began; this was the lowest point through which life ran, and Mr. Huxley, with that delightful conceit of his and with his superb trust in himself, immediately received the somewhat with open arms and gave the baby a name, "Bathybius." When they came to look the matter up more accurately, it was found to be only a low form of life at the bottom of the sea and was the connecting link to nothing whatever; and then Mr. Huxley said he had to "eat his leek," which he did, very daintily. When he gave the leek for others to eat it was a large and corpulent onion; but when he ate his leek it was mild and strangely lacked even the onion breath. I am not blaming Huxley at this particular juncture. But I am saying that Mr. Huxley said a thing he didn't like to take back. A zealous scientist is not more candid than the rest of mankind.

Now, Christianity is a clansman. Christianity

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has a truth. That is, it thinks it has truth, and is willing to die for that truth; and Christianity stands for its truths as science does for its truths. And I affirm that Christianity is righteously a clansman. If Christianity antagonized Mr. Huxley and his scientific confreres, they were in large regard to blame, because they assumed to know too much and they were vituperative with Christianity. It never occurred to these scientists, Huxley, Tyndall, and Spencer, that they could be mistaken. Darwin was of more open mind. Mr. Spencer talked about the unknowable, which was God. And the letter which Charles Kingsley wrote to Mr. Huxley when Mr. Huxley's child died—one of those letters which only a Christian man could write, redolent with tears and sympathy—and the reply of Mr. Huxley I have read and leaned my forehead down to the page and wept like a little child. It is so hopeless, so sunless, so skyless, so utterly opaque. Their unknowableness was so knowing and so dogmatic.

And it is not given to all of us to discriminate between the truth a man has and the error a man has. And while these scientists were trying (as this group named certainly was) to hammer God off the world and to push him off his own doorstep, certain men stood and fought for those things they knew to be true. Some people, with regard to the Bible, hold that it is verbally inspired; every word God indited, as though he

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had indited it to an amanuensis who made no mistake—every dot of the “i,” every special phrasing, and the like. All such attitudes toward inspiration infinitely weaken the doctrine of inspiration; but when anybody arises who says that the Bible is inspired only as other books are inspired, as Shakespeare was inspired and Plato was inspired, then I call these people to witness that Christianity must stand with its last breath against that supposition.

This book is inspired as no other book besides is inspired. But we have no call to fight for things that are uncertain and things that are not vital. So science is a clansman and Christianity is a clansman. Clansmanship is good. Clansmanship, by how much it is good, is liable to blunder. Neither is infallible. So that what I obtrude on your thinking this moment is that Christianity better not slur scientific attitude and science had better not slur Christianity. And my contention at this hour is that there is not one thing found out about the universe of matter or the universe of man—for there are two universes, the universe of matter and the universe of man, the universe that is insensate and hath no heart to break, and the universe of the thinking brain and the aching conscience and the breaking heart—not one discovered scientific fact which militates against Christianity. Christianity wants the truth. All the truth that there is came from God; and the God of theology is the God of science; and the

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God of chemistry is the God of theology; and the God of astronomy is the God of theology.

And He who sent the morning star up on its tower and bade it watch forever, and He who with his own hands set up the cross upon the hill and crimsoned it with blood from his own heart,—He who set the stars and He who holds the cross, are the same. I distinctly affirm that no wise custodian of Christianity has any fear of science. Its hand reaches to science, and hands of science reach to it. But what I am urging is that pseudo science will contradict Christianity and pseudo Christianity will contradict science. All I am asking is this—What does the truth say? It is the truth we want. God made all things. We are glad he made them, and we think he made them right. God created woman's love—we are not disturbed by that strange charm and alchemy. God created man with such strange might that sometimes they bewilder God. We are not alarmed how he made them.

The facts of science do not militate against Christianity one iota—that is my contention.

There is the fact of gravitation, the most amazing and tremendous single exhibit of the might of the human brain that has ever been given to man. Understand what I say—the most amazing single exhibit of the capability of the human brain is the discovery of the law of gravitation by Isaac Newton. Nothing the world to his day had grappled with compared with it in immensity.

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When I see Newton, bare-handed, bare-armed, man-handed, man-armed, going to wrestle the universe down, it amazes me. It makes the blood leap to my cheek. It makes me so proud of the race of which I am. He was a part of the race to which I belong. When I see that man undertake with the naked strength of his arm to throw nature down and take her secret, plaudits leap to my lips. There is the law of gravitation. The method is allowedly and wholly of God. Is Christianity afraid of it? No. Christianity is in love with it. God created the universe and had good right to create it as he would. Until we know about things it is best to be silent in criticism of them, though the less we know about things the easier we talk about them. Some talk as if God were opposed to the law of gravitation. They bow God out of his own premises, saying, "You did well for the younger time, but now we do not need you any more." How does the locomotive engineer put on steam? Well, by pulling the lever. Now, we have got to have room to pull the lever. How did you let the steam on? No human intelligence needed—just the lever? No, you have got to have a hand, an arm, a man. Natural law explains naturally. That is the way things are done, that is all. Do you do away with the man who did them? Natural law is God's economy of force. He sends a sun through the universe. It never gets lost. It never staggers. Its light does not burn out. No-

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body knows how its lights are kept up. Nobody knows how its fires are kept up. God has the secret and keeps it.

Nobody knows about these things. But we know that through the universe the sun leaps on and changes position 180,000,000 miles in its journey, but always comes back to the same place in its journey and varies not a second, not a breadth of one poor hair. Who did it? You say, "Natural law did it." No, friends, God did it through natural law. You say the tides are governed through natural law. The moon comes around to other folks than lovers. The moon comes around and woos the waves of the seas, and the waves call: "Tarry, for we come. We love thee, we wait for thee." And the moon smiles and goes on its journey, and the tired ocean throws up its arms and says, "We will be wooed of the moon no more." It is natural law, is it? Yes, and it is God's law likewise. A big business man is a man that has brains enough to have his business in such fine running order that he can go off and leave it. The little chaps think they cannot leave a minute. The financial genius is the chap who knows how to organize his business so that he can go away for a month or a year and the business still goes on. God sets his business in order so he can continue it, and what we mean by natural law is that God sets things in motion and runs them and may go off and leave

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them and doesn't have to stay. God is not confined to his machine, but sits in the pilot house of a universe and tells the pilot how to guide.

There are the words "heredity" and "environment," and many people, when they hear those two words, throw up their hands and say, "Take all I have." They think of "heredity" as something that is fixed and undisputed. Now, brothers and sisters, I have not time to argue. All I say this moment is that the first statement of the doctrine of heredity ever made was made in the Ten Commandments. Now, God said something about heredity. Why? Because he manufactured it. Who made it? God. And in the Ten Commandments the statement of heredity is this: "For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation."

This is the statement of the doctrine of heredity—that poisoned blood will tell on descendants; that you can't be mean alone; that you can't be vile in life without tincturing the lives of your children; and when I hear people get up and talk as if science had first directed attention to this it makes me laugh out loud.

Evolution? I will speak about it. I will not state my own attitude toward it save as I state the Christian attitude toward it. Christianity does not care one thread about evolution one way or the other. Why not? Because God made

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things, and we are not intimately concerned how he made them. The first creative theory of the world was that God spoke and things were done like a flash of light. He created everything by saying: "Let this come forth, and this, and this, and this." If God had wanted to do that way, it was no chore for him to do it. He was able. But another theory in the creation was that creation was accomplished by evolutionary processes; that is, was done by stages; that God was not in a hurry, but took plenty of time. Now, listen to me. Does Christianity care? All we care to know is that God did do it. And when a man comes around and says, "God didn't do it," we reply, "My esteemed friend, God either did this one way or the other," and we smile blandly and say, "We don't care which way he did it." As scholars, as thinkers, as lovers of God we are always concerned in God's *modus operandi*, but we do not care how God wanted to do things; that is his business.

There is the doctrine of the creation of the universe. Do we care how God created it? O, no, only as people of scientific stamp and philosophic turn. All that we care is that God did; that's all. The chemists go around and find out the primary substances, and the world looks like a thing made, just as a table looks like a thing made. We didn't know who made the table, only somebody did. The world looks like that. You can go across the American continent and

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see that this world is a manufactured article. Something sculptured the hills; something lifted the channels of the rivers from the sea; something stumbled like a monster to the earth and the mountains crashed so that they broke the timbers on which the floor of the world was laid. You can see that well enough. But has that any bearing on the doing away with God? Not a trifle. God made these things. God made the world. The world is a manufactured article, and as certainly as you live, men and women, some of these days God will let the world do as shipowners do with an unused ship at the wharf. He will let it rot. He is doing that now. The mountains are not as big as they used to be; the rivers do not flow as they used to flow. What is the matter with the world? It is ageing. Falling to decay! This is the doctrine of Christianity.

My closing word is this: Christianity is interested in the universe. Why? O, because God made it. Why else? O, because God loves it. Why else? Because we are going to live in it forever. We are going to own it forever, and every Christian is interested in his estate. Upon my heart, beloved, in some celestial days that are coming, I as much expect to visit the Pleiades as I expect to preach this day. When the wings are on the shoulders and when transportation goes by passes and not by fares, when the universe to the farthest frontier and the farthest star is only a step from our doorway, beloved, you and I shall be at

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home in the universe of God. It is ours. What Christianity does not want is to have its God turned out of his universe; and what Christianity wants is that the cross of its Christ shall not be taken from its own Calvary hill; and what Christianity wants is that jejune thinking shall not, with trivial hands brush aside the chain that has anchored the world to God for all the years.

A man came to me one time when I was younger than I am now, when I could be scared easier than I can be now, and said to me, "Mr. Quayle, you are a minister." "Yes, sir, I think I am and I hope I am." And he said, "Mr. Quayle, I regret to state to you, for I think you are a good kind of a fellow" (he didn't know me much)—"I regret to state to you that Christianity is on its last legs." "Yes," I said, "you are right, my friend; it is also on its first legs. It needs but those. They suffice."

And the longer I live the more I trust the ability of Christianity to walk and to run and stand. I am not worried. And when some smart fellow comes around and says Christianity is dying, and I see Christianity going on filling the earth with music and heaven with population, I know it is an amazingly healthy sick man.

Matthew Arnold talked about the "power not ourselves which makes for righteousness." Christians do not care to talk that way. They prefer to talk accurately. They prefer to call this divinity, God. Herbert Spencer talked about the

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“unknowable.” Christianity prefers not to take that aimless talk, but prefers to talk about the knowable and the known Jesus Christ, who by the grace of God tasted death for every man; and his blood is at our door, and by its cleansing we are healed.

Christianity has a science of its own and I advocate it. It is not the science of Aristotle, but the science of Bacon. It is this science: “What we have seen and heard declare we unto you.” We have seen Christ, and he has stooped and found us on the road overborne by sin, and he has put his arms around us and lifted us up and set us on our feet and has given us grit and grace to walk, and cleansed us with his own blood from our sins, which were very, very many, and put a new song in our hearts, and said: “Come on up; I am in a hurry and I will go on ahead, but I will be there to see to it that when you come I will be standing at the gate and watching for you.” And we will go on up the hill, empowered by him, and while we climb will tell what he has done. And that is experimental religion. And I affirm here that experimental Christianity is as absolutely a science of facts as the doctrine of gravitation and the doctrine of the circulation of the blood. And Christians are people who love the truth and know that the truth’s other name is Christ, and that Christ is our Master and Lord, our resurrection and our life, our Helper and our Redeemer, and that some of these good days we

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are going to go home and live with him forever.

PRAYER

O Lord, persuade us this morning to our Saviour. May we not hammer at science and be frightened for religion, but may we rejoice in science and rejoice in religion, and have the Christ of both now and always. Amen.

VI

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“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.”—Luke 4. 18

IN a little church in a trivial town there is a new preacher. He is a young man with the morning in his face. The church is little and cozy, and the people perforce sit close together; and Mary, the widow of Joseph, the carpenter, sits on the women’s side of the house. The name of the town is Nazareth, and the First Church is the name of the house. And I recall now that the name of the young preacher is Christ. And it is a touching thing to recall whenever you chance upon that name “Christ” how it dignifies everything where it is; how anywhere that Christ’s name appears we are electrified by it. So soon as Christ’s name steps onto a book page or onto a man’s lips or onto a woman’s lips, or into history or into heaven, that minute we are electrified. When Christ comes we have an electric shock. And I do not care and you do not care what the name of the church was, and we neither of us care how big the church was. We are diverted now. It is the preacher; and, to tell the truth, there are three things that make a church—one is God, and the other the people, and the

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other is the preacher. And if you have a crowd of folks, the hearts of men and of women, and if you have the God of hearts of men and of women, there is always a church there.

And Mary, the widow, sits in her pew and woman-wise watches with furtive eyes her eldest Son; and she is so eager and perturbed and nervous because it is her Son Jesus who is preaching; and she doesn't know how the congregation will receive his preachment. And she looks down, not up, and her heart beats wildly like the heart of a fluttering bird when pursued by a hawk through the sky. And the town is Nazareth; and the place is the little church; and the preacher is Christ. And if we had been there, beloved!

Don't you think it must have been a gracious thing to have heard Christ read. He took the roll and read. He read—he didn't elocute. That is another matter. Elocuting is something on the outside of you, and reading is something on the inside of you that works out. A reader is somebody who can inhale an author's meaning and then exhale it; it is somebody who obliterates the reader and reveals the writer. Christ reading from the Book. Read on, O Reader! Now, some people can read, and some people can't. Reading is in the nature of a gift. I have heard Spurgeon read; and I have heard Joseph Parker read; and I have heard Charles Jefferson read; and I have heard Lyman Abbott read; and I have heard Bishop Fowler read, and I have heard a multitude of

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men read; and some of them could read and some of them couldn't. Some of them tried at it and some of them did it. It is a gracious gift to read, to let folks know what the writer wants to say, to put an interpretation, not of you, but of him, to be an intermediary of thought through which the written lines might reach others' thought; to have a heart hearkening to the book rather than to lips. And wouldn't you have loved to have heard Jesus read?

Wouldn't you have loved to have heard Jesus's voice? Whenever I am in an audience, which is not enough times to gratify me—whenever I am in an audience and the speaker is to speak—I always watch and wait. If he's a stranger, then I wonder what kind of a voice will proceed from his lips, and I wait and try to frame an interpretation of the man's voice from the face, and then from the voice interpret the face. And when the speaker begins to speak I begin to walk in at the half-open door of his life. But Jesus's voice—wouldn't you have loved to have heard that? What sort of a voice was it? Baritone voice, was it? Well, maybe. Tenor voice, was it? Well, maybe. A voice full of gust and passion, was it? Well, maybe. A voice of great peace, was it? Well, maybe. But I will tell you this: it was your kind of a voice; it was the sort of a voice that you would lug into your heart and leave there. It was your sort of a voice. Some voices draw across your soul like the violin bow across

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the violin string, and set your soul surging with the words; and when you hear the voice somehow a hidden gust arises in your heart, and not knowing why you do, you answer it and your face and your eyes and your heart and your soul and your feet and the sum total of your personality respond. It is the answer to the voice; and you say, "I hear the preacher, whose name is Christ, reading. And his voice"—whence comes it, whither goes it? What ails it? No, that is not the query. What ails me? And the little church house at Nazareth on that bright morning of the year is filled with the gladness of a wondrous light. Now, the house is filled with the wonder of the voice, and O, the crowd watches and listens, and the mothers cease looking at the children in their arms—mothers do that; when they have the children in their arms they look at the children—and they ceased to look at the child's face and they begin to look at his face. They seem to feel his voice as well as hear it. And in that Nazareth church that gay day there was a voice, and when the people went away they said, "What a soul! What a soul!" Voice is interpretative of the soul; and they said, "What a soul!"

Now, Christ read this passage, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," and then his voice flamed like a bonfire. You will be able to measure people's souls by an easy measuring rod. I hand it to you this morning. It can be carried, put in the pocket or in the reticule. You can measure souls

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many ways, but I give you an easy way this morning. You can measure people's souls by the way they respond to a great phrase. If they lie inert under a great phrase, they are clods; if they rise alert to a great phrase, they are souls. A little life doesn't know a great phrase, while big lives rush out to meet it with the dash of armies. And Jesus, when he read this phrase, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me"—ah! his voice blew bugle music and he couldn't quite restrain his voice. The Spirit of the Lord! Somehow that little church house seemed as if thunders were trumpeting in it and as if God's angels blew ten thousand trumpets that morning. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me! And I envy nobody who hasn't found his soul caught as if by a hand of fire by some great phrase. Robert Browning said that a certain soul was "stung by the splendor of a sudden thought." And it hacks a man clean through the cartilage and into the heart where the blood spurts and from where the blood flows—some phrase from Ruskin, some phrase from Cæsar, some phrase from Napoleon, some phrase from Luther, some phrase from Wesley, from Wendell Phillips, from the great Beecher, from your mother's lips, from your father's unthought talk, a child's little word that showed you on the moment that the child's little heart was bigger than the vaulted sky—some phrase that suddenly leaned over and gripped you by the shoulders and turned you around and your soul was like a window pane at sunset. And

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if Christ had gotten no further, I should not have wondered, for his voice shook for a moment and then rang out, as I told you, like ten thousand silver trumpets. And he waded on with the surging sea around him, for sometimes the soul must wade out, through raging surges. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me!" And then men and women and children felt as if the air were tense as once more he read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." And I wonder that Christ ever got through with the lesson. But he read the lesson on to the end and handed the book back to the chasen and sat down and preached. That was the consummate self-control of a consummate soul. I would have thought from the tumult of rapture in his voice that he would have stood on his feet, despite provincialisms and ritualisms, and spoken. But O, the fire of his voice! And you must not think it strange. Some people think that the sign of bigness is eternal placidity—never be excited and never be urged to anything but the quietest tone, and never do anything with your hands but hold them. That's some people's notion of power and poise. I call that cheap. When the cry lifts, "Fight for liberty!" it is not the time to hold your hands, but to say: "Where is the fight? Show it to me." Now, when there is misrule in the city, when cowardly men throw bricks from the housetops on unsuspecting men below, it is high time that right-minded men who believe in the equality of men—it is high time

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they spoke out and let municipalities know that men do not like that sort of cowardice. I am a poor man's son and I am living up to my father's condition—I am poor; and I stand here this morning, and I stand here every morning and every night for the frank equality of all Americans, whether they belong to the union or not. Every man has a right to hold a job if he can get it and is qualified for it. And I appeal to this company this morning to take this stand, that it is un-American for any man to have to be anything other than a good American to get or hold a job. I speak for nobody in this company this morning but for the preacher, but I desire to say this, as long as this preacher stands in this pulpit that he is for men as long as men are men, and for women as long as women are women. There are times for trumpets in voice and attitude—the rights of human life for human life's own sake; that is all.

And here we are to observe this thing, that this preacher Man this morning in the little house began to preach, and the thing he said—the verse that thrilled him and he couldn't be quit of was this, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." Christ felt he was the fulfillment of prophecy. He felt the Scriptures talked of him; he felt that he did not therefore belong to the now so much as to the there and then; he belonged to the then. He was a Man looked for; a Man whose coming had excited expectation; a Man at whom and for

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whom the surging centuries had turned their eager, eager eyes and said: "Where is he? Where is he?" And it is one thing for the astronomer to look and see the lost comets—those vagabond stars that wander through the universe of God alone—one thing and a great thing, I take it, for the astronomer to see a single unseen comet and say, "It is coming and it will be here on noon of such a day or noon of such a night," but it is, I tell you, another thing, beloved—and a vastly greater thing—to be able to look through the gloom and blackness of the centuries and see the coming of the Star of Bethlehem.

Now, some people make a great deal of trouble about the Scriptures and their fulfillment. My trouble would be if no Scriptures were fulfilled. If the great Christ were coming and nobody knew it, I would be dumfounded, crushed. If the Lord God of the universe were coming on a day over the fields, walking in his garden, climbing his hills; what a pity it would be if the great Christ God, for whom are all things and through whom are all things and to whom are all things—if he were coming to the world, to the town he had made, and nobody knew it! I would think that a frankly incredible thing, so that my excitement is never aroused by the fact of the Scriptures being fulfilled. I would have the thought that when some king was coming some herald would have gone ahead and announced it; some spiritual astronomer would have been watching and would

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have called: "He is going to come. Watch for him! Watch the light! He is coming! He is coming! O ye far below, see the flaming of his star—out where the shadows are black the light is coming—watch!" That's the Scriptures.

Now, Sargent has, what I think to be, all told, the greatest soul pictures American artistry has produced. If your mind is not at this moment familiar with them, I pray you give them thought. They are princely—that is all I say now—princely faces—a great crowd of prophets—those Isaiahs, Jeremiahs, Ezekiels, Daniels, Hoseas, Malachis, Nahums, Zephaniahs—a great company. What are they doing? Why, listen—they are out looking for the Face—looking for the Face. And some of these pictures are looking downward; they don't know where to look for the Face; but they are looking. And some of them look upward and outward; they don't know where to look but they are looking for the Face. You prophets—you Daniel, you Habakkuk, you Micah—you men, what do you do? They say: "Trouble me not lest I miss sight of the sky for the minute. I am looking for the Face." And Isaiah's face begins to blaze like morning on a snowy mountain shield. Isaiah, what ails you? "The face! The Face! I see the Face!" Is that strange? No, that is divine and natural, not strange. And Jesus caught sight of this—that he was the fulfillment of prophecy; that the past had written books about him, and he said, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me."

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I wonder he got on any further. But aside from all that, there are prophecies about us. Had you given that matter a thought—that there are prophecies about us? I will fling that word “us” aside, for I like it not, and I will say, Had you thought that the Scriptures prophesied about you? “Us” is too big, and you maybe had not given thought to this, that the prophets talked about you—me. Listen: it said that the Gentiles should come to the Christ. Who are we? Gentiles. Did the Scriptures take me into account? Truly. Did the Scriptures take you into account? Truly. And far-off watchers of the skies saw you. God saw you and said: “He is coming!” “He is coming!” One Gentile coming—coming! We are prophesied about. And I charge you this that the moment the Scriptures concern themselves about you you become sublime. Who are you, who am I, to think ourselves so thoroughly inconsequential as to erase ourselves from the calendar of the months of God when the Scriptures wrote about us? And Jesus, one night when his heart was breaking in a prayer, prayed for us. Watch, preacher; have a care. We are setting your words down in our hearts and we will remember them against you. And the word of the preacher is that Jesus when his heart was breaking prayed for us; and his face dripped with blood and tears. He said, “And I pray not for these only, but also for them that thou shalt give me.” Me—he prayed for me. O heart! heart! rejoice.

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Christ looked at you and saw your face and knew you.

Then Jesus read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." Now, that is getting into relation with the biggest. Did you ever sail up the Saint Lawrence River? It is the lordliest river on the planet. Five seas link fortunes together to see how big a stream they can conjointly make. Lake Michigan, what are you doing? "Well," Michigan says, "I am joining hands with Superior and Huron and Ontario and Erie to make in America the lordliest river that ever swam toward the sea." Do your part, Michigan; don't dodge; do your part! What a river they make! Did you ever go up where the Saint Lawrence spills out from those five seas? The morning you do will be a great page in your calendar. You will write on the page and all over it will be "Saint Lawrence." I have gone on the Saint Lawrence to the Atlantic. For what? For fun. Can't a man's soul have fun now and then? Can't you let a preacher quit and go off and have fun once in awhile? And one time I went on the Saint Lawrence to Quebec, and I liked the taste of the river so—its steady onward push, its greatness—that when I went to Europe last I went by the Saint Lawrence to see where the big thing met the bigger, thing; and for three royal days on the Saint Lawrence I felt and saw its boundaries widen out until in the vast mouth of it an archipelago might be lost. But when the river found the sea, the river was such a little thing.

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It is a great thing to have the Scriptures fulfilled in you—that's the Saint Lawrence of life. But it is a greater thing to have God at you—that is the ocean of life. When God comes over you the Spirit of the Lord is upon you. What's that? O feet, walk steady now! O heart, beat drum beats now! O face, have the moon light on you now. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me—God at my life. Those two great, gracious, manipulative hands that formed the stars, and hollowed out the seas with one cuff at the plastic world—those hands that bore the cross; those hands that support the universe and set its balance so equably that it swims on forever and never jars the nesting of the bird; those two hands give me life—the Spirit of the Lord is upon me. O now, life, life, look out! Life, stand straight! Life, hunt your toil! Life, don't hector nor wait. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Christ had that, and his head bowed down like a head of broken wheat. Christ got that, and his face somehow was a mixture of rapture and holiness, and he said—O heart, before God I wish we could have heard him say it—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." No wonder he handed back the book, having closed it; no wonder that sometimes as he preached that morning the people who heard his voice thought they heard a rumbling of thunder. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." And he challenged the world of glory to come, and the people

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thought they heard the voices of eternity. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me."

O men and women, this morning, if God would only lend me a little of his power, I would submerge your souls with "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." He cries for you; and he is not angry, only hurt, when you do not help him.

May every heart this morning share this Jesus perception that he was receiving station for the Divine. Out in the country that I used to be in—Kansas by name; you could find it on the map—out in the country I used to be in, and in the town near where I used to be, there was an oak. I never heard it make explanation of its life, but any oak is magnificent—it needs no history—it is there, that's all. A big thing about anybody is that he is there. But the bigger thing about that oak was that in the border ruffian days the Free State people used it for a watchtower, because they could see for twenty miles the coming of those marauders. And in winter all it did was to sing angry music, and in summer all it did was to whisper as if making love to somebody and perchance give shadow in its kindness. Oak tree, what did you say? The annals say the oak tree was receiving station for news of the invasion of a free land. Mr. Marconi has put up little odd dots in the sky—frame works that climb skyward. What are they for? Why, they are receiving stations for the lightning from the world, and the dull and yet not inept fingers of the lightning

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thrust and write so we can hear across the seas and over the world. And the receiving stations see the lightnings you didn't see, that have been here and written a story.

What is it, Christ, what is it? We thought you were through. What is it? Tell us. And he says, "I am receiving station for God." You must not wonder he was glad. You must not wonder there was rapture. Heart, listen. What is your prerogative? Yes, you, you, you, you? You are earth's receiving station for heaven. You are humanity's receiving station for God. Heart, you better stand up high. You better keep a dial on your life ready and open. And God in his heavens stands with his front door open and lifts up the hand with the scar and beckons. Did you get it, heart? Did you get it? Don't miss it. You are receiving station for Divinity. Did you see the beckoning of the scarred hand? Did you get it on the dial of your life? Has the needle wavered, setting the electric currents of your life wild with rapture? The hand of God beckons, and the receiving station of the human soul will say, "God has beckoned." God in his heaven has beckoned to man in his world. Does your soul dial answer? Is it written in lines of fire, "God beckons"?

PRAYER

O God, if thou beckonest, may we get the message and record it, for Christ's sake. Amen.

VII

“DEMAS HATH FORSAKEN ME”

“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.”—2 Timothy 4. 10

THIS text is a sob. A strong man, unused to weeping, is given up to tears. Now, tragedy always stands close to the door of life. It is like the frontiersman whose lodge is built on the edge of the forest wilderness, and, when the wild winter shrieks and raves, and the snow gathers feet deep, and the wolves grow hungry and lean and lank and brave as an army of invaders, these beasts, which usually slink out of sight, grow bold and slip in, and sometimes dip their hungry fangs into the babe that lies in the rough-hewn cradle; and then, at the door, the man and woman who loved the babe and lost it stand, and the wilderness is sounding board for their tragic cry. And tragedy always stands so, waiting to invade life. And this man with the big heart is now a man with a broken heart. The sob—why, men and women, would you not think that centuries would be long enough to choke a sob to silence? No! No! You cannot silence a sob. God alone can kiss sobbing into peace and laughter. And this sob that choked in the throat and then spilled from the lips and ached from the heart of the pris-

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oner with the chains dangling from his wrists—on my heart, I hear it this morning as though he sobbed in this hour—“Demas hath forsaken me.”

When a big man, and strong, weeps, somehow it shakes us all from our placidity, and we say: “What ails him? What ails him? Sobbing? What ails him?” A big man kneels at a bed, and on the bed a woman lies asleep; and the man cannot wake her with his kisses; and he buries his face in his arms, as I have seen done, and sobs out, “O, Lizzie! Lizzie!” and shakes as if the whirlwinds caught him in their twisting wrists and hands. What ails Paul? It is Paul sobbing. What ails him? Why, a friend has deserted him. Paul of the big heart has lost a lover. That is enough to make a man sob. That is all Paul had. If you would read of the belongings of this man Paul, I think the penury of his belongings would make your heart ache. He had a cloak; and he was a man, and he was forgetful, as men are, and he forgot his cloak, and hadn’t money enough to buy another, and he was shivering in his prison; and he wrote from his damp prison cell, “Hurry up and come with the cloak; I am so cold and ague-smitten.” He had a cloak; and he had a book. And he said, “Bring the book; if you can’t bring both, bring the book.” That’s the scholar. You find a scholar, and if he can have but one, he will say, “Bring the book.” He will cloak himself with the book. Bless you, Paul! And then he said, “And—the parchment.” That’s it—that is

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written—something written down, and he wanted to see. And Paul's belongings were an old coat, shiny from wear, and a book thumb-marked and finger-printed, and a parchment that bears on it something strangely like blood. And he had one other thing I must not forget: he had scars. Blessed are the scarred men, the battle-hit. Honestly, I don't so much like the people who have fine looks, unmarked faces. The people I covet to be are the people that wear scars. Where did you get that scar? At Shiloh. O man, don't hide it! Don't put oil on it; keep it. Place it so folks can see it.

And Paul had so few things—a cloak, a book and some writing that no one could read but Paul (smart folks can't write well), and scars. One book, one coat, some writing, and forty scars cut on the face, at the throat, across the breast, where, in the old days at Iconium and Lystra, with two hands, with a thousand hands they had thrown stones and cut him deep; and they thought him dead, and nobody cared whether he was buried; and he crawled away and left a trail of blood.

And now all he had in the prison was what I have named (that's enough, thank God!), except one thing—he had friends. While a poor man, he was one who had friends. Now, would the preacher forget that? He must not forget that. Friend—whose name was Christ, his big Elder Brother; and one friend was the Holy Spirit,

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who loved him and helped him. And he had folks; he had friends; he had so many—lots of them. Now, I don't envy the folks that have only one friend, like a woman who says, “I have the dearest, dear friend!” Why don't you have two? That's nonsense. Some, when they focus their love on one friend, think they have done enough. That's too little. Can't you love a number of people? What ails your heart? Why don't you expand it—encompass lots in it? Why don't you put more rooms in it? You can crowd the city, but you can't crowd the country; you can't crowd God's country full. Out in the dim shades where shimmering shadows lie, and out where the summer sun makes radiant harvests grow; out where the whippoorwills call on moonlit nights, and out where stars walk out and lean over and peek at you, there's lots of room in God's country. You can't crowd it. Why not? O, it's so big. Give a body a big heart and you can't crowd it. One friend? Thank God, yes. Two? Thank God, yes. And two hundred? Thank God, yes; and two thousand, thank God, yes. And I pray my God, when I get home to heaven, I may meet thousands and ten thousands of people I have loved and who love me.

And Paul's life was so spacious that in his heart there was room for so many. And if you ever get little-souled—which I do not think you will—then read the last chapter of Romans, and see the people Paul sent his love to—women and

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men, and men and women—crowds of them and crowds of them until his paper gave out, and he said, "I've got to quit; my paper has given out." So many, O big soul! O Paul, you have so many friends; and he says, "I thank my God I have."

And, Paul, when you lose one, does it make your heart ache? I wouldn't think you'd miss one. And he says, "I am so lost without the one." And you can never have so many friends, if you are the right sort, that you can lose one without it gashing your heart and your blood spraying like a fountain. Paul, doesn't Timothy love you yet? Yes. Doesn't Titus love you yet? Doesn't Luke love you? Haven't you your family doctor yet, Dr. Luke? Yes, but "Demas hath forsaken me!" Women, haven't you children yet? "Yes, but one is gone. Give me the one." That's it. That's the mark of immortality of the soul, that we can't afford to lose one love out of life—not one. How many flowers are there in the garden? Not one too many. How many stars in the sky? Just enough. If you lose one Pleiad, you go and hunt the lost Pleiad up. And Paul is sobbing, "Demas hath forsaken me." That is an easy test of the spacious nature. Does it feel gashed to the very core of the soul when one friend is lost? "Demas hath forsaken me!" Paul, what is the matter this morning—you look so pale, and your eyes look so weary? "O," he says, "Demas hath forsaken me!" Now, little natures can get along without friends, but big natures cannot. That's why God

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is such a necessity of the soul, because, if there isn't anybody to be a friend, God will be a friend; and nobody need die friendless when God is around. Now, Frederick the Great didn't have friends. He wasn't big enough to want them. But William of Orange had friends, and his friendship for Bentick, whom he made a lord in the realm, is so sweet that it reads like a poem. Big souls need friends. Dr. Johnson had to have friends; and the friendship of Mr. Thrale and him reads like a storybook. Robert Browning had to have friends. He loved Tennyson so that that sweet story is like reading his poems. And Jesus had to have friends; and when you see him with the twelve disciples in his arms like so many children he had to hug together it makes your heart leap. Paul had friends; and when he lost one—anguish! You will notice that when Paul lost a friend it never occurred to him that the other man lost most. Paul just sobs, “Demas hath forsaken me!” That is all. What is the matter in the prison this morning? And the Roman soldier, in a rasping voice, says: “The old man in there is crying; yes, crying. He's getting old and feeble—just crying.” Paul, what ails you this morning? “Demas hath forsaken me.”

But observe this: Paul had the hurt, but Demas had the loss. Paul could get along without Demas ten thousandfold better than Demas could get along without Paul. When you come

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to know Demas, Paul didn't know him. People aren't always astute in their friendships, thank God. There is one place where astuteness has no play. That's the heart. People aren't smart at the heart; they're just silly—silly, beautifully silly. Why, if fathers and mothers were smart at the heart they would disown their children—some of them. And lots of women, if they were smart at the heart—well, they wouldn't have what they've got; no, they wouldn't. And, when it comes to friends, why do you love them? Because you do—that's all. And when you find people making prescriptions for friendships, like they do prescriptions for medicine, they have lost the friendship secret. What makes you love folks? You don't know; you just love. You ask a man what made him love his wife. "Well," he says, and he scratches his head; "well—well, she was so nice." That's a kind of miscellaneous suggestion that doesn't mean much of anything. It means that he loves her; that is all that is necessary. A man doesn't need to tell why he fell in love. There isn't a man on the planet that can tell. He just did. The women were so winsome and treated him so miscellaneously well. They would say, "Why, Mr. —; it is so nice of you to come and see *me*" And she had him. All he knows is he loves her; and if she were not here, the noon light would not be enough to keep him from groping in the dark.

Paul ought to have known more than to love

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Demas. Demas was a shallow man, a little soul; and Paul never ought to have loved him. But he did; that was all. And he used to walk down the street, when he was a free man, with his arm around Demas' shoulder and say, "My, Demas, when we see the Christ face to face in his beauty! Say, Demas!" And now he says, "Demas hath forsaken me!" A hot heart, aching out loud. That's the text. Listen to it, will you?

I say Paul had the hurt, but Demas had the loss. There are some men whom to know is a liberal culture. To brush up against them you can brush enough knowledge off the sleeves of their coats to make you a scholar. And if you ever got into the heart of their lives, why, you are savants. Paul was one of such—and Demas forsook him. Paul was a man of great knowledge. He had the finesse of reason that allowed him to master easily whithersoever he cared to learn. Paul was one of the best-read men of his day. He quoted Greek poetry so well that the Mars' Hill auditors thought he was an Athenian. He never told how much he knew; never went around saying much about it; he just sweat knowledge out. Just sweat it out. Why, Demas, if he had stayed with Paul, would have been a man of knowledge. He would have had themes fetched from far. He would have been like a spearpoint in summer storms when every spear burned with a lurid fire. Demas could have gone to college gratis. What college? Paul College. And he

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could have been around and inhaled knowledge, and he wouldn't have had to study; all he needed to have done would have been to stay about. Demas, you have lost your chance of an education. He has forsaken Paul and has lost.

And Paul was the greatest traveler of his day. All you need to do, brothers and sisters, to become a traveler in Paul's day is to track Paul around. You take those missionary journeys. He met every metropolis of Rome's great government face to face. You can see Paul's tracks in the road. Traveled man, Paul, what about Iconium and Lystra? He would have told you. Mars' Hill? He would have told you. The Pyræus? He would have told you. The Ægean sea? He would have told you. Asia Minor? He would have told you. And you would say, "Paul, where haven't you been?" And he would answer, "I haven't been to heaven yet." There are two ways of traveling. One is to have leisure and money and go off and travel. It takes much time and much money and some sense and many of us can't do it. The most economical way to travel is to find those who have been abroad, and go and sit up with them. Where were you? What hotel did you stay at? What did you do? Were you at Florence? Did you see Fra Angelico's paintings? Yes. This and that angel? Yes. And it never cost you a cent, and you become traveled. Very well. Demas loses that.

And then Paul had such a unique acquaintance

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with Jesus Christ. He was the one disciple Jesus forgot; put it that way. Jesus didn't see him. Jesus went out walking by the sea, and he called Peter and James and John and Nathanael; and Paul wasn't there; Jesus didn't see him, and Jesus forgot about him. After Jesus went to heaven he came back to the lost Paul, and called out, "Paul! Paul!" And Paul says, in his striking phrase (Paul is one of the most striking phrasists of literature), "I was like a man born out of due time." Paul, were you of the twelve? "No," he says; "I am the thirteenth." Did you walk with Christ at Galilee? "No," he says; "no, I wish I had. Christ came out on the desert and picked me up." Paul, you have seen Christ? "Certainly I have." And how did he look? "Ah," he said; "don't ask that. I have got to die pretty soon, and if I tried to tell that it would take my lifetime. Wait till we get to heaven, and we'll sit down in the shade of the tree of life [his face was like a thousand sunbursts; his voice was like to music]; but I can't stop to talk about it. But I saw Christ!" And Demas forsook that. Why, Demas; you must be a foolish fellow. Demas, don't you want culture? Demas, don't you want travel? And don't you want to get close to Christ, Demas? Lost all that!

Besides, Paul was one of the greatest geniuses that ever lived. This is not exaggeration; you can scarcely exaggerate Paul. I will say this, that the most colossal figure of the Jewish race, outside of

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Christ, is Paul; and standing by Paul is standing by the rafters that prop the sky, and is to feel as if you held the heavens aloft. Demas, you left this? The only thing we know about Demas, the only thing that redeems him from utter oblivion, is Paul sobbing his name out. "Demas hath forsaken me!" And he was saved from oblivion by a big heart sob; but he has been saved to execration by a big heart sob also. Demas, don't litter up our road! Demas, get out of the way! Demas, you could have been with Paul and you forsook him. Demas, you are nigh relative to a fool, Demas! Demas!

Who had the hurt? Paul had. Who had the loss? Demas had. Paul never thought of that. You don't think of anything when you've a heart-ache. No—lose a friend, and you hold your heart and you honestly think it is going to break. What is the matter with him? Demas hath forsaken him.

Now mark, what ails Demas. This present world. That's what ails him. "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." What tricks this present world serves us! This present world is like a ventriloquist's voice. You can't tell from where it sounds where the voice is. This world lures by the shifting shadow of its voice. You must always remember, beloved, that from the great spirits of this world you will always learn more by suggestion than by statement. You must always catch the shadow of the planet.

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It's the shadow of the planet that counts. You can tell of the planet by the planet's shadow. And the great souls talk and we, listening, can get more from the shadow of their words than from the words themselves. Now, Paul, listen to him. He says, "this present world." Is there an un-present world? He won't answer; only he says, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." And so it is this present world that cheats us out of the un-present world. And the present world is the little spot and the un-present world is the eternity landscape. You would not think if you knew me, you would not think I would slander this present world. I love it. I love its mornings in the spring, I love the singing of the early birds, I love the nesting of the birds, I love the earth smells in the air, I love the glow of the sunset skies, I love the splendor of the clouds, I love the majesty of the unbounded sea, I love the altitude of the great mountains. I would not slander this present world, only this present world is like a book bookworms eat up; it won't last when matched with the un-present world. This little lot matched with that vast spaciousness; this world where sin is so absolute, and that un-present world where Christ is the absolute; that's the difference. This present world: Demas, you lost Paul and you got this present world. Demas, your hands are dust and your knuckle bones even are wasted away and crumble like chalk, and you can no more lip the

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thoughts that are in your mind; you had the present world and you wasted like a leaf. And Paul is now eternal as God. Isn't it a pity to hold a little and lose a great deal? Isn't it a pity to hold a pebble and miss a mountain? Give me the mountain! This present world—it's so little, but it's so near. The near things crowd close to hide the distance. "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." There was a girl down in Indiana—bless her heart! Wherever I know such things being done as she did I love all womanhood more for her sake. She had a lover over in India—a slender bit of a lad; and she was a preacher's daughter down in Indiana; and she did what millions of women have done—she fell in love with a man; and he went off to India and she stayed in Indiana. And she was so lonesome. Her mother used to come on her crying in her room and say, "Child, child, what ails you, daughter?" "O," she said, "I want to see him." "Why, daughter, isn't the land about as fair? Isn't the sky sweet, and aren't the plum blossoms swelling and the trees leafing out, and isn't the green carpet spread across the world?" "Yes, mother, mother, but I want—him." He was unpresent; she couldn't see him, he was so far off, and she didn't know a soul there but that lover up by the Himalayas, where they climb to see where God is. And this little lover at the foot of the great crumbling mountain—she couldn't see him. "Isn't this world fair?"

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“O Mother, I want to see him.” And one day she had all her traps and hats and other contrivance—bundles of them—and started out; and she was so happy, but her eyes were filled with tears when she said good bye, and she started out and went to the Atlantic. And she had never seen the billows lift and the waves hump, and she came on the boat and her soul said, “I wish this sea was only a mile across.” She was in such a hurry to see this little chap at the foot of the Himalayas. And she went across the sea, through the Mediterranean, through Suez, through the Red Sea, out into the hot zone of the Indian Ocean, and said, “Ship, ship, if you don’t hurry, there will be trouble.” She was so anxious to see him. And by and by I read in the paper that over in a certain church, married by a certain preacher, were a certain Indian preacher and a certain Indiana girl.

O, beloved, let us stop. It’s not much use going further. Let’s not let this present world shut out the un-present world. The big loves are beyond; and Demas had his hands stocked up with this present world, and when he died his hands were as empty as a seashell thrown up on the shore; and if he hadn’t been occupied with the present world, he could have carried the present world away in his heart. Beloved, there is a moral in this sermon, which I won’t undertake to rehearse. If you get the big, you won’t miss the little; but if you marry the little, you

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won't the big. "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." O, heart, heart! the un-present world—the great knowable unknown—put it so—the great knowable unknown—if I only had it, I should have this; and if I had the there, I could have the here. O, Demas! O, Demas! "Demas hath forsaken me," and Demas lost. And some of us are likely to lose on Demas' score because this present shuts out the great un-present. It's Demas that is sobbing now. Demas! "Don't ask me! Don't ask me!" he sobs. "My God, be still, don't ask me! Lost! Lost! This present world lost, and the great un-present world lost!" Demas hath forsaken Paul, beguiled by this little, perishable, present world! Paul lost, earth lost. God lost—all lost!

PRAYER

O, Christ, keep us off the rock on which Demas's vessel broke, for Christ's sake. Amen.

VIII

THE HIGH NOON OF THE GOSPEL

“These things are written that ye might believe.”—
John 20. 31

AN old, old man, with dimmed eyes, is leaning close to a parchment, and with shivering fingers is writing a blessed story. He is so near to eighty—near to a hundred and so far past eighty—that if he would reach out his hand, he could touch his hundredth birthday. He has a beautiful face, I think. It is a face like the face of the poet Longfellow; and I don't know anything sweeter to say about a man's face than that. I think Longfellow's face, in his age, to be one of those rapt, masterful, persuasive, virile man faces that catch with a grip of steel the eyes of those who think. And this old man, with his beard snow-white and his hair as white as almond blossoms, does not see anybody, nor hear anybody, nor know that the world is close, nor guess that the world is far.

I told you, did I, that he was writing a book; and his eyes are close against the parchment; and his shivering fingers shiver across the page; and by and by he lifts up his head; and, if you look at him, straight in the face, you will find that he has lips that are fit for kissing and eyes

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that burn like stars on a crystalline night; a face that wears the triumph of a thousand battles in it. Eighty, and past; ninety, and past; merely a finger's breadth and a hundred years are here!

But it is not a senile face. It is an old face, but the eyes are the eyes of youth; and his lips have caught a trick of smiling that never ceases.

It is John Zebedee; and his business is writing a book; and he looks up, puts his pen-hand across his eyes for a minute as if he were clearing cobwebs from his vision. He takes the stylus once again, writes the book; and so he wrote this book. And I should suppose that if you would choose a hundred of the greatest books the world had ever penned, this John Gospel would be one of the hundred; and I re-suppose, if you would choose twenty-five of the most significant, startling, persuasive, tremendous, heart-books of the earth, this John Gospel would be amongst them. And, he doesn't know it! He doesn't know, because he is writing a great book. The fellows who write the big books don't know it. The fellows who write the little books; they know about how big they are. The fellows that write the big books; they don't know because they are big. And he is writing one of the marvelous books. It is "The Paradise Regained"; that is the book—"The Paradise Regained." Milton wrote "Paradise Regained," but this is "The Paradise Regained."

He is busy writing a book, and his face is close, and his hand ungarrulous, shivering and hesitating,

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and he fears the light will go out and the shadows will have come and the night be on before the book is done; and he says: "O, quick! The book! The book!" And I wonder why he is writing the book. People suppose that books are the fruit of life. Books are not the fruit of life; books are the flowers of life. They are life at blossom. People don't write books when they get old. It is when they are young, when the saps run like lightnings through the trunk of the soul; when the rapture is on the heart; when it is morning swimming with its sun toward noontime—then life blossoms out in books.

When Ruskin was a lad he wrote books, and his pen ran so that it seemed as if the lightnings had seized his hand and used it to tell their story. When Ruskin was old, his hand held out and the pen dropped, and he couldn't find where to pick it up. But this old man has a spring-heart in him. That's all. A spring-heart, and his spring-heart is blossoming into a book; and I wonder why he wrote it.

Now, it is not necessary to know why a man writes a book; not at all. Some, I think, write a book to get rid of what is troubling them. They pass their trouble on to others; and it is a pity they couldn't keep it. Some people write a book because they think it is elite; that if you write a book, foolish people would think you are "some." Some people write a book because they have some fad with which they want to infect the multitude.

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Some people tell why they write a book and some people don't, and it is not necessary that a man should tell why he writes. The book will likely explain the trouble the man has; but when a man does tell why he writes a book, it is worth while. If Milton will tell why he wrote "Areopagitica," we will thank him, though we need not be told. If Newton will tell us why he wrote "Principia" we will thank him, though it need not be told.

But pardon me, John Zebedee; with your face smiling and your eyes alight, you were about to speak. And he said: "These things are written"—and he bites his under-lip to keep it from laughter, utter laughter, and says—"These things are written that ye might believe." Ah, is that it! "This book is written," says John Zebedee, "that ye might believe." This book is written that men might get faith. O, John Zebedee! O, you centenarian! O, you man that walked with Christ! O, you head that pillowed on the Jesus breast! O, John Zebedee, what made you write that book? And he said, "This book is written that men might believe." And I have lit upon this text this morning, not through chance, but because it expresses succinctly and kindly, what I suppose to be the ministry of the Gospel, "That men might believe."

And so the Gospel is always working toward construction; not destruction—construction. It is always reaching toward occupancy. The Gospel is not an iron hand, quick with temper

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and vast destruction, mad for ruin. Not that. The Gospel is a hand, with a mason's trowel in it and a mason's spirit level in it, and a scaffold before it—building a house. The Gospel is like a man. It has two hands. What for? Why, for to build. You can fight with one hand. It only takes one hand to handle a sword. One good right hand is as good as a thousand; and with the wild wielding of it, a man could hack his way through armies with one hand; but you can't build a house with one hand. It takes two hands. You can't dig a trench with one hand, not well—two hands. The Gospel is constructive. It is for faith. It is for positivity; it is for suggestion, not of stolidity, but of solidity. It is to find out a rock, and then build on that rock.

This church used to be bits of debris and now it is a cathedral. What ails the house? It used to be a wild pile of bricks and stone. It used to be wreckage, as if some catastrophe had chanced at this place, a wild demolition—that had never been gathered away by any wreckage company. What ails this place that now there is no debris nor any wreckage? What ails this house that now the organ dreams, and the choir sings, and the preacher prays, and the congregation waits, and the windows glow, and Saint James looks on the solemn scene of the hour, and the gentle Christ holds the one lost lamb on his heart? What ails the house? O, nothing ails the house, only it is built! That's all, just built; and the ruin that

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was—why, those cathedral windows with their strange, sweet story used to be a pile of sand; and that organ that dreams its dream of storm as touched by cunning fingers, that used to be a bit of uselessness and waste. What ails this house, that now the solemn roof leans with its massiveness of strength; and now the shades of the house of God induce to prayer, and now watching congregations face God? What ails the house? Do you not know what ails the house? Why, the negativity proceeded to positivity; and the wreckage proceeded to building.

On the road, across bridges, along the street, whither go you, rock? and sand pile along the pavements whither go you? and O, organ-fluted columns, whither tend you in your hastening way? and O, workmen on cathedral glass, what do you? And the answer is, "We build, we build, we build!" And this morning, here the shades are and here the Christ is. Here the Scriptures are read and the preacher talks of God.

So the Gospel is building into a house and never raises questions for fun. The Gospel is no joke. The Gospel has question marks, multitudes of them standing up; some of them minute and curious; some of them tremendous and majestic like the uplift of the lean mountains. What are the Gospel's questions for? Why, for answer! That's the word, "For answer." We don't ask questions in the Gospel to show that we know

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the value of the question mark. We don't raise interrogatories because we are pleased to hear our voice lifted in interrogation. We are asking questions for the answer. O, give us the answer! The Gospel's questions never prate. Some people's questions prate. They just ask because they have an asker; and so they use it to see if the thing works; and that is about all. Now the Gospel is not so. The Gospel asks, why, and says, "Give answer."

There was a man at the prow of a ship; and the seas were gray and tumbly-waved, and the waves were wide to infinitude; but, was not the water music sweet? Aye. And did not the wind flow through the rigging like the murmuring of a river making music? Aye. And was not the sky open and the sunlight beautiful upon the crest of the billows? Aye! But the gray-faced Columbus, with his eager heart, says: "O, shore, where are you? O, shore, where are you?" "Columbus, is not the water music sweet?" I heard him speak. His voice is husky with the peril of hope. I ask, "Are not the wild waters turbulent and glorious?" "Aye." "And is not the sunset splendid?" Wistfully, "Aye, but, the shore—where is the shore?" His eager eyes are in quest of shores where anchors may be dug deep to hold the ships. The soul asks big questions. Why? To get answer!

Now, the Gospel is no book of interrogatories. It is one of truth, wants the truth. "Give me the truth," is what it urges.

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People ask of the grave: "Is there a door out of it?" What kind of a question is that? It is a question of the broken anguish of the heart. "Is there a door out of it?" When people ask you that question, they are choked with weeping and wild with anguish, and they say: "Is there a door out of it? There is a door into it, but is there a door out of it? O, is there a door out of it?" And the woman, with her empty heart, her arms held as if the babe were still in them, but has gone out, she says, "Is there a door out of it?" And the gray, aged man whose wife has slipped away from him into the arms of the angel of death, says, "O, is there a door out of it?" And, upon my word, there was nobody in the universe that seemed to know until by and by there came along a Man with a babe on his bosom and a lamb under his arm, and the women ran with the instinct of womanhood strong upon them—not knowing why, but only running—and they said, "Is there a door out of it?" He said: "Yes. If you will come after me, I will show it to you"—and they went after him and found the door! Now, then, that is the "because" of the question marks in the Gospel. We are wanting the thing, the substance.

I wonder if you mind if I were to read you this out of a letter I had yesterday from a woman of sixty or thereabouts—if it be allowable to guess the age, even of an absent woman? I will read you out of this letter. And the other day her

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husband kissed her with feeble lips, and wandered out to God, and Christ met him—past half way—and took him on his arm, because the man was a soldier, old and weak, and helped him over the rough edges of the Jordan and carried him over the Jordan stream and to the other side—and if we could only see a little better, we could see him smiling. Her husband is there and she is here; but she cannot see anything for weeping; and this is what she wrote: “Sometimes when I awake after dreaming of the olden time, it seems as if this terrible reality were only some horrible dream. He was always so glad to get home again after a short absence. How can it be that he will never come again?” She wrote it; that young-hearted woman of sixty. She wants him, him; and I am telling you this morning, of a truth, that the Gospel will give no evasive answer; that the Gospel is on the road to somewhat. We want somewhat! Not negation, but substance. And there is a word I remember that so strangely resounds above all the battle bugles that ever blew their weird strain; and I know not one that ever blew so strange a strain as this: It is, “Now faith.” It is a definition. Think of it, that a definition could outblow the blasts of battle bugles: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for.” Ah, that’s it! Gospel, what are you after?” “Why,” the Gospel says, “Substance!” “Gospel, what do you want?” “Substance!” “O, Heart! What do you want?” An-

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swer: "Substance." "O, Doubt, what do you want?" "Nothing." "O, Faith, what do you want?" "Everything!"

The Gospel is on the road to "Somewhat." Thank God. "These things are written." John, have your say; go on! You are old enough. Have your say—And, "These things are written that ye might believe." Very good, blessedly good, John the Beloved.

Now, this John Gospel is always working up past doubt to faith. You know the trouble with Doubt is that Doubt is always digging for the heart. If Doubt would settle down and tend to his own business and dig in the head, we could tolerate him. We can get along with that. But he won't be satisfied with that. Doubt is digging for the heart; and through it run the saps of the soil of the soul; and he digs up the soul trench, with the blood spurting in it—"Doubt, what are you digging for?" "The heart," he hisses.

Now, people do business at the brain; but they have their homes at the heart. That is the way it is. We don't live in our intellect, thank God. We live at our heart. I have a friend who is custodian of an observatory; and the observatory stands on the crest of a hill, and the hill overlooks all the regions round about; and there is nothing that hill doesn't out-top. When my friend takes his key and opens his observatory door, then locks it behind him, and goes up into the uncanopied summit, turns the glass whither

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the searcher will and squints out into the sky—he is looking the universe in the face. It is majestic to be looking with optic glass into the universe, isn't it? And my friend stays in his observatory to look at the universe; and his door opens outward on to the universe; and all the stars in the galaxy of God come past him and, leaning over, look into his open door; but, don't you let me forget to tell you that my friend doesn't live in his observatory; he lives at home. He goes up to the observatory to see the universe; but he goes down to his house at the bottom of the hill to stay. He never stays up at the observatory; he never takes his shoes off up there; he never puts his slippers on his feet up there. He keeps his shoes on at the observatory; and by and by, when he is done and comes whistling down the stairway, unlocks the door on the inside and locks the door on the outside—he goes whistling down the hill and down the main street and then branches off on a by-street—for preachers and school teachers don't often get to live on the main street. I told you he did business in the observatory, did I? I told you that. I told you his observatory was on a hill, did I? I told you, did I, that his observatory crested the hill? I will tell you now, that this man lives in a cottage, one story—five rooms. Why doesn't he live on his hill crest, in his observatory? That is where the stars belong and play hide-and-seek with him; and that is where the dawns come very early like;

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and that is where the sunsets stay a longer while. Why doesn't he stay up there? Now, this is private and you mustn't speak of it: His wife and baby are down in the cottage at the foot of the hill. You live where your heart is. That is where you live; and the curse and the menace and the hell of Doubt is that he won't stay in a fellow's head. He just digs down at his heart. What are you doing, you, with the lean face and the wicked eyes, what are you doing, with your thin lips and your wicked hand?" And he says, "Digging, digging, for the heart, *heart*."

But God wants the heart! God has a right to the heart, and we have a right to the heart of God. But, Doubt, he will kill the heart. "These things are written that ye might"—have "heart-ease." That is what John says. "O, John, talk on a little more. It is not time to quit yet. What is that, John?" He says, "Heart-ease, heart-ease. These things are written that Doubt might not get at the heart, but that you might have heart-ease." O, John, that is so good. You are old, and this doubt hurts so—how it hurts!

Sometimes, when the doctor comes around—blessed be the good physician—when we send for him in a jiffy, and want him to come over before we are through telephoning (that is the trouble with people who have sickness, they hasten so: "Why didn't you come sooner?"—as if the fellow could come by electricity as you talk by electricity)—when the doctor comes and commences

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to skirmish around on the body and you say, "Doctor, don't; you hurt so." What's doubt doing? Hurting. "I have to do it," he avers. I tell you simply the honest word of a man who has had experience with doubt. And he would take my arm and crush it as if it had been pulp. "O, Doubt! You hurt so." And he says, "Who cares, Hurt?" And Christ comes along and takes the lame arm crushed by Doubt and lifts it up and says, "Don't you worry, don't you worry," and he lifts the arm up and kisses it; and all is well. Thank God; "that ye might believe." O, Doubt hurts so! That's it. "These things are written that ye might believe."

Believe? Well, what's that? You say it is credulity. No, more than that. Faith is not credulity. Credulity is faith without sense. Lots of people have it. It is a very common commodity. Credulity is faith without sense. But what is faith? What is Christian faith? Faith with sense. What is believing? Friends, the believing of which the Scriptures speak and for which Christ stands—that believing is receiving. That's all. "That ye might believe." That you might have the faith attitude; that you might listen and believe. Some people listen and say, "I won't believe." They are just spatty, like some people when you touch them and they spat at you. "I am not going to hurt you. Don't do that." But they are just spatty. When you tell them anything and they don't know whether it is so or not;

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they think it isn't so, because they are spatty. They don't know it isn't so, and there is no reason to believe it isn't so—but—and there are a lot of them.

That you might have faith, the faith attitude. To what? To listen to the biggest things. I said "the biggest things." That's it. I didn't say "the bigger things." I am not talking about them. I said "the biggest things." Receiving. What time is it? It is starlight. The morning star is up and it will be daylight. What of it? The world is dark now and so lank and black and passionless and colorless. The flowers are in flower? Yes. Who knows it? Nobody.

"You can't see the lilies whitening in the dark? Can't you see the roses glowing in the darkness?" "No." "What time is it?" "I told you the morning star was out of bed, did I?" Why, the morning star is holding his candle at the eastern window; but never says anything, that morning star; he just holds up his light and keeps still. It means, "Pretty soon, daylight; pretty soon, daylight." Well, Doubt would have you put your fingers before your eyes and say, "It's night." "How do you know it's night?" "O, it's been night a long time. It's night." Somebody comes around and says: "Daylight? No, it's night, night." Keep the fingers in the eyes and eyes shut—Doubt.

What is faith in the gospel of the Son of God? It's receiving. Put yourself so that you can see

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the light when it comes. Why, the morning star is out. Who blew it out? Nobody blew the morning star out. Did the winds blow it out? No, there wasn't any wind; it was a calm morning.

What ails the morning star? It's out. O, the wind blew it out? No, it didn't; the sun lit it out. That's all; it's sun-up. And all faith is believing; is receiving. What hour is it? You say, "Six o'clock." O, don't talk that way; it's daylight. It's daylight on the mountains; daylight in the glades; daylight in the shaded valleys; daylight on the glorious pines; daylight to the drooping trees; daylight to the sleeping babes! It's daylight! O, Earth, keep your eyes open, lest the daylight pass you. That is what faith is; faith is receiving.

And then this heart said: "O, I hear you. These things are written that ye might believe." What else? "Why, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."

Well, now, what of that? Why, beloved, this of that: believe that Christ is get-at-able. "Say, John; say, John, writing in your book; say, old man, quit your writing a minute. Say, old man, stop; look up here." And he says, "What's wanted?" "Say, old man, your name is John Zebedee?" "Yes," he said, "yes." "John Zebedee?" "Yes." "Say, John Zebedee, what's the biggest thing you ever saw?" "O," he said, "Christ!" And he is wiping the tears away. "Quit crying, John Zebedee; you are a man. Quit it; let the women

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cry, John Zebedee. Let us men not cry. Say, John Zebedee, what's the most glorious thing you ever saw? Quit crying and tell us." And he says, "Christ!" Now he throws his pen away and leaps to his feet; now he stands erect as a pillar of the temple; now his face beams with glory; now he strides to and fro, as if he chanted a psalm, and says: "Christ! Christ!" "John Zebedee, what's the entire world?" "O," he says, "Christ! Christ!! Christ!!!" "O, John Zebedee, stop your shouting or you will be taken for a Methodist; stop shouting, John Zebedee. What's the biggest thing in heaven, John Zebedee? Listen to me, John Zebedee; what's the biggest thing in heaven?" "O," he said, "Christ! Christ!! These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ; is the Son of God." O, John Zebedee, loose the pen and throw it away! O, John Zebedee, shut the book and write no more! These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ. O, how I take a long breath now. O, lips, you will have to sing in a minute if you don't watch. O, voice, you shall shout, if you are not aware. These things are written that ye might believe. That is what the gospel stands for: Christ! Christ!! "What's heaven so big for, John Zebedee?" He says, "To hold Christ!" "What's the heart so big for, John Zebedee?" "O," he says, "I thought you knew that. To hold Christ!" "What's eternity so long for, John Zebedee?" "To love Christ!"

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O, John Zebedee, what ails you now? His hands tremble and his figure falters, and his eyes dim; and his face is white; and he is dying; and his lips move feebly, as if in a dream. What is he saying? Lean close. He is saying, "Christ! Christ!" And John Zebedee is in heaven.

PRAYER

O, Son of God, for the mercy of thy gospel and the condescending glory of the truth, we thank thee. Pour into our hearts the glory of the gospel this morning, and all the mornings of our life, for Christ's sake. Amen.

IX

A SERMON OF THE SKY

“The heavens declare the glory of God.”—Psalm 19. 1

WHEN the heavens preach, everybody must listen. What the heavens say, everybody must ponder; and what the heavens preach is the glory of God.

This word “glory” is not to be defined. I am not saying that dictionaries do not define it, but I am only saying it cannot be defined. Nobody can read what the dictionary says “glory” means without feeling that that is not all “glory” does mean. And you will find if you consult the dictionary definition of the word that it falls flat on the ground like a slain bird. Anybody who has ever had in his soul a touch of glory knows that when he spake the word it was to enunciate things beyond his voice to declare. And I remember so well when at scant intervals I have heard some heart big with God find itself at the limits of its vocabulary, and then on a sudden lurch of inspiration spill out of the heart this word “Glory!” And it was as if God had opened a window in the sky and looked out a minute and thrust the door and the shutter back again where it had been.

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The word "glory" is our "x" word. It is our algebraic symbol in vocabulary, fitted to say that we cannot put into words what we think, and we cannot think what we want to put into words. It means we are out of thought in depth and out of vocabulary in speech. It is the word the intellectuality uses when it would fain fly on out and doesn't know the way. Then we say, "Glory!"

An infinite word is what "glory" is, and therefore its application to God is strictly discreet and altogether apropos. "The heavens declare the glory of God." And this morning I would fain talk with your brain and heart about this ineffable somewhat preached about by the heavens. "The heavens declare the glory of God." And if you mark, mark this, that the heavens might talk about glory, and they do, and the heavens might talk of their glory, and they do, but the heavens do talk of God's glory. The peculiarity, and the pregnant peculiarity, of the Hebrew mind was that it was never satisfied with things. It always ran on like a racing star past things to folks. The Hebrew mind was never satisfied with faculties; it was ever satisfied with personalities. Now, with the Greek intelligence the heavens would have talked about glory. They would have talked about an infinite somewhat of which the heavens spake. Nobody can thrust his weary face, snowed on by the snow and rained on by the rain and burned by the sun, thrust his weary face

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out to the affluence of the utter depths that seem beyond us without feeling this—glory is yonder. The vast silence, the unspeakable loveliness, the unshored spaces, the glorious archipelagoes of light; the listening for the sea waves break on the far-off shore and hearing them not, makes every heart that is big enough to get a big thought, stand and watch and be still and think “Glory.” I would be sorry to believe that any soul were so craven that it did not have the battle breath to drink in the glory of the heavens. I would be loath to believe any soul so fickle that it did not have the steadfastness of purpose to stand in silence and watch until the wonders of the upper sky drenched the soul like an eternal sunrise. And I would be sorry to think any human soul was so unspacious that it could not drink down as into an ocean the infinite deep. And the heavens talk about glory.

But beyond that the heavens might speak of their glory. They own somewhat. Theirs are the stars, theirs are the noons, theirs are the dawns, theirs are the moonlights—all theirs. And the heavens might preach out of their spacious calm and say, “Behold our glory.” That is what the Greeks would have said. That is what the Greek did say. The Greeks made a geography of the heavens; and everybody in this company who has studied astronomy knows that the constellations wear Greek names, and the theology

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and the mythology of the ancient Greeks seem to fill up the entire sky, so that every night or every noon asserts its glory and its eternal springtime loveliness, and the lesser stars bear titles of the Greek alphabet letters; and the Greek stayed there and looked up in the sky and said the heavens declared their own glory. And then, when the Hebrew came and walked out among the starry constellations, he saw it was God that has brought the glory down and let it be, and let the noon light shine on him with its glorious torch. He could not let the solar luster be un-human. He could not let the glory fall in his eyes and ask no amazing, passionate question. But, instead, when he saw the glory, he saw through it the heavenly face as through an open window, and saw Him—Him! And the heavens, to the Hebrew mind, declared the glory of God. That is why the Hebrew vocabulary and the Hebrew understanding and the Hebrew poesy and the Hebrew profundity answer to the human heart. And this race of people, this nation, as it was the nation of thousands of years ago, was never content to let things rest as things. Behind the mathematics they sought the mathematician; behind the door they sought the maker of the door, and behind the stairway they sought the carpenter who built the stair, and behind the constellations they looked for the fingers of fire that flung the stars out into space. Then they called, "The heavens declare the glory of God."

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And to-day, as then, the heavens are not talking about glory only, nor yet primarily about their glory, but eternally and primarily about his glory.

The Heavens Declare the Glory of God Because of their Infinite Space. The heavens are so big. Their spaces are so infinite, because in them miles and mensurations are lost, because the surveyor's chain is like a useless and forgotten torch dropped into the sea of space and never reached by any arm and grasped out again from the sea depths. The universe has been growing since that night or day, or day and night, when the poet looked it in the face and said, "You are glorious." Every day since that day of that man's life the heavens have been growing a thousand miles a second, so to say. When the old astronomers began to touch the universe with their fingers they thought it was spacious, and now it has grown so vastly great—spaces, spaces, spaces! "End is there none to the universe of God?" said the angel in Richter's dream. In Richter's dream, "End is there none?" queried the traveler. "End is there none?" said the stars. "End is there none to the universe of God?" And this angel said, "End is there none to the universe of God." There is elbow room amongst the stars. And, if anybody wants to feel infinitude, walk out into the sea called night and walk through the universe. What spaces there be! There is room in the universe, they say, for a billion

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suns. And the latest astronomers have said, "Suppose each of the billion suns had eight planets, as our sun has—nine billion orbs, and they never touch fingers and never hit each other through the universe, cycle on cycle, cycle on cycle."

Room, O room for the constellations and room for God, who built the constellations. It is wonderful to walk out along through the universe. If you wanted to get to the Milky Way, for instance, which is like a silver zone, bounding the created universe as far as we can see, and at the center of these is a little bit of silver light we call the earth, blinking like some new-lit star which does not know whether or not it will succeed to burn; if you walked out at the rate of a mile a minute for two billion years—only two billion years—you would only then be getting to the frontier of the starry galaxy. Two billion years to the front gate of it, and the universe of it lieth beyond, beyond. God wants room. He won't be shut in. He cannot be hidden on the earth. He cannot be holden in a star. He will not be housed, except in infinite spaces. O star, out on the farthest frontier of the astral universe, what saw you as you went speeding by? And the answer is, "No end to the universe of God."

Some time when you have a minute's leisure, and you want your soul to tear its shackles off from eyes and mouth and fingers and brain, then take some astronomical map of the nebulae and see how their Roman wheels are lit and they

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flame around as if God set some strange wind blowing it till it seemed it would shatter all its light. What is it? O, it is suns on suns; systems on systems. And when you take an eighteen-foot telescope and point its eye yonder, your faculties are blistered, your very soul hammered down, you are so little. That is the out-of-doors of the universe. You know, in this world we say out-of-doors at the house. Whose house? At your house, at my house. "Where are you going, son?" "Outdoors, papa." "Where are you going, lassie, when the spring is blooming: where are you going, lassie?" "Outdoors, where the wild flowers are coming." Where is God going? Outdoors, where his flowers bloom and the stars are lit. And God is snuffing out the stars now one by one outdoors. Did you ever watch a comet? What is its name? In my lifetime and your lifetime I remember a comet that soared up above the heavens. And I used to watch it as if to say: "Where have you been and whither going? You stranger of a strange world, how long have you been here and whither go you?" And the comet stood and took our picture so he could retain it ever in his memory; and where is he going? On in the universe. And Halley's comet, which appeared years ago, has gone out of the sight of the strongest telescope man has known how to make. Gone on, to see where God has built his retaining wall at the edge of the universe; and no human eye shall see the comet again. It will thrust

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against no barrier. There are no fences known to mark the end to the universe of God. End is there none to the universe of God. Whither going? On to infinitude.

Ah, whose house is infinite? God's. And why does he have so much space? He is so big. What is God's outdoors for? So men's souls could come out and stand on the frontier and lean over in his universe. And, say, how far is it? And the answer is: "The angel has lost the surveyor's tool and the theodolite is blistered by the heat, more than tropic heat of suns, and the end is there none to the universe of God." The glory of the spacious God—I wonder what human heart could stand up against that blistering glory, no end of room, and not feel as if he himself were neighboring to strange and infinite things. And it will evoke the wonder of you, aye, and the interest of you. And there is the sun wheeling and well ordered, but when he sees the infinite universe he will say, "I am journeying thither, thither, thither!" Can any man when he sees the spaces of the infinite think death will give him his quietus? Can any sane soul, when he knows that, want only a little patch in the back-door yard of his house and stand and scan it and think he is meant to die and have only a burial ground in his own yard? But God doesn't deal so with folks. He has an infinite spaciousness and says, "Be good, and I will take you to be with me forever. I will take you to be

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with me forever, to voyage on the seas of the space where my island groups are islands of suns, and where my heats are amazing beyond the power of any test tube to measure. Come with me." O, God!

And the Heavens Declare the Glory of God's Fecundity. Do you know why God made so many stars? Well, I will tell you; he made them for fun. Making stars is fun to God. Did he sweat building them? Never once. Did he sweat lighting their torches? Never once. Did he plan with infinite laboriousness where to set his swinging flames? Never once. Just did it for fun. There was a man, his name everybody knows—every boy body knows, and I wouldn't wonder every girl body knows, because what the boys know every girl is certain to catch to. And his name was De Foe, and he wrote Robinson Crusoe, and besides he wrote only two hundred and forty-nine other books. What made him write two hundred and fifty books? Don't you know? He had them in his head and had to get them out. He had to dispeople his brain, that is all. Did he have hard work? No. Fun. And if there is a boy who has got so little of the fiber of boyhood and the future manhood in him that he could read Robinson Crusoe and not be elated with it, I never saw the lad, and hope I never shall see him. And this man De Foe spilled that and others, others, two hundred and forty-nine others, out just to relieve his creative faculty. The poets make poetry for fun. They don't make it because

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it sells well, because poetry is never at a premium; nor to read, because not many folks read poetry. It is only one man in ten thousand who cares to read the poet's book. But they write poetry because the burning fluid is in their sun and the sun has got to spill the burning fluid out.

And God created the universe. Why? No reason, only he had it in his brain to do it and in his heart to do it, and he lavished his splendor. Supposing anybody started out in the springtime, clean in the tropic South in the early spring, and the flowers began to bloom out in the shadows of the woods, and he began to pluck the wild flowers, and said, "I will run the wild flowers home and pluck them, going northward till the last flower blooms in the meadows of spring." And he began his journey northward, northward, northward, and as he plucks the wild flowers the next wild flowers say, "Come and pluck us. We are blooming too. Be not partial to the flowers of the South. We are blooming too." And northward, northward, and northward, while the wild flowers still bloomed with their perfume in the South, far in the North, where the trailing arbutus trailed under brown leaves and sent its perfume out in the dark. And the traveler of the springtime at the last flash of summer time we find on the journey on the far Northlands neighboring the pole; and the wild flowers of the summer are there. Won't God ever quit having spring? No, never quit having spring, for "there everlasting

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spring abides.” When spring here grows into weary autumn, spring there is only flashing into its first wild flower. Will God never quit making wild flowers? No. Why? Because they are for tired-out people’s hearts. Wild flowers for the reaching of people’s fingers and for the plucking of people’s hands. Wild flowers—why did God make so many? O, he liked to. Won’t he ever get tired of it? Never will. Now, the heavens are a place where his wild flowers are stars, stars on stars, stars on stars; and there are some four thousand stars visible in both hemispheres, north and south; and most of us live in one hemisphere and don’t want to go to the other; and the most stars we see when our eyes are most faithful will be about half of five thousand—twenty-five hundred stars. And in the old days God said to Abram, “Look into the sky.” And God said, “I will make thy seed multiply like the stars.” And Abram looked up into the skies and saw the stars.

And to-day—how many to-day are in the heavens? When I was a boy they said there were one hundred million suns. And then I read you this morning from the recent astronomical conclusions there are one billion suns, and nobody knows how many more. Suns, suns, suns, stars, stars, stars. How many? Don’t know. Do you have to? I didn’t think of that. We don’t know, but that is neither here nor there. Who is making them? God. He likes to, and that is why. Sometimes people say to me: “Why is God making

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so many suns? Hasn't God lots of worlds like this and lots of inhabitable worlds like this?" And I say, frankly, "I don't know. I have been busy lately and don't know; and I don't care. God has got something to do and is making suns. And he is flaming flowers out in his flower gardens." O God, how many suns hast thou? And he says, "Wait and see." It won't do to find out everything here. What will we be doing throughout eternity without any schoolmaster and without any schoolhouses to be in? And he says, "Wait and see." And so many, many, many suns and stars. Now, day after to-morrow, likely enough, some observatory somewhere will install a new telescope and then the new telescope will reach down into God's pockets and take out a new universe. It is not the question of God quitting; it is the question of us getting out where God is doing things. O, brothers, brothers, did you think about this? Sisters, sisters, did you love this that God did with a lavish generosity? He doesn't get tired. He doesn't pillow his head for a night of sleep. He doesn't weary. He loves it. End is there none to the fecundity of God. The heavens declare the glory of the infinite artisan God. O God, what are you going to do? "Some time I will tell you. Some time." "To-night?" "No," he says, "not to-night." "To-morrow?" "Not to-morrow," he says. "Next day?" "Next day," he says, "I will tell you. I will take you out and show you."

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And Then This Universe Tells of the Vast Machines God Can Make. I wouldn't think much of a man who wouldn't go to see the biggest engine in his town. I always inquire in the town where I am where the biggest stationary engine is; and then I go out and see it, and stand around where it does business, and it doesn't stop to talk with me a minute, but just says, "This is my busy day." Great, brawny, fearless, majestic arm—swing, swing. O, I would like to have a chance to go with the Great Mechanic into his workshop and see him make a stationary engine. And then I would like to go into God's machine shop and see him make a locomotive engine. "What are you doing, O God?" He says, "Making things; making things."

Now, you know, here on earth, when people say, "I am going around the world," that sounds big. And it is big. It is quite a chore. It takes time and cash—and they are suggestions. You know about the world—it is twenty-five thousand miles straight around. Quite a journey. You have made it, have you? O little traveler! You have not been anywhere yet. The sun out there—it is only ninety million miles away. Some time, when you want a little summer's vacation, go around the sun. It is only one and a third million times bigger than this world. Go out and try to journey around it a while. But what is the sun? It is only God's candle; and he has got suns, if you go out and look for them. Our system, our solar

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system, our Jupiters, Saturns, Mars, our Venus, and the rest of the company—they are little folks to God. And he has lots of big folks in the far skies. O sun! you are so mighty. And when the sun some day goes up and stands beside some of God's grown-up suns it will be like a kindergarten. O God! you are so big. Won't you ever quit doing big things? And he shakes his head, because he is going to make big folks out of some of us; and that is bigger than making suns. No limit to the suns of God—none.

I was reading the other day about the weight of suns. Some people are peculiar. If they don't weigh enough, they put some on; and if they weigh too much, they take some off. And it is funny to see the people weigh on the scales, and jump on quickly and jump off quickly and say, "I weigh so much." I wonder if we could put the sun on the scales. I wonder if we can. It doesn't weigh much, only two octillion tons, that is all. And it is one of God's baby suns. I should like to see one of his grown-up suns, wouldn't you? End is there none to the magnificence of the enterprises of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God."

"The heavens declare the glory of God" in that *Never Yet a Star Ray Lost Its Way in the Universe*. I think I will confess in this company that as amazing as these matters are of which I have been prone to speak this morning, none of them seems so utterly confounding, so passing all intelligence

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as this—that a billion, quadrillion, sextillion, octillion million miles and not a star ray is lost. It takes Sirius twenty-two years to get a light ray to us and that ray traveling at the rate of one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles a second—running full speed for twenty-two years every second. A Polaris ray also is on the dead run, never stopping to wipe the sweat from his forehead or stopping for a crumb of bread for his journey, or stopping to put in a lump of coal so that the engine may not stop for a moment, and it takes fifty years for that single ray of light to come to us. And they are close neighbors to us. There are stars whose light has been on its way twenty-seven hundred years, and moving at the rate of one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles to the speeding second. And the stars that are back of that we cannot look at because our eyes are too weak, and we cannot see so far, and if we only had a little stronger vision we might see stars whose rays have been on the road for twenty-seven thousand years and lost not one ray, though they have crossed the track of thousands and ten thousands of suns. But if you mark, when we stand out on nights or sit on the porch on summer nights and look at the stars in the heavens, look at the blazing stars, they haven't lost one spark of fire. Don't you know that when they run an electrical system they have to have reenforcing stations here and there where they reenforce the electrical current. And God's light current loses

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none of the sinewy strength of its sinewy hand, and the starlight comes and you take the picture of its star from its grain of light that came to us, and you tell what the star is made of by holding your hand out and catching a little of the starlight dust in your palm. "That is what the stars are made out of." That is what the spectrum means. The solar spectrum means that far-off suns are made out of so and so, and the solar spectrum tells what God kindles his fires with. And in the spaces the starlight never wearies, never loses weight, never loses power, never loses faculty. It is what it was when it began. O, you heavens, you heavens, what are you up to? And they say, "We are declaring the glory of God." And you people, you people, you make a stumbling-block in the heart out of God's keeping a single soul out of the thing we call death for the thing we call eternity. You think it is a big thing for God to keep a man forever. I wonder what it is for Him who can keep the stars through a billion years, through a billion miles? O, God, you won't let my dim light flame in darkness, will you? You will give me a chance to shine in eternity, won't you? And God only points at the stars. And by and by when your worn heart has been dejected awhile he will say, "Does a ray get lost, beloved?"

O soul, soul, "The heavens declare the glory of God." The poorest torch of trivial star hath its continuity of fire and light. O soul, God would

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wash all the stars forever out and drench them with eternal rain rather than your light should die. You were meant of him to live forever.

The heavens, ah, the heavens—what are they doing? Preaching. Who said they had a license to preach? God did. God gave the heavens license to preach. What are they preaching about? About the glory of God. What is their sermon? Their sermon is “The glory of God.” Elbow room in the universe for God? Yes. Faculty in the universe and behind it? Faculty in the universe, God faculty. Aye! God’s universe has his name burnt into it? Aye, aye. God doing big things? Yes. When? Every day. Why? Because he likes to. When is he going to stop? Never, never. And then you people make strange of miracles, do you? You think it is a wonderful thing for God to turn a dead man to life, do you? Will people allow this preacher to suggest in the blessed shadow of the stars he cannot look at and dare not, that they do not know how big God is? That is what ails us. We don’t know how big God is. He strides out in the universe and life and immortality come to the light in the gospel. That is to say, we get light because God is around. If I were you, folks, I wouldn’t set serious limit to what God can do when he wants to, lest your faculties be burned to charred dust. Let us know enough to let the heavens talk and reiterate, “God is bigger than you thought, God is bigger than you thought, God is greater than you thought.”

X

THE RAINBOW AND THE THRONE

“And there was a rainbow round the throne.”—
Revelation 4. 3

THERE was a stranger sightseeing in heaven, and fortunately for us he was a poet. It is no use sending anybody out anywhere to see sights and come back and tell us what he saw unless he be essentially a poet. They are the only people who can see things that can ultimately say things. And this poet, John, was for the first time in heaven, and with reverent mien and eager heart and wondering eyes and with alert, invigorating intelligence he was looking around in heaven, to see what he could see.

Now, I think it to be a frothy intelligence that affects that it doesn't care about heaven. People that care about heaven most are very apt in experience to love the earth best. Those hard-and-fast folk who assert that this life is good enough for them, and the less heaven talk the better they like the talk, are giving a sorry credential to their own interior life. You do not love the ground less because you love the sky more. You do not love the mountain less because you love the blue that bathes the mountain summit more. You cannot stay here always. Everybody

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knows that. There is not an intelligence so totally imbecile that doesn't know that life only lasts over a night and over a day. To speak in the language of the ephemerality of time, we shall none of us live to see a third morning's dawn and daylight. Just beyond the hill, climbing up it without sweaty toil, just over the hill is the end of the road. Just under the hill is the tunneled bridge, black at noon. Just over the hill and down at the hill's foot trudges the river of death. And in view of that, it is strangely shortsighted talk for men to bluster with their fussy words and say the world is good enough for them. Why, heart, you cannot stay here. A man says: "I like my house well enough; I don't want another house. This house just suits me. I like the street it is built on, and I like the view from the front windows, and I like the town it is built in, and I like the soil that is under it. I like it." Ah, but, friend, you miss your mark. You do not speak to the question. You should be called down by the chairman of the meeting for speaking off the question. The fact is that next May Day you are going to be put out. What boots it to talk about how well you like the house, and how you mean to stay in the house, and it is good enough for you, when you have got to move? The owner of this house you live in is coming back from across seas and he is going to occupy the house himself, and you have got to move out. So that wisdom will lead us to this: We love the earth we are in; we praise its

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windows on which shine the risings and the settings of the sun; we love its views where the lake rollicks in the storm and grows placid when the winds are whist; we love the blue sky with its deluge of June glory and the gray sky with the rapture of December on its frozen cheeks. We love it, but, ah, me, we are not going to stay with it always, and we are to be moved out. And blessed are all such as have heaven for a home and heaven for a definite engagement, and heaven for a definite location, and heaven to dwell in forever, and even to dream of a little even now. And this poet, John, when he looked about and saw much, saw one strange thing—and you may certify always that the poet will set on the striking thing. He will see the central thing. The rest of us, maybe, get cluttered up in our logic, and impressed by the multiplicity open on display. But the poet soul will light on what is essential. He will get at the credentials of things. And this poet saw what he never thought to see in heaven—a rainbow. Ah, beloved, would you let me put up the rainbow the poet John saw in heaven, put it over your heads and let it arch your sky with its wondrous purples and its changing dyes and its rapture it might have on it? It won't hurt you; it might help you.

Do you know that heaven is so strange a country that we are in danger of getting lonesome in it. You say, we will never get lonesome where Jesus is; and I think you are right. But still we are home people anyhow, and we get used to things,

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and we like where we put our pictures and where we have arranged our bric-a-brac, and even where the piano is put, and we like to go in and walk around and say: "O, it looks so home-like now. We have been wandering a while, and have been traveling yon and there, but, O, doesn't this look comfortable?" And the woman takes the hat pins out of her hat, six to ten of them, and puts them in her mouth for a minute, and takes her hat off and lays it down in her lap and jabs the hat pins in and sighs a long sigh that is like regal comfort; and when the woman gets her hat off and the pins in it, everybody feels, we are at home now. And it is so comfortable, isn't it, utterly comfortable, with the old home things in the old home places. And heaven; we won't have anything there where we put it.

It is pronounced by those who have seen it to be a new heaven. There are no scuffling seas. "There shall be no more sea," saith the Book, and the man who wrote it. No gales are there with delugings of rain; no tears are there with their soft spray to wet the cheeks and drip upon the lips and taste upon the tongue. No pain, nor any fretting, nor any care, nor any mourner's garments, nor any litany of pain, nor any widow's weeds, nor stooping widow's frame, nor any old man going to look up his grave and saying with tremulous, wondering old-age voice, "Isn't it here we put her?" None of that, thank God! All gone, gone, like a tale that is told. None of that there.

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And, don't you know, in such a new world we are strangely apt, in its very unfamiliarity missing everything we had, seeing nothing we know, to get a little homesick? And so God has a rainbow in heaven so there will be something up ready for us to look at that will look like home. We have all seen the rainbow. When the storm swooped and the winds blew and the tree boughs leaned from the storm and the scowl was yet upon the clouds, then, O then, when the sun was nigh to setting, somebody sang, "There is a rainbow!" and we looked. True, true. And in the unfamiliarity of heaven there will be the familiarity of our old, stormy world. A rainbow! And he looked up, and I shall not think it strange that he talked about the rainbow. On my heart, I think it would be strangely strange if he hadn't. He said: "There is a rainbow here. O, home, home!" The old landscape, and the old scowl of cloud and the home feeling come before him. A rainbow. And then the poet ran toward it, hugged his arms around the rainbow's earth-pitched arch, hugged at the arch and said, "You are here, you are here."

Do you know that if a man were born and bred on the desert—great stretches of yellow sand; morning blazing on the sand, noon burning on the sand, night dawning on the sand—and he had been used to that, that only, all his life—used to the parched lip, used to the dry water course, used to the brookless brook, used to all that—and then were tossed on some strange adventure,

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with hunger in his heart, and went out of the desert for the first time, and came to where the laughing water brooks gurgled and sang, and where the hills sprang high against the blue and leaned their greenery up to heaven, and where the wheatfields were yellowing against the slant of field, and where the birds he never heard or dreamed of were singing, don't you know that the desert-born and desert-bred man with the desert heart would have a little choke at the throat on seeing there was no home look there?

I keep over home in a book—you can't borrow the book, remember that—I keep over home in a book a sprig of sagebrush I plucked in the desert; and now and then my heart, that is not desert-born but hath the instinct for the lonely, naked stretch of the undrenched world, wants that, and then I go and open the book and smell the sage, with its bitter pungency of odor, and then see I Nevada stretch yellow miles on yellow miles, and I see Utah's blistering, sunny waste, and only a bouquet of sagebrush here and there. And some people out of the desert would feel lonesome if they found themselves in a garden where the odor of the rose is mixed with the blessed breath of the blue sky, and need just a sprig of sagebrush of the desert to remind them that here also they are at home. And when this poet got over to heaven and saw a rainbow he said, "There is a rainbow in the sky." And he felt at home.

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And he saw a rainbow in the sky. He saw no cloud. How could there be a rainbow when there was never a cloud? Ah me, ah me, that is the beauty of heaven. Here there is never a rainbow save with the cloud, and there there is never a cloud, but just a rainbow kept. That is how you are to reckon with heaven, beloved; that heaven is the place where the good things stay forever and where the bad things have never admission. Isn't that worth while? Isn't that song worth the balm of it that the storm clouds are banished from heaven, but the rainbow is set up forever? Long since, with the drowned-out world, when the man that had much of his fortunes ruined and the world seemed nothing but dismal drownings when he came through it, God said to him, as he saw the rainbow arch, "While that stands up against the sky, take hope;" and when you get over past the deluge and the storm, past the dash of rain and wash of furious mountain torrents that lunge through the gorges, crash, and drown the world—over there, when all of this is past, there will be the rainbow, the everlasting hope that says that tempests are of yesterday, but the calm and the rest and the hope and the song, shall abide forever and forever. The rainbow lasts. O, isn't that good? The storm cannot stay long. It quits with the morning and the night. Beloved, some of you folks need to remember that the storm is in its nature temporary, and you need to remember that the calm that comes after the storm is in its nature eternal.

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Don't you think it would put fiber into your brain, don't you think it would put holy battle into your brawn, if you ever remember that the bad things won't last very long. The earth things are bound to be only a little space, but the heaven things, they are bound under an oath of God to last, last, last. How long, every day? Yes. All day. All day clean through, clean through. How long is that day? It hath no end. O, rainbow, rainbow, standest thou with thy glittering glories and thy remembrance of rain? There is no rain here, but there is a rainbow here. Honestly, I think the things that hurt the heart now by and by will only furnish the substance out of which God shall build eternal rainbows for the soul. No storm, no. No black cloud looming on the far-off Southern sky. No stormy mountain ranges of the black tempest swelling up against the dome of heaven. No fleeing, flinging lightnings zigzagging in the storm. No. No rush of tempest winds. No. No broken forests and denuded earth. No. No hailstorm and no wicked winter wind. No, no. Only the rainbow keeps. God makes an immortality for a rainbow, so that men might know that the storm is not as consequential as it acts.

You know storms have a way about them like some people; they are so blustery and consequential and when they come around we feel, "My sakes alive, my sakes, you are here, are you?" And the storm, bustles so and acts so outrageously

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mighty that you will think it owns the earth. But, pshaw, no. It is just a minute long. It is just a minute long, not quite that, but I am putting it at the long range. But the rainbow, it is immortal.

And the rainbow yonder is a subtle suggestion that there is a sun. O, I think, beloved, that we never shall be able to exceed the essential poetry of this great, beautiful book, the Bible. "They have no sun there," said this observer. John, the poet, was immensely impressed with the omissions of heaven. There is no sun there, neither candle nor any moon nor any star, but just the morning star. One star in that firmament. No sun. Well, but how could you have a rainbow without the sun? Now, anybody knows what makes rainbows, the marriage of storm and sunlight. There is no rainbow where there is no sun. The thing that makes the rainbow is the storm gotten at by the sun. No sun there? A rainbow there? Yes. How is that? Has this poet forgotten to be scientific? No, hold a minute—hold. What is the significance of the rainbow in heaven when there is no sun? Answer, it is a subtle suggestion that Christ is staying at home now. A subtle suggestion that He who is the sun is nigh, is in this man who remarked the rainbow where the sun was not set up, and is a way of saying Christ was there. They have no sun there, for the Lamb was their light. O, now, now, my heart, now, there will be rainbows when the Son of God is there and when the Lamb of heaven maketh light. And the subtle

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suggestion is of the presence and the saying of Christ. And I defy you to have Christ around your home and to have Christ around your heart without having light around. And God has a rainbow. He makes his rainbow come to stay, and there will be everlastingly the rainbow arching the throne because Christ is the light that is above the light of all the suns there are. And O, John, sweet poet, we bless thee thou wast on a holiday, a strangerman in heaven to go and look around as strangers do, and sawest there is a rainbow around the throne. Where is the sun? "And the Lamb was the light of it." There is the sun.

And did you remark that the rainbow was around the throne, from which we may honestly deduce this conclusion; that there is some relation, intricate truly, but absolute as truly, between the throne and the storm. The throne, that is where the rainbow was, did you note? The throne. You and I, if we had been dreaming, and John, if he had been dreaming, would have put the rainbow at the background. That is where we are used to seeing rainbows here; they are at the edge of the sky, but everybody knows that the throne is in the middle of the house. The throne, palatially considered, is in the center of the palace.

And this throne, there is where the rainbow is, not yonder. What is this? What is this, talk? What is this, theorizing? What is this, poetastering? None of that, just saying the true word.

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The rainbow *is* around the throne. Can you get the throne without a struggle? No, you cannot. Now, that is the end of it. Thrones are not things you are born to, but things you go out and earn. To tell the truth, who is on the throne? Christ is on the throne. How did he get there? O, he fought his way to it. Fought. Christ was no pacifist. Who is here? Life. Who is here? Death. Who is here? Prosperity. Who is here? Energies. Who is here? Hell. Here is the fight. And you know if you have read the story of Christ, that he came up through great tribulations, came up where? Why, don't you know, he came up to the throne. I don't think a throne is worth a trick of froth on a dying seawave if you don't go out and earn it. That is my mind. But the lordly throne with the rainbow around it, says that the throne is related to the storm; and, bless God and thank God, the storm is related to the throne. And you will find out, beloved, in my humble belief, that when you come at this right it will be blessed, blessed, like beatitudes told through, that our tempests and our perplexities and our defeats and our great toil that make the beads of sweat to stand and then drop from the face are inextricably related to the throne on which we are to put ourselves. O, heart, O, heart, the throne then!

What art thou at, soul? Hard at work. Can't look up? "Look up a minute. Look up a minute." "Can't. I am digging a grave here,

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and I am digging a trench here, and I am digging a pathway for the street car here, and I can't look up." O you fellow, hard-worked fellow, look up! And he says! "What for?" O, to see the rainbow around the throne. That is what for. "O!" And then he stands and looks at the rainbow around the throne for a minute, and says: "Whose throne is that?" "Your throne, friend." "Whose rainbow is that?" "Your rainbow, friend." "O," he says, "thank God!" And then he digs harder. And then the people who go by him see the man digging a grave near him and singing while he digs. Why? Because he has seen the throne and the rainbow. Nothing earthly appeals to him. O, beloved, if you have a stormy passage, remember, remember if the raging tempest clutches you and snarls at you and maims you, never mind now. It is the maimed folks and the people that are scarred and bitten into by the rabidity of years like the mad-dog bite, if they hold to it, who are getting up into their throne.

Say, poet, poet! Here, you, you poet, John, you poet, poet, I have never heard of a poet coming from Patmos before, but you poet man, stay a minute. Wait. What did you see? And he said, "I saw a rainbow round about the throne." And we left him standing and looking at it.

XI

THE BLACK MAN AND THE CHRIST

THE SEMICENTENNIAL ADDRESS OF THE FREEDMEN'S
AID SOCIETY, DELIVERED AT ST. PAUL
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CINCINNATI,
OHIO.

“That he [Christ] by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”—Hebrews 2. 9

To a thoughtful mind and to a manly heart this must appear a momentous occasion, because it has to do with a race. Nothing on this earth is of any special importance save man. God built the world for him, and if man moves out of this world, God will dismantle it like an unoccupied house. It was one of the weighty sayings of Mrs. Palmer recorded by her husband in that fascinating biography of her he penned, “Nothing counts but people.” The novelists know that; the dramatists know that; the historians know that; the school teachers know that; the preachers know that. We have passed that station on the road where one class of supposedly superior people counts, and are running into the station where all kinds of people count. A novelist entitled his fiction, “All Sorts and Conditions of Men.” It is the title of the world’s most momentous interest.

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Some men have inherited Plato; all men have inherited Jesus; and Jesus, not Plato, is Lord of the society of the planet now and of the society of the future. Plato is like a tale that is told: Jesus is like a tale which is just barely begun in the radiant telling. Wherefore, Humanity's thrilling narrative is only beginning to be recited.

A race! What an electrical word that is, shot through with light and flame! A race—a huge block of men, a kinsmanship by blood, by history, by suffering, by shipwreck, by survival. What a vivid, vital thing a race is! How weighty like a mountain range and, like a mountain range, cold and bleak and dangerous and high and sunlit and wide with health and cooling with its pines and streams—a Great Divide of History and Civilization. A race is a momentous thing and an august thing.

We are here to-night to look a race in the face and take a race by the hand and give a smile and a word of cheer to a mighty race at march toward the what it is to be.

It is hard to quiet the pulse if we get the significance of this scene. This is no pleasant passing of compliments to a little company on whom we wish to confer some blandishments. This is no hour of flattery. This is no hour of mummery. This is no hour for speaking feigned speech. This is no hour for a little rosewater to be sprinkled on the uplifted face of a congregation. This is an hour with a race, and with a race in

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America twice the size of the English race at the time of the Puritan Rebellion, and three times the multitude of the American people at the time of the American Revolution. And a race, which, sum totally, occupies the second largest of the continents.

My friends and brothers, we are this night facing our masters and talking to our masters. These are men of world bulk and world destiny. "It doth not yet appear what they shall be!"

We are not here to patronize this race. There is no man competent to patronize any race but God, and God does not do it. He does not patronize a race. He loves it and died for it. I am vexed with the cheap condescension of small men who would blandly smile on a race as to say, "You do well, for you and I notice your presence and progress, but, to be sure, between us is a great gulf fixed." God may some day wither such little souls with a word, or he may omit the word and use only a look. As touching races we be brothers. The thought is God's and must later or sooner become ours. Toward it we do well to run. God stands on the top of that Hill.

It is the black race we are here to celebrate; the bond-servants of the centuries, the burden-bearers, the men of the wide foot crushed flat with centuries of heavy loads, and with faces burnt black by exposure to the centuries of scorch of suns; the black race hounded for the thousands of years and hunted from their jungles; their black and sweaty

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bulks shut in shipholds like swine, cursed, despised, bought, sold, hearts broken; a race cast down, but not destroyed—thank God, “but not destroyed!”

A race which since the twilight of the morning of history has been the servant of mankind. For how long a time has that word “servant” been a reproach. An underling! A sneer was ever on the lip which pronounced “servant.” “Nobody but a servant,” “a mere servant,” a scullion, a watcher of swine, a server of tables, a doer of kitchen work, a holder of horses, a thing for everybody’s beck and call, a servant whom anyone might smite in the face at will, or lash on the back, dismiss, kick, upbraid, and no word be spoken in reply. It was a long, long road the road where the servants staggered and fainted and fell in the way, and no one cared enough to bury them. The vultures and hyenas rendered that kindly service.

Then came Christ, and himself became a servant, a menial, a body servant to lepers, a street cleaner of the world, a washer of feet, girding himself with a towel and at the same breath saying, “I am Master and Lord,” and “I am the servant of all.”

And on that day the world swung to a new center. At that center it stays. Nothing occurs to remand it to the old desperate littleness and leanness. The servants are the ruling class of history now. We see that since Jesus was here.

The working class has become the ruling class. Russian peasantry has climbed into a drunken

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throne which is the last lordly exhibit of the majesty of the under man. That incredible change would make Cæsar pale as if the Gauls smote him on the helmet. We are in the thick of the new regime. In the days of Louis XVI it was the rule of the aristocrat; in the days of the French Revolution it was the rule of the proletariat: in the days of the twentieth century it is the rule of the democrat. Man has come to the throne. The working man is clothed in purple and holds scepter and sword.

This black race has worked since it was torn from its mother's arms by the slothful and doless. Christ has enthroned the servant. "He that would be chief among you, let him be servant of all." If that be not the setting the black race in the seats of the mighty, I cannot catch the meaning of words.

We celebrate therefore to-night a race that is a world-worker. He is singing, he is uncomplaining; he is a light sleeper; he is not pernickety in the choice of a job; he easily and quickly adjusts his shoulders to any load; he complains little save on the banjo and to God. He is born in the tropics; he has been at the North Pole. That black but not brooding race is present here this night and owns this occasion. The night is his, not ours. The ten millions of black faces—babes, child, man, woman—who have fluttering across their foreheads the shadow of a flag lit with stars, they peer at us to-night. This is their hour. Think not that we

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who seem to sit at this gathering are the real auditors. These ten millions of black Americans constitute this congregation. They gather black as a wide cloud shone through by the white stars, and they are not all this puissant, sweaty, uncomplaining company. More than a hundred million men are footing it this way. Africa is tramping across the highway of the sea. Hither they come. This is one of the days of the Son of man. We who come hither are brethren of that friend of Africa and friend of God who on a night while at prayer in an African jungle was hushed to sleep by God. We are brethren of David Livingstone, and are grandly set to heal the open sore of the world, which is not solely the slave trade. We are set as men to give black Africa its place in the Sun. It must have Sun-up. It must have a book and read. It must have a pen and write. It must have a holiday and sing and play. It must have an open road to a man's chance. It must have safe conduct from mob violence while it walks across the ages. We are here for that. We are not playing here to-night. We are praying here to-night. We are dreaming out loud here to-night. We are singing to-night. We are seeing here to-night that crowd that walks into the world's white to-morrow.

A race saddens, yet gladdens, this event. A race breaks on our vision like a headland of the sea up-plunging through salt sea fogs.

Palpably a race would suffice to make this night sublime; yet, is not that all the biography of this

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hour. This is a race invited by God! A shamed and broken people to whom God has come with laughter on his face and in his voice, and a rainbow in his hand to put above their heads. We celebrate fifty years of the holy Methodist Episcopal Church in its high attempt to bring the black race Christ and comfort and holiness and health, freedom of the brain and heart. Be sure, whoever helps the black man is the perpetuator and benefactor of America. No surer benefactor has arisen under our flag of dawn and stars than the Freedmen's Aid Society. As an effort of American patriotism nothing has exceeded it in felicity of conception and wisdom of execution. But the Society was more than an effort of Americanism. It was a wild exploit for God, like a Columbus venture across the inclement seas. The men are dead who dreamed this dream. I wish they might be here. They should hold high festival. I wish John M. Walden of the craggy yet tender heart were here, who went to Kansas to help make it free and came to Cincinnati to be a brother to a race which for so long had had scant brother save the Elder Brother Christ. No orchid is beautiful as the Freedmen's Aid Society. I can see God standing and looking and smiling as he looks upon its loveliness. It is doing what Christ did when he was our neighbor on the ground. Help for the neediest. Not a Red Cross Society, but a White Cross Society. A giver of hope, a teacher of big but ignorant hands, a teacher of housekeeping and

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homemaking, of farming and building, of cleanliness and health, of political economy of the practical sort; but above this hand-employment a teacher of brain and will, a stimulator of intelligence, a maker of teacher and doctor and preacher, but beyond a maker of women and men. Not alone the teacher of mundane condition of the servant, but the constructor of a human soul, the planting the ineffable in the brain and heart, the giver of courage, the nurturer of valor, of virtue, of holiness, the missionary of the holy gospel of the clean heart, being the prologue to all melody, the giver of a bond-servant race to understand it was a man, and that God had set a rainbow on the black man's path where hitherto had been no visible presence but the cloud at storm—that is the Freedmen's Aid Society. O, Freedmen's Aid Society, what skies of sunshine you have spilled on the black man's path till where his thorn-pierced, naked and bleeding and bruised feet pressed the hard road, the spring flowers bloomed, and by the way the songbirds with their shining wings fluted their melody! O beautiful Society, if ever you have been down-hearted and questioned the worthwhileness of your service, know that in his beautiful book of biography of things that ought to be God has a shining page set apart to thee, the heading whereof is "The Christlike Helper of Helpless Folk Whom Nobody Helped!" And God leans over that shining page.

If the "Son shall make you free, you shall be free

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indeed," is a far-sounding word said by Christ. Nations nor men have caught that majestic import yet. We are so slow to learn. The safety of the world lies only in the possession of the Christ and in the presence of the Christ and in the proclamation of the Christ. Give men Christ, and all things worth the having will ensue. So says Redemption. So says History. Battling millions captained by Grant and Lincoln had changed a race from things to men. They should be sold no more unless they sold themselves. But history had seen race after race sell itself body and soul; and those men who founded the Freedmen's Aid Society had read history enough to know that real Redemption comes only from God and that a race unfettered was a dangerous race until it had a new brave Master whose other name was Christ. So Christian brotherliness took a hand. Christ leaned down and took the black man by his bleeding hand, saying, "I say unto thee, Arise and walk." And brethren of Christ took his hand and said, "Walk this way. This way goeth Christ." So our event is the intrusion of the Almighty and All-loving and All-tender God upon the scene, and men at work with him. God at work upon a race! He had done this before. It was not new work to God. He had wrought so with Israel. He had wrought so with the Anglo-Saxon. He would do as much for Africa. He was not new in this making and remaking of a race; but we were new. Such stirring business was an

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untried instrument in our hands. Bricks with straw had we made, but not bricks without straw. Yet God had spoken, saying, "Help these folks of mine," and the Freedmen's Aid Society sang out, "We hear thee and obey." This night celebrates a conspiracy of God and good men to redeem a great hurt race.

A half century working at being a Christian brother, a half century of seeing how august a business is the making of a race and the tuition of a race by God! The sight has always charged my blood with martial fervor above the beat of battle-drums. I see the race; I see the Christ, and him marching smilingly at its head and smiling, always smiling, looking back and smiling, looking down and smiling, looking forward and smiling, and the black race wiping its tears away and forgetting its age-long wounds and looking and marching and smiling!

These black folks present two aspects on which we do exceedingly well to dwell. First, they are citizens of America; second, they are citizens of Africa. We cannot split this sphere into hemispheres. It abides a sphere. In American Africa resides the destiny of African Africa. The deed is vast, like the making of a world or the sphering of a star, yet by so much the more does the trumpet sound, "Do the sublime deed." We must keep this thing in its magnitude always before the eyes of our mind, of our patriotism, our heart, our world-instinct and endeavor. Whoso helps Amer-

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ican Africa helps America. This is a study in patriotism, a service under the flag and for it. We need not fool ourselves. No program of nullifying the Constitution which guarantees these citizens of America certain rights can long continue. The voice of right has strange carrying power and cannot permanently be stifled. The black man is a citizen. He did not come here, as all of the others of us came here, volitionally to be a citizen. He was stolen and brought here to shoulder our burdens gratis. Never mind. He is here. That is the one assured thing. He is here; he will stay; he has a right to stay; he pays his board; he works his way; one tenth of the bulk of the population of the United States of America is black. That tenth will have the deciding weight, the deciding voice, the deciding arm, the deciding sword. That black giant looms extravagantly vast. His name might readily be Fear. His name is Hope.

In my public life, spent in loving people of every race, I have observed certain things about the black man: (1) He is not a tramp. Not three black men in my lifetime have begged at our door. Thousands of other men have. (2) He is self-respecting. That is what the above credential means. He does not ask alms: he wants work and usually gets it; he expects no favors, and God knows he has received few favors. He remembers his asking bread which has made him the recipient of a stone. If he has little work he lives on short rations, but is no beggar. If some active mind is

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thinking, "He takes things," my reply is, He takes little. That old allegation is anæmic. In Southern States many hotels have no keys, though their rooms often open on the "gallery." The white race may well refrain from speaking of thievery till its honesty improves. (3) He does not solicit the bounty of burial. He does not find his last bed in a pauper's graveyard. A multitude of black men and women in America is insured in some organization to insure his being buried at his own charges. Many people not black might wisely copy this self-respecting ordinance. (4) He is not a socialist. He does not care for the exploit of dividing other people's goods up, nor holding goods in common. (5) He is not discontented. He is not a haranguer. He does not support a walking delegate. For years I have listened to the street-corner orator, the sower of dissension, and have not found the black man much in evidence in the audience, and seldom a congratulator of the vociferous and vituperative speaker. (6) He is never an anarchist. He believes in man, in God, in the divine and human government. Though he has suffered much at the hands of men and governments, he has not grown pessimist, nor misanthrope. He does not decry order and law. He laughs, which is not a deed the anarchist is expert in. (7) He is social. He enjoys his kind. He loiters with his fellows. His make-up is musical, sociable, quick to see humor, and sure neighbor to wholesome laughter. (8) His bias is religious. He

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feels the tug of divine command and divine love. His nature is answerable and amenable to the divine. God thinks this a mighty matter in man or race. So must wise men and statesmen. The black man does not quite square his profession and his conduct. Neither does the white man nor any other man. Conduct, however, will ultimately climb to the altitude of the faith possessed. The black man has a God; and that faith, that love, has all ascent in its feet. No Calvary will be missed in ascent for him in due time. (9) He is not bitter. We could not blame him if he were. He has had abundant, superabundant cause. To his praise, he is not. He has not cultivated the venom of asps. Though poor and often in penury, he does not rant nor grow vicious in discontent. He has drunk sunlight, rather. When members of his race have been lynched (innocent men, it often turned out afterward), I have not heard him speak in bitterness. His gentleness made my heart weep bitterly. (10) He is an American. In this present time of our national life that is not a bad thing to have around. When so many have been traitors and when so many are essentially traitors now, it is stabilizing to have an absolutely true American in our midst. When so many have come hither for the "pursuit of happiness," in which they have succeeded, and possess equality, comforts, riches, and the peaceable pursuit of their vocations without enforced military service, yet these same people are volitional, if not operative,

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traitors to the land which should be the land of their love, then the black men, with not a tithe of their reason to be patriotic, are as firm as a rock for America. No one thinks of a traitor among them. The thought would provoke laughter. They love the flag. Can all say as much? Does any American who knows the black man think that that race would hesitate to die for the flag? Nay. He would run to the battle. He is brave. The black man, as I have seen him, knows no fear. Getting hurt does not worry him. Hardship does not make him peevish. While machinators have instigated our next-door neighbors to stab us in the back, it is good to know that our black American citizens will man every mile of wire fence which hedges Mexico off from us, and that dwellers along the fence could go to sleep without leaving a lamp lit, and wake in safety. The black sentinels would not slumber nor fail. For these reasons among others I count the black man one of America's assets. He works. He laughs. He is American in instinct and devotion. He squares with our sense of law and freedom and with the high sense of our American inheritance as Christians.

But his enemies say he is lazy. Let the white race, whose labor he has so long sweat under, be slow to throw that stone. They say his women lack virtue. Until the white man becomes a gentleman with a helpless womanhood he has diabolically debauched, let that word sink into silence.

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They say he is brutal. While white men continue lynching black men with inhuman delight, let that accusation wither on the lips. They say he is barbarian in his lusts and deeds, to which the caustic reply civilization has to make is that in the presence of deeds in the matter of German warfare, the black man is a saint and deserves canonizing.

No, brothers, the non-black races will do admirably well to observe a discreet silence. Compared with many of them the black man is a petty sinner. I marvel at the intellect of critics of the black man. They should study humor lest they be considered grotesque. I am not here as a panegyrist of the black man and the black woman. Truly, they have their abundance of failings, weaknesses, faults, coarseness, sensuality. I overlook none of these, but solely contend that these are not black-racial: they are racial. All races wade in that sorry bog of pitch. I contend for fair play. I contend that no race known to history has done so much for itself and for its elevation and bettering in so brief a space as these lately liberated black men. If we are not dead to wonder, we shall stand amazed. If we are not dead to progress we shall lift the song. I do not deal in statistics. They are printed and can be read. They read like a tale of adventure and outshine Aladdin's lamp. With so few for them, with so many against them, with the jungle in them with the tooth and claw, with the jungle about them here and every-

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where with its tooth and claw, with their lukewarm friends, with their hostile critics, with their humorously friendly critics lacking profound and prophetic forecast of their destiny, with their own failure to bravely mass themselves to their own self-help, with their flaw of striving to be like the white race rather than establishing the pride of their own race—yet, with all, they have surprised God. My heart aches when I think of the hot marl their naked feet have trodden; but my heart sings when I see the swiftness of their journey till it seems to me they have run with hind's feet and sometimes have taken the wings of eagles.

As history reckons age, they are wee children. What is a half century to God or civilization? What speed did the Anglo-Saxon make? He was club-footed in his doddering haste. Nobody in history hurried much. Israel was distinctly poky. You cannot name a swift runner among all the races. God will set this solitary race in families. He will light their candle, nor suffer any wind to blow it out.

Brothers, what we need in this race ascent is the penetrative sense of God. The Ethiopian was the first missionary exploit out of Palestine. And we read that God was the missionary's chariot to bring him to the mission field. This missionary who had to borrow a ride from God, found himself barefooted near an Ethiopian in a chariot. We shall need to acclimate our thought in history to the Ethiopian in his chariot. He is

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scheduled to ride in the chariot and, for aught we can say, to have a white man for his chauffeur.

I conceive, then, that this ten million Africans in America are the most magnetic fragment of any living people. They hold the more than a hundred millions of Africans in Africa in their molding hands. As citizens of the world we must look this giant in the face. He is not asleep nor paralyzed. Friends of the human race are under oath to be friends with the black race even as American patriots are under oath to be friends of the black American patriot. Africa is the most splendid theater for coming history this world presents and is subject to redemption largely at the hands of these American Africans. Black humanity converted, sanctified, as it has been redeemed by the great kind God, is the theme of this hour. God and the black man, God and the red man, God and the brown man, God and the yellow man, God and the white man—that is history not come to catastrophe, but come to virtue, valor, diligence, frugality, contentment, glory and honor, and to the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

As, in this view, black Americans are not a liability, but an asset, so black Methodists are not a liability, but an asset. We are Christians, though Methodists. We must not forget whose we are and what has happened to us. We belong to Christ, the world Brother and the world Saviour. We are bought with a price, even the precious

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blood of Christ. The cross is on every hill where we are to make our oblation and our prayer. That is not primarily a Methodist doctrine. It is primarily a universal Christian doctrine. There is no color line with God. God is color-blind. I bless him that that is so; for our complexions are such a peevish commodity. We all need complexion powder. I hope God may not give scrutiny to our skins, but look deep into our hearts, as his age-long custom has been; and he will; for was not his Son, after the flesh, a Jew?

Two Methodisms would become one. There is one way to become one; namely, to have fewer than two. Making more than two and calling the product one betrays an ignorance of arithmetic. Either the addition table or the multiplication table could give the process of figuring accurately. The Methodist Episcopal Church is a world church. That is its glory. Such church Christ loved and died for. The world of politics and commerce has come to the world-mood. To retreat from a world church would be to sin against our century and the sense of largeness we have learned of Christ. Now, if two Methodisms are to become one, to ignore the black man, or to snub him would not only be inexcusable in a democracy, but will be sin against God. The black man is a logical and redeemed and impressive part of Methodism. He is one of its most notable missionary trophies and treasures. Methodism is not an aristocracy with one class clad in purple

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and fine linen and the other class a Gibeonite hewer of wood and drawer of water. We are common guests at the common table of our God. The Lord's Supper is our common feast. The Board of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church declared the black man a part of Methodism, equal in privilege and service, and that Methodism wanted it so. In this, the Board understood the General Conference to concur. Who, then, is qualified to suggest to the man with a black skin that his place is preferable to his company? The answer is patent. Nobody is qualified. If the union of Methodism is to be paid for with such a price, the price is too high. Christianity is at the issue; the missionary enterprise of the future is in the issue; the world kingdom of Jesus Christ is in the issue; fealty to the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us all is in the issue; an unfragmentary Christianity is in the issue.

One member of a household by any other of that household, or by anybody outside that household, must not be invited out or down. The table is set. At its head sits nobody but Christ; and who can tell whether the Beloved Disciple is to be white or black in the perpetuated festival of love and sacrifice and salvation for mankind?

Yes, brothers, we must hold with Christ. I question the motive of no church or man. I only mark the motive of God. His face is set. His Jerusalem has in its population "clad in vesture

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dipped in blood” people come from every tribe under heaven; and they are there to constitute one tribe in heaven. We dare not sell our birth-right. For myself, I want to belong to no white church. I want to belong to the church of the living God, which is without spot before him, and whose communicants are from all the races redeemed by the very precious blood of Christ.

Holding a black Conference once, I found a father and son members of it, and I made remark in hearing of the Conference how it moved my heart to see father and son in the fellowship of the ministry, and in the name of Methodism I thanked the father for giving his son to the ministry of the church of our common love. Whereupon he arose and in his courtesy of manner said: “Bishop, this boy is the son of my first love, long gone from me; and I sent him to school. I peddled oysters to get the money. I paid his way. I asked no help. It was my joy. When I am dead I will leave him to the Methodist Church of my love.” And the Conference sobbed, and I with it, and then we sang! Can you think, brothers, that a race which can produce such poetry of fatherhood will not come in due season to distinction, honor, and far-flung benediction to the world?

I want to see the heavenly harpists harping on their harps. 'Twill be a famous orchestra. I hope to sit near and see the harpists' fingers what time they play the tune of Redemption called “The Song of Moses and the Lamb”; and if I sit

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close (being privileged of God), I surely will see the fingers glancing like rain down the strings of the harps—red fingers of America's primitive race, yellow fingers of Asia's farthest East watching the sunrise, brown fingers of India's folk lifting their eyes for morning on Himalaya's crests, black fingers of Africa schooled to lift loads what time they lifted song, white fingers of the race whose joy it was to spread abroad the gospel of the Son of God—all fingers smiting the harpstrings into rhapsody, "Now, unto him that loved us and gave himself for us, be Glory, Glory, Glory!" Hands, hands, the multicolored hands of a redeemed race!

And in the midst of the tumult of harps, heaven shall climb to kiss the feet of Christ!

XII

“THY COMMANDMENT IS EXCEEDING BROAD”

CENTENNIAL ADDRESS OF THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY, DELIVERED IN NEW YORK CITY MAY 12, 1916

“Thy commandment is exceeding broad.”—
Psalm 119. 96

“It is said that when Satan, after his fall, was asked what part of the heavenly life he missed most, he answered, ‘The sound of the trumpets in the morning.’ In the doleful depths to which he had descended there was no sound of jubilation; no *Sursum Corda* was ever lifted there. The heavenly trumpets blow through the joyful melody which one man’s soul, kindled by the hallowed glory of the Christian faith, lifted at the centennial of the American Bible Society in Carnegie Hall, New York, last May, in an address which pressed God’s lamp against each hearer’s heart and made the Bible’s splendors pierce the gloom: an address more affecting, persuasive, winning and effectual in glorifying the Divine Word in the eyes of men than Biblical polemics, apologetics or criticism. It is worth tons of such; it voices the response which the common human heart has made through the ages to the Holy Book.”—*The Rev. Dr. William V. Kelley in the Methodist Review.*

THE CHAIRMAN, HON. JOSEPH H. CHOATE:
Don’t go; don’t go—the best is yet to come. [It is now 10:10 P. M., and several have started as if

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to leave the auditorium.] If Jonathan Edwards had found any in his congregation leaving before the service ended he would have commended them to a very warm place. Now I have the pleasure of presenting to you for the final address the Rev. Bishop William Alfred Quayle, who has come all the way from St. Paul, Minnesota, to speak to you. (Applause.)

THE REV. BISHOP WILLIAM ALFRED QUAYLE: *Mr. Chairman*—I greatly regret to keep anybody out of bed. I am not a dweller in the village of New York and don't just know the time of retiring of these citizens; but the Honorable Chairman intimated at the beginning of the meeting that they went to bed early, and I suppose they sleep. Is it bedtime now? That is what I am interested in specially. (Applause, and several voices—"Not at all!") If peradventure we might stay awake for a few moments I might venture a few remarks; but I don't want to hazard them to those that are asleep or sleepy, though I think, if let alone, I can put 'most anybody to sleep by my talk.

We have witnessed a great matter here to-night, and if we have nerves that are accessible we have had strange thrills. We have been speaking in the language of a century and of a planet and of the kingdom of God. If a century may not stir us, mayhap a planet will; and if a planet will not stir us, surely the kingdom of God must stir us.

We have been talking about the Book that

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proceeds through the centuries and through the earth and to that majestic mystery called the kingdom of God. Now I am to pitch a love note for the Bible to-night. I am simply here as a child of the Bible, to carol out a little music of it from my own heart, and in it, as the robin-redbreasts in the spring carol, not knowing why they carol, but God knows why they carol—because it is spring. So to-night I would lift a note of laughter and of singing because of what the Bible is to me; and what the Bible is to me it is to you, the strange, beautiful Book that goeth everywhither, that knocks at everybody's heart—"Good morning!" You cannot feel of the Bible that it is a miscellaneous Book. It is so personal, it calls you by your name. It is like somebody in a crowded thoroughfare or through the jangle of the traffic of a crowd: when his name rings out, your name rings out and you knew not anyone knew you were there at all, or anywhere at all, but—O, the beautiful Book that comes and calls you by your name and me by mine! O, the beautiful Book of the beautiful voice of the beautiful Christ which cometh and calleth us, like Christ does his own sheep by name! We can no more get along without this winsome loveliness called the Bible, than we can get along without our mothers. Having had them we are miserable without them forever. And we would have to have our mothers in eternity to make eternity seem glad. And I have not found anybody that understood mothers;

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and I have not found anybody that understood the Bible. But mothers are lovely, though misunderstood, and non-understandable; and though we don't know as much about mothers as we might they are lovely to have around and to figure them out and have a chance to wonder what they mean. And the Bible—the Bible is without comment. Why so? The answer—so everybody can become acquainted with it. Why so? So that everybody can say his own word. Is a body's mother's love written? No, it is not written, it is caroled out of her son's heart. He writeth not his mother's story, he singeth his mother's love. He writeth her wonders, not on the gravestone but on his heart and on his hands, washed with his tears; and in the opening heavens when he crieth to God, "O God, for a mother that I had I bless thee!" Even so we lift our voices and our songs for the Book of God that cometh to everybody and says, "*I am Thy Book.*"

Now, I am the son of a foreign man and a foreign woman, and they came over here so they could get to see each other. And they saw each other—that is sure. And by and by, as the woman and man have seen each other, and seeing each other have loved each other, and loving each other have married each other, so my father and mother did. You can fall in love in any language, thank the Lord! (Laughter and applause.) And you can marry in any language, thank the Lord! And this is the thing that I have remembered about

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it, never having known my mother, waiting now and waiting yet, and waiting for some dreamy, shadow face to come—waiting for my mother's face—my father having long since slipped out into the land of the morning to clasp my mother by the hand and walk the shining ways called the ways of the Providence of God. Yet this I know, that my mother and my father afterward met and married, and were beautifully poor, so that I, a Methodist preacher, have never had to learn poverty, having known it from the first (applause). And my father gone to heaven years since, and my mother who had gone before him, from the summits of the Rocky Mountains years and years ago, before I knew her kiss, left no library to me—no other books but only these, *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, and the Bible in two volumes. O me! There are ancestors of great repute for some. As Tennyson has said, "There be those sprung from the midriff of an hundred kings"; but I would rather have been the son of a woman and man who in their penury could not leave to the child of their love, to the child of their heart and hearth, anything but a Bible, than to have descended from all the majesties of history. It were better so. You will excuse me, won't you, though it is sleepy-time and the babies already are abed, and the birds long since have tucked their heads under their wings and are soundly asleep. Here now I lift a note of laughter for the Book of God—just a note of laughter for the Book of God.

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A man some time ago said to me, "The Bible has had many critics;" and he said, "It is made up of many things," as if I, being only a minister, knew none of these matters. O, it is lovely to be ignorant! (Laughter and applause.) And it is calamitous to know so much that you must tell it all the time to everybody. This is a thing I have noticed, that the Bible is wonderful symposium of God, and tells about wandering minstrels and beggars and poets and prophets and kings that lost their crowns (but never thought it worth while to hunt them up). Those sunburned sons of deserts, those laughter-makers of the world, those people turned midnight into the minstrelsy of morning because they saw God! Through them all we got together that strange, composite, eternal music called the Bible. What I rejoice in to-night is that the Bible can by its shaping words make the world anew. (*A voice*—Amen!)

You don't have to have a Congregational minister with it to give explanations of it. And you don't have to have a Methodist minister to exhort on it—thank God! And you don't have to have anybody to speak about it. No, verily. Or not to speak about it—like the Quakers. When they do speak they say something when they talk. And it might be well for some of us to hold our peace until we have something to say. But in anywise the Book of God can be trusted alone.

I have heard the cry of death in the dark, with

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no star to lighten the way, and only the muttering thunder as an accompaniment to the rustle of the sable wings of the Angel of Death. I have held the Book at the dying pillow and the dying eyes shone and saw a great light, thank God! It is good to have a book like that around. You are never alone when you have that Book of books with you. I have preached a good deal about the Bible. I was hired to preach, though really I always knew enough to know that the most important and beautiful part of the sermon was never the sermon but the text. And the text came from the Bible, thank God! I knew that if I planted the text in the soil of the soul, I might go away, but the text would take root and grow, and by and by become like the cedars of Lebanon.

Now I know we do not understand the Bible very well; but, honestly, we understand it better than we think we do if we only use the little sense that we have. I was a farmer boy, and I knew so little that it was lovely, and I never enjoyed anything more than the little I knew, because every day I learned a lot more, and at the end of the day I did not know much, but a little more than in the morning. So every day in the year was a kingdom of prosperity in the kingdom of my knowledge. And I was a farmer boy and I kept the New Testament in my back trousers pocket. And when the horse would stop to consider at the end of the row (laughter)—horses are great on

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ruminating and considering—but when they would stop to consider at the end of the row, I would take the Book of God out and I would read a little Scripture, and then I would parse it, for I had no grammar; yes, I would parse a little Scripture and learn my grammar. What happened to me was this: I did not misunderstand the things very much. I did not have to be rectified very much in my theology. When I got to be theological and became a D.D., and an LL.D., I did not have to change it very much. But I know it was beautiful, and the farmer lad, knowing nothing but the west and the south wind in his face, and the blowing to and fro of the tasseling corn, and the growing of the corn, and reading God's Book out of doors—that is how he became matriculated to literature and history and nature and astronomy and the wide world and the world to come—just because he had the Bible. It was quite a book. I did not understand it much, but I understood more than people reckoned on. And all of us understand more than we reckon on. If we would read commentaries less and trust in His Word more and use our imagination (such as we have), and dream and live over it and pray and hope over it, we would have more sense and better theology. Now, that is the truth.

When I heard the word that this dignitary used it made me so inclined to anger that I repressed it. He used the word "predestinate." That always makes a Methodist angry. He said we

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were predestined. Why! Methodists are predestined to nothing but backsliding. For years I have heard people talking about the immanency of God, and they said we had lost God, and they have said that in the present century people were under the impression that God had become a carpenter and left his job. I tell you, that as a farmer boy in Kansas, plowing the fields and shucking corn, I just read the beautiful Book that Jesus Christ left, that he wrote no word of, and I never got the notion that God had gone away. I got the notion that God was around but was not noisy (laughter). I got the notion too that he was around picking flowers like Jesus did, that he was around loving the babies like Jesus did, that he was around calling people by their first names, as Jesus did; and sometimes as I went along I heard a voice in my ear and it said—"William, William"—and I said—"O, Christ, here—here—here!"

I rather wonder whether if we only took the Bible as a lamplight to the path, love to the heart, a candle to the soul, whether we should not find the rapture that anyone feels in the first intimation of God and the realization that he is ever recurring? The Book of God is right here. You know when the Book of God comes around it is beautiful and wholesome too; and how homely it is, and how usual it is, and how unusual, and how everybody does not mind it much, and yet how everybody minds it a lot (applause and laughter).

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When I was in the old country some time among my ancestors, I could tell where all stood in the social scale by how they bowed to each other; and by the grace of God and the kindness of my parents I was born in a country where you could not tell anybody's social status by how he bowed. You could not tell that the chairman of to-night had been the guest of kings and had feasted with emperors. You could not tell one man's place from another's. Why? Because, before God, in America, we be equal by the Bible! (*A voice*—Thanks be to God!)

You know we Methodists have a habit of calling each other brother. Excuse me—we have a habit of calling all the folks that are not women brothers, and all the folks that are not men we call sisters (laughter). And you know when sometimes I, a Methodist preacher, say Brother So-and-So it may sound foolish; and when I say Sister So-and-So, just as society says "Mrs.," people smile a little; yet I take their smile as a kind of cordiality and thank God. I like it. Why? Because I am following the program of God. (*Several voices*—Hear, hear!)

We be brothers. We be brothers and we be friends of Christ. He said we were his mother and his sister and his brother. Ah me! We be the household of Christ.

And, do you know, I love the Bible because anywhere I go it is such a good sword for fighting

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if fighting be necessary. It is a sword, and sometimes you have to fight. No doubt about it. The members have to be whipped. No doubt that is true. And sometimes the preacher has to be thrown out. That is true. And a sword is very profitable, and sometimes we need a lot of punishment—and it does us good.

And sometimes too we need a light—not the stars. I have traveled many dark nights when I would have traded all the stars for one lantern (laughter). It is not that I do not love the stars; it is not that I have not sat under their drip of beauty; it is not that I have not held out my hands and felt the light of the stars fairly splash upon my palms. Please God, I will feel that way many times hereafter. But when I want to go some place in a hurry I cannot keep my head in the air, but must keep my feet on the ground. That is, where the walking is good. And the lantern is a lamp to the feet. And so the Bible is a lamp to the soul, a light to a path. Where is the path going? It says—“Everywhere—everywhere.” To the grave? No, everywhere. To the grave? No, to look in it. And, into a grave to walk in it; and out of a grave to go past it; and on the rest of the road to eternity. I love that. I love to know that the walking shall be good, by the grace of God, and by the Book of God; and that I shall walk up over the land and come to the sea and shall remember how Christ walked on the water,

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and I shall see his path and walk after him, and the walking shall be good. And then I remember he walked on the land and he walked on the sea and he climbed on the mountains, and the climbing was sweet; and then one morning he got eager for his Father's house, and he walked across lots up through the sky; and I shall see his path and walk thither and find him in his Father's house—thank God! What is that? That is the Bible, the sort of book that calms you through desert regions, stormy water, calamitous disasters—all shortness of breath, all reaching of hands, all calling voices, and all fair haven, where in everlasting rest the anchor drops and the sails go out no more with the ship forever. It is the Everlasting Book of the Everlasting Soul!

Now I am grown up. I am a year younger than Darwin's Origin of Species. I was issued a year after that book, and I have lived through the domineering influence of physical necessity and environment and heredity, and I thank God tonight I have lived through them up into the freedom of the soul. But I always knew it in the Word of God—I always felt the thrill of it in the Word of God. I knew just as well as I knew anything then and know it now; not better, but as certainly, that God had he not meant it would not have said—"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will open the door I will come in." I knew God would not fool me and knock at my door if I could not open it to him. Noth-

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ing like sense in the family. What was that? That was the freedom of the soul.

I had a friend who used to belong to my church, and lived through my preaching; and when a man does that we preachers love him. That is a great triumph for a minister. I had a member that did so and I used to love him—love him—love him—love him! I didn't dare to tell him how much I loved him because he was married, and his wife might get irritated, because a man's wife wants a monopoly of all the loving he gets. He was a traveling man and used to come a thousand miles Sunday to hear his minister. And I used to say—"What made you come so far?" And he would say, "Every sermon you preach I think I must hear—because you will be going away some time." Then one time he was himself journeying, and came to a town, and was so sick that they put him in the house of a friend he loved. And all the time, as he would stumble out of his stupor, he would say, "Is this the station where I get off—is this the station where I get off?" And they sent for his wife, and she came and he would look at her face and not know her, and only say, dimly, "I must get off now, for this is the station, I reckon, where I get out." And they sent for his son. And when the son arrived he asked the same question, and the boy said to him, "Daddy, this is not the station where you get off"; and he looked up and said again, "Is not this the station where I get off?" And then one night when he

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said, "Is this the station where I get off?" Christ said, "Yes, this is your station," and he got off at the station of death; and when he looked up to see the name of the place, the station was Everlasting Life.

O, Bible, stay by me and make it light!

There were a man and woman I knew, once, and all night long she was waiting at her daughter's bedside, and the father of the girl and the husband of the woman was hurrying by the fastest train that ran to get to them; but it came so slowly and the night was so long and the girl was getting ready to go out into the country where the evening has no recurrence and only deathless morning shines with dew upon the flowers and mercy in the wind; and the mother held her hand and said, "Don't go yet, daughter; don't go yet, daughter; don't go yet, daughter—Daddy will be here in the morning." And the poor tired voice of the poor tired girl who had been slowly dying for thirteen years, and was now dying swiftly, was heard to say, "O, I am trying to stay until Daddy comes, but I have not the strength." And then the mother took her hand and said, "You must stay until morning." And then the father came in the morning and the girl had not been able to stay. And the woman lay with her face over the two dead hands of the sweet, dead girl, and the man who loved the mother and the girl most in the world found an envelope torn, and in it was a letter he had written to the wife he loved;

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and scrawled on the back of the envelope—by the hand of the woman who all night long had been attending the dying daughter, saying, “Don’t go, don’t go” (and that dying daughter, the dim voice of the girl saying, “I am trying, but I cannot wait long”)—on the envelope was written in the poor, staggering, stragglng hand, as if written by a wounded wing of a dying bird—“He giveth power to the faint and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.”

O, no, we have to have the Bible yet. So long as people have to live, so long as people have to have strength, so long as people have to die, we have to have the Bible. O, blessed Book! I lift my love note to thee. If any deny, still thou art the language of God. And the wayfaring man, though he were blind and dumb and deaf, can hear thy voice, can see thy shining way and have a lamp to light him into everlasting light (applause).

XIII

THE WHISPER OF THE LORD

“The whisper of the Lord is with them that fear him.”

—Psalm 25. 14

SOMETIMES I take not liberties, I think, with the translation of a text, but I exercise my godly judgment in it, and if a word is susceptible of differing translations, I feel at liberty to take the translation that breathes the thought, the especial thought, the best. That is fair. The usual reading of this text, as you know, is “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him,” but inasmuch as the word *sod* means “whisper,” as well as “secret,” I have chosen to render the passage as you heard me read the text, “The whisper of the Lord is with them that fear him.” In other words, and in sweet words, it is said that God’s people can hear God’s whisper.

If you were to light upon a miracle, I think that the miracle would be this, that God is always wanting to talk to man. I think that makes all miracles, however majestic, seem less great—God always wanted to talk to man. God is always around trying to get to talk to man. Have you ever given that thought heed? Have you ever pondered it? Who am I that God notices me?

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But, ah, listen! listen! Who am I that God wants to talk to me? On the road, in the street, in the business, crushed by the mauling fury of business relations, in the quiet of your home, in the rest of your vacation—God is always wanting a word with you.

It is like a man who has at his door—he is a great man of affairs—a butler, and the people that come and want to talk with the great man are asked by the butler, “Your card? Your business?” And soon the butler comes back and says, “He is busy now; will you be seated and wait?” And if you have ever been in a long string of waiters like that, you have felt a little humiliated. And when a man came in, and when the butler took the card and took it to the great man, and then came out smiling and obsequious and said, “He will see you now,” that made you grit your teeth a little, didn’t it? You had to sit and wait and the second man had immediacy of hearing. Beloved, have you thought of this, that so far as God is concerned in this matter, you are the great man and Christ waits? Always wanting to get in at the door, always wanting to come into the house, always wanting an interview, always leaning with the hand upon the shoulder, saying, “A word with you, friend.” Always wanting to talk to you.

And if God doesn’t get to talk to us, God is sorry! Sometimes God talks to us out loud. We are so hurried, so impetuous, so surfeited with

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care, so given over to the lesser, so inept in learning the larger, that we don't listen to God. And God still wants to talk with us. "A word with you, friend." We are to hold two things absolutely in remembrance: one is that God is always around. God never takes a vacation. God always stays where work is done. God, through the age, through the ages, and through all histories past and making and to be made, stays; whoever else is gone, remember this, man and woman, God won't be gone. He never lies down to slumber, never goes to rest, never changes. That is one thing. The other thing is he always wants a word with us. Always after one body, always saying: "I have a word to say; can you hear it? Can you?" And because we are so obdurate and so occupied and obtuse and so unimaginative and so unspiritual he has such difficulty—nothing so difficult as that—of getting a word with us. Sometimes he calls with the thunder voice. As the big ships on the big sea call to each other across the waters then and now with the megaphone voice, so God has his crash of thunders when he takes his cymbals in his hands and lifts them up before his head and crashes with them. And then we sigh as though the laughters of the world had lost their lute. The war of the rebellion was a voice like that. The eloquence of the rebellion said one thing; it was a thing we ought to have known; it was the thing our covetous eye made us not apprehend, or our lust of gain made us

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not remember. And then God took all the thunder of cannonry, all the sharp ping of hasting bullets and the guns, all the hack of rude swords, and crashed so that the earth put its hands upon its ears and said, "God spoke!"

Well, God said that wickedness cannot last. O thunder of monster guns, O jabbing bayonets' prick, O hack of furious swords, O cymbals of august battles, what is that you said? Sin cannot last, sin does not pay. Everybody heard it. They cannot forget it. Guns, a word with your eloquence: Sin cannot last. "Sin cannot last!" That is what The Rebellion said.

The fall of Jerusalem was one of God's thunder voices. If you have forgotten that tragical episode in the tragic story of a tragic race, refresh your minds in the rereading of it. If you never owned Josephus, buy him for that chapter smeared with blood and spilled on by broken hearts, and fallen over by the corpses of the slain. Read it! Forget it who can. And Vespasian's legions are battling at the gates and Titus's legions are hammering at the walls, and the Roman torch is licking with tongue of flame against the wonder of Jerusalem's builded vastness, and—loss and ruin! Nobody can help hearing that. The dead stumbled to their knees and held out vacant hands and called, "What crash of thunders is that we hear?" The resurrection and the crucifixion were voices like that. Sometimes Sinai blazes out upon the sky. But God does that

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because he has to. He is not a rude vocalist. He is not a clamorous orator. He loves not the gusty speech. But when men won't hear him, then he enjoins us with Sinais or with Calvarys, or with resurrection throes, or with Jerusalem falls, or with rebellion clamors; but this is because we are so deaf. And so God wants to whisper to us!

Now, the beauty of the Book of God is this: on its æsthetic side—for you must know that the Bible has an æsthetic side and is worth while. But not its æsthetic side is the Bible's glory. I called to see a shut-in woman. She should go out no more till death led her out. She leaned above a worn Bible; her hand lay limp over the book. And the face was so sweet and the eyes looked up and out. And I said: "You are reading of the book?" And she said: "The fiftieth time through it." It is sweet, that is it. The Bible is like the love letters you have at home, man. Last night when your wife was gone and you were lonely like—privately, not before the crowd; it is just betwixt you and me—what did you do? Got out the letters, untied the string tied with a man's fingers—you tied them—bungled and botched, took out the letters you had the first, picked them all up like flowers that come from the blooming gardens of God.

And when she said for the first time, "Thine, henceforth, always"—what makes you read them so much? Don't you know what is in them?

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Yes. Didn't she tell you all that is in them with kisses to punctuate the remarks? Yes. What makes you read them? So sweet. Ah, this book is the love letter of God. And the last time we read it is the best time. I love it on its literary side, because it is always disclosing new beauties. When you see Saint Paul's Cathedral at London you see its most wondrous aspect at the first, and the longer you stay the less you like it. We remember it because its silhouette is its wonder and its gift. But the longer you stay at Westminster Abbey the more you like it. It is replete with suggestions; it is replete with wonders. Ah, well, this is that book. O, heart, if you can hear it whisper, you are one of God's folks!

Now, the trouble with the most of us is this, not that we are blatantly bad, no; not that we willingly encourage evil in ourselves or others, not that; not but that we discourage evil, but our trouble is, folks, that we are not sensitive. It takes a big voice to make us hear. We don't get at the whispers. If you said of a man, "He is coarse"—the neck thrust down into the shoulders, the huge jowl, the bulldog chin and cheek, a coarse crude, menacing face—coarse—and you looked at him and were afraid—we would not be invited by that. We are scared of that. We know enough to know brutalities. But the trouble with all of us is we think things are either good or bad. In our category things are catalogued as

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“bad” and “good.” “Bad”—don’t do that; “good”—do that. But goods and bads don’t exhaust the category of life. There are “bads” and “goods” and “questionables.” And when it comes to questionables that is where fineness of character counts. Bad? No. Lie? No. Be poltroon? No. Be vender of inuendoes? No. Wouldn’t do that; but the fine lines—ah, that is it! Anybody can see the glare of noon.

Can everybody see the veins of the flower? Anybody can see the miracle of the rainbow. Not everybody can catch the wonder of the silvery thread of moonlight. We lack sensitiveness. God’s whisper would be fooled away on us. He has got to get the drum and crash! And we say, “Did you speak?” Thunder at us. “I thought I heard your voice.” Ah, what is the matter with us? Coarse, coarse. We like chromos. Etchings are not to our liking, and we say, “The chromos are so fine and colored.” And we are so coarse. If we were able to see the delicacies of God! God hath a whisper. Who will get it? The folks that are close to him. The delicacies of God’s attention are ever given to the people who have the fine grace and the fine character to hear him. The whisper of the Lord! O, wouldn’t it be sweet, beloved, to hear that? The whisper of the Lord, the secret of the opening lips, the leaning face, the blessed eye, the touch of the finger, the pressing hand like a caress! That, that! Ah, now, that is where our trouble is!

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And you will find, rank and file, that the discrepancies of conduct in moral matters come largely through lack of fineness of perceivings. People are too coarse. Their fingers are not apt to feel fine things. Did you ever notice this of the fingers of a man's hands, that though the human foot, with much tramping along the weary wastes, first grows blistered, then calloused, then will outwear the hoof of horses or shoe of man—did you notice that the longer you use the fingers, not the less delicate they are, but rather the more? You cannot make the fingers callous. And the trouble with us in our moral life, in a large degree among the better of us, is that while the coarse is a shame and offense to us and the coarse in plain, palpable speech is unsavory to us, that the finer antipathies in the cause of God we have not had, we do not know.

We are like a preacher who goes to make a call and sees the man with his social-function toggery on and the woman with all her get-up and with her fan ready to make a "debut" into society, and the preacher comes in and he is hale and says: "I am glad to find you at home. I never had the pleasure of seeing you at home before, especially both of you. I am glad to see you." And the woman looks at the man and the man at the woman, both covertly, but the preacher is dense; he doesn't see it. He stays and takes off his hat and the woman says, "Shall I take your hat?"

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And he says, "Yes, yes, I will stay awhile. I am so glad to be here." And the woman says: "It is such a beautiful evening. We are so glad it is a beautiful evening. We were going to a fête with a friend and we feared the evening might be blustery." And the preacher says: "Yes, it is a lovely night. I was afraid I would not find you here to-night." Why, that makes you ache, just to think of it, doesn't it? To think that a preacher would have no more sense, would not have sense to know that the time when people urge you most to stay is peremptorily the time for you to be going. "No, thank you." "You will come again, won't you?" "Yes." A preacher will be delightfully received if he comes again, usually in proportion as he has sense about leaving.

Some people think that an invitation to stay makes them welcome. Did you ever see a man like that? I said a preacher, because I can talk about my own ilk. Why, did you ever see a man like that? The gentleman and the lady, when they came in two hours late at the social matter, said, "Why, do you know"—the woman was the unelected spokesman for the combination—"that a minister called, and, of course, he stayed." And they talked to each other, the man and the woman, on the way. "Isn't it curious he couldn't see we were going some place?" said he. And she said, "Some people never take a hint." Now, I have given that just as a figure. You say it is

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very coarse in the preacher. What is the trouble with the man who would do that? Why, he is not sensitive, that's all. Such people are good-hearted. Yes. Sweet? Yes, likely enough. If you were in trouble, you would like to have them? Yes, likely enough. But if you weren't in trouble, would you want them? What ails them? Well, I will tell you—you know without the telling—they lack sensitiveness. I am saying that as a parable of us and God. We are not sensitive. And when his hand sometimes grips us to his heart we do not notice it. What is the matter with God? Heartache.

Did you ever go to some place, or were you ever on the car with somebody, and occasionally the hand without intent lifted occasionally to the throat? What doing? Why, if you know—you may know and you may not—what was the ailment? There was a sob chocked in the throat. You and I kept on talking and talking and talking. And now and then the hand crept up and the thumb and finger settled on the throat for a moment and then came away. We didn't see it—the sob. O, well, I am speaking this morning of the whisper of God, getting at God's actions, listening to God's sayings, letting God omit the Sinais and the Calvarys, and let us hear him.

Do you know what makes a great many people go off to vagaries in religion? You think they are after variety. I will tell you. It is lack of moral sensitiveness. They don't discover the

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fine courtesies of God. They don't see the exquisite lines in the face of the Almighty. If you read a book, and in it Jesus Christ is called "J. C.," would a fine mind ever read that book again? Never! Never! Why? Note, I said a fine mind. Coarseness like that would nauseate like seasickness. Yet people who think themselves very fine-lined read coarseness like that. What is going to happen? Well, they must get sensitive, so they can see not the great black bands wide as the breadth of the storm cloud, not the thunder of the summer tempest, but they must see the finest line in the spectrum of the soul of God and the spectrum of the soul of man. Do you know what ails people who are led away from a great strong Christ, who hath healings in his heart for the heartaches of the world, and cleansings in his blood for the sins of the world—do you know what leads people away from majesty like that and a capacity like that, and a divinity like that, and an eternity like that, to where the Old Testament lesson is the Bible and the New Testament lesson is the vagabond babbling of a woman who knows little of God or man? What ails them? They lack moral sensitiveness. They don't know a doctor book from an eternity book.

Do you know why it is that a dewdrop far up amongst the woods, when it falls from its tremulous branch and falls into the stream, do you know why the dewdrop strikes out toward the sea? Every dewdrop has the passion of the sea

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upon it. What ails the dewdrop that it wants the sea? Is it because the sea is so impulsive? Is it because gravitation is so vast and clamorous in its calling? Is it because that other world is so majestic? It is, beloved, this! The dewdrop is sensitive to the calling of the earth, and the dewdrop drops from the leaf and drips like a silver voice into the pool, and then it hurries, hurries downward to the sea. Did you hear the voice? Come! Bugle blowing? No. A weird music? No. But the dewdrop heard it. The dewdrop heard the call to come and the answer was, "Coming! Coming!" "Come," "Coming!" In other words, if in us is the finest attitude toward the infinite personality called God, we shall not miss either ecstasies or clamorings or whisperings. "Coming!"

What is a sensitized plate? It is a plate ready for business without waiting. When you have a sensitized plate, how long does it take to take a picture? Quicker than wink. A man the other day was fooling with me and I was fooling with him. He wanted to take my picture, and, privately, I wanted my picture taken, but I never let on, for I have found out the best way to get things done is, don't show your being particularly anxious to have them done. And I didn't say anything at all. But I saw him fumbling with his kodak. I didn't let on at all. And he said, "It's a beautiful day." Didn't let on at all. And he made a twick, and there I was. I was

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certified for the years to come. Didn't take him long to do it. No. Why? Was I a good subject? Well, I was, but that wasn't really the cause.

That wasn't really the cause. The point was that the plate was a good object. The sun leaped past my face to the plate and did the trick. That is all. Now, if life has the fineness when God passes by, here is the picture. You know I think if a man could look at a woman's heart it would make his heart break with joy, because if a woman loves a man her heart is such a sensitized plate that she carries his face upon her heart. And she looks at the plate, and she says: "No, it is not my heart; no, it is not my face. But it is his heart, and I keep it for him, and it is his face." O, beloved, if only we have the sensitized heart we shall catch the impressions of God. The farthest trembling on the air—we should catch it.

I am a friend of the dandelion. You don't like them, do you? Well, maybe you own a lawn. I own none; I borrow a little one. But I like them. Why? O, that is not material now, but that is the story. But one reason why I like them is because they know when the storm is coming without anybody telling them. I have watched fields of the yellow flower beginning to clench their little yellow fists together, as if washing their faces in the sensuous yellow sunshine, and the yellow fists begin to clench together. O flowers, why so soon is it you will cease flowering?

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By and by I shall see the storm coming; they knew it—nobody told them. They felt it.

Have you ever watched the mountain poppies fall asleep and fall awake? Did you do that? When the night is coming then the mountain poppies don't say it is time to go to sleep, but they are fast asleep. It is because night is coming. And I have watched the festive mountain poppies when the light came—why, they are sprier than ever a tangle-headed, freckled-faced boy was on Christmas morning to get out of bed because Santa Claus had come in the night. And these flowers spring wide open. Why? Light is coming. Well, now, that is right.

Beloved, would you let me urge upon your thoughtful mood that thinking things out is not the biggest way? But God wants us to feel things; that is the big way. We people think things out because we are silly and don't know a better way. But in the diviner life people feel things out. And if you read Goethe's "Faust" you will observe that Gretchen, when Mephistopheles came, said, "Henry, I like not your friend." "No? Ah, he is a gentleman, he is good company." "Ah, but," Gretchen said, "I like not your friend." She felt the iron of his heart. She felt the stabbing of his consciencelessness. She knew not the reason; she felt.

Ah, folks, if Christ came upon the road, should we feel him before we saw him? If Christ's lips were moving, should we hear the words before they

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became vocal? Should we? That is all. Some of you folks go to theaters. A word with you, not as to the ethics of it, but as to the sensitiveness of it. If you are systematic theater-goers, I will make one prophecy, just one, that if, when you first began going to theaters, anybody had told you you would have gone and would have seen things you have seen, and sat through while they were being seen, you would have said they were slanderers and would have been angry. And the other night you saw things and didn't even have the sagacity to blush. That is the unconscious hardening to the things that makes us take for granted things that are crudeness to the fineness of the soul. Now, that is an illustration. There are plenty of things everywhere. But God is whispering. Ah, now, what was it the psalmist said? "The whisper of the Lord is with them that fear him." The whisper.

One day this week I was going along the road and I heard a woman cooing, and I saw her wheeling a baby away from me, and I stepped up right briskly, for when babies are on the road I always take a peek at them. That is my way; I like that. So I came up, and as I came near I heard her saying: "That is it; that is it. Talk to mamma. That is it. It is talking to mamma." I didn't hear any talk. She said, "That is it; that is it; talk to mamma." I heard no talk. And I stepped a little fast. Was going on, and then I heard when I got right abreast of the baby,

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I heard just the daintiest little bit of a coo, half a whisper and half silence. But from behind the baby came the voice: "That is it; talk to mamma. That is it. Talk to mamma!" O God, talk to me, to me! If I could get the whisper, then I would be a man, wouldn't I? I could wear the *toga virilis* of God. Then you would be a woman and hear the whisper of God. The calmness of his speech would quiet you like perfume.

You know that story of the days when Lucknow was undefended and when bloody-handed murder rioted, and the Scotch lassie said, "The Campbells are coming!" "Nay, nay, lass, nae coming. What ails you?" They looked at her and thought the long fast had made her insane and the long fright had turned her head. "Nay, nay, lassie! Nay, lassie." But she said: "Dinna ye hear the bagpipes playing? Dinna ye hear the bagpipes playing?" And then her voice began to have the reverberant music of the march. "Dinna ye hear the bagpipes playing? Dinna ye hear the bagpipes playing? Dinna ye hear the bagpipes playing? Dinna ye hear the bagpipes playing?" And by and by they heard the pipes playing. Then blowing, blowing. "Dinna ye hear the bagpipes playing?" And the woman turned and said: "Dinna ye hear the bagpipes playing? Dinna I tell you? The bagpipes are playing."

Ah, some time or other, somewhere or other, all of us here shall hear God's bagpipes blowing,

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and some time or other, somewhere or other, all of us shall hear his drums a-beating. But that isn't it. That isn't it, anyhow. It is this: We will hear the bagpipes playing while here. Can you hear the whisper? O, the whisper of the Lord is with some. The whisper of the Lord is with such. Why can't the preacher get through with what he is at? He said the whisper of the Lord is with some. He said the whisper of the Lord is with such. Try again, preacher. And he will. The whisper of the Lord is with all them that fear him. The people that are close to him, and the people who are listening to him, and the people who are in love with him, and the people who want him most, more than they want breath. Just that.

At a certain supper—the strangest and greatest supper that ever poured out drink and brake bread—there was a man called John, with his head on the breast of a God called Christ, and John's ears close to Jesus's lips. And what Peter and the rest couldn't hear—Peter leaned over and said: "What said he?" It was because John heard the whisper of Christ. O, my heart! O, your heart! Know thou this morning the whisper of the Lord, to hear it, to be so close against the lips with the listening ear, and hear the first drip of rain of his tender words drip into the heart, and the whisper of the Lord is with them that fear him. My Christ, did I hear thee whisper?

XIV

JOURNEYING WITH GOD

“And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.”—Genesis 5. 24

THIS is essentially all we know about Enoch, and possibly is all we need to know, but certainly is not all we want to know. As one who gets the breath of the mountain wants to feel the full of it rush past him in the pines, so when once we have an engagement with a man like this, we want to know him. We are hungry for a sight of his full face. We are not satisfied with the profile. We want the eyes of him, the lips of him, the smile of him, the strength of him, the winsomeness of him. Brother Enoch, look this way.

You shall find it strangely hard if you ever care to take words and cull them as you have flowers for a bridal, strangely strange how hard it would be to put words together with such liquid music in them as these. Here is a man's life. Nothing is out, all is in. All said, we love him. He went past us like the vanishing loveliness of a falling star. But, O, Brother Enoch, turn your face this way, won't you? These words are so deftly chosen, so aptly handled, so

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put together with mosaic. Who did it? Ah, friends, wot you not? God did it. Nobody talks quite that way but God.

If you sometimes want to read passages of singular strength, that make you think they are written with a pen of an oak trunk, so strong they are and mighty, I will commend you to read the biographies of John Wesley's dead preachers, written by John Wesley's hand. I think I will say what is in my heart to say, not because I am a Wesleyan, but because I am a man, that the English speech does not possess many such masterful users of it as John Wesley; and his style never had such strength as when he is summing up the career of the men who wrought beside him, and talked out of the hot heart and called God down into the heart, and out of shadow brought resurrection to souls, and out of discomfort brought comfort, and out of disquiet brought peace. And if you will read these brief biographies, compressed so, you will find it was worth while to live. And you should hear what Wesley said. But it is always to be frankly said that all Wesley said, with all the enriching, lucid style of perception and conception of theme he had, was not quite like this, when God writes in his biography what he said there when he had a man he could say it of, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him."

I was once this week at a certain city, looking in a book at a bookstall, because looking in at

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books at a bookstall is like drinking water out of mountain springs—it costs you nothing and it is so nice to borrow. You won't have to buy a book. That is a ministerial device. And I was looking in the book, and it was a stray volume. I had no thought whose book it was, but the engravings in it engaged me so that suddenly I found myself down in the center of the book, turning page after page, page after page, until my mind was completely flaming, and I dreamed great dreams myself, which is the test of able, efficient utterances or illuminations. A page puts your mind in such heat that you want the sun for a chance to go to bed in it. And while I looked at the book, not meaning to, I began to wonder whose work, and then when I looked further through and over to the beginning I found it was the work of Benvenuto Cellini, one of the wonderful men of the art history of the world. And to dig into the book a little is like digging your fingers into the spring of water—a touch of it to the tongue made one thirsty. And it is so with this wording I read you. We may not have heard of Enoch before. We could not. Nobody told about him. There was no gravestone set with his story on it. He was a man, and that was even better than the poor housing of a grave. Though you haste your step, won't you mind a minute when the preacher calls, and turn your face this way, Brother Enoch? And I would like, beloved, in your name and mine, to try out of this hastening

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look we had of him to get at the face of Enoch. I would think it were a beautiful thing to get a glimpse of Enoch. Brother Enoch, without being introduced—O, Brother Enoch, we must have a glance at you this morning.

Enoch made so much out of so little. Some of us make so little out of so much. We are not relatives of Enoch. Enoch knew so little about God. Christ hadn't come to town. No prophet had seen him for a minute in the dark. No. Not once above the horizon line of the ages had that strange wonder-face lifted for a minute. And you, men and women, know how hard it has been in the world's experience to get at God till Christ came and got him close for us. God was so far off, we gripped and gripped the air and clutched the night. We called, and heard the rattle of our voices up against the unraftered sky. We beat the air with futile pinions like wounded birds. Where is God? And back came to us the dull clatter of the call, "Where is God?" And Enoch had so little chance. No prophet had spoken. No Word of God was writ. No Christ of God had come from heaven to any manger stall and conquered sin and death. No heavenly visitants had sung their song from out against the taper stars. None of that. And he had so little chance to get at God. And yet with the so little chance to get at God he came to him and owned him. It is a thing to think on, beloved, with

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the heart, this matter of getting at God with little chance. It is good to think of with the head; but we must do better than that this morning; we must think with the heart. We have so much.

We know so much about God. He stayed here with us till we learned his voice, and kissed us till we knew his kiss, and touched us till we knew his touch, and would know it in the grave. I declare, Christ will not need to call me when the morning of eternity shall break. Before he calls me, if his touch is on my shoulder, I shall spring up and answer, "Here!" Christ is here. And we have learned all that, and yet, and yet with so much, live so little. Men and women, we ought to be suns burnished like the sun at noon, the light has become so bright, the rapture has become so strangely keen. The heavens have stooped so low, myself have heard the brushing of an angel's wings; and I have felt the trailing of the garments of those who have been with God and went my way. And we know so much; and Enoch knew so little. And yet he used the little, and he did so well. He had God to keep. That is glorious, is it? Quite glorious. Did you think this, that Jeremy Taylor, that Edmund Spenser amongst preachers, the man who could no more keep from talking poetry than the sun can keep from leaking sunlight, do you recall that Jeremy Taylor of the Holy Living and Holy Dying, lived his man's life and his

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preacher life in the basest era of English history, and that he was preacher in those shameful, stenching days of the second Charles, when life seemed to be a hell broth, and all men were at the witches' business of stirring the brew in?

Then Jeremy Taylor's life was so white. O, it doesn't take much to make a man good. Did you consider that Thomas à Kempis, he of the kindly look and the quiet face and the pacific heart, who scarcely heard the turbulent tramping of the panting world, or knew that a sword could be used against mankind? Did you know that he lived in the fourteenth century, when things in the church were fairly at their wicked worst? And when he leaned down to drink it was a pool of stagnant water, such as soldiers drink of only when starved for the water brooks. And in that shameful age Thomas à Kempis leaned out and got God's hand and held it tight. Did you consider that William Law, he of the *Serious Call to the Unconverted*—which is among those books that speak their way and call their way and soar their way and amaze their way into all good people's hearts—lived in England in the first half of the eighteenth century, when Protestantism had gone so shamefully amiss that it seemed as if religion were not only dead, but a corpse four days dead and putrefied? Do you recall, brothers, that this man grew up then? Well, upon my heart, men and women, it begins to look as if daylight was not so needed, but dark

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night, and one poor winking of one poor star. And this man Enoch, I commend his life to us in that he made so much of so very little. He had so little knowledge of God, and he used it so. Was it Lincoln who had few books? I reckon not. He must have had a tumult of books. He must have been among the great libraries of the earth. From that style that has not had its equal on this continent or in this Western hemisphere but once, and that was in the style of Hawthorne, he must have had great libraries. Frankly, friends, he had a geometry and a spelling book and a dictionary and a few reading books, and a tallow dip and the light from the fireplace. But he used the little, and he made it much. My heart, thy doom may be this, that thou hast had a sun and dost mistake it for the candle. That is all.

He walked with God, and yet Christ had not been here. He walked with God, and yet Christ had never worn his seamless coat. And yet the God of heaven had never stooped low under the swaying cross. Never that. But with the least he had he made the best, and God liked him so well he couldn't bear to let him die, and took him, so that while he took him to the skies he might have a word with him and a kiss from him. Brother Enoch, turn your face this way.

And Enoch didn't know he was good. You say he had sense. That is the reason he didn't know he was good. You say he was good. That is the

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reason he didn't know it. If you are smart, you don't notice it. It doesn't hurt you. If you are good, you won't believe it if somebody tells you. If you are bad, or one third or one half bad, you will tell people you are good. That's the difference. Goodness doesn't wear a bugle. It is no bugler and has no bugle. God didn't tell him. He didn't know it himself. He was busy. What did he know? Well, frankly, people, he knew this—that he was trying to be good. He knew he tried. A man knows if he tries to be good. A woman knows if she tries to be good. We are like people whose eyes are full of tears, and they look at the staff on which the music is written, but cannot discover the notes, and their voices break and the eyes are full of weeping, and neither eyes nor voice make the music out. Busy with their music. And Enoch didn't know it. Did you notice this, brothers, sisters, when you are going toward the mountains the road always appears to be going downhill? You can hardly persuade yourself you are not going downhill when you are really going uphill. And you marched toward the mountains seemingly downhill, and you got to the mountains going uphill. That is how it looks when men are walking toward the hill of God. Because himself is walking, himself to himself seems to be walking downhill. But when he gets to the top he sees it is uphill he came; but the man says it is downhill. And this going downhill is uphill going into heaven.

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I have not the remotest opinion that an eagle thinks about its flying in the heavens. I do not think that he knows he is above the mountains, that he is neighbor with the sun. He doesn't know that; he is busy at the flying. You will find this out, that with people who are getting far on the road to God, if you get them to step aside and get their pictures taken, that their spiritual seal is, "I have been trying." Laddie, how came you on at school? He says, "I tried." Is that it? Lassie, how came you on at school? "I tried."

Poor man, on thy road to a better life, how came you on? "I tried," he said; and his voice broke on the wistful tingle of the "tried." "I tried." People staggering at the last with groping hands and eyes toward the future, how came you on? "I tried." And the thing you might be sure of, as if Enoch told you on oath, is that this man who walked with God didn't know how much God thought of him; didn't know how much store God set on him, so that God loaned him his rod and staff to walk across the river of death, and that God gave him his key to unlock the door with, that God gave him a star to brighten the lonely valley. What he knew was, on his knees, on his face, on his feet, he was trying. O, Brother Enoch, won't you look this way?

And people around Enoch were not specially impressed with him that he was specially good.

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Think you that strange? Not quite strange. What they were impressed about Enoch was that he was so nice to have around. That is better. I have known people that were specially impressed with their own piety, but were disagreeable to have around. You must not think the highest mark of piety is that everybody you meet says, "How good he is! how good he is!" Not that. But when people say, "How pleasant it is to have him come to town!" People say, "How good to be close to him!" People say, "How witching he is when you are weary!" People say, "How bracing when we are weak!" People say, "How wholesome!" And the thing that counts in life is that when people see goodness they are not so much wanting to say goodness or to think goodness, but to think wholesomeness, that the man was necessary, that the man was desired, that we could not keep house without him, that if gone we would be like people on a weary journey. You must not think that Enoch preached with everybody, that he wrangled with people's theology, that he asked everybody, "How is your soul, brother?" He never thought to do that. He was one of the wholesome kind and had too much success in earthly things and heavenly things to do the silly thing, but he walked along with his smiling face and said: "How are you and how are yours? And are your roses blooming now, and how did the chrysanthemums come on? And how is your little daughter? Are her ringlets as sweet

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as they were when I knew her? And does she wear the freckles on her face she got at summer time? And how is the laddie at college getting on? And is the farm land fertile? Are the blossoms yellow in the ravines in the pasture? Why, is the goldenrod as golden as of old? And is your mother's burying place as sweet a place as it was when you and I broke flowers upon it at the first?" That is what Enoch did. And people weren't even discoursed at, weren't even punctured with antiseptic needles. Weren't even jabbed at. The traveler would go to some and say, "I was with Brother Enoch to-day." "From what town is he?" I don't know. But how sweet the sky and how clear the river ran! And I heard my little daughter call to me, though far from home. And I saw my wife's face smile. And when Brother Enoch went I asked him to come over with us and stay awhile, because it were good to have him here.

Ah, Brother Enoch. They didn't reckon he was a saint. They didn't put his name upon the tablet of their adorations; but when there was a marriage at the house, then the bride said, "He must come, for I must have his kiss." And when there was a graduation at that town he must come, for the laddie who had been at school wanted this old friend that used to come and see him play ball and loved him. Ah, people, put it down that the best life carries no vulgar banners, but it is like having a rose flower. This morning as I stood in

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the chancel and the children were filing out, a little girl came up and gave me two rosebuds, sweet and chaste were they. And she went on, and now I have the rosebuds and the memory. When Enoch goes he leaves the rosebuds and the memory. I wish we might see him soon, beloved. O, Brother Enoch, turn your face this way!

And then Enoch had a simple test of what things to do. Have you had trouble over that, beloved, what things to do, what things to keep from doing? Enoch had a workable rule, and he applied it to all things. It was this: "Will it please God?" Isn't that easy? But that is enough. Will it please God? I was out this morning pretty early. I won't say how early—rather early—because I was sure the lake was booming on the sea wall, and knew God keeps some great music reverberant through his dark sometimes. It was a thing worth going a thousand miles to see. The great jeopardy of waters, the tangle of the tilted waves, the rush of the furious waters, the spouting of the great black wave, edging against the sky, and then sometimes a half mile of sea wall steamed with its great sea waves as if volcanoes blew with their hot breath. And the tangled waters churned and the fury raced, and the long arms beat blindly like blind giants. O, it was such a disenthralled sea! Now, what of it? This; the sea gulls were out getting breakfast on that stormy water. That is all they did. I was ashamed for them. Upon

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my heart! Out when the rapture called? Aye. Out when a hundred battle bugles blew? Aye. Out when the fury flung out its naked arms and fists? Aye. All I saw the sea gulls do was to get breakfast. And I was ashamed for them. Mark, mark. Not that it is not dignified to get your breakfast. It is better to go out and work for it than to borrow it. Not that cooking is not good to do. But there are times when a man might go breakfastless, when he might forget that eating is an elementary business. And I watched the sea gulls and I said, "Some laddie will poise above the wave and call out, 'Rapture.'" But they only reached down to get the crust of bread. And what I am saying is that Enoch tested life by the sky lines and the skywards and the uplands, "Will it please God?" Nothing is more honorable than to earn bread, but some things are more honorable than to eat. If I saw God come along the road, would I sit down to breakfast? Would I? Well, maybe I would. Maybe I would; but it is because I am dirt, made out of the dirt from the middle of the road. If I were a man—ah! When God came by I would call to him, "Thou art my bread," and "Thou art my drink," and "Thou art my sun," and "Thou art my star," and "Thou art my exceeding great reward." Enoch tested everything by this: "Will it please God?" That brought him God. Brother Enoch, you are hurrying, I know, but, Brother Enoch, won't you turn your face this way?

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And then Brother Enoch lived a life of trust. You have got to do that if you do much. We are going to business? Yes. We are going on the Santa Fe. We have taken it for twenty years. Yes. Are you going to go down to business? Of course. Some morning you won't. The train will creak and the rail will spread, and they will bring you home dead on a crimsoned cloth. Yes. But you go by trust. We trust it, thinking it will go our journeys. I tell you, men and women who have a fine insight in the larger things of life, you cannot go very far without trust. "Somehow, we trust," the poet says. We are like a man blindfold, yet walking toward the voice. Sometimes I have been back inland, and the night was dark and not a star was lit; but I wanted the sea. And where I journeyed was toward the sea, and starless, opaque, and black. I heard the sea's voice and journeyed toward the voice, and came to the waters I journeyed to. I could not see. I could not feel my way, but I could hear my way, because the voice of the sea was calling: Brother Enoch, stop a minute; turn your face this way.

And then it said, "He was not." One day when somebody knocked at Enoch's door and said, "Is Brother Enoch at home?" a voice said, "He is not." Isn't here. Truly isn't here, that is it. He wasn't there. Where is he? Gone. Where? Out with Him. Where is he staying? Out where the lamplight is not known and where starlight

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is a vanishing memory, and where daylight is the lamp that shines forever. Gone with Him. Beloved, some of these days folks will come and inquire for you, and the honest porter at the gate must answer, "He is not—is not here." Where? Ah, there, but not here. Where is he? He has gone on a space, has outrun us. Do you care how Enoch went? Not at all. He was translated. God took him on his left arm so he could be close to his cheek and walked with him where the hill was steeper than Enoch knew to climb, but it is not much odds how he took him. But he wasn't here with us, but there with God's self. "He was not, for God took him." That is the poetry for dying. You must not make a chore of death. It is not much trouble to die. It is like a smile running across the face but never wasting out. "He was not. God took him."

I was the other night at a house where there was a little girl, and she sat up in her chair so straight and looked at me with her big blue eyes. And her mother said, "Aren't you getting sleepy, Dot?" "No, 'um," she said, "No, 'um." Her father said, "Dot, aren't you getting sleepy, dear?" "No, 'um." And while she said she was not getting sleepy her head began to nod. And then her mother said: "Dot, kiss Brother Quayle good night. I will take you to bed." And so the sleepy little lassie came down from the sleepy, straight-backed chair, and came and gave me a sleepy kiss. And she was as sweet as the breath

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that comes from the new mown hayfield. And her mother took her by the hand and took her to bed. And she went out of the door and up to the room and lay down. And her mother kissed her good night. She was not downstairs with me; for her mother took her upstairs with her. Ah, now, has God an upstairs to his house? And does he know the road upstairs, and when we grow so sleepy will he take us by the hand and say, "Kiss the folks good night, for I am going to take you"? And the little girl had no trouble going up to bed. Her mother took her by the hand, and then, when the mother came back, I said, "Did she climb the stairs?" She said, "I carried her." Ah me, how sweet to go to bed carried by a mother's love and a mother's heart and a mother's arms, and go to sleep with a mother's kiss!

"And Enoch was not, for God took him" upstairs in heaven. Ah, Brother Enoch, that isn't hard. God took him. Beloved, let everybody in this house say: "God helping me, I am going with God. And some day I shall not be here, for God shall take me upstairs."

PRAYER

O Lord, we are glad for Brother Enoch, and that we have been looking at his face. He has helped us some as thou hast helped him much. God of all, help us, and may we all walk with God so that God will take us all upstairs to stay with him, and keep us from going downstairs any more. Amen.

XV

THE GREAT COMPANION

“Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.”—

Luke 24. 15

BROTHER and Sister Cleopas of the village of Emmaus had been to Jerusalem and were on their way home. In the book of John you may read that present at the crucifying of Christ there were three Marys—Mary, the mother of Christ and Mary Magdalene, and then Mary, wife of Cleopas, who was sister of Mary, mother of the Christ. And husband and wife had been to Jerusalem in those vexed days, the wildest, weirdest, most awesome days that ever shadowed this black world with clouds. They had been there on the Friday of the crucifying. They had stayed there on the Sabbath, being church folk and holding Sabbath holy; and on their Monday—which is our Sunday—these two, with faces as sad as this gray April sky to-day, went wearily home. They walked so slowly. They didn't notice the road; they didn't look at the journey. All they noticed and what they saw and all they cared to look at was that the world was empty of Christ. And it might be worth our time, and I think it is worth all of our time this morning, to walk with these

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lonesome folk and listen to their lonely talk and see how the tears wet their cheeks; and they do not go through the useless detail of wiping them off, because they run so fast it is futile to try to evade them.

They Were Tired. You can see that on their faces—tired out. They were country people come to town. They had been in big Jerusalem. They had heard the crunch of wheels; they had heard the halloing of the throngs; they had been through the sleepless, disturbing night. They were out of the quiet country village, where their house was on the threshold of the green country land, where April flung its perfumes and blossomed with its flowers, where the birds sang till the dusk was dead and sang in the morning till the dawn was slipped into daylight—out of that quiet restfulness into the packed, perturbed, boisterous city. Nothing tires country people as a holiday in the city; nothing is so hard as looking at the houses and looking at the buildings and trying to quadrate our lives with the environings, coming out with the heart full of the God wonder of the country, where the grind of the unaccustomed wheel is heard and where the songs we hear other than our own voices are the singing of the birds—and then to come into the city world, where the sky is only a slit betwixt the edges of the buildings. Were you ever a country body in the town and then went away tired to death? Quite right. Brother and Sister Cleopas were tired, and they could

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hardly drag one foot in front of the other. So tired, Brother and Sister Cleopas! And sometimes, when coming up the hill, Brother Cleopas takes his wife's arm and says: "Tired, sweetheart?" And she looks up at him dimly through her tears and says: "Tired out—tired." And Jesus himself drew near.

Brother, would you let that mercy soak into your hearts like dew? Would you? To the tired the Christ draws near.

We are not citizens from Jerusalem and we are not citizens of Emmaus town, but we are citizens of St. Louis city, and we are tired. Hands limp, spirits limp, tired out. There is not anybody who works that does not get tired. There isn't anybody who doesn't get tired hands, tired arms. There isn't anybody who doesn't know what weariness is. Some people might miss the knowledge of many words in the vocabulary of life, but not that word. Mother with your baby at your heart, how you love it! But you get so tired! Father, with your hands dirty with your toil, how you love your folks, but you get so tired. Old men with the years so heavy on your shoulders that you stoop and lean on the staff, you get so tired. School laddie and lassie, with your books below your arms, you get so tired. And may be the sum is long and the English is hard and the drawing is hard and the music has a rasp in it, and the lessons are hard—tired out. People with business tired; people at housekeeping

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tired; people at schoolmastering tired; and so people at many vocations tired, tired. And when our weariness comes in every bone, and fingers even at the tired valvings of the heart, then Jesus himself draws near. Rested. Tired, Brother and Sister Cleopas, tired out? And, to the tired, Jesus came.

Then Brother and Sister Cleopas Have a Sorrow. They have got a fresh grave. Ah, well, who's dead? Christ. Who's dead? The Elder Brother is dead. Who's dead? They thought God was dead. Sorrow. Ah, yes, sorrow. What is your name, brother? Well, never mind, never mind. God knoweth it. Sister, what's your name? Well, don't tell it. God hath written it upon his hands. O, brother and sister, whoever you are, you have sorrow, have you? Yes. What is that streak under your eyes? Why, it is a ravine worn in your cheek by weeping. What is that little house you own at the graveyard? My beloved's, beloved's. And I notice this, whether they live in a rented place or in town—I have yet to know anybody who didn't own a house in God's acre. Sometimes it was just room enough among crowded, cluttered city graves, just room enough for one to lie very still. Everybody has that. And they were so sick at heart, so sorrow-crowned. What is that on the brow? Why, wistful heart, that is a crown of sorrow. And the poet Dante said: "And sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things." O, they have sorrow. Some-

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times Brother Cleopas with his wet hand takes his wife's arm and holds it tight and says: "Mary" —for her name was Mary, the Book tells—"Mary, don't cry so." And she said, "Beloved, I will try not to," but she didn't stop her crying. Who is it that hath not a grave? Sorrow, sorrow. Who is it whose hands are not wet? Why are you wiping your face, folks? You have no kerchiefs. You can't keep handkerchiefs enough to wipe away the weeping, and you wipe away the tears, like a man does, with his hand. What ails you? Why, the grave. Listen, Brother and Sister Cleopas have a sorrow. Brother and sister—your name is no matter, only, you Cleopas soul, you have your sorrow. You on Easter Sunday, you will find your grave. Sorrow, folks. And what I was looking out at was this, that out along the road that sorrow took and scarce could see for weeping, and could not note the furlongs for tears, Jesus himself drew near. And do you know that was the reason they couldn't see Jesus, they were crying so? You have known times when you wouldn't have known your father or your own mother, and the hand on your shoulder said: "Look, will you?" And you said, "O, I can't see you." Sorrow. Well, Jesus himself comes near when people weep. People, I wouldn't wonder if this is your Christ. Wouldn't wonder, not a bit, not a bit.

And Brother and Sister Cleopas Were Disappointed. They said (don't you hear them talk-

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ing?), "We thought that this was he that should have redeemed Israel." O, I can hear them saying that all right enough, can't you? They thought—how did they say it? Did they chant it? No. Did they laugh it? No. You can't laugh when disappointment grips you by the throat and tosses you upside down with fingers wild like lion's claws and with hand like the hand of fate. Disappointed. And I hear them sob it. And they said, "We thought that this was he that should have redeemed Israel." And you had to lean your ear close to hear the closing of the saying. We thought—why, they had been in the city that bleak day when the raucous cry like spear-thrust spread and the crowd cried, "Crucify him! Crucify him! Crucify him! Crucify him!" and they leaned down as if their heads were hit with the unsheathed sword of death. Disappointment. And they had watched him. I have told you that the book of John pointed out Mary Cleopas at the cross; and we thought that this man should have redeemed Israel. And there is not any disappointment like the high hope gone to naught. Nothing. It was as if they thought the day to live forever, and the sighings of the night winds never to blow again, and the blackness of the gloomy night should enter life's open sky again nevermore. And now the sun goes down and the west is red, and the west is colorless, and the west is dark—all gone—all the glory gone out of the sky. And when the stress is on us in the

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day, when the day was dark we could not see the stars, and when the sun was lit with splendor we could not see the stars. Disappointed. O, men and women, what happened? May I tell you a thing? No, not that. I am telling you the thing so that you can open the door for the great thing to transpire. O, hands of disappointment, push the door open and Jesus himself will draw near. That is it. It is the truth I am after.

Are you disappointed? Likely as not. Some women here are disappointed in their husbands—I wouldn't say how many; that wouldn't be polite. When you married them you thought they would amount to a lot, and they don't even amount to a little. Well, let that go. Some men here are disappointed in their wives. Well, think not of that; that is not polite. Some people are disappointed in themselves. O, now, that is acid to bite, that is worse than hungry wolves that link their teeth together in your flesh. Disappointed in themselves. Some of us are disappointed in business. Some of us came to town and thought we would build a fortune; and, honestly, it is a chore to keep the wolf out of the front door. What do you think of that? Disappointed. And some of us have been disappointed in people. Some of us have been disappointed in the church. What of that? O, this: to the disappointed, Jesus himself drew near. Man, when you have been younger you had a fortune, didn't you? When you were married you

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were affluently equipped? Yes. You took your wife on a long wedding journey, and people said, "She made a good catch." People are so funny. The women said that. Women are always talking about another woman getting a man, as if women were out fishing. That is nonsense. Women don't have to fish for men to get them, there are so many men; and women are so nice. That is what happened, isn't it? They say you were a good catch, and you had money, money, money. But what happened? Well, I won't speak of that. But you haven't money now. Man, you are getting old? Yes. And you don't own a thing; and when life insurance paying day comes around there is a grubbing around in the cash box. That's private. I speak with knowledge. Isn't that so? Disappointed? Yes. What will happen? O, if you watch, Jesus himself will draw near to the disappointed. Christ finds the door open and comes in. Isn't that beautiful? Isn't that blessed?

And these people, Brother and Sister Cleopas, had now—put that in bold letters, underscoring *now*—*They Had Now* such a fight to believe. They had doubt and faith, and faith and doubt. And Christ was dead; and they knew he had been buried; and they said, and I wish we could have heard it, when they said it—Mrs. Cleopas was talking, curiously enough, and she said, "And others have told us that he hath risen." Say, beloved, have you got the fight?

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Yes. Is your faith fisticuffing with doubt? Yes. Is the battle frightful? Yes. Everybody has it; and it is the biggest battle that ever comes to choke off anybody's life breath with malignant hands. Everybody is fighting for breath enough to live forever. Some of you people have got into the miasmatic atmosphere of doubt and you say, "I don't believe." O, try, try. Try faith. Do not let your hands droop like a sea bird's broken wings. Keep them up. Wings that stay out on the sky—keep them out. Do not fly? Meant to fly and do not? Keep the wings out on the sky. Keeping the wings out keeps you in the sky and you will fly to heaven. Try it. Some of you folks say church folks have deceived you. I shouldn't wonder. Lots of others have. You said nothing about that, did you? Keep to business now. Talk about the whole thing or not about anything. You have the fight. It is hard. It is furious. I know it. I am not a laddie out among the daisies picking flowers along the road. I am a man that feels the clinging of doubt. I have it now. But, folks, fight forever. Dead? He is alive. Alive? Dead? Dead, like the drooping of the thunder cloud. Alive, alive, like the singing of angels. Alive? What happened? Didn't I tell you? Jesus himself drew near. That is the answer to it. You get Christ around your door and doubts run like whipped curs. Won't they? You try it. Get Christ at your door and the angels will come in behind him for a

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background. O, well, Jesus himself drew near. And, upon my word, sometimes when I have heard that verse and have heard it with my poor elocution, it seemed to me I heard the tramp of conquering legions and a blast like bugles saying, "Victory!" Jesus himself drew near. And he is alive, alive. When you are making your fight with doubt Christ will come in. It is worth fighting to get the guest—well worth the fighting to get the guest.

And They Were Church Members, did I tell you? Brother and Sister Cleopas belonged to the little Methodist church at Emmaus. You say Presbyterian. Like enough. Baptist church. Like enough. Congregational church. Like enough. It is all according to the door you come in at. There's no difference about the door you come in at. It's the same house. What's the odds? No odds. Just get into the house. The trick is to get in. Some people fool with the doors. What's the odds? What we want is to get into the house when Jesus himself draws near. I wouldn't fuss with the label on the door. Honestly, that is silly. But Brother and Sister Cleopas were walking, and as they were walking they were talking about church matters. I tell you honestly I like to hear folks talking about church matters. And sometimes when I am on the train I hear them, very often. They say: "Well, business is picking up," or, "Business is bad," or "This late snow is adding

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millions of dollars to the crops.” O, I like that. I have a farm and it needs picking up. Well, I like that sort of thing. Then I hear men putting their heads together and talking about God’s business, and say: “Well, ever hear our preacher? Didn’t? Well, come on over. We have a fine church, fine big Sunday school, um—um. Fine time at our church.” I don’t go and talk to them, because men don’t like a man to bother them, but I just feel tickled. I don’t say anything. I don’t care what church it is, but to hear men talking about church affairs, to hear women talking: “O, you ought to be at the church. Don’t you belong to the church? I thought you did; you are always there. Don’t you belong to the church? No? Didn’t you ever belong to the church?” “Yes, over at Clintontown.” “Didn’t you ever bring your church letter here? I will tell Brother Quayle about you.” O, that makes anybody’s heart glad to hear people talk about the church. And what happened? Didn’t I tell you? Jesus himself drew near. And you will find that it is one of the beautiful things about the church that, when you are talking about church matters and the Christ, Christ will hear and will want to take a hand in the talking. Talk about Christ and he will come. Jesus himself drew near.

And now, when we come to think about it, that is about all Brother and Sister Cleopas wanted, isn’t it? That is just about all they

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wanted—for Jesus himself to draw near. That's all. One time I knew a little body who cried in the night and was so scared, and her papa went and lay down beside her, and she put her little sleepy hands out against his face and said: "I cried—and was so scared—and you comed, didn't you, papa? Why," and she patted with her slow, sleepy hand upon his face, "I was so scared, and you comed, papa, didn't you? Hug me tight, papa." What did she want to get rid of—being scared? No, just to get papa. The child that gets papa gets rid of being scared. Jesus himself drew near. Jesus himself drew near. O, that is all we want, that is all we want.

Do you remember Dr. Maclure, the doctor of the old school, when he got so tired out he couldn't get through the snowdrifts any more, but he and Jess were still trying to get through the drifts, and the Doctor couldn't say his psalm? What was he working for? You know—the mother's kiss. Can't you hear him? He says: "Aye, mither, mither, dinna ye ken, mither? Dinna ye, mither? Dinna ye hear your laddie, mither? I've said ma psalm, mither; gie me the kiss." What did he want? The kiss. That's all. "Gie me the kiss, kiss, kiss, mither."

I was out at a place the other night, and the sweet mother said she was so shocked the day before when her little girl said to her, "Mamma, I love you better than I love God." "Why," she said, "daughter, you mustn't say that. Daughter,

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what makes you say that?" And she said, "Mamma, I do." Well, little women and big women will stick to it when they say a thing; and she did. And her mother said: "You mustn't say that." "But," she said, "I do, mamma." "What makes you say that, daughter?" And the little body said, "Because I can hug you, mamma, and I can't hug God." What was that? O, that was infinite theology of the heart. That is why Christ came. God manifest in flesh, so that we could hug him. You believe that? Don't know enough to know that you need an incarnate God? O, Mary Magdalene, with your weeping eyes, what are you trying to do? Trying to hug the feet of Christ. That is right; quite right. Give us a hug of the feet of God. What will happen? Jesus himself drew near.

I tell you they were tired; and Jesus himself drew near. And then he is rest. "Come unto me and I will give you rest." O, choir, you can sing that, can't you? Rest, rest! Tired. And the Rest himself drew near.

They were filled with sorrow and had a new grief, and then the life Eternal drew near. They were disappointed, and Hope drew near. They were fighting their fight with doubt, and faith drew near. "And now abideth faith"—spell it in capitals—**FAITH** drew near. They were talking about church matters, and then he whose name is Song came near, singing, singing. Song has come. Think of that! Wasn't it a thing to be along the

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road coming down with Brother and Sister Cleopas?

And did you know—you did know—that he went with them? And then did you know he went home with them? Now, what is poetry? I will recite to you a line. You will know then. I will take a cluster of poetry and squeeze it so that the juice will run out. Here it is. I will read it—this poetry: “Jesus himself drew near.” That is poetry. Went with them. Where?

Along the road where they had business. Along the road where their toil lay. Along the road where their office was. O, men and women! thank your God—Christ will go with you to your work. He won't sit around on the porch to wait for you to come home. He will hunt you up. He will come down with you. When I used to visit my father I used to go out in the field with him. I wish that he were here yet, to give me a chance to work with him; that would be fun—to work with him. “Lord Christ, I am busy to-day.” He says: “I know it. I worked that work myself.” And he lays hold with the carpenters and the masons and the farmers and the reapers and the authors and the lawyers and the teachers and the preachers and the rest—walked and went with them. O, beloved, don't go to your work without Jesus himself going with you.

And then he went home with them. Where is home? Well, it is where Jesus goes and stops. That is the definition of home, is it? You say it

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is a new one. Well, no matter. Where Jesus stops, it is home. It is good, and that is enough. It makes no difference how you build it, and it makes no difference whether you own it or not. I tell you, honestly, I would not want to stay all night where Jesus doesn't live. I might want ferrying over the river in the night; and who would take me if he were not there? I might wake and find Doubt's fingers tearing at my throat; and who would take Doubt's fingers from the throat if he were not there? It is always home, sweet home, where Christ is.

He sat down at supper and broke bread with them. Read that when you go home. Some of these times I will be at the Lord's Supper where the feast shall last forever. Wait, my soul!

One time I was at a house where Death and I walked in together, though we are neither relatives nor friends. But in together Death and I walked with shoulders touching, and the little, wasted hand of the little, wasted woman, with a smile upon her lips, lay on the coverlet, and her husband sat by her, and while Death was staying and I was going, the husband leaned over the little, dying woman, and said: "What do you want, dear? What do you want? What do you want, dear?" And she said, with a glint of color coming for a minute to her cheeks, as if he had given her a kiss—she said, "I want you, I want you." And Christ himself draws near and says to everybody's heart

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here this holy hour, "What do you want, dear?" and the heart hath the vision to answer and the poetry to answer and the response to answer, "I want you, O Christ; I want you." And he himself will draw near and won't go away forever. "I want you, O Christ—you." And he will say, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

PRAYER

O Lord, we thank thee we have had the chance to walk down the Emmaus road with Brother and Sister Cleopas. May the Man they met fall in with us and we with him, and may our hearts rejoice, seeing we have the Saviour. Amen.

XVI

THE BLESSING OF GOD ALMIGHTY

“And God Almighty bless thee.”—Genesis 28. 3

I THINK the story of the text will make appeal to all your hearts. The story is this: A mother's boy is going from home for the first time. He has been his mother's dearest love. He has been sunning himself in the spring sunshine of her gladness and her preference. He has never known hardship. He has been free from care. Her love has forecast all his desires and has ironed out all the unpalatable processes of his life, so far as she knew and so far as love could do it. And now he is going away from her and away from home. If any of you were ever a mother's boy, and if you ever had a mother at all, you know. Mothers have a fond way of leaning all their lads up close against their hearts.

And if you ever had a mother and if you ever have known her love, and if you ever were sheltered in the constancy of her belief for you and in you, you know something of what was going on in robust heartache in this house this day, when a lad with a little bundle in his hand leans his face for the kiss and purses his lips for his mother's good-by, and wore tears away that were salt to

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the kiss. Ah me, Jacob! Ah me, William! Ah me, George! Lads, did you ever go away from home with your mother's salt, dear kiss on your face? Well, that is what is happening at the house of Isaac; and Rebekah, the mother, is kissing Jacob, her son, good-by. And he is going out with such a little kit in his hands; he has a water-cruise and a crust of bread. No more. He is going out barefoot and alone. No more. He has nobody with him whatsoever. He is going to a strange place he never saw. He is going away from home, where he never went to sleep without his mother's caress and his mother's kiss. He is going away from home to be a boarder. That is enough. Enough said now. Going to trade a home off for a boarding house? Quite right, that is what Jacob is doing. Going to be a boarder; and he turns his poor, white face toward the strange country and with laggard step and aching heart feels his way through his dimness, for he cannot see.

His eyes are so full of sobbing tears. And his father, as he reaches blind hands—for Isaac is stone blind—reaches blind hands for the lad's head, says, in lieu of a kiss, this, "And God Almighty bless thee." And if you mistake the words for a part of a chant you will not blunder much. And if you mistake the words for a part of a triumphal ode you will not blunder any. The old blind father trying to choke back the sob in his throat lifts himself to heights, and says,

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“God Almighty bless thee.” And that one saying puts blind Isaac among the prophets. And that one saying puts blind Isaac among the poets. And that one saying puts blind Isaac among the benefactors of mankind. He has set the foot of earth on the right journey. Any road is good when God Almighty’s blessing goes with the journey. Any road is bad when God Almighty’s blessing is withholden from the road. Any heart is rich when God Almighty’s blessing is its accompaniment. Any heart is bankrupt beyond all financial recovery when God Almighty stays at home when it takes a journey.

Now I have always found myself filled with tenacious reiterant attempts for this thing, namely, what are the fewest things with which life can keep house? I am never concerned whether the wealthiest life has belongings or beholdings. [✠] I make inquiry of this, for this, into this, toward this, rushing like a torrent or going at easy journeyings, I must get thither somehow, “How little can we have and have enough?” What must we have and still have enough to do life’s great business with? And the answer is this, You must have the blessing of yourself and you must have the blessing of the Almighty God.

Now, when Jacob went out he had no riches, and that is not any calamity, not any calamity. If you have riches, then you have the chore of keeping them. If you have not any riches, then you have the chore of getting them. Upon my

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word, I don't know which is better. I never have succeeded much at either. I have never had any riches, and I didn't have to keep them, and I have been in an occupation where I was in no danger of getting any, and I am holding my own with beautiful fidelity. But if you are born poor, is it a calamity? No. Not any calamity. Born with just two hands empty? But you can get them full. Well, that, that is a good time. If a man went away from home with an empty grip-sack, need he come home with an empty grip-sack? No. If a soldier went away with nothing but a soldier's name and a soldier's garment and a soldier's beating pulse and a soldier's bounding heart and a soldier's new accouterments, just spick and span soldier, with a blink of fire in his veins and never a cut of saber on his cheek, should he have to come home brand new and brisk, like he went away? Why, no. He may come home with bullets hiding around somewhere, and come home with the scars of mutilating fight upon him, and come home with memories of the battle boom in his heart, with raptures of the accomplished fight. There are soldiers here this morning, I doubt me not, who went out with absolutely empty hands, and if the truth were told of them—as they will not tell it themselves—they came home, and around their foreheads there was a laurel wreath of glory; and they went out empty-handed and came home full-handed. Is it any calamity to have empty hands? O, no,

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go out and get them full. This man Jacob was empty handed.

Then Jacob had no prestige, or if you are ex-cruciating in your pronouncing he had no prest-eezh. Some people sit up with presteezh. I would rather sit down by prestige myself. But, anyway, he went away without repute. Nobody knew about him but his mother and his father. Went away without any acclaim. Is it any calamity? I don't think it is. I have heard people moan because youth had to go out and fight his way and win his laurels and secure his position in life. I think it is a thousand diameters from being unfortunate. I think it is life's glory. Nobody should have prestige to begin with.

Go out and work it up. Sometimes fight for it, sometimes write for it, sometimes strive for it, sometimes work for it, sometimes dive into the seas for it, sometimes climb the hills of life for it, sometimes go and drag down stars to win it, sometimes go and light up the dark world for it. It is no odds, only that we get a chance to go and do. Wasn't this whole country illy lit a few years ago? Yes. Didn't it have oil lamps and gas lights? Yes. Didn't the gas lamps make a funny flicker along the streets? Yes. And a man came around with empty hands. "What are you bringing?" they said. "Nothing," he said. "What is your name?" "Edison," he said. "Who are you?" "I don't know," he said. And to-night all this continent and all places of the civilized

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world will be lit up, and Edison struck the match. Which is better, to be here with the lamp lit and the match struck or to be here with the dark world to be lit and light it up? Men and women, the glory of life, I take it, is that there is a chance to go out and get prestige.

You can go out and get honor. Do what Shakespeare told about, "Drag up drowned honor by the locks." Those astronomers go up in the heavens and set the lighthouses in the edges of the universe; and the astronomers are yonder leaning and looking into the dark, and they question every star and borrow light from every moving sun, and stand on the watchtowers and get the burning glass and carry the light from the farthest edges of the universe and spill it down on the gardens of the world. O, so many people have died illustrious, so that the world cannot forget them if they would, and wouldn't if it could, who went out empty-handed and with no prestige.

This man went out among strangers. You know this is pretty hard. What is your name? O, Mr. So and So. Very well. How do you do, Mr. So and So? I think that is pretty lonely. You can go everywhere at home and everybody says, "Hello, Bob! Hello, Tom! How is your mother, Mary?" Now you have gotten where nobody cares whether anybody is around or not, and you go and take a seat in the street car or

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you stand on the cowcatcher if you can't get in the car, and on the street people trample on you and jostle you. You are a stranger. What is the fun of being a stranger? Well, it is this: Making friends. Going out and finding out who people are. Let people know who you are. I will tell you, if I were in this church, if I came a brand new man with a price mark on me, or even if I weren't worth a price mark, what I would do? I would sit around with the people and be so nice they would say, "Who are you?" I would be so nice with the hymn book that the women would speak to me without being introduced. I would be so nice to the old folks that the old folks would say, "Who is that nice fellow? He must have a mother and a father." I would be so fine I would be worthy my continuance in the house of God. I would have the hearing ear and the seeing eye and the learning heart, so that some would say, "We are glad that young chap came to town."

Well, now, what is better than being among home folks? Being among strangers. And Jacob is going among strangers. He is on a pilgrimage. He is on a journey. He didn't know where to go. Worse than being a Methodist preacher. Methodist preachers know they have to go somewhere. Business men don't know where they may get. Women think because they marry a business man they know where they will be and where their friends will be. You are making a mistake.

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Business men are the worst vagabonds on the face of the earth. If you belong to the telephone company, they may send you to Europe to-morrow; and if you belong to Marshall Field, they may send you to New York to-morrow. But it isn't any odds. We are pilgrims and we are going somewhere and looking the future in the face.

And new life is worth endeavor. And we are on the journey. O, Jacob, turn your white face, with the sweetness of your mother's kiss on your face, turn to the forward. You cannot live at home forever and have your father's love with you forever. You cannot have your mother's kiss warm on your cheek every evening forever. Pretty soon your father will kiss you once and say, "Good-by, laddie!" "Father! father!" No other word, "Good-by, laddie!"—that is all. Pretty soon your mother will linger with the look on her face and in her eyes till the last dull minute of the last dull evening of day's splendor of sunlight fades from her sky, and say, "Dear heart, good-by!" And you get no other word or kiss. And you must go and live among strangers and be a pilgrim.

And Jacob has to work with what is in his kit. What is he going to do business with? Can a man go out with nothing and come home with everything? Can a man start out on the sea and by and by own the ships and own the seas? Ah, yes, that is it. What does a man need? Answer:

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this blind man Isaac has all of it poured into the chalice of a single flower, "God Almighty bless thee." That is enough.

I call you to note, the first thing is the blessing of yourself. A man's first beatitude is to be his own beatitude. If you count your mercies, be sure and count yourself in your mercies. I am here. I see the century. I know its wonder. I am circled by the unspeakable mercies of the world. I am in the contagion of society. I feel the riot of blood in my heart and in my veins. I am here. I do not know where I may go. I do not know how far I will journey, what my impediments will be, what roads I will take or leave, what learning I will possess, what pictures I shall paint, what songs I shall compose. O soul, thou never hast found all these things, but thou art here, and I am I. Here I am. I am a part of the world, to lift the world up. Here am I. O Jacob, what makes you step so swiftly and walk so far? What makes your face burn so and your eyes so bright? Lean toward your journey.

And his answer is, "I am going to make myself." Every man and every woman must mark that the first beatitude of the human soul is to own himself. Do you amount to much? Maybe not. You can amount to more. Do you know much? Likely not. You can know more. Do you love many people? You can love more. You are here. Do you see something of the wonder in the world? You can see more. Do you know

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how great a thing it is to live? You can know more to-morrow. "I am here." Every soul ought to feel that with all insistency. We are here to spend our future on just enough ground to stand on. The first qualification of life, therefore, is one's soul. This is more than half might. If you had a soul, what would you do with it? Well, make a poet out of it. You could make an architect out of it. You could make a soldier out of it. You could make a sailor out of it. You could make an originator of great commercial industries out of it. You can make a dreamer of sunlit dreams out of it. If you just had a soul! That is right. What an initiator of industry a man's own life is. Consider a man like Browning. He came with his voice of song and melody and urged his way. And to-day, I take it, more people are vitally concerned in Robert Browning's poetry than in the poetry of any one man that ever lived except Shakespeare; and to-morrow he will have more votaries, and the day after more yet, and in twenty centuries Shakespeare and Browning will stand shoulder to shoulder on the sky line of the world. What did he do? He had more than half might, and he wrote such things as make him blow a thousand trumpet breaths and bugle calls and martial music. And the first thing of life is therefore thyself. This is thy beatitude.

Then there is the blessing of Almighty God. Friend, will you think this: If you had a boat and

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the whole sea, what would you do? Well, you could sail around the world. If you had a boat and a little river, you could sail up the river till the shallows drew too nigh against the keel to let you voyage farther. And you could sail down to where the little stream emptied into the larger stream and the larger stream flowed into the river. If you had a little boat and a little stream, you could float your way out into the sea. And then, having the sea, the all-enswathing sea, where are you going? To the ends of the earth. All Columbus needed was a ship and a sea, and he came to America, and if he had lived fifty years longer he would not only have sailed to the Bermudas and seen sunny Cuba and down to South America, but he would have doubled Cape Horn and gone Magellan's journey. What he needed was a ship and a great sea. O, life, thank your God you have a God Almighty. Infinite room for the invasion of the human soul. The reason why I like Bret Harte's books is because there is always the touch of adventure on them. You never know what gold is in his mountains, what fresh expanse of hill is before you for the climb of your feet; you never know what Sierras' peak is before you. You never know in Bret Harte's books what country or adventure or enrichment may be before you. When you have God Almighty you will be forever and forever in the front-door yard of heaven. I tell you, if a man can have God Almighty, he would be fairly

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clothed in riches. If a man had everything and had no God Almighty, he would be fairly impoverished and in utter penury. "God Almighty." What does a man need if an astronomer? Answer: Eye and the heavens. And when you have the eye and the heavens all you need is time and an opportunity, and by and by the universe will pass your watching eye. O brothers, the commodity of a great life is the possession of God Almighty on whom to draw.

The trouble with life sometimes is that there is a God Almighty and he is against us, and cannot care for us. He is like the stormy sea, angry against the ships. But there is such a thing as having a God Almighty giving a roadway for the soul. And this is what Isaac knew; and he said, "The blessing of God Almighty." Brothers, sisters, have all of us that Pisgah? Have all of us to look into that promised land? Hope all of us still for that Caanan? Have all of us to cross that Jordan? How strangely rich we become! And I profess before this company this: all life needs is the blessing of one's self and the blessing of God Almighty. We can keep house gloriously on only that. We can keep house with the sense that over us is the Almighty God; with the sense that within us is the Almighty God; with the sense that the Almighty God is for us and not against us; with the sense that his voice is making way for our advantage. "Make way, make way."

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And the old couriers, sometimes the forerunners of the king, came and said, "Make way for the king, make way, make way!" And God Almighty is the forerunner of any good soul and he says: "Make way for the man to come; make way for the woman who has arrived. Make way!"

My plea at this juncture, therefore, is that we should learn that the celestial fund of any soul is the blessing of God Almighty; and that the terrestrial fund of any soul is the blessing of God Almighty. We should learn that there is no word "rich" and no word "poor" as touching monetary matters, but only the word "rich" or "poor" according as we possess the high possession of the blessing of God Almighty. Whenever a person has the blessing of God Almighty in his heart, he is never poor and he is never gloomy and he is never fearsome, and storms never ravage and storms never blow so but out of the debris of the wreckage lifts glorious the manliness of the soul; and we stand and smile and say, "He has the blessing of God Almighty."

If Alexander the Great had given a man a credential reading, "Pass this man through every part of our empire and give him honor; let the soldiers answer to his call," and if the man went out and presented his credentials now, Americans would laugh it and him to scorn. This is not Alexander's empire. His soldiers are not here. His Macedonian phalanx is all dust; his long reach of spears is rotted-away wood and rusted-

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away iron. Alexander the Great is unknown here. If Cæsar the Great gave a credential to a man, "Wherever the Roman eagle flaunts its wings, answer this man's needs," and if the man had kept the credential, and if he came across the world through Gaul, and everywhere he went he had centurions and soldiers and legions to do his will; and then he brought that credential to-day and presented it, it would be worthless. Alexander the Great is lost; and Cæsar is lost; both gone beyond recovery. No man answers to either's behest. But what I will call you to witness is that if a man have a credential from God Almighty, if the handwriting of the eternal God is on it, and it said, "Pass this man wherever he takes his journey," do you know what would happen? The centuries would bow down to him; the stars would make obeisance to him; the sun would kindle its light earlier to give him light along his track, and angels in heaven would look, leaning, and say, "Whither going?" There is not a power in the universe, not a power of art, not a power of materiality that would not be ready and waiting to answer to his purpose. Why? He had a manifesto of God Almighty. I profess in this hearing this morning that the Christian man has the universe behind him, as well as before him. I profess that nothing can be of any impoverishment to the man that has behind him the glorious might and effulgent blessing of the blessing of God Almighty.

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I knew a preacher who was very poor. He went away from his home to study for the ministry. His father cared for none of these things. He went away garmented as a youth from a rich man's house, but poor as penury. But he went to the school and became a Methodist preacher, and went to Virginia before the days of the war. He was imprisoned in the Southern prison because they thought he was favoring the freeing of the slaves. All the while he was strangely rich. And then God gave him a wife and children and people to hear him.

And God continued to be with him, and he died as he had lived, after long service, after being a soldier in the rebellion, after doing strange things that linger long as the lingering of beautiful songs in the memory. I loved him so much, and I have looked straight into his soul and heard his words that are reverberant in my memory now like reverberating waves on a stormy shore. And his words seemed sweet as if the moonlight had found a voice; and all the time he was very poor, having scarce enough to live on. But all the while he had the blessing of God Almighty. I never knew him to complain. I have seen him dig his preacher hand into his pocket and hand out the little change he had. And God looked at him and thought he was a millionaire. He had so strangely little but the blessing of God. I have gone across this continent time and again and never got anywhere but somebody would

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say: "Did you know Colonel So and So?" "I did." "Did you ever hear him preach?" "I did." "Did you love him well?" "I did." "He was my pastor once." He had the blessing of God Almighty. He had nothing much else. Who said that he was poor?

I was one day this week in a certain place in this city where a woman was incurable. Pain was doing its worst day and night, day and night, day and night. She is just as certainly walking to an open grave as the stars are walking to their setting in the open sky. Nothing can stop her. She is going, sometimes faster, sometimes slower, but I never go there that I don't hear the beating of the death surf on the shore. Going nearer, coming nearer. And I said one day this week, "How are you to-day?" "O," she said, "full of hope, full of hope." And I looked at her and was ashamed. Sometimes I have complained, but as I looked at her in my shame I said, "Laddie, God keep you from the infamy of complaining, when this girl is dying by slow tortures and has a smile on her face." I said, "Have you any good days?" "All days are good," she said. "Are the nights long?" "All long," she said, "but full of His presence." "Are you ever free from pain?" "Never," she said. "But I am never free from peace." Who is she? One of God's daughters. Where is she going? Going to heaven. How fast? I don't know, but strangely swift, I can

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certify. But what has she? Only the blessing of God Almighty. Is that enough? It is altogether enough.

I thank God this morning in this presence that as a man I can stand before you all and say this is plenty, the blessing of God Almighty. If you have riches, God bless you in them; if you have a competency, God bless you in it; if you have nothing, God bless you in it. What is life's need? Soul and God, and having the blessing of God Almighty. Everything comes that needs to come.

George Matheson is dead. Who was George Matheson? He was a Scotch preacher. Who was George Matheson? He was stone blind. Who was George Matheson? He was a man who all the main years of his public life saw nobody's face. And yet George Matheson died the other day, and angels were waiting for him, and Christ was smiling in the gate, and there was rapture in heaven that I could faintly hear. What was the reason heaven was paying attention to George Matheson, the blind Scotch preacher? This was why: He had the blessing of God Almighty. He wrote many religious books. I think George Matheson was the nearest spirit to Rutherford of any man in this century. My conviction holds, having read his books of religious meditations, that he had the most sweet and mirthful piety I have known written in books. I think his prayers come nearer breaking heaven's gates down and taking

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them from their hinges so there may always be an open door of any prayers I have read. What of that? Nothing, only he had the blessing of God Almighty. Will you let me read you this? I will read it now as the reverberant shout of this man. Nothing in it of tears, no complaint, no talk of blindness, only of his peace. No intimation that this man saw nobody's face, but all intimation that the blaze of the glory of heaven spilled on his heart and on his eyes and on his face. He had the blessing of God Almighty. And he wrote:

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

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O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

And what he had (and he had enough) was the blessing of Almighty God!

PRAYER

O God, we thank thee that thou art so great and art with us. We feel so equipped with thee at our side. We want none other. Thou and we are sufficient. Bless us. May we all get the Almighty God and his blessing, for Christ's sake. Amen.

XVII

IN THE SIGHT OF JESUS CHRIST

“In the sight of . . . Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession.”—1 Timothy 6. 13.

AN old soldier, Paul by name, writing to a young soldier greatly beloved, Timothy by name, tells him that Timothy's battle is fought out under a Captain who is scarred with fighting and amazing with victory. I don't quite see how you can escape the thrill of that. Paul says our life is not hid, is not shadowed, is not immersed, in the depths of doing, but that life is visible; says that not only we at our doing are visible to those that are with us in our doing, but that we in our doing are full in the sight of Christ.

Now, I am not unapprised that Paul has a genius for marshaling phrases. If you will notice them, they clank like cavalry at march. Paul was in essence a soldier. He never forgot it. The battle revel was always in his blood. You will never understand Paul unless you understand that. But if Paul makes a marshaling of phrases, you are not to think that he does so for the fun—the intellectual fun—of creating a phrase. Paul never does that. He is too big a man to spend

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time in creating a phrase. That is for children and for childish intelligence. The difference between the rhetorician and the poet is that the rhetorician spends time on a phrase and the poet spends time on the thought. Where thought is, there is just as certain to be a phrase as when there is a saber made there will be a sheath for it.

To spend time eternally fashioning sheaths for swords is pretty small business when we might be fashioning sabers for sheaths. And so Paul is after seeing things. And in saying things he saw and felt he gets into people's blood. Walter Pater was a phrasist. "Marius, the Epicurean," is jammed like an ice floe with phrases; but I haven't happened to feel in it a touch of elemental manhood. Plenty of room between the pieces for a man, but not a man. I prefer the man. But Paul has the thought; and so the phrase leaps like a leaping sword. And he says this—that the General who is watching us at our fight has great history as a fighter; that we are not out under the play review of a play daylight with a play general. We are not out on review at all; but we are out at battle and the big General is watching us—no, not that, not that. Sometimes that word "us" hinders the thought. Watching me! Ah, now, is the General watching me? Yes. Ah, hands of mine, fight, fight! He is looking at you. And Paul says: "Timothy, Christ, your Captain, has plenty of scars and has been in plenty of pitched battles; and he knows a

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fighter when he sees one. Timothy, don't forget." And Timothy didn't.

Now, a great many military reviews amuse me. Curious things get me on my funny bone. But to see a military review when there is not much soldier but lots of flummery, then I laugh. Where the men in it never have been where they could even see the point of a sword except to salute with, never have had one sheathed in their breast, and to see a general that has never seen a fight, but has lots of millinery and white gloves, and the people bow to it—then I laugh. That amuses me and makes me vexed at one breath. Why, is a military parade a bit of tapestry? No. Is it a bit of military red tape? No. Is it a millinery display? No. Is it a place to see how angular you can be and how angular you can stay? No, that is not what a military review is for, but to see how battles are made. Now that is what a military review is for.

When the fight is on and when the battle calls you, you go; that is what a military review is for. When they turn it into a milliner's window they vex my soul. But if the general happens to be Meade—ah, now this review. What do you need for a review? Why, you need a general who has been in the fight and behaved in it. Meade, O you of Little Round Top and you of Gettysburg's enswathing fight, and you that stood unperturbed in days when the bleak-voiced cannon

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tore the sky to strips and hung it bleeding on the trees—Meade, are you here? There is a military review to-day; Meade is here. Or if it were Thomas, of Nashville, that said he would not hurry till things were ready, and then he would not stay, but hurried, and in his two gripping soldier hands caught an army and choked it and left it dead on the ground, hardly a straggler left. Ah, Thomas, are you here at the review stand? There is a review to-day, O General! Well, when there is a General around, he helps to make soldiers out of all of us. That is the thing. There is an embryonic soldier at our hearts, and when the Captain is at the review stand we quit being milliners and hairdressers and idlers and say: "Ready, General. Ready, march, fight." There is fighting now. And if Sherman of the shrewd, long face, with the bristles of his beard like set bayonets, if he were at the stand, I think a drummer boy would get the charge of a brigade in his blood.

At one time I was over in Paris when there was a review of one hundred thousand soldiers, but they had more flummery and finery and head dressing than ever I saw on a man; just built up of it. But I didn't care much for that review; there wasn't much doing that day that I saw. They were showing off. Soldiers are not to show off; they are to show on. But if Marshal Ney had only been there—ah! He of the face black with powder smoke; he of the rear guard; he that came

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back in the face of the foemen multitudinous as death, and was last at the river to guard the poor remnant of Napoleon's Moscow army; if he had been there, my blood would have boiled like an angry sea. Ah, well, what the old soldier Paul, he of the Holy War, said to the young soldier Timothy was: "The General sees you—The General."

So life is in the open, is it? We were modest and thought that we were hid. Our modesty made us inaccurate. We are not hid, not lost. This General can see every soldier in the battle line. Out in the open, and the General, the General sees every soldier. "Timothy, you stand pretty tall," and Timothy says: "I can't help it. Fight's the word. The General is here."

And we are, therefore, to understand that the pith of this text is that we have to do what we do under the eyes of the Doer—that our human actions are all done under the trained eye of Him that was here and went through all our conflicts, had our troubles, and not only knew all of them, but had the barb of the battle in his unhealed wounds. The old battle arrow used to have a knack—very cruel the knack was—of eating into the flesh and then not coming out unless you cut the flesh away. This General has a scar where the arrow was cut out, and he has an arrow in the flesh yet. He is watching. This is no play business. No, no. This is no joke we are on, no.

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A great electrical battle, that is it. Timothy, he says, "Ready, charge!" And Paul says the specific instance of this battle trial and battle conquest of this Captain, Christ Jesus, was that before Pontius Pilate he witnessed a good confession, that he stood clean through till the last feeble stab of the dying battle stumbled to its grave. That is what he says.

Now, I suppose that this trial of Jesus before Pontius Pilate is easily the most thrilling episode in jurisprudence or jurisdiction that has ever transpired; God before a man; heaven before earth; eternity at the bar of time. And the supercilious Roman sits on his bema of judgment, and with lavish hauteur spills out lavish obliquity of justice and unmanliness of attitude, and shames Roman law till it blushes to the forehead's top. And I want this morning, rapidly as the fleetness of the time compels, to look at the chief Captain under whose eyes this young soldier Timothy fights his battle—to look at Him, fighting his battle before the eyes of Pontius Pilate.

And I would have you note that Christ Jesus made no abatement of claim before Pilate. It is one thing to talk one wise to the rabble crowd, an unpicked, unsolicited company of farmers and fishermen, a great swarm of people who come we know not whence and go we know not whither—one thing to speak before them and remain unchallenged, and another thing distinctly to stand before Cæsar's bar and hold tight to the

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claim. And when Christ came to Cæsar's bar and answered Pontius Pilate's inquiries, I would have you mark that he made no abatement of claim, no faltering of the voice, no dulling of the pulse, no softening of any high prerogative he had claimed for himself. But when he was asked explicitly, "Art thou a king?" the answer came with explicitness that drove like a naked sword by a naked arm, "I am." Christ never winced at that talk, never. Christ never parleyed with it, never. Christ never softened it, never. When people put at Christ, "Who can forgive sins but God?" Jesus did not soften his speech and say, "I was too hasty in extemporaneous word; you misconceive me." He did not, no, but he said, "That you may know the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say to the sick of the palsy, Arise and walk." Christ said that.

And when he came before the visible empire of this earth, when he came before the mightiest empire that had thus far invaded the planet, when that sneering-lipped Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judæa, in the name of the great Cæsar whose hand encompassed the world and ruled in rudest might, asked him, "Art thou a king?" as if to say, "There is but one king, and his name is Cæsar," then Christ's voice with bugle's might, said, "I am." Men, women, there come times when you have no right to abate your moral claims. There come times when the tribunal of

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the world, the tribunal of business, the tribunal of society, the tribunal of etiquette, the tribunal of literary training, the tribunal of intellectual cult, call you frankly to face this, and you dare not abate your claim. Who are you? "I am one of God's sons," you say. Put it straight. You dare not abate your claim. "I am one of God's daughters." Say that. You must not abate your claim. And in that time, when the thrill of fear you would have thought would have shaken Christ from his feet, when Pilate put out that word, "Art thou a king?" when he said it with all the tumultuous passion of audacious Rome—as if to say, "There is one king on the earth; are you he?"—then Christ said, with a smiling lip, "I am." No abatement of claim. That is the soldier.

Then I would have you mark that Christ before Pontius Pilate made no abatement of dignity. I am not talking about that cheap dignity people go and put on to hide littleness. Some people are very dignified so that you cannot get close, so you won't know they are small. But I am talking about that imperial dignity which is the shadow of the soul. When you do because you are, and you walk because you live, and do battle because you be a soldier, that is all. No abatement of dignity. Did you mark that Jesus asked Pilate what Jesus might do? No; he told Pilate what Jesus would do. Did he quiet his claims and say, "My dignity is for the peasants"?

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He did not. Was he a prisoner? He was. Were his hands tied behind him till they bled at the wrists? Yes. Did he bow down and was he despondent? No. If you think that, you never saw Christ at the tribunal. He stood as straight as a pine. Those people who think Christ was despondent and immersed in sadness when he was before Pilate, I reckon do not know Christ and the sort of a soul he had. I venture that he smiled. Why? Because he knew who he was, and he knew that the thongs he wore upon his wrists he could break as if they had been towstring if he wanted to, but he was so big, so big, that he dare suffer humiliation and not be humiliated.

If a man be insufficient and knows he is so little and insignificant he doesn't dare to say anything back, he is a kind of coward, and will say, "I hope you won't do anything worse than you have to." It is no wonder that he doesn't speak back; he doesn't dare to. But if he knew he could mutilate the man with a trick of the wrist and just kept his hands down, and knew he could choke the fellow and have fun at it, then it is imperial to let the fellow alone. Christ with his hands behind him! Ah, with those hands he could have throttled imperious Pilate and have wrecked Rome, and put his dynamite under Rome and made a Vesuvius under the continents and ripped them and flung them tattered into the sky. No abatement of dignity. Face upright as the dawn, his eyes like stars. And when I see a picture of Jesus at

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the tribunal of Pontius Pilate with his head down, I know that the artist didn't know Christ. Christ is not of the hung head; he is of the erect head and the erect spirit, and looks the universe in the eyes. When he bore the cross he looked the world in the face. Upright; no abatement of dignity.

And I would have you mark that Christ before Pilate had no irritation. He didn't sneer, he didn't whimper, he didn't complain. Take as an instance of suavity that dealing of Christ before Pilate, and you will find scarce its fellow in the world for marvelous equipoise. He had calm. And this is the reason why he was calm. That is the way. To be calm is to have it. Some people get scared at something and say, "Why, now, I am just as calm as can be, just as calm as ever. You think I am excited, I am not. I am calm." Any child knows when people are calm, because, if you are calm you won't talk about it. But Christ was not irritated. Don't think this matter of irritation is a small matter; it is not. The sin that besets so many persons is not the sin of swearing and cursing, but the sin of irritation.

"I am so vexed and I am so upset I don't know what to do." The cooking has gone wrong or the consomme doesn't taste right for the guests. Or the car was overcrowded going down town. When you stood on the footboard the people who sat wouldn't let you stand there in peace; they just jabbed you in the ribs, and when you got

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home you said: "I was so mad I could have just knocked them off the seat." That is the sin of irritation. Little things wear us. And Christ had plenty of opportunities for irritation; the petty lordliness of the guard, the forsaking of him by his disciples, the mouthings of the crowds, the intrusion on his privacy, the assuming him a criminal before a crime had been proved against him. But, mark you, he was calm because he had calm. And whenever people can stir you up to be nagged, remember they have whipped you. That is a sign you are whipped. You think it is a sign that you are smart and know what you are doing. It is a sign you are not smart and don't know what you are doing. If you are what you ought to be, you can make a good profession. And I defy you to show or say or think a trifle of irritation in the manner of Christ.

Then I would have you to mark that Christ held fast to his purpose. You will struggle long in history, with its details of affairs, if you think to find a man that was not diverted from his purpose. But no abatement of purpose here. Christ had destined himself to die for a wicked world. O, now, that is music, is it? That is music—destined himself to die for a wicked world. And he kept straight on. Do you think that if when Pontius Pilate said, "Art thou a king?" he had said, "I am not," do you think even vacillating Pontius Pilate would have slain him? He could not and would not. The Christ

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was on his way to the grave. Every now and then I find people who think Christ wanted to evade the cross. Christ was no dodger. No man wants to evade his honorable burden; no woman wants to evade her honorable duty. We are not here to dodge our mountain, but lift it. O, lift. Get down and underneath the mountain, shovel it up on your hands. It is so heavy. But that is what we have strength for. It is so hard. That is what we are here for—to do hard things. The muscles crack, but they don't break. Lift it, and by and by you can hold it forever. Christ was not dodging his purpose. No abatement of his purpose. To find the babes in their cradle bitten with leprosy and kiss them back to health; to find foul cheeks and kiss them to cleanliness; to find the broken hearts and kiss them into compassionate peace; to find the tragic failure, and to kiss dull lips that have smothered themselves with sobs like the babe that has cried itself to sleep; and he said, "Fail no more, try again." No abatement? None.

Neither was there in Christ any forgetfulness of the fact that he was in his heavenly Father's presence. Now, beloved, do you wonder that he smiled? Do you? How can you, now? One time I was graduating at college, and down here in the second seat was my father; and his farmer hands were folded Sunday-wise. To him it was Sunday. It was Monday with me. It was my first work day of the week. And he sat down

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there and sometimes he would unfold his hands and clasp his bearded chin and look to see how the "b'y" got on. He was a Manxman and never said "boy." He always said "b'y." I wish I could hear him say it this morning. But I cannot; he is choiring in heaven. And I sat on the rostrum and looked down on him and was scared. You know, if you ever graduated from college and had to make a speech. I was white here and blue there and scared all up and down, through and through. I was scared. But I looked down and saw my father looking over and not seeming to notice—you know how parents do when their children perform in public—and his eyes were down and his fingers combed his beard with contumacious persistence. And scared as I was, I smiled, because my father was there. Scared, smiled—my father was there.

"O," you say, "that is a small matter." I know it. That is my matter. My matters are small. You say, "What bearing has that on him, the Christ?" Much bearing. I told you he never forgot when he was with Pilate that he was under his Father's eyes. He knew. He knew his Father was looking at him. O, hearts, hearts, if we could only know that Father is looking at us we might get scared, but we must not run, must we? No, must not run, Father's looking. And he never forgot that he was on his road home. And now, when you come to think of this, that is how it is you dare live greatly in your

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fear, in your often utter trepidation, because the Father is watching. And Christ, there was about him that strange dignity, therefore, that fairly bankrupted our expectations of him.

We are told that King Charles I, however frivolous his life had been before, however lacking in sagacity, in the last event of his life, the only eventful event of his career, when he was tried for treason, professed that the court had no jurisdiction. And, however Lilliputian the Sixteenth Louis of France was, when he came to his trial he professed no jurisdiction. And you mark when Christ came to his trial he could have professed no jurisdiction, but he solely said: "My kingdom is not where your kingdom is. My kingdom is not of this world. Your kingdom is a kingdom of dying men and a kingdom of earthways and of dust. My kingdom lasts when sunsets vanish and when daydawns cease, and when all the stars shall be plucked from out the firmament of night. My kingdom!"

What is this Paul says? Paul says that Timothy is under the eyes of this Captain, unimpaired by his fight, equal to his battle, saved, not by his triumph, but by his defeat. Under his eyes you fight. Out under the open day, beloved, and the Captain looking at you, and you, and you, and you, and you, and me. Fight a good fight for eternal life. Lay hold on eternal life, because we live in the sight of Jesus Christ, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good con-

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fession. He of the scarred heart, and the scarred brow, and the scarred hands, and of the scarred side, and of the scarred feet, He, battled at, and torn, and wounded, and bleeding, and dying, and living forevermore, in his sight we make the fight. O, heart, heart, double quick, march! O, heart, fight; if you die, it is no matter. He will be at the death. If you live, he sees you; but fight like a man that lives under his Captain's eyes. That is all.

PRAYER

O Christ, hearken to our prayer this morning. Touch our hearts with the electric thrill of whose soldiers we are and under whose eye we fight, for Christ's sake.

XVIII

LIFE'S CRIMINAL AGNOSTICISM

“And knew not that it was Jesus.”—John 20. 14

THE narrative from which I have plucked the flower of this text is strangely and clingingly beautiful. I have plucked this text like one purple flower I might take from a clematis; but in taking the one purple blossom I did not denude the vine, did I? This twentieth of John is a clematis vine, purple, glorious, and fairly stifling with color. And I have pulled one flower. I would be glad for you to see its loveliness, and be touched with its wonder.

If you were to read any one of these three poems I mention—and I trust you have all read them—you must have found yourselves strangely caught in the clinging fingers of clinging beauty. One of the poems is Shelley's “The Sensitive Plant,” one of the poems is Bryant's “Green River,” one of the poems is Poe's “Annabel Lee.” And you notice I have mentioned three poems utterly diverse, from minds that are so separated one from the other that one compared with the other seems fantastic, and for reason. The poems are very beautiful. We are not always all touched by the same poem. That is well.

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“The Sensitive Plant” is Shelley, not at riot, but at calm, and Shelley is seldom at calm. He is full of vituperation, full of gusty speech, full of pomp and circumstance. The poet winds are blowing gales upon him, and are very clamorous. But “The Sensitive Plant” you cannot read without feeling the wistful, lonely, shadowed, sequestered loveliness. You become immured in the garden’s walls and shadows under the trivial shadow of the plant. It is very sweet. You will read it.

Bryant’s “Green River”—you will read it. I feel the calm of it in my heart. When I think of the poem I feel the shadows in the stream—I do not see them—anybody can do that. I feel the shadows in the water; I feel the leaning of the trees; I feel the emerald running river; I feel the drift of the meadow, and the wood, and the water, as if the landscape all were but motions in a happy dream of October sunshine and evening. It is a beautiful poem; you will read it.

And “Annabel Lee” is love set to music by a musician strangely gifted. Not Edmund Spenser, not Alfred Tennyson; neither of them was a greater master absolutely of the mysteries of music in words than Edgar Allan Poe; and then when he and love met and he and love kissed, and then he put that into music—that is “Annabel Lee.” You have read it. Some time when you go to be rocked asleep in the ecstasy of poetic motion, as if the boat were on the flood and you leaned in the

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moonlight, you read "Annabel Lee." Why do I speak of them? I speak of them by contrast. The twentieth of John is more sensitive than Shelley's "The Sensitive Plant." The twentieth of John is more restful and exquisite than Bryant's "Green River." The twentieth of John is more music-making and music-compelling than Poe's "Annabel Lee." It is a poem, but I did not say so. I did not have to.

Some people when they write a poem have to mark it, "This is a poem." And then people cannot quite persuade themselves that it is. But some things are so utterly poems that you cannot persuade yourself by any prose forms that they are not. Did anybody say that a mourning dove's wing is a poem? No. Why not? They didn't need to. Anybody with sense knew that. I knew myself. You readers of literature, you people that bathe in the dewfall of the blessed night; you people that haunt the groves where holy poesy marches at night time in the shadows burdened with beauty—you read the twentieth of John. Ah, from this beauty vine filled with purple flowers I will pluck a bloom.

"And knew not that it was Jesus." What if she had gone past him? Ah, Mary, what if you had missed him? Mary didn't know. That makes you shocked at the heart to think of it. Mary missed Christ. And what I wish to think of with you and you to think of with me, and God to think of with both of us together is, some of

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the causes why we miss the adventure of the ages and the sight of eternity. "And know not that it is Jesus" when we meet him.

Mary was in the garden. Some of us miss the sight of Christ because we are looking at the garden. Is it possible for one beauty, very winsome, to drown another beauty more winsome? Yes; quite possible. Is God's garden fair? So fair. Is it meant for us to be in? Meant for all of us to be in. Know you why God made so many flowers? Answer—So everybody could have a choice. Know you why God made so many trees? So everybody could have a shadow. Know you why God made so many rivulets? So everybody might have a song. Know you why God made so many waves? So everybody might rock upon a billow. Know you why God made so many sunsets? So that every one could pluck a crimson rose that vanishes with the daylight, and wear it at the heart. So beautiful, thank God, this out-of-doors—this garden of our God. And it were a pity then if when the perfume of the garden is so sweet and when the crimson of the flower is so seashell delicate, and when the odor from the dank woods drenches not the body but the spirit, a pity that in the presence of the garden and with the mantle of the garden, so to say, wrapped around the shoulders, we should miss the Gardener. Ah, that is it. I have known many dwellers in the outdoors to miss the Gardener. I have known many a lover of the sky to miss the Skymaker.

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I have known many a lover of bulbs to miss the marvel of Him who put the germ within the bulbs. The garden is so fair. Because I saw the cloud should I let the cloud so swathe me round about as that I missed Him who dropped the cloud for a shadow to the panting flocks and the lowing herds and the weary child and the burdened man? Should I? No. We must not let the garden keep us from the Gardener. We must not let the thing keep us from the Contriver. This is the divine gift then of scenting out the path that leads to the hand, and following the hand through the arm to the shoulder, and running the shoulder home to the heart. O, heart, that is the trouble. We didn't know that the fingers run to the palm and the palm to the wrist and the wrist to the elbow and the elbow to the shoulder, all slanting upward, and then that the shoulder runs, slanting downward to the heart; else hand and finger and pulse and power be dead. It is the heart that giveth life.

What is the garden? Why, it is one method of the Gardener's talking. What is the flower? It is the thing God loves to look at. What is the star? It is a touch of the finger of God in the canopy of night. And where God's finger touches he leaves light. Ah, heart, who is around? Why, the Gardener is around. But you ought to know that the Gardener is not anonymous. Who is around? The Gardener. And I didn't see him!

When I go to London there is one place I never

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miss, though there are many places I do miss, for it is quite a town. I never miss the Royal Gallery. And there is one room in this gallery I never miss, and it is the Turner Room. And there is one picture I never miss in the Turner Room, and it is "The Old Temeraire," a sea ship of battle which is being tugged in to die. Did you ever see that picture? And I go and look at it, and then I go and take a sea bath in it, and then I go and take a sunset drench and then I go and hear the battle tug and boom and crush and crash, and then I go and smell the old powder blackened and bleakened guns. Old ship, only an echo of the boom and crush upon it now, but used to be in the fisticuff of war. All that. Ah, now, such a picture! But listen; if I were so intent on the picture that if Turner had been there I should not have seen Turner, then I would go away and do the woman act and have a cry. Why? Because I saw only Turner's picture. But Turner was all of his pictures. One, just one! But he had a thousand in his brain and two thousand—nobody wots how many thousand he had. He was more a picture than any picture. I miss him in the picture? Ah, no, I must get to him through the picture.

Do you read John Burroughs? You ought to. He likes dirt. He says dirt is good enough to eat in the spring. I read any fellow who knows that much. I wouldn't want to diet on it all the year, but in the spring it is good. And if you should travel a good deal you must be used to eating a

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good deal of earth. You will have to do it. All told, as nature writers go and as nature writers are called, I think John Burroughs the best of all the sweet chorus. I have all his books except the one on Whitman. I have asked to be excused on that for a time. But do you read Burroughs's books? What is the lack of them? I will tell you. He has missed the Gardener. Burroughs is apparently an agnostic. I have gone through all of his books, seen him walk on his dirt, gone down among the water lilies with him, stopped on the Hudson banks with him, heard the water brooks bubbling strangely intelligible speech with him, have been all wheres with him, but never saw a hint about the Gardener. And I am so sorry about it. If he only once had looked in the Gardener's face and said, "I bless thee, Gardener, that the garden is so sweet," Burroughs would have had no fellow in the earth as an interpreter of the out-of-doors. But in the garden he has missed the Gardener. We must not, must we now? We must not miss the Gardener. Is he not at home? I call you to mark that you are out in God's flower garden, all a-bloom and all a-perfume, and all a-rapture of green. Don't miss the Gardener and say, "He is not at home." And some of us, therefore, are guilty of criminal agnosticism in that we miss the Gardener because we watch the garden.

Some of us miss the sight of Christ because we have tears. And Mary was weeping. You can for-

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give people who are crying for not seeing, can't you? I came near running over a little codger the other day. He was crying and I was walking along, and he was crying so he didn't see me, and I was nodding and stepping intellectually, and I didn't see him, until, all at once, I said: "Little codge, why didn't you get out of the way when you saw a big chap coming?" And he said, "I didn't see you, neither!" "I didn't see you neither." I said, "Sweetheart, I saw you either." And I leaned over and used the one handkerchief I had left—and I jabbed around in one eye extracting the tears and then in the other eye extracting the tears, and then said, "Little codge, I have a great deal to cry at; we will feel better now?" And he said, "Yes, ma'am." If people have tears, you can forgive them, can you? And Mary was so busy weeping that she could not see who it was. But Mary was so busy weeping she must not miss who it is. That is it, now. When the heart will cry out, it is better to have tears. You can do a good job at weeping tears out of the heart. Did you ever see a man trying to kiss a woman to quit her crying? Why, did you? It is a fine job—kissing—but it doesn't get on. You say, "Dear, don't cry; dear, don't cry!" She doesn't seem to notice that you hold her with the one arm and fold her in with the other. I don't know whether it's the holding or the kissing that she is working for, but she doesn't stop, just keeps on crying. Folks, it is so hard to stop crying sometimes—so hard.

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And we maybe will miss seeing Him, but we must not. You will have plenty of crying to do, I wouldn't wonder. I have yet to see anybody that didn't need kissing for tears. Never one yet. Little people cry a good deal. You people who think little chaps don't suffer much, why don't you go back and be a little chap again so as to refresh your memory? Little people don't have any to-morrow. It is all to-day. And when they feel bad it is so mighty bad, and you when you feel bad you have a to-morrow. O tears, would you miss Him? Some people do. You have got tears—I won't hector you about it. They are very swift. They are bitter to the taste as gall, and your hands and your face are together and you cannot wipe the tears away, so fast the tears will fall. You cannot keep your face dry because the rains drench so. Why? Weeping. Mary, it is Christ! And, Mary, wipe your tears. Who are you? Who are you? Beloved, don't let your sorrow dim your heart to Him. I think sorrow is pretty hard. Where I have seen one body hardened with sorrow I have seen fifty hardened with no sorrow. Tears are bitter and tears are salt, and yet good for drinking. See Him. See Him. O, don't let tears blind you so you can't see Him.

Then some of us know not that it is Jesus because we don't pay attention. Inattentive. Not caring. There is a story I remember in Bret Harte—that graphic relator of unwonted condi-

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tions. He said to this import: that a certain man prospecting in those dim Himalayas of our continent, the Sierras, having prospected long and fruitlessly, left pick and shovel, and went away and came back no more. He left because there was not gold. He had worked so long and fruitlessly and unavailingly. And then, one other later day, a man discovered one of the richest lodes in all that rich auriferous yield, but at the vein he found a broken pick with a splintered handle in it. And the man had come upon the kit of that prospector who had gone away poverty-smitten when he was at the door of the house of fabulous wealth. That is the history of many of us—inattentive, don't watch, go nodding. It is no time to nod when you might meet Him, the Master of the mines. There is no time to sleep if along this way there may pass the articulate Christ. Inattentive. Would it do me any good should Christ walk by if I gave no heed? Reading in the Book. Ah, but the Author of the Book went by. Where? Past now. Men, women, what business have we to be inattentive when the Man might go along the road? What business? None. What business have we to appear careless when the Prince of the Ages might walk past our house? None. What business have we to be thinking lessers and be inattentive to largers? When we only look, ah, my God, thou art here!

Say, people, you say you don't see Christ. I wonder if you watched. That is all. Where

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will you see him? In the sick-room. Where will you see him? In the death-room. Where will you see him? At the baby's cradle. Where will you see him? In the waters of the lake. Where will you see him? In the dim, black loneliness of the August night and at its noon. Where will you see him? Where the crowd crushes to its daily rush. Where will you see him? Where the meadows lie. Where is he? Everywhere you go, if you go where decency and frugality and high resolve and holy hope and grace of heart and cleanness of spirit walk, He will be there. Ah, my heart! If you pass Him and know not that it is Jesus!

Some of us miss reckoning on this—that Jesus is unobtrusive. He will not intrude upon you. He is like some woman in love. A woman may have love untold to venture on your heart, but she must not tell it, save with the cadence of a blush like a single leaf of one red rose. And because he was inobtrusive we knew not that it was Jesus.

Some people miss Jesus because they are inattentive to the divine. Now, you know, I think it is pretty nice to notice people. For one thing they are so funny. There are lots of jokes when there are lots of people. If you like jokes, just watch folks. You will save ten cents. You don't have to buy a "Life," or any other joke paper. Just watch people. It is nice to notice people because they are so enjoyable. I think it is nice when you are out on the road keeping your head

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up and your eyes open, as if to say, "If anybody speaks to me, I won't feel very mad." It is nice to look for people, isn't it? You know, many's the time I would have given a deal to have somebody on the street say "Hello!" I wouldn't have cared whether he knew me or not. It is nice to notice people. It is nice to have the thrill of soul because people are beside you. But, ah, people, people, what is that compared with the indifference to the divine? Tell me some of the people that have been hissed in history. One of them was Tilly, ruthless. One of them was Wallenstein, ruthless. One of them was Alva, ruthless. One of them was Cæsar Borgia, hellish. Tell me some people that poisoned the heart of the world? I will not. Tell me some people that march down history's road as if they owned it. I will. Cæsar, Cromwell, Lincoln. Tramp, tramp, tramp—who is coming? Cromwell with his Ironsides. Tramp, and the slush of blood is in the tramping. Who is coming? Lincoln, wading shoetop deep in blood. Tramp. You saw them, didn't you? Ah, but didn't you see the one Man who has made history white light, noon light. Why don't you see him? One road, He on it. I will profess this morning in the name of the history of the world for nigh two thousand years that the one Man on the road was the Man Christ. I am not talking at random. You know history. I know a trifle of it myself. I say here is the one Man in history on the road. And some people read the history

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of the ages and never see Christ. What was the trouble? Wasn't he there? Yes. Listen. "Knew not that it was Jesus." Didn't you know who it was? Took a drink from his cup? Yes. Took civilization from his bounty? Yes. Took of his best from his treasure house? Yes. Took chastity and high morality and holy hope? Yes. Never knew who gave it. Never looked up past the cup to the hand or past the hand to the face. And your lips are so parched and dry you stoop with heat, and you have been tramping across the sands, till your eyes are blurred. And then a cup of water held out, and a voice, "You are so thirsty, drink," and you took a drink and you pushed back the cup and never looked up at the face. Ah, "Knew not that it was Jesus."

XIX

THE UNKNOWN GIRDING OF GOD

“I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.”—
Isaiah 45. 5

GOD said to Cyrus this: “I have been at work on your life. You haven’t known me, but I have known you; you haven’t thought of me, but I have often thought of you; you haven’t been interested in my kingdom, but I am interested in yours; you haven’t known that hands other than yours had been at work on the plastic life of you, but my hands have helped shape you.” Cyrus was astonished when he knew that. When that word came to him it was as if the two divine hands had suddenly become visible and had reached out in front of him, had leaned hard and broken the door wide open, and a voice had said, “Go on in.” And what I want to talk with you about in God’s name then, is “The Unknown Girding of God.” And this name Cyrus might as well have been another; it might have been James or George or Paul; it might have been Mary or Martha or Elizabeth; it might have been William; it might have been Allen; it might have been any name. To tell you quite the truth, it is any name. Cyrus in this text is like an algebraic x . It represents

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the unknown, not quality nor quantity, but person—the unknown person—and you, and you, and you and I—are the person. Would you care to listen to God this morning?

Now God Girds Life, in the First Instance, by Ancestry. It is a thing to school our hearts to attention that the whole world of folks, that a line going from us to the first woman and the first man, has been at work upon our life. You know your ancestors—a little about them—sometimes you wish you knew a little less—it would be convenient—but you don't know much about any of your ancestors, and you don't know anything about most of them. Most of them are out of sight. Whose face is that on the wall? And you say, "That's my mother's face." And a sweet face she has, daughter, thank God for it. And whose face is that? She says, "That is father's face. I wish you had known him, preacher man." I wish I had. And who are those folks with the old-fashioned dresses—the man with the great big tie fluffed at his throat and the collar that chokes upon him like a noose, and the woman who sits there in her bodice as if she were about to be executed—those funny clothes these ancestors of ours wore? "O," she says, "that is my grandfather and my grandmother." "Is that all the folks you have, lady?" "No," she says, "I have a lot more." "Where are their pictures?" She says, "I haven't a picture of them." And there isn't anybody who has the picture of all his

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folks—just a few of them for samples, that's all. You belong to the Daughters of the Revolution, do you? That is a good company. I would rather have an ancestor who fought to give freedom a shield and wings than to have a patent of any nobility. And you can trace your ancestry back to your Revolutionary fathers? Why, lady, that is but a stone's fling. Any girl could throw a stone that far, and a man could throw clear past them. Who were their folks? Who, now? What were their ancestors? You don't know? What about those Norman conquerors who came over with the bloody-handed, wicked William? What about their folks? You don't know? Clean back to the sunrise morning of the making of the world—that's how far back ancestry goes; and I state still that it is a thing to cloud the sky of anybody's heart and make thoughtlessness thoughtful to consider that the whole race of the world has been concerned in shaping our life. And what we are runs back with its threads of weaving to the beginning of the race. There is "Jason," hewn out by the cunning hand of Thorwaldsen, the Danish sculptor. It is a brave piece of marble; it is an emanation of genius. And you say that this piece of sculpture is one of the golden efforts of Thorwaldsen's genius. Is that the end of it? Is that the cream of particulars with which you are conversant? Is that all you care about?

Let us consider this, the history of the marble

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out of which he hewed it. Marble is limewater's deposit of lime, sickening slime along which the creatures of the early world crept. Maybe there came the completion of fire. Anyhow, no geologist knows how the lime of the limestone happened to be made whiter than the teeth of a little child. Some alchemy of fire, they think. But God Almighty was a multitude of years creating the block out of which Thorwaldsen could contrive a "Jason." And consider the tools the sculptor used—how long it took to make the tools. You say he needed nothing other than a chisel and a mallet. You are quite right, friend; but did you pause to consider how long it took to contrive a chisel and how long to contrive a mallet? All the chisel the early world had was its fingers, and dug the dirt up and chiseled with its fingers—chiseled with its fingers to find the roots and bulbs fit for food. Have you considered that the only mallet the earliest world had was the hammer of the fist, and how long it took the world to make a mallet like God put on the end of a man's arm? There's the mallet. And it took spacious years to make another like it. They didn't have sense enough to pattern quickly, but it took a thousand years to make a hammer. You must consider that in the making of the tools—for the making of a "Jason." You are to consider this too—how long it took the world to come to an æsthetic idea sufficient to know that it is worth while to change a marble block into a marble

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personality. It takes a good deal of intellectual growth, terrible and strenuous sometimes, until out of the nondescript crowd there grows a man who sees that there is something in the marble worth while to hew out. And then you are to consider that it took the world a long time to learn that a human face was worth preserving. Milton calls the face "the human face divine," but it took a long while for the world to learn that it was divine. They would say of the face, "There are plenty of them." But you must know it is nothing against the face that there are plenty. It is nothing to the glory of the sun because it is alone. He would be better married. There is no glory to anything because it is alone. If the thing is notable, the more of it the better. If I had my way, I'd like to have a thousand Shakespeares, and I'd take five hundred of the sweet-hearted Sydney Lanier if I had my way. And it took a long, long spell of sitting up with human life to conclude that the human face was worth keeping forever. Men come and men go, and there is a blister on the earth; that is all—that is life. There is a scar where a man kissed the dirt of a little mound, and there is a blister above the grave where heartache dropped its tears and those tears burned the earth; that is all—that is life. And after centuries somebody thought it was worth while keeping the face so soon to be buried, and making the mortal immortal. And in the history of Thorwaldsen's

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“Jason”—you are to consider this, the finding out of what stone was eligible for such honor. In the older days they tried granite, and the reason why Egyptian sculptor never tried the fairest things is that Egypt never had a stone for the fairest thing. Egypt made the colossals out of granite. And then somebody found a quarry of alabaster; and because alabaster was more eligible to the chisel they used alabaster, and with finer results. But only when alabaster had given way for marble did the chisel and the mallet and the man grow to be one wondrous act of creative power, out of which sprang angels and temples and glories innumerable. And the old Parian marble made many a statue. And the glory of that era of Athenian perfectness of architecture which achieved the Parthenon and the Propyleum and Phidias’ Metopes, was possible by Pentelic marble. And the moderns have used Carrara marble; so you are to consider how long it took the world to learn what medium would most aptly express the wonders of the soul and body. And you will consider Thorwaldsen’s schooling and his ancestry and how he came to have that breath of strange life, which, inhaling, he was able to exhale those wondrous certificates of God in art. And you will consider this, how broad man is to have a gift in himself outside of ancestry. Even so our ancestry has contributed to the girding of God in this unknown and strange fashion, so that it is beyond our comprehension to gather up all

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the multitudinous steps of it, only that God has been girding our ancestry since the beginning of the world. There is Wesley, with his slight body and his majestic soul, and his slow smile and his power of becoming artificer of an ecclesiasticism. There he is, while the unknown generations of the world have been contriving his personality. And there is Joliet the discoverer, with his eager quest; and the generations of the world have been at work contriving him. And whatsoever man you have in thought, you are to understand this, that ancestry since the dawning of the planet has been at work to contrive that man's personality.

And God Has Been Girding Us by History. History has been at work on us. We are not the things we could have been without history. Those long-unnoted centuries and those long-noted centuries have been shaping us. God has been perpetuating them in us. The Declaration of Independence—who wrote it? This schoolboy says "Jefferson." You are quite right, boy. But who told him how to write it? That's another item. The generations of history had been at work on that document. The old Greek days had been at work on that; the old Periclean democracy had been at work on that; old mediæval Europe had been at work on that; the makers of England had been at work on that; the rising of the barons and Magna Charta had been at work on that; the glory of Hamdens and Eliots and Pymys and Miltons had been at work on that; the

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battles of great Cromwell had been at work on that; and all these Puritan swords dripping with blood of tyrannies lifted in the sky and hacking down cavaliers—these swords had been at work writing the Declaration of Independence; all the Puritans who sailed across the winter sea had been helping to write the Declaration of Independence. And the sum total fact was that history was the contriver of the Declaration of Independence; and one lucky man, Jefferson by name, democrat of the Revolutionary era, the man who had the genius to believe that the mob could be trusted and had the perception to understand that man, if he were put under a burden, would likely respond to the burden, Jefferson took the pen and the ink; and the story was furnished by the past, and Jefferson set it down and honestly thought he was writing the Declaration of Independence. He was only the amanuensis, and the centuries taught him. You could not have written that in the olden time until Jesus came and thrust his personality and life and his philosophy of politics through the centuries; and then the Declaration of Independence could come to pass. So the girding of God is the girding of history.

Then We Have Been Girded by Labor. Long ago men thought that the man who had the slave was the big fellow and the slave was the little fellow. And in the days of Abraham—that quiet, courteous, fine-spirited gentleman—

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mankind held slaves. And I have not time nor disposition this morning to argue about the evolution of the slave into a man or how far it is from the slave to the hired man. It has taken thousands on thousands of years and millions of lives just figuring out what is the difference between a hired man and a slave. I am the hired man of this church, but I am not this church's slave. In the olden time they would have bought me; now they pay by installments so they can get rid of me when they want to. You talk about labor and the laboring man; you couldn't get a Labor Day until men began to guess they were men. Why? Because God made them. When a labor union becomes undemocratic, as it is at this hour, the time of its initiation to death is not remote. Nothing can stand before a man's rights. Money cuts no figure; ancestry cuts no figure; how much money you get for your job cuts no figure. But through the girding of God in the realm of labor everybody is a hired man except a woman, and a woman is a hired woman. Everybody who cuts any figure on the earth is a working body. You say that is elementary. You can read that in the primer. I know it; that is where I found it; that is the book I read. But the whole history of the world has been busy making a primer. They didn't have any primers until they knew what to put in them. And we have had the girding of labor so that to-morrow morning ten thousand, a hundred

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thousand, five hundred thousand, a million men and women will go down town for work. Blushing? Not at all. The girls will go giggling, and the men will go smoking, and they will go down to their jobs. They are not apologizing for their jobs. May they do an honest day's work! The world has been engaged in God's girding in labor so that labor is not disreputable but reputable.

And Then God Has Been Girding Us In Race. Race cuts a figure in life. We are not tools in the hands of somebody; we are in turn creators. But I am talking about how God has been busy on us to make us what we are. And there is God's girding of race. And the Jew is one man; and the Anglo-Saxon is another man; and the Frenchman he is another man; and the Irishman he is another man; and the Manxman he is still another man. And there is a distinction of character because of race. You never will explain Victor Hugo until you remember he is Frenchy—not French—he is Frenchy. He has all the volubility, all the majesty of the race from which he sprang. He is French to the last thread of his personality and the last drop of his blood. You will never understand Tennyson—that dreamer standing on the sea rocks and listening to the sea waves—you will never quite comprehend and enjoy him until you remember he is the wreckage of a race. He is one of the planks that came from a far-off bulging ship hammered against the rocks. Tennyson was a remnant of the Gaelic race, a million of whom

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Cæsar sold into captivity, and a million of whom he slew in battle. And a remaining million were left to struggle tragically and ineffectually against the stronger races. And this brooding Tennyson, "moaning of the bar" Tennyson, this Tennyson of "Break, break, break, on thy cold, gray stones, O sea," this Tennyson of Guinevere who never laughs, and of Arthur who never smiles; this Tennyson—why, listen a minute—he had the heartbreak of a broken race in his blood. Something you must reckon in the matter of race—you will never be quit of it. There is the black man; some people sneer at him, many people snub him, some people leer at him, and other people affect to think him inconsequential. I wouldn't like to be one of those who do so. The other day I was reading a volume of sermons by Dr. Mason, one of the secretaries of our Freedmen's Aid Society. You are not all familiar with him. But there he is, thick-lipped, musical-voiced, with black hands, the palms worn white with labor, kinky-pated, and black kinks at that; and for your life, if you didn't know the man was black you would never guess it from his book. I tell you, men and women, there is this thing in race: God has no races out of which he will not shape something that ought to be. And the black man, with his voice of music, and the black man with his laugh, and the black man with his capacity for toil without murmuring—don't think you are going to take a little piece of white cloth and wipe him

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off the blackboard—don't think it. He is around doing things; and this I say this morning, that person or section or institution of labor that throws a man out of doors because his skin is black is a bad organization. We are here to be hired, not because we are black nor because we are white, but because we have brains inside of our heads, and hands that know how to work, that is why. There is a shaping of race. The Manx people are solemn, and the Irish people are jocose, and the French people are ebullient, and the German people are stolid and sit down with a mug—with no water in it—and drink. And so the races have their peculiarities; and you must think that God is girding people through races. Two men I will mention and then pass on. I will say that the two most absolutely democratic presidents America ever had were Abraham Lincoln and William McKinley. Where did they get their democracy? They got it from the American race. They couldn't get it from any other place because they were Americans. And my mind is that it would be good for Americans to learn what their girding is. My idea is that a good new beatitude for Americans is "Blessed are the Americans." So God is girding us by race.

And Then God Girds People By Localities. Something gets into a man's constitution by where he is. I have heard that if you got to Chicago, you would walk fast. I have found it so. You have to walk fast to get to your work and then to get

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your wages. It is rather funny, isn't it? There is something in training. There is something in a city that gets into your blood. When you are in a car going fifty or seventy miles an hour you think you are sitting still and when somebody comes to you and says, "What makes you bob so?" you say, "I am sitting as still as I can." You are sitting still to the tune of fifty or seventy miles an hour; and if you went out of that train, you would go out at the rate of fifty miles an hour. So localities get into your blood. And if one went into a sleepy community, by and by he would incline to sleep at noon, and his pipe would fall from his fingers and he would snore, and his wife would wake him.

There is a good Dutchman—I don't mean a German. And there is a man who is a Dutchman and his name is Roosevelt; and if you have read Knickerbocker's History of New York, you know the inebriating laughter of it lies chiefly in this, that the Dutch character is somnolent, and when a Dutchman got seated it would take an earthquake to unseat him. Roosevelt goes so fast you can't catch him with a telegram. When the politicians are after him they run themselves to exasperation and then sit down and wait till he comes back. Why, how did it happen that Mr. Roosevelt, this son of the somnolent Dutchman—how did it happen that Mr. Roosevelt has riots in his blood? Because the spirit of America is in his blood and in his feet and in his brain. He will

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do more in one day than lots of men will do in a year. So God girds us by locality.

Then God Girds Us by Religion. It took a long time to build a Methodist Church. How long? Since God came to Zion. Yes. How long? Since God put on the surface of the world a human being. Very well. Now, here's this matter of the Protestant religion. We Methodists never quarrel with the Baptists—we love them; we never quarrel with the Presbyterians—we love them; we never quarrel with anybody who doesn't think he is an ecclesiastical it. We fuss with them because we think we are a part of the matter ourselves. Now, how long did it take God to bring about a thing like Protestant Christianity? All the time he has had, that is all. All eternity has been at work on that. And here you are; and you are a Quaker, and you can go anywhere and nobody will molest you. In the old days they would have put you in the stocks if they could have caught you. Not so very long ago when a Presbyterian came around where a Methodist was, the Methodist would become as belligerent as sin; but now he wants to embrace him. In the olden times when a Methodist was seen, the other denominations would become perfectly rabid, but now when they see a Methodist they say, "Shake hands," that's all. *God has been at work on our life and we didn't know it.* We couldn't understand it. He has been contriving—how? By the multitudinous mutations of his providence, by the

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movements of civilization, by the movements of race, by the movements of ancestry.

Then God Comes to Man First-handed and Works on Life. Is God so busy he can't work on me? No, he is just busy enough. The busy people are the people who do the world's work. Is God tired? Never. Is his hand slack? Never. Does he grow weary with toiling on me? No. God Almighty at work on your life, beloved, and on my life. It is like this. A little child lies asleep with her tousled hair on her white pillow, with the coverlet down half way on the little nightgowned breast and the little dirty hand outside on the covers; and the child is fast asleep and in that quiet breathing that God gives his beloved. And the child lies asleep and the mother sits by the bed and sews. And the coming day is Christmas day or a party day, and the little one is going to the party, and the mother sits away into the night, and the child is asleep and doesn't know that the mother is up, and the mother sits up away to the wee hours of the morning, till the cock crows and calls to the village streets and the answering echo comes; and the mother sits by the bedside in the flicker of the lamp and looks upon the little child asleep with the smile on its lips and the dirty hand on the coverlid, and when the day comes—the Christmas day or the May Day—then the little tot is clothed in the cloud of beauty and kisses her mother on the lips and goes away with a smile and doesn't know that the mother

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girded her while she was asleep. And the father is hard at workday in and day out, and the son doesn't know the father is working for him. God girding your life! God girding my life! God stilling thee into quiet by his tender hand; God rousing thee into resurrection activities by his voice; God blowing with his southwind upon thy life and making all the meadow star out in flowers. God girding and we did not know him! And God won't quit work on us, I reckon. God, the great anonymous contributor to our personality and character, is at work on us this morning.

O God, thou unknown workman, with thy breath blow yet! And O God with thy chisel, throw it not away yet! And O God, with thy strange, persuasive activity, which when it touches life, goes through us like a fire, forget us not, be painstaking with us; and when we sleep, like children tired from play, upon the pillows while the parents toil over washtubs for their maintenance; so, O God, keep at work for us; and if sometimes even thy hands are bleeding, toil with us yet; and mayhap out of all thy girding there shall come a soul worth while—maybe there shall come a soul worth while. O thou unknown girder of souls whose name is God, put toil on us and forget us not and grow not tired of us forever.

PRAYER

O God, may this morning help us to take a good look at God, who girds us for the best, we pray for Christ's sake. Amen.

XX

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“Thou shalt be a blessing.”—Genesis 12. 2

THIS wording may be legitimately interpreted in three different ways. It may be interpreted as giving God's opinion of the character of this man to whom and of whom he speaks, that he is a blessing. Or it may be taken as a prophecy at the lips of God saying what this man's life will ultimately become. Or it may be translated as a commandment, “Thou shalt be a blessing,” in which instance it becomes the epitome of the Ten Commandments and glows like a star. In other words, it seems to amount to this, that this is so capable of being put in various settings because it is very comely and very beautiful. It is like the sun. You cannot frame the sun any way but that it shall be altogether lovely. If the sun rises when the morning skies have not a dot of cloud in them, only one wistful touch of splendor that climbs up the heavens to greet the sun, and the sun rises slowly and majestically and looks out to see how its world has behaved over night, how glorious that framing of the sun is! Or if all above the east be black, gloomy for storm, congested with summer rains, save at the

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very touch of sky and earth for a minute, and the sun climbs and looks through his lattice, and kisses the earth and calls and says "Good morning!" and then, up, past, and behind the blackness, and we see it no more from dawn to dark, this is very fitting. Or, if the sun puts his radiancy at noon, all the heavens empty of a cloud, and he stands there, panting with the climb to his summit, and inverts his pitcher of daylight and fills the earth with rapture, nothing but the blue, unutterable sky—what is more wonderful for a framing than that? Or if it be April, and the scud of storm-cloud whips across the heavens, and one moment the drench of rain is on the landscape, and now and then out of this fretful and uncertain mood of day the sudden rapture of the sun leaps like a surprise—what is more comely than that? Or if toward night, when the upper skies are clean of cloud, but as the sun reaches the landscape farthest west a black mountain range of cloud piles blackness, in which tempests would be no intruders, and the sun goes down and fires all the wrinkled crest of this bleak mountain range with splendor, who stands and looks at such a framing of the sun and does not know it fair?

Well, some celestial things are capable of being put in any wise and always best wise; and it is not material, therefore, how you conceive the text, whether it is a statement of observed fact of this man or the prophecy of him or the commandment to him. The thing I would fain have you

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let spill on your hearts like a spring's breath is this—that the vocation, the beautiful vocation, of life is to be a blessing.

Now, I think, having gotten this far on my journey; I think, having had vast elation in life; I think, having found life abundant in battle and peace; I think, having been played some scurvy tricks by life, but having been played with a thousand and one kindnesses in life, I think that one of the most serious unalterably solemn businesses of life is getting a vocation. Women have something to thank the Lord for. One of the things is, they don't have to think much about what they have to do. They know, all being well and the men being willing, what they will do. A woman's best vocation, if I may say it in this company—and I will, because it is the mind of God, and God's mind is always the ultimate rule of the world—the best vocation for women that God knows about is wifehood. And most women think so. You don't have to argue much with them to prove it to them. They think so. Once in a while a girl gets high-headed and thinks she has genius that equips her to do big things otherwheres, but when she gets more gumption her heart will break for some one and she will be a lover until she dies. Men have got to do the choosing of a wife and getting a vocation. Women are a little peculiar about some things, and one thing is to guess whether a man could keep her or not. I am not provoked at it, but I

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will thank the Lord women don't want too much, and people in love can get along with little. It is only the woman with a withered life that demands large financial abilities. Kind hearts yet, and loving hearts yet, and true hearts yet, "are more than coronets, and simple faith than Norman blood." Women know that. But a man has got to have his job.

I don't know anything which takes my heart and twists it harder than to see a young chap looking for his station in life. He doesn't know what he is fit for. Nobody else knows. All that he does know—and, thank God, all he really need know at the initiative—is that he is fit for something. Hardly anybody is so impoverished of brains or brawn but that he is fit for something. But to find out what is going to be his thing to do, to feel out and find a handle—of what? Why, it is a sword. True. It is a plow. True. It is a pen. True. It is a shovel. True. I say that it is better to shovel well than to preach poorly. Nothing personal in that. It is better to do anything excellently than to do anything inefficiently. It is proficiency that counts with God and with men. But a beautiful vocation engages us—what is our business? Answer: Being a blessing. And if you contrived a catechism for everybody, it would be this: "Little children, what is your business?" Answer: Being a blessing. Man grown, what is your business? Answer:

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Being a blessing. Womanhood, what is your business? And she says, "My mercy and my service and my grace are being a blessing." And there is nothing other than great about this. This has never hurt anybody. This has never lacerated anybody's heart. This brings no salt tears to anybody's eyes. This never breaks anybody's back; this never crushes bitterness into anybody's soul. This never lashes with stinging whipcords of maledolence. This is our business, being a blessing.

I read the story of Parrhasius, how, in order to be a great painter, he had a devil's heart, and how, that he might paint the sickly pallor of a dying life mixed with anguish, he put a man bound and jabbed him with wicked swords and let him die piecemeal so that he might get death's throb on the canvas. Quick, quick! Moaning lips and white face, and quick, fast, fast! O the moaning of it! And the man says, "God!" "Be still, let me paint your anguish."

Here is a business, for everybody, that makes no anguish on the forehead and has no sweat of terror on the face. What is the business? Being a blessing.

Now, the wonder, I think, and the winsomeness of this vocation is that everybody can succeed at it. It is the only business I chance to know for which everybody is honestly equipped. We cannot all make good business men. I knew a preacher once who couldn't. And you cannot all make good lawyers. I knew a lawyer once who failed. And

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we cannot all make good schoolmasters. There is an infinite amount of ingenuity required to make a good schoolmaster. I knew a preacher once who couldn't hold to the text. Is there a job which everybody can get at and succeed? Ah, yes, one. Whose is it? God's. What is God working at? Ah, now, what foolishness to ask so barren a query as that! What God does is one matter; and what man does is another matter. You are talking, preacher, about something at which little children succeed, and women succeed, and toiling men can succeed, and withered hands can succeed, and the panting pulse is sufficient for, and the pulse that fairly riots can succeed in. What odds to show us what God does? Well, listen, *listen*. God's business is being a blessing, and the business of God is the great business, and everybody is equipped for it. It is wonderful, beloved, I think, to know how little equipment is essential to this highest and finest business of time or eternity.

Did you ever know, and I think you must, if you live long, how little it takes to make a body's heart glad? How little it takes to bring a smile to a weary body's lips! Did you ever try to wipe tears away without getting a handkerchief out? Some people when they are going to dry people's tears, tweak them by the nose and say, "Hold still, now, I am going to wipe your tears out of your eyes." And then take a pocket handkerchief

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and poke it in their eyes and in their face, and say, "Don't cry, now; your eyes are dry." That is some people's method of stopping weeping. It is not God's method. It is not a sane method. Sit down by some weeping body and talk. What about? About him? Not necessarily. About you? Not necessarily. There are other themes. Talk anything. About the weather—most people are informed on that. Talk about anything, but say somewhat to him that will rid the person's loneliness and his grief. Ask housekeeping bodies out of doors, and as you walk along the winter's road, or walk along the winsome springtime road, or tramp along the streets, pretty soon they will put their hands against their faces and bring the hands down dry. No tears there. Who wiped them? Well, you did. Not by talking about wiping them or lecturing about it, but by talking somewhat that led them out to where there was sunshine enough to dry the face. Water won't stay long when the sun is up. The daybreak is here, and will bring the flowers in a minute more. The icebergs are gone out of the face, for when the sunshine is on the world it shines them off in a minute. It is wonderful how little it takes to make a weary life with sobbings on it, sing. And sometimes I have seen an old body groping low, feeling the pages of the book, seeing the light. What ails the old body? Why, it is the birthday of her boy. And where is the boy? In his grave. How long? Long since. Women never forget

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when their beloveds are born or die. Never. They are the days in her life calendar. Won't you forget? And she has been weeping, and the book she is reading is God's book, and the tears of her are coming like June rain. God always gives tears like that for the pages of his book. And it never matters because the pages are worn and blurred somewhat. And a little child comes, reaches out a little dirty hand and takes her grandmother's hand and says, "Grandmother, don't you know I am here?" And the little young 'un brings a little piece of something with it, a piece of bread and butter, maychance, and says, "Brung it for you." Now, what happens?

Well, you know what happens if you have had much gumption and used it a little. The weary old mother smiles and puts her weary old arm around the child and hugs it tight a minute. Wouldn't you think, men and women, that if there is a vocation so adjacent to everybody's life and for which everybody is competent, wouldn't you think that everybody would work at it harder, wouldn't you?

I knew once—if I should say I knew them, for I knew them not—I knew two little lassies and knew not their names till now or ever. Across the street I used to see them, and I would stand at my window and look—little ladies whose names I didn't know. Two little girls whose ages I dared to guess they were so young. Little

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tots, bebonneted and becloaked. Every skating day they went skating and fell down with infinite delight and much laughter. Every weather suited them—no more sense than the snowbird about staying in because days were snowy and bluster. And I used to look at them and loved them as I looked at them and love them now, not seeing them but having them forever in my heart. O, little lassies whose names I never knew and who never knew a thing about me; but into a man's heart, sometimes a little crowded and sometimes with a wisp of cloud upon its sky, and sometimes with a touch of anguish rasping like a file across the heart—came two little lassies, and they were blessings. How good that is! Didn't need to be big. Don't need to know much. Don't need to read books. Don't need to talk high, scholastic talk. Don't need to wear academical garments nor have the shoulder straps of success. Don't need to wear the insignia of travel; to be smeared with the battle or be black with the toil—none of that; only to let God have his sweet way in the heart and then let the heart get out of doors and near to men.

Not so long ago I was at a sick woman's bedside. She will never be better this side of where the Good Physician standeth with healing in his fingers, and when he sees the poor body borne forth—for she will never walk again, not out of the room nor into heaven—when Jesus sees her borne forth up to her Christ, he will lean over and

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touch her with his fingers of healing and say, "Daughter, thou hast come far and it is time to be well forever and forever." And there the woman is, and she said to me, "What am I kept for?" Smiling face and eager eyes, she says, "Why do I live?" And on my word, for a moment I was baffled; and there was a hand at my throat and the words choked; and then I said quick as a sudden leap of sudden light, "You are kept to be a blessing." And she said: "Why, now, how could I be a blessing shut in and shut out and nobody here?" "O," I said, "I am here." And she didn't seem to think I counted. And I said, "Other people come, and when they find you with your weak hand holding God, and when they find you so full of kindly cheer, and when they find you with sleepless nights and days full of rest in the infinite, then you are a blessing." And she said, "O, is it so?" "Quite so," I said. I give it as my judgment this morning that some people in the meagerest limits are the largest blessings. It is wonderful how blessings get out. It is wonderful how a sweet life pervades the world. It is wonderful how barriers of prison or miles of mountain range are unequipped to shut it in. And then the marvel of the kindly hope and the gracious prayer, nothing, nothing but God can house a life in a narrow confines; and God won't house it so.

Sometimes I find people who say, "I have so little

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opportunity," and I think that this is an excuse. If we have the sense that we are not amounting to much, I think that is the hardest thing to get over. Why, it raps your knuckles and clutches the heart and spits in your face. But when you remember that every life is equipped to be a blessing, that will help you. Once I knew a little old man, very stooped, utterly white, very old. I don't think I ever heard him say fifteen consecutive words; but on a Sunday morning, about such and such a minute, as I came into the pulpit, in another city from this, up the aisle came the stooping old man, leaning on his cane, and he held it this wise—came stooping his way up the aisle and shivering his way up to the front of God's house; and he slipped down in his seat and laid his two hands on the top of his staff; and then he looked at me so that I thought God came in unbeknown to me and sat down in the seat and was looking at me. And when I used to preach he used to watch and listen; and when I preached his face was like a pool in which the passenger birds or clouds reflected their weaving shadows. And the man is in heaven, now, years; and I wouldn't wonder if God, on his Sunday morning, when he tells the mystery and mercy of a life so full of radiancy that tears are clean forgot, but he looks in that man's face and catches back smile for smile and hope for hope and radiancy for radiancy and song for song. Anybody, *anybody*, can be a blessing.

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To-day noon, when we go out of this house, what hinders that we should be a blessing? What hinders that we speak to somebody we know, and, with sudden smile upon the face, say, "I don't know you, but we might meet;" "I belong here," or "I don't belong here; I am a stranger from another place." Suppose you said that. What would it do? Well, it will put somebody else's face like yours. It is a wonder how a smile kindles a smile. It is beautiful how God won't let smiles go to waste. He has so many of them; but they don't get wasted. You try smiling at somebody sometimes—not making a smile; I don't mean letting a smile loose. The difference is, the made-up smile is apt to be like a plaster-cast smile. That is why I say "to let a smile loose," which is another business. That is like a bird tossing its wings in the air; not trying to do it at all, but doing it. It liked to. So to-morrow, when you are on the car and going to business, cogitating—not thinking, but cogitating—when you are tumbling the barrels of business in the garret of your brain; when you are thinking and tumbling, and don't know whether you will roll them downhill or up—you look up at somebody grabbing at the same strap as you and smile at him and say, "Plenty of room, ain't there?" You do that, and see what he does about it. Now, I miss my guess if ninety-nine out of a hundred don't smile back at you and say: "Fine! Where is another fellow to take hold of the strap?"

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That is a little thing, quite so; quite trivial. But the business of being a blessing is not trivial.

Let me call these names off a minute: Raphael and Michael Angelo and Dante and Leonardo. What of them? Why, they are the foremost minds of the mediæval years. They flung domes in the sky and wouldn't let them fall down again. They flung splendors on the roof and made the whole roof seem to be a glorious sunset. They spread a common table and put there an uncommon Christ. They walked a step down the deep descent that led to black spaces, that led to glooms, and groped their way up out of hell to heaven. What were they? O, solitaries. They had scant company. They were like Mount Hermon in the promised land, one snow peak only in the land or sky. But the folks who are blessing are like the waves flashing back light. It takes so scant a pool to flash back the radiancy of a star. Room for thy vocation. My business, while I journey underneath the stars, is to be blessing, and my business when I journey on the upper side of yonder stars shall be still this—to be a blessing.

I heard the other day that Longfellow was not much of a poet. Every once in a while some smart man comes around and tells me a thing, and I listen to him and sometimes don't believe him. They said Longfellow didn't know much. That is too bad. And they said he didn't say anything but commonplace things. This is too bad, too

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bad. That is what the heart says all the time. Just commonplace things. "I love you and have room for you and can't live without you." What are those but commonplace things? But, mark, they are commonplace things, but life cannot live without them. Well, they said Longfellow didn't have many words anybody couldn't understand. He should have bought a dictionary and hunted up the big words. They said he is a commonplace poet. He must have a great clientage. Now, you know all that talk vexes my soul. Why, haven't I read Longfellow? Once I did. Haven't I read the other poets? Once I did. All the big poets? Thank God, I have. And don't I know the difference between Robert Browning and Longfellow? I do. And don't I know that Longfellow cannot stand as tall as Browning's knees? I do. And don't I love the kindly genius who puts the trumpet of the sea against his lips and wakes the sky to thunder? I do. But I will tell you this—that when the bluebird whistles in the thicket and when the spring breath is in the wind, then I love that always. If you hunted up a poet to hug, which one would it be? It might not be inadmissible to think of that. If you were hugging a poet, would you hug Shakespeare? No. He is too busy being hugged by big folks. Now, I will tell you this—you warmed your heart when you went up to Henry W. Longfellow and reached over around his neck—woman or man though you

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may be—and hugged him tight and kissed him on the lips and said, “You don’t mind, do you?” You don’t mind, do you? There are some people here now who remember when they used to sing with tuneful voices,

“I stood on the bridge at midnight
When the clock was striking the hour.”

What did it mean? It meant this: when the night comes on and the shadows of the heart step out under the shadows of the night, and the heart is so lonely that if you talk out loud you will sob—that is what the poem means. That is a great meaning. What I say at this moment is that it is not much odds about whether a man is greater or lesser, if he said the word we wanted, we want that man around. I think America is infinitely enriched by having that one man in it. We love him, though he had not the American mood; but he was a man, and he knew how to love the stars and the quiet water and the night bird flying south or north, and he loved the children’s garrulous delight, and his heart and his arms were open to the earth. And he came to town, and the whole town laughed out loud and said, “The poet has come.” Out in the town, down the street, with the fair light shining in his eyes, and the light shining in his face, he goes. O, Saint Longfellow! These people that bless us, they are the saints of the calendar. They belong in the saints’ days forever—“For all thy saints who

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from their labors rest. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" They are the people who walk across our lives. For all the people who sang for us when day was sad; for all the people who helped us along with our load when it was heavy, for all such, hallelujah! hallelujah! Isn't that worth while? That is life's best. What is this man's name? It is Howe. What is he doing? Threading a needle for the women to sew without taking hold of the needle. He gave leisure to womanhood. Very well, what is that? A blessing. Stevenson is building a funny little locomotive which would be a joke to look at now. What is that? A blessing. Why? Because he made it nearer from heart to heart. When women's daughters used to marry and go off across continents, women couldn't see them for a lifetime, and now they can go half around the world, and the locomotives and steamships can put out hands and touch, and hearts become neighborly. O, the man who did these things is our blessing. There is not a commodity so common but it has a mercy from God. "Thou shalt be a blessing." O heart, take that vocation.

What is that? That is a johnnie-jump-up. Who picked it? This little child. What for? Couldn't help it. Couldn't help blooming, and the child couldn't help having sense enough to pick it. What is a flower? It is a blessing. You know, I believe, that outside of the Constitution of the United States the biggest thing America

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ever invented was the potato; that is what I believe. You know when they call it the Irish potato I am indignant. I am proud of it. We invented it. Didn't we?—and loaned it to the Irish. Let them not think to put a mark on it. It is an American potato. We say it is a tuber. It isn't. It is a potato. It is a staff of life, a good staff of life. What is it? It is a blessing. Well, we invented it, didn't we? We did. What is the Constitution? It is a blessing. What are tears? Blessings. What are smiles? Blessings. What is love? Answer: Love is a blessing. And I will thank my God while I live, I live to love and to be loved. I will thank my God that nobody is so little he cannot amount to much; that when he goes into the world he cannot be a blessing. We can do things now. "Thou shalt be a blessing."

And the thing for every preacher who has his service at heart to ask is this: "Am I a blessing?" When people come around where I stay will they think the blessing of God is come on the earth? Now, I don't know what the women think about it, as I notice; but I always watch women on the cars because I like them for many things, but in particular for this, because they smile. I am not so particular about hearing what women say. It doesn't matter to me. I am not so much concerned in what they say, but I always am concerned in their smile when the smile lights its torch on their lips.

Now, the business of heaven is being a blessing.

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There is an eternity of room for that. O my hands, my hands, learn the craft ye would work at forever, forever. And we read in the Book, "Are they not all ministering spirits?" which is another way to say that the vocation of the infinite life and of the eternal future is to be a blessing. O hearts, hearts, you are not so busy you cannot work at that. You are not so tired you cannot work at that. You are not so learned you cannot work at that. You are not so crowded with many cares you cannot work at that. You are not so high-minded you cannot work at that. You are not so low-minded you cannot work at that. Forever and forever, then, is business for a blessing. Here is a trailing vine and it trails on the ground, but it is so fair that an angel would stoop to look at it and loose its tendrils and touch its leaves. And here is another vine, and it climbs up its trellis and gets the morning light upon it. And here is a tree which grows straight up unambiguous, filled with music, filled with wonder. It is the pine tree. All of them make life worth while. Heart, wherever you be, on the ground, or climbing high against the sun, or standing tall against the sky where the billowed music of the pines sings and blows like ocean waves, you can be a blessing. Ah, hit upon thy vocation, soul, and stay working at it while eternity abides.

