

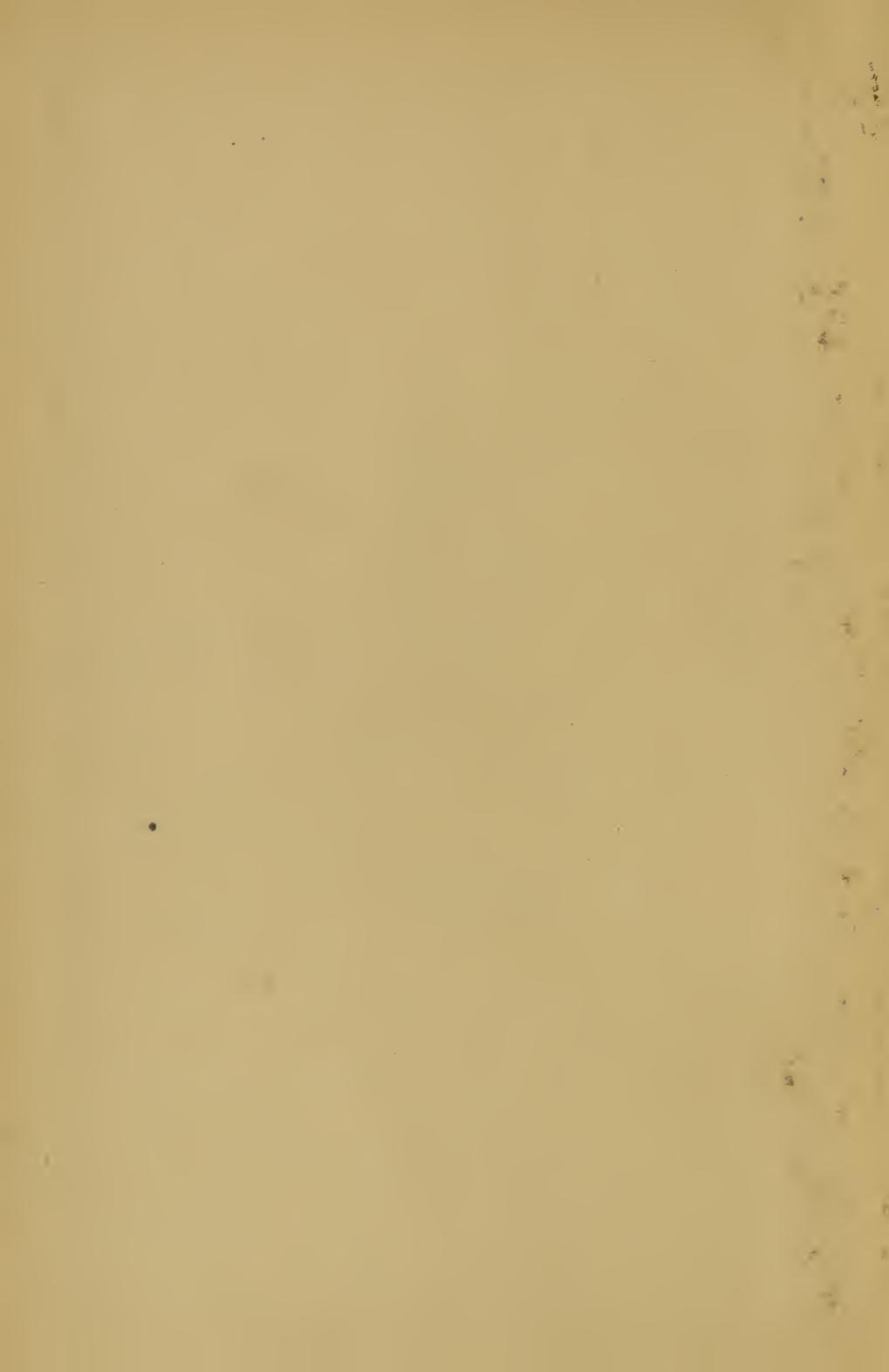
Class BV 4501

Book .C44

Copyright No. \_\_\_\_\_

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT



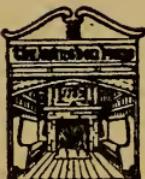






# The Line is Busy

By  
**EDGAR HURST CHERINGTON**



3  
3  
3  
3  
3

THE ABINGDON PRESS  
NEW YORK      CINCINNATI

© 1923

BV4501  
C44

Copyright, 1922, by  
EDGAR HURST CHERINGTON

Printed in the United States of America

APR 28 1922

© CLA 659825

**TO STELLA, MY WIFE**



## CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	7
I. THE LINE IS BUSY.....	9
II. HOLY RECKLESSNESS .....	23
III. COUNT YOURSELF IN .....	33
IV. IS IT EASY TO BE GOOD?.....	41
V. "FOR SUCH A WORM AS I".....	50
VI. STEALING THE ROBES.....	60
VII. THE TEST THAT TELLS.....	69
VIII. SMOKELESS CHIMNEYS.....	77
IX. PERSONALITY AND THE KINGDOM.....	85
X. HAVE A HAPPY HABIT .....	98
XI. THE COURIER OF THE KING.....	109
XII. THE WORSHIP OF WORK .....	123
XIII. WHEN THE MIND FALLS IN LOVE....	135
XIV. "TAKE THE LONG BELT".....	145
XV. SELF-STARTERS .....	159
XVI. THE NEW UNIVERSE AND ITS CHAMPION	171



## FOREWORD

THIS little book was written as a recreation. Much of it found expression out where the “trees unfold their banners,” during the author’s vacation days. It does not aspire to be a learned discussion of the truths it seeks to interpret, but, rather, to divest them of antique phraseology and exhibit them in terms of practical observation and experience.

The author’s sincere desire to interpret with clearness and comfort the great and abiding things of religion and life, may perhaps excuse the use of the colloquial form of expression and the frequent employment of “windows.”

Having in mind that the Divine Master only *“began to do and teach”* the things of the Kingdom, I could not pretend to offer these chapters as completions, but only as very small beginnings. If they should shed a little bit of light upon the pathway of the reader’s own thinking I will be content.

EDGAR H. CHERINGTON.

Toledo, Ohio.



# I

## THE LINE IS BUSY

THE modern telephone is a growing wonder. More strikingly perhaps than any other one thing does it accent the fact that our age is not the age of the canvas-backed schooner and pony express, but an age to which a "mile a minute" has become a memory. Indeed, the great telephone system in a peculiar sense seems the embodiment of a great century, in which we of To-day are having our life. A century of great forces and velocities, and consequently liable to become a century of great follies and frailties. It has become our teacher in the philosophy of personality. The wonderful talking machine did not invent itself. Millions use it who never heard the names of the inventors. Yet the great system which binds cities and States into one neighborhood was once personal. The wires swarmed overhead in our streets. The switchboard was all arranged in the thought of a thinker before it was built into an office.

And the perfect work of the busy enterprise, which has its stations in all of our offices and homes, so depends on the private faithfulness of individual operators, that without them a great principle would be practically lost to society. It all helps us to see more clearly the fact that every strength, and every weakness as well, of humanity to-day was once personal. Certainly, all public weakness has been private weakness. All public strength has been personal strength. All public opinion has been personal opinion. It is in these personal convictions and purposes that universal sentiments and world-wide movements have their genesis. Sit down and trace back, if you will, any of the great results or institutions of American history and away back there somewhere you will find that there was a man in it. Truth is not settled by majority vote. The teacher in science does not say to his students, "All in favor of having the magnetic needle turn north say 'Aye,' those opposed say 'No.' " One thing is true of the magnetic needle and every other truth, it is not settled by claque of tongues; otherwise the City Coun-

cil might order a comet to appear in our sky on Saturday afternoon. The truth ever awaits the personal thinker's torch to break through the fog and disclose it.

Is there anything busier than a telephone line? It is busy with folks trying to find out things. It is busy because the Scriptures so truthfully say, "We know in part," and we would like to find out what other folks know. Moreover, every person as a knower of truth knows only in part perhaps because he sees it partially, because he looks from a personal angle. We see only a small patch of the sky, but the universe is boundless. One night when Jennie Lind was singing in the oratorio of the Messiah an old sea captain in the audience went to sleep and his snore became plainly audible. Many auditors sitting near him were amazed, but it was not his fault that he had no ear for music. He doubtless knew how to load a boat so it would outride the storm, and in time of storm he knew how to relinquish his right to a lifeboat and stand at his post in the face of death, but he was not the one to be put on the "music committee." One mind is poetic, another is analytic, an-

other is practical. One man approaches life through the intellect, another through the affections, another through the senses. When Tennyson writes a poem its merits cannot be determined by a microscope. The mind of every one has a personal bias, and this personal angle of outlook makes us partialists and makes it advisable that we "call up" somebody who has another outlook of truth, that we may learn of it more completely. It is for this reason that a partnership with God seems necessary.

*The telephone has become our teacher in economics,* and has shown us how one may multiply his power by using outside forces. Let us suppose that you have a half dozen errands to-morrow morning. You need to see someone at the north end of town, and another at the south end, some one at the mill, and the agent at the depot. By attempting to do all these errands, using only your own power, it would require all morning and probably part of the afternoon. By making use of the telephone, which is a power separate from yourself, you can do the errands in twenty minutes and have the rest of the day for something else. You

have increased your capacity by using the power outside. "The line is busy" in the schoolroom and the college, making use of teachers, discoverers, and achievements of the past in getting an education. Do we not talk with Galileo, Plato, Pericles, and John Hampden and the rest? Their thoughts have become the simple thinking of our early school days. Their strength has made us strong. Nothing profound was ever thought, nothing enchanting ever imagined, nothing noble ever uttered, nothing heroic ever done which is not our inheritance. All the iconoclasm of the rough, rude years cannot blot out strength once created and men become mighty in proportion as they use it.

This is true in spiritual life. Jesus does not only invite men to come unto him and learn of him, but to take his power and use it, take his grace and use it. The line is up, and to keep it busy in the work of salvation is our privilege.

*The telephone has become our teacher in sociology.* It was something very important I had to say to a friend who was depending on me for information. It doubt-

less was to be a long conversation, so a friendly stool was found. But now when Central had been called, and the number given, the only thing to be heard was "The line is busy." Of course in such a case one might rave at the operator and argue the case and explain that the message *we* want to send is one of extreme urgency and that the other fellow can wait. But we might as well save our breath, the only answer that comes out of the receiver is, "The line is busy." In some large cities when you call a busy line, they just switch a phonograph into your circuit and the phonograph begins to say, "The line is busy; ring off; the line is busy; ring off," and continues to say that *ad infinitum* until you do ring off, for one can make no headway arguing with a phonograph that can only say one thing, and doesn't know what it is saying. Every day this strict and persistent teacher is emphasizing the fact to our ears, willing or unwilling, that every man is bound to respect his relations to society. You are not the only man in town; if you were, it wouldn't be a town. "There are others." Moreover, you are considerably more than yourself. You

are that much in the start. But in addition to your being yourself you are a part of your neighbor and everybody else, a part of the town, a part of the church, a part of society, a part of the sum total. You are therefore under obligations to the sum total, as well as under obligations to yourself. But here is a man who says, "My creed is to look out for number one." Yes, but the line is busy. Why don't you talk anyhow? Because you cannot look out for number one to the exclusion of number two. It would be a splendid thing if there were a school somewhere accessible where people might matriculate for the purpose of learning how to look out for number one. Many a man thinks he is looking out for number one, when he is doing the worst thing possible for number one. When Cain killed Abel he thought he was looking out for number one, that his brother *dead* was so much gain. But no, it was so much loss. All the sympathy of brotherhood and companionship that he needed and would have helped him in his battle with the strange new world, was destroyed by that one stroke of mistaken selfishness. Did you ever notice when one

man fails in business that someone else will likely fail soon afterwards? A few years ago, a certain prominent bank failed in one of our cities, and within a week a score of banks within a radius of a hundred miles closed their doors. Our success is dependent on other people. No man liveth to himself. The philosopher cannot get along without his cook, the farmer brings him grain, the miner sends him coal, the doctor cures his distempers, the dentist pulls his teeth, and the lawyer pleads his cause. When you sit down to a very modest dinner, remember that it took millions of capital and millions of men to set it before you. The pepper came ten thousand miles. A great army of men, women, and children were engaged in the task of getting it into your pepperbox. Everything else in accordance. With many cooperative and world-wide enterprises already working successfully, why is it not reasonable to expect that all the capital and all the folks in the world, under the leavening of Christianity, may yet work together for the greater good of all? "*The line is busy*" also in morals and religious character. We are in-

terdependent. It is to my interest that you should not be false, for then I lose your support in my effort to be true. It is to my interest, if you please, that you should not become a moral wreck, for then another prop is taken away from my endeavor to be upright. It is not good for my health for you to be sick, and likewise it is not good for my moral character for yours to have a low tone. In a certain telephone exchange, one day when the fire bells rang, a hundred phones called in and the query of all was, "Where is the fire?" Men downtown at business had heard the bells and had said to themselves: "What if the fire is in our square? What if it is next door to my residence?" "If my home is in danger, I must leave the office and go out home to protect my property." But now suppose, instead of a brick house being on fire, a human life is on fire with hate, or drink, or greed, or iniquitous ambition, on fire with sin which is fast consuming the beautiful fabric, its character and prospects. If that fire is not put out, you may become poorer yourself. It is the nature of fire to spread, and if it does there is no telling how great

your loss may be when the life of your friend or neighbor is reduced to the residuum of a burned out goodness. Oh, sir, in the face of the human waste and drift in all of our cities, and with a knowledge of youthful crime that, it cannot be denied, appears to be fast increasing, the people everywhere must awake to the feeling that human lives are on fire. It is an alarm for your ward; it is an alarm which many towers might peal forth. This only *suggests* a great field that calls for social salvation, where Christ calls you to labor in partnership with him. From him we can learn what to do when the line is busy. He teaches folks how to live and get along with one another, and what spirit should actuate them. He said, "Bear ye one another's burdens." He taught his disciples that there is a telephonic system which connects every man with every other man, and wherever that line is struck, it sends a message or a shock to every brother that breathes under the broad dome of our human sky. "Who is weak and I am not weak?" said Paul. True enough, he meant also to say, "Who is strong and I am not strong?" The nearest king and the re-

mostest slave are related. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem a new star arose on the world. It was a *morning* star. The word "brother" was dropped from heaven with new music in its accents. "Religion heard it and crawled out of her cloister. Literature heard it and began to glorify common life." Government heard it and came down from her throne and began to break the shackles of the slave. For the high privilege of being a man in the light of this new day, the great God will surely hold you responsible, as he calls you to become his helpful partner in promoting social salvation and in bringing down to this earth the civilization of the skies.

When I was a boy the telephone was just being introduced. The company was very attentive to its patrons, who were fewer in number than now. One morning a man came around to our house and inquired, "What's the matter with your telephone?" He was the trouble hunter. He said: "They cannot 'get you' at headquarters. Several times in the last few days they have called your number and received no answer." He opened the little box and did some adjusting

and went away. The next morning while at breakfast the telephone rang. I said to myself, "I wonder who that is calling so early in the morning; it must be something urgent." So leaving my buttered cake to get cold, I hastened to the instrument and said, "Hello," and back came the bland response, "Just testing the line."

"Oh! is that all? If I had known that, I would have stayed with my breakfast."

But in spite of the annoyance I keep thinking about it: "Just testing the line," "testing the line." Oh, I didn't understand at first. That meant, "Is the line open? Can we get a message through? Are you in communication, in touch with headquarters? Is everything all right to begin the day?" As men and women, boys and girls engaged in the great day of life, you have a great deal of work before you of duty to God and service to humanity. Do not be impatient if I summon you to the test and ask: Is the line open between yourself and the great Master? Can he get a message through? Is everything all right to begin or continue in the magnificent business of being a representative of the living God? Nobody

can achieve a success worth having unless he gets permission from on high to succeed. You cannot point me to a single life that has been lived with indifference to God's will and God's church and God's day and God's book and God's people and call that life a *success*. It must be surrounded with excuses and apologies. The verdict of history has ever been that applause soon dies away from any name and any life that has not been lived in touch with God.

What an unspeakable privilege it would have been for one to have been private secretary to Homer, or assistant to Michael Angelo! How willingly would admirers compete for such a fellowship! Such a privilege cannot now be obtained. But it is grandly possible for you to live and work in intimate touch with Jesus Christ, and the strength of such a companionship will impart a glorious contentment. In the school of this great Master there were eleven students whom he especially trained and taught during a three-years' course. They were not men of genius by any means. They were dull and slow of perception and unpromising to the last degree; but under

his tutoring, they became mighty exemplars of the greatest system of soul culture known to the world. Without him, they would have had no luster or fame. Without him, they could not have written their sublime chapters, preached their wondrous sermons, or lived their heroic lives. I bid you remember that what was the making of them must be the making of you. You too may live in touch with him. You too may sit at his feet, think his thoughts, feel the breath of his love and catch the impulse of his errand. Thus becoming wise in the culture of Humanity's great teacher, you will become partakers of the divine nature and the "beauty of the Lord our God" shall be upon you.

## II

### HOLY RECKLESSNESS

AT a summer resort in northern Michigan I watched with interest the loading of a bunch of cattle which the owner was shipping to the Pittsburgh market.

"Have you sold those cattle?" I asked.

"No," was the curt reply.

"Do you know who is going to buy them?"

"No."

"Haven't you any idea who is going to buy them?"

"Not the least idea," he insisted.

To a man of no business experience it seemed like a reckless venture, to send a whole train load of cattle to a distant city, expecting to make a satisfactory sale after arrival. But it was the recklessness of faith. The shipper had such confidence in the market and such a satisfactory knowledge of the demand that he was reckless enough—yea, wise enough—to load up every hoof that he had on the farm and send it off, not

knowing for certain just how things would be when he reached his destination. He could not know how many cattle would perish on the road, yet he felt assured that the situation justified any amount of venture. We turned back to the hotel a bit reflective. Passing the public square, we noticed a farmer with a long wagon whip in his hand walking his beat around two wagon loads of potatoes. We particularly noticed because the spring drought was charged with being responsible for a very short crop of the early variety of potatoes, and prices at the resorts for the same were decidedly fancy. This old farmer had driven his teams across two counties to reach the resorts. "Have you sold your potatoes?" we asked.

"N-o-o-o," he replied with a satisfied drawl.

"Do you know who will buy them?"

"Well, not 'zactly, but I reckon somebody will."

Here was another reckless man, reckless enough to load up every potato he could dig, and take over to the resort region, not knowing exactly how he would come out

but feeling assured that to do less than he was doing would be stupidity. Now, here were some wayside illustrations of believing recklessness. There is a certain venturesomeness in business, love, and religion that is necessary for a large result. Prudence is estimated as a virtue; but suppose you sit down and make a record of the things which prudence has done for the world. If Caution had had her way, she would have kept Columbus back from the venture to find a continent on the other side to balance. She would have put out the fires of science. If Caution had had her way, Moses would have stayed with his comforts and cushions in the Egyptian palace. Nothing is so imprudent as too much prudence.

Likewise, economy is supposed to be a valuable principle for life. But it would be doubtful economy to increase a bank account by saving the price of meat, in the strength of which the money is to be earned. It would be doubtful economy to save the price of a load of coal in order that when the rigors of winter came on, one might have something with which to buy cough medicine. In the matter of Christian

duties and activities it is the calculating spirit that withers us. If one stops to calculate beforehand just what will be the result in the case of service contemplated, there will be no result.

If one wants to be told just what profit he will have by attending church service, he will soon be calculating how seldom he can attend and keep out of perdition. If one is chiefly concerned to know how long it will be before God pays him back, and how much dividend he will receive for right doing, he will soon be calculating how little bread he can cast on the waters so as to have enough for a breakfast on the dawning of the eternal morning. One of the real perils of a church is this matter of getting into ruts. It comes to pass when folks are "at ease in Zion." A rut is not the result of heavy hauling; it is the result of a *soft spot* in the road. Many preachers and laymen are hunting soft spots. We get lazy, then the church becomes rutty. Many seem to be ever considering the question, How can I be religious without any inconvenience, or without going out of my way? How little attention can I give to God's kingdom and

yet be counted in? In contrast with that spirit the inspired Book declares "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the cloud shall not reap. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not which shall prosper, whether this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." If I go to prayer meeting, what good will it do me? If I give a dollar to missions, will it be sure to convert a heathen? Will a kind act to yonder man in trouble be sure to reform his life? Oh! sow it *all*, sow it *all!* Sow beside *all* waters. You must make the venture of faith, then the harvest of goodness will not fail. Blessed are those folks who never shut up shop, but keep on doing good whether it is succeeding or not succeeding, and keep on doing right and doing duty even though it does not seem to be paying *just now*.

The *Old Testament* representative and illustrator of this spiritual instinct was called "The Friend of God." At the divine call to leave home and kindred and friends, and take his departure for a land, "which I shall show thee," he "went out not knowing

“whither he went,” was not that very indiscreet? Do not discreet men nowadays insist they want to know how they are coming out before they start? We have all had sympathy for Abraham because he had to venture on such uncertainties. We have thought it was too bad that he should have to take that leap in the dark. But while he did not know “whither he went” he did know “a thing or two.” He knew at whose call he was proceeding; he knew who was to be his guide; he knew what were to be the final results of his faithful and obedient going. From a human standpoint it was unreasonable, but it was true. It was madness, but it was wisdom and inspiration. The greatest facts are discovered and the greatest experiences are had on a plane where reason alone cannot walk without becoming dizzy. It is very entertaining to be told that the earth revolves continuously, and that nobody falls off. You may tell that to the inmates of the asylum, but do not expect reasoning people to accept it. It is the most unreasonable thing in the world, but it is true. No bird can fly very far or very satisfactorily with one wing. Neither

can the soul; it must have two wings—philosophy and faith. With these two pinions the spirit of man can venture into any sky and cleave the unknown. These trusty wings will yet bring God's pilgrims up to his beatific presence.

The *New Testament* representative of this instinct of the human spirit is Peter when he enters upon that impossible task of walking to Jesus on the water. He started because, and only because, Jesus bade him come. Having been bidden by the mighty Christ to do this, he started at it as though there were nothing in the way and as though there were nothing absurd about it, and as though to know the Master's bidding was all the qualification needed for any sort of venture or any sort of doing.

Some of us who hesitate in doing the plain bidding of Christ because of the difficulties in the way are fond of comforting ourselves and justifying our conservatism by exhibiting Peter's folly and recklessness. But I heartily wish that every one of us might be always as the venturesome Peter was at that moment when John McNeill, the Scotch preacher, pictures him climbing

down out of his boat with the storm light on his face and the spray in his hair, affording thus a glimpse of what you and he and I by the grace of God were meant to be, namely: personalities so filled with the vision of Christ, that all things temporal could not make us hesitate in doing the plain bidding of Jesus.

All the great reforms are accomplished by holy recklessness. Christ bids his disciples to venture righteous undertakings. They will not understand always, just how it is going to be accomplished, nevertheless it is certainly safe to venture to do whatever is the plain bidding of Jesus.

“Why did we not vote the saloons out of town before this?” remarked a “dry” worker after a victorious campaign. Plain enough: no one dared to venture to lead in the movement. It was unheard of, and such a reform was regarded as impossible as Peter walking on the water. Whoever attempted such boldness would need to get his life insured. It is only a lack of sanctified courage that prevents, or delays us in similar matters in responding to the bidding of righteousness.

We are afraid it will hurt our business or hurt our something if we are enterprising against evil, and so we stay inside the good boat "discretion," for fear we might get a wetting. There is no "walking by faith" in this. It is walking by human calculation, walking by the weather reports, walking by the "cork soles" of human sagacity instead of walking by faith. But the objector will remind me that this New Testament adventurer made a failure: instead of walking on the water he sank in the water. Yes, but why did he sink? He started well, but he began to sink because he got his eyes on the wind and away from the eternal Christ. And the Master said, "Wherefore did'st thou doubt?" not, "Wherefore did you begin?" nor "Wherefore did you venture?" Christ did not consider it ever a reckless thing to do his bidding, but "Wherefore did'st thou *doubt*?" No answer was given. Doubt never gives any answer to Jesus. In the world it gets a reputation for intellectual acumen, but Jesus always speaks of it as a "stupidity."

Above all things let us not hesitate to do the plain bidding of Christ, by getting our

eye on the difficulties in the way. For instance, Christ bids all men come to him, but the nature of things is against it. The heart is sinful, fleshly desires and tendencies are away from a spiritual ideal; and if a sinner were governed by the nature of things, he would stay away from Christ. He will need to recognize that the mighty Christ who bids him, is superior to the nature of things. His commands are all in the present tense, which means that he never expects a man to take time to first comprehend the mysteries of redemption or become qualified to obey his call. It is not the experience of the most of seekers after God that they see their way clear through to him from the start. The first that they see will be the difficulties in the road, but these are to be walked over. They are difficulties social, doctrinal, moral, industrial. They will never become any easier to navigate by thinking about them, but with the soul "looking unto Jesus" who is superior to the "nature of things," they are forgotten. O for such a vision of the Eternal Christ as will make us superior to the calculating spirit!

### III

## COUNT YOURSELF IN

IT will not be denied that Christianity has a marvelous past, but what about its present? We are accustomed to think that certain things were once possible to men, and that certain experiences and certain effects were once common to the gospel; but that was in the great past. We live in a new age and a remote time and cannot expect such things now. People will tell us of a time when there was a revival of religion in their community, when the interest was so great that it was the main topic of conversation. Business men closed their places of business and came for miles to get their share, but that was in the great past. We will all agree that if Peter were the evangelist, the gospel would produce startling results; but that preacher has long since gone home, and we are left to push the battle without him.

We can easily get men to agree to general statements when they will not agree to particular statements. They will stand up

with a hymn book in church and sing "All hail the power of Jesus' name," and "Crown him *Lord of all*," and sing heartily, but to have him as Lord of their "all" is farthest from their thoughts. They count themselves "out." They believe that God does hear prayer, but *count themselves out*. They believe the promises of God are yea and amen to him that believeth, but count themselves out. What can we do or say, to get the folks who are always excepting themselves from general truths to *count themselves in*. It is stated of many a man in Bible story that he prayed and his prayer was answered. If such a blundering, tempted soul as Elijah or Peter could get God's ear and affect the transactions of the universe, *you* can move the hand that moves the world.

If they lived so far away from church and yet were not kept away from prayer meeting, count yourself in. If they had such a hard crowd to deal with and yet led hundreds to the true worship and life, count yourself in. *You* can do it.

They were but *men*, then I am sorry for them but am glad for myself, for they re-

mind me of the manhood that is within the reach of all—of the men who are famous for strength, such as Luther and the Baptist. You can scarcely imagine they were ever weak-kneed and uncertain. What they *did*, gave them a reputation for stalwart righteousness. What made them illustrious was not that they were *men like ourselves* but the fact that while they were lame they climbed so high up the mountain; while they had such temptableness and weakness as we have, they did accomplish certain things which belong to the doings of the strong. All men, great and small, have had to go to the school of “Endeavor and Mistake.”

People read that “Elijah prayed,” “And Paul prayed,” and they say “Certainly, certainly.” You would expect that of a prophet and of an apostle. They were preachers. They were members of the church. They were under *obligation* to be religious.

Here is the genesis of a great blunder. It should be made plain that the requirements of religion are not for church members alone, not for such as have “come forward” and publicly avowed their purpose

to live better. The obligation to be a Christian is independent of any agreement you ever made or any organization you ever joined. Men of the world are excusing their worldliness and secularity and sin by urging that they never made any profession. There is a lot of that. It would be as reasonable for a thief to exonerate his deeds by saying that he "never made any *claims* to honesty." As well might a highwayman justify his murderous assault on one of our citizens by saying that he "never pretended to be a peaceable man." Whatever a man's pretensions are, they do not relieve him of obligations which exist independent of all pretensions or professions.

The obligation to love God is not created by promising to love him or by joining an organization which has that in its constitution and by-laws. God's commands are not for communicants but for all men. If it is wrong to be drunk in church, it is just as wrong to be drunk in the saloon. If it is wrong to be proud and selfish in the church, it is just as wrong to be proud and selfish in the world. Oh! it would be shocking to hear a deacon swear, but is not swearing

just as wrong for the man who sits behind the deacon and who belongs to no church communion? The universe would go to smash if it were otherwise. The Ten Commandments were given not to church members, but to *men*. The Bible is the revealed will of God for *men*, not simply for the folks that go to Sunday school. You are bound to do right because you are a *man*, and I am bound to do right because I am a *man* and because God requires men to do right.

To say "it is expected" that those who have made a profession of Christian faith will obey God's law is quite another matter. What society expects and what the world expects on one side, and what God requires on the other side, are altogether separate. In the last analysis, the obligation to be a Christian was not created when you became one, but existed before, and was only recognized and accepted then. The one who really desires to be holy will seek all the helps he can get. He will surround himself with church influences or any other influences or companionships that will aid in that direction. He will seek the aid of

sacraments, vows, and resolutions; but these all are only helps to assist him in meeting his obligation and do not create it. So I am saying it over and over again to the man on the outside: God's commands are to the individual; it is as much your duty to live a life of faith and spiritual-mindedness as it is mine. It is time you were recognizing this duty and proving your response by seeking the help of the *church*, which is only God's institution for helping men live as they ought to live and be what they ought to be.

We are "met up" every day with the fact that there is a great difference among men who are otherwise similar. What makes the difference? In one word, earnestness. If I am lacking this, I know nothing which will generate it in me like the example of Jesus. He never would have moved men as he did if anything less than a flaming zeal had moved him. The marvel of history is the influence which that blessed life has had upon these last two thousand years. It has been wafted down the ages as human nature's refreshment. Coming up the Saint Lawrence River one hears with delight a

chime of bells as he approaches Montreal. Naturally enough, he seeks to visit the cathedral which could send out such melody from its towers. He inquires for the "chime room," expecting to go up, but is told that it is down. There, in an obscure place on the ground floor, sits a slight girl at something that looks like the keyboard of a melodeon. She plays thereon, but you hear no sounds, but the pressing of the keys lets loose electrical currents which connect with the towers and set in motion silvery bells. As the operator plays in her quiet place, the world outside, toilers in the shops, laborers in the street, folks everywhere, hear the sweet hymn and are glad. Oh! we cannot imagine what a dull world this would be were it not for the life of Jesus which comes to us like sweet music from far distant towers. Generation after generation has been refreshed by it. And it means more, because the chime room is down on a level with our human nature.

He has shown us as no one else has done what kind of inspiration must operate in the chime room of our life in order to send out tones of good cheer and helpfulness. If we

would move men as he moved men, nothing less than his earnestness must move us.

Like him, we will believe in the reality of goodness; like him, we must be conscious that the powers on the side of goodness are greater than all that can be arrayed against it; like him we must in our inmost soul have the unanimous confidence that we are the allies of these victorious powers. Then will Christianity be the master passion. Then will angels and men be given an opportunity to behold how lordly is the power of an earnest life.

## IV

### IS IT EASY TO BE GOOD?

YES and No. It is and it isn't, according to who is answering the question. One conception of the Christian life regards it as a struggle because there is so much opposition to encounter. Indeed, Paul's own judgment in the matter was that it was a fight, and a constant battle, which would need to be kept up until the end, hence he exhorts his brethren to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." But Jesus himself said, "My yoke is easy and my burden it is light." The two estimates seem rather contradictory.

And then the world evidently thinks it much easier to live a worldly and sinful life than to conform to the requirements of the Christian standards. It is easier in the sense that things are going that way. The great current is the *world* current, and it is surely easier to go with the current than it is to go against it. Easier to float than it is to row, easier to be like everybody else, easier to do

things when "they all do it" than to be distinctly and peculiarly something different.

The popular notion perhaps is that it is easier to be a sinner, and yet the Bible says plainly, "The way of the transgressor is hard," and we know it is. It is hard on the body, draining it of its power and abusing it by dissipation. It is hard on the intellect, for it tends to weaken every faculty. It is hard on the moral and spiritual nature, for it clips the wings of every noble aspiration; and yet so many of us think it is easier to be a sinner than to be a Christian. The hardness of a Christian life has reference always to the opposition which goodness encounters in the world, but it is a hardness that pays, a hardness which is exhilarating because applauded by the angels and cushioned by a divine peace. The hardness of the sinful life, in contrast, does not come from the world's opposition but from the suffering arising from violated law and rebellion against God—the hardness of slavery and death at last which is the terrible wages of such wretched service. I know one thing only of which a man never tires. A shopkeeper gets tired of his shop,

a lawyer gets tired of his profession, the drummer becomes tired of the "road" and wants to retire, the doctor becomes tired of his practice and gets a younger partner in the office, the farmer grows tired of the labor on the farm and moves to town, but a Christian never *tires* of serving his great Master, unless he has slipped the yoke of his Master's spirit, for to live in that yoke is to live in the realm of restfulness.

Now, I think that sin is tiresome and fatiguing because it is unnatural. It does not fit a man as God originally made him. Either goodness or badness is our deepest nature and the very fact that the sinful condition is described in the Bible as a "fall" indicates a departure from the normal to the abnormal. As the man whom God created was a good man, it is evident that the sinful man is a deformity. If this is heresy, I am sorry for the truth, but I *never* did believe that the deepest thing in man is sin. Deeper down than sin is *God*.

Is it not always easier to be natural than unnatural? I suspect, then, that the restfulness of a truly Christian soul is because it has renounced rebellion and has come

back into a sweet conformity with the laws of our being.

We are not unmindful either of the apparent exceptions of those to whom a religious life is an irksome bondage, an unpleasant and uncongenial experience. They "yawn through the sermon as though they were doing penance"; they seem to have no satisfaction in Christ's service; they are nominally bearing religious burdens while wearing the devil's yoke. Christ said, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest," but they came to something else. They came to a meetinghouse; they came to a cushioned pew; they came to a painted window and an elaborate ceremonial—all of which, however, is not an adequate substitute for coming to Christ. Jesus calls in unmistakable accents, "Come to me," and in answering men say, "I will come to the communion; I will come to Church; I will sign a pledge; I will turn over a new leaf." But do you not see that all these things, very good things indeed, may nevertheless become a "refuge of lies," when done as a substitute for coming to Christ?

They will not afford the rest that men are

seeking. The promise never was made that if you turn over a new leaf you shall find rest. The fact is that all effort at self-reformation will be found a heavy yoke, but, "Come unto me," says Jesus, "and you shall *find* rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden it is light."

The wings of an eagle are large and are quite an additional weight to the body. Considering the long, long journeys which the eagle takes, and hence the desirableness of being free from any unnecessary load, these wings would seem a burden which could be dispensed with if we did not know that it is a burden which is light. I remember the first time I went to our County Fair, where once a year everybody went, and then everybody else. The one thing that impressed me was that the large majority of the people carried a bundle under the arm. I wondered why, and remarked that if these people were going to do much walking, as they would have to do to see much of the fair, it would certainly be better to get rid of bundles of all kind. Was this bundle an impediment? That depends on what was in the bundle. The fact is that the particu-

lar bundle referred to was a lunch box containing bread and meat and a bottle of milk, and it was being carried to enable the carrier to walk more and do more and see more of the exposition. When the lunch was transferred from the box to the inner man it weighed just as much as it did before. It did not lose an ounce by that transfer (except the pasteboard, wrapping paper and string, which we do not count), and yet it was a burden which lifted instead of being lifted. The Master, then, was not propounding riddles when he said, "My burden is light" and when he offered to lighten the load of the heavy laden by adding a yoke. He was only saying in an understandable way that the impulse with which a task is met determines whether it is going to be easy or hard, whether it is going to be a weight that bows down or a weight that lifts. One day when crossing the street in Columbus, Ohio, with a very good old lady, she took my arm with the remark and apology,

"I am afraid you will find me an impediment."

But, conscious of the strength awakened

by the touch of her arm, I felt it was one of those weights which inspire lifting power and I said,

"How can that be since when I was little I used to hold on to your hand to keep from falling, and frequently you have carried me altogether in your arms when I was very tired."

If I was no impediment to her *then*, surely she was none to me now, on the principle that there are some weights which arouse all our loyalty and strength and love as soon as they are laid upon us. The question is not how much we may bear, but, What is the motive power which will make the bearing of it an exhilaration?

It is easy, therefore, to do Christian work if we love enough. But in considering the question of whether we are wings to anybody or any church or any of God's enterprises in the world, we almost have forgotten that all Christian tasks would be hard without the Omnipotent helper.

We watched with wonderful interest an ocean vessel in San Francisco Bay loading up its freight for Liverpool. It had come from England, bringing coal, and now was

loading the hold of the ship with wheat—thousands of tons—while the upper decks were occupied with passengers. All these tons of burden the ship was to take around the Horn to England's shore. She is well named when they call her the "burden-bearer of the sea." But the ship is enabled to carry so much because she is herself being carried. The mighty Pacific tides swell under the keel of the mighty vessel and lift her as easily as they would lift a skiff. The ship carries the cargo because the ocean carries the ship. You and I will do more lifting of the world's burdens, do it more easily and masterfully, as we ourselves are buoyed up by the power of God which will be under us like the perpetual lift of the sea. The Book says, "Bear ye one another's burdens," but, it also says, "Cast thy burden on the Lord and he will sustain thee." The latter will make the former easier.

He is faithful who has promised. On your United States Liberty Bond you read with satisfaction that the United States promises to pay you the face of that bond in gold. You possess the bond and are not lying awake nights wondering whether the

United States will keep its word and redeem the bond at the appointed time. You have never even thought of the possibility of any failure of the nation's pledge to you. You are content.

Shall we be satisfied with the promise of our government and have no confidence in the promises of the Almighty?

## V

### “FOR SUCH A WORM AS I”

ISAAC WATTS was a great hymn writer. He has written the greatest hymns in the language, exalting the character of God and of his Christ. This may, in a measure, account for the fact that his humility has worked “overtime” and consequently his self-abasement abnormally developed. I could never be entirely reconciled to his atonement hymn or that part of it which asks, “Would he devote that sacred head for such a worm as I?” The expression cripples the thought, because he did devote his sacred head for “such as I,” and yet he would not devote his sacred head for a “worm.”

If we know anything at all about comparative values, we do know that the Lord Jesus did not leave the glory which he had with the Father to come down to the earth to bleed, and suffer, and die for a lot of worms. It would not have been worth

while. He would not have paid his expenses at the very best.

Of one thing I have always felt very sure since the days of its occurrence, namely, that Jesus called me to preach his gospel; but I never could get up any interest or inspiration in preaching that gospel to a congregation of "worms."

I never could feel justified in trudging around all over town and out of town to make pastoral calls on "worms."

I never could feel that it would matter much. And when some of them are taken ill and have to go to the hospital, why should I go to the hospital to pray for the sick "worms"? Much less could there be worthy impulse for practicing self-denial, so as to be able to send the missionary to *heathen* worms with the "good news" that they are living in splendid ignorance of what they are. How different is the inspiration that a man belongs to the lineage of God, that he is a "partaker of the divine nature," and is an heir of immortality! How every faculty opens under the breath of such a faith, like the petals of a hyacinth under the touch of morning!

There is some dignity in being a man. When we are told that the "world was made for man and not man for the world," that the sun was kindled for his comfort and delight, the stars hung in the firmament to drive away the shadows from his nightly path, and that the constellations were "lit up" that he might see in their light the magnificence of his own selfhood, what good reason has he for feeling like a worm? The Bible says that the Creator made man a little lower than God. "A shaving less than God" reads Gesenius, one of the greatest Hebrew scholars. It says, "Thou crownedst him with glory and honor; thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hand; thou hast put all things under his feet." When you thus read the credentials of your being, what right have you to feel like a worm, or to reckon yourself eclipsed by anything but God and his angels?

It is significant that so much of the Bible is written to make a man respect humanity of which he is a member.

If you put a mean estimate upon yourself, that will culminate in being mean. It

will also result in a cheap estimate of your fellow man. On the other hand, where there is the keenest self-respect there will be the greatest respect of other people.

Of all God's creation, man stands alone in his capacity for progress. In contrast with that fact Thain Davidson says, "The sun shines no brighter to-day than it did on Adam. The birds are not any more skillful in their song than when they filled the bowers of Eden with their music. The bees make no better honey now than when David found the sweet comb in the carcass of the lion, nor do the flowers yield richer fragrance than when they perfumed the palace chambers of King Solomon at Jerusalem." If a sheep should live to be a hundred years old, it would make no progress or improvement of its sheephood, but the better types of men are continually improving, enlarging their knowledge by strengthening mental powers, and improving the world by cultivation and invention, and making it every year a grander thing to live.

But it will be urged that man is a sinner. But if that is urged to disprove his greatness, it is a sample of blundering logic that

proves the opposite. A genius for being bad is a sign of greatness. The creature that can disobey God must be far above the creature that cannot disobey.

A worm cannot sin, poor thing! A worm cannot backslide, poor worm! A worm cannot defy the Almighty and break his commandments, poor creature! Such a prerogative belongs only to a man. Perhaps you never were congratulated on being a sinner, but there is in it the embryo of greatness. The Master said, "How much then, is a man better than a sheep," how much better is indicated by the fact that a man *can* sin but a sheep *cannot*.

Inasmuch as "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," it fills me with wonder to hear Christ passing his opinion and saying that an innocent sheep is not to be compared in worth with a wicked man. Evidently, the depth to which anything can fall is only an index to the height or loftiness from which it has come. In other words, to be sinful implies the possibility of being saintly. It is just because a man is a son of God that he *can* sin; it is just because he *has* a conscience; it is just because

he has a spiritual nature; it is just because he has a *will* of his own. But it is always in forgetfulness of his divine sonship that a man turns his back on his Father and wanders in sin. When, like the prodigal, he "comes to himself," he comes back to his divine Lord. When a sinner comes to himself he rediscovers the fact that he is a man, that he has an intrinsic value, something that relates him to God quite beyond anything that belongs to the brute creation.

It was always a beautiful reflection to me that Christ thought we were worth "dying for." Not worthy of it, mind you; but after he had figured us up to see how much we "come to," he concluded there was something in us that was worth such a great expenditure and sacrifice as he bestowed on us. In one of Charles Dickens' books he describes a wicked woman who was indeed far gone in sin. But conceiving her nature as a great structure, he said that one might journey down its corridors, and then up a flight of stairs, and down another deep corridor, and up another flight of stairs, and finally in some remote place in that structure find a cupboard door on which was in-

scribed "Woman." He thus suggested that though womanliness had retreated far back in her nature, it was still there and could be redeemed. And now for every passage in God's book that you may find which says that man is sinful I can find two which say he is redeemable. God never tells a man what he is, without also telling him what he may become. There are plenty of books that spread out with deadly realism the evil that is in a man or woman and then stop; but no author is worthy of your reading who familiarizes you with crime or sin and then stops. You want no surgeon whose whole skill is exhausted in taking a diagnosis, who can analyze pain but cannot cure it. If Jesus had had no mission to the earth but to reveal to man his sinfulness, he never would have come down here. He could have spent his time to better advantage. To preach the gospel does not consist in telling men that they are sinners. If I were shut up to that, it would break my heart. But these are the great truths which answer each other in the Gospel: "Thou art a wanderer, but a wandering child. Thou art a prodigal, but a prodigal son. Thou art a

sinner, but hast been redeemed. Thou art hungry, but may'st be fed. Thou art condemned, but may'st be justified." These truths make preaching worth while because they show a man what he may become. A recognition of this truth, a standing in awe of what a man may be, is at the bottom of all Christian endeavor. Some people who are in the business of discounting human nature seem to follow the plan of a man who goes into a field of corn in October and makes a diligent search for all the nubbins and knotty ears he can find. Then, with withering sarcasm, he says, "This is the kind of corn this field produces." It is unfair to judge a cornfield by the nubbins. Why did he not bring the largest finest ears he could find, as specimens of what the field could do under favorable conditions? It is just as unfair to judge our humanity by the nubbins and the runts. It is unfair to pick out all the mean men and the beastly men and the cruel men, the pimps and the sneaks and say, "This is your human nature." The only adequate presentation of human nature is to select the finest and grandest men that the race has ever produced and offer

them as specimens of what humanity is, for every man has within himself the prophecy of the highest manhood, whether that prophecy is fulfilled or defeated.

We ought to thank God that he has made us capable of choosing the wrong and the false, for that implies the capacity also of choosing the right and the true. We ought to thank God that he has made it possible for us to be wicked, for that implies that it is possible for us to be holy, and to be holy is to be like God. No sort of preeminence will take the place of that.

Jesus of Nazareth was great not because he was a soldier or a poet or a statesman, indeed, men never mention him as an illustrious orator, although "never man spake like this man." But he is reckoned as the greatest of men because of his preeminence in holy character. And it is significant that what he has commanded us to do and be is exactly that which made him most illustrious. He did not say, "Be ye a miracle worker as I was," but "Be ye holy as I am holy." And now if you will take any kind of preeminence and put it alongside of what made Christ great it will be eclipsed.

Take eminence in oratory, and what is more eloquent than a noble example? Take eminence in art, and what picture will compare with the likeness of Christ in human nature? Take poetry, and is not a living poem better than a written one? Consider military genius, and is not he that ruleth his own spirit mightier than he that taketh a city? Consider the royalty, and what emperor in his palace has so imperial and abiding an outfit as those who are clothed with the “purple within” and in the lineage of Calvary have become “kings and priests unto God and the Lamb forever”?

## VI

### STEALING THE ROBES

THERE is a feature of the tragedy on Calvary that is generally overlooked because our attention and interest are so occupied with the crucified Saviour. The executioners of Jesus were professionals. They had become so familiar with driving nails through the quivering flesh of their victims, hearing their cries and viewing the white faces of the uplifted dead, that these things no longer impressed them. Having crucified Jesus with their usual nonchalance, they came to the only matter that had any interest for them, namely, dividing up his garments among them. For these they cast lots. It seems terrible to us that the garments of Jesus should be taken from him and worn by the brutal Romans who nailed him to the cross. If the disciples could have inherited them, they would have kept them sacred. It would have been with some propriety if Peter had received the sandals which with him had gone on so many jour-

neys. The feeling is expressed by Dr. David Gregg that if John had been given the magic seamless coat that had been touched by the sick and dying, imparting health and life, it would have been comforting to his followers, but for Christ's murderer to get it and wear it over his "heart of stone" seems a sacrilege. But this picture of men bespattered with blood gambling for the garments of the Saviour at the foot of his cross is not altogether an ancient one. It is painfully modern. The twentieth century is populated with many who are eager to use the blessings that come from Christ, but do not prize him. They think they could not get along without the clothes of Jesus, but will not appropriate him to their perishing selves. They crucify Christ, but they wear and enjoy his robes.

(1) The clothes of Jesus were for his *protection* and comfort. They protected him from extremes of weather, from cold and rain and storm, and were in the interest of his comfort. The executioners took from him protection and comfort, but crucified him. It is a picture of people in our times and in our community who want the pro-

tection of Christian civilization and the comforts of Christian civilization, but do not want Christ. Indeed, they will "glory in our civil rights, secured and transmitted to us by our forefathers," but do not care anything about the God of our forefathers. Everybody knows that the influence of Christ's religion in any community is to make things safe and life secure. But behold the many who avail themselves of the security, but reject the giver. In Ocean Grove, a religious resort by the sea, I found many Jews and unbelievers who with their families were spending the summer there. Other worldly resorts were near by, but knowing that their families would be safe in a Christian resort, they stole the clothes of Jesus, but sneered at him. It is a noticeable fact in this country that our skeptical friends take particular pains to keep around where the shadow of the church falls and where Christian standards abound. There is a story of a young man who in college professed to be an infidel. When out hunting with his uncle in the West he was obliged to seek lodging in a little cabin in the mountain. Both were alarmed for their

safety during the night. By arrangement the young man began the night-watch, revolver in hand, while the uncle slept. The latter was to go on watch duty at midnight and be on guard till morning, but very early in the evening the uncle was aroused by his nephew coming to bed. He had peeped through a crack in the wooden wall into the other room and saw the rough mountaineer arise from his chair, and take a Bible from the shelf and read. He then knelt down to pray. The young man's fears suddenly departed when he learned that he was guest in a home where the Bible was read and prayer was offered. Here was an example of taking the protection which Christ offers, but crucifying him with unbelief.

Is it not significant that there is not on record any evidence that the world knew any such a thing as a charitable institution before Christ? Does not the historian tell us that in the chronicles of ancient Constantinople and of ancient Rome "descriptions are found of all public edifices, but no reference whatever to a charitable institution," whereas in the realm of present-day gospel influence such institutions form a conspicuous

part of a modern city's glory? Institutions of mercy and help follow the cross of Christ, wherever that cross goes, yet how many receive the mercy and alleviations afforded with no gratitude to the Giver!

(2) The raiment of Jesus stands for *respectability*. The cruel soldiers could take these clothes and wear them and thus make themselves outwardly decent. This, therefore, the soldiers did, but they crucified Christ. Decency and respectability are about all some people get out of Christianity. Now, the gospel has always been productive of excellent behavior. Its ideals are such that civilities and refinements are necessarily manifested. But I have found a class of people who, under the influence of prevailing sentiment, have had just enough of the outward effects of the gospel to cause them to simulate the customs and manners of good people and thus fancy they have found all there is in Christianity. Such a man seems to become incased in something that is absolutely impervious to gospel appeal. His little imaginary goodness acts like a lightning rod pushed up over his life and it carries off the strongest bolt

of gospel lightning that may be flashed toward him.

See that hard-visaged and brutal Roman soldier taking up the seamless robe of Jesus, which became his by a "lucky throw of the dice," and throwing it around his own shoulders, parading up and down the Calvary hillside. A passing observer might conclude it was the Master himself, for he has the Master's robe. But a look into his wicked face and a knowledge of his sinful life makes the thing a mortifying incongruity. There is only one thing equal to that in irony: it is when a citizen of Christendom wears the garb of respectability woven by Christian associations and by it covers up a life which by its worldliness or its neglect or unbelief has crucified Christ.

(3) But let us not forget that the raiment of Jesus had *intrinsic value*. The seamless robe and the other garments of his sacred person were worth something to the soldiers; Christ himself was worth nothing. If the question of modern commercialism, "What is there in it?" had been asked of them, their only answer would have been, "The clothes." I would not take the re-

sponsibility of saying how many or who are interested in Christianity to-day because of "what there is in it" from a worldly stand-point, but Christ foretold there would be many such. During his three years' ministry he became very popular with the multitude because he healed the people of diseases and gave them food, but they did not value him because of his redeeming mission and his noble character. Is not virtue sometimes esteemed simply because it pays? Is not righteousness esteemed sometimes because it is good for the health, promotes good standing in the community, and tends to increase the bank account? In answering the question "Which is the greatest commandment?" do not some say, "The one that pays the best," at the same time regarding that as the least commandment which pays the least? Let us have a care that the man does not get lost in the merchant, for there are crucial times in life when the true man will do right though it does not seem to be paying and will adhere to honesty when it spells a temporal sacrifice. If a man has won the hand of a maiden in marriage and is proven to be chiefly interested

in the wedding presents and in the fortune which his bride will bring with her, he is "more of a merchant than a lover." As every bride wants to be loved for what she is and for her own sake, and not for what she possesses, so does the Lord Jesus yearn for the devotion of disciples who will love him not for the sake of his garments, not for the sake of what is comfortable and safe and gratifying and popular, but for the sake of his beauty, nobility, and goodness. "Cling to him," said Dr. Watkinson, "not only when he answers our questions, but when he is silent; not only when he is fashionable, but when he is forsaken; not only when discipleship insures wealth and honor, but when it involves disgrace and poverty; not only because he can make us perfect, but because he is perfection." The soldiers cast lots for the garments of Jesus, but why did they not cast lots for his holiness? Why did they not cast lots for his wisdom? Why did they not cast lots for his gentleness and goodness? These could not be transferred like a garment. They did take away from him everything they could lay their hands on: they took away his legal rights; they took

away his liberty; they took away his blood, his clothes, and his life, but they could not get hold of his glory. They could not take away the splendor of himself. Herein is a parable. The greatness of a man consists in that which burglars cannot carry off nor men destroy, because it is within. It is not in what one possesses, but in what he is. If from some folks you should take away their beautiful raiment and they had nothing beautiful left, or if you should take away their splendid houses and they had nothing splendid remaining, what could we say? We would say this: "Behold Jesus hanging on the cross without power or friends or money, or even a garment, yet proving his nobility by saving the thief by his side and by forgiving the soldiers who nailed him to the cross, and proving it so convincingly that even the centurion cried out, "Truly this is the Son of God."

## VII

### THE TEST THAT TELLS

THE Greeks estimated a man by his research. The Jews estimated a man by technical observances; the Spartans by the force with which he could hurl a javelin. The Romans estimated a man by his nationality. To them there were only two great encampments of men: those who were Romans and those who were not. Lord Chesterfield claimed to correctly estimate a man by the way he said "Good morning" or by his manners at the tea table. Englishmen are said to have great reverence for one who trails fragments of the alphabet after his name. In America it is possible to do a great deal of oscillating between a high and a low estimate of society. He who rides to-day in chariot of golden-wheeled applause will not surprise history if to-morrow he be dragged through the streets of denunciation, and he whose name to-day writhes beneath the lash of censure will reason well if he says to him-

self: "I will wait. There will be a reaction. Curses will be followed by eulogistic editorial, serenade, and bouquets."

It is significant that the world has tape-lines and scales for estimating men that do not engage the piercing eye of Heaven. Like Samuel scanning Eliab, we say, "He is of good stature and countenance," but the Lord looketh on the heart.

The tailor will beat the universities in making a man according to the standards of some. There are those who say, "As a man seemeth to be pious," "As he seemeth to be wise, so is he." There are those who say, "As a man arranges his toilet," or "As he rideth in his limousine, so is he," but Inspiration dips a different thermometer into the temperature of a man's true selfhood when it says, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." The heart is the determining power of life. It is the middle and the center of activity. In this wonderful body of ours there is a throbbing, vital center, which by its perpetual enterprise floats little fleets of life to the most distant harbors of the body, carrying their red cargo to the very fingertips. Likewise

at the center of all moral decisions and spiritual circulation there is a pulsating self-conscious heart which thinks and purposes and feels and by so doing sends a tide of influence through all the arteries of life, giving complexion to its creeds, color to its thoughts, tissue and blood to its philosophy. Now, when Solomon picked out the heart for God he was indicating the easiest kind of Christian service. How hard are the practice hours of the piano pupil who does not love music! Each thump of the keys sets all the chords of disgust avibrate. How hard it would be to preach a gospel which one did not love, or to take our time and strength in proclaiming tidings which aroused no echo among the hills of our own soul! Mechanical religion is hard enough. But as the engineer takes his oil can and moves around upon all sides of his engine, pouring lubrication into the wheels and pistons, so that their movements may become superior to friction, so for all the duties of our Christian calling, in the performance of which we often hear so much screeching and rubbing, there is a spiritual oil found in the consecrated love of the heart which

makes the Master's service smooth and well doing easy.

Two men parted on the street corner one night with murderous intent in their hearts. One went to slay the President of the United States and succeeded. The other went to slay the secretary of state, but missed his aim. According to American law, man number one is a murderer, but man number two is not a murderer. But according to the judgment of Him who looketh where man cannot look, the unsuccessful assassin was just as guilty as the successful one. The fellow who came to your chicken-coop to carry off your poultry, but was scared away by the watchdog before he had gathered up the feathered spoil, is just as much of a thief as the man who came a half hour later, when the watchdog was asleep in his kennel, and performed a successful theft. The man who swears to himself might just as well swear out loud, so far as he himself is concerned, for the recording angel does not indicate whether he swore in parentheses or italics. Church rules may declare the standards of the church, but they are of little value to the

individual. Those who love to keep them do not need them. There are some church adherents who are always whining because their church rules forbid dancing, but is there any virtue in an unwilling restraint or an unwilling keeping of rules? In our humble opinion, one might as well go to the ball as to stay home and bawl. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Do you suppose God looks at your feet to see if you are guilty? Do you suppose he determines a murderer's guilt by the blood on his hands? Do you suppose he searches a burglar's pockets to prove him guilty of larceny? Does he study the expression of a man's countenance to determine his piety, or does he watch the movements of his lips or listen to his words to determine his fidelity and his love?

The nearsighted vision of men cannot discern the seeds hidden beneath the sod, waiting for the call of the bugle of spring. Neither can they behold the purposes and intents of a man, hidden as they are beneath the visible surface of everyday life, but to Him who knows no seasons, the purposes and determinations of the heart are ever

visible. If, then, all manhood is measured by heart-throbs; if the fingertips of Destiny are washed by the tide which flows out from this vital center; if the heart is the great commander before whom all other leaders of life must lay down their lances, how imperative it is that our hearts should beat in unison with the ideal right in the bosom of God! How shall human actions be made right? In answer, let us ask how shall the watch-maker fix the "out-of-fix" watch so that it will indicate correct time on the dial? Suppose he takes your watch, looks up at the regulator and turns the hands to indicate half-past eight and hands it back to you saying, "There now, I have fixed your watch." You say, "Oh, no, my watchmaker friend, you have only turned the hands. Very soon it will be wrong again. Some spring has become infirm. Some wheel has slipped a cog, or some mote of dust has blockaded the revolutions. If you will repair the works, the hands, I am sure, will move correctly." Now we know how human actions are expected to move upon the face of life, and we know how such a thing can be, that a man may draw near to Jesus with

his mouth, while his heart is far from him. I was about to say also that we feel the utter vanity of pointing out any particular hour of the Christian's standard time, *mechanically*. Somebody must fix the works. You must say to the Divine Lapidary: "My heart's jewels need resetting. Its little wheels of purpose need dusting and cleaning. Its gearing needs heavenly oil." "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew within me a right spirit." Then will my hands and feet and lips move at the impulse of thy love and I shall keep good time.

And now let me tell you a secret—no, it is not a secret. It has become a manifest truth. A man's force in this world is measured by his heart force. It cannot be measured by his education in books. It is not determined by those social niceties which are so complimented by the superficial. It is determined by the passion of his life. A whole-hearted man will be felt anywhere. If you drop him down in the wilderness, the birds and reptiles and the beasts of the wildwood will soon find out that he is there. He is always a powerful man. He may be

in the wrong; then he will be powerful for the wrong. He may be right; then he will be powerful for the right. "What moves the world?" is a frequent question. It is not instinct. It is not logic. It is not evolution. I tell you it is HEART that is moving the world. Moral evil becomes the *great* evil, and moral good becomes the *great* good, because "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

It is absolutely certain that every one of us may add himself, and, indeed, cannot avoid adding himself to one of the forces which are pushing the world. Let it be our aim to be, not a centrifugal force, to make the world fly off into the wild tangents of error and sin, but a centripetal force and power that will help keep the old world of humanity on the track of Truth and hold it safe in one continuous and unbroken orbit around the Sun of Righteousness.

## VIII

### SMOKELESS CHIMNEYS

As these lines are written, millions of manufacturing establishments are silent. No smoke is coming out of their chimneys. Vast acres of machinery are dumb. Workmen are idle, and capital is idle, and both are losing. That affects the grocer, the butcher, and the baker. With no wages coming in, folks must live on less. The old suit is worn another season. Shoes which had been discarded are brought out from the closet and sent to the repair shop. Few permits have been sought for building houses, and families have doubled up. Furniture dealers and clothiers flung out great headlines in their newspaper "ads" and told a story of "wonderful reductions," but the "multitude passed by." It was to them as an idle tale. All this affects church budgets and indirectly affects the work of the Kingdom in Africa and China, for missionary enterprises started in those distant parts are obliged to wait.

The lesson of mutual interdependence in

the commercial world was never more graphic.

The North has learned that it is not independent of the South, and certainly the East has discovered that it cannot run its boarding houses without the West. Every time Columbia's heart beats there are a hundred million pulse beats. We have been taking hard lessons lately, but perhaps hard lessons are remembered the longer. We have heard of a case of larceny where a man was accused of entering a tent and committing a theft. It was proven by the defendant's attorney that only the right arm and shoulder of his client entered the tent, whereupon the wise judge sentenced the right arm and right shoulder of the accused to prison, remarking that he could do as he pleased with the rest of his body. Interdependence is no more a law of the body than it is of society. What is good for my head must be good for my feet. What is bad for my right hand must be bad for my left hand. As society becomes more complex the principle becomes more manifest that one class cannot say to another class, "I have no need of thee." The brain worker is dependent

on his hand worker. Mr. Edison, when he gets an idea, calls in his pattern maker and explains to him as best he can what he is thinking about. "I get you," says the artisan.

"All right," says Mr. Edison; "go ahead and make it."

He cannot make his own conceptions. He is dependent on his designer. No man is complete in himself. One partner is sanguine of losses. The other partner has an eye only for profits. They need each other.

What believers we are in independence, yet such a thing does not exist! Are the rich independent? I was in the home of a millionaire. It was a frigid day, with the thermometer below zero, but there was no fire in the house. The members were shivering in overcoats and shawls. It seemed strange, for I had just come from the homes of poor people over in the "addition," and there the people were sitting around roaring fires with all the comforts of home. But the rich family was suffering. What was the trouble? They were waiting for the plumber. The pipes had burst. This

family of wealth was the most dependent family visited.

Here is a suggestion of what constitutes a flourishing and useful church. It is a company of Christian kindred who are loyal to their dependencies. The office-bearers, teachers, singers, hearers, preachers, and caretakers all function.

If it be true that "no man liveth to himself," it is equally true that no life terminates on itself. It was a good riddance when the first king of Israel left the throne, but whenever his name was mentioned afterward a "withering biography" was attached to it which said, "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." In contrast to that, when David left the throne he continued to reign, for his devotion continued to articulate in the memory of the people and unfold in the ideas which he planted. It is likewise true in our little kingdoms. We will never be able to successfully deny that we have lived, for the marks of influence, for good or evil, will remain as indelible proofs of the fact. Every one expects to find these marks in the home and in its children. A lady visitor

came into the home of an acquaintance and, rushing over to the couch, picked up the baby and said, "Oh, Mrs. M., the baby looks just like you," not knowing that the particular baby under consideration belonged to a neighbor woman who at that moment was back in the kitchen. It was only a trifling mistake, but it betrayed the fact that so well grounded is the universal expectation that the child will be like its parent that it is hardly worth while to look closely before announcing it. The philosophy of childhood has been edited by experience so long that juniors are expected to be second editions of the seniors. No man's life terminates with himself. If, therefore, you have a Christian standard of conduct, you will not lose anything by maintaining it and will not gain anything by lowering it. Will one win the regard of people on a lower plane of living by descending to their plane or by inviting them up to a higher plane? That question has been answered by the work of Dr. Houghton, rector of the "Little Church Around the Corner," in New York. It appears that by a thoughtful kindness to actors he

gained the affection of the whole theatrical profession. Members of this profession came to his church in great numbers, for they regarded him as their best friend. Yet the rector never attended the theater. He did not win the confidence of the stage folk by going down to their level. To a noted actor, who had asked him why he never came to the theater, he said, "When you want me for your sick and dying, would you rather find me in the dress circle or at the rectory?" Coming from such a source, this is a great testimony to the proposition that devotion to duty commends itself more to the lax than laxity will commend itself. Promoters do not expect to win adherents to one position while occupying another.

Close upon the heels of interdependence, there follows the imperative of fraternal responsibility. Cain killed Abel and then asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" If he wanted information on that subject, he should have asked before. After Christ's short residence in this world no Christian creed can leave out the item that "We are our brother's keeper in the noblest sense."

If you go out into the country and see your neighbor's horse by the roadside going astray, and when you come back home read the owner's advertisement in the paper and learn of his great anxiety, yet remain silent, your indifference would be regarded as criminal by many a conscience that makes no claim to being Christian. But I bid you notice that if one has fraternal responsibility at that point, he also has it in a much *higher* sense. Let us all agree that it is one's duty to tell what he knows about a straying horse and assist in its recovery. But what about the horse's owner? Suppose one discovers that he is straying away into dangerous and wrong courses, shall he raise no alarm? What if the owner's tastes and ideals and habits are found straying away from purity and uprightness and getting lost in the thick old woods of error, shall the discoverer raise no alarm? If I am the keeper of my brother at all, I am his keeper in the highest sense. I am the keeper of his reputation, of his good name, of his heart, mind, and soul and destiny, of whatever in him is most enduring.

Thank God for the many bright spots

manifested on the dark background of the Great War in Europe. Food became an evangel. In a home far away on a Western farm and far removed from any railroad, at the dinner table one day, the youngest, four years old, was sprinkling sugar on his baked apple and incidentally spilling some outside the dish. The mother said, "Philip, if you waste sugar that way, brother won't get any." Then Philip opened his brown eyes wide, dropped his spoon and said, "Then I won't eat no sugar," and conservation was begun in earnest by the child's thought of that wonderful soldier brother, far away in France, having to get along without sugar. A certain housewife during that conservation period declared the hardest lesson she had to learn was "patriotic housekeeping," which was not always the most economical. Sometimes the "war bread" cost more than the good bread. Sometimes the "meat substitutes" cost more than the meat, but said she, "For the sake of our soldiers and sailors and overburdened allies we were impelled to use the substitutes regardless of cost." The war released much hate, but very much more of love and sacrifice.

## **IX**

### **PERSONALITY AND THE KINGDOM**

THE directness of the New Testament is startling. I challenge anybody to arise from a faithful reading of it without having the feeling that it has been talking to him. While its chief Figure walked among men over two thousand years ago; while its epistles were originally written to people who are no longer citizens of this world; while much of it may be explained away by local significance, yet no honest man can arise from its perusal without the convictions that its truths are for him, its warnings are for him, its judgments are for him, its promises may be for him, and its Christ is for him. Let us consider therefore—what? The church and the Kingdom? No. Society and the Kingdom? No. The public and the Kingdom? No; but personality and the Kingdom. By this time we have all found out that society is made up of personalities.

All public strength has been private strength. All public opinion has been personal opinion. It is in these private views and efforts that world-wide movements have their genesis.

The individual is called. The calls of God are not in the third person, not the second person plural, but the second person singular. It is not him, or them, or those, but *thou* and *thee*. The Ten Commandments are not in the third person, else they might not discover me, or you might count yourself out; but "*Thou* shalt have no other gods before me." "*Thou* shalt not steal." "*Thou* shalt love the Lord thy God." I believe in divine calls. I believe in a divine call to preach. It is a popular notion that the ministry is "entered" like any other profession, but I am sorry for the man who enters the ministry at his own call. When God calls a preacher he does not blow a trumpet in his ear. I refer to my own miserable experience because it seemed inseparably connected with my own salvation. It came at a time when it seemed out of order and after another work had been entered upon. Why did God wait until I

had chosen another profession and then overtake me with the conviction that I must abandon all and preach his gospel, and have it so pressed upon me that meal time came without appetite, evening came with greater weariness than if I had been breaking stone on the street, and morning came after sleepless tossings? But perhaps that was God's way of letting one know that he had something to do with it and of having some attention paid to his call. Then I wondered what my mother would think about it, for she had been thinking for a long time that I was not a very serious lad. When, therefore, with much trembling I told her my conviction, imagine my surprise when she replied, "Why, my son, I have been expecting this." And then I learned that when she gave me to God in baptism she had given me to him for the work of the ministry. She had never told me. She had kept her secret well, and twenty years afterward that consecration came back to earth and found me in northern Ohio and woke me up with the message, "**The Master calleth thee.**" Akin to that is the call to a life of faith. Have you heard it, or are you like

the folks that live in the neighborhood of Niagara and who do not hear the roar of the cataract?

The greatest sounds and sights on earth may become commonplace. When a touring company of us had reached the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, after many days of carriage riding, we alighted from the carriages to look at the great panorama, and I said to "Dixon," the old park driver, "You had better hitch the horses and go and take a look."

"Oh, no," he said, "I have seen it so many times."

We crept out to the edge of "Inspiration Point" and for the first time looked down into that awful gorge where God had written his frescoes and which some time in the past had captured a bunch of sunsets and held them fast, and they were now glinting from a hundred cathedral towers and minarets and flashing in the rainbows that spanned the "Lower Falls." In the presence of that vision splendid our anxieties were forgotten and our skepticism, if we ever had any, was overwhelmed as we stood hushed and reverent listening to the speech

of God. Was it just because the scene was new to us? When we had gone back to the carriages I begged old "Dixon" to go and take a look, but he smiled at my enthusiasm and said he had seen it before. I have thought of the old mountaineer's answer a thousand times, and have wondered how the gospel becomes commonplace to men so that they have no eyes for its glory and no ears for its musical invitation, and how life itself sometimes becomes disenchanted of its great meanings. It need not lose its attractiveness and become stale. Life may be kept fresh and lustrous. By living a life of simple helpfulness and with a trust that keeps us busy in his service, like Jacob of old (even after sorrows have smitten), we may reenchant the earth and the sky, we again may gloriously dream, see the ladder let down, hear the rustling wings and behold the angel faces, and to the end may see a holy blush resting upon the details of our common life. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Yes, but there is yet a greater fool than he, and it is the fool who believes that God is and yet lives as if he were not. Who is guilty of the greater

folly? He who does not believe in the doctrine of gravitation or he who knows that gravitation is a fact and yet with that knowledge goes to the treetop or the house-top and attempts to walk out on the air as if gravitation were not a fact? It occurs to me so often in these days that the worst kind of atheism is exhibited when the life is occupied in denying God—knowing him to be a fact and yet treating him as though he were a fiction.

The individual is responsible. The fact that God calls for him makes him responsible for answering. None may answer for him. We blame the city and say it is bad, but there is no badness apart from persons. People complain of what the council did, but there is no council apart from certain persons. It is a great test to be in a crowd that is going to act, for responsibility gets spread out and is very thin sometimes. Passing strange that men will do in councils and in boards and congregations what they would not do over their own signature. While this is an age of corporations and a man tries to lose himself in the "firm," God never loses him, but transacts business with

him every day, and finds out how near alike he may be to the Negro who made an assignment, and in giving a statement of his financial condition said that he had two hundred dollars assets and fourteen hundred dollars of "unreliabilities." It is certainly fair to say that in the business of being a son of the living God our "unreliabilities" ought not to be the most conspicuous part about us. As active or passive personalities in the business of life we cannot get rid of responsibility. When those two trains came together on the railroad the other day, the question upon every official's lip was, "Who did it?"

A few telegrams back and forth and it was found that a signal agent had given the wrong signal. It was only a mistake in the color of light that was thrown into a signal tower, but the difference between a red light and a green light made the difference between life and death to a score of passengers. Can it be possible that a man is held responsible for the color of light which he throws into the signal tower of a railway system and is not responsible for the quality of light which goes out from his

life and by which travelers to eternity take their bearings?

Religion by proxy has never worked well, all because duty cannot be deputized. You cannot deputize another to sleep for you, or to eat for you, or look upon a beautiful landscape for you; much less can moral obligation be deputized to another. Gehazi could do nothing with Elisha's staff. We are great folks for committees to be sure. We have committees on music, incidentals, and finance, but we cannot appoint committees to die for us or go to the Judgment for us, and we may not elect delegates to eternity.

Personality has a power. A large part of the work of schools and colleges and churches nowadays consists in shaping the personality. The very name of one so shaped becomes an asset to be reckoned with. I was a visitor in a paper mill one day and the proprietor was showing me courtesies not a few. Among other things exhibited was a delicate scale for weighing single sheets of paper. Taking a very fine onion-skin sheet of paper he put it on the scale and balanced it. After thus weighing

the thin sheet on the scale he took it off and with a lead pencil wrote my name on it. On putting it back on the scale pan the latter went down with a bang that startled me. That was the first time I knew that my name weighed anything. Listen—your name weighs something; your example weighs something; your opinion, your influence weighs something with somebody. We have heard of a man who said that he weighed one hundred and forty pounds, but when he was mad he weighed a ton. In discerning that fact he was a philosopher, for every man ought to weigh a ton on the side of his greatest earnestness. The demand of the times is for men of weight, whose moral avoirdupois is heavy on the right side. How much do you weigh in the cause of goodness? How much do you weigh in making your church a power in the community? How much do you weigh in lifting your acquaintances up to a higher plane of thinking and feeling and doing?

Thus far we have gone along together and most likely we are in comparative agreement about this matter. I am not quite so sure, however, that you will agree to the

following statement, namely, that the measure of personal obligation is limited only by the power, the forces which are at one's command. For example, the duties of a ship captain are not determined by his naked eye; they are determined by what he can see with his spyglass; by what his barometer tells him and by what the mariner's needle indicates. If he does not apply to the running of his ship the information furnished him by these instruments, he is almost, if not altogether, a criminal. Suppose a government prisoner in the Atlanta penitentiary is sentenced to be executed on a certain day. The President of the United States, however, having gone over the case, makes out a pardon for the prisoner and handing it to a government messenger with instructions to stop the execution, bids him make haste. The messenger starts at once, without a moment's delay, to walk to Atlanta to deliver the message and the pardon. He arrives a week too late, and after the execution has taken place. Now he justifies himself with the declaration, "I walked as fast as ever I could," and no doubt he did; but ought he

not be punished for not using the telegraph and express train? His obligation was limited only by the forces at his command. What I am thinking about is this: our responsibility as Christians is determined, not by what we can do by our own unaided efforts, but by using the forces at our disposal. As long as one can, through the power of Christ offered him, overcome a besetting sin he will be held responsible for doing so. As long as one *may* be something more than a passably decent church member, he will be held responsible for what he might be. Not only am I responsible for what I am, but also for what I might become by making use of divine forces. I am therefore persuaded that you and I as prophetic personalities of efficiency must be inspired for our task as certainly as Moses was inspired to give the Decalogue, or as Peter to wring the hearts of the three thousand, or as Paul to make Felix tremble. There is a diversity of task but the same spirit.

Often we have been awed by the sign on the traction which says, "Don't talk to the motorman"; but once I did, and was glad

of it, for he told me a few things. All others had alighted from the car and we were alone and out near the end of the line. He talked of the old days when the mules furnished the motive power for the street cars and recalled how the driver had to wrench the reins and use the whip. It took a lot of shouting and whipping and swearing to make the car go. It was a wearing business on the driver and put a careworn haggard expression upon his countenance. But now he stands in his little vestibule with his hand upon the lever, and as this friendly motorman said to me, "It is a mighty comfort to know that there is more power here than I can possibly use." How wonderfully fascinating it is that one may hold such a power right under his thumb! He need use no whip nor speak sharply. He does not even wonder if he can get up the hill, for he knows that at the touch of his hand a million Samsons will leap to do his bidding. I wonder if we would be so hesitant in undertaking big enterprises for the Master if we knew that all his resources were subject to our check. It will be a great gain when we count ourselves as the Lord's

motormen and keep in vital touch with the power house. It will put tonic in our hearts to operate with the consciousness that all the omnipotence of our Lord is placed at our disposal.

## X

### HAVE A HAPPY HABIT

WE have not been in the habit perhaps of thinking of happiness as a duty, but rather as a good fortune, a lucky find, concerning which the popular idea is

“And blessed is the chap  
Into whose lap  
It may hap.”

Very different does it seem in the light of the command, “Rejoice in the Lord always.” If one of the commands of the Decalogue said, “Thou shalt not have the blues,” it would not be more direct than this.

But the Bible idea of happiness is not the daily giggle of the simpleton, or the constant grin of the fool, or the guffaw of the night reveler; but it is the by-product of that disposition which, with a heart firmly fixed in God, believes that all crooked places will be made straight and that for all who strive for it and pray for it good will be the final goal of all seeming ills—a disposition that finds

good in men and good in events. Cheerfulness is a habit which we owe to *ourselves*. It is the best preventative of ill health and conducive to good health. With a confidence that all things will turn out for the best and that all things will work together for the good of those that love God, it will bring a man to convalescence against most adverse conditions. There was good psychology and more in the confession of the Methodist who in the love feast owned up that he had been living on "Grumbling Street," where the air was bad, and the water was bad, and the house was bad, and the birds never stayed. "But," he said, "I flitted; I moved over to Thanksgiving Avenue and found the air pure and the house good and the water fine. The birds warble in the tree tops and the neighbors are most congenial." When one sets out to be a Christian he owes it to himself to avoid all counterfeits. The popular notion of religion does not do it justice. It is a tune in the minor key, played very slowly and with the tremulo stop out. It supposes that all good things are to be given up now for the sake of a good time in the sweet by and by.

It regards Christianity as something to be endured rather than something to be enjoyed. The popular idea of religion is untrue. It is not a requiem, but a pæan of victory. "Normalcy" is a word that has come into recent use. When the mind is normal it is a pleasure to think. When the digestion is normal it is a pleasure to eat. When the Christian disposition is normal it is "rejoicing in the Lord." That is its healthful state. If one's religion agrees with him, if it fits him, if it is acting well, it is characterized by joyfulness. But if it is a source of annoyance, if it is always in the road, if it is so much burden to carry or so much disagreeableness to be "put up with" for the sake of a dividend of joy in the future, religious life in that condition is abnormal.

Now, it is not trouble that makes folks unhappy, it is the low tone in which it catches them. One day a person may be driven almost to distraction by the buzzing of a blue-bottle fly on the window pane, but another day no notice whatever will be taken of the same performance. The difference in nervous tone accounts for the difference in effect. It is similarly true in

mental and spiritual condition. What today may weigh a ton may not weigh an ounce to-morrow, but it is downright inappropriate for a Christian to allow trouble to catch him so unprepared and lacking the shock absorbers of a large manhood.

It is humiliating for one to have to knuckle down to the little cares and attritions of life. Why will we let petty cares command us and make us deny our religion? When Sydney Smith was very old, a friend wrote inquiring after his health. His reply was, "With the exception of three mortal diseases I am otherwise quite well." You are supposed to have a power within you that will give you victory and rejoicing in the midst of daily cares. You are supposed to be serene when others are disturbed. You are supposed to be sweet and cheerful amid circumstances which would be dispiriting to those who have no faith power. "The Lord is my strength and song," said an ancient apostle of good cheer. How can that be? Certainly only when one has been set "in tune with the Infinite." I am told that some folks do not enjoy the "Hallelujah Chorus," and I can easily understand

that. Before anyone can enjoy the "Hallelujah Chorus" he must have a little hallelujah chorus within him. "Rejoice in the Lord always." How can I do it when the factory is shut down and I am out of work? How can I do it when the crop has failed and there is the prospect of a hard winter? I was awakened at three o'clock this morning by the singing of the birds. Out among the trees they were singing before breakfast. They were singing, though they did not know where their next meal was to come from. They were singing cheerily just as if they had been reading the New Testament and understood what it means when it says, "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." I stood on the street watching faces of passing people, to note, if possible, the one who seemed the happiest. I decided it was not the man who was going down street to business, for he had on his face the anxiety for the dollar he was "going to make." It was not the man coming back, for he had on his face a troubled concern for the dollar he had lost. So far as the

countenance was an index, the happiest person to be seen on that corner was a woman sitting by her little fruitstand knitting. And so it has been in all history. We find Nero grouchy and unhappy although sitting on a throne. We find Haman, though given the first place in the kingdom, yet fretting himself to death because one little Jew would not tip his hat or bow down to him. He was only "one bow short" yet unhappy. But in contrast we find Paul and Silas singing in a prison at midnight because of a power of soul to which the world was a stranger. The optimistic religion of the Lord Jesus is exactly what men need when they are not suited with what they have. Happiness is a mood which we owe to each other. Would you go into a sick-room and advise the patient of many cases similar to his that proved fatal? It would likely help him to hear of recoveries. Cheerful words are "more soothing than chloral, more stimulating than cognac, more tonic than bitters." Many sick folks recover under the influence of cheerful surroundings. Cheerfulness is a duty which a man owes to his *family*. Up at the store or the

office he has required himself to "look pleasant" as a business policy. Ofttimes perhaps he has been like the man in the Scriptures of whom it is said, "His words were like butter, but there was war in his heart." Whatever his feelings, he has put on a jolly, happy mood for business reasons. However, it frequently occurs that the annoyances of the day get "dammed up." The harassments of business detail are dammed up during the day, and when the man goes home to his family in the evening the dam breaks and the domestic circle is deluged with scowl and petulance. There is nothing heroic in this performance. On the other hand, the members of the family should be in better business than that of accumulating complaints during the day to pour into the father's ear as soon as he strikes the front steps. Remember he has been answering complaints all day, and a change would be refreshing. In heaven there are no complaints, and that makes heaven. The more cheer in the home circle, the less use there will be for divorce courts. Certainly, a happy personality can stand a lot. A singing disposition that brings to the affairs of

life a rejoicing spirit will find cause for joy in many a hard experience.

Cheerfulness in service is something a Christian owes to *Jesus* as a *Master*. How would you like it if you had some one in your employ who was continually sad and unhappy while working for you, but became exhilarated and merry as soon as he began to work for somebody else? Would that not be a serious reflection on you as a master? When a Christian is discontented and dissatisfied in Christian work and life he is a poor recommendation for his Lord. He is practically saying to all prospects, "Religion will make you just as miserable as I look, and Christ Jesus is an unpleasant master to serve." What would you think if after the wedding the bride should lapse into deep melancholy? Remembering that always before the wedding day her habit was one of well-known merriment, would not all her friends have a suspicion that the match was a disappointment?

Well, now, the church is declared to be the Bride of Christ. If, therefore, we have been truly wedded to him, we will not bring dishonor upon him by doing his will with heavy-

ness of heart. "Rejoice in the Lord always." I have just been out to the County Fair which is about the biggest thing of its kind in the State. There is a good deal of psychology in an agricultural fair. The farmers from "all over" come bringing their finest products, to prove the excellence of their lands. They come bringing great ears of corn, overgrown pumpkins and beets, luscious melons, beautiful apples and pears. The women folk bring their golden rolls of butter all carved with rustic sculpture and as the thousands of spectators pass along they behold in these beautiful products the attractiveness of farming. How different would be the psychological effect, if instead of such products, one man would come from Bloom Township bringing a rag weed, another farmer would come from Sciota Township bringing a Canada thistle, and still another would come from the Center Township bringing a basket of nubbins, and they would offer these products as evidence of their skill and of the excellence of their soil! It seems to me that, as good tenants of the Great Husbandman, we owe it to him to show forth how rich he

is and how abounding in goodness. Instead of making so prominent the sacrifices and the hardships of our lives, let us show forth the positive, sweet, and beautiful fruits of the Christian vocation, such as "rejoicing in the Lord."

Now, these words will have no meaning for one who rejects the Messiah of God. If he does not believe that Jesus came to the world on a mission of ransom and rose from the grave to make our life victorious, he has a clear right to be full of gloom, to reckon life as a grand farce, and all religious endeavor useless. There is a tragic story of a famous comedian who spent his life in making others laugh but could not smile himself, and finally he went to a celebrated physician for his melancholy. The doctor said: "Your case is a very bad one. There is only one remedy. You must pray to God." "Oh," said the comedian, "then I see that my case is incurable, for I do not believe in God." It is significant that Jesus taught that true seriousness and true happiness go together. One day when he had finished a discourse to his disciples he said: "These things I have said unto you that my

joy might remain with you, and that your joy might be full." How it can be that earnestness and happiness go together, how it can be that a serious view of life and the world is also the sunniest view, he has best illustrated. To him I commend you as to the one who has the mastery of this secret and who alone can communicate it.

## XI

### THE COURIER OF THE KING

THERE is an old story of Roman courier-ship that deserves recognition in modern systems of social economics. In that ancient kingdom there was no telegraphic device for the transmission of messages and orders, such as now makes the world one neighborhood, but government dispatches were transmitted by means of mounted couriers, and persons of all kinds were required by law to show them the way. In order to effect the rapid conveyance of the emperor's orders his couriers were authorized to press into service men and horses, and even vessels. If one of these couriers should by chance lose his way in a strange mountain or valley, he had the right to order anyone he might find in the neighborhood, in the name of the emperor, to go part of the way with him and show him the way out. No excuse would relieve one of this responsibility at any time of day or night. He must quit work, leave his dinner half

eaten, or rise at the midnight hour and go when the emperor's servant called him and show him the way out of his difficulty. It was with reference to this custom that Jesus in his Sermon on a Mountain (where perhaps couriers had been lost) said to his disciples, "Whosoever shall compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain."

The right of the government courier to press other people into his service when needed makes prominent the modern claim which men have on each other. In the case of the courier he was representative of the government and the proclamation of the emperor had created the right he exercised. To be sure, there is no legal enactment making such a claim binding on us to-day and here; but as the Sermon on the Mount was not intended for one neighborhood or empire but for all time and places, it is certainly still true that men have rights in each other.

If there wanders to your door a lost child who during the sport of the day has drifted away from its own familiar street, is any law necessary to create the claim which that child has on you to show it the way home?

If on a lonely highway a helpless woman is pitched upon by vagabonds, is any legislative enactment necessary to create the claim that helpless one has on me, passing near by, to come to her relief? In such circumstances my strength is not my own; it belongs to her. I may be in a great hurry to get to the next town, but my time is not my own. A higher law than human legislators can make establishes the right she has to expect me to respond to her cries for help. But I do not overlook the fact that whoever undertook to show the way to the emperor's courier should certainly have known the way himself. Not long since I took the train for Dayton and found aboard the train a half dozen ladies of my church who were going to the same city to a missionary convention. They were considerably exercised about changing cars at a certain junction where many branches of the road met. I quieted their fears by assuring them that I was en route to the same city and all they had to do was to watch me and follow me and they would arrive at their desired destination without mistake. And, sure enough, at the junction depot I noticed them watch-

ing me, while walking back and forth and waiting for the proper train to arrive. If I entered a door or turned a corner, some of them came to see what had become of me. They had girded themselves with baggage in hand to follow me. At last the train came in and I went aboard. They, likewise, went aboard and settled themselves in comfort for the remaining journey. Presently a yard engine took hold of our car in the rear and pulled it up a half mile in the railroad yards and apparently was going to leave it there. I then ventured to inquire of the brakeman, "Does not this car go to Dayton?"

"No, sah," he replied, "this car goes to Indianapolis."

And there I was with my ardent followers awakened to the fact that their confidence had been misplaced, and I was rudely shocked by the discovery that I had proved a false guide. But as great as was my chagrin, it was a small matter compared with the awful awakening that one must have when he learns that other people have gotten on the wrong track in life or the wrong route to the eternal life by confi-

dently though perhaps unconsciously following his lead.

But now draw a little nearer to the Master's words, "Whosoever shall compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him two," and you will see in them an illustration of the Christian disposition. It is this: Do what you are compelled to do, plus. In a community like ours some things are required by the customs and standards of the community. A man living in a Christian neighborhood is required to be decent; but if a Christian at heart, he will be more than decent. He will be true and good and generous. He will go the second mile. He will be respectable, and more, too. Living in this prosperous society of folks one is compelled by his associates to present a good appearance, but the true Christian disposition will not stop satisfied with that first mile, but will go on and be *just as good as he looks*.

Living in this favored republic one is compelled to be law abiding, keep the peace, and pay taxes, but will the Christian go no further? When the republic is in peril of an armed foe, will he not be quick to stand among the volunteers, ready both with

patriotism and bullets to go the second mile?

Still better is that citizenship which, over and above legal requirements, is concerned to have the country on the side of right, and when she is in danger of moral wrong, will be as ready to strike for her honor and glory. A newer patriotism has been growing up in the hearts of our citizens, which pants, not so much to die for the country as to live for it. For example, it feels that irreligion is a menace to our country with which war will not compare. Our new patriotism believes that the Bible is the lantern which God has hung out from the heavens for this world's guidance. While it burns, it gives light and safety. When it goes out, there is decay and darkness and death. Any attempt, therefore, to put out this light is high treason. As the glory both of our flag and civilization has come through Christianity, any movement that seeks to paganize our government, secularize its Sabbaths, undermine its educational system, intoxicate its citizens, promote vice in its society or corruption in its offices, is the yell of pirates against the ship of state and

calls for patriotism as certainly as did the cannon shot against Fort Sumter. Second-mile patriotism in foreign policy and in home policy is the demand of the hour.

This principle finds many fields for urgent application. Many people feel compelled to go to church. They feel that they must do that for the sake of keeping up appearances. They must go that mile, even though it be irksome and inconvenient. But what about living the spiritual life? What about taking the religion of Christ into heart and home and business? Oh, that practical second mile! None can compel us to take it. It must be traveled voluntarily. But no earnest disciple of Jesus will stop short of it. It is the true exponent of the Christian character which is not content to stop with the letter but goes on to the spirit. It stops not with the doctrine but goes on to the new life, stops not with faith but goes on to the fruits, stops not with the form but journeys on to the power. Public opinion or policy may compel one to cover the first mile of these familiar couplets, the profession, but only genuine earnestness will advance upon the second half of the couplets,

the practical, and cover the twain. Now, it is worth remembering that Jesus gave this second-mile principle its most brilliant illustration. He did not propose to redeem the lost world, provided he could do it on a cheap scale, but he gave his life a ransom. He did not announce to a race lost in sin, "If you will come half way, I will consider going the other half," but he came all the way and covered the whole distance of separation between God and man; but have we not discovered a tendency among some of the Lord's professed disciples to do no more than they are compelled to do?

The searching genius of Rhey Thompson discovered that the great questions of many people are: "How can I be a Christian without any loss of time, without any expense, and without any inconvenience? How can I be a Christian without using my hands and without using my tongue? How can I serve God and get off with as little trouble as possible? How can I go the mile I cannot get out of going, but not an inch farther?" Either these are not the questions of a soul that is filled with the love of God or else Christ's statement of a Christian

disposition is untrue. A religion of love will not stop its program at the point where policy or pride may dictate, but it will have the spirit of the volunteer. It will seek an opportunity. It will want to give more than was expected. It will seek to surprise you with a stroke of kindness. It will go out of its way to do good. It will go the second mile. This disposition will be curative of all labor troubles. As no matter is settled until settled right, it is evident that the remedies now being applied to this social carbuncle will inflame it rather than cure. The labor question will never be settled by the laws of political economy, for political economy is heartless and selfish and proceeds on the principle of the survival of the fittest. It will never be settled by legislative enactment, for when a million men are hungry a whole supreme court full of law and a whole army of policemen cannot keep them quiet. On the other hand, it will not be settled by dynamite and anarchy. When workingmen blow up the factory they cause the bricks and timbers to fall upon their own heads. When operators throw the trolley or train from the track they injure the

cause of labor by shutting up both the hand of sympathy and the fist of monopoly more tightly. After all, was not Gladstone right in deciding from the standpoint of a statesman that the gospel of Christ is the only solution for the inequalities and woes of life? The largest soap factory in the world has tried it and has never had a strike. One cannot go through its many buildings and observe the contentment and inspiration of its thousands of employees without being persuaded that better than all other remedies for labor troubles would be one drop of the disposition of the second mile administered to each and every man. If the employer had the disposition to pay more than he is compelled to pay and the employees had the disposition to do more than they are obliged to do; if each had that much interest in the other that he lived up to the contract and more, too; if instead of the capitalist regarding the laborers as so many cattle and the laborers regarding their employer as a villainous tyrant, they would regard each other as men, who had rights in each other independent of their contract, the controversy would cease.

The labor question, moreover, is a progressive one. It is not the same question it was sixty and seventy years ago. Our fathers had to decide whether all laborers had a right to own themselves, if they could have *any* wages, if they had the right to be educated and read the Bible for themselves, and they decided these questions rightly. Our fathers went their second mile heroically. But we stand in the advanced steps they took. It may be a very much more complicated question now. It is perhaps more difficult to apply the Golden Rule in office and factory and kitchen now, but our progress is before us and not behind us, and we shall not be worthy of our fathers if we do not give the Christian disposition the right of way and go *our* second mile. But I do not forget the enchantment of all Christian service. When a Roman courier dashed up to a private citizen and pressed him into the service of showing him the way out of the woods or mountain fastness, he went because the courier represented the emperor. To refuse him was to refuse the emperor. To favor him would be accepted by the emperor as a personal favor. Does

not the King's courier ever visit you? When I was a lad there came one day a stray and homeless boy to the door of our home in southern Ohio and asked for a bit of bread. My mother must have felt that the request was a humble one, for she invited him in, gave him a warm and nourishing meal, inquired about his home and his mother, gave him a better coat and a good book to read and some kind advice. While doing more than he had asked her to do she was unconsciously going the second mile. To her the wandering lad was the King's courier, and she remembered that the King had said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me." The incident left with me an impression that has stayed with me ever since, namely, that the world needs something more than it asks and it pertains to Christian enterprise to meet the greater need. The world may ask for bread, but man cannot live by bread alone. It may ask for a dollar, but the ability to earn a dollar would be a greater gift. Men are not merely to be rescued from starvation; they are to be inspired. They are not simply to be given a night's lodging;

they are to be built up in manhood and the love of goodness.

It is too late in the world's history to turn the wheels of progress back. It is too late in the world's history for any kind of religion but the practical kind. "Ye are the salt of the earth." True enough, but an essay on "salt" read over a barrel of meat will not keep it from spoiling. If salt is to do any good, it must be rubbed in. For a similar reason the applied Christianity is the only kind that will attract attention and survive. This is simply a gospel that touches man as he is, society as it is, and the human heart as it is in all its need of the stimulus afforded by a great prospect. The time has come when we must have "second-mile" Christianity or none. The enchantment, therefore, of every gospel minister, as the flying courier of God, must be that he represents the King. As the Roman courier was heartened when he remembered that behind him were Cæsar's armies and all the resources of the empire, so the messenger of the gospel has confidence in his heart and face because he operates in the consciousness that he is doing the

King's work, and in so doing all the King's resources are pledged to his faithfulness.

Some say, "O, the world is getting worse," but Jesus says, "All power is given unto me: go ye." The church says, "We have not got the men of fire we used to have," but Jesus says: "I have not changed. I have the same power; go ye." And as I see in this modern time the couriers of the cross going every whither—over plain, mountain, and sea, some by railroad, some by vessel, some by trolley, some mounted and some on foot, but each one upbearing the sacred page—I am easily persuaded that it is the same old power which puts them "on the go" and generates in them a sanctified audacity to lay their hands upon men and claim them for Jesus Christ.

## XII

### THE WORSHIP OF WORK

WORK is one of the laws of life. It is not only a "doing" but a "being." It is a form of worship quite as acceptable unto God as the saying of prayers. It is perhaps just as much of a compliment to the Almighty as to call him by many endearing names. The individual who spends his years with nothing to do finds life a well-organized misery. Very much that has been said and written about the "wrongs of labor" has been unmindful of the truism that a "chance to work" in this world is the best that we can get. No class of people is so hard to evangelize as lazy people; people to whom a new truth is painful and the very thought of action is oppressive, people who seldom hear the gospel because of mental indolence and for the same reason seem to care for nothing but a "full supply of nonentity." However, the relation of work to the kingdom, and especially the relation of work to salvation, has often been misunderstood.

Nothing should ever be permitted to obscure the splendid fact that salvation is a gift. You cannot claim it, cannot earn it, cannot acquire it, cannot purchase it on the market. It is just handed over to you by the Giver of every good and perfect gift and becomes a possession so real that the inspired Word calls it "your own." And yet after salvation is your own, here comes the exhortation to "work out your own salvation." One does not work to get alive, but he works because he is alive. On bright days when one sees prophecies of spring-time, beholds the peeping grass and feels the breath of God in the delicious atmosphere, he says, "I feel like getting out and working in the garden." But you feel that way because you are alive. A dead man doesn't care about working in the garden. Likewise a sinner "dead in trespasses" cannot work himself into spiritual life. But it is just as plain that one may own a field, have the deed to it, and yet leave it alone. It will then become unproductive. The fact is that conversion is capital "to begin on" in the transcendent business of being a son of the living God. But it is an equal fact that sal-

vation is a gift capable of indefinite expansion. All gifts do not seem to be capable of that. One day you received a gift with which you were delighted. You showed it to your friends. You put it on and wore it, and it amounted to a great deal. But after a while another gift was received and the former one was neglected. It lost some of its luster, became tarnished, dented, and forgotten; and, finally, one day it fell down behind the trunk and you did not miss it enough to look for it. It had its biggest day when it was received, and from that day it gradually dwindled to its end. But listen: the gift of God is an expansive gift. Use it and it will grow bigger. Wear it and it will become brighter. Apply it and it will become more valuable. O what a gift! If you have it, work it.

Now, human nature cannot be said to be like a pan of good milk in which the cream always rises to the top. Both revelation and experience will bear us out in saying that the evil in a man is very liable to come to the top (or the front). Certainly, when goodness does prevail, it is not through a policy of passivity but by conquest. If we could

listen at a real confessional, we would hear one say, "I am selfish; that is my infirmity." Another would say, "I have a temper and it always has its way." Another would say, "I have to take a dram occasionally, for I have always been used to it; that is my infirmity." Another still would justify his profiteering or taking advantage because he has "to make a living." But will someone tell us what the Christian principle is for, if it is not to be applied and expanded? What is salvation's function if it will not save from what we have always been "used to"? If, as the Greek student says, you will "energize" your salvation, inconsistencies will disappear because no standing room will be left for them. An enterprising and growing city is always extending its boundaries. Real estate dealers are always busy laying out subdivisions all around the corporation that will be "near by" and yet "outside," where residents will have all the benefits but no responsibility. But every now and then periodically the city council finds it to the advantage of the city to take in the subdivisions. A vote is secured and the thing is done. Now the significance of

“working out your salvation” is practically to keep on taking in the subdivisions of your life and character. Fill up the swamps and take them in. Weed out the brier patches and take them in; plant them with the flowers of grace and truth. Bring every talent you have into the corporation. Bring every mental aptitude, every possession, and every influence you may have with men into the corporation and let them be Christianized. Work out your salvation—out and out until all the territory has been reached, until the remotest desert of your life becomes transformed by the civilization of grace and your own heart becomes a miniature of God’s own beautiful city whose streets are gold, whose gates are pearl and the throne of Christ is in the midst.

It will therefore be a great gain when every Christian is filled with the persuasion that God will hold him responsible for what he does with his conversion. If you neglect it, it will neglect you. If you keep it warm, it will keep you warm. If you energize it, it will improve. If you let it alone, it will let you alone. If you work it, it will increase. Thereby it will become more capable.

The more one knows of God the more he is capable of knowing. "To him that hath shall be given."

There was a certain citizen on our street who started to build a house; that is, he had the sand and the bricks and the timbers all brought and deposited on the lot; but, strange to say, he never went any farther. The neighbors were disappointed, for certainly they had a right to expect that he would go on and build a house, finish it, and move in and live there. God expects every one of us to build a character that will be worthy of being located on the avenue of grace. He furnishes all the material, but the material of a temple is not a temple. He expects a man to take the material which he furnishes and work it. He furnishes plans, specifications, and a foundation. Then he says, "Work this thing out." Build a "sky-scraper" according to the blue prints in Second Peter: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kind-

ness charity”—one story after another, one accomplishment after another.

There are some churches that seem to be organized on the principle that the kingdom of heaven is God's enterprise and that consequently he will do all the work. They have quite forgotten that the church is the body of Christ and that it is the function of the body to respond to the dictates of the head. If, therefore, the body sits down and does not respond to the dictates of the head, there will be no result. The churches which leave God to do all the work are the churches whose work is never done.

A beautiful English Lutheran church was being completed in our community. Its appointments within were arranged for convenience, for elegance, for beauty, and religious suggestion. One man was hammering, another was measuring, another sandpapering, another coloring. It was a pleasure to see how the workmen were all cooperating to construct a splendid piece of architecture. But one could not help thinking of the architect who was back of all the beautiful unfolding. He designed and planned all that the workmen were doing.

When they wanted to know what to do next, they had to consult the architect. His thought was breathing through it all. The architect worked in the carpenters, and the carpenters worked his thoughts out. But is not the program of all Christian work similar to this, since "It is God who worketh in you, to will and to do of his good pleasure"? But as the architect's thought will not work itself out, so the thought or pleasure of God will not work itself out in men "whether they will or no."

It would simplify the matter very much if you could start a Christian life going as you might start a clock's pendulum a-swinging and say, "Now go on and tick."

But, strange to say, the going on is not a thing that will do itself. All noble life has a mainspring. It is God working in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. But, alas! our figure breaks down because we are dealing with life, not mechanism.

There is such a thing as liberty of action in the personality, and sometimes the mainspring has to wait a long time for the tick to follow and sometimes waits in vain. Perhaps some one who reads these lines has

been resisting a conviction of duty. He has been moved by the Spirit to witness for the Master in some place or way and has not done so. How long are you going to keep the mainspring waiting?

Perhaps others are absolutely convinced of some cause they ought to assist or of some wrong they ought to resist. The impression may be from God, may plainly be his "will and pleasure," but how long are they going to keep the mainspring waiting?

Do you not know that one cannot keep God's time unless he responds promptly to the mainspring? A traveler was in a hurry but stopped to set his watch by the watch of his friend. He then saw he had plenty of time. He missed his train. Why did he miss? Because his friend's watch was too slow. As great as was the inconvenience it was a small matter compared to the fact that travelers to eternity are setting their watches by us. They do not stop and ask but unconsciously take their bearings. It is possible that they will discover too late that they have been misinformed. Oh, will it not be a grand state of things when the world, at any time, even on a foggy morn-

ing, can look in the faces of the manhood of the church and the womanhood of the church and see what time it is by God's calendar?

The two conspicuous departments of the Christian system have been called faith and works. They have no quarrel; but the Lord indicated a test by which you may know faith when you see it. You can tell a live man when you see him. You can also determine a dead man when you see him, but then a dead man is no longer a man. Likewise a dead faith is not faith any more, and "faith without works is dead." Here is a hungry man who has a claim on your sympathy. You have the means of feeding him, but instead of feeding him you stand off and say, "I believe, I believe." No, you don't.

Here is a big world to be operated in the interests of truth and purity and justice. It means every disciple's thought and prayer, time, money, and strength in his measure; but if he evades all obligations and, standing off, says, "I believe, I believe," he thereby demonstrates that he does not believe, for the demonstration of faith

is fruitage. Here is a peculiar-looking seed. How is it possible to find out what kind of a seed it is? Plant it. As it grows up out of the ground one may look at the sprout and make a guess as to what it is, but cannot tell positively. It develops trunk, boughs, and branches, and leaves. These things were all contained in the original seed held between a man's thumb and finger. Still he could not determine what variety of seed it was. But one year there was a single apple that escaped the insects. As it begins to ripen and blush under the yellow blazes of autumnal sunshine it proves to be a Northern Spy. There was no telling what variety it was until it made an apple. And here is faith. It too is a seed. It is an insignificant affair, but the whole Christian life with its beautiful possibilities is wrapped up in it; yet it can only be known to be genuine faith when it fruits into good works. We are not told that God will take a man's faith and put it under a microscope to learn if it is genuine faith, but will look at the fruitage of the life for demonstration. The basis of all judgment, he says, will be "Inasmuch as ye did it," and "Inasmuch as ye did it

not." If, therefore, the Almighty is shut up to telling by a man's works, his fruitage, whether he is a Christian or not, it would not be expected that a mortal man could tell by any less graphic or convincing evidence.

## XIII

### WHEN THE MIND FALLS IN LOVE

HAVE you not often been impressed with the intimacy between thought and action? All outside action is but the visible expression of inside thinking. This is no less true of evil actions than it is of virtuous action. It has been said that the best way to kill a bill which has been introduced in Congress is to "kill it in committee." It is equally true that the only, as well as the best, way to kill a mischievous act is to kill it in the mind. There was one place and one moment when a bucket of water would have saved Chicago in 1871. But that opportunity passed and square mile after square mile of houses and millions upon millions went up in smoke. And what is the difference between a good and a bad man but this? It does not consist in one having an evil thought and the other one not having it. Wicked thoughts come to life in the godliest of people, but the difference is this: the good

man puts the extinguisher on the spark and the evil man allows it to kindle and burn on until life's beautiful prospects are burned up and life's great city of possibilities is but smoking and blackened ruins. A man by the name of Reed had the same opportunity to betray his country that Benedict Arnold had. The offer was made to both. The same thought was in the mind of both, but Reed quenched it while Arnold nursed it. Every bad thing wants a thought. That is all it asks at first. In giving his religious experience David says, "I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto thy testimonies," but he never would have done the turning without thinking. Turning and thinking go together, but the thinking comes *first*.

There is, therefore, an unmistakable intimacy between thought and character. It is worth a great deal to have something worth thinking about, for whatever a man keeps his mind upon will give complexion to his soul, color to his philosophy, and tissue and blood to his life. Thus if a man keeps his mind on the low resort where men and women revel in sin, thinks over its filth

and fondles its mean stories, he will soon have no passions but the passions of a beast. But if his intellect be occupied with whatsoever things are pure, true, lovely, and of good report, he will come to a development of being that can scarcely be told. If Christianity were valuable for nothing else, it is worth espousing for the exalted themes of thought it furnishes the believer, and whether we believe it or not it may be absolutely demonstrated that our thinking is immortalizing itself in our character, as a dyer of fabrics becomes strained with his own dye-stuffs.

What a world of significance there is in the commandment "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy *mind*"! There are very many people who are convinced that there is a God, but who wish there were no God. They cannot but recognize that the fact of God is the supreme fact of the universe, but they are sorry it is so. They do not love that belief. They do not like to think about God. If they could be convinced that God is a mere vagary, they would have a celebration. They would ring bells and blow whistles and beat drums and

kindle bonfires on every hilltop, because then they could do wrong with impunity, and without being troubled about any future accounting. But, oh, the Christian not only believes that God is, but is *glad* that he is. He is persuaded that God is all powerful and is glad that he is. He is fond of thinking about him. God is the sunshine of his life. When the mind is in love with God it has the greatest possible encouragement to gain knowledge and discover truth. What incentive would one have to think and study and search for knowledge if he believed that all he is will return to dust? That would be like tying dumbbells to a bird's wing, and would make it hard work for faculties to fly. A depressing weight would hang heavy upon our mental wings.

"Loving with the mind is the best insurance of achievement. The folks who do things are the folks who love what they do. There was once a great lover of animals; he found out the habits of animals. There was once a great lover of flowers; he found out the secret of the flowers. There was once a great lover of butterflies; he has told us all about the butterflies. There was once

a great lover of birds; he found out the secrets of the birds and constructed the science of ornithology. Likewise the mind that is in love with God will learn the secrets of the Lord and will come to know him best. Such a one will not be content to know about him." Christianity always has been a religion of knowing.

In John's first Epistle he says that "We do know that we know him," and in one form of expression or another he says fifty-one times in one Epistle that men may know God.

Now, it is just as true of Christianity as of any other science, that every time you apply it you prove the truth of it. Astronomy as a science has to do with the movements of the heavenly bodies. The navigator applies astronomy in a practical way and by so doing is able to steer his vessel from shore to shore. Is it not evident that when the ship captain out on the midnight deep unfolds his chart and looks up into the star-clad sky and is enabled to tell where his ship is in all the watery waste, is it not evident that every time he takes an observation like that he proves that astronomy is

true? And as Christianity is the science of knowing God, is it not true that every time this knowledge is applied and worked out in daily life you have a fresh proof of the truth of the science? Every time a believer's faith in Christ enables him to conquer he proves that his faith is true. Every time a man goes down on his knees in prayer, and after that mysterious experience, rises up to life's task with a new light in his face and a new warmth in his bosom and a new strength in his arm, he proves the truth of prayer. Our religion is no exception to the rule that you may prove a truth by applying it. "He that doeth his will shall know."

If, then, in any real sense it is art life to know Raphael, if it is musical life to know Beethoven, if it is classical life to know Homer, if it is law life to know Blackstone, in a much more eminent sense it is true that "This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Referring again to the commandment "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind," the little word "all" will not permit us to forget the neces-

sity of concentration in the Christian life. Don't you understand that it takes the whole man to be a Christian? Concentration is power, always has been power, always will be power. With how many is religion only a matter of paint, a decoration, a flower in the buttonhole, something put on to make things look right rather than being the one reason why they live and the motive power of all! "What think ye of Christ?" is not an idle question in spiritual pedagogics, for he who thinks indifferently about Christ will also think indifferently about sin.

It has always been noticed that whoever does not consider Jesus a great Redeemer does not consider moral evil a very great evil.

The oppositions to exalted living are so many and so tremendous that nothing less than the consecration and the enthusiasm of the mind's love can blow them aside. During the Spanish-American War the Spanish Admiral explained his defeat by saying that his fleet was outclassed by the enemy. But let me say to any and every one who goes out in the world to meet the oppositions to a Christian life with a divided

mind: You will be simply outclassed. You will be driven ashore and stranded and compelled to pull down your flag. This fight that is going on against the "world, the flesh, and the devil" will require all your mind, as well as all your soul and strength. The love of the mind! Oh, no other one thing has so much to do in deciding how much of a Christian one will be. It is one thing to be convinced of a truth; it is quite another thing to love that truth and accept it. You might admit the argument for Christianity without admitting Christ. He will not reach any farther into your life's program than you make room for him. The shoemaker does not expect or try to drive the peg into the sole of the shoe without first making room for it with his awl. We must make *room* for the gospel. The preacher can never drive it in. We let it in, and just how much the mind loves that gospel will determine how large a place we make for it and how much it will do for us.

A dear friend of mine living in the country took me out one day to look at a certain field in which he had great confidence. He declared that he would rather part with all

the rest of the farm than part with that one field. It had such fertility that in all the years he had owned it, it had never failed to surpass his expectations. But now let me find an earnest student of truth whose mind loves to think of God, loves to discover him, whether in human dispositions or wayside blossoms, and I will show you a rich soil where you can plant the gospel and always count on a grand result. A splendid nobility of character is the unfailing product when a loving mind and gospel seed meet.

What is called happiness must always flow out of such a mind, for we have to remember that happiness does not flow into a man but flows out of him. When the Master said, "Blessed are the pure in heart," he did not refer to the muscular organ that pumps blood into the arteries. The only value of a figure of speech is the kernel inside of it. The idea inside of the Master's beatitude is, Blessed are the pure in mind, Blessed are the pure in conscience, Blessed are the pure in motive, Blessed are the pure in thought life and affectional life. Let us accept it, therefore, as one of the necessities of clear thought as well as a certainty of

God's Word that one's happiness cannot be separated from what he is. Milton makes his devil to say, "Wherever I fly is hell, myself am hell," and someone has suggested with equally good philosophy that he might have made his angel to sing, "Wherever I fly is heaven, myself is heaven," for not even golden streets and blooming gardens and ambrosial fruits could constitute a sufficient substitute for character in building a paradise.

## XIV

### "TAKE THE LONG BELT"

IN a certain city of size and importance, the street-car system is arranged in "belt lines." When first visiting this city and wishing to do some sight-seeing, "Information" asked: "How much do you want to see? If you take the Short Belt, you will see some portions of interest, but you will see very much *more* if you take the Long Belt." One of the children spoke up and said she had to write a paper for "Rhetoricals" on "City Life," whereupon "Information" advised, "By all means take the 'Long Belt.'" One of the party said, "We can take the 'Short Belt' and get back in time for dinner," but to this it was responded, "We can get dinner any day, but to-day we have come to see the city." And so for these and many other reasons we took "The Long Belt." Passing strange that we should years afterward go to this same city to live, and that the place of our residence was located on the most remote spot of this car

line, and that during our stay there, whenever we wanted to go anywhere, or when we wanted to go home, we had to take the "Long Belt."

This wayside experience has become a parable of life and suggests an inquiry into the philosophy of the Christian movement in the world. An old adage declares, "The world was not made in a day," and many times it has been an offset to discouragement, in promoting moral reforms and making the world better.

To take a populous people, used to a certain habit of thinking and living, and so change this people that its personalities become established in another habit of thinking and living, is not a work that can be finished before sundown; but it is a work that needs to be begun instantly, followed vigorously, and kept up persistently. You must "take the Long Belt."

Time is an essential factor in accomplishing everything worth while. We are living in an age of very rapid movement. It is possible now to do some things in days which formerly required years for their doing. Sky-scrappers are erected in a few

months, oceans are crossed quickly, and the country is traversed by the sleeper in the night, so that the traveler may arrive in the metropolis for business hours the next morning. Everywhere there is speed. Perhaps the power to work miracles in the transportation and mechanical world has begotten a feverish impatience with slow methods in other departments of life. Why may we not have equal swiftness in mental culture? There are frequent advertisements in the newspapers offering remarkable "short cuts" to knowledge, skill, and accomplishments. One notice advertises "The Art of Music Taught in Ten Lessons." Another reads, "Elocution Made Easy." Still another assures the reader that he may learn to "write and speak French or Italian in ten weeks." Even lawyers may be turned out in a few months by the secret process of a correspondence school, while favors without number, formerly requiring a tedious process, are now done for you "while you wait." The age has become furiously impatient with delay and with slow methods. Boys want to leave school even before the eighth grade and

clamor for permission, and then afterward will say, as a noted business man said in mature life, "I would give ten thousand dollars if my father had not listened to me and permitted me to quit school when I did."

There is a picture in my mind, imprinted there in my boyhood days. It is the picture of my father cutting the oats with the customary "cradle" of those days. Every once in a while he would stop and whet the scythe. It seemed to me he did this altogether too frequently, and I presumptuously suggested to him that he would go faster if he did not "whet" so much.

"No," he replied, "that is the surest way to get through. As the edge is sharper it will cut more oats." It is exactly this way in the work which the mind has to do. The whetting of the mind which the schools will do is not so much lost time but it is time gained. The boy who fails in the junior year invites this failure by a lack of preparation in the elementary courses. Likewise the surveys of successful men of to-day make conspicuous the fact that the educated man, the trained man, the prepared man wins in the contests of life. Wherever we

have a chance to give any advice, therefore, it will be this: "Take the Long Belt."

Furthermore, the Bible is a witness to the fact that Christianity as a work in character and in society is cumulative.

"They go from evil to evil," says the prophet. "They go from strength to strength," says the psalmist. "We all are changed from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord," says Paul. To go from "evil to evil" is supposed to be the most natural and most common kind of progress. Let us hope it is not the case with us. We lament the contagiousness of evil, forgetting that the life of God, once implanted, becomes a leaven of a mightier power, will accumulate power, and may become as natural as evil ever was.

There is such a thing as momentum of purpose and habit. When we were boys at school the envied boy of the crowd was the one who could jump the farthest. A stick was put down or a mark was made in the ground where the jump was to begin, but the boy who made the record did not stand on that mark, but went far back of it, perhaps two hundred feet, and then ran with all

his might up to the mark. The momentum thus acquired carried him through the air much farther than he could have jumped without the accumulated momentum stored up by the long run.

We are glad to believe that, beginning in youth to run the Christian race, one may be so committed to a righteous purpose that he acquires a momentum irresistible, so that when he meets temptation he goes right through it; when solicitations to evil hail him he is going too fast to stop. A momentum of character will carry him unharmed through many snares of life. We can lay our hand on many an individual for whom it is harder to do wrong than it is to do right. If he should be thrown from the track of a righteous purpose, it would not be unlike a planet in the firmament flying from its orbit. There are three fascinating romances with which we are familiar. Consider the living germ. It will sprout, bud, blossom, exhale fragrance, and ripen into fruitage. This is the romance of nature. Consider the baby in its cradle. It will smile, then will walk, then will articulate, and soon will imitate. This is the romance of the home.

Consider also the Christian developing, going from "strength to strength," "tribulation working patience, patience experience, and experience hope." This is the romance of the kingdom of God. Every bit of knowledge gained makes easier the gaining of other bits of knowledge. It is wonderful that one can learn an alphabet; but it would be still stranger if, having learned an alphabet, one did not go on and learn others. It is said that every new truth learned is an alphabet to some higher truth. Everything done for Christ's sake brings to view a dozen other things which might be done. Opportunities multiply as the door to one of them is opened. To know God is our opportunity, but it cannot be done in the twinkle of an eye. It must be allowed to grow on you. I remember the first time I ever saw Niagara, I did not think it was much. Frankly, I was disappointed in Niagara at first sight. But I walked around and listened and it began to grow on me. I saw it from the American side, then from the Canadian side; saw it from above where I stood and looked down the awful plunge; saw it from below

where, clad in waterproof, I ventured up into the mist. I saw it from the rapids, and then the whirlpool, until finally I was overwhelmed with its tremendousness, so that for two days afterward, when I was hundreds of miles away, the roar of the cataract was still in my ears. Likewise a knowledge of God is cumulative. He must grow on you. You must linger in his presence. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." Having learned of God from the standpoint of prosperity, you have only begun. You still must learn of him from the standpoint of adversity. Will you presume to grasp in a moment what the angels have never yet been able to comprehend? This is no little affair. You must take the "Long Belt." It is an education and a fortune to know God at all, but to know him unto perfection is the industry of eternity.

I confess to have learned a great lesson from Dr. Lyman Abbott concerning Life. Substantially it is this: There is an outer life which we observe. There is an inner life of which we are conscious. There is also an innermost life which lies back of con-

sciousness. For example, one may read the notes of a musical selection and sing the same. Then he may learn this selection so well that he may sing it without the notes, but yet he follows the notes in his imagination. He may, however, become so familiar with this musical composition that he can sing it without the notes and without imagining them. He sings then as the bird sings. The bird does not sing from memory, but simply sings what is in him. It is an expression of subconscious life. Now, there are certain tendencies which may and do become strong in age. These remain after memory and other mental powers have failed. My mother's lifelong passion was anxiety for her children. In old age, when she had forgotten everything else, this ruling passion was still strong. If it depended upon memory, it would have been forgotten as everything else was forgotten. But it was written down in her subconsciousness. It is not the objective of scholarship to tell the shelf and the book and the page where everything can be found. Dr. Abbott in this connection tells of a New York judge of his acquaintance who seldom in his de-

cisions cites an authority by volume and page. The principles of the law are so wrought into his being that he decides the greatest questions which are submitted to him according to principles which have become a part of his nature. It is grandly possible for Christianity in human nature to amount to that much. The highest kind of Christian experience, therefore, is when the subconsciousness has been so shaped and vitalized by the Lord Jesus and his Holy Spirit that the tendency to righteousness is there, and the man gravitates toward righteousness even when surprised by a situation.

It is the case, perhaps, with most of us that when we do right we first have to stop and think about it. But no man is yet what he ought to be until he does right without thinking about it. He does it because that tendency is written down in his subconsciousness, is supreme, is quickest to assert itself, and is the first impulse to leap forth when circumstances have opened the door. But to have Christianity to amount to that much in your personality is not the work of a moment or a day. Again, it is evident, you must take the "Long Belt."

When the world is going so fast and quicker methods are found for doing many things, there are some, perhaps many, who, like the editor of a famous magazine, think that preachers are slow and churches are slow and missionaries are slow and that they ought to save the world quickly. Steam power has had some very swift developments, but does it bring on the reign of goodness any faster? Electricity is mighty smart and can get there quickly, but does it have a quickening effect on piety and consecration to the spiritual rescue of the race? Sometimes I wish things were so arranged that all we would need to do to enlighten the world would be to press a button, or that by moving an iron lever we could throw religious enthusiasm into high gear.

The gospel is proclaimed on one corner, but wickedness holds sway on a dozen other corners, and the days and years are passing. It is suggested that perhaps the standard is too high; that the cross ought to be taken out of religion and some other disagreeable things eliminated to make it more to the liking of the average taste. All this is nothing new. Moses had discouragement, but kept

on. Elijah had it, and Daniel had it, but they kept on, and all down the history of goodness there have been periods when men threw up their hands and said, "The cause is gone"; but it isn't gone yet.

All the discouragement is on the human side, and that side alone, with eternity at its disposal, could never make the human spirit triumph. On the divine side there is no failure, and it is said, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." Some things are more important to God than time. He cares more to have things done well than to have them done quickly. Everything would indicate that he favors the program of taking the "Long Belt," for to him one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. He created the earth, but took plenty of time. He made the Bible, but took two thousand years to do it. Is it not just as much inspired as if he had done it all some morning before breakfast? He promised a Messiah, but waited four thousand years before he sent him. He waited until men had tried all their schemes—waited until Egypt had tried her learning, waited until Greece had tried her art, waited until Rome

had tried her power, and when all had demonstrated their inability to make the human spirit triumph, the Promised One came, and he came in the fullness of time, the ripeness of events.

"He that believeth shall not make haste" is the inspired word of a prophet, which means, in other words, that impatience is a symptom of unbelief. The times just now are "panicky" because men have lost faith. Discontent and fretfulness appear in the work of the Kingdom because the workers lose faith in the outcome. Many are impatient with inconspicuous duties, forgetting that the life of blessing is not a matter of great parts, many applauding spectators and Jupiter orbits, but a matter of principles and "faithfulness to that which is least." No great sphere is needed for the expression of greatness. A modest, "wee daisy" was opportunity sufficient for a Robert Burns to manifest great genius. A "single string on a wooden shoe" was enough for a Paganini, and a few inches of canvas were sufficient for a Raphael, for the expression of great talent; and a dim corner, a humble task, and a constant faith,

with only God and the angels as spectators, are sufficient to develop and reveal real greatness of soul.

A great believer can afford to meet defeat now and then. He can stand it, for he knows it is too late in the world's history to turn the wheels of the Kingdom back. A great believer can afford to be patient, for he lives in the persuasion that "all things are working together for good" and to actualize that "far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves." He is on the "Long Belt."

## XV

### SELF-STARTERS

ONE day I stood on the pavement by the curb and talked with a friend who was seated in his new automobile. And when our conversation was finished and I saw that he wanted to be off, I said to him, "Do not bother getting out; I will crank your machine for you."

"Oh, no," he answered, "it is a self-starter."

It was the first I had seen, and I looked at it with admiration and said, "I wish it belonged to my church; I have need of self-starters." Since then I have had the feeling that if I ever bought a motor machine I would get the starter first. It is an accomplishment superb in mechanics to own an automobile that is a self-starter; but to have a church of a thousand members and all of them self-starters would be a far greater thing under the sun. For self-starters in doing good and in the King's service there

is a wide, wide field of invitation where the occupants are not crowded.

What a Sunday school that would be where all the teachers and officers were self-starters! What a congregation that would be where the pastor and visiting committee would not need to go around and crank folks up in order to get them started! What a grand prayer meeting we would have every week if every member of the church had a self-generated desire to come. On a certain Sunday night the weather was rainy and the people stayed home from church. Why? The weather was bad. On Monday the weather was still worse, but everybody went to business. On Tuesday night there was a big social function appointed, but, of course, the weather was too bad, as the rain continued. Did the people remain indoors? Hardly. The men telephoned for taxis and took their wives to the social event. The rain continued the next day and the next night, which was prayer meeting night, but did the members of the church call the taxis to take their families to prayer meeting? Not exactly. Why not? They will agree that the prayer meet-

ing has to do with the most important matter. If on some prayer meeting night, when a rain storm suddenly came up, the people of the world should call all the garages for taxis to come and take them to some big social event, and should learn to their dismay that all the taxis in town were engaged to take church members to prayer meeting, it would do more good than a month of preaching. An event like that would make more people think than ten years of beautiful weather on prayer meeting night. It would be an evangel. It would show that there were some Christian people in town whose self-starters were in good working order. What a delight a self-starting constituency would be to the Finance Committee! Instead of cranking up the "supporters" of the church with an exhortation, and then with a begging letter, and again with a "second notice," and then again with "an every-member canvass," and finally cranking them all over again with an oyster supper, every member would be a self-starter, only waiting for a chance to give until benevolence would become an exhilaration.

Now, to make a little closer approach to sobriety and to make a wider observation of the working of this principle, one of the most impressive things in history is the way that Christianity has started things going, started nations on the way to power and influence, and started men on a better career. In whatever land this wonderful starter has been installed it has started industry itself upon a rapid speed of development. What the sunbeams of May have been to the waiting vegetation, Christianity has been to the sleeping energies of the human race. It has thrown the shuttles that have weaved the marvels of the world. On a train one summer day, going through the fertile Sacramento valley, I conversed with a returned missionary. He had just described to me how in the idolatrous country from which he came the farmers would go out into their fields with a sickle and reap their grain a handful at a time. Just then we looked out of the car window and saw the reapers at work in the wheat fields of the Sacramento valley. Machines drawn by sixteen horses were cutting the wheat and threshing it and sacking the grain all at the same time!

What was that? Industry living, growing, advancing. But that was only an incident. Put it alongside the fact that to-day, at this writing, America is bridging the Atlantic to send food to starving Russia and we have a practical suggestion of what Christianity means to industry. Moreover, was it ever known in history that a pagan idolatrous nation organized relief expeditions to save from starvation a distant and uncongenial people?

A "self-starter"? That's what the gospel hope is and that is the way it acts when it is given its place in anyone's life. It was uniformly true when Jesus was on the earth that in his presence people felt themselves new. It had that effect upon Zacchæus. He had been a rascal so long that he had given up the idea of being any better than his reputation called for. But when he looked into the face of Jesus he was stirred with the hope that goodness was possible to him. And the woman who touched the hem of his garment had first looked into his face and had her expectation aroused. How much the world needs to look into the face of the great Nazarene and get a new out-

look for itself! The face of the heathen is dull. The fatalistic pagan is lacking the pull of a great prospect. I have visited the homes of heathenism and noted their lack of a great impulse. Then the good missionary said, "Come with me," and he took me to visit some of his native Christian homes. As soon as the door was opened I beheld the new life that was mirrored in the faces of the Christian family.

Human character under divine quickening has developed in surprising quarters. The old Roman slave, the ancient Briton and Scandinavian were developed into "beautiful types of service." No one ever knew what was in a violin until a Paganini got a hold of it. No one knew what was in human nature until Jesus got a hold of it. We are told that in southern Africa to-day Christ is bringing out of men what they never dreamed was in them. It is fair to ask that if all the prospects which Jesus has put into Life were subtracted, what would be left worth having? Is there any other system that can offer a hope worth while? Mr. Huxley, who was perhaps the most reliable exponent of evolution, said in so

many words, "Evolution encourages no millennial prospects." But we defy any one to candidly read the New Testament and not have millennial prospects awakened. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be." What can compare with this as a *starter* of life on a higher plane? What can equal it in making the thought life of the world and the soul life of the world to sparkle and with deeper meanings run?

Have you not / been forcibly impressed with the vitalizing effect of Christian love? Another name for the same thing is "The Holiness of Helpfulness." Mr. Ruskin in one of his books says that the most expressive name of God is the "Helpful One," and this name in our Saxon means the "Holy One." The "Holiness of Helpfulness," therefore, is a high-grade mainspring of the Christian life; or, continuing our original metaphor, it is a most efficient "self-starter" for the kind of a life that is applauded by men and angels. This starter, however, may be easily "short-circuited." It is most effectually hindered by selfishness. I was on the train one day with a lot of city folks

who were going out to a Chautauqua resort to hear a distinguished lecturer. After the entertainment was over, the train backed up to the platform for the return journey. Such a scramble for seats! Everybody wanted to get the best seats. Men ran over women and children in their determination to get the best seats. One man reversed a back and taking possession of two seats, fenced off his claim with an umbrella. A lady of considerable size and fussiness "set" her basket down in one seat and "set" herself down in another seat, and what comfort she and the others had in watching the late comers go through the cars looking in vain for a seat! I happened to know that the most of these people were respectable church people, but in a moment of forgetfulness they let selfishness have the right of way and made a graphic showing of how far away they were from the disposition of Him who pleased not himself.

When Phillips Brooks was once starting for Europe one of his friends remarked that if he brought to America any new religion he would have to pay the duty on it. In reply he said, "No, any religion popular

enough to import to this country would have no *duties attached*." The remark was more than a pleasantry, and was a keen reference to those who regard the whole outfit of the church as especially for their own comfort and in woeful disregard of the crowd outside. Hamilton Fish once asked a noted judge for a contribution to help build a monument to Washington. The judge refused, but said he had a "profound respect for Washington and always carried him in his heart."

Mr. Fish replied, "If you carry him in your heart, he is in a mighty tight place."

These types of kingdom "promoters" would be a poor dependence, if *they* were all. Salvation of the world in this generation or any other generation depends on the discovery that Christianity is a religion which "won't keep." The thing to do is to spend it, use it, give it away—indeed, the only way you *can* keep it is to give it away. Love becomes vitalizing and quickening only when it becomes concrete in the "holiness of helpfulness." Is the church a light? Then it must flash its beams across the dark wave. Is the church a witness? Then it

must tell what it knows. Is the church a lifeboat? Then it must pull for the wreck. The love that is real will not fail to "start" something. It is not a caress, but is life-giving. I think it takes a mighty love to serve God in some places. We think it hard to serve God in our community or in our city. What would you think if you were in a country where everybody worshiped images, a nominal Christian country, where, for example, in time of drought the people prayed to the image of the Virgin Mary for rain; and if the rain did not come, they would take the image of the Virgin down and give her a whipping because she is not attending to her job? There is such a country. And if after this she does not bring rain they put her down in a well to punish her and keep her there until it rains. Then they bring the image up again and put it on a pedestal and have a great festival of worship, smiting their breasts and crying, "Hail, Mary, mother of God!"

We think *we* have a hard time promoting a spiritual religion in our church, but little conceive of the damper which an atmosphere of image worship creates. Certainly, the

missionary must have a "*self-starter*" in perfect condition, and of remarkable power, for it sets him going whither other folks do not want to go and where it seems most distasteful to stay.

When a lad in the primary department I could not understand why my oldest brother wanted so much to go to India and leave "us." There was frequently a package arriving at our house from his strange mission field. It contained Indian trinkets, funny little shoes, and jewelry with a god or two. His letters and boxes from the banks of the Ganges constituted my first lessons in missions. Many years later, when he was back home and I was older and studying to be a preacher, I said to him, "Brother, tell me in ten words the supreme reason for taking the gospel to heathen people." His answer was: "As you multiply their light you increase their chances." Since then our government has recognized light as an element of safety. It sent an army of school teachers to the Philippines to make the inhabitants safe. When we were boys the jewelry stores put great iron shutters over the windows of their establish-

ments as night came on. With great iron bolts that were run through and fastened on the inside the shutters were made secure. That was their idea of making things safe. Now it is different. If you walk along by those same jewelry stores at night at the present time, you will see no iron shutters, but you will see the store brilliantly illuminated from one end to the other. That is the latest idea of safety. There was once a congressman—and many like him—who thought, perhaps honestly, that the heathen would be safer if kept in ignorance and in the dark; that they would be less likely to be lost if they did not know any better; but Christ's plan is illumination. Turn on one jet of truth after another. So valuable are these jewels of humanity that he is asking you and me to help multiply their chances.

## XVI

### THE NEW UNIVERSE AND ITS CHAMPION

THOMAS CARLYLE once said, "Six thousand years of effort and strife are behind us." But may we not truly say, "A universe is behind us and a universe is before us"? We are living upon the past and for the future. Our every life is the case of the eager landowner who built his house on the line between the farm which was his and the farm he was hoping some time to possess. The place of our residence is "on the line" between the well known and the unknown, "on the line" between the Egypt of what we are and the Canaan of what we ought to be; "on the line" between the commonplace Real and the enchanted Ideal, "on the line" between the Universe Old and the Universe New.

Every realm has its champion. Liberty suggests Washington. Massacre suggests Nero. Philosophy suggests Plato and theology suggests Paul. But there is an

empire wider than these according to surveys up to date. It is the *Universe of the New*; and when I ask to learn the champion of this undiscovered country the unmistakable reply comes from Revelation: "And he that sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

As the champion of this realm of the New, Jesus is the Renewer of the human spirit. Has he not offered to give rest to the burdened and purity to the sinful? Has he not advertised as the *heart renovator* and said, "Here come with your withered souls and I will make them as good as new"? When a cyclone sweeps across the country we may follow in its track and behold prostrate forests, fallen towers, and ruined homes strewn all along the way. What shall we say when Jesus has passed the breath of his spirit over a human soul? Witness Saint Paul's answer when he declares, "Behold, old things have passed away and all things have become new." What is this I see? New landscapes of Hope and Prospect. What is this? A new reason why a man lives and why he ought to live well. What is this? A grander

meaning blushing in the dawn, written on the sky, speaking from the stars, "A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass, a deeper sapphire melts into the sea."

A lamp peddler once strolled along the streets of an ancient city crying: "Who will exchange old lamps for new ones? Who will exchange old lamps for new ones?" And the people flocked out from their dwelling houses, bringing their broken and tarnished wares to make a speculation. I am only a humble peddler of the gospel of Jesus Christ, but I tell you of a splendid bargain, for by him I am authorized to cry, "Who will exchange old hearts for new ones?" "I will take away that stony heart and give you a heart of flesh." Who will exchange old ideas for new ones? old inclinations for new ones? old pleasures for new ones? Who will exchange the lamp of ever-extinguishing death for the lamp of ever-brightening life. Who will exchange? Wonderful! overmastering! Stupendous speculation!

As the champion of this realm of the New, Jesus has made us believe that there will be many surprises and disclosures at the

final judgment. No scheme of philosophy is more intensely studied in this world than the "philosophy of clothes." The author of *Sartor Resartus* discussed it. And Professor Teufelsdroch, whom he makes to speak forth that strange mass of words, at least makes us understand the fact that underneath society there are mysterious events continually happening which are not made known to the unsuspecting citizen. There is much crookedness behind screens and aprons, which on the public street seems straight enough. What a man seems to be and do is not always a sufficient index of what is buttoned up under his coat. But garments do fade and wax old and wear out and so will every concealment of human thought and action. Life's masquerade will go on all night. We will talk with people we do not know, shake hands with villains under gloves, and look upon supposed "kings and queens." But when the midnight bells strike off the *end of time* and eternity tips the morning hills there will be a pulling off of masks and a rending of veils and a removal of false faces. In that event every dark corner shall be ex-

posed and every secret thing made known, for he who sits upon the throne shall take hold of the world's mask and lift it and say, "Behold, I make all things new."

Moreover, the great Day of Disclosure will render an explanation for every event of earth, that was probed for solution but in vain. All the fogs that ever hung over mysterious causality will be unlocked. That empty laudanum bottle will find its long sought "why." That discharged derringer pistol which was found with blood stain on the silver, that midnight leap from the canal bridge into the water will make known their terrible secrets. All the mysteries of London Bridge will be brought out for the world to view under the glare of the Judgment torch. All the verdicts of "circumstantial evidence" will be revised, when time shall cease to be a circumstance, when the archives of Fact will be broken open and He who sits upon the throne says, "Behold, I make all things new."

But I am persuaded that, in the light of eternity and through Him who is the champion of the realm of the new universe, we shall discover the errors of all the ages.

Men have long been hunting for wisdom. With telescope they have gone up. With microscope they have gone down. With chemist's test they have gone in. No doubt they have learned many things. But there are many theories in textbooks, many explanations of phenomena, much knowledge which we boastingly proclaim that angels laugh at and will be shown to be erroneous when the testing rays shall fall upon them. With the paddles of theological inquiry we have been trying to strike clear across the ocean of Revelation, but one day when we look back we will discover we have only moved a few feet from the shore.

I once had a dream which was not all a dream perhaps. I was in a new country. It was hung with bewitching scenery, but it was not Switzerland. It had a blooming soil, but it was not Italy. There were luscious fruits hanging pendant from the bending limbs, but it was not California. There were birds of rarest plumage holding concert in the treetops, but it was not in the tropics. Picturesque valleys it had, but it was not Yosemite; seas, but not Gennesaret. And what with theplash of fountain, the

carol of bird, and the benediction of a fragrant air, it was indeed a Land of Wonder. In the midst of the vision, an angel touched me on the shoulder and said, "Follow me and I will show you the wonders of the Kingdom." He led me up to a throne and showed me a ponderous book that was chained to its base. The name of that book was "The Mistakes of Earth Corrected." With the help of the angel the book was opened and I saw on one page some very familiar theories in human science and on the opposite page the true theories of the same phenomena and I said, "Why, how badly we missed it!"

On another page were recorded some old tenets in human philosophy, together with certain doctrines in religion, and on the opposite pages was written the true orthodoxy, and I said, "How badly we missed it!" Turning other pages of the great book, we came to the Bible itself, with every verse and chapter. On one side was given our explanation of each paragraph and on the other side was given the true explanation, and now and then I noticed how widely they differed, and I said, "How badly we missed

it!" And the angel said, "Old things have passed away." And He that sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

Perhaps this dream was not altogether inspired. But let us be thankful for that cherished angel who comes to tired souls and assures them of a coming eternity, where discovery does await the weary brain, and where a new opportunity will be given for the fulfillment of all our longings.

Does it not sometimes seem that life is too short to undertake the excellent and the high? Does it not sometimes seem that every man's career is halted before he comes to the realization of his dream? The astronomer drops his telescope when he is just drawing a focus upon some unfound star. The painter must drop his pallet when he has but made the outline of his masterpiece. The musician must forsake his lyre just at that moment of arriving rapture when he has caught the first strains of an unborn melody. Shall not the dead artist ever finish his picture? Shall not Kepler one day behold the star for which he so wearily but vainly swept the heavens? Shall not the

completed anthem ever ripple through the soul of the silent minstrel? Shall not the Christian find a shore where is built the fulfillment of his faith and where his character may continue its upward march? At the close of the first installment of a serial story these words appear: "To be continued"; and I can but think that every unfinished noble task, dropped at that supreme moment when it seemed so desirable to live, will have another opportunity for fulfillment during the endless lapse of God's day.

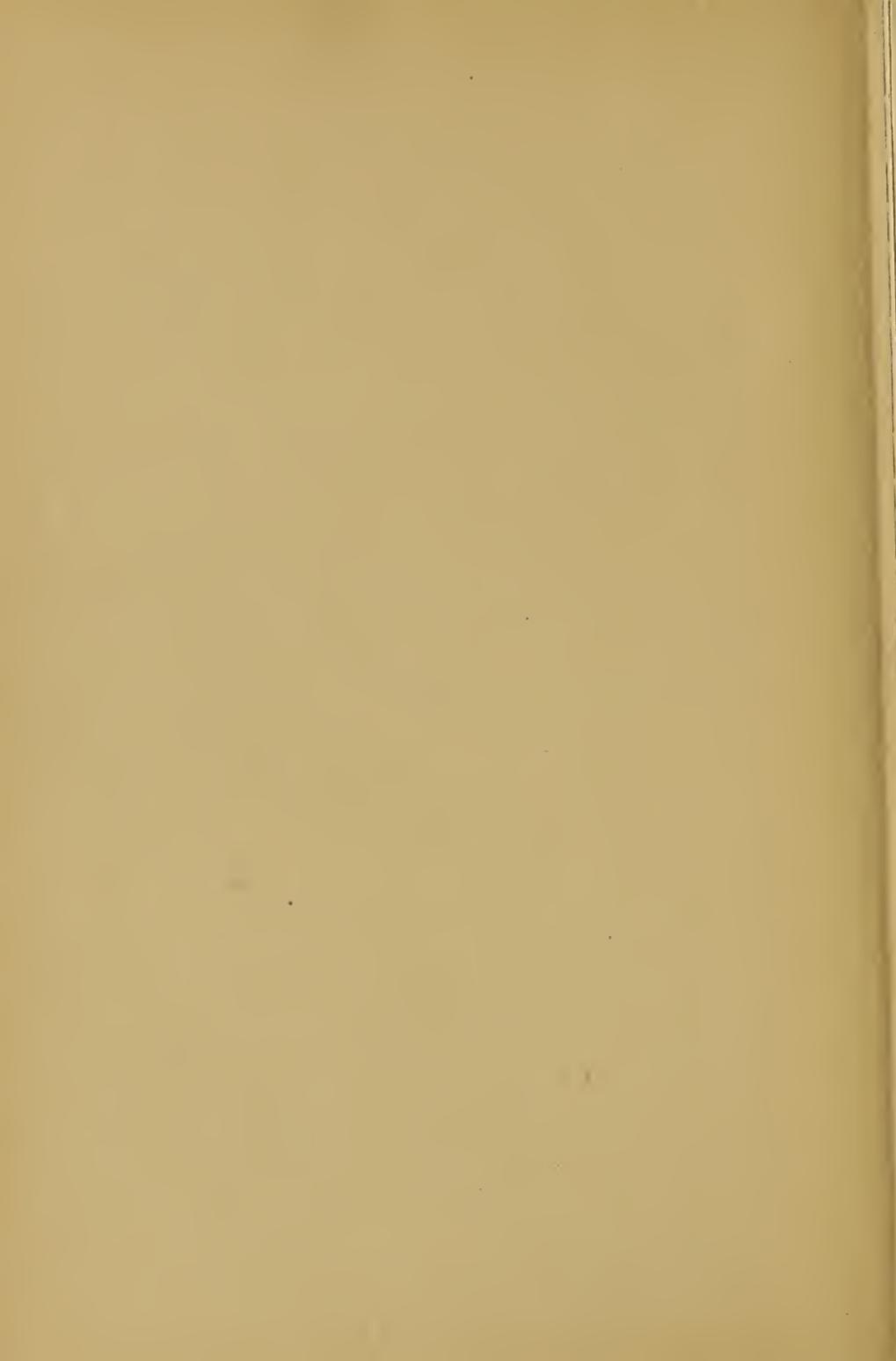
As Time is only the prologue to the great serial story of Eternity, let this be the reason for the unfinished manuscript: "To be continued." Let this be the label for the half-finished picture in the studio, "To be continued." Let this be the epitaph on the monument of that Garfield, that John Summerfield, that Henry Kirk White: "To be continued." Let this also be the subscription written at the close of a thorn-stuck life which had long looked forward to the palaces, which came at last, crystallizing through intervening tears. But now I stop and think that when we get our first vision of Jesus we will have a conviction of the

small value of life's discoveries, compared with the unseen continents of Truth that will be revealed in him. However successful may have been our lives, all human successes will be left behind as something old, that we may learn of new possibilities in him. All the brave who dashed through battle smoke and rode down the foes of right shall drop their captured banners to follow him. All the victors who saw their sabers flash in triumph shall leave their trophies hanging on the battlements of earth that they may be "more than conquerors" in him. All the Polycarps will forget the stake to listen to the untold glories of the cross. All the Händels will drop their strains to listen to the new oratorio of the Messiah. All explorers will forsake their discoveries, to sail over the deep Eternities with the divine Columbus; and as the welcome cry of "Land ahead" brought rapture to the hearts of the ancient mariners, so will our association with Jesus be a perpetual discovery of another shore and a perpetual gladness for a vision of the eternally and grandly NEW.











LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 019 971 874 5