

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 06819691 8

*Discords
and how to heal them*

by

Malcolm J. McLeod



W. G. Johnston .
28 July 1914.

McLeod

ZEE

Earthly Discords, and How to
Heal Them



Earthly Discords, and How to Heal Them

By

Malcolm James McLeod

Author of "Heavenly Harmonies for Earthly Living"



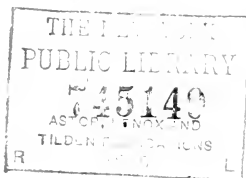
CHICAGO NEW YORK TORONTO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON AND EDINBURGH

MCMIII

SG



COPYRIGHT, 1903
By FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY
MARCH

CHICAGO: 63 WASHINGTON STREET
NEW YORK: 158 FIFTH AVENUE
TORONTO: 27 RICHMOND STREET, W.
LONDON: 21 PATERNOSTER SQUARE
EDINBURGH: 30 ST. MARY STREET

TO HER WHO FIRST TAUGHT ME HOW
TO HEAL LIFE'S DISCORDS, AND WHOSE OWN LIFE
IS A HEAVENLY HARMONY—
MY MOTHER



EDUCATION, LEGISLATION, REFORMA-
TION, REGENERATION.



CHAPTER I.

EDUCATION, LEGISLATION, REFORMATION, REGENERATION; OR, THE COLLEGE, THE CONGRESS, THE CLUB, THE CHURCH.

Ours is admittedly an age of denial, but one truth shines out so bold, so clear, so evident, that no rash doubter has ever had the front to challenge it—there is such a thing as sin, and this world is full of it. When some one asked Rowland Hill if he believed in a personal devil, the famous preacher is reported to have said, with characteristic bluntness, “A personal devil? Madam, he has branch establishments here in Somerset!” Foolish to quarrel with those holy men of old when they say, “I was born in sin and shapen in iniquity.” “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”

With the commentator we may quarrel if we feel so affected, but with the text it is, to say the least, not wise, especially when the conscience of the race answers to it. The Bible is an honest book. Never does it flat-

Earthly Discords.

ter, never does it hold out false hopes of refuge, never raise any vain alarm. It states the simple facts. From first to last it is a picture of human weakness, human woe. It paints all the wrinkles and the blemishes. Depravity is written on every page—idolatry, hypocrisy, lust, shame, guilt, tears, blood—and whether we be pre-millenarians or post, one thing is certain, the battle is raging, the darkness is dense, and morning seemeth not yet at hand.

Some there are who waste their precious hours of thought and labor discussing the question how sin entered into the world, how it came to have so dire and dreadful a dominion. Never once, let it be noted, does Inspiration handle that vexed and vexing question. It occupies just one chapter trying to tell us, and that chapter is so flexible as to worry definition; and the other eleven hundred and eighty-six are concerned with how to get it out. How to overthrow the ruling dynasty! Be that, then, the subject of our paper! Not how did the Evil Spirit enter, how rather may the Demon be thrust out.

All society is on the march toward a city called happiness, and to the earnest leaders

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

of progress four lines of travel suggest themselves. Some there are who would guide us up along the pathway to the college fountain, education being their watchword. This is the favorite approach of the rationalistic school of thinkers. "Give us better schools, better academies, better institutions of learning," they cry. "Instead of putting off the old man dress him up and send him away to college," was the stinging thrust of Dean Swift. The culture of the heart for holiness can be had, we are told, in much the same way as the culture of the taste for the beautiful. When the wardens of our prisons convey to us the sad intelligence that the majority of their inmates can neither read nor write, "surely indeed, " we exclaim, "ignorance is the mother of crime!" Furthermore, as the delicate laws of living have been mastered the average length of life has grown. With a more perfect knowledge of the human anatomy comes a longer lease for the race, and we are being informed that the same is possible in the sphere of morals. Let the church discontinue the sending of missionaries to the Dark Continent. A railroad after the idea of some Cecil Rhodes will show larger and better re-

Earthly Discords.

turns. Inform man's intellect and he will not be slow himself to soon reform his heart.

This is the theory that to-day obtains a wide and patient hearing at the judgment bar of many cultured thinkers. And it is not new nor strange; it has numbered its advocates indeed ever since the days of the Renaissance. With the encyclopædists it was a living question. Perhaps no one name is more familiar along this line of travel than that of Rousseau. His first literary venture, it will be remembered, was when he undertook to compete for a prize offered by the Academy of Dijon for the best dissertation on the subject, "Whether the progress of the sciences and of letters has tended to corrupt or elevate the morals of mankind," in the which he condemned civilization most severely. The ideas expressed thirteen years later in his last work, "Émile," showed no change, and for these he suffered exile.

"Émile" is really a treatise on education in the guise of fiction, its teaching being that civilization brings with it moral decline, that only as man comes naked from the hand of nature is he truly happy, in proof of which

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

he calls up the great kingdoms of the past, showing how Athens was morally on a lower level than Sparta, "how astronomy has been the source of superstition, ethics of self-esteem, and how the study of the arts has given birth to a lazy luxury."

One criticism we feel ever warranted in pressing against our time is its tendency to bravado. We so boast about our glorious age and its achievements! But surely there can be little doubt that in architecture, sculpture, art, law, government, and philosophy the scholars and specialists of Greece and Rome were our masters. Some one notes how the world to-day has not a single philosopher to compare with Aristotle, not an orator to rival Demosthenes or Cicero, not a poet to class with Homer or Virgil, no historian to compete with Tacitus or Herodotus. Scholars indeed tell us that the world's four greatest historians are Herodotus, Thucydides, Tacitus, and Gibbon, of whom but one belongs to modern times. Little question that the tragedies of Sophocles are the most perfect in literature; and in the realm of comedy who disputes the empire of Aristophanes? In

Earthly Discords.

satire Juvenal, in dramatic power Plautus, reign supreme. Beginning with Solon and Sappho, who come upon the stage about 600 B. C., and traveling down a stretch of three hundred years or so along the shores of Peloponnesus, what a list of worthies one salutes by the way!

Here are Æschylus, Æschines, Anacreon, Aristides, Anaxagoras, Euripides, Epicurus, Empedocles, Isocrates, Lysias, Lycurgus, Xenophon, Parmenides, Pindar, Simonides Pythagoras, Plautus, Socrates, Thales, Terence, Zeno, Euclid, not forgetting to add the greatest of them all, Plato, who was born the year that Pericles died. Now, without purposing to follow Rousseau in his sweeping censure, yet the startling fact abides unchallenged, that this golden age of learning was the most corrupt age that the brave little peninsula had ever witnessed. Corinth, her center of art and literature and commerce, was a very Babylon of iniquity. Likewise Athens! And Egypt and Rome repeat the same sad, shameful story. How any honest student of history can advance education as a cure for life's ills were passing strange and puzzling in the light of Egypt and Greece and Rome.

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

One of the interesting studies in nature is her trick of opposites. If her ocean can terrify it can also transport, and for every poet that writes of her rage another notes her repose. The fires that warm our dwellings burn down our cities, and the winds that waft the welcome odors of lake and mountain hesitate not to mow down trees and crops and temples. Vinegar and sugar are composed of the same ingredients, yet the one is sweet, the other sour. The same elements that produce tea also produce strychnine, and the plant that furnishes food not infrequently distils poison. Singular soil! Just as willing to furnish the drug that deadens as the fruit that delights, like the noted French criminal, Marie D'Aubray, who was the nurse and the anathema of her children. A similar contradiction repeats itself in man's career; his virtue being the other side of his vice. Love let loose becomes lust. As the wheat and corn of the Kansas prairies fill the granaries of the nation and also the intoxicating cup that steals the brain, the honor, and the good name, just so do eating and drinking oftentimes serve the double end of ennobling the body and debasing it. Even waiting on the

Earthly Discords.

Lord may close in indolence. For alas! all things have their use and abuse.

How clearly and unmistakably this dual outcome may be read in the history of those drilled in the learning of the schools! As the fertility of the soil is sometimes its embarrassment, causing the weeds and grasses to crowd out the rich grain, so the trained mind may be fertile to invent evil rather than good. Some years ago a Boston jury was struck with wonder at the bold oath of a noted criminal, who declared on the witness-stand that he had spent five years in a great school of science studying mechanics, and all for the sole purpose of breaking into a certain New England bank. Who of us can read the life of an Aaron Burr or Benedict Arnold and not feel that one of the grave dangers threatening our country's future is educated treachery? Less than a decade of years ago a man was convicted in the courts of Philadelphia, whose life of shame and crime the police admit to be without a parallel in the records of the Rogue's Gallery. This evil genius was a college graduate, a doctor of medicine, and a post-graduate at Ann Arbor. He could commit a crime so cleverly and cover up his tracks

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

so dexterously as for years to baffle detection. He was tried and found guilty of arson, forgery, bigamy, note-raising, and the death of more than half a dozen of his fellow-creatures. So accomplished was he in the slaking of his thirst for bloodshed that he slipped the authorities of almost every state in the union! Surely it were not difficult to see how this man's college diploma but served to sharpen his weapons, and make him all the more dangerous a disciple of Bakunin and Proudhon.

For knowledge is power, but a power for evil as truly as for good. Does not Milton make Lucifer use his knowledge for nothing but evil? A man's genius may be a genius for infamy. The sharper the blade the more dangerous the dagger. The history of the world is an open commentary on the fact that along with the culture of the mind must go the culture of the conscience. If education could save the world, then it ought to be true that the greatest intellects shine for very beauty of holiness and soul-loveliness. But alas! how not infrequently our study hastens us to confess the very converse. Instance Goethe, who has been called "the most splendid specimen of culture ever presented to the

Earthly Discords.

world." Poet was he, geologist, anatomist, osteologist, florist, philosopher. His inquiries into the nature of light would have been respectable had he confined himself to this branch of research alone. He is the apostle of self-culture. Scarcely any department of science or letters on which he was not an authority! But how far short this great name from our ideal of the true man! How selfish! How unworthy to woman! How impure the atmosphere of his study! How lacking Weimar in the spirit of a true home!

When our missionaries first went to labor among the Indians of Upper Canada, the effort was made to coax them to a higher plane by the culture of the sense of taste. Homes were built, schools opened, farms furnished. The attempt was essayed to make them discontented with their habits of living by an appeal to the æsthetic. But after years of trial the endeavor failed. The Indian went back to his wigwam, and raw flesh, and robe of skin, and tent of twig and bark, and blanket.

Dr. Edward Everett Hale, writing recently on the duties of the twentieth century, mentioned (1) a four-track railroad from Labrador

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

to Patagonia; (2) the construction of a similar road across Europe and Asia, with a branch line to Odessa; (3) the laying of another great highway from the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope in pursuance of Cecil Rhodes's plan. What a contrast to this are the words of Cardinal Newman, "The Church would rather save the soul of one poor, whining beggar of Naples or one poor brigand of Palermo than cover Italy with railways from Piedmont to Calabria." The author of "In His Steps" has recently written a magazine article which some of us cannot help feeling is in close touch with the truth. He describes the impressions of a visit to his alma mater. He notes the elegance, the luxury, in contrast to the simplicity of former years. And he returns with the faith forcing itself upon his heart that we have not gained in power but in things, and he fears the future is in danger of becoming an "educated paganism, a cultured heathenism, that will lose its sense of spiritual ideals."

Others there are—and they form a company quite considerable—whose claim is that the world to-day needs nothing so much as

Earthly Discords.

righteous legislation. These are they who hope to save society by legal enactment, believing that an iron railing at the top of the precipice is better than a line of fully equipped hospitals at the bottom. They would give us laws against the liquor traffic; laws against the gambling hazard, which is more contagious than plague, more infectious than fever; laws to cleanse our streets against the social evil; ordinances checking the growing disregard for the Sabbath; and in every line would make difficult the doing of wrong and easy the effecting of right.

In the ward better aldermen, in the city better councilmen, in the state better representatives, in the executive a higher type of Christian citizenship who would see that laws were first enacted then enforced, for force is the watchword of this salvation army. If the criticism be valid, that the penitentiary rarely turns out penitents, and so becomes misleading in its inference, just so these champions of the legislative hall believe in prevention as the most direct footpath to another golden age. Love failing to make life more lovely, let law make it less lawless. This is the cry of the new democracy; not saved souls so much as

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

a wholesome sentiment in which a true Christian ethic is applied to commerce, politics, the school, the home, the mine, the farm, the factory. For it is still true that the millionaire-sweater lives in a mansion while his workmen-slaves die in garrets; still true that female poverty is sometimes compelled to sell her virtue for bread; still true that hard-hearted monopoly grinds as never before the face of toil; still true that abject yet preventible misery abounds. When we are reminded of the fact that during the first six months of this current year, England has shipped more opium to China than in any previous six months since, in 1776, the East India Company took the commerce of the deadly drug under its control, and also more missionaries to fill the gaps made by our lamented martyrs, and open new strategic points, we are reminded of that story in Dante's great epic in which a man in the lower regions is busy weaving for himself a long rope of hay with which he means to purchase liberty, but for every strand he finishes, a herd of oxen hidden behind a wall are eating up the other end of the juicy hemp with a joyful and contented relish. Thus does the

Earthly Discords.

church weave ropes of salvation for other appetites to feed and fatten upon.

The trouble with all branches of legislative reform is that they lessen evil without abolishing it. They minimize, but do not abrogate. "The law is weak thro' the flesh." It is but a schoolmaster. As the teacher cannot make scholars, no more can the law make saints. The humorist noted that "Going to law for salvation was like going to hell for justice." And perhaps the best answer to all theorists of this school is found in another glance at a well-known page of history. It is an established fact, to which our attention is called by such names as Hallam, Hume, Green, Froude, and Lecky, that the early part of the eighteenth century was the most corrupt period in the whole sweep of English history.

The leaves of these authors are black and bloodstained with shocking tales of crime and cruelty. Never was society so profligate, never was there such a low tone to public and private life, never were the clergy so openly immoral, for Puritanism had toppled over in a crash followed by a reaction that left the church cold and lifeless. To so low a plane indeed had everything fallen that in despair a

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

society was formed clamoring for the laws. It was entitled the "Society for the Promotion of Public Morals." Lecky tells us that, "In a few years one hundred thousand convictions were obtained in London and Westminster for public debauchery and profanity; the openly vicious were made to feel the scourge of the law; a special corps of detectives with a police force was organized to stem the tide of murder and license that reigned throughout the kingdom." But so barren of any wholesome results were the efforts made, and such was the disinterestedness of the church, that the society died off for lack of funds, and on its grave arose a great spiritual awakening under Wesley and Whitefield. Sadly indeed must it be confessed that legislation is no remedy. In its essence legislation is destructive. It can restrain but not cure, help but not heal. This is a blunder the Church has been making all adown the ages. All forms of persecution are an attempt to cure the world by legislation. This was the mistake of the French Revolution and the Spanish Inquisition. Under Torquemada, nine thousand men and women were burned at the stake. But the fruits of the Spirit cannot be

Earthly Discords.

developed by any forcing process any more than the flowers of the hillside can be made to respond to the noise of the cannon or the blare of the battleship. These hinder rather than help. When the air gets warm and genial then nature will not be slow to deck herself in all her rich and varied loveliness, and this comes only with the circling summer. Just so the winter of persecution has but served to delay the coming of that good time when the "lion shall lie down with the lamb, when there shall be nothing to hurt or to destroy in all God's holy mountain."

Perhaps the most popular preacher of the age is the reformer; provided, of course, he comes to do his work through human agency. Reformers of the Luther type, the Savonarola type, are not so welcome. The reformer sent of God is stoned and scourged, but sent of man he is banqueted and wreathed and heaped with flatteries. The craze of the hour is social philanthropy. Even foreign missions are most acceptable to the average Christian when it can be shown that they are working along the lines of culture and the commercial return. Not that these things

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

should discourage us, for their final aim is admirable. There can be little doubt that morality would save the world if only it could be had; so each age asks despairingly the question, "How can it be had?" In tropical countries a wood-worm, called the termite, works its way into furniture and eats up the inside tissues, converting it into a shell which collapses to the touch. In the Island of Cuba the native shows a tree that looks fair and beautiful to the eye. Giving it a blow with the axe it topples over, filling the air with a fine, white powder, the secret being that a tiny insect eats its way into the fiber and turns the beautiful tree into a mummy of bandaged dust. The trouble with all the many types of human reform is that they take no account of the enemy that builds his nest deep down in the inward parts. They are the old attempt to "improve the music by decorating the pipes, to purify the water by white-washing the pump." When Coleridge threw a bit of thistle down into the air he cried, "The tendency of this is toward China, but we know it will never reach there."

And the tendency of many an amendment suggested to-day is toward goodness, but they

Earthly Discords.

lack the dynamic. Surely it is a noble thing to polish life's externals, to uplift and gladden the lives of the poor, to cultivate in them a sense of self-respect, to educate their families and give them beautiful homes, with art and taste expressing itself at every turn. But if the cleavage of the soul from God is left unclosed, if the sin of yesterday is left unpardoned, if the heart remains uncleansed, how unsatisfying the work! how the real trouble is left untouched!

Dr. Abbot is fond of saying that there is a wide difference between a green apple and the apple with a worm in it. "The one needs sunshine, the other calls for a knife." Mortification asks not salve but a surgeon. Decay must be uprooted. "If thine eye offend thee pluck it out; thy hand, cut it off." "The oil comes after the arrow, the bandage after the wound."

Mr. Sheldon has written for us a story which he very fittingly names "The Crucifixion of Philip Strong." The hero of the story is a strong man—strong in name and nature—a clergyman who starts out to redeem his parish and who of course is cruci-

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

fied. He takes the burden of its sorrows upon his heart, its sins upon his soul, and through very weight of sympathy the life is crushed out. But this way lies hope. This must ever be the story of redemption. This is the gospel of the God-man. "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Interesting that the word bless and the word blood have the same root. Not until we share our very life can we be a blessing to our brother. This it is that constitutes the attractive power of Calvary.

If Jesus must needs suffer can we hope to be immune? Nay indeed, not so! The rather are we "buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

In Kaulbach's famous picture of the reformation Luther is the central figure. He holds an open Bible in his outstretched hand, while grouped around are seen the scientists, statesmen, scholars, and thinkers of the age. The portrait is true to life. To-day the standing of a people, in the column of culture depends on its attitude to the Book. Where this Book has gone and is untrammelled, there the light

Earthly Discords.

of Civilization shines, there education is at its highest, and legislation at its best. The Bible is the true reformer. Its remedy is deep; its appeal to the heart; its ultimatum "Ye must be born again." In the law library we find crime discussed, in the treatise on morality we learn of vice, but when we would acquaint our lips with the word "sin," then we must needs return to the Book. Here we learn the tearful tragedy that sin's home is in the heart; that it is an intruder, a usurper; that if we would have the enemy cast out and crushed, the strong man must be bound by a stronger, ejected, and forthwith the temple cleansed.

Some years ago a scientist advanced the theory that the first living protoplasm from which have evolved all forms of life on our earth was carried hither by some falling meteor on its wild uncertain flight. This may be reckless science, but in the spiritual life of man it is the glad evangel of our holy faith. From without and above—not from within and below—must come all spiritual vitality and power. The gospel is not a development, not a resultant of human research.

As yet nothing has ever been found in contemporaneous literature to correspond to the

Education, Legislation, Reformation.

doctrine of the new birth. An outburst was it upon the world from without, not an offshoot from within. In Jesus Christ a new word of truth came down to us from heaven. Man did not create it. It was revelation, not evolution. "Jesus Christ is the branch of prophecy engrafted on the old stock of fallen humanity."

And so we reach the conclusion of our study. Education has done much to cheer the fainting pilgrim on the march; legislation has leveled the hills not a little and eased the journey; reformation has made him physically fitter against the taxings of the some time steep ascent. Yet show I unto you a more excellent way, more excellent because more radical and more complete, "the way taught not by learning but by unction, not by science but by conscience." Not education, not legislation, not reformation, but regeneration through the blood; not the college, not the congress, not the club, but the church, which He hath purchased by His own passion, is the hope of society and the race.



THE DISCORD OF SIN.



CHAPTER II.

THE DISCORD OF SIN.

Sin is of course the great controlling discord of life, one strife but many sounds, one variance but many voices, disturbing all peace, destroying all music. For the "whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain," and because of sin. No secret place has yet been found where sin is not. The poison pervades all hearts, pollutes all fellowship. Linger long in life's garden one notes how a worm is seen in every apple, a blight on every berry. "For alas! sin hath entered into the world and death by sin."

At the outset it may be well to get a clear and searching grasp of what sin really is, because much of the loose and ragged thinking on the subject to-day is due to vague and slipshod definition. We hear much, for instance, about the spirit of the age. Some there are who claim that said spirit is commercial, its tone metallic, and to this they would attribute all our troubles. Others hold that we are

Earthly Discords.

living in a transition period, that is in the act of shifting its emphasis from eternity back to time, and this they would push forward as the source of all our social and spiritual unrest. These things no doubt are true, but there seems a deeper truth beneath. We are living in an age that is losing its sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, an age that argues for toning down the loud and glaring colors in which our fathers pictured it, softening its uglier features, and making attractive the intruder and enemy of all peace. Sin, alas, is laughed at.

We write sweet music to the tragic song—light, flippant airs. This is the pitiful accompaniment. Hardly a novel in which it is not treated as a joke, a witticism, something ludicrous! We throw a glamour of loveliness around it, instead of regarding it in its true and lurid light as the fen which is the fountain of all tears, the well-spring of all woe, the root of all bitterness and sorrow.

What, then, is sin? What saith the voice of Revelation? In allegory the inspired writer causeth it to pass before our eye in the similitude of a serpent, sly, insidious, veno-

The Discord of Sin.

mous, like the fabled monster of Greek mythology—one life but hydra-headed. The Apostle John in his first epistle writes, “Who-soever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law”; or, as the Revised Version more correctly translates, “for sin is lawlessness.” Sin is lawlessness. Let the word be written in letters of fire, lawlessness—missing the mark, failing to reach the ideal of God’s perfect righteousness. Whether such failure be intentional or no does not matter; this does not enter into the equation. No exceptions are noted. Every time we fail to fulfil the divine ideal set forth for us, it is sin. What a searching, sweeping, startling thought is this! How can we make light of it! How can any redeemed child claim to live a perfect life! How can we hope for acceptance without His atoning blood and pardoning grace and daily cleansing! Surely our very best falls short of the mark, our very perfection must be failure! Sin, then, be it established firmly, is not ignorance; not even an act; it is a condition—a condition of lawlessness—a state of insurrection against the government of the Most High, an attitude of disobedience to His will. The

Earthly Discords.

law says something is permissible and proper if gained in a certain way. That way is laid down for us in Revelation and in the nature of man. But it is so much easier to get it in another way. Here is the genesis of all sin, wishing to be one's own master. Desire gratified by the transgression of—the stepping across—the King's law and in a path forbidden, this is sin. Striving to secure what may be a perfectly lawful prize but striving to secure it in an unlawful way; i. e., in a way different from the way marked out at the Court of Heaven; trying to secure it in our way, the way that suits our will the best; this is the lawlessness of the human heart; this is sin in its wide generic sense. "For we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity"—the perverseness literally—"of us all."

The way of the transgressor is rough and hard and toilsome, and it may give a clearer outlook if from some upper window we view the journey in its three successive stages: sin is selfishness; sin is solitude; sin is suicide. One road but three sections. Starting out as selfishness, it runs into solitude and terminates in suicide.

The Discord of Sin.

I. Sin is selfishness. The Westminster divines defined sin as "any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God"; and as the law of God is love, sin in its last analysis would be any infraction of the law of love. The drunkard who robs wife and child of life's first needs for a base gratification and momentary, is essentially a selfish man. The thief who reaches out and grasps a brother's purse confesses himself thereby a base, ungenerous creature. The man who works the Sabbath and steals from God is surely not less free from blame. The libertine who leads aside the daughter of innocence for a breath's brutal delight is of all things selfish. The money grubber who crushes his fellow-man; the proud lord who spurns him; the society lady of a false and superficial culture who slights her sister on the street; the woman who lives for pleasure; and the man whose God is gold—all are self-centered creatures; all shut their eyes to the interest and welfare of their neighbor as announced in the Good Samaritan story. Each transgression of the Commandments is at heart self-seeking. Whether the breach be a violation of the first law of worship, or the last law of covetous-

Earthly Discords.

ness, or the Christ-supplement of love and kindness, self is the spur at the start, self is the root-trouble.

2. And selfishness results in solitude. Of necessity the selfish life becomes a lonely life, because no happy companionship can be without a kindly regard for others.

“No one liveth unto himself and no one dieth unto himself.” None standeth separate and apart. Neither in life nor in death are we alone. We all lean largely, heavily, on our fellows. He who lives for others will have friends, but he who lives for himself must not complain when he finds the world forsaking him. If a home would be truly happy, husband and wife must needs live for each other. For the moment each begins to live for self, that moment there arises misunderstanding, division, separation, discord. And so the cleavage widens till each eventually lives alone, till no longer is there any community of interest or sympathy of spirit, but estrangement rather and loss of felicity and virtue, for “he that saveth his life shall lose it, while he that loseth his life for my sake and the gospel’s the same shall find it.”

The Discord of Sin.

Solitude, furthermore, is swift punishment to the soul's peace. When in the Reign of Terror prisoners were cast into dungeons, many went mad through torture from the aloneness. Not infrequently would they scream at the bars to passers by. For the instinct of humanity craves comradeship. The very cattle go in herds, the fishes in shoals, the bees in swarms, the quails in coveys. Nothing is more unnatural than a hermit. "Hard to spin our own top, to light our own lethargy," was a fond saying of Emerson. "A scholar is a candle which humanity kindles."

We read of Judas that after the supper was ended and the betrayal foretold "he went immediately out and it was night." He went out. Out, note! He went out into exile, out into solitariness, out to suffer the evil companionship of his own heart, and the evangelist adds, with a touch of insight, "it was night." Alas, 'tis always night when we go *out* from friends and fellowship, the soul's eclipse when it turns deaf ears to the overtures of "Love that will not let us go," blackest midnight when our Father veils his face:

Earthly Discords.

“Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn,
Our noontide is thy gracious dawn;
Star of our hope, thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.”

Christ Jesus is the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the World. When his face is hidden, how hopeless and dark the night! For just as surely as “earthquakes develop cowards and war makes heroes,” so surely does selfishness beget solitude and shadow.

Professor Selby, in the *Journal of Forestry*, tells us that when the Lebanon cedar gets a start in the young forest it crowds out all other types of sylvan life. No spruce or fir or hemlock can be found; no fern or flower or foliage can find welcome; no shrub or stock or herb or creeper; no maple or chestnut spread their tints to the autumn tourist or drop their nuts for the squirrel and the chickaree. Cedar has the sole monopoly. The bark is the bark of the cedar, the resin is the resin of the cedar, the odor is the odor of the cedar. All is loneliness but for the cedar. How selfish is our Damascus friend! Just so does sin crowd out all loveliness from the soul, and turn life's garden into a waste, into a sameness, where self becomes the sole in-

The Discord of Sin.

habitant, the one tenant of the spiritual temple.

Perhaps the saddest words that fell from the Master's lips are in his portrayal of the final reckoning: "Depart from me." The words describe departure from truth, departure from home, from father and mother and family and friend, departure from the soul's first love, departure into the far country, departure into the blackness of darkness forever.

3. And the end of the road is suicide, self-destruction, for "The wages of sin is death." Sin is a boomerang; it recoils. Every time we sin we injure others, but ourselves we injure the most. Some one has noted that a handsome face is never seen in jail, thus denoting that indulgence puts a twist in the eye and a cloud on the brow and a stumble in the step and a coarseness into the facial tissue, and forever mars the beauty of the body. Selfishness somehow steals a luster from the life, and one feels that a glory hath passed away. All sin degrades the body, unnerves the mind, indurates the conscience, weakens the will, clouds the reason, dulls the edge of

Earthly Discords.

moral discernment, and eventually slays the soul, for be it repeated over and over, "The wages of sin is death." Ever careful are we to caution our youth on the penalties of sin, but objectively, socially, financially. We speak about the poor-house, the hospital, the asylum, the prison, the cell, the collar, the shackle. The drunkard we track to his den of poverty where we pause and listen to the cries of his hungry children; we point out his neglected grave; we say, "Mark, my child, this spot, for though poets have sung many a sweet strain over the shroud of the soldier, no poet has ever had the courage to lay a laurel here." The footstep of the fugitive we follow as it bends over some "Bridge of Sighs" with its sorrowful reminder, "The way of the transgressor is hard." The course of the sensualist we watch as it presses hard upon the pest-house. The highway of the assassin leads us to the prison bars or the morgue. Till we exclaim at last, "How expensive must all wrong-doing be! Surely it must be that sobriety alone is profitable, that only purity pays!" But these things are trivial compared with the real mischief. This is only damaging the frame of the picture; this

The Discord of Sin.

only concerns the spoiling of the cabinet; it does not touch the jewelry within. The real havoc is the rebound. Keep your eye shut long enough and blindness will follow. Not less easily darkened, surely, is spiritual vision. The kick of the rifle is worse than its forward impulse. "He that sinneth against me," saith scripture, "wrongeth his own soul." The reaction of sin upon the sinner is the real ravage. The great and fearful loss is the loss sustained by the immortal nature. Sin sears the sensitiveness of conscience, hardens the heart's finest emotions and instincts, stains the delicate beauty of the affections, puts us out of touch with spiritual impressions, and steals from life its glory, its music, its joy.

In our childhood we were thrilled with the old tale of Jack the Giant Killer. With eyes wide open we followed him up his long ladder to the moon and laughed and cried and paled and trembled, for there he met a giant of titanic build, whose custom was to gobble up all foreign intruders. When the giant undertook to seize Jack, the wily lad laid a trap by which the giant tumbled headlong earthwards and was dashed into divers pieces. Thus

Earthly Discords.

does the old amusing legend teach a great moral truth, that all sin is retroactive and strikes home.

Homer gives his enchantress the power to change men into swine, but in order to accomplish the metamorphosis men must first make swine of themselves by drunkenness and indulgence. The author of the great immortal allegory tells us how once in a dream he thought himself a hare with the hounds in hot pursuit. So real was the chase that he could smell the bark of the hemlock and feel the sting of the briar and the brushwood. Closer and closer they drew till their hot breath touched him. And when he awoke on the summit of a rocky cliff, far, far from the green wheat fields, it was to find that the hounds were his sins and he a flying soul. How true the dream to life! It is the fashion of sin to run its victim to earth on the top of some lonely solitude or in the depths of some dark defile where help is helpless to extend its human reach. For all sin travels to a city called Sorrow. Wind and tide, sail and current, but hurry the foolish youth to his haven of tears. Agrippina puts her husband to death to enthrone her son Nero, and what

The Discord of Sin.

does Nero do to hold his throne but put Agrippina to death. This is sin's never-failing programme. Benaiah slays the Egyptian with his own spear. Each thief steals from himself. Each murderer takes his own life. "Put a fetter on the foot of a slave," says Emerson, "and the other end fastens around your own."

The historian tells us that "when Spain kindled the fires of the auto de fe and stretched victims on the rack, those fires sucked up the blood of her own heart, and through the mutilating and mangling of other limbs she herself has never since walked erect." For the word of the Lord abideth forever, and this is the word that is preached unto us, that self-destruction is sin's shadow, sin's rebound.

Some years ago there was a little Sunday school book published, and the pith of the story was as follows: A father comes home tired and careworn in the evening from his day's work. He takes his little boy, kisses him, plants him on his knee, and begins telling him a story. The story is made up as the father goes along, and the little fellow, getting impatient with its length, looks up into

Earthly Discords.

the father's face and says, "Papa, how did it all turn out in the end?" The father pays no attention, but goes on absorbed even more than ever in the tale he is concocting. At last the little fellow gets so worked up that he cannot endure it any longer, and so exclaims, "Papa, I can't wait! Do tell me how did it all turn out in the end?" Let us then see how it all turns out in the end. There are two immortal creations in literature that show sin and its workings from the angle we are standing. The one portrays the selfishness and consequent solitariness of sin; the other tracks the victim to his natural end and sees the play out. Dickens's story of Scrooge is a Christmas story. Scrooge is the arch-miser of literature, the Shylock of romance—hard as steel, keen as a surgeon's blade, disagreeable in every way to run up against as a cactus plant. The grasping greed of the man wrinkled his face, bent his form, pointed his nose, reddened his eye, lent a squeak to his voice, and a line or two to his lean, lanky fingers. No biting blast bitterer than he, no frost more cruel or inconsiderate! Even the dogs appeared to know him, and would cross the street to avoid the glance of his ugly eye or the crack of his

The Discord of Sin.

hard, knotty cane. The story commences on a clear, cold Christmas eve, and the author takes us to a cheerless, dingy office, where Scrooge and his clerk sit shivering counting shekels. "Merry Christmas, Uncle!" cried a cheerful voice at the door. "Bah!" said Scrooge, "Humbug with your Merry Christmas! What's Christmas but a time for paying bills without money, a time to find yourself a year older, not an hour richer? If I could work my will every idiot who goes about with Merry Christmas on his tongue should be boiled with his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. To bedlam with Christmas man, go home."

In order to make vivid to us the loneliness of the life the miser lived, the author next takes us to his humble home, which was a room in a back alley and up a flight of stairs over a wine-merchant's cellar. The hall was dark, for Scrooge loved darkness, being cheap, so up he stumbles with a dimly lighted candle in hand, double bolts his door, and sits down before the grate to prepare his evening gruel. Suddenly the ghost of his old partner—seven years dead—appears before him, Jacob Marley; same face, the very same

Earthly Discords.

usual waistcoat tights and boots. The chain he drew was clasped about his waist and dangled behind him like a tail. It was made of cash boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and ponderous purses wrought in steel.

“You are fettered,” ventured Scrooge, trembling all over.

“I wear the chain I forged in life,” replied the ghost. “I made it link by link, and yard by yard. Is its pattern strange to you?” Scrooge trembled to his toes.

“Perhaps you do not know,” continued the ghost, “that you carry a coil yourself. It was full as heavy as this seven Christmas eves ago. You have labored on it since. Its links are large and lusty to-day.”

Dickens never tires telling us that sin is selfishness, and the solitude of Ebenezer Scrooge is a perpetual warning from the leaves of fiction. The awful loneliness of the man sends a shudder through the reader's frame. How awfully aloof his life! How hated by all! How the little children would run away from him! How even the horses would turn their heads when he passed by! True, his course is interrupted, but this great interpreter of the human heart takes particular

The Discord of Sin.

pains to show us what the end would be unless the life is changed; and that scene where the Spirit of the Future takes the miser to his death-bed and shows him himself dying, with not a living creature in the empty house but a cat, then to the churchyard where was a lonely, broken down, neglected tombstone, overrun by weeds and off in a corner by itself (for even the tombstone was apart), and bearing the single inscription, "Ebenezer Scrooge," is one of the most thrilling pages in all literature. The chapter might well be called "The dying body of a dead soul."

But possibly no one tale in the republic of letters brings out the truth of our study better than the strange history of Eugene Aram. Lord Lytton leads us back to the modest country home of a great scholar. He gives us a peep into his life, showing us a calm, dignified, thoughtful man, in delicate health apparently, and as before, coveting solitude. None of the neighbors had more than a speaking acquaintance with him, for he lived alone. "What the shell is to the turtle that his solitude had become to him—his protection, aye his life." He had the scholar-habit

Earthly Discords.

of talking to himself in an absent-minded way, for he clung to reverie and musing, but in conversation he was charmingly eloquent. Though never mingling with his country yeomen, still it was noted by them that, unlike Scrooge, he was kind toward the poor, tender toward the suffering, that not a dumb animal but appealed to him. When walking in the garden he would stoop to remove a snail or worm from his footpath rather than hurt the humblest life. For years he lived in his modest cottage on the top of a little knoll surrounded by tall junipers, seeing no one, rarely venturing out, reveling in his books; the passion of his life was to know, to understand. He lived to learn; he was an "arch-miser in the wealth of letters." Only thirty-five years of age, yet he was already a profound mathematician, an elaborate antiquarian, an abstruse philologist. From almost every university in Europe there came to his humble home letters of introduction from famous men, and few foreign educators ever visited this part of the country without seeking an interview with this world-renowned doctor of the sciences and the schools.

Then chances the strange falling in love of

The Discord of Sin.

our hermit-sage with Madeline Lester, the daughter of the country squire. A charming child of but eighteen was she, surpassingly beautiful, and with a like love for study. For full two years he had lived apart in his quiet retreat till the spell of Madeline drew him out. No one knew his ancestry; no one knew his history. Unsocial the neighbors called him, yet withal they learned to love him, for that pale melancholy eye appealed to them, as the face of some lonely pleading stranger-child might touch the heart of some fond mother on the busy boulevard. A few there were, of course, who doubted. "Free to confess," said the Squire's butler, "that I don't quite like this learned man; somethin' queer 'bout him; can't see 'zactly ter the bottom; don't 'pear quite so meek and lamb-like as he seems. You know, Squire, onced I saw a calm, dead pool, peered down into it, by little and little my eye got sorter used, saw somethin' dark at the bottom, stared and stared and stared—by Jupiter! great big alligator! Never liked quiet pools since."

But that was only the feeling of the few. The greater number turned to him in confidence and something kin to pride. For did

Earthly Discords.

he not lend dignity to the parish? The name forsooth became a thing to conjure with. Travelers were always driven to see the home of Eugene Aram. When some ambitious youth journeyed afar to the halls of learning and heard the familiar name quoted there, it added a reverence and respect which soon leaked out in common gossip among the lowly toilers of the region round. Here he was called "the great scholar." The humble laborers of saw, anvil, and furrow touched their hats in reverence on meeting him. It was noted, indeed, as a thing worth repeating when some little bright-eyed lassie returned from school, and told her mother that she saw "the great scholar" trudging down the lane, and that he smiled at her.

So the months of courtship passed, for both the lovers months of tense and feverish delight. And now it was the morning of the bridal day—a beautiful, clear morn in the last week of October. Alone in his favorite study-cloister, with his books around him, the scholar-lover sat and looked out at the landscape that lay below. Not a leaf stirred in the autumn foliage. Would that my poor mother were here, he thought to himself, to see her boy

The Discord of Sin.

count the stars of destiny's joy. "I am, I will, I shall be happy now. Ah memory, memory, I defy thee." These words were uttered in a deep, tense tone, and for several minutes the sole thought of the soliloquist was love. Glancing at the window he saw a little group of men hurrying up the lane. Aram sprang, pale, breathless, lips apart, for the day had lent special tautness to his nerves. Below, a hand was heard banging at the door, and then a voice, "My hand shall seize the murderer!" He shot a lightning glance around the room, his brain reeled, his breath gasped, a mortal sickness passed over his heart, then drawing up to his full height, he whispered, "Madeline, dear, it's all over."

'Twere a long and touching tale to tell—this marring of the marriage day—of how bound by the links of the law the officers led the crushed scholar, not to love's altar, but in lieu thereof to the prison bars; of Madeline's patience and unswerving faithfulness during all these months of durance; of how she journeyed daily to his cell and comforted him with every expression of her love and confidence; and then the last day of the trial, the final act in the tragedy. It was the third of August.

Earthly Discords.

Almost a year had passed—a year so sad, so slow. Like her expected bridal day the morn dawned bright and clear. Madeline rose early. “See,” she exclaimed, “I am going to wear the dress I was to have been married in.” Her love and loyalty during all these months of strain had never wavered. She said, “Though all the world forsake him, yet will not I.” But her face was pale, her form shrunken, and her bridal gown hung loosely from her bent form.

And 'twere a tale more terrible even to tell of his conviction, of Madeline's falling in a faint from which she never rose, of the scholar's confession of complicity in murder, of his taking his own life in the cell on the morning of the day on which he was to have been executed. All this were surely thrilling narrative. But with details we are not much concerned. What we wish to note is “one black deed at war with a whole life.” “That such a crime should be so separate from the rest of life's career, that it should never have steeled or roughened his nature, that a character capable of a deed so black as murder should still be tender and thoughtful and unselfish—all this presents a startling para-

The Discord of Sin.

dox in human conduct, strange and puzzling." And the lesson specially worth noting is the isolation wrought. Sin insulates its victim and sets apart, cuts off all communion, severs all sympathy, drives into pitiful and painful privacy. Even from the world there is estrangement. All good fellowship is but outward and seeming. Sin means friendlessness, forlornness, ostracism, banishment—banishment from God and fellow-man, aye, and from self. For even with one's own heart is there lack of communion, since the heart distrusteth itself and knoweth its own bitterness.

Oh, ye who know little as yet of the wages of Satan and his enslaving service! You whose feet have never yet been cut with the thorns or bruised with the brambles of sin's rough march! Would you be proof against the flints and briars of life's perilous pilgrimage? Put on the armor of God. "Stand having thy loins girt about with truth and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and thy feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Take Jesus Christ for thy leader. Clad in his righteousness alone are you secure. Anywhere with him you may safely go. Yea, though thou walkest through

Earthly Discords.

the valley he will go with thee. With his presence you need never know solitude, for "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Living with him you will never know selfishness, for "I am among you as he that serveth." And knowing him you will never know death, for "I am come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly."

THE SAD NOTE OF UNBELIEF.



CHAPTER III.

THE SAD NOTE OF UNBELIEF.

The Apostle to the Gentiles, in a word of warning to the Corinthian Church, writes: "For we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth"; and truly many a sad page of history would have been left unwritten had his warning been regarded. How slowly the mind of man learns that the most obstinate rejection of a truth were powerless to turn said truth into a falsehood! The English queen came to the mirror when all her beauty was gone; seeing the gray hairs and the wrinkles, the story goes on to add that she smashed it into atoms. And full oft, alas, that foolish scene has been re-enacted since Elizabeth lost her temper. Truth has had her warfare and her martyrs. Stoned have her preachers been, aye scourged, and beaten with rods—all the way from the little Jew of Tarsus down to the time of our own big Boston Abolitionist. Her discoveries have been hailed with hatred. "History," says John Stuart Mill, "fairly teems with instances of

Earthly Discords.

truth put down by persecution." Hegel declares that the great fact of history has been the struggle for truth. "When I am dead," said one of our greatest poets, "lay a sword upon my coffin, for I was a private in the war for the liberation of humanity."

It seems to have been one of the hard lessons for the world to learn that burying the head in the sand, ostrich-like, avails not to avert the danger; that smashing the mirror will not make one young; that throwing out the thermometer will not turn January's snow-drifts into July's waving barley; that putting green goggles on the oxen will not convert dry waste desert land into rich, roral pasture; that standing on the seashore with pitchfork in hand tempting to keep the tides at bay is vain and idle venture; that every shift for fighting facts is baby business, and does not pay. Let us then hasten to note some of the truths against which the intellect of humanity has been in blind and impotent revolt.

I. The Scientific Government of God.

Instance the story of Galileo when he announced his Copernican theory. In 1616 he was summoned to Rome, where his doctrines

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

were condemned by the pope. In 1633 the aged scholar was dragged before a church tribunal and compelled on bended knee to abjure and hate the heresy. After death his remains were refused admittance to the family tomb, and a monument to his memory forbidden. Well-known, uncontested facts, these!

Instance, further, the story of Roger Bacon! What did this great philosopher do for the world? Much every way. Chiefly a long line of discoveries in mechanics and physics, besides valuable treatises in logic, mathematics, and moral philosophy. He had much to do with the telescope, with gun-powder, with spectacles, much with burning glass. Time fails, indeed, to itemize his long list of blessings to our human comfort. This it is that Roger Bacon did for the world. And what in return did the world do for Roger Bacon? Burned his books, broke his instruments, thrust him into prison, treated him with cruelty passing credence, so much so, indeed, that worn out and weary, he murmured at the last, "Would that I had not given myself so much trouble for the love of truth." In the inn at Athens there was no room for Socrates, nor

Earthly Discords.

could Florence find any welcome for Dante. When Anaxagoras announced the sun to be a ball of fire he was condemned to death for teaching such heresy. The Peloponnesian patriarchs could not permit profanity so patent against their favorite Apollo. At the request of Pericles, his lifelong friend, the sentence was commuted to banishment for life. Not a few are the pages such as these, and alas, with shame and sorrow must it be confessed, many of them from sacred history! The way the church has fought each new prophet sent of God is dark and dreadful reading. "If some seer saw a new light on the face of nature he needs must suffer for the vision." If some teacher would be true to his trust he must be reviled and persecuted for righteousness' sake; for such has been the story of the despiteful ages.

And not alone is the church blameworthy, for even science must plead guilty to a like charge. Her apostles, too, have insisted on closing their eyes to the light of fresh discovery. Instance the several theories of heat. It was as early as 1798 that Sir Humphrey Davy endeavored to prove the immateriality

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

of heat by showing its generation through the friction of two pieces of ice under an exhausted receiver; and in 1820, on being elected president of the Royal Society to succeed Sir Joseph Banks, he read a paper claiming heat to be a mode of motion. But so incredulous were the scholars that they simply smiled. In 1804 Sir Benjamin Thompson, better known as Count Rumford, propounded the same theory, but the Royal Society was still skeptical. It is a well-known fact that as late as 1863 Professor Tyndall gave a course of lectures on heat as a mode of motion, contesting the old igneous-fluid theory, and for these he was literally laughed at by the scientific world. The British Association for the Advancement of Science in open debate refused to accept it. To-day no scientist anywhere, for a moment, questions it. It was advanced by Davy and Count Rumford full half a century previous, but so great is the popular prejudice against anything new, that all these years must needs lapse ere it received the stamp of University approval. Truly, indeed, no fold is large enough to contain all the world's prejudice. Foolish and false the impeachment that all narrowness is in the

Earthly Discords.

church! Bigotry climbs over all fences, gets into all inclosures. The history of the world has been a story of revolt against the acceptance of new truth. Evolution has had a hard uphill climb of it. Even the law of gravitation was full fifty years fighting its way into the halls of learning.

The telegraph it took well-nigh as long to win any considerable favor. Man is a fighting genius; only when he must, will he surrender. As the ocean greyhound groping her way along the banks of Newfoundland, fog-encircled, shoal-encompassed, must needs move slowly lest icebergs or drifting derelicts imperil her safety, just so when any new truth is launched and puts to sea its progress must at first be slow. Great is the denseness, many are the half-sunken dangers. And if it be true that the scientific truth comes slowly how much more slowly the moral truth! Marking the former by the speed of the Olympic runner, the latter would be the pace of the snail. If it took evolution half a century to cleave its way into the class-rooms, the champions of liberty must not be discouraged at freedom's lazy jog. Though slow, it is notwithstanding sure. For the

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

shackles of slavery are being removed gradually, first from the hand, then the foot, then the mind, and soon will come the heart's glad turn.

God speed the happy hour!

May it not for long be delayed!

With grateful hearts and glad hosannas would we usher it in.

“For we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth.”

2. The Moral Government of God.

God is righteous. His righteousness rules the world. His sword is sharpened against iniquity. He cannot look upon sin but with abhorrence. This is the theme that trembles in every tone of Hebrew prophecy. No truce can ever be 'twixt righteousness and unrighteousness; i. e., not until the fundamental axioms of life are different from those we now accept.

Professor Huxley once said that there may be worlds in which two and two make five, and he might have added as logically that some stellar sphere there may be, in the ages yet to come, where holiness and iniquity live together in peace; but not until the nature of

Earthly Discords.

things is subverted and contradictions meet and anarchy is law. If there be a world where two and two make five, then the "five is not our five and the two is not our two," and if some nebular space there be where love and hatred harmonize, then our definitions must undergo revolution radical. For God is love, but his love is just. This is religion's intuitive axiom, her basal-block. There is an avenging Holiness, a consuming fire of infinite Purity and Love. This is the sublime and awful truth writ large on every page of Inspiration. It is on the first page, it is on the last; it is in the Old Testament, it is in the New; it is in the poetry, it is in the prophecy; in the history, in the allegory; and may we add, it is in nature as well as grace.

Idle to fight against this truth, and yet perhaps no doctrine of the church has been so challenged, and none that men have striven so to resist. No dogma has been the target for such stern and stringent criticism; none we would adventure to believe has been so perverted, none so maligned. If some smart skeptic be emboldened to mount the rostrum and hold up the "mistakes of Moses" to jest

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

and ridicule, much of his eloquence is almost certain to be a tirade against the church's teaching of punishment for sin.

And let us be free to admit that much of what he says is true. In attacking the mediæval conception, unbelief has done the cause of true religion a service; for it was a false limb, and dead, fastened on to the old trunk of Christian tradition. Never once did Jesus preach a woe materialistic such as Dante's. Mayhap Jonathan Edwards did, but not Jesus. From his divine lips we have no single utterance as to the economic workings of the lost world. Great principles he laid down, but never once did he detail. A judicial sentence is the bold creation of the schoolmen. It is the nightmare of the Middle Ages. Infinite Love has been pictured with a lurid shadow on the face, but the portrayal is unscriptural. And it has worked harm. It has worked harm because an unjust shadowing forth of the final reckoning tends to blunt men's minds to an outline that is just. The basic teaching of the Master is that future punishment is a harvest, that the sinner is self-doomed. Every life has its own reaping in the economy of grace, just as every

Earthly Discords.

field has its own return in the economy of nature. Jesus was a figurative teacher. He is the Peerless Painter. He taught in parable and without a parable spake he not unto them. He spoke of the place where "The worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched"; but this almost certainly refers to the valley without the walls of Jerusalem where the refuse of the city was burned and its defilement cleansed. The divine love is so inexorable that it becomes a fire; but what the character of the fire is Jesus never told us, and no authority has been given the church to fill in the silence with any flights of frightful fancy.

Sin cannot go unpunished, because in the nature of the case it is suicidal. It carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction. Sin cuts a bloody gash in the conscience, severs its life artery. This is God's moral government. "The wages of sin is death."

"As well argue with an African tornado as argue with that." Punishment follows sin just as certainly as shadow follows substance, but as to what the nature of that punishment will be let us hasten to confess a very imperfect knowledge. We have not been acquainted with that secret, final, awful. Not ours surely

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

to intermeddle! "Are there few that be saved?" Be not over-officious, replied the Master. "Strive to enter in." What will become of the sinner? Just what the sinner lets himself become. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom. Give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him. Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

How forcibly doth our own Hawthorne drive home this truth in "Marble Faun," that sin quenches the holiest fires in the soul's inner chambers, turns life's garden into a waste where death reigns, and where men have lost the power to love. Once upon a time, long, long ago, the story goes, there lived a Tuscan count whose likeness to the statue of the Faun by Praxiteles lends the book its name. A happy, spontaneous youth he, full of fun and frolic, joyous, handsome, eccentric.

He would run races with himself in the wood-path. He would leap up to catch the overhanging bough of an ilex and swinging his arms alight far forward. He would em-

Earthly Discords.

brace the trunk of a hemlock as a faun might have clasped the warm grace of a nymph, then fling himself down on the turf and kiss the violets and daisies and wood anemones. This happy youth loved a dark-eyed lassie whose name was Miriam. Miriam had a warm, passionate nature, and was possessed of strange, mysterious powers. She lived in the depth of the Arcadian wood, the sweet child of nature. Together they learned to tame the squirrels and the foxes, and even the oriole and bobolink would alight on their shoulders in answer to their mimic warble. The wild thrush would swing on the twig near by and pour forth its full-throated roundelay unbroken by any chirrup of alarm.

But our happy young lover grew jealous of a rival, and one black Friday in a fit of frenzy he took this brother's life for the sake of the dark-eyed lassie whom he loved. Then he turned to bespeak her as his bride. How vividly doth the novelist picture his attitude of mind and heart! How changed the ferns, the flowers, the foliage! How fear had taken the place of love! How the very oaks seemed ready to fall on him! How the winding pathway seemed full of wriggling lizards and the

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

silent forest full of echoes! How the dead leaves cracked! The hand of our fugitive lover is hot, the step uncertain, the whole bearing feverish. The brittle branches lying athwart his footpath broke as he stepped on them, and startled the birds from their nests and the wild beasts from their lairs—for be it noted that the wild beasts came forth. The squirrels ran leaping to the tops of the tallest hemlocks to hide themselves. It seemed as though the dead body of his late enemy lay heavy and bleeding across his heart, and all nature knew the sinful secret.

“What hast thou done?” asked Miriam, in a horror-stricken whisper, when she saw the glow of rage still lurid on the murderer’s face.

“I did what your eyes bade me do,” was the reply.

Miriam sank back dazed as though struck by a bullet. “Then we two are guilty,” she whispered; “the deed knots us together for time and eternity like the coils of a serpent. Ours is the loathsomeness of a union cemented in guilt, and our condemned spirits, alas, shut out of heaven.”

Then suddenly the hilltop grew dark, and the owl and mocking-bird sent forth a dread-

Earthly Discords.

ful whoop, and the water trickling from the rock tasted sour, and for the first time our hitherto happy youth experienced the real bitterness of hell—not its fires but its chill, rather; for the hand became ice; the whole body shook as with the cold fit of a Roman fever. Gazing at her beautiful form he seemed to have felt a strange indifference steal over his spirit as with overburdened heart he muttered, “Farewell, Miriam, farewell forever.”

“We talk of breaking law,” says George Adam Smith, “we cannot break law; we can only break ourselves against law. But if we sin against Love we do destroy her; we take from her the power to redeem and sanctify us.

“I believe in hell because I believe in the love of God—not in a hell to which God condemns men of his good will and pleasure, but in a hell into which men cast themselves from the very face of his love in Jesus Christ. The place has been painted as a place of fire. But when we contemplate that men come to it with the holiest fires in their nature quenched, we shall justly feel that it is rather a dreary waste of ash and cinder, strewn with snow—some ribbed and frosted arctic zone,

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

silent in death, where there is no life, and no life because no Love, and no Love because men in rejecting or abusing her have slain their own power ever again to feel her presence." Ah me, "Verily, verily I say unto thee, the wages of sin is death," death of honor, death of reverence, death of conscience, death of faith, death of hope, death of peace, death of love.

3. The Revolt against the Spiritual Government of Jesus Christ.

In a book of recent issue we were told of an old colored preacher—John Jasper by name—who died last year in Richmond, Virginia. He had acquired a notoriety quite considerable, because of a sermon preached more than a hundred times, in the midst of which he would declare, with strong and solemn accent, "The sun do move." The journals of his native state were wont to make sport of Jasper's olden-time astronomy, but whatever his wilfulness in refusing to accept the latest researches of science, he humbly bowed his heart to the lordship of Christ Jesus. Accepting His mastery he never once questioned His ruling, but gladly the rather did he carry

Earthly Discords.

every thought into full captivity to His obedience.

Once a slave to human cruelty, he was now the happy *doulos* to the bidding of Incarnate Love. And so, clean in character and consecrated in calling, he was the instrument in higher hands of leading many a seeking soul into the secret of His gracious presence. Foolish to be sure, the attitude that refuses allegiance to the demonstrated truths of science, but how infinitely more foolish is the soul that persistently rebels against the kingship of the world's Lord and Saviour.

Calling upon an invalid lady recently I found her reading a sermon of Campbell Morgan's, in which was a story that had almost a parallel in her own life. "Strange," she began, "but there's a story here that just suits me exactly." Then opening a locket she said, "Read this." I took the little case, and looking very closely, saw printed therein, in the very smallest excelsior type, Mrs. Elliot's hymn:

"My God, my Father! while I stray
Far from my home, in life's rough way,
Oh! teach me from my heart to say,
Thy will be done."

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

Then, underneath the hymn were five dates printed in red ink. "These are the black-letter, not the red-letter, days of my life," she added, smiling. "The first is the date of mother's death, and oh, how I rebelled, although I was then but a girl in my teens. The second, three years later, is the date of father's leaving us—and again I rebelled. The third is the date of my husband's going, and still I murmured and struggled and fought. The fourth was the taking of my only darling, a sweet little fellow of five, and this time I almost cursed my heavenly Father, for all my loved ones were now gone, and I was left alone. All the while I was not a Christian. In fact, if the truth were told, I had grown bitter and hard and sour. I thought God was punishing me. I see now he was not punishing but educating me by a spiritual discipline, and I have since learned to say, 'The Lord gave and the Lord hath received,' not taken away, but 'received; 'Blessed be the name of the Lord.' Ah," she added, with a tremor, "my life, too, seems made up mostly of rebellions."

"But I want you to look at the last." I looked; it read "March 3, 1898."

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

“That was the day on which I gave my heart to the Saviour. That was the great surrender. You notice there are twenty-six years between the first date and the last—twenty-six years of fruitless insurrection; took me six and twenty years to learn to say, ‘Thy will be done.’ ”

“If thou shouldst call me to resign
What most I prize—it ne'er was mine:
I only yield thee what was thine;
Thy will be done.

“Renew my will from day to day,
Blend it with thine, and take away
All now that makes it hard to say,
Thy will be done.”

Have you learned to say that, dear reader? Is your life largely rebellion? Have you admitted the Saviour into your life? He stands at the portal of your heart just now knocking for entry. He will not force the lock, but whosoever he be that openeth the door shall have the Heavenly Visitor for his abiding guest. Strange, passing strange, that men will double-bolt and double-bar their soul dwelling against life's most loving, most lasting Friend!

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

“Behold a Stranger at the door!
He gently knocks, has knocked before,
Has waited long, is waiting still;
You treat no other friend so ill.”

I call you to loyal submission and loving service. Believe it, that revolt of yours is idle, and furthermore, it is sin. For all rebellion against truth of which the soul is convinced is sin. If you would have peace you must needs first surrender. Do not put off yielding till death is at the door. 'Tis willing captivity the Master asks. Faith has its fetters, but they are glorious; its yoke, but what an easy yoke; its burden, but how strangely, blessedly light!



The story is told of Henry Drummond that on one occasion he remonstrated with a coachman who had a weakness for drink. “Suppose your horses ran away,” he said, “and you lost control of them, what would you do?” The man said he did not know. “Now, suppose,” continued Mr. Drummond, “that a stronger and more expert reinsman than you sat by your side, what would you do?” “I should give him the lines,” was the ready answer. And doth not the Divine

Earthly Discords.

Helper stand by the side of every man whose temper is violent, whose passions are headstrong, whose appetite is past control? Verily indeed He doth. A very present help is He in trouble. His are overtures of strength granted to grapple with the present need and pardon for the past guilt.

His is a hand beckoning us to happiness and hope and rest. His a voice calling us to the high levels of purer air and fuller, more abundant, living.

For the Christian life is the only natural, normal life—the life of harmony, poise, balance. 'Tis easier to obey than to disobey. All disobedience implies a wrench, a jerk, a strain. Only he who has graduated into the slavery of unconditional surrender to the divine will knows the true, glad liberty of the Christian's walk.

“For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman,” and stands fast in that liberty wherewith Christ doth make his children free.

Some time since it was our sad privilege to be called in to minister to a dying young woman. Her husband was a drunkard, and

The Sad Note of Unbelief.

who but knows something of what a tale that intimation tells? Entering the humble home what marks of misery met the eye! what bareness! what poverty! what signs of waste and want and woe! Closing the door somewhat suddenly an echo rang through the narrow corridor. Surely, the heart kept saying, for sheer cheerlessness and gloom, after the jail and prison bar must come the drunkard's home. Sitting down by the bedside and greeting the sick one with a smile and a word of kindness, the remark was ventured, "My dear woman, tell me your troubles, won't you?"

"I have no troubles, sir," she answered.

"No troubles?" That seemed a startling confession. A drunkard's home, and yet no trouble! Two little tots in the corner, one four, the other six, shoeless, almost garmentless, and yet no trouble! No picture on the wall, no carpet on the floor, no curtain on the window, no flower on the table, no nurse in the room, no kind friend near—not even a physician—and yet no trouble!

"My life was nothing but trouble," she added, after a little, "until a few weeks ago I brought everything to Him and yielded."

Earthly Discords.

Then, after a short pause, "I was unfortunate in my marriage life, but—but—but—I loved him."

Another silence followed; then turning and looking into my eye with such a hungry look, "I'm so glad to see you! Haven't seen anybody since Sunday," it was Thursday, "I thought I'd like to have you read to me a psalm and speak a little prayer. My father was an elder in Horatius Bonar's church in Scotland, and I get great comfort from some of his hymns." Then reaching her hand across for an old ragged, paper-bound hymn-book, she began to read. "Oh, yes, sir, I was brought up right."

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon my breast.'

"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
And he has made me glad."

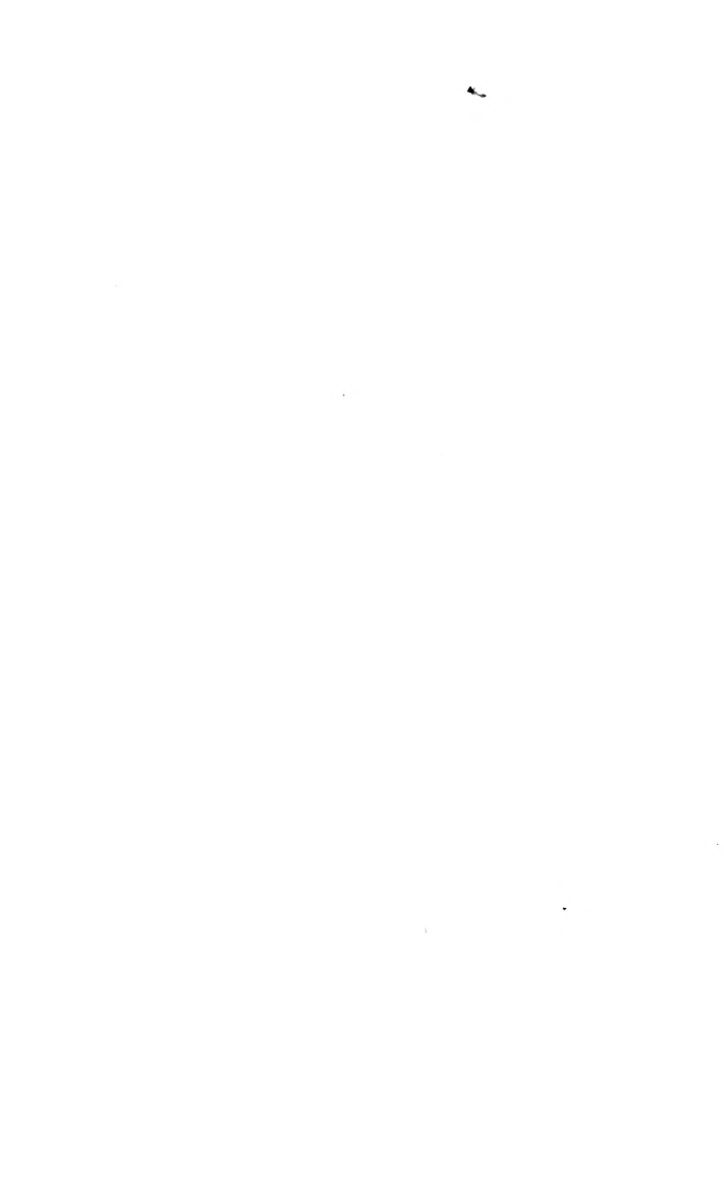
"Do you think you could sing it for me?"

"Well, my dear woman, I am not much of a singer, but if you wish it, we will try together," and so, in that dingy, disconsolate,

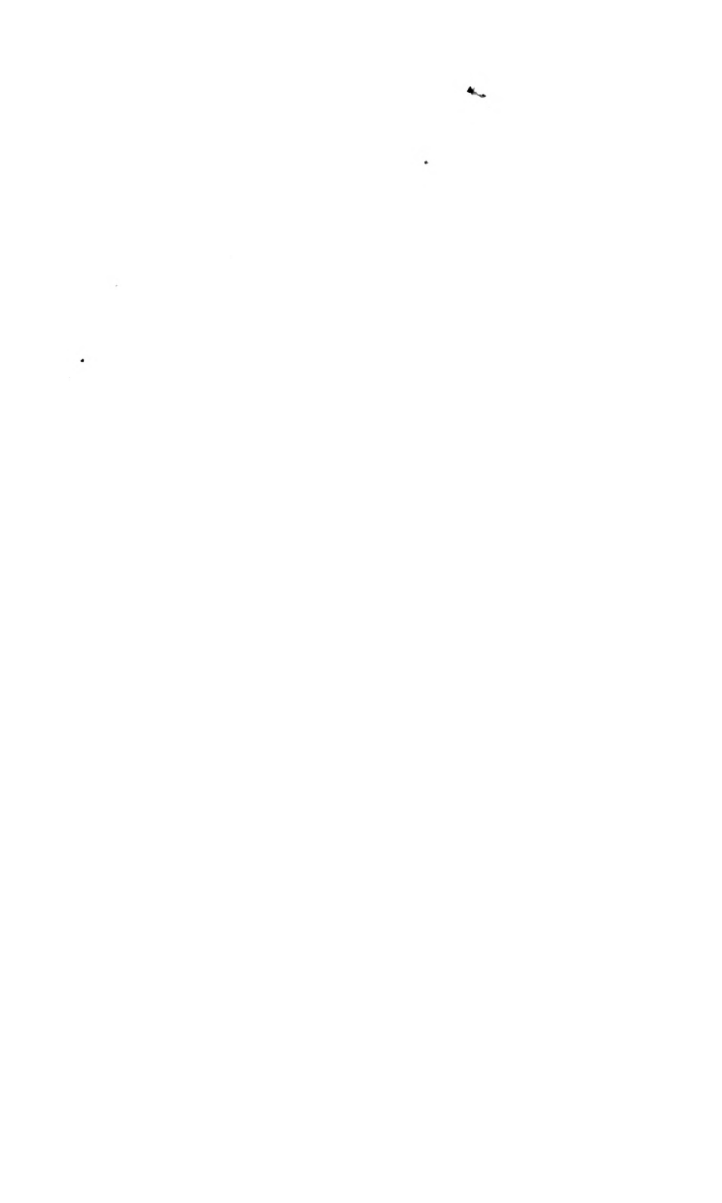
The Sad Note of Unbelief.

dying chamber we sung the hymn of hope
immortal:

“I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘I am this dark world’s light;
Look unto me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright!’
I looked to Jesus and I found
In him my star, my sun;
And in that light of life I’ll walk,
Till traveling days are done.”



THE HISS OF THE HYPOCRITE.



CHAPTER IV.

THE HISS OF THE HYPOCRITE.

There is a narrow stretch of land running through the heart of Arcadia called by framers of isothermal charts the "storm-belt." Almost every summer round about the reaping time a destructive hurricane sweeps through it. First is felt that palpable hush, prophet of the coming danger. Gradually the sky frowns and blackens, while one by one the birds seek shelter. Soon puffs of wind whirl dust along the road followed by a few drops, and forthwith the cannonading. The rain pelts down in pitiless fury. Trees strain and groan and overturn. The roar of the torrent, the shriek of the wind, the zigzag line of the lightning, fill the soul with awe and dread and wonder. Great limbs are torn from their trunks and roots from their grip of earth. Physical nature seems in pain. In a few hours the tempest passes by and we greet the sunshine and the birds again.

Once in one of these sudden fits of fury the little lake by which we rested was lashed

Earthly Discords.

into the ugliest temper. When night closed in how grateful was our little circle for a roof and a refuge! Retiring we were rocked to sleep in the lap of Mother Nature and to the rhythm of her awful music. Morning came, and what a change! The sky was clear, the birds were singing, the little lake lay peaceful as the grave. It was indeed a grave, a cruel grave; hardly could one have believed that it had swallowed up three lives in its fair-faced treachery. And yet the little lake lay so innocent-appearing. Peaceful as a tired child it slept, with a smile on its face like unto that we sometimes see on our little dreaming darlings. The fishes were leaping, the surface was sparkling, the wavelets were lapping its shores, and difficult was it to realize that such a smiling surface could ever be darkened into such unpitying rage.

A passage there is in the first Evangel of our faith that has been called the "storm-belt of the New Testament." It stretches through the twenty-third chapter. The Master has just been discoursing about Love.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

thy strength and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment." Love! Then, like a bolt out of the blue comes this moral lightning, and for five and thirty verses the storm sweeps by and rages. Demosthenes is the master of the phillipic when he denounces the Athenians for their sloth and supineness, but verily there is nothing in the nine orations of Demosthenes against Philip, nothing in the fourteen orations of Cicero against Mark Antony, that can compare for a moment in severity of tone with Christ's phillipic in the twenty-third of Matthew. The diatribe is fearful. Eight times do we read, "Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites." Every word burns like a flame, eats like a canker—"blind guides, devourers, whited sepulchers, serpents, vipers." The sky is thick and black and heavy. The thunder rumbles and peals and cracks hard by, while one by one the flashing bolts leap forth with merciless effect. Terrible and deadly are the blows dealt, while each time hypocrisy is the target. Never, we are told, does lightning strike twice in the same place, but here the rule is broken; every time hypocrisy is the mark. Then the storm passes

Earthly Discords.

by and we catch a beautiful sunset, and peaceful; "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate, for I say unto you ye shall not see me henceforth until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

What can be the matter with this word hypocrite? How comes it that in conversation it is whispered soft and low? What defilement clings thereto? Not always has it been a tainted word. Once it showed sound and wholesome. Hypocrites were impersonators on the stage of ancient Greece; tragedians were they, and honorable men. The literal meaning of the word is one who questions and answers, hence one who impersonates. Not infrequently even orators were called hypocrites. Does not Roscius, the greatest of Roman comic actors, speak of his pupil Cicero as a hypocrite? Such the usage of the word for several centuries. But time soon was when it began to serve a figurative

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

purport; and as playing a part is usually for deceitful ends, the word fell from its high commanding altitude, and kept falling, till to-day it has become a verbal degenerate, no longer desirable, no longer respectable, "wallowing rather in the slums of human speech."

How interesting the study of words! How instructive! The weaknesses and sins of our poor, frail nature can be traced in the changes that some classic roots have suffered. Etymologists call our attention to the word "ostensible," which literally means "capable of being shown," but the step from showing things to showing them off remains so short and tempting that the fatal step was usually taken; the innocent idiom lost its coyness; now it carries the suspicion of flaunt and feign. When our early English writers used the word "counterfeit" they had an eye to nothing sinister; they simply meant to "copy or imitate," with no intent the slightest that said copy should ever be dishonestly substituted for the original.

Perhaps no word carries more counsel along the line of moral teaching than our word "pretend"—at first meaning simple to "lay claim to anything." Repeatedly do Shake-

Earthly Discords.

speare and Milton use the term in this open, artless, undesigning sense of laying claim to a title or heirloom or estate.

“Why shall we fight, if you pretend no title?” (Henry VI.)

Does not Lord Lytton speak of Leslie pretending to the hand of Violante, meaning thereby “aspire”? Alas, what a commentary on the cunning of the human heart and that our pretenses are so largely false, when we learn that our latest lexicons give as its primary meaning this soiled, corrupted sense! So the first has become last, the last first. How full of instruction each Müller and Trench and Wedgwood and Sayce along the line of words!

Was not a villain in early Roman life simply one attached to the villa or farm—a slave, we might say? What a story it tells again of the character of such creatures that the original meaning is hidden in the root, the slave lost in the scoundrel! Verily indeed the history of words carries many a valued lesson for the pulpit and the sage. “Sermons in stones,” the poet says, and sermons many and impressive there are, too, in words. For words are the vessels that carry the

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

soul's freightage; windows are they that show the heart's treasures. If the furnishings of the soul library are degrading, the choice of words must soon betray the fact. For words are the chief vehicles in the carriage of thought.

So, as we rub the dust and grime from many of our verbal pictures, they come out into beautiful and suggestive freshness. The deeper truth, alas, that lies behind this particular portrait is, that every man is two men. There is the person as he actually appears on the surface and the deeper man beneath. Sometimes the actual man without is better than the ideal man within. Such was Judas, and Judas was a hypocrite of the baser type.

Not infrequently, however, what does not appear is better than what does. So our study leads us to confess two types of hypocrites—those who deceive others and those who are so far purblind as to deceive themselves. One of the teachings of Holy Writ and one supported by experience is that it is possible for men to deceive themselves. Full oft in striving to deceive our fellow-men we succeed in doing that very thing, and oftentimes, alas, in the attempt we fail, fail pite-

Earthly Discords.

ously, deceiving no one but ourselves. For does not the prophet tell us how crafty is this heart of ours, and over and above how desperately wicked, and does not the psalmist cry out in words burning with noble glow and ardor, "Search me, Oh God, and know my heart; try me and know my thought and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."

A little too apt are we to think that the scribes and pharisees whom our Master so severely and sternly denounced were openly wicked and dissolute men. Not so. That were a serious misreading. No authority have we to suppose that these men were guilty of loose and scandalous living. Nowhere does our Lord accuse them of uncleanness and the flagrant sins. Time and again indeed he notes their scrupulous conformity to the letter. These men, be it noted, were the religious leaders of their time. Men high up, were they, in the councils of the church. What our Saviour condemns in them is their caste spirit, their separateness, pride, outward fastidiousness, their proselytism, extortion, long prayers, their solicitousness for the out-

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

side of the cup and platter and indifference to the weightier matters of the law. Of old the philosopher tells us of the knave who invented an untruthful story and narrated it so frequently that after a little he came to believe the tale as part of his own life history. And these pharisees kept playing at religion so much and so long that they grew to mistake the letter for the spirit, thus warning us surely of the danger of being over familiar with sacred things and the consequent snare of self-deception. For when religion does not touch the real life it becomes a cloak, and a cloak worn constantly becomes a habit, and if the habit of our lives be to cover up our disfigurements so that they cannot be seen, we are in danger of becoming blind to their presence and being thus self-deceived.

Wonderful book, this Bible! Wonderful man, this Jesus! One verse in his opening sermon is a master-stroke. (Matthew vi. 1) "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them." "To be seen of them!" Here is the nerve of the mischief. "To be seen of them." This is the vital point; thinking what man will say, giving for the glory of self, praying to the audience,

Earthly Discords.

playing to the gallery. Beware of the theatrical is the open warning to an age that loves the trumpet and the street corner. Learn to give thine alms in secret; then forget them. Beware of adding up thy benevolences. Beware of memorandums. Memorize naught but thy sins and thy mercies. Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth." Closet thyself and bar the door. Thy life look intently at in the dark. Commune with thy Father in the quiet. Of the incarnate One the prophet wrote, "He shall not cry nor lift up nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." When he retired for prayer it was usually to the desert or the mountain-top, and at midnight or in the early dawn. He "retired," note. Be this picture thy pattern! Retire, heart of mine! How a man conducts himself in his home, not how he acts in the market-place, is the true index of character! How few, alas, can stand these searching tests of the All-Seeing!

"It is more blessed to give than to receive," but as some one notes, the giving that increases its gifts when it learns the amounts are to be published in next week's issue of the calendar is infected with the un-

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

righteous virus, and the poison will sooner or later permeate the life. Verily such benevolence has its reward. The man who excuses himself from uniting with the church militant lest his fellow-man label him a hypocrite, is he not entitled to the ugly epithet already? For is not the essence of the malady thinking what man will say? When this truth grips us, we see how far-reaching is the figure, reaching down into the inner parts as all spiritual figures do, and out into the infinite. Is there not here wide and ample room for heart-analysis? Are there no strict religionists to-day who think less of telling an untruth than of indulging in some innocent pleasure? Are there no professed disciples of the Great Teacher who fill prominent seats in the synagogue and sing with upturned eyes,

“Take time to be holy,
Speak oft with thy Lord,
Abide in him alway
And lean on his word;
Make friends of God’s children,
Help those who are weak,”

and who forthwith go out straightway to bleed the fatherless and widow for twelve per cent? Scribes such as these, alas, we must confess, are with us still, and it is of these

Earthly Discords.

men that the Master speaks. They strain at gnats and swallow camels. They are quibblers, dabblers in a divine art, stammerers in the great speech of heaven. All their works they do to be seen of men. They shut up the kingdom of heaven against themselves. The inwardness of true religion they have not learned; the searchingness of the blessed life they have not felt. For "Thou requirest truth in the inward parts" and "Blessed are the pure in heart since they shall see God."

Never surely a time when we so needed these reminders, for ours is an age honey-combed with guile, gilded with double-dealing. The fiction of the old travelers was, that before the crocodile devoured its victim it shed tears, and men there are to-day who will weep over the widow's misfortunes then eat up her substance. The counter is crooked, the law likewise. The drawing-room has mastered the secret of being unreal, sometimes, alas, the church. Who has not felt the temptation to overcolor and embroider, to transfigure sin by soothing names, to conceal its deadly deformity? Carlyle thinks that when we speak of falsehood we lay our finger on most of the world's worst maladies, and verily the

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

sage of Craigenputtock may not be so far astray, since what is sublimer than simple wholesome truth? What doth society need more for its ills to-day? Is it not patent that insincerity is one of life's harshest discords? In its last analysis hypocrisy is falsehood. It is the basest of all base metals, and the "Master of all good workmen" so accounted it. Very little had He to say concerning drunkenness and some of the coarser sins. To the poor woman taken in adultery he whispered, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more," but against all sham and cant and hollowness how he thundered! How severe his stricture! How terrible his rebuke! "If a soul is false in God's presence, when can we hope for it to be true?"

"Who dares think one thing and another tell
My soul doth loath him as the gates of hell."

Perhaps we cannot do better by way of illustration than by refreshing our minds with a little abstract from literature. By consent unanimous William Shakespeare, Bobbie Burns, and John Ruskin are children of the first order of genius. Nothing in the creations of these cathedral minds looms up so

Earthly Discords.

prominent as their intense and drastic hatred of sham.

Lord Timon was an old retired Athenian general whose prowess and military strategy had delivered Athens from many a besieging army in the days of her glory. His wealth was great, his generosity and big-heartedness unbounded. To him came the poor with their emptiness, the rich with their flatteries, and no one ever left his palace-home without some token of his liberality and favor. Crowded was his hall continually with a great flood of visitors who tended their services and bended the knee to Lord Timon and rained flatteries in his ears.

In this current stream of fawning hypocrites were many who brought gifts. For it was noted that a gift bestowed on the noble lord always brought one seven to ten times more valuable in return. One of these sycophants, Lucius by name, had lately sent to him a gift of four white horses trapped in silver (hearing that he had admired them) for the which he received a jewel in return of many times their value. Lucullus, another smooth-faced time-server, learning that Timon had taken a fancy to his dogs, sent him forthwith a present of a

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

brace of greyhounds, which was accepted with thanks and a return gift made of twenty times their worth.

Sometimes these human parasites would make pretense of praise toward some of his possessions with the hope of thus securing them, and he, good, honest, simple-hearted soul, not seeing their artifice, would straightway send the thing admired next day with gracious compliments.

Hearing that a certain gentleman, Ventidius by name, was thrown into prison for a debt, he at once discharged the debt and started him in business with a considerable loan. Scarcely a home in Athens but was adorned by some evidence of Timon's munificence! His hall was daily beset with a throng of sharks—poets, painters, lords and ladies, merchants, jewelers, tradesmen—and all with one design, to bleed the noble Lord with flattery and fulsomeness.

“For he outwent the very heart of kindness,
Plutus, the god of gold, was but his steward.”

Alas, such generosity could not last. Time came when all his land was sold or forfeited, and when all his assets sufficed not half to pay that which he owed. One day

Earthly Discords.

his steward came in weeping and informed him of this fact, and that creditors were clamoring at the door. He bade the kind-hearted fellow to hold his foolish tears, to remember that he was rich in noble friends who had tasted of his bounty:

“Canst thou the conscience lack
To think that I lack friends?”

So, with a confident tone he hasted several of his servants to Lucius, Lucullus, and Sempronius, men whose estate had almost been supported with his purse, men who could but with difficulty eat a meal without Timon's silver treading on their lips; and to Ventidius, whom he had lately released from prison, and who had just stepped into vast wealth by the death of a relative.

Lucullus was the first approached. At first he thought it argued another gift from Timon and was very cordial, but when he understood the real import of the visit, his answer was, “I always knew it would come to this; I told you so!” concluding by offering the servant a bribe to go home and tell his master that Lucullus was not at home. Lucius was the next addressed: “Yes, I have been befriended much from our noble lord,

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

and am much endeared to him; how very unfortunate that I should have made that purchase yesterday; commend me bountifully to your master and tell him that I account it one of the greatest afflictions that I cannot pleasure such an honorable gentleman." Now, Timon had been a father to Lucius, had largely supported his estate, had builded his fine mansion; aye, Timon's money had paid his men their wages and kept him rolling in comfort.

"This man had spent of Timon's wealth

And now ingratitude makes it worse than stealth."

And a similar response made all his varnished friends. All were sorry, or said they were. The very tongues that hitherto had praised him for his bounty now censured him for his folly. Even Ventidius, who had been redeemed from prison and was now rich, even he refused a loan of those five talents that Timon had so generously volunteered in his distress. Friends! Alas, he had none. That was the sorrowful discovery. His princely mansion became his jail, at whose gate iron-hearted creditors were loudly clamoring with their bills and bonds and mortgages, each demanding his due, "the which if he

Earthly Discords.

should dole out his very blood in drops there were not drops sufficient to discharge the debt.”

“Alas! what a god is gold
That he is worshiped in a baser temple
Than where swine feed.”

And now comes the remarkable part of the tragedy—a complete transformation in the noble lord. Hard and sour and bitter did he become. Athens he forsook forever, shaking the very dust from off his feet as a testimony against her ungrateful people. Outside the walls he turned and cursed his native city. “Reeking villains! May you live loathed and long! May the youth of sixteen snatch the crutch from his old father’s hand and with it beat his brains out! May confusion ever live among you! May plagues and fevers, leprosy and cold sciatica, cripple thy senators! May lust and liberty creep into the marrow of thy children that they may drown themselves in riot! Detested town! Timon will to the woods,

“Where he shall find
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.”

So he built himself a cave in the forest where he might never see the face of man.

The Hiss of the Hypocrite.

Alone and solitary like the neighboring wild beast did he live, drinking the cold brook and breathing the bleak air. Naked he stripped himself that he might not retain the semblance even of a man. One day, digging in the ground, his spade struck something heavy. He threw it up. It was a pot of gold. Here was a mass of treasure that would have purchased him friends and flattery again, but so sick was he of life's duplicity and such a rooted hatred did he bear his species, that when a regiment of soldiers passed by he gave the money to their commander, asking nothing more than that they should go straightway and level Athens with the ground, burn, slay, and kill all her people, and make one universal massacre of the city.

Where the noble lord died, and how, is not told us. One day a poor soldier, passing by the sea-beach near his cave, found a tomb on the verge of the bank, and on it these words:

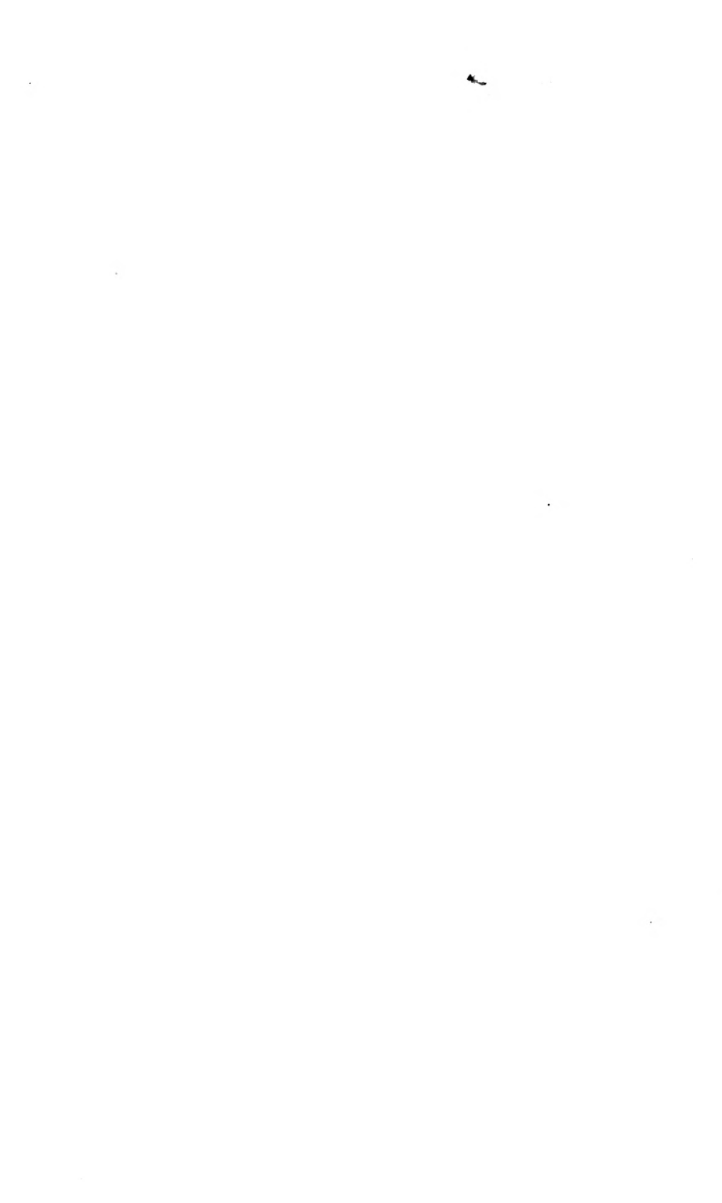
“Timon is dead who hath outstretched his span;
Some beast read this, there does not live a man.”

Dear Reader, the Church of God can stand much. She rises glorious from the fires of persecution. The soil of poverty lends luster

Earthly Discords.

to her brow as the barren, sterile hills of Scotland add a purple blossom to the heather; but in the atmosphere of unreality she loses her life. In traveling we have noticed how at each station the brakeman takes the hammer and taps the wheels. If there is any weakness the sharp ear of the expert soon detects it. The world to-day is listening closely to the triumph song of the King's children. Woe unto us if our lives are not in tune. We may deceive ourselves; we cannot always deceive our fellow-men; never can we hope to deceive Him.

THE NOISY PASSION FOR PELF.



CHAPTER V.

THE NOISY PASSION FOR Pelf.

A most artful touch in the filling in of one of the parables of the Great Teacher, is that line in which he speaks of the deceitfulness of riches. He has just thrown an outline of the sower upon the canvas, and now he details.

“Some seed fell on good ground, but it was choked; the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and the lust of other things entered in, choked the word, and it became unfruitful.”

The skilfulness of the stroke consists in its seeming simplicity and the greater truth that lies, unseen to the outer sense, beneath. “Riches take to themselves wings and fly away.” False are they, we say, and fickle, slipping through your fingers much like the trout the youth catches in the summer stream. This is the surface glimmer that first arrests the eye, but this is not the central light; but a reflected gleam is this. The larger light is hidden, as always, in the parable. The Master meant self-deception; not the effect of our

Earthly Discords.

riches upon others, but its effect upon ourselves. Never do we moralize on the deceitfulness of poverty because poverty knows no deception. Poverty paints; poverty poses; poverty puts on airs; poverty tempts to pass itself off for something that it is not, but poverty never disillusions. My poverty may deceive others; never does it deceive me. All the while I know the facts, the bare, nude, negative facts. Poverty shows one up to himself, just as he is, just as his friends are, just as the world is. Poverty is honest, horribly honest. Poverty tells the truth, the troublesome truth, the tormenting truth. Is anything sadder than proud poverty? Riches throws a glamour over everything. It lends a strange, weird witchery to the lake, the landscape, the cult, the temple, the task, the tool. Mountain and rock, hunger and cold, famine and fever, have a charm in the Alaskan Eldorado. When riches comes nothing abides the same. The life is different, the politics, the philosophy, the religion—all different. The fortunate fellow—or the unfortunate mayhap—sees things through gold-rimmed, gold-tinted lenses. Like the stick in the bottom of the stream, the light is refracted, the stick twisted.

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

There is an optical delusion, a false perspective. How oft we hear the haughtiest souls speak of their own unworthiness, thereby lending us the impression that they are the least conscious of the presence of the pride-poison in their hearts; in this lies its subtlety. This, likewise, it is that is meant by the deceitfulness of riches.

The illusive atmosphere of affluence arises largely from the fact that the desire of the heart is never gratified. "The eye is not satisfied with seeing nor is the ear filled with hearing." "How much is enough?" the old proverb runs, and the answer returns, "A little more than one has." The great money miser rarely knows for why he accumulates his money. Of such little worth is it to him. "Just as at base-ball," says Ruskin, "you get more runs. There is no use in the runs, but to get more of them than other people is the game." And no use can come of the money save to have more than neighbor Jones, to pile it up mountain-high, to erect thereon an altar graven after the image of the golden calf, to regularly visit the sacred shrine and bow the knee with the homage of idolatry.

Earthly Discords.

Let us speak an illustration, one we are meeting day by day in life's dusty pilgrimage. Here is a young man starting out with the one dominant aim of making money—twenty thousand dollars say—we can start at that. That is the height of his ambition—to be worth twenty thousand dollars. With that sum total he would be satisfied, he thinks. His word would have so much more weight in politics and on the marts of trade. He would be so free, so calm, so independent. So he plods on till in the course of five years' slavery he is worth that amount. How much? Twenty thousand dollars. Is he satisfied? Does he feel that he has enough? Now, that is just the point worth noting. Herein lies the "curious deceitfulness of the thing." Not only is he not satisfied, he is more dissatisfied than the day he started. He feels poorer, astonishingly poorer. His ambition now is one hundred thousand dollars. He works harder than ever, morning and evening, night and day, year in, year out; denies himself of art, music, poetry, literature, culture, travel, friends, society, till at last some bright morning on the Exchange he is marked, "A, B, C, 1, 2, 3, one hundred thousand dollars."

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

And now the second milestone on the desert journey has been reached. And the tempting mirage has pushed on with duplicate pace; like the Olympian runner each succeeding stride is longer. The third landmark reads a million. But standing on his already earnings the distance seems not far. Besides, do not all successful men say that the sterner troubles are at the start? Do not riches grow like the rolling snowball? Did not a famous financier once admit that he had more difficulty in gathering his first little bundle than all the rest of the mammoth fortune? And here I have surely a good start; one hundred thousand dollars. Why, a sum of money doubles itself in fifteen years at six per cent. And so he starts the third stage of the journey. How tiresome and hot the trail! Heavy load, growing heavier! Nervousness, restlessness, sleeplessness, avariciousness; little time has he for reading, less for worship, none to study the wondrous development of his child. Bonds, mortgages, banks, safe deposits, government securities, gold, silver, cash, collateral! And so the years roll on, five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, forty, sixty-five years, and worth

Earthly Discords.

a million—the third milestone of the toilsome stretch. Once his ambition was twenty thousand; now he has that income every month. Does he feel rich? Why it is one of the strangest things in life's wily involvement. He knows for a surety he cannot live ten years, but he is more discontented than the day he went forth on his eager adventure. The poet tells us of the Greek youth who was lured by a beautiful maiden into her forest home. She sang so sweetly and winked so slyly and tossed her dainty feet so enticingly—throwing kisses at him all the while from the tips of her tidy fingers—that for the nonce he forgot home and loved ones! On and on and yet on she drew him, over the rocks and the bog and the brambles, till at the end of the day his chase was given him and he clasped in his arms a repulsive old sorceress with a scowl on her face and a look of envy in her eye. Such is gold close at hand and stripped of its glamour! Here surely abides a startling sermon on the vanity of things earthly. When we speak the word "satisfaction," we are reaching down to the heart's immortal hungering, and "things" were powerless to quiet that; they make a vacuum, not fill it. "As

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

easy to fill a chest with grace," Phillips Brooks tells us, "or a vessel with virtue, as a heart with things." In Plato's great banquet food is not even referred to, and in Sir Thomas More's ideal republic is not gold despised and put to menial uses? How little these sons of genius cared for the things that are seen and temporal! Emerson speaks of a certain judge in Massachusetts who at sixty proposed to resign, alleging that he perceived a certain decay in his faculties. Dissuaded by his friends, he postponed the idea. At seventy it was hinted to him that possibly it would be better to retire, but he now replied that he considered his judgment as robust as ever. Ah me, herein lies one of the illusions of nature! This is the deceitfulness of age. Age like some types of disease hath powers wonderful of delusion. One of the strange phases of pulmonary trouble is its hectic flush, its power to outwit and throw a hopeful mirage athwart to-morrow's footpath. Not less is the snare and vanity of abundance. "For he that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, and better is a handful with quietness than both the hands full with travail and soreness of spirit."

Earthly Discords.

Perhaps the fact that gold and silver tempt us so with hopes of happiness in an age of pleasure-seeking is largely the cause of our strange unrest. What may be the source of true happiness? A perfect body, Mr. A says, and becomes an admirer of Hercules; knowledge, Mr. B answers, and becomes a student at the shrine of Minerva; doing good, Mr. C whispers and becomes a disciple of Him who "came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." But however many the accents, one strain is clear, distinct, piercing, insistent—the voice of great possessions. And it were the height of folly to deny the might of money, for does it not represent everything that may be purchased? Doth not a great estate mean a comfortable home, good books, beautiful pictures, travel, recreation, freedom from faggery? Does it not furthermore denote the power of helping the poor, giving to charity, establishing reforms, founding homes of refuge for the weary and heavy laden, and thus fulfilling the will of the Christ? If the old Ionian sage was right when he said that "Knowledge is power," surely the same were true of money;

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

for money is influence, it is distinction, it is respect.

Such is the voice of the age, and sometimes it is almost worth one's reputation as a judge of true art to dispute its range and quality. "Periods there are, indeed," says W. J. Dawson, "when we have felt like resting under its spell and acquiescing." Here, for instance, to draw on personal acquaintance, is an old college friend. Many a happy hour we spent together, both graduating in ninety, he a tall, stately, personable figure with a clean-cut, handsome face and an intellect as clear and keen and bracing as a frosty, moonlight sleigh-ride in our Canadian winter home. But he has tubercular leanings. If only he were a rich man's son he could come out here to lovely Pasadena and postpone the inevitable, but since his father is a humble toiler in life's lowly ranks, he must stay at home and surrender, for disease wins.

Alas, many a Keats and Mozart and Chatterton have not lived out half their days for lack of the comforts that wealth could have lent them. Yes, money is mighty! Altogether outside the province of question is that fact. Money is mighty, but not thereby al-

Earthly Discords.

mighty. Some things elude its grasp; the best things elude its grasp. Everything in the counting-house it can have, but happily everything is not to be found in the counting-house. Reputation it can purchase, but not character. Patience it can buy, but not peace; flattery, but not friendship. Carve it cannot a line of glory on a man's brow, nor chisel a curve of beauty on a woman's face. How coarse and cruel Watts's portrait of Mammon! How hideous the face, the eye, the lip! Travelers tell us that as you approach the city of Constantinople it is a picture of beauty with its domes and mosques and minarets, but when the city is studied at closer range with its dogs and dirt and general uncleanness, the enchantment vanishes. So do men find wealth and great possessions. If distance lends enchantment, nearness removes the mask and shows the real face. Of old the sage told us of the steamer sinking in mid-ocean, and of the voyagers throwing their diamonds into the deep. Great is the love of money, but greater is the love of life. "Give me neither poverty nor riches," cried the psalmist. Let me live in the temperate zone, midway between the frosts of winter and the

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

heats of summer, for if the one chills the nature and sponges it of everything that is noble, the other lends sorrow and vexing discontent.

How unlike the spirit of the hour is the story of Chinese Gordon! The more we learn of this remarkable man the more we feel like saying with Huxley, "the most refreshing character of the century." For his services in China it will be remembered the government sought to reward him, but he declined all honors. Money and titles he scorned; but a medal inscribed with his name and a record of his thirty-three engagements was accepted because it could not well be refused. After his tragic death, that medal could nowhere be traced. What a revelation of the great soldier's unselfishness unfolds when we learn that the medal had been sent to the poor of Manchester during the famine, with an anonymous letter accompanying it, requesting that the ore be melted down and given to the hungry children in that great city. Then, in his diary he wrote these words: "The last and only thing I have in this world that I value, I have given over to the Lord Jesus Christ." Verily, lowliness is never so lovely as when

Earthly Discords.

the crowd is cheering, and humility is never so beautiful as at the Cross.

Many there be to-day who argue that the greatest danger of Mammon-worship consists in its enslaving power. This they claim it is that Scripture means when it speaks of "the root of all evil." For riches itself is a blessing, a gift from the good Father, but when the heart's affection is set thereon, it becomes a bane, a blight. Money makes a man in a certain deep, real sense a freeman, the love thereof makes of him a slave. And the deceitfulness of the danger lies in the fact that it is done so gradually.

Ary Scheffer pictures Satan leading the Master to the verge of the cliff and bidding him to throw himself over among the rocks and the skulls and the boulders. But the famous painting is true neither to Scripture nor to life. For Scripture tells us it was the pinnacle of the temple to which the Christ was led, and the teaching of life is that the evil one leads each innocent youth where the slant is gentle, the slope easy, and where fragrant flowers are blooming, not where broken bones are bleaching. The disciple of Isaak Walton

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

noted how Satan always baits his hook with beauty, how he uses the very finest thread and makes it water-color. Hans Anderson tells us of the cloth woven for the king's garment. "The thread was so fine that it was invisible." The chain of each evil habit is wound around us day by day. Each day shows it stronger, thicker, tighter, heavier—like the fabled thread in the old Greek tragedy, the thread sufficed to lift the string, the string the rope, the rope the chain, the chain the anchor.

In the epistle to the Hebrews we read, "Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, but exhort one another while it is called to-day lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." This is the like-enslaving power of sin. The Master's perpetual warning against the danger of indulgence is in view of its captivating power. Many things in life are dangerous to possess because they tend to possess us—so treacherous their mood, so tenacious their hold, like the bull-dog bite of which Emerson speaks, where the head must needs be severed if the teeth would be loosened. Ruskin tells us of

Earthly Discords.

the wreck on the California coast in which one of the passengers fastened a belt filled with ore about his waist. Later his body was found at the bottom of the bay. "Now," says the critic, "had he the gold, or had the gold him?"

Luxury tends to selfishness and coarseness, and the swamping of the higher manhood, like the Newfoundland dog that drags his sinking master ashore, but keeps the head under water, and so in the act of saving him, drowns him. It is said that when Mahomet reached the gate of Damascus and saw the loveliness of the place, he turned away, saying, "I dare not trust myself in such a garden of the gods." One of Emerson's ancestors was in the habit of praying that none of his posterity might be rich. Agassiz declared he had no time to waste in making money, for the great naturalist felt that it was poverty that toughened soul-fiber and made the true knight-errant. How awful the description of the first Rothschild, that he was one of the most devout worshipers that ever laid a withered soul on the altar of Mammon! When George William Curtis looked through Mr. Tidbottom's spectacles he saw the real man.

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

At one creature he looked and saw a ledger, at another and saw a billiard cue. Alas, what strange and sorrowful sights would greet our eyes could we but read as He does who knoweth all the thoughts and intents of the hearts! How we should go out in pity and fellow-feeling toward those who have given themselves over to idolatry and vanity and wicked works! When President Van Buren heard that his son had become engaged to a lady of affluence, he is said to have remarked, "Well, poor boy, he is ruined; he will give up the study of law, for which he has such talent, and become the least useful of human beings—a rich man."

Naturalists tell us that tropical birds are often caught by alighting on strongly scented trees and becoming stunned and stupefied by the fragrance, and many a pilgrim to the better land has stood the hard fare of want and abasement nobly—aye, and thrived thereon—only to become a moral weakling in the garden of luxury. Blessed, indeed, the child that knoweth how to abound, that "everywhere and in all things is instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

Earthly Discords.

In his "Thoughts for a young man starting out in life," the sage of Antioch notes how great wealth tends to become a snare, in that it makes real munificence difficult, that the millionaire who gives away half of his principal no more makes a sacrifice than the man afflicted with dropsy, and whose tissues hold a bucketful of the morbid liquid, makes a sacrifice when he is tapped for a gallon. He is in a better state after than before. But how difficult to make that truth vital to the ambitious hearts of men! Here is a well-known benefactor who has just given several millions of dollars toward colleges and different charities; but when we ponder the fact that he dictates the policy of a trust which paid last year something like forty millions of dollars in profits, surely the munificent act loses all of its sacrifice and much of its philanthropy. And what of that great and increasing company who feel no obligation to give anything, whose sympathies have dried, to whom giving even a pittance is a real pain? What of them? Serfs are they, thralls, blind bondmen. Not a greater slave to his glass is the drunkard, nor the libertine to his passion.

They remind us of the mouse who got the

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

cheese, but who got it in the trap. Sadly, indeed, must it be confessed that a considerable company pass out and in among us who are nothing apart from what they possess, things which they have collected around themselves, therein being well compared to the case-worm, which gathers about itself a coat of sticks and stones and shells many times its size, then glues itself to the bottom of the channel and feeds on spawn-fish. Tearing apart the outer coating of the larva we are surprised at its mass; shell after shell comes off—straw and stalks and roots—and when we reach the grub within, it is the tiniest insect. So with many who intend their lives on massing money, the raiment is more than the body, the life more than the meat.

But perhaps the most successful lure in the chase for mammon is the fact that it teaches, or at least impresses, that a man's life does consist in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Hardly can there be any question about that. And there can be as little question about this either, that it is not true. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he pos-

Earthly Discords.

sesseth, and true success is not mercantile. A contradiction, but herein lies the strange treachery of the thing. Riches gives more clothes, but somehow you are colder; more bread, but one is strangely hungrier; tantalus-like you stand chin-deep in water which recedes whenever you attempt to drink.

It was in the days when Athens was in her glory that the critic said to the sculptor, "Ah, you have loaded down your goddess with ornaments because you could not make her beautiful," and multitudes there are to-day who are crowding and weighting their lives with worldly treasures thinking thereby to make them happy and attractive. To all such the old Homeric tale of the sheep on the verge of the cliff comes with fresh and forceful freshness. A few yards below there hung a level shelf covered with verdure. Thoughtless, it leaped down. Thereunder a second shelf loomed large and vital. Then the story tells about a third shelf and a fourth and a fifth, and then the usual sequel about hunger, helplessness, and the eagles.

Some months ago the daily press interested us with an interview that Mr. T. P. O'Connor, the English M. P., had with Mr. Car-

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

negie. "As we drove to the station I was remarking how I envied him his wealth." He said, 'I am not to be envied. How can my wealth help me? I am sixty years old, and I cannot digest my food. I would give all my millions if I could have youth and health.' Then I shall never forget his next remark. We had driven some yards in silence when Mr. Carnegie suddenly turned, and in hushed voice and with bitterness and depth of feeling quite indescribable, said, 'If I could make Faust's bargain I would. I would gladly sell anything to have my life over again.'

"And I saw his hand clinch as he spoke."

Surely no lesson needs stressing more in these feverish days than the pitiful failure of a life "whose dominant chord is the distracting craze for gold." The teacher of safe and healthy living dare not keep silent on this danger else be false to his trust. It is the chief jangle in life's music. The vulgar sway of mammon is at the bottom of nearly all our jarring and unrest. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth, and the truest seer that ever read its heart never said so. A man's life

Earthly Discords.

consists in the number of noble ideals that possess him. A man's life consists in the fulness of his affections, in the depth of his sympathies, in the strength of his faith, in the reach of his hope, in the purity of his love. Will the good Father ask rich men what they did with their money? Methinks it will be the first question. May a rich magnate do as he pleaseth with his possessions? Not unless he pleaseth to do what is right. No soul is worthy of a growing fortune who does not have a correspondingly growing liberality; but the man whose outlet of benevolence keeps flowing—fully, freely—that man's wealth is a blessing to society, it is a blessing to his fellow-men, and some day he will be surprised to learn what a blessing he has made of it to himself.

In the Paris Salon there is a striking picture—the death of William the Conqueror. The soul is represented as having just taken its flight, and the servants who a moment previous would have leaped to answer his every nod, are robbing his wardrobe. Underneath is written, "William the Conqueror." Think of it! Just dead, and his own life-attendants rummaging for booty! What a

The Noisy Passion for Pelf.

victory! "What a failure" rather, would not the "Master of all good workmen" say! For the man who does not own a penny, but who lives daily in the love of whatsoever things are true and noble and of good report, who can kneel by his bedside, clasp his wife and little boy in his arms, then commit them into the keeping of the All-Seeing, All-Loving, and sleep as soundly as his curly headed darling—that man is the true conqueror, the true millionaire.

The child of a King is he, the heir of the ages.



THE GREAT FALSETTO NOTE IN MOD-
ERN SOCIETY.



CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT FALSETTO NOTE IN MODERN SOCIETY.

Along the line of our last chapter all has not been said.

It is now some four years or more since we paid our first and only visit to Monte Carlo, but the impressions then made were so deep and clear cut that we can easily define them even now.

By every nature-lover and landscape-critic the place is admitted to be one of the most charming spots in Europe. Monaco, the principality, is situated on the shores of southern France, not far from the ancient city of Nice. A promontory only eight miles square, it yet has a king of its own, who, it may be worth noting, is absolute monarch and ruler. The population of the little kingdom cannot be more than fifteen thousand people, thus showing it to be both in extent and inhabitants the smallest state in Europe. The capital—a little town of four thousand—occupies the summit of a rocky headland that rises

Earthly Discords.

two hundred feet or more sheer from the Mediterranean shore and is surrounded by ramparts of stone and granite. To the north-east but just a little loom up the buildings of the Casino. These are owned by a joint stock company, and capitalized at something like five million dollars. Of the buildings themselves the first stone was laid in 1858, and to-day Paris itself can hardly boast of structures more magnificent.

This, then, is Monte Carlo—goodly, picturesque, pleasing to the eye, and yet, withal, the world's great gambling sore, the blot on the fair name of southern France. Nowhere possibly in all Europe is there a prospect lovelier; nowhere is there a vision viler. A garden of glory is it, but a garden likewise of death. Here the blood of the suicide but stains the red of the rose to a deeper dye. Under every leaf there coils a cobra, beneath every cluster sleeps a corpse. Ruben's picture of the crucifixion has been criticised because Golgotha has been painted so attractively that the skull cannot be seen for the flowers, but in this latest Golgotha skull and flowers lie side by side. Nothing is done to hide the deformity. If the heathen conse-

The Great Falsetto Note in Society.

crate shrines to serpents and adorn the crocodile with a crown, so here contempt of life is invested with a glamour and ignoble death with chivalry. The waters of the great tideless sea wash the base of the castle; the fragrance of the lemon groves scents the air far, far afield; rarely does a cloud hide the sun by day or the crystal purity of the stars by night; the strains of the orchestra are never silent, nor, alas, the wail of the dying.

Aristotle tells us of the Indian princess sent as a gift to his pupil Alexander the Great. She was the loveliest creature in all Illyricum, but having been fed on poisonous herbs from infancy, her very breath was fatal. So the very breath of this goodly garden is death to noble impulse. Here shielded from the law millions are annually paid in shameful rental. Hither flock thousands of visitors daily from every corner of the Continent. Hither hies the college graduate to try his luck around the tempting table. Here may be seen on any morning of the year American millionaires, Russian noblemen, London gentry, Parisian sports, Italian clerks, and criminals whose features grace, or shall we not rather say disgrace, the walls of every

Earthly Discords.

“rogues’ gallery” in Europe. Here paramour and courtesan drink their wines and rattle their dice and “shoot their gold napoleons.” Not an evening passes, it hath been said, but some “poor unfortunate weary of breath” descends those winding marble stairways, while a pistol-shot forthwith below proclaims the sequel and the tragic end. What a tale that mention tells!

To the earnest youth busy with task and tool and hearing for the first time of the harm of the gambling hazard, it must be accounted as a strange thing that so little disorder is seen or heard at Monte Carlo and places of like tone. One hears little shouting, little profanity, sees nothing obscene, nothing indecent. Perchance, indeed, a whole morning may be passed in the walks and banqueting-rooms without even the faintest tell-tale of drink’s ravages crossing one’s stroll. At the cost of over one million dollars the stockholders some years ago erected a cathedral for religious worship—thus stealing the livery of heaven surely, and making secure in stone history’s fittest illustration of Satan clothed as an angel of light. Alas! let no youth think the way to death bleak and barren and

The Great Falsetto Note in Society.

full of startling screams and noisome odors. Let not the beauteous child of tender years suppose the footpath dark and lonely and through passes dangerous and fearful. Truly indeed "the mountain up which the tempter takes us is bathed in purple, in its rocks gleam jewels, while from its crest is seen the vision of kingdoms." Facts force us to mark how the way to death is lighted up with jets of multi-colored splendor. No hideous skeleton shocks the eye, no grating note offends the nerve, no ravenous beast or dragon crouches by, to the outward eye nothing unclean to startle or disturb. The way to death is carpeted with velvet and lined with bloom and brilliancy. The opening pathway for the hesitating footsteps of the blushing youth winds through a garden in which the flowers of the better land are stolen. Bewitching music charms the ear; tempting fruits tickle the taste; delicious opiates dull the sense. If one would learn somewhat of the refinement and seeming innocence of the gambling habit he need but wend his way to Monte Carlo. Here decked out in silks and jewelry may be found ladies and gentlemen of courtly dress and carriage who would shudder at

Earthly Discords.

drunkenness or brutality and many of the coarser sins. Fruits beautiful to the eye are they, but within of corruption all compact. Gaudy creatures of the vilest tastes, like the Purple-Emperor butterfly, which turns aside from the sweet juices drawn from the nectary of the narcissus to feed on putrid animal substance.

Our wonder grows apace as we linger around this school of scandal, when we note the preponderance of young blood loitering through the grooves, for age is but poorly represented. Gambling, alas, is a young man's game, requiring the riot of youth to feed the flame. There are no old gamblers, it hath been noted by the seer of olden time. In an eloquent passage the preacher tells us of the vessel in mid-ocean that exhausted her coal supply. First she fed her cargo to the furnace, then the masts and deck-castles, then the furniture, tables, beds, chairs, then the timbers and inside linings of the hull, till when port was fortunately gained by some favorable wind, she was naught but a shell. So doth the fire of this deadly fever burn up life's precious furnishings till, grown old and gray at forty, the despondent victim seeks the

The Great Falsetto Note in Society.

rest of the revolver or the river. For as luck has been called the gambler's titular deity, so suicide is his natural end. No more eloquent discourse was ever heard than the silent sermon preached by the suicide's graveyard at Monte Carlo. Thither the anxious pilgrim wends his way and meets old Gilbert at the gateway of the lonely spot—Gilbert the keeper, Gilbert the gravedigger, Gilbert the atheist—eighty years of age. "Life is a game of chance," he says. "We cannot rule over our lives any more than we can rule over the ball in the roulette. If I am to suffer I suffer; if I am to be glad I am glad; when I am to die I die; fate is my God." Such is the religion of Monte Carlo.

Sometimes troubled and cast down in soul, when the congregation has scattered and the lights are out, we review the day's work and failure and wonder at the little impression our words have made. In such dark moods we exclaim, "Verily it must be that the world is growing worse!" Then when we note the madness of man in flinging his life as so much firewood to the furnace of passion we say, "Surely some specially commissioned evil genius is abroad in our age deceiving if it

Earthly Discords.

were possible the very elect." But these are not our strong hours, certainly not our best hours. Ever do we need to be reminded that no new unknown visitor is sin. Of old did the prophet say that sin "*entered*" into the world, in the which he speaks of the dawn of time. Idolatry and theft and murder and violating the Sabbath day were the master evils under the Pharaohs, and they are the master evils now. Betting, let us hasten to note, is not a twentieth-century invention. As old as profanity is it, old as adultery, old as thievery. Scholars have striven to trace its beginnings, but in vain. Lost are they in the twilight of fable. Does not Ruskin inform us that in mythology the gods gambled? And is it not a fact reported for us by all our missionaries that no savage tribe has yet been found that has not learned the secrets of the vicious art? John G. Paton, in his autobiography, tells us that in all his travels he has never met an adult native who was not a proficient gambler, while as far back as the "Book of Historical Documents of the Chinese Race" the practice is mentioned. Verily, a relic of savage darkness doth it seem to be.

Just here we find much food for dark fore-

The Great Falsetto Note in Society.

boding. Our wonder and amaze would not surprise us so if the evil were confined to-day to the lower strata of society. The ominous fact is, that it pervades the whole economy of our human movement—business life, political life, social life, alas, church life!—for everybody indulges, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, members of the church and members of the stock exchange. Even society will not meet of an afternoon to play a game of cards without some “seasoning to make it spicy—a ripple on the social board of trade”; thus contributing the saddest chapter to the pernicious story, for there can be little doubt that *society* to-day is preparing the youth of our land for a fearful harvest on the morrow. When, but a few months since, our late lamented President lay adying, we took up our morning daily and saw where more than one hundred thousand dollars were won and lost in Chicago on the hour of his death. Surely there can be no fascination like unto that which causes sport and play over the life of those we love. When, for instance, some years ago we read where a well-known sporting man wagered ten thousand dollars on the chances of his child’s recovery how we were

Earthly Discords.

moved! Betting on to-morrow's weather is bad, but betting on the heart-action of wife and child and sweet babe nigh unto death, who can begin to tell the shame, the solid apathy, of such inhumanity? Is he not right who calls the sport the "witch-craft of crime" —potent, all-potent, omnipotent?

A noted critic has recently written an essay in defense of gambling. "Gambling," he says, "is simply a disguised system of purchase. One buys excitement and excitement is needful to healthy living." Clearly no violation of any of the Ten Commandments but would be vindicated by an outlook so partial and unfair. Cannot the same be said of duelling? And what is the bet but the duel in the realm of mammon? If duelling may be regarded as murder by mutual arrangement, may not betting be defined as thievery by each party's consent? Thus is the evil the denial of all industry just as murder is the denial of all life-sacredness. For gambling is the death blow to lawful toil. Each different duty, task, and tool becomes tasteless. Honest work loses its spice and tang and flavor. Each worthy craft and calling suffers in proportion as men's minds are fed on ex-

The Great Falsetto Note in Society.

citement. This also is how it destroys the home, for home is the refuge of repose. Home is God's gift of rest to His tired children. Home means freedom from life's fitful fever.

Home is the place to unwind and relax the highly strung instrument of nervous care. Home means life's little nest of calmness and soothing quiet for mind and heart, just as sleep is nature's sweet restorer for the body. And the sorrowful tragedy of the betting habit is that "home becomes a jail to its victim." Love of excitement displaces love of wife and babe and sweet boy.

This makes clear, furthermore, how it comes to be the lasting companion of every other indulgence that poisons the well-springs of life. Lust is a base debauch, but once appeased there follows temporary recoil. How debasing is drink! how demeaning! how low! But drink at a certain point makes for nausea and loathing. Drink, for many, dulls the luster of the eye and rocks into self-helplessness. But with gambling the fever never cools, never leaves; like unto a veritable furnace does the mind become. Winning or losing it is the same. It may be doubted, indeed, which is the greater stimu-

Earthly Discords.

lant, success or failure. No point is reached where the brain is dulled as by some narcotic and thrown back insensibly. While the fuel lasts the fire burns and blazes, and alas, in memory after.

Oh, all ye who love home and church and boy and girl and fatherland, would you learn somewhat of the enormity and peril of this soul-wrecking evil? Hear the warning *beware* of Jerry MacAuley, who tells us that in his fifteen years' work in the Bowery, the professional gamblers he has seen saved could be counted on his fingers. How low must human nature be when the Gospel of the Lord Jesus fails to find it! No indulgence will so quickly destroy self-respect. None will so speedily unsettle the mind and wreck the body and destroy the soul. Does some innocent child of tender years claim that there are honest gamblers? In answer let us quote the sage of Concord, that "fruit is always ripe before it is rotten." The testimony of one of New York City's greatest graduates in this vile art at any rate should suffice, a man who confessed to having won sixty thousand dollars in one night of evil debauch. It was given before the ministerial union of Manhat-

The Great Falsetto Note in Society.

tan. Before that venerable body this man affirmed that in all his wild career he had never met an honest gambler who played a perfectly straight game. The evil is essentially dishonest. It is a system of ethics built on a false conception of ownership. This is our arch-indictment; wealth is a sacred trust, not a toy to sport and trifle with. It destroys the mind; it pollutes the heart; it inflames the passions; it puts the stigma on honest industry; it wrecks the home, than which no impeachment could be graver. Home is the corner-stone of church and state, and anything that knocks the underpinning from underneath this divine altar is wrong and wicked, and in condemnation thereof nothing more is needed.

“Dark is the night, how dark! no light! no fire!
Cold on the hearth the last faint sparks expire;
Shivering she watches by the cradle side
For him who pledged her love last year a bride.

“Can he desert me thus? He knows I stay
Night after night in loneliness to pray
For his return, and yet he sees no tear—
No! No! It cannot be! He will be here.

“Nestle more closely dear one to my heart!
Thou’rt cold! Thou’rt freezing! But he will not part!
Husband, I die! Father, it is not he!
O God, protect my child! The clock strikes three.

Earthly Discords.

“They’re gone, they’re gone! The glimmering spark
hath fled.

The wife and child are numbered with the dead.

On the cold earth outstretched in solemn rest,

The baby lay frozen on its mother’s breast.

The gambler came at last, but all was o’er;

Dead silence reigned around. The clock struck four.”

THE YOUNG MAN OUT OF TUNE.



CHAPTER VII.

THE YOUNG MAN OUT OF TUNE.

“The Lord let the house of a beast to the soul of a man,
And the man said, ‘Am I your debtor?’
The Lord said, ‘No; but keep it as clean as you can
And I will let you a better.’—*Tennyson.*”

David king of Israel had four sons—Solomon, Amnon, Adonijah, and Absalom—and not one of them, if the strange truth must be confessed, was a credit to his father. In Solomon we have the curious mingling of wisdom and folly; Amnon was guilty of one of the foulest crimes that can stain the human heart; Adonijah was a usurper; Absalom a murderer. A bad child was he, a bad youth, a bad man, and still his father loved him. He was very handsome, we are told, and we are also told that his beautiful head of hair when cut every year weighed two hundred shekels; i. e., about thirty ounces. The story of how he rebelled against his father's throne and had himself proclaimed king at Hebron by the people, and of how he then marched toward Jerusalem with his army to

Earthly Discords.

take possession of the capital and the throne, is an old familiar story; and the Journal of the Father's hearing of his approach and fleeing from the city accompanied by his family and his famous body-guard of six hundred men, and proceeding toward the Jordan, is likewise well-known and thrilling narrative. There is perhaps no single day in the whole record of Jewish history so completely fulfilled as that which describes this memorable flight. David is pursued. The two armies meet in the forest of Ephraim, and then the battle—and what a battle!

Father forced to fight, or rather to defend himself, against the son; the son deliberately turning against the father. Twenty thousand men are slain. Absalom is defeated. Riding off the field on horseback, his beautiful head of hair is knotted in the boughs of a huge oak and he is dragged from the stirrup and is hanged. So sharp and graphic is the record that we can almost see King David standing at the gate of the city waiting for tidings of the battle, and as he sees a messenger running toward him with news from the front, he cries out in breathless excitement, not "Is the battle won?"—he seems not to

The Young Man Out of Tune.

have cared so much for that. He cries out, the rather, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" And when the sad story is told the father weeps, "Oh, my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee! Oh, Absalom, my son, my son!"

There can be little doubt that the words of this sorrowful refrain contain more than a literal meaning. This tale about a wayward youth was not inserted in the inspired Testament as mere history. A deeper truth by far than that does it hold in its ample and far-reaching content. Forever it must loom as the lighthouse on the rock, with its red warning writ in flame of fire, "Beware!" Intended is it to teach us that there are Absaloms to-day who rebel against their father's God and their mother's God, and wander into the far country, careless of everything—careless of body, careless of soul—and run life's short but sure career. And it is especially intended to teach all Christian parents who profess the name of Christ to take measures for the safety of their children, else they, too, be found standing at the door of the homestead and crying aloud when it is too late,

Earthly Discords.

“Oh, my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee! Oh, Absalom! my son, my son!” This surely is the spiritual burden of the elegy. How we are reminded of the New Testament prodigal! May it not well be called the Old Testament version of the Master’s matchless parable? For both wandered from home and both partook of the same Circean draught. Already we noted how sin at heart is lawlessness. Here the lawlessness breaks out in open mutiny, for each listened to the voice of the tempter as he bade them to insurrect against a loving father’s will. That there are a few catching melodies that come with peculiar fascination to the ears of young men must seem so evident as to be scarcely needing statement. Darwin tells us that but few animals can be caught twice in the same trap. Not so our young men! With one or two of the old songs, alas, Satan keeps enticing our youth aside, as in the Homeric myth the Sirens lured the sailors on the rocks and violated them. But such strains are discords to the ear trained to spiritual tones. Hearing the new song of redemption, the siren voice of the tempter soon loses its charm. That

The Young Man Out of Tune.

man alone is safe who takes the wax of worldliness from out his ear and tunes his heart to the heavenly harmonies of our Divine Orpheus. Then alone is he proof against the beverage of Circe or the music of the mermaids. For then doth he hear better music reverberating daily in his soul, and sweeter.

I. No young man is safe who plays with his body. True, the body is only dust, but what an interesting lump of dust! The eye a text-book on geometry; the nervous system a treatise on telegraphy; the joints and muscles a standard work on mechanism! Of old the philosopher challenged his class to find a happier location for any one of the twenty-five principal organs of the human anatomy than the place in which it is found. We study the backbone. We note the perfection of its skill, "firm as a pillar, flexible as a chain, light in weight, graceful in form." Six million nerves and muscles in every square inch of the human face! Six hundred million cells in what we call the brain! Strange that in these days of enlightenment men should trifle with so delicate a masterpiece! Far

Earthly Discords.

aback as history takes us the ancients revered it, the highest ambition of an Egyptian being to leave a sufficiency when he died that it might be embalmed. Surely the youth who gives to his body other than the very best care is entitled to any nickname in the lexicon of folly. For health is the stepping-stone to happiness, to usefulness. Some Adam Smith may publish a work upon the "Wealth of Nations" with never a word in it as to the health of nations, but this is much as though one were to write a treatise on jurisprudence with the Ten Commandments left out, or a dissertation on music with the octave ignored. The human body has been called the finished poem of the Great Author. Neglect of it is a blot on any curriculum. To keep the soul's dwelling in good working order, this is the first duty of the religious man. Pascal's theory that to be pious one must starve himself and be pale no longer obtains. Tall, sickly, spiritual shadows are not wanted anywhere to-day save in the sanatorium. Imagine Ulysses or Hector or the Cyclops an oarsman in a rotten boat. A kind Providence surely could not have intended the drama of life to be—first thirty years health

The Young Man Out of Tune.

hunting wealth, second thirty years wealth hunting health. At one of our commencement exercises last spring a certain class celebrated its tenth anniversary. A review of the decade elicited the sad surprise that fifty-seven men had graduated in that class, of whom but ten are now living. Is it unjust to say that there must be some false note in the teaching of these scholastic halls? True, sickness is oftentimes but a reflection on a young man's prudence, often indeed a tribute to his life of sacrifice and devotion, yet 'tis also true that not infrequently also it is a stigma on his moral character. Seriously and in all conscience it must be confessed that some of us hold it as the wickedest foul play that when we sat at the feet of the wise men, none of them thought it worth their while to tell us the part our body was about to play in life's greater curriculum. As some one notes, we were told the pathway of the Pleiads and all about the moons of Jupiter just as though they were in danger of losing their course, but of ourselves—who are in danger every moment of swinging off—never a word. In blissful blindness were we left to find that out by tear and tilt and tumble. Whenever a

Earthly Discords.

Southerner is asked as to his health, he replies, "Just tolerable." No youth of pride and promise can do his best who is "Just tolerable," and every young lover of honesty owes it to the world to do his best. Southey tells us that the Cid, the national hero of Spain, had such an overflow of warm, rich blood that he could lie with a leper and not contract the disease. Only smallpox and bullets, 'tis said, kills the Mohawk Indian. With these compare the forty-seven youths afore mentioned who within ten years after graduation died of old age in the thirties. And let us take to heart the lesson that no child of immortality can afford to play with this wondrous temple of wisdom and beauty and grace. For the gospel of the Lord Jesus glorifies the body. It is not vile and never once does the Bible say so. The habitation is it of the Holy Spirit. It is to be raised from the dead. It is to be clothed upon with immortality. Keep it clean.

2. No young man is safe who plays with his life. For life is something surpassingly serious, and he who trifles with it and treats it as an idle game of battledore or bagatelle

The Young Man Out of Tune.

must some evil day smart for the neglect.
Full oft this assumes the revolting pessimism
of some Khayyám who would make of life
an idle lottery.

“We are no other than a moving row
Of magic shadow-shapes, that come and go
Round with this sun-illuminated lantern, held
In midnight by the Master of the Show.

“Impotent pieces of the game he plays
Upon this checker-board of nights and days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks and slays,
And one by one back in the closet lays.”

Perhaps our Puritan elders in attempting to curb the youthfulness of youth made life grim-visaged and over serious, for in protesting strongly against all Catholic leanings, they unwittingly glorified a type of penance themselves, therein fulfilling the old adage that not infrequently extremes do meet. Play these sturdy pilgrims denounced in all its forms; and in some places still, with sorrow let it be confessed, their intolerant spirit lags and lingers. Many there be to-day who would cry down all pastime and diversion; the ethic of innocent amusement they seem not to regard; the billiard-table they would blacklist, the bowling alley, the golf link, the tennis court,

Earthly Discords.

the ball game. Each Epworth League and each Endeavor army they would have dressed in drab and slowly sauntering down the avenue to the strains of some funeral march. But this surely defeats the high end of Christian rejoicing for which all young hearts plead and pine. Life's greatest seers and sages have found time for festival and frolic. Missionaries like Coleridge Pattison have distinguished themselves on the cricket field, and ministers like Robert Speer have not thought it sacrilege to play ball. "Any type of raven religion is a repelling religion." Youth will have none of it. Too black its wings to tempt young hearts to the heavenly flight, for all are pleasure-seekers; and it should be the aim, we are constrained to believe, of each true church to provide wholesome relaxations for the fold of her care.

Of old the famous Frenchman remarked, "Play, but play with the right things; play with thy limbs not thy life; play not with powder. Form a purpose, then fix it." And herein surely lies the victory. Emerson, when asked how to make the most of one's self, replied, "Have one idea." Not purpose but singleness of purpose is the secret

The Young Man Out of Tune.

of success. "To keep a gun from scattering, put in a single shot." The apostle adds, "One thing I do." Ours is an age of specialists. Recently a learned professor passed from us, regretting that he had not devoted his whole life to the study of the dative case. "Science is boring everlasting gimlet holes," says Dr. Patton. "Non multa sed multum" is the college motto. And doth not the motto seem a wise one? Is it not worth hanging in every store, every office, every workshop? Few things more valuable to a young man in life than the pressure of a purpose! It has a negative value, for it keeps from drifting, and a drifting boat always drifts down stream; it hath a positive value, for it focuses power; and "concentration," said Sir Isaac Newton, "is the essence of strength." "The light of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be double, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." Light is lineal; darkness is dual. Single men are singular men; they crash through impediments with the earnestness of gunpowder. Ofttimes the boat race is won, not by superior straining, but by superior steering. Rarely

Earthly Discords.

does the derelict find an accidental harbor. "Sheet lightning does little damage; it is the bolt that kills." "Be a magnetic needle," said Carlyle. Look straight ahead. Do not circle, but steer. Point. A life without a purpose has been compared to a letter without an address. It is stamped, sealed, and mailed, but it lacks the element of direction; it will go to the dead-letter office of defeat. It mattereth not how much wealth the child of fortune claims, he has no right to be idle; no right to play with his life. Idleness is treason to the King's government.

"No child is born into this world
Whose work is not born with him."

Of late we have been interested in the life of Cecil Rhodes. He was the son of a clergyman. Going to South Africa, a poor boy in search of health, he became swayed by a master motive—the painting of the Dark Continent British red. An empire builder was he—"a Titan pitching quoits with worlds." Much of his great career was selfish and unworthy, but all must admire his steady passion for a purpose. Never once did he fritter away his life; never once trifle his time.

The Young Man Out of Tune.

3. No young man is safe who plays with his passions. Not that there is anything unworthy in our passions; our passions are God-given. The passion for food, for drink, for dress, for praise, for beauty, for truth, for love. How noble these heart-hungerings! How excellent! How sterling! Only when we begin to play with them and run them to riot do they lose their luster and become base metal. Fire is a good servant. What blessings it doth bring! What bliss! How it purifies! How it gladdens! Comfort it lends to the home, light and cheer to the weary. But how cruel a master! How merciless its empire! Water. What greater blessing than water? What were life without water! Without water life could not be. Surely, like bread, Swift might have said, it is the staff of life; rendering commerce possible, cleansing our defilements, cooling our overheated frame, quenching our overburning thirst. But water unchained, unchecked, how ruthless! how relentless! Never perhaps was the play of passion painted so richly and highly colored as by Burns, but his own sad epitaph is the best commentary on the painting:

Earthly Discords.

“Is there a whim-inspired fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool,
 Let him draw near;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,
 And drap a tear.

“Is there a man whose judgment clear,
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself life’s mad career
 Wild as the wave;
Here pause—and through the starting tear,
 Survey this grave.”

If ever there was a singer who sang the songs of the flesh it was the German poet Heine. But the historian notes how his seven long years on what he himself called his “mattress grave,” his excruciating sufferings, his softening of the spinal cord, his opium craving, is the most pathetic illustration of the after-bite of the serpent and the after-sting of the adder. Does some one then ask, “What shall I do with these passions mine?” Keep them in check. Learn the dignity, the glory, of self-control. Self-knowledge, self-reverence, self-control, these are the steps to the citadel of safety.

There is an old saying attributed to Luther, “We cannot prevent the birds of paradise flying over our heads, but we can prevent

The Young Man Out of Tune.

their nesting in our hair," to which another shrewd divine adds, "The colored boy who looks through the fence at a row of water-melons cannot stop his mouth from watering, but he can run." And in running, let us add, he will find his limbs grow steady and his heart grow strong.

Quite recently a religious review was telling us of a man who was sentenced to jail last winter in a police court in Boston. Dressed was he like a rowdy, and yet this man was at one time governor of a Southern state. He was the only son of wealthy parents. His father was chief justice of the Supreme Court of South Carolina. The mother in her girlhood was a distinguished beauty. Less than thirty years ago the man was tall, stately, kingly, eloquent, wealthy, charming. Going into the Civil War, he came out with medals. To-day his picture hangs in the rogue's gallery. On being placed behind the bars, he used these words: "I am but fifty-eight years old, but look at me! My hair is white, my skin is browned and seasoned, my cheeks are hollowed, my frame is shrunken, my hands palsied like a man of eighty. Opium and morphine, the twin curses of my life, were not

Earthly Discords.

content with undermining my health; they attacked my mind and my moral nature; they led me to do things that in my right sense I abhor as I do murder. They are not mere drugs to me; they are two grinning, pursuing, avenging sprites, besetting me at every turn. It is years since I tasted either, but the work of destruction they began, all the forces of nature, disease, and approaching age have helped to carry on.”

Years ago Mr. De Lesseps devised the idea of cutting a passage through the Isthmus of Panama. The project failed. To-day travelers tell us that a trip across the Isthmus is pathetic; machinery rusting and falling away; rotting timbers and derricks and every mechanical contrivance in a state of collapse. A sense of depression steals over the visitor. Three hundred millions of money were spent—but there is no canal. Sights like unto this there are in life all around us. Such is the man who lets his passions run riot; the man who fans his baser feelings into flame; the man who dulls his brain with some stimulant or narcotic; the man who makes a lifeless luggage out of his body. Such the man endowed with a divine nature and immortal

The Young Man Out of Tune.

powers who prostitutes this splendid inheritance to coarse and carnal ends. How pitiful, how sad!

Walking through the British Museum what a mutilated collection of vases and statues and ancient porcelain greets the eye! Here is the lower part of an Egyptian kneeling figure with the knee fractured; here is a Greek fictile vase with one of the handles missing; here are the remains of a Roman water-wheel; here is a portion of an Assyrian sculptured slab, chipped and cracked; here is an equestrian statue of the Emperor Caligula with both arms gone; here is a statue of Apollo playing the lyre, but the strings have snapped and the yoke is wanting; here is a broken bust of Athene, with head and draperies restored in plaster; here is the torso of a Triton in high relief; here the fragment of an acroterion with various shattered moldings. Alas, what evidences of devastation and waste are here! Traces of beauty left to tell us that some Phidiases, some Angelos, some Canovas have once visited our earth, for beautiful even are the ruins. Could some stranger from the better land come to visit us to-day, it hath been noted what marred models he would

Earthly Discords.

see; homes that are hells; codes and ordinances that are infamous. Here is some inhuman husband beating his wife, the marriage certificate once a symbol of love and liberty having become a sentence of enslavement and hate; here is some child possessed of perfidy assailing his parent; here are men dealing out to their fellow-men the drug that is deadly and that turns them into demons; here are youth maiming their bodies; here hulls of shattered ships strew the beach of life; here are fragments in fullness of broken vows, closets with skeletons therein; immortal souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus and that are still precious in his sight, but with a coating of beastliness upon their one-time beauty. Here prisons our visitor would see, penitentiaries, hospitals, asylums, and cemeteries for the dead; sobs he would hear that never cease, like the endless moaning of the sleepless tide. Verily our other-world guest might well say, "What a ruin!" "What a splendid ruin!" "Surely the Divine Workman himself hath been here once, and just as surely some enemy must have entered since to spoil and undermine his work."

The Young Man Out of Tune.

4. No young man is safe who plays with the world of chance. More than once already have we called attention to this deafening discord, but it hath peculiar enchantment to the audience of youth.

Perhaps there is nothing to-day that carries with it more danger to society than playing with the world of chance. To-day the heart of the American nation is burning with lust—the lust for gold. For money is America's god. Almost outside the pale of debate is that statement. The passion for pelf is white-hot. 'Tis more than a passion, alas! 'Tis a disease. The American people are money-drunk. How to make money! how to make it easily! how to make it quickly! This is the problem and playing with the world of chance seems the popular solution. The rage of the age is to get rich; or rather the rage of the age is to get very rich. In Zeus the world hath lost all faith, lost faith in Apollo, lost faith in Athene, lost faith in Aphrodite, but never did a people have such faith in any oracle as the American people have in Mammon to-day, and yet he is the basest god that dwells on Olympus.

Now, like the sage of old we wage no war

Earthly Discords.

against wealth, we defile it with no polluting breath, but we do wage war against this vulgar crusade to the altar of wealth. "The feudalism of the stocks is fully as wicked as the feudalism of the sword." The pitiful paragraph is that the poor little hungry orphan who steals a loaf of bread is a thief, while the hard-hearted usurer who speculates on the tears of the little fellow's mother and sells them at so much a pennyweight is a shrewd broker on the exchange; which is false, which is wicked, which is blasphemous, which indeed at heart is anarchy! One grave objection to playing with the world of chance, let us hasten to observe, is, that the greatest things in life are gotten slowly. The insect develops one day and dies the next; the elephant lives almost a century because his maturity is postponed; the fly is born full grown in a day; the bird asks weeks before it learns to risk its wing; few the years between the colt and the steed's full strength; but when God calls some Moses or Milton he starts him on a long crusade. It has been regarded as a strange fact that boys who gain honors in college do not as a rule succeed in life. Youthful wonders but rarely fulfil their

The Young Man Out of Tune.

early promise. Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Webster, Greeley, Beecher, Scott were dull boys. "Soon ripe, soon rotten" is an old proverb. How long doth nature ask to make a diamond? Happy question! Something like one hundred thousand years. Patience, the poet says, changes the mulberry-leaf to satin. "Can't wait" is the voice of the age. The boy chafes to become a youth, the youth to become a man, the man frets under his slow, lagging pace. Society is out hunting short cuts and big profits; and yet the greatest things grow slowly. Instance Tennyson for seventeen years laboring "In Memoriam." Think of Webster devoting six and thirty years to a dictionary, or a Gibbon a full score of years to his immortal classic. Witness George Eliot reading one thousand volumes before she wrote a line of Daniel Deronda. Verily, each sage and patriot should be patient since God's century-plants refuse to be hurried.

While some labor others enter into the fruits of said labors, and these, after all, are the labors that last, for the longer the ripening the richer the harvest and the less liable to mildew and life's corroding cankers. Mr.

Earthly Discords.

Carnegie has quite recently published a book, entitled, "The Empire of Business." One paragraph is worth quoting in capitals: "When I was a telegraph operator we had no exchanges, and the men who speculated on the Eastern markets were necessarily known to the operators. These men were not our citizens of first repute. They were regarded with suspicion. I have lived to see nearly all these speculators ruined men. There is scarcely an instance of a man who has made a fortune by speculating and kept it." O all ye young hearts of earnest but ambitious aim, whose limitations tend to vex and wound thy spirits, apt many of you to grow restive under the slowness of your lowly lots, let this truth come with comforting and calming sway, that man is born a long way from home and that we are saved by hope. Be thine the larger faith, that if the "Master of all good workmen" calls thee to serve him as a banker, that said call comes as a business overture, but not with the final motive of amassing gain. Into the banking house he may summon thee and great may be the gain thereof. If so, well and good, but to his All-seeing eye no life fulfils its primal plan that lives for such a

The Young Man Out of Tune.

low, unworthy aim as mammon. "He lives too low who lives below the stars." Manhood alone is the true riches, the imperishable wealth. Make thy choice 'twixt truth and treachery, 'twixt infidelity and faith. Sign thy name to no compact for which the whitest saint in gloryland may not be a voucher. Learn the value of the invisible, the reality of the remote. Study to show thyself approved, a workman that feeleth no shame for the humble task, the lowly service, the slow and patient part. Thus shalt thou find the true treasure, the enduring substance, which the world must ever fail to give and which no change can ever take away.

5. No young man is safe who plays with his soul.

Esau, for a mess of pottage, sold his birth-right, and many there be to-day, we fear, who set no greater value upon their immortal heritage. The glory of man is his spiritual nature. The horse has been eating grass since the days of Darius, but he knows no more about it to-day than he did then, but the horse's owner has unlocked the lips of every blade that bursts and every bud that blooms, and

Earthly Discords.

made each tell out their secret. The skylark sings the same note that Ovid and Homer heard; meanwhile each listening poet has poured into the heart of the world a flood of harmony, and still the end is not. "The eye is not satisfied with seeing nor the ear with hearing." "Heard strains are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter." Man is a pilgrim in search of a city out of sight. The only satisfying solution to the mystery is the solution of Holy Writ. What may that solution be? This: life is the great polytechnic. The spiritual is the real. "We are building day by day as the moments pass away, a temple." We have bodies; we are souls; these souls are homed in God; never will they find rest until they reach their native dwelling.

"Heaven is my fatherland,
Heaven is my home."

"Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home."

And now why should not every young heart who ponders these pages be a Christian? Why should he or she not say with the old divine, "Jesus Christ has no hands or

The Young Man Out of Tune.

feet in this world; I will give him mine. He has no eyes; I will give him mine. He has no tongue to tell his excellence; I will lend him mine. He has no heart to love and melt with pity; here, Lord, mine.”

“My life, my love, I give to thee,
Thou Lamb of God who died for me;
Oh, may I ever faithful be,
My Saviour and my God.”

Mrs. Ballington Booth tells of a company of good women whose custom was to go down every Sabbath afternoon into the Hartford jail to hold a service of song for the prisoners. Among these good sisters of charity one day was a strange lady who had heard of the service and had asked permission to accompany them. One by one the prisoners defiled into the room and took their seats. The leader arose and gave out the hymn, “Just as I am without one plea.” They had just begun the second stanza when suddenly the visitor turned pale and fainted. Taken out into the vestibule she revived and later was brought to the hotel. On being asked the cause of the swoon, she replied, “I saw my boy; he has been away from home for five years, and we thought he was out West.” Some one

Earthly Discords.

has opinioned that the widow's son laid under the turf is the saddest sight in life, but, oh, not so, not so!

To see a young man play with his body, play with his life, play with his passions, play with the world of chance, play with his immortal heritage and trample upon it as a little and an unworthy thing; to see him turn life's sweetest strains into a harsh and grating discord; to see him turn his back on God and Christ and home and mother and native land—going down, down, down till at last the depths are reached; then becoming a dangerous outcast so that the law must needs step in and call for fetters—surely this is the saddest sight in life. Than this can anything be more comfortless or grievous? This is the spectacle over which angels weep. This is the scene that led to David's heartbreak. This is the picture of a lost soul.

STRAINS TRUE AND FALSE IN OUR
NATIONAL ANTHEM.



CHAPTER VIII.

STRAINS TRUE AND FALSE IN OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM.

A THANKSGIVING RETROSPECT.

This day has been set apart by our worthy President as a day for public thanksgiving unto Almighty God for his singularly impressive gifts and unfailing goodness, and perhaps it may be wise and well to recount a few of the unnumbered and unnumberable blessings for which we, and all our fellow-countrymen here in Christian America, should be deeply and devoutly grateful. The custom of public thanksgiving has come down to us from our good old fathers of pilgrim name. To them belongs the honor of establishing an observance that we trust may never lapse. Many things have happened since the Mayflower dropped anchor in the ice-bound bay—some of them for the better, some perhaps for the worse—but the same Providence that watched over those sturdy, stout-hearted wanderers from the time they embarked at Belft Haven till sixty-three days later they moored their

Earthly Discords.

little craft of one hundred and eighty tons in the harbor of Cape Cod, that same Providence has been watching over us, and leading us, and blessing us, making our land a land of milk and honey, and one more nearly fulfilling the ideal of the prophet than any unredeemed land that history yet acquaints us with, when he speaks of Immanuel's land. The subject is ample and far-reaching, and we can do little else than take a brief pilgrimage into the country, and stir up the mind that is pure and open by way of remembrance, trying all the while to note what a favored land this is, what a favored people we are, and how each responsive heart should join the glad triumphant chorus,

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above ye, heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

I. How wonderful our country! And not in swollen style do we speak when we say it is the first country in the world. Other countries surpass us in churches, cathedrals, cemeteries, art galleries, museums, and scenes of antiquity; but in all that goes to form a part

Strains True and False.

of daily living this is the best country of all. It is the largest; it is the most fertile; it is the richest. Russia has a vast stretch of territory, but Russia's territory is less than half the size of ours. William M. Sloane notes how every American citizen could be put into the state of Texas without being as crowded as the people of England; and Bishop Fallows claims that if our land were brought under tillage it would support half a billion people. Thoughtful indeed ought we to be, that Providence has pitched our tent for us here in this great America, with its three million square miles of territory, with its twenty-six thousand miles of riverway, with its twelve thousand miles of indented shore, with its eighty million people, with its temperate clime and arable meadow, a land through whose gates famine never yet hath entered, where peace and plenty reign so happily, furnishing as we do not only our own needs, but with the privilege of contributing as we so largely do to the great world's needs and the great world's comforts.

2. How gracious our climate! The whole of India and much of China lies to the south of us. The tropic of Cancer cuts India in

Earthly Discords.

half; the tropic of Capricorn cuts Australia in half; the Equator being the like dividing line for Africa. The whole of Asiatic Russia is north of our most northerly point, and most of European Russia. How vast a territory is Canada, but the greater part of Canada is uninhabitable! Alaska hugs the North Pole; South America hugs the Equator. Our latitude stretches from thirty to forty-eight degrees, the same as Japan. If Dean Swift could humorously say that most of the millions of the human race live in climates torrid or horrid, let us be thankful that our lot has been thrown so far away from the realm of eternal ice on the one side and eternal fever on the other. For while we have famines, they are not Indian famines; fogs have we, but no London fogs; storms, but no Russian storms. Thoughtful also, then, for our climate! To us favored citizens of this genial southland should these facts specially appeal. For is not ours the best of the best—summer and winter, winter and summer, each the best—a clime truly of tranquil temper,

“Where everlasting spring abides
And never-withering flowers.”

Strains True and False.

3. How unexampled our prosperity! We are to-day, in a commercial sense, a very Gibraltar among the nations. Our national debt is small, our national sheaf golden; our harvest is a poem of praise. The department of agriculture has been telling us that our crop of wheat is seven hundred and fifty million bushels, more than one-fourth of the whole world's total. Such fruits, such meats, such minerals, such timber, such harvest from mountain and meadow, lake and river. Verily, no thanksgiving table was ever spread so richly, so generously! No country can with ours compare; none where the masses of the people are so well off and so happy. Ten cents a day good wages in China; twenty cents a day good wages in Japan; seventy-five cents a day good wages in Germany; one dollar a day good wages in England! An honored missionary who has spent many years in Peking, speaking from a public platform recently, said that he paid his cook one dollar and seventy-five cents a month and find himself. "My carpenter cost me eight cents a day," he added. "Millions in China," he further added, "never get enough to eat from birth till death. No sweeping rhetoric are we

Earthly Discords.

guilty of then surely when we claim that the toilers of head, hand, foot, are better housed and better fed in America than in any other country. They have more pleasures, more comforts, more luxuries. Up to October the first of this year we have sent to foreign markets more than nine hundred million dollars' worth of manufactured goods. Our bank clearings for 1901 exceeded one hundred billion dollars. How magnificent a nation is ours! What far-stretching territory! What acreage of wheat-field! What railroads, mines, and factories! What cities, towns, and villages! What a seaboard! What inlets and outlets for the world's commerce! What institutions of learning! What high schools and academies! Six thousand and five in number. What colleges! Four hundred and eighty-four by the roll-call, with ten thousand teachers and instructors. Surely these are things for the candid heart to ponder, for the thoughtful mind to weigh.

4. How advanced our civilization! Emerson says that no one has ever attempted a definition of what civilization is. A nation that hath no tool, no garment, no alphabet, no

Strains True and False.

civil code, no temple, no art or science, no commerce, no invention, no agriculture, no literature, is uncivilized. The ungodpeled Chinaman to-day is the Chinaman of Confucius's time; the negro is the negro of whom Herodotus wrote—still kneeling to his fetich; the Mongolian still worships his dragon; the Hindu still enslaves his wife; the tattooed South Sea Islander still feeds on human flesh. Traveling back in memory one hundred years what a collection of castaways greets the mind! These were the days of flint locks and tallow candles, whale-lamps and home-spun; the days of Franklin stoves and goose-quills; the days of bad roads and log cabins, the ox-cart and the stage-coach; the days of scythe and sickle, flail and winnowing floor; these the days of awl and churn and spinning-wheel. These were the days of bungling surgery, human slavery, and the Inquisition. "One hundred years ago," it has been remarked, "a man might be taken on Friday, arraigned on Saturday, preached fire and brimstone to on Sunday, and found on Tuesday to be innocent." Our first President died at Mount Vernon on the banks of the Potomac. At that time the capital was in

Earthly Discords.

Philadelphia, one hundred miles away. The sixth congress had just assembled, and a courier was dispatched. They received the tidings three days later. The first railroad time-table read thus, "The locomotive will leave the depot every morning at eight if the weather is fair." To-day America alone operates two hundred and fifty thousand miles of railroad, more than half the railroad mileage of the world. The hours of toil are halved, the hours of recreation doubled. The average length of life has been pushed forward ten milestones. New light has abolished darkness, new tools have abolished drudgery. The child of the artisan has open pathway to the college fountain, and what were luxuries but yesterday at the banquet of the rich are now necessities on the table of the poor.

When New York heard of Waterloo six weary weeks had lapsed. To-day the continents are linked by fourteen wires and fourteen hundred ships, carrying their own engine for converting salt water into fresh. For that, notes our Concord sage, is what civilization after all is, "converting salt water into fresh; teaching the chimney to burn its own smoke; teaching the farm to produce its own needs;

Strains True and False.

teaching the prison to maintain itself and yield a revenue''; teaching the anæsthetic to pull the sting out of the surgeon's knife; teaching the good-natured waterfall to turn the wheel; teaching gravity to bring down the ax and split the wood; teaching the tides to grind our corn; teaching the elevator to lift it to the fifteenth story; teaching old Father Neptune to carry to your noonday table delicacies from the five continents and the Islands of the sea. What a glorious age indeed is ours! Deep should be our gratitude for such an age, such a fatherland, for our advance in science and the arts. Does some narrow-minded lover of discord aim to stir up strife between science and religion? Vain and idle were the effort. Never were these one-time warring lovers better friends. True science and true religion have no quarrel. In heart they have always been as one. Never were they marching on so happily as to-day. Joined they have been in an eternal wedlock. For religion to-day is the minister of science, and science is the servant of religion in the interpretation of the hidden workings of the laws of life.

Earthly Discords.~

5. How world-admired our government! "A government of the people and by the people and for the people"; a government that secures for every loyal citizen life, liberty, and chance to be happy; a Christian government, stamped so on our colonization and our coin. In a passage of polished fervor Cicero tells us how the words "Civis Romanus sum" gave panoply, prestige, and power. Right proudly does the apostle to the Gentiles boast "I am a Jew of Tarsus, a citizen of no mean city." Does American citizenship mean less? As we think of the luster of our national eminence; as we fling our eye far down afield and watch that long line of worthies who endured contradiction and shame, who waxed valiant in fight and handed down to us our glorious heritage of never-dimming deed and valiant venture—from George Washington to William McKinley—surely we have a right to feel a pride as pure and a thrill as chivalrous as can quicken the pulse of any Jew or any Roman. A great living historian propounding the question "What has Africa done for the world?" replies "Apart from Egypt, nothing." And pursuing the thought, What, may we inquire, has Austria done? What has

Strains True and False.

Russia done? What Turkey? What Portugal? What single blessing has Asia conferred upon the race? Mr. Beecher was wont to say that "saving one little insignificant corner called Palestine, the whole continent of Asia might be turned bottom side up into the gulf of destiny and not one worthy idea would be lost." Greece has given to us the principles of æsthetics. Rome has handed down to us the laws of government. England stands for poetry, history, liberty, invention, commerce, agriculture, jurisprudence, religion. And what does America represent? Let that great Englishman speak, Mr. Gladstone. "America stands for all that is democratic in the policy of Great Britain, and all that is Protestant in her religion." It will be remembered that in a day of intense public excitement in New York City the lamented Garfield stood in the presence of a dense throng of liberty-loving people, and the first words he spoke were these, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him, but justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne"—while the multitude bowed their heads in

Earthly Discords.

silence and there was a felt hush. Verily indeed the heart of the nation is Christian. So permeated with the principles of our Divine Master is the spirit of our government that we should be joyful in temper, hopeful in tone. "For our God hath not dealt so with any people; praise to his name."

Perhaps it were not wise to paint everything in colors overhopeful, for many are the dangers confronting us as a people—dangers desperate and dark. We love our fatherland as ardently as the Swiss mountaineer loves his hilltop or the Scotchman his heather, and 'tis just because we so love it that we are sometimes alarmed. Are we not all apt to glory overmuch, for instance, in our spirit of liberty? "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; let not the mighty man glory in his might; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciseth loving kindness and judgment and righteousness in the earth." Little doubt that no country enjoys the liberty we do—liberty of the press, liberty of the pulpit, liberty of thought, liberty of expression. We are proud

Strains True and False.

of it—and justly. We prize it as we do no law or institution. It is the most sacred trust given to us by God; it is the most important victory ever fought for by man. “As for me,” said the orator, “give me liberty or give me death!” But never for an instant let it be forgotten that most of the crimes of history have been loaded on to this word “liberty.” No name, perhaps, in our Saxon vernacular so shamefully abused! In the name of liberty hath every government been established; in the name of liberty czars have been crowned and tyrants enthroned and presidents assassinated; in the name of liberty have political corruptionists met in solemn conclave and opened their meetings with prayer; in the name of liberty some Tammany Hall levies blackmail and legalizes vice; in the name of liberty a scandalous journalism cartoons our worthiest men; in the sacred name of liberty anarchy has lifted its red flag to the breeze. Truly with Madame Roland we may well exclaim, as on her way to the guillotine she paused before a statue of Freedom, “Oh, liberty, what crimes are committed in thy noble name!” The department of justice tells us that there have been three thousand

Earthly Discords.

cases of death by lynching in our country during the past twenty years. One hundred and fifty a year! And all in the name of liberty! Some time ago the Danish government pardoned a notorious forger on condition that he would go to the United States. Statistics show that seventy-four per cent of the discharged convicts of Ireland have emigrated to America. And all in the name of liberty! These men we have welcomed; some we have lifted to positions of trust who in sooth are worse than pagans; in comparison therewith the Chinaman, whom we ostracize, being a veritable celestial. Many belong to societies that exist for the destruction of law and order. Many are anarchists, many nihilists, and all infidels.

Quite recently the New York police arrested John Most for an article which he published calling upon his readers to save humanity by blood and steel and poison. Said he to his 'arresters: "All that I have written was simply in a new guise what has been printed and reprinted one thousand times in the last fifty years." He was right. "We have been coddling the serpent and now we are poulticing the sting." It is our proud

Strains True and False.

boast that our government is by the people and for the people, yet 'tis an open saying that the bosses are more powerful than the people. We have one million five hundred thousand tramps; we have one hundred thousand criminals in prison; we have twenty thousand youth in our reformatories; we have one hundred thousand paupers. In 1901 there were eight thousand murders of the first degree. Divorces are increasing three times as fast as the population. Some one figures out that if this ratio is kept up till the end of the twentieth century, separations by death will be considerably less than separations by discord. And all, alas, in the holy name of liberty! Do these³ things mean nothing? Does it mean nothing that we roast alive every year more human beings than any savage tribe in Senegambia? Does it mean nothing that the marriage law is less respected here than in any papal commonwealth since the time of Charlemagne? Does it mean nothing that a ruler's life is less safe here in free America than in Mexico or Samoa or Erromanga? How many kings of England have been put to death since the time of Alfred? These things do surely mean some-

Earthly Discords.

thing. They mean everything. They mean, do they not, that we are glorying overmuch in our spirit of liberty; and if anything should call us to national penitence and the reading of the fifty-first psalm, it is facts, grave and urgent, such as these.

Then the saloon! Full oft an age of luxury resents plain speaking about a flagrant sin, but earnest men and women have no time to waste in sewing fig-leaves over the naked truth. No language can express much less exaggerate the enormity of this man-defying, God-defying evil. Drink confounds us, shames us, laughs at us at every turn. Scarcely a vice or disease or disorder that morally speaking is not linked with drink! Drink has been characterized as one billion of capital invested in a great tyrannous trust for slaying the youth of America, body, mind, and spirit, degrading manhood, debasing womanhood, befouling childhood, absolutely pitiless, absolutely inhuman. Cholera is a mystery of the air, and visits us every quarter of a century, but here is a ravage preying upon us daily and in comparison therewith making our Asiatic visitor a feeble, hurtless creature. Do we

Strains True and False.

realize that three-fourths of all the horrors that sadden and sicken society are directly traceable to the tearful traffic? Who can sum up the crimes and cruelties of war? 'Tis said that one million men died at the bidding of Xerxes, another million at the call of Cæsar, and still a third million at the nod of Napoleon. Approximately, one hundred battles were fought in the eighteenth century, and a celebrated English statesman has given as his opinion that of these only one was a field of honor—that on which the United States defended her national life. But here is a death-struggle that hath no field of honor, no equity, no conscience, thoroughly wicked, thoroughly pitiless, thoroughly unscrupulous, thoroughly un-American. And if there is anything that makes the sense of injustice stir the breast of patriotism, it is to see the stars and stripes, which we familiarly term "Old Glory," floating from the gable shaft of some saloon. Old Glory stands for life, liberty, and a chance to be happy; the saloon expresses death, slavery, and a chance to be wretched. Only one flag harmonizes with the dram-shop, the red flag, and here insooth it usually floats.

Earthly Discords.

One jar in the music of our national life calls for constant and repeated caution. "Beware of covetousness," said the Master; "for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Scarcely a chapter in which his prophetic eye does not touch upon the tempting snare! Covetousness seems the one eager, all-absorbing hunger of the age. Touch what part of our common life we may, we are met on every hand by its insatiable thirst. Go where we will, talk with whom we will, the spirit of the age is commercial, the ring of its conversational tone metallic. When women in their clubs are discussing the question "What are the limits of allowable luxury?" and when the conclusion is reached that there are no limits, is it not time for the church to speak, and is it not time for the church to speak loud? Does there not seem need for another Luther or Wesley or Savonarola?

No Spartan mother would deign to wear jewelry on her person, and who but has a prevailing admiration for the social star to-day who is simple in her attire, modest in her appointments? Overdress has been termed one of the plagues of this opening century.

Strains True and False.

If the wife of our honored President can dress on three hundred dollars a year, why may not every American mother do the same? If the tenth commandment still is binding, surely trying to breed envy in her weaker sister is as unchristian as cherishing it herself. How much nobler to tempt soften the rigors of her dull monotony! How beautiful the greatness that is great enough to be simple! How Christ-like the power that does not parade itself! That man who wrestles successfully with the luxury of the age is the true patrician. The youth who can journey single-eyed along prosperity's pathway unmoved by its tinsel glitter is a hero. The maiden who can pass some Cleopatra in her gorgeousness, yet not feel the sting of envy is a heroine as truly as Florence Nightingale. For the days of knight-errantry are not passed. When we read of the millions lavished on vain display, costly feasts, extravagant dress, how we stand aghast! One hundred million dollars spent every twelve months for jewelry, and five and one-half for missions; more than six hundred men going astray last year as embezzlers, robbing the people of twenty-five million dollars in the vain effort to keep up expensive homes!

Earthly Discords.

Verily indeed he was not far wrong who called luxury the spade that has dug the grave of every empire that has ever perished.

Prosperity is not the throne of greatness, but its tomb. And if we as a people are going in for false liberty and indulgence, our army will not save us, our navy cannot save us; the old way of Persia and Carthage and Syria and Rome we must go. Some future Gibbon will be writing the "decline and fall of the American empire." "Better be poorer and purer." "Manhood is worth more than moneyhood."

"Far called our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire;
Lo! all the pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre.
Judge of the nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget, forget."

To all young hearts toiling hard over task and tool in this gracious republic of light and privilege comes one happy reflection to drown many a grating note, that ours is a fatherland of homes. It has been noted that the French nation have no word for home in their language. Home is the salt of society, and herein lies our hope. Perhaps the best gift

Strains True and False.

that two young loving hearts can bequeath to their country is to build a home. For home is the corner-stone of church and state. Destroy all our churches and less harm would be done than by destroying our homes. It is the home that keeps the church alive, and just so soon as the home dies the church must die. Home is the cradle of everything great by every adjustment of the eternal.

We talk of home. We sing its praises. "Home, sweet home," how fondly do we love thee! how excellent is thy name in all the earth! A true home is a little, cosey, storm-sheltered nook where two lives may open out into flower and fragrance. Truly indeed a true home is a little corner of heaven. Roaming through some of the grand cathedrals of the older world, and listening to the chants and choruses of angel-seeing voices, how the heart is stirred! how soft and reverent the footsteps! how hallowed seem the arches! how transfigured the walls and windows! how sacred and spiritual the place! But the most sacred place is a place called home. There we recall the sweet faces of long ago. "How dear to our hearts are the scenes of our childhood!" Never can we

Earthly Discords.

forget that crackling fireside and the old family tryst,

“The cheerfu’ supper done; wi’ serious face
All round the ingle form a circle wide.”

It lingers as a sweet memory-morsel still.

“Mid pleasures and palaces tho’ we may roam,
Be it ever so humble there’s no place like home.”

There is a story told of the king of Sparta. An ambassador was visiting him, and one day he inquired, “Where are the walls of Sparta?”

“Did you not see them?” said the king.

“No,” said the ambassador, “I have walked all around but have seen no wall.”

“Ah,” replied the king, “I must show you them to-morrow.” On the morrow the king drew up ten thousand trained soldiers, and sweeping his hand, “these, sir, are the walls of Sparta.”

Amid the conflicts and clashings of our national troubles oftentimes are we apt to think that the walls of America are at Annapolis or West Point. But oh, not so! Not so!

The walls of America are found in her million homes, where love and truth and thrift are taught, where the religion of Jesus the Christ is preached and practiced. Never have railways made a country great; never

Strains True and False.

commerce. Nor has any army or navy or military prestige ever lifted a nation up the ladder of luster. Nothing has ever made a country shine but homes,

“To mak’ a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife;
That’s the true pathos sublime
Of human life.”



HEAVEN, THE HEALING HARMONY.



CHAPTER IX.

HEAVEN, THE HEALING HARMONY.

Such are some of life's discords that mar the music of our earthly living, and the question arises in the hearts of all earnest men, Is there no healing remedy? Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? In an early chapter it was hinted how little the college avails to give power to the weak of will, peace to the heavy of heart; also noted that if the teacher can do little, the law-giver can do even less; with the final and compelling claim that some help from above, some new spiritual birthright, is the only antidote for life's banes, the only healing for its hurts, the only balm for its bruises, the only cure for its pathetic griefs and ills and pains. So we return to the hymnist. His we believe the true note who makes heaven the one controlling harmony. The heavenly life hath power to bring unison to earth's most discordant voices:

“Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish,
Come to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel,

Earthly Discords.

Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your
anguish;

Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal."

An eminent writer has recently said that there are seven lives of Christ. There is a life by Matthew and Mark and Luke and John; that is four. There is a prophetic life in the prophecies of the Old Testament; there is a post-resurrection life in the Acts of the Apostles; and the seventh life is to be found in the Christian's own life; "I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me."

This it is to be a Christian; Christ born in us; Christ dwelling in us; Christ controlling us; Christ impulsing us; Christ motivating us; Christ over all and above all and in you all—yea, Christ all in all. "For me," saith the apostle, "to live is Christ."

And what doth "living Christ" imply? This: every life hath its slumbering motive, its ruling passion, its ultimate design. And the motive of life is its love. Knowing what the youth loves we know the youth, and not until we know that do we understand him fully. "Tell me what you like," said Ruskin, "and I'll tell you what you are." A man is

Heaven, the Healing Harmony.

not truthful who speaks the truth; he may be paid for speaking the truth. A man is truthful who desires to speak the truth. And the Christianity of Jesus comes not merely to teach us to do what is right, and to help us to do it, but that we may delight in doing it. To tell the truth and to love to tell the truth, this alone is truthfulness; to lead pure lives and to love to lead pure lives, this only is purity; to do unto others as we would that others do unto us, and to affect so to live, this is living by the golden rule. Thus not deed but desire is the measure of manhood, the touchstone of tendency, the criterion of character. "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

Musicians have recently given to our word-motive a new and larger meaning, signifying by it a theme that recurs frequently in any great dramatic work. Thus, in order to evoke the idea of war, peace, pride, pity, the wail of the wind, the sweep of the storm, the song of the bird, the play of trickling water, certain notes and a certain touch are needed. Handel, in his oratorio "Israel," represents

Earthly Discords.

the sun standing still by a long drawn out tone, and darkness by a sound analogue. Wagner attempted to make every bar, almost every note, correspond to a word.

Who that has listened to the Marsellaise but has felt the somber severity of that great national strain. In vision one can see the soldiers trudging along, footsore and weary, counting the cost, yet willing to fight, and if need be die, for their country. These and all such representations are called a "motive," because they move all minds alike and draw all hearts into a common emotion.

In like manner each life hath its motive. "You can unlock a man's whole being," said Henry Drummond, "if you watch what words he uses most"; and full truthfully it may be said that the youth's whole inner life is altogether unfolded when once we learn the lode-stones that lure him on.

That brilliant girl, Marie Bashkirtseff, wrote in her diary these words: "It is the New Year at the theater, precisely midnight, watch in hand; I wished my wish in a word; it leaped to my tongue, intoxicating, thrilling—Fame." If to-night, dear reader, you were to do likewise, take out your watch, that is at

Heaven, the Healing Harmony.

midnight, and wish the true wish of your heart in a word, what would that word be? Crossing the bridge at Venice one beautiful evening, Lord Byron tells us how, looking over his shoulder, he saw a shooting star. It cleaved its brilliant pathway across the breast of night and dropped in the distant waters of Tuscany.

“The desire of my heart,” says the poet, “sprang to my lips like a panther; it gripped me, dazed me—‘*Indulgence.*’”

Recently a woman of note came to live in a certain neighborhood in one of our suburban towns. She was wealthy and built around herself a wall of exclusiveness, so that it was no easy matter to approach her. For several reasons the local clergyman became convinced that it was his duty to call. Presenting his passports to the different outer-guards, he at last succeeded in meeting the lady herself. Looking at him with affected surprise she asked, bluntly—cruelly so—“And what was it you wished to see me for, sir?”

The clerical dignitary was taken somewhat aback, but replied that he had not come for himself, that he represented a little church around the corner, that his people were poor, that her coachman’s children were in the Sab-

Earthly Discords.

bath school, and that he thought he might be able to interest her enough to help them in their work. But his visit was received so coldly that he was obliged to withdraw.

Next morning a line came from our mistress of the mansion, asking him to call at his own time, that she was very sorry for the way she had acted. The last sentence in the missive read as follows: "Hope you will forgive me for being so selfish; it has dawned upon me that I must be a very selfish woman."

Now, just as the prompting of the brilliant Russian artist and authoress was fame, and that of Lord Byron was indulgence, and that of our lady of wealth and fashion was selfishness, so the idol of Paul was Christ. At the shrine of Christ he bended the knee. His reverent heart turned to Christ as naturally as the mineral to magnet. "For Paul to live was Christ"; for him to die was Christ. "Whether we live we live unto the Lord, whether we die we die unto the Lord; whether we live or die, therefore, we are the Lord's." Was the apostle's eating and drinking Christ? Aye, surely, for did he not eat and drink to his glory? Was his suffering Christ? Verily

Heaven, the Healing Harmony.

indeed it was. "From henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

Was his creed Christ? "I know whom I have believed."

Was his love Christ? "I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die if need be at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Aye, Paul's creed was Christ; his love was Christ; his ambition was Christ. The whole passion of the man was to communicate Christ. Christ lived in him, coursed through his veins, colored his fancy and feeling; Christ spoke by him, wept through him, suffered in him. "Now I rejoice in my sufferings and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake which is the Church." The whole desire of the apostle, if need be, was to be a fool for Christ's sake. "Christ was the Greenwich from which he counted longitude, the equator from which he reckoned latitude." Just as the merchant brings everything to the gauge of the dollar, just as the architect brings everything to the rule of beauty, just as the writer of pure English brings everything to the form of expression as found in

Earthly Discords.

the great standard authors, just as each Balzac and Scott and Hawthorne and Hugo test their work by the canons of real life, so the Christian is one for whom Christ is final authority and court of last appeal. And it is all a matter of motive; nay, rather is it all a matter of supreme motive. For our motives are many, but the supreme motive is one.

Each life revolves about some central sun. What is that central sun? For the Christian it is Christ.

The ancient legend tells us that when Theseus was about to enter the labyrinth with drawn sword to destroy the monster, his sister Ariadne had tied around his ankle a silken thread and told him that when he felt the gentle pulling of that thread he would know that she was thinking of him. Just so is there a mystic thread linking the saved soul with its Saviour, a bond of love, of communion, of sweet and holy fellowship. The life gravitates to its Lord under the pull of some hidden working. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The Crucified One thus is the magnet of the moral world—the pole and the dynamic of all holy endeavor—to whom and from whom are all

Heaven, the Healing Harmony.

things, "For all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things and by him all things consist; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence."

Here, then, is the healing harmony for all of life's discords—Christ, i. e., *living Christ*—not mere profession, but whole-hearted surrender and happy-hearted service. For nothing, alas, does the world stand lacking to-day so much as Jesus Christ enthroned in the loves and lives of men. Nothing doth society need more than a practical Christianity that hath its roots deep down in the heart of the forgiven child of grace. For lip worship is loud and flippant still; surface attachment is popular; public profession still regarded, many, alas, making a worldly convenience of sacred things; but to be a living Christian, to really *live Christ* in the overflowing fulness of that wondrous wealthy word—how rare! how intermittent! yet how fruitful, how pregnant, how eloquent of things fair and excellent!

"I knew a man," says Henry Drummond, "the author of a well-known orthodox theological work, which has passed through a dozen editions and lies on the shelves of all our

Earthly Discords.

libraries. I never knew that man to go to church nor to give a farthing to charity—though he was rich—nor give any sensible sign that he was really *living Christ*.”

Verily, indeed, many there are to-day who worship a dead Christ, but ours is no dead Leader; ours is a living Leader. “I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore.”

Our Lord is still with us as ever, and will be to the end. “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.” But his work is thwarted in that he lacks an undivided loyalty; he is not appropriated to the full. For many he is but a partial Saviour. It hath pleased the King to express himself through his own. If we revolt we deprive him of the means of expression. When Christians give themselves to their Master completely and receive him in his abundant and abiding fullness and live his life in joyful and complete surrender, then will be the dawning of the golden age foretold in his own pattern prayer, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” For when Christ is lived, sin will be loathed; when

Heaven, the Healing Harmony.

Christ is lived, self will be lost; when Christ is lived, all discord will speedily vanish, all ambition be fulfilled, planning solely for those things which are seen and temporal will seem a cheap and empty mockery, laying up treasure on earth will argue a vain and idle interest; when Christ is lived, the world will not kneel at the shrine of affluence and luxury and comfort-worship, a silent contempt indeed will be poured upon the gleam of gold; when Christ is lived, no time will remain for doubt or compromise or double-dealing, none for strife or jealousy or idle talk or vain-glorying or malice or avarice or hate, none for anxiety or worry, since living Christ will pull the sting out of yesterday and the terror out of to-morrow, causing pardon to pour out lavishly upon the past and hope to flow freely into the future; when Christ is lived, no time will remain for anything that makes for the wreckage of this fleshly temple of wonder nor its immortal indwelling tenant, there will be no such waste as now is seen of splendid human stuff; when Christ is lived, there will be ushered in the reign of a great, world-wide, sympathetic brotherhood, capital and labor will be no more at variance, wars will cease,

Earthly Discords.

and man will not be found trampling his loveliest gardens into fields of dust; when Christ is lived, one child born into the world in every ten will not be destitute, positive want and chronic misery and squalid horror will not abound, the millions of abject poor will not be driven to toil in sweatshops and mines and factories for sixteen hours a day in a world where perhaps six hours a day was intended by the Master Workman as a full day's tribute; when Christ is lived, the traffic in all forms of trickery and the tearful traffic in thirst will not be slow in passing, marriage will not be found with the lines of loveliness marred and bruised beyond cognition. For living Christ means loving Christ, loving as he loved, loving whom he loved, loving because he loved. "We love him because he first loved us," or as the Revised Version more correctly and more forcefully translates, "We love because he first loved us." We love the outcast, the Magdalen, the leper, because he first loved. We love the unlovely because he first loved. From the great flame above we get a little spark for our own fire-side; our torch is lighted at the sun. So we fall back on the psalmist, "all our springs are

Heaven, the Healing Harmony.

in Thee," all our hope is in Thee, all our power is from Thee:

“Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,
And back of the flour is the mill;
And back of the mill is the sheaf
And the shower
And the sun,
And the Father's will.”

Châteaubriand, who has been called the greatest master of the French tongue, when he stood before Niagara one hundred years ago, and saw twilight fall upon the plunge, said, “It is not within the power of words to express the grandeur of this scene.”

And even less is it within the power of pen or picture to tell the glory of that time when Christ's full reign shall have come, when he shall have dominion from sea to sea.

“For then indeed the wilderness and solitary place shall be glad and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing. The parched ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting

Earthly Discords.

joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

“Joy of the comfortless, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure;
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying—
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot cure.

“Here see the Bread of Life; see waters flowing
Forth from the throne of God, pure from above;
Come to the feast of love; come, ever knowing
Earth hath no sorrow but heaven can remove.”

PRINTED BY R. R. DONNELLEY
AND SONS COMPANY, AT THE
LAKESIDE PRESS, CHICAGO, ILL.

J. 5

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

100 45 100		

