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SERMONS

PREACHED IN

*Plymouth Church, Brooklyn,*

BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

FROM ELLINWOOD'S STENOGRAPHIC REPORTS.

VOLUME III.

September, 1874 — March, 1875.

BOSTON:

The Pilgrim Press

CHICAGO.

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## LAW AND LIBERTY.

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“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”—Gal. v., 13-18.

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Of all the writers whose words are recorded in the Bible, there was no one whose spirit so perfectly accorded, on the whole, with the modern spirit, and the spirit which prevails in America, as Paul's. There was no one who had such a profound sense of individualism, of the right of the individual, or of the object of religion—namely, to build up in each particular person a manhood that should be large, strong, rich, and perfectly free. There was no one of them that spoke so much about liberty—a sound peculiarly pleasant to our ears—as the Apostle Paul; and he declares that we are called to it; that it is the very thing in religion to which we are called. Now, there is an apprehension, very wide-spread—and we can see how reasonably it has sprung up—that religion, so far from making men free, hampers them, restricts them, ties them up, burdens them; and there is among men a universal impression, when life is strong in young veins, and the impulse to do just as they wish to is power-

Preached at the TWIN MOUNTAIN HOUSE, White Mountains, N. H., Sunday morning, Sept. 13th, 1874. Lesson: Luke ix., 28-42. Hymns (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 31, 1166, “Doxology.”

ful, that they do not want to be religions. The fact is that they want to enjoy themselves a little while.

They have a superabundance of hilarity, and a strong impulse toward enjoyment; and they think it will be time to be still and careful when the world is not so stimulating; they say, "When we are old enough to have the rheumatism, why, then we won't race and dance; when we don't want to laugh, why, then we'll be sober; and when we can't do anything else, then we'll get ready to die; but as long as we have vigor and vitality and sunlight and all sorts of pleasures, why, we're going to have a good time. We'll take the bad time when we can't help it." On the other hand, there are many persons—persons that are anxious about their children, and trying to bring them up well; people that take on the duty of instructing the community, and feel themselves responsible for what their fellow-men believe and what they do; folks that are trying to form and employ public sentiment—there are many such persons who are astonished when we say that religion is the freest of all things, that men who have once become converted and are truly Christians are no longer under the law, and that a typical Christian, one who is a type of what religion really should be, is a person that does just what he has a mind to. "A person that does what he has a mind to, a Christian?" say they: "why, it is contrary to the whole face of Scripture, which says that you must deny yourself; that you must take up your cross; that there must be a yoke and a burden. To preach that when a man becomes a true Christian he may do just what he has a mind to is flagitious, and will lead to licentiousness and all manner of self-indulgence." Historical developments are pointed to by men, of what are called "Antinomians," whom Christians have regarded as claiming to be raised to such a state that there was no more law for them, so that whenever they wanted to do a thing their doing it made the act right in their own estimation—the grace of God being given them to make them worse rather than better. Conservators of purity and religion are very much afraid of this doctrine of liberty, because they think it will break the bands of responsibility, and destroy the power of conscience upon men.

Now, Paul insists upon it that we are born to liberty, that we are called to liberty, and that the true typical Christian experience is one that takes away the power of the law over us, and gives us freedom to do what we want to do. Other inspired writers, and James among them, enjoin upon us the law of liberty, and exhort us to continue faithful therein, declaring that they are not unfruitful who do this. James says :

“ Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

Men who are under the divine inspiration exhort us to liberty. How could this be if it were as flagitious in its results as men claim that it is ? Let us look into this matter a little.

What is liberty ? In the first place, the way in which men have learned to consider liberty has come from their experience in being oppressed by each other, and in emancipating themselves from the domination of a neighbor or a ruler. Breaking away from him has seemed to them to be liberty. In other words, the notion of being at liberty to do what you want to is intimately associated with the act of throwing off law and throwing off government. Men do not discriminate between the process by which one comes to a state of liberty and the essential element of that state.

In regard to civil liberty, we are very proud of having had the war of Independence. We broke away from Great Britain, and became masters of ourselves, and made our own laws, and elected our own officers ; and as a nation we could do what we pleased without asking anybody's consent ; and from these various historical developments of the power of liberty, men have come to hold the idea that liberty means ignoring authority and setting aside controlling laws.

Now, by your leave, I will say that no man is free until he is absolutely in bondage. No man is free until he is so in bondage that he does not know that he is in bondage. No man has true liberty until he has been so subdued that he accepts the control that is over him, and makes it his own, and ceases to be able to discriminate between his individual

will and the law which is exterior to him. I think there will be no doubt about this matter if you will trace it step by step, and see how men are developed.

Consider, first, how men become, in their material and physical relations, large, strong, facile, and successful. When the child is born, and begins to learn the qualities of matter and the use of itself—of its feet, of its hands, of its eyes, and of its ears—what is the process by which we undertake to develop him out of weakness into strength? We teach him the knowledge of matter; we teach him what are the laws, as we say, of matter; and we teach him strictly to observe those laws. At first the child does not know the difference between cutting edges and blunt edges; but he learns it; and he learns how to accommodate himself to those qualities or natures. He does not know the difference between fire and ice, nor does he know the difference between water to be plunged into and the air to be breathed. He learns the peculiarities of these substances and their laws. No child has learned to go alone, to use his hands, and to have the comfort of his eye, of his ear, or of his mouth, until he has learned what are the laws to which these various organs must conform themselves; and learning on the part of the child is obeying; and obeying is coming to more of himself. Having his way by refusing law would be never to walk, never to use his hands, never to look, never to hear, never to taste, never to do anything except to have his own way, which would be to be an everlasting cipher or zero. Every step by which every child comes to be less and less a child and more and more of a man, every step by which he finds out more laws, on every side of him, in the air above, on the earth beneath, among men, in the infinite variety of the affairs of human life, is a step of obedience to law. He learns what laws are, and how to yield to them, and how to apply them; and he grows by compliance with them and obedience to them.

Follow it up a little. We educate ourselves either for pleasure or for accomplishment. How is it that one learns to become a pianist? By sitting down, and saying, "I am going to have my own way about this matter"—or, by

finding out exactly what is required by the law of sound and by the law of instrumentation, and saying to the hand, "You have got to come to it: you don't like it, but you must come to it"; and twisting and turning, and twisting and turning it, and training and drilling, training and drilling it, through months and years? It will take a long time to subdue that hand to the nature of the instrument. It is going to control the instrument by-and-by; but it will control the instrument by-and-by because it has been a bond-slave to it. He who, having accepted the bondage of the instrument, drills his hand till it has become perfectly obedient to it, transfers to his hand all the virtue of that instrument.

The man who undertakes to play billiards must submit to law, and be led by it, until he has learned how to handle the cue, and how to strike the balls and make them rebound and affect each other. He cannot say, "I will do as I please here," until he is able to do just what the billiard table requires. When he has submitted himself to the nature of the game, and mastered its requirements, then he can say, "I will do as I have a mind to," because he is inclined to do what the laws of billiard playing demand.

So it is in regard to every single act of this sort—riding, fencing, dancing, rolling ten-pins, plowing, or cutting wood. In each of these instances the first step is the subjugation of yourself by obedience to the law; and the second, when you have obeyed it perfectly, is unconscious, automatic action. When you have reached this point you have perfect liberty—the power to go or to stop; to do or not to do; to accomplish in one way or in another. A man becomes large, facile, ingenious, accomplishing, in the proportion in which he has subjugated, by apprenticeship, every muscle, every nerve, every power, every element of his being, to the laws under which it acts. This denying of himself, this taking up his cross, in regard to all the specialties of life; this dying to himself and living in the laws that are around about him, gives him back to himself strong, wise, facile; and he becomes free in the proportion in which he has submitted himself to perfect training and drill.

That which is true in respect to the body is as true in respect to the social conditions of life. A man says, "I am born free and equal with all the world"; and in one sense all men are born free and equal. Men are said to be equal in our political bible; and politically men have equal rights—that is, they alike have the right to obey the laws, and to reap the fruits of obedience; and they have an equal right if they disobey the laws to be punished for it. The highest has an equal right to be punished with the lowest. In the eyes of the Government men are equal as citizens; they are equal before the law; but they are equal in no other sense. They are not equal in noses, nor in eyes, nor in ears, nor in any sense other than simply that of their fundamental political rights, which are, comparatively speaking, artificial and remote.

A man says, "I am born free, and am as good as anybody." It depends entirely upon who that *anybody* is. He says, "I do not believe in the laws of society, and I am going to do as I please." In that coarse sense he goes out into the community, and every single person is his enemy. A rude, vulgar man who goes into civilized society will find that all those among whom he moves are of necessity his antagonists; and he will be expelled from that society. A man who would move and thrive in the midst of refined and cultivated people must become acquainted with social laws, and must comply with them. When he begins to comply with them it is awkward for him. It is awkward for a man to come into a room gracefully when he has not learned the postures of polite society. He does not know what to do with his arms, nor how to stand or sit. What is an awkward man but a man who has not learned the laws of civility in the social relations of men to each other? There are such laws, although they are not written in a book. They are not penal laws, but they are laws which are just as real as though there was a penalty attached to them. The laws which govern one man in his intercourse with another in life are as real as those laws which govern the stellar universe. Every man who becomes facile and easy and natural in his relations to society becomes so because he has learned and complied

with the conditions which are imposed upon him by society laws. It is by obedience that he comes to be free to do what he pleases. He is free to do what he pleases simply because he has learned how to please to do the things that are right, but on no other conditions.

That which is true in respect to social relations is as true in respect to civil relations. Who is the free man in society? Is it the counterfeiter, who watches with suspicion every man that knows him, and who is conscious that the whole armed force of society has been put, by his act, in battle array against him? The murderer, the thief, the gambler, has set at defiance the laws of society; and is he free? The man who is hunted, who is circumscribed, who is always in danger, and who has to create a circle for himself in order to exist at all, because society is his natural adversary—is he free? No. The man who is the most intelligent, and has the most perfect knowledge of the laws of the community, and believes them to be right, and so thoroughly obeys them that he does not know that he obeys them; the man who obeys laws and does not know it except when he begins—he is free.

When I am driving it does not occur to me that I am obeying any law. I turn to the right on the turnpike to avoid a stage that is likely to be run into by me, not because I think of the law that requires me to do so. I do it unconsciously. I do not go through the process of thinking, "I will turn out because I am required to by law." And after I have done it I do not think of it. When I bow to a man, I do it without thinking of it, and I do not treasure up the fact and tell my wife about it when I go home. Having done it, I do not know that I did it. I speak kindly to a child, and give it sympathy, not because there is any law that says I must, (although there is such a law), but because when the law first said so to me I obeyed it so implicitly that I have forgotten it now. I perform the deed, not because public sentiment or law says, "Do it," but because I have been so drilled into it that I do it without law. The law says, "Thou shalt not steal;" but that is not why I refrain from stealing. The law does not permit me to do it; but if it did

I would n't. And now I do of myself that which the law once obliged me to do because I was so low and base and undeveloped that I needed something to show me what the best things were. I followed the law, I obeyed it, and finally I came to see, by my higher intelligence, what it was to be a true man; and this is the way to come to power and freedom.

That which is true in regard to social relations and civil matters is true in respect to political affairs. A man may be free under a despotism. That is to say, let the Czar of Russia issue his decrees so that every man knows just what he wants him to do, and let his subjects obey because they really believe theirs is the best government, and under it they become free. If they were always resisting it they would always be hedged in, hindered, restricted, bound; but by accepting it, though it be an imperfect administration, they become free in proportion as they conform to it, or in proportion as they run with those who are in sovereign power over them. In every government the man who accepts the law is the freest. The man who knows how to conform to the laws of commerce is freer than the man who does not know how to conform to them—for there are laws of commerce as much as there are laws of taste, laws of good manners, or any other laws that apply to the individual.

When a man first goes into business, he does not understand the laws which govern it, and we do not trust him with much liberty or scope. Why? Because he has not been trained to obedience to the inevitable and compulsory laws of commerce. When he has learned them, and is expert in them, and yields to them, and obeys them, we say of him, "He can go alone now." He has tied himself to those laws, and he has gone with them until they are incorporated into him and he into them; and he is free so far as he follows them; but if he resists them they restrict his liberty, and punish him.

So, liberty does not mean throwing off law: it means taking it on. Liberty does not mean opposing government: it means the most absolute submission to government, provided it is a right government, conformable to our bodily

structure, our social make-up, our intellectual qualities, and our moral nature. He is freest who submits to the most laws, and submits to them the most implicitly. No man gets possession of himself until he has gone through this process. The trouble and curse of daily life in every direction is the want of that unconscious or automatic action which is the result of training in laws and principles and obedience to them. Great mischief has come from men's imperfect knowledge of laws, and the imperfect manner in which they have submitted to them.

That which is true in respect to all our external relations you will find to be true in respect to our higher relations, or in respect to what is called, in distinction from our education in business, the education of our thoughts, our intellectual development, our philosophical elevation, our cultivation and refinement. In other words, when men are set to develop their mental faculties, they learn in just the same way that they do when they undertake to educate their muscles or their organs.

No man can learn to read except in one way. He cannot walk into a spelling-book and say, "I want *r* to have the force of *t*, and it shall." He must call *r*, *r*, and must give it the sound which custom gives it. *M* must be *m* to him, and *b* must be *b* to him. He must give to every letter in the alphabet the name and sound which belong to it. When a man begins to read he cannot say, "I will spell phthisic, t-i-s-i-c." Custom is law, and he is obliged to spell the word the other way—though I should not dare venture to tell you how! No man learns so simple a matter as reading or writing except by submitting himself to foregoing rules and regulations. Well, when a man begins to learn to read, he is exactly like folks who are just converted. "N-o, no; m-a-n, man; m-a-y, may; b-u-t, but; o-ff, off; t-h-e, the." Has the man who spells out his words thus learned to read? No. Why? Because he has to think of each letter in a word before he puts the letters together and pronounces the word. Do I do it? Do you do it? We do not. Why do we not? Because we have become so used to reading that our eye never sees a single letter in a word, nor

a single word in a sentence. Indeed, we are not conscious of sentences even : we are only conscious of the ideas which are expressed by the sentences. Our minds are so drilled that we take in only the event or thing described by these symbols on paper. We see the history itself, the person himself, the occurrence itself ; and the drama goes on before us as though we were looking through a glass at an actual picture.

Now, how do we come to that facility of reading? By familiarizing ourselves with instruments or letters until they become our servants, as we first become theirs. We bow ourselves down to these crooked symbols ; and then we become so absolutely absorbed by them, in obedience to them, that they vanish and leave their power and effect in us as a part of our own personality.

The result is what we call "habit." Habit in the popular mind consists merely in doing things easily because we have become used to doing them ; but it is more : it is really the augmentation of faculty. It is a new power which a man has gained by the repetition of acts until he has perfected himself in a given direction. It exalts him. It brings him upon a higher plane of cerebral power or capacity.

It may be said that no man knows a thing perfectly until it has become so much a part of himself that his knowledge of it and his use of it cease to be matters of consciousness. We cease to be conscious of the force of letters in a sentence, and yet we read ; and just in proportion as we lose the consciousness of the letter-form we become perfect in the art of reading. No man knows how to walk well who thinks just how he is going to take every step. What is the trouble with awkward people when they go into company? Nobody is so graceful in things that belong to the farm as the farmer. If you bring him to Boston and ask him to go into conditions that he is not accustomed to, he is awkward ; and the well-dressed, kid-gloved young man laughs to see how the poor old fellow acts ; but now, take our young man and put him behind the plow, and see how he will act ! He is as awkward there as the old man was in the city. But put the farmer behind the plow, and see the elasticity with which

he adapts himself to its movements. He observes what is coming, and prepares for it, and goes along with the utmost ease and composure. Where a man has had education and drill in the thing to which he is appointed, and does it unconsciously and automatically, according to its kind, it is noble and beautiful.

When buildings are being constructed I sometimes am tempted to go up and see what they are, how they are made; and I observe that the first story I get up the ladder well enough; that the second story I hold a little tighter to the rounds; that the third story I lie flat against the ladder; that the fourth and fifth stories I tremble, and crawl like a worm; and that when I get to the top I very carefully place my foot on the gutter, or step on the platform, and scarcely dare look around; but I see the workmen—men that are not a bit smarter than I am—run up the ladder, step all over the roof, go everywhere, without stopping to look where they tread, climb a rafter, put two sticks together, and spring to the top of them, light as a bird, nimble as a squirrel, and sure-footed as a spider; and as I look at them I envy them. But I go up to-morrow, and find that I have a little more confidence, and am not quite so dizzy-headed. I go up the next day, and the next, and the next. The result is that by and by I can go up just as well as they can, and just as quick, and can do it without thinking what I am doing.

I remember that in Indianapolis I had a house built. I wanted to economize in every way I could, and meant to paint it myself; and I did. I got along well enough until I came to the gable end, which was two and a half stories high. When I began to paint there I was so afraid that I should fall off from the platform that I nearly rubbed out with my vest what I put on with the brush; but in the course of a week I got so used to climbing that I was as nimble as any painter in town.

No man has learned a lesson who thinks of it at all as a lesson. No man has learned a trade who has to stop and say, "How ought I to guide my hand?"

A man begins to set type in a printing office. Here is a composing stick, and here is a case of letters. He is told to

set up, "All men are born free and equal," and he says to himself, "A. Where is A?" He looks for A, and finds it, feels of it and turns it over to get it in the right position. Then he says, "Double l," and he hunts for l; by and by he gets it, and puts it in the stick. At length he gets the first word set up; and finally the other words. But that man is not a printer, although he manages to set up "All men are free and equal." Go into the office of one of our dailies, and see a compositor set type there. He handles the letters so quick that your eye cannot follow them. His hand knows all about the case; it knows just where to find every letter; and no sooner does it touch the type than the type tells him which side up it is to go, without his thinking.

No person has learned anything so as to be perfect in it till he can do it without knowing it. When a man can do a thing without thinking of it, he has come to a state of liberty so far as that thing is concerned. He is in bondage to his notes who is obliged to think of his notes; he is in bondage to the piano who is obliged to think of the piano; but he is free who does not think of note or piano, and yet swells the strain and rolls off the symphony. He has subdued the music and the instrument; and now he may do what he pleases with them. He could only have done it, however, by going through what their laws required him to do, which lifted him to the capacity of doing.

All government in the family, all methods of civil government, all institutions of education and religion, ought to set this ideal before themselves. There is a great deal of government in the family that is mistaken. I have sometimes heard people say, "How poorly those boys have turned out! It is strange, too, because there never were boys more strictly brought up. To my certain knowledge, they used to be whipped once a week!" Yes, they were watched; they were kept out of evil; they were carefully instructed; and when they were of age, and went out of the family, they plunged into every liberty and every license, and proved themselves fallible and imperfect in every way. They learned a great many things in the family, but they never learned how to govern themselves. There are a great many fathers and

mothers whose nature is to *govern*. The spirit of autocracy and monarchy is in them. They do not govern their children to teach those children to govern themselves, but they govern them for the sake of governing them; and they keep it up; and the children never learn self-government. Now, the object of governing a child is to get rid of the necessity of governing him. It is to teach him the use of his own faculties with regard to the great laws which are fundamental to you and him in common. If you bring up your children with a liberty which has restriction enough to make them obey the law, and with an amount of government which makes them independent and self-reliant, you will do that which is best for them. They will make blunders; but they will learn. They will fall into mistakes; but those mistakes will be a part of their training. You can bring up a child so that he is all compliance toward externality; but he will have no power in himself; and what will he be good for? He will be like dough, and will never amount to anything. These round, smooth folks, that come up so carefully, and that will roll in all ways with equal facility, and are of no particular account, serving as mere punctuation points to keep other folks apart, have not been well developed, or taught, or bred.

Power of knowledge, obedience, training until it becomes unconscious and automatic, is the end that is sought by the whole drift of divine government, as indicated by nature and revealed by the Gospel. It is not meant that we should go through this life acting as if the world were a life-boat, to be used merely for snatching as many folks from destruction as possible, and for taking them safely to heaven. This world is God's university or school, where men begin at zero, and are to unfold and come to manhood as the object of God's decrees and providence and grace, and of the common sense which God has given to us.

The whole drift of civil governments, of churches, of schools, and of families, should be to make men larger, bolder, more symmetrical, freer, and to do it by the way of discipline, drill, the knowledge of laws, and obedience to them.

I have conducted this subject thus far without considering

it specially in its application to morality and religion ; but, after all, the end and drift of my discourse this morning is, *What does religion mean in a man?* The derivative meaning of the word *religion* is, To be bound ; to be tied up as by allegiance ; and the fulfillment of it, in a large part of the globe, has, unfortunately, been literal, and men have been *tied up*. The idea has been, very largely, that when a man became a Christian, he agreed with himself to give up dancing, and give up swearing, and give up gambling, and give up lying, and give up Sabbath-breaking, and give up dissipation, and give up bad company ; and his creed, if he were to let it out, would be, “I will not do this, I will not do that, I will not do that, I will not do that,” till by and by it will be as *knotty* as a pine plank sawn out of a small tree. Negatives are not to be derided nor despised ; but a man who has nothing but negatives is a fool, and has no temperament, no vitality, no positiveness. The true religious man is a man who is positive and affirmative. A man who has nothing more than *nots* is nothing. To be anything he must have actual virtues.

A farmer goes to the agricultural fairs, next week or the week after ; and he says, “I have a farm that I want to put in competition. It has not a weed on it—not one ; it has not a Canada thistle ; it has no purslain ; it has not a dock ; it has no plantain ; it has not any mullein. There is not a weed on it, absolutely.” “Well,” it is asked him, “what are your crops?” “Oh, I—I—” “Have you any wheat?” “No.” “Any corn?” “No.” “Any grafts in the orchard?” “No ; I have nothing of that kind—but I’ve got no weeds.” And that is all!

There are a great many people who seem to think that religion means *not doing wrong*. As if a knitting machine would be considered good that never knit any stockings, because it never misknit ! What is a man good for who simply does not do some things ?

There are thousands of men that are bad who come nearer to the royal idea of manhood than many professed Christians, because they are positive, and do something—because they are not bladders filled with air—and because they are not

dandelion blossoms, beautiful globes, worth nothing. A true man is a force-bearer and a force-producer. I understand that when a man becomes a Christian he has higher ideals, larger conceptions of life here and of the life to come. The motives which are addressed to him from the bosom of God are an inspiration by which he becomes more, does more, longs for more, strives for more, gains more. Before, he lived a circumscribed life; but now he moves out the walls on every side because he needs more room. "Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes," is the right text for a true man. He that is a Christian ought to be a hundred times larger in every way than he was before he became a Christian. Larger in every way? Yes, larger in every way. What! larger in his passions? Yes, larger in his passions. His passions ought to be not only larger, but better and healthier. Pride ought to be stronger, only it ought to be in subjection to the law of love. It ought to be, under the influence of love, auxiliary to higher things, and not an autocrat in its own right. Every part of a man's nature is to be built up, and is to be made subordinate to love. Anything that God thought it worth while to put in a man, from his toe to his eyebrow, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, is worthy of our consideration. He has not employed anything in the making of you that will not be needed for fuel.

Take a great good-natured, jolly fellow, who sits on verandahs, and tells pleasant stories, and plays all sorts of games well, and is good at a pic-nic or a card party, and drinks a little too much wine. People say of him, "What a pity it is that he is not a Christian! He is in a dangerous way; and yet he is a capital man in many respects." He becomes a Christian, after having gone through certain proper exercises. He does not sit on verandahs any more. His thoughts no longer dwell on frivolous things. He does not laugh. He is not seen at card parties and pic-nics any more. He supposes these are wrong. What does he do? He goes to church, and to prayer-meetings, and is a devout worshiper; but he grows stupider and stupider all the time. Before he became a Christian he was a genial, good companion, but

now he has cut that all off, and he does not take anything else on ; so that he really is weakened. To be sure, he may have withdrawn from certain faults ; but he has lost nearly as much in another direction as he has gained in this. I should say to such a man, It was not sociality, or gayety, or facility in amusement, that was your sin, but making such things the end and aim of your life. What you want to do is to make a complete manhood in Christ Jesus the end of your life, and take those lower things as instruments. Let every part of your nature, enlarged and made better, enter into that complete manhood. Taking Love as their supreme governor, let all the elements of your being, sweetened and made more powerful, aid in accomplishing this great work in the soul. A man ought to be better when he knows that he is living for that godliness which “is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” And yet, many persons come into the church from the world where they had strength and momentum in imperfect ways, and they lose that momentum and that strength because they do not understand that religion is not simply tying a man up, but tying him up to let him into a larger liberty. It drills him into obedience to law that he may be master of himself. No man is so free as that man who has accepted the law of God, which is expressed in the words, “Thou shalt love God supremely, and thy neighbor as thyself.” There is no sound in the universe that cannot be chorded to that. Love is the only true concert-pitch. Let pride be the concert-pitch, and you cannot bring the orchestra of human nature into agreement with it. Let taste be the concert-pitch, and you cannot make all the other faculties of a man harmonize with it. There is many a part of our being with which all the other parts cannot be made concordant. But sound the word *love*—love to God and man—and there is no passion or appetite, there is no taste, there is no social feeling, there is no intellectual element, there is no moral sentiment, that cannot be brought into perfect accord with it—yea, and be made nobler and better by it.

He who understands that religion is the drilling of every part of his nature into accord with this great law of love by

which God himself is bound, by which he governs, through which the world is ripening, and which is to fill the eternal heavens with blessedness—he that understands this, and accepts that law in earnest, and obeys it, day and night, in the field, in the shop, on the sea, everywhere, and making pride and vanity and selfishness subservient to love, trains himself in obedience to it till it is easier for him to be gracious and beneficent than anything else—he has become a man that has looked into the perfect law of liberty, and that is continuing therein. He has become a citizen of the commonwealth of the universe, and is absolutely free.

My Christian brethren, this is just what you need. I observe that many persons never settle anything. They never carry a battle to its final results. You are now fighting with pride, as you were twenty years ago, and you are fighting with your temper as you were twenty years ago; or, if there is any difference, it is because the fire of youth and early manhood has burned out in you. Grace has done nothing for you, and you have done little for yourselves. Many persons are just as avaricious, just as stingy, just as close-handed as they were when they began their Christian lives. They recognize it, and are sorry for it, and once in a while they shed impotent tears over it, and once in a while they offer a little resistance to it; but they do not say to the intractable faculty, “You shall come to this law of love, and you shall be trained and drilled till you obey it without flinching.”

Here is a man who stands behind his counter. He is bilious and dyspeptic, and at home he is cross to his wife, and snappish to his children, and brutal to his inferiors; but when he goes into his store, where it is his interest to be complaisant, he is very agreeable. If a person comes in to buy something, he puts on, for the occasion, a commercial smile; but that is not benevolence—yes, it is benevolence just the same as moonshine is sunshine, cold, remote, reflected. Yet we are doing, in this, that and the other place, the same thing. We laugh at exaggerated instances of it, but we are not free from it ourselves.

We do not trust God. We are anxious with care. We fret and worry about to-day and to-morrow. We do not love

our neighbor as ourselves. We are envious and jealous. We do not honor and prefer each other as we are commanded to. The welfare of man is not precious to us. Nothing pleases us so quick as a bad story told about somebody. There are persons who are ready to catch at criticisms, or anything suspicious about folks, and are never specially gratified at hearing anything good about them. Such persons have not fulfilled the law of love in these things. On the other hand there are persons who are always actuated by love, and are always glad to learn anything good, and sorry to learn anything evil, concerning their fellow-men. Love is their habitual disposition, morning, noon and night. They are always radiant and beaming, because their manifestation of love is automatic and unconscious. Where by education, by training and drill, the whole man is subdued by this power of divine and human love, one is a Christian.

You professed the Creed when you joined the church; but oh, that you would profess something higher than that which the Creed means! When you professed religion and joined the church you should have joined as a boy goes to school. Some seem to think that when a man joins the church he is like a celebrated portrait in a picture gallery, at which people point and say, "Governor So and So," or "Governor So and So." It is often thought that those inside the church are saints, and that those outside are sinners. It is no such thing. There are sinners inside as well as outside. Those that are inside are sinners under medication, and the others are sinners without medication. Those that are inside are sinners in a hospital, and the others are sinners in their own houses. As the term *sinner* is generally used in the community, it is a very misleading and misinterpreting notion that men have. A man is a sinner whether he is in the church or out of it. A Christian is a man who is attempting to subdue every part of his nature to the law of God. That law is Love to God and to men; and he who binds himself in slavery to it till he is perfectly subdued by it, till in its full strength it resides in him, and reigns there, and he rejoices, heaven rejoicing with him, in that victory by which he comes to a perfect liberty, is a Christian.

Oh, how narrow our views are of the power of God on the soul of man ! Do you tell me that religion is failing because you see how bad a war is waged in the street where the desperate odds of business drive men hither and thither ? Do you tell me that religion is failing because men in public and political life gain their positions through cunning and craft, and that only here and there one endures ? Go with me to those places where the shadows that work grief and sorrow beat down on the household ; go with me to the all-patient mother's side ; go with me to her who is stripped of everything in life but her hope in God, and who is servant of all the neighborhood ; go with me among the humble, and among the meek who shall inherit the earth, and you will find that there is a school where God, by the Holy Ghost, compels such obedience to the great law of love that persons rise up in simplicity and meekness, princes, kings, priests unto God, having the liberty of the realm, and do what they have a mind to because their whole soul has a mind to do the things which the law requires, and which God loves.

Such is the liberty that makes men free. He that is out of concord with those motions and throbs of the divine Heart that send currents of light through the universe is narrowing and dwarfing himself. He only is a full man who is a man in Christ Jesus.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

DRAW near to us by thy Spirit, Almighty God and Heavenly Father, and make thyself known to our thoughts, not by display, as once thou didst upon the burning mountain, not by force, but by the inspiration of gentle thoughts and sweet affections, by relieving us from darkness, and sorrow, and fear, and remorse, and by breathing upon us peace, and gladness, and good will and hope. Draw us far away from animal life—from those that are around about us; from the bird, and from the insect, and from the beast; from all things that have but begun their lives; for we are thine, we are God's sons, and our true life is nearer to thee and to the invisible than to things seen and visible. Therefore may we know thy presence in the elevation of our souls; in the springing forth of joys to meet thee; and as the homeliest and lowliest things bear upon themselves tributes of joy in the morning wherein the sun beholds itself, and they are beautiful in his light, so may all our thoughts, joining in the light of thy rising glory, seem beautiful to thee; and may we reflect that thou art blessing us with thyself as nothing else in all the realm of the universe can bless us. May we realize that we are blest in thy love, in a conscious strength derived from thee, and in holy hopes born not of ourselves, though in us, but of thee.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may feel how much more we are than we seem to be, and how much less we are than we think ourselves to be. Grant that the things of which we boast, but which are poor, and perishing, may be revealed to us in their poverty, and the things which we neglect, wherein our true strength and our true greatness lie, may be revealed to us in their majesty and beauty; and that we may go out of our ordinary life, its servility, its bondage and its painfulness, into our higher life, where we shall be hid with Christ in God, in whom every one hath a covert and a refuge. We pray that this day God may become a name not of fear nor of authority alone, but of love and of joy. Wilt thou help every one to-day to roll away the stone, if he sit in darkness, and behold the risen Saviour. May Christ come forth this morning to every soul as the messenger and the symbol of hope in immortality. We pray that thou wilt help every soul to appropriate something from thee, O blessed Saviour, that it needs. Help every one who is conscious of deficiency, of ignorance, of short-comings, of perpetual transgressions, of wrongs done or permitted. Help each soul to lean upon thee, and to borrow of thee medicine, and food, and raiment, a staff for its weary feet, light for its eyes, hearing for its ears, and life for itself.

Be with all of us. Become to us the first and the last, the beginning and the end, the Alpha and Omega. Grant that we may have in thee that inheritance which we lack in ourselves.

We pray that thou wilt renew the joy that they have had whose joys have faded; that thou wilt redeem from sorrow those who are bent and ready to break; that thou wilt give strength to those that are weak; that thou wilt establish the feet of those that slide; that thou wilt deliver from their fears those that stand looking forth

upon impending dangers; that thou wilt hush the anxieties of those that fret away the very fabric of life; that thou wilt still the tumult of passion in them that are bestead by passion; that thou wilt give control to those who are driven about by every wind of doctrine, and success to those who strive earnestly for that which is good, and are perpetually rolled back from it.

Grant to every one, this morning, according to his necessity. May those that hunger and thirst after righteousness be filled, and behold the Saviour who bath in him that which they need—who hath something that stands over against every want of the soul—who supplieth indeed the bread of life.

We pray that thou wilt grant to those who have known thee, and rejoice in thee, and dwell in peace from day to day, more manifestations of thyself, that they may every day come down from communion with God, as thy servant of old came down from the mountain, with a face shining with things spiritual, that men may behold and rejoice in the reflected light thereof; and that they may become ministers of peace, of salvation, and of hope to all that are around about them.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may have great joy of one another, to-day, as we dwell together for the hour. May we lay aside all the ugliness, and weakness, and pride, and envy, and jealousy, that so beset us in the world, and that separate us and make us so hurtful one to another. Grant that we may dwell in that peace which brings us nearer together. Grant that all the wrinkles which care has made may be smoothed out, that all trouble may be taken away, and that we may rejoice in each other as heirs of a common salvation, as children of a common parentage, and as pilgrims bound for a common blessedness in the land of immortality.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all that we love. Go to those that we have left behind; and visit those that have gone away from us and are upon the sea, or upon the land, in the city or in the wilderness, wherever they may be throughout the wide world.

O Lord, grant that thy blessing may be distilled as dew upon every heart in this presence. We pray that this may be an hour in which secret petitions shall go up and receive the pledges of answer and fulfillment from thee.

We pray that thou wilt bless this dwelling, and all that here control and manage. May the cause of God, the purity of the Holy Spirit, and the power of divine love, abide under this roof forever more. May all that have come up hither receive a blessing of God. May this be to them a day indeed of rest from evil, and of aspiration toward good.

Bless our whole land. Bring us more and more together in a true unity of reciprocal interests. May we be knit together in confidence, and in a desire for things that shall ennoble this whole nation.

We pray that intelligence may prevail everywhere. We pray that strength may be imparted to the weak. We pray that this great and prosperous nation, builded up by a thousand precious influences, may grow strong for justice, for goodness, for the rights of mankind, for peace and for prosperity throughout the whole

world. And may the day speedily come when men shall love one another, and aid one another, and study the things which make for peace, and learn war no more; when there shall be no oppression known, nor any desire to oppress; when men shall be so strong that none can bind them; when the kingdom of God shall descend; and when the new heavens and the new earth in which dwelleth righteousness shall appear.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

GRANT, we pray thee, dear Lord and Master, an incoming of light and knowledge that we may see more perfectly the truth; that we may know more perfectly that the way of Christ is the way of liberty; that we may understand that suffering means learning, and that tears betoken smiles, as from thorns come roses. Grant that we may comprehend how by submission we rule; how by obedience we come to a state in which we no longer need commands; how by conforming to law in our innermost man we rise higher than the law. Grant to every one in thy presence some portion of this truth, that he may order his life in accordance with it. May self-will die out, and may conformity to the will of God take the place of it, in the heart of every one here. May we try to be better in our families. May we seek to treat each other, in all the affairs of life, with more justice and more kindness. May we endeavor to apply the Gospel to our conduct. May it drive away doubt, and envy, and jealousy, and all the imps that Satan sends upon us. We pray that we may become children of the light, and that we may be children of the day, and walk in the full communion of freedom here, in the hope of a yet greater emancipation, and more perfect development in the world that is to come. O Lord, chide us for our narrowness. We are not hungry enough. We do not aspire enough. Our longings are too few and too easily satisfied. Give us more discontent. Grant that we may have more aspiration. Create in us a true hungering of the soul for that which is infinite and enduring. We ask it not for ourselves nor in our own wisdom, but in the adorable name of our Beloved, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

## FAINT-HEARTEDNESS.

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I purpose, this evening, to make some remarks on the narrative that is contained in the 13th and 14th chapters of the book of Numbers. It is the account of the spies entering the land of promise, and bringing back their report. The story of this emigration of the Israelites from Egypt is one of the most remarkable of histories in this: that aside from the interest of its relation to that great and wonderful race, the Jew-stock—the most wonderful race-stock in the world—it has become twined with the thoughts and the feelings of every nation in christendom. We may despise the Jews, but our Saviour was a Jew. We may despise their ways and their teachings, but without their Scriptures we would ourselves be, as it were, in the wilderness. Their history has been so thoroughly incorporated with our early instruction and our early associations that it may be said that we are more Jews, to-day, than the Jews themselves are.

It seems very strange to a modern, with his habits and notions under civilization, that there should be such a history—that there should be an impulse which should lead an entire people, numbering probably over two millions, to rise up in the night and move out of the land they were dwelling in. Such a thing is unheard of in very recent times, but we have the most authentic history of such emigrations in the olden time, and reaching down pretty well toward modern times. We have the history of the irruptions

of the Goths and Vandals, and the movements of the Asiatic people, where nations broke from their moorings, and drifted down from land to land. In antiquity such things were not uncommon—at any rate, they were not so infrequent as to make it a matter of surprise that this nation should separate itself from its connections in Egypt and enter upon a subsequent history of its own.

Now, the Israelites were evidently upon the eastern side of the river Nile. As there is no mention of their crossing that river, it is quite certain that they were on the eastern side. It is also quite certain that they were low down upon it. They were, therefore, but a comparatively short distance from the promised land; and the question is often asked, Why they did not go into it at once. The reason given in the Word of God is, that their leader doubted their capacity to meet the adversaries that would stand upon the threshold of that land; namely, the Philistines—an active, bold, courageous people, bred to war, and knowing how to wield both the spear and the bow, as we find in their subsequent history. When the Israelites first came out of Egypt they were a vast undisciplined herd—a great nation that had just escaped from slavery, that did not know self-government, and that, though organized into families and tribes, were not organized as a civil commonwealth. They had never been trained to arms, nor to much else. So it was needful that they should go to school; and to school they went. Crossing the head of the Red Sea, they journeyed, with various fate, southward; and it was more than a year, probably, that they spent in the environs of Mount Sinai, and the valleys and plains adjacent. Then they turned to their left and went northward until they came to Kadesh-Barnea in the neighborhood of the Amalekites. Here it was that they were commanded to select a portion from every tribe and send them forward to look after the land into which they were apparently about to enter.

“Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.”

They were to be picked men; but after all they were

good for nothing, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb: and they were good only because they were *men*; the rest were cravens.

“Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan.”

Here is their commission:

“Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain.”

That is, they were to go into the mountainous region—the “hill country,” as it is called in other places.

“See the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strongholds. And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein or not.”

It was a military reconnoissance and an agricultural examination. It was a commission to go up and look after the people, and see how they lived, and what they did, and all about it.

It seems strange to us that men should be sent on such an errand as that into a land occupied by another people; but we cannot now consider that question.

“Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes. So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin [which was a great desert in which they had been wandering] unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath.”

That was the route; and it is quite interesting to follow that route a little. As they would go forward, the very first territory that they would strike, singularly enough, was the territory of their old father Abraham, and where Jacob dwelt; for they would go into the land of the Hittites, in which were the old pasture grounds that the patriarchs held, where their flocks were. And they would go through Hebron. And, leaving on the right Jebus or Jerusalem, they would skirt the summit of the hills between the Jordan valley and the great plain of the Philistines on the right and left; and going down into the valley of Eschol, they would pass Bethel and Shiloh and Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, and still further north they would see Gilboa on the south, and Mount Tabor on the right, and Carmel on the left. Thus they would enter that great fruitful plain of

Esdraelon. And still further they would go north, leaving Nazareth on the left, and seeing Lake Gennesaret on the east. They would keep going north till they came to the source of the Jordan; and looking far up the north country they would see the snowy top of Mount Hermon. Forty days were these men gone; and not a word is said about how they fared. Little is told of where they stopped or what they said. No doubt they lied all the way, from the beginning to the end of their journey. They were sent as spies; they would not tell what they were going for, and they must needs have had some sort of account to give of themselves. They could not help striking a village or a city here and there; and it was their business to look into things wherever they went; but what account they gave of themselves nobody knows. At any rate, they made the journey clear through to the north and returned again south; and when they came into the hill country of Judæa (the southern part of Palestine which became Judæa was especially a land of the vine, the climate and soil being adapted to the production of grapes)—to the valley of Eschol (or, literally, to the land of clusters), they cut a huge cluster, such that two men bore it on a pole, upon their shoulders, and carried it to the camp. It would not take two to carry one bunch of grapes such as we have; Yet there are even now clusters that it would task a man to carry. There are grapes from the Orient that answer somewhat to the description of these grapes of Eschol.

“They returned from searching of the land after forty days. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him [Joshua and Caleb evidently were the speakers], and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this [pointing to the cluster] is the fruit of it. Nevertheless, the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great; and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south; and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.”

There was the brave man's report. “It is a grand land,”

he says; "it is a land, however, held by people that know how to defend their own. It will cost something to get it, but it is worth the price. Let us go!"

"But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants, and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night."

This was a nice people to spend forty years with; but, then, they had been four hundred years slaves. They were born and kept slaves in Egypt; and what could you expect of a great rabble crowd such as they were? Men do not learn manliness in slavery.

"And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron; and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said, one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: and they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey."

They had to address a motive to their mouths. Men who cried and groaned for the melons, and cucumbers, and leeks, and onions which they had in Egypt, and said, "Who are we that we should be brought to perish in this wilderness?" would be likely to think a good deal of milk and honey, and such things.

"Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us [we can eat them up]: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not. But all the congregation bade stone them with stones [that, you know, is the last form of an argument]. And the glory of the

Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me for all the signs which I have shewed among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them."

Upon that, Moses, being promised that God should raise up from him another people, declines the honor; and for the glory of God's name among the neighboring nations of the Gentiles, he pleads that he may not seem to have undertaken an enterprise and to have brought it short of accomplishment on the very border of the promised land. Then the sentence was commuted; all but Caleb and Joshua of the spies were cut off; and the great people were turned back; and it was declared that not one man of those that were of age should ever enter into the promised land—that they should wander for forty years, until the whole population that had manifested such pusillanimity and disobedience and rank treacherous rebellion should be cut off; and that they who should go in should be those who were under age at that time. Then comes another rebellion.

No sooner did the people hear this sentence, and see the condign fate that was visited upon the unfaithful spies—the cowardly ones among them—than their minds rushed to the other extreme. They said, "We *will* go in—we *will* go in." But Moses said, "No, no." Still they determined to attack the Amalekites; and they went forth and attacked them; and they were soundly thrashed, and came back into the camp crestfallen, humiliated, and discouraged. Then they were obedient; they wheeled about and plunged into the mysterious recesses of that desert land, and wandered to and fro till forty years had elapsed; and then, ascending again, passed by on the left of Kadesh-Barnea, along the east side of the Dead Sea, and by brave and persistent battling took possession of the promised land.

This is the history, in brief. There are some points in it which will bear spiritualizing. There is much in it that is pictorial.

The first remark which I make is, that God, in leading men by his providence, never overtasks them, but adapts his dispensations to their condition. He did not take this un-

fledged and undeveloped people straightway from their tasks and their toils in Egypt into the promised land through the gateway of Philistia, where they would have been over-matched—where, unprepared, they would have had to cope with more than equal adversaries. With great compassion God waited until such time as organization and instruction and drill in civil and military affairs should fit them for entering that land with some promise of success. It was not a precipitate entrance that was intended. It was delayed long enough to accommodate the necessities of human life. And that which was true in the management of this people is true of all divine economies. They are adapted to men's weaknesses as well as to their wants, and the requisitions of God upon men. All the divine commands to attain unto virtue, to overcome evil, to rise into the possession of noble elements, are graded and adapted to men's experiences; and men are not subject to everything in childhood that they are in ripe manhood. Men are dealt with leniently; and God waits for them to reach those things which are commanded them. He is patient and long-suffering, and gives them time to unfold the more perfect manifestation of Christian life and Christian character.

The effect of slavery, as we have seen, is to make men cowards. We are informed in the New Testament that sin is slavery; and certainly it is the effect of sin in men to make them cowards, not that they are afraid of the punishment of their sins, but that the temper of their spiritual courage is taken away from them. The spirit of fraud, of deceit, and of theft is a blight to the motives of reformation. Men who have been accustomed to live by guile come to doubt their own power, and they are faint-hearted in respect to their ability to re-establish themselves on foundations of integrity. Men who have indulged at length and at large in appetites, and in the dispositions which spring from lust, when they are plied with motives to virtue, and asked to rise out of the desert upon the higher table lands of true morality, find that they have been made cowards. They have not moral enterprise. They have not confidence in themselves. They do not believe that they can overcome their habits and tempta-

tions, and break their thrall. There is an impression in them or before them that if they attempt it they will meet such mighty influences as certainly will defeat them and cast them down, and that it is all in vain for them to try to reform. Thousands and thousands of men stand outside of the promised land of virtue because they do not dare to go into it. They are afraid to undertake to enter it. They are broken in morality and courage. They are hampered in spiritual directions.

The same thing takes place continually in the realm of industry which took place in the history which we have briefly traced. There are thousands and thousands of indolent men who draw near to the realm of industry, and step on the border of it, and look into it, and see its thriving multitudes, and feel that it would be better for them if they were there, and wish that they might become like those whom they behold; but, after all, when they come to seriously meditate going in, they draw back, and lapse into their spendthrift habits, which all their life thereafter prevail against them. They do not dare to venture.

Those men who have been living unvirtuous lives go and look into the sphere where those men reside who are living virtuously, and they think they will step over the border, and now and then one goes over; now and then God calls one who responds; but how many there are who stand like the slavish people on the southern border of the promised land, and although glorious accounts are given them of the wealth that awaits them on the other side are too timid to go forward.

How differently the same scene appears to men according to whether they have manliness or whether they have the reverse! Among the spies that went up to the promised land there was no doubt as to the character of that land. They all said it was a glorious land—they agreed in that; they all said it was very populous, being full of villages and cities—they all agreed in that; they all said that a brave and hardy set of men lived there. And Joshua and Caleb said, "They are not so strong as we are; we are more than a match for them; we can overcome them. It is the land of our fathers,

that God gave to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and their seed forever : and let us go up and possess it." If the others had had the spirit of patriotism in their hearts ; if they had had the inspiration which they should have had, they would have felt that they could go into that land ; but while Joshua had faith and Caleb had it, they had it not, and they were neither manly nor courageous. The impression made upon them was, when the spies came back, that it was impracticable to attempt to go into it. The great mass, the multitude, when they were told what a splendid land it was, were pleased. Their eyes sparkled when the waving grain—the barley and the wheat—was described to them. The wine, the delicious clusters, the fruitful land flowing with milk and honey, the lowing of the herds on every side, the flocks covering every hill, and the very wilderness being the pasture-ground for innumerable bees—these all appealed to them in the most forcible manner. It was a beautiful land, filled with abundance, and they all of them doubtless felt, "That is our land ;" but when it was told them, "There are great giants there ;" when the spies said, "The land is full of grain and grapes, and milk, and honey ; but there are giants there ;" they said, "Oh, no, we don't want to go up ; we don't care about honey ; we don't like milk—let us go back to Egypt. We don't care about this promised land."

Are there not men who are doing just the same thing to-day ? Are there not men who come on Sunday and hear me preach, "The ways of righteousness are the ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" ; and while I am describing these ways do not their judgment and their moral sense approve ; while I touch the springs of aspiration, and paint the glories that lie in the land beyond, do they not say to themselves, "Yes, this renewed spiritual manhood, this land of promise of the soul—let it be ours ;" but when to-morrow comes, and they face the world and the temptations of the world, and learn how giant-like are their adversaries, and discover that the price of virtue is strife and struggle, and that they must deny themselves, put on their armor, draw their sword, and fight for the land which they are to inherit, do they not, many of them say, "I may as well go back to

Egypt"? They want virtue on Sunday, and they like it all the rest of the week. They desire it, but they are not willing to pay the price with which alone it can be purchased.

There was not a man shivering in that camp who would not have been glad if God had sent destroying angels before him, and conquered that land, and then let him walk up into it, and enjoy its advantages without effort or struggle; but no; God does not let his people go into the promised land either physically or morally. He has joined together as immutable, in every man's life, the two elements of cause and effect; and he has established it as a law that the things which are best cost the most. That he who would have the most must work the most; that he who would attain the noblest things must be the most heroic.

That which was true in regard to those people of old in the lower forms of life is even more significantly true in regard to the higher forms of attainment. No man goes into the land of promise without endeavor. There are the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amalekites, and all the other *ites*, which threaten a man in his social surroundings; and no man can take the pleasant places of life, and sit in the valleys of flowing water, and in the midst of the abundance which the soul is to possess, unless the spirit of enterprise and courage is in him.

Mark, once more, the penalty that was inflicted by God, not only on the unfaithful spies, but on the great mass of the people, because they were pusillanimous, and doubting, and faithless. Was their crime great? Is it a crime for a man to doubt? Is it a crime for a man to lack faith? Under certain circumstances, yes, it is. Not that every man in the modern acceptation of that term *faith* is to be considered as fatally guilty who does not accept this or that intellectual proposition; but in practical life there are few things more disastrous to a man than want of faith in the full attainment of the things which belong to manhood. A man who does not believe that he can tell the truth, or that he can maintain himself in honor and purity, that he can attain spirituality of life, and abide in it if he attains it, is a traitor to God and to his own soul. There are places in

which men stand where to be faint-hearted is to be guilty of crimes as great as man can commit. Those men who went with Joshua and Caleb and brought that report which set the whole camp in a turmoil of cowards, and produced a panic of fear—those men, for want of courage, were doomed to death, and justly. It is the impetus of conviction and purpose and faith that gives men success in life.

When Farragut—that noble man, who succeeded because he believed that he should succeed—was talking with the commander of the fleet off Charleston, who delayed, and delayed, and delayed making an attack with his whole force of monitors, and finally gave it up, and never brought on a battle, this commander complained that the government did not give him such and such arrangements and combinations, that he had not this advantage, and that he lacked that advantage, and when he got through his story, the old hero Farragut said to him, “You have not told one reason.” “What is that?” said the man. “You did not believe you could do it.” That was the story in a few words.

When Farragut meant to run the forts on the Mississippi he believed that he could do it, and he did it; and when he wanted to run the fire in Mobile bay, desperate as it was, he said he could do it, and he did it; and it was the power of his faith that carried him through.

Now, when men look at enterprises as if their face was made of jelly, they certainly cannot carry much through; but if their faces be of fire or of flint, they can. There are thousands and thousands of rescues, there are thousands and thousands of victories, in this life, which are the result of the force of conviction and of courage. Every man can be better than he is. You can leave off any habit if you have a mind to. You can stop swearing, you can break off from drink, you can abandon bad company, you can correct lascivious thoughts and imaginations; you can give up all degrading pleasures, you can maintain honesty, you can attain it if you have lost it, you can purify the understanding of all obscurity so that you shall see the truth and speak truly, you can come into the spirit of prayer, you can enjoy the communion of God, you can overcome easily besetting sins, you

can live a Christian life, by the power of faith. What you need, standing trembling on the border of the accomplishment of these things, is simply conviction, and the courage to venture. Without faith you can do nothing ; with it you can do everything.

There are many men who are pictured in this scene. Many of you, doubtless, are pictured in it. How many men have been brought, as the Israelites were, to the very border of the promised land, and have never gone into it ?

My thoughts drift back to my early ministry, and to the labors of some of my former fields. I remember that one Sabbath morning, after a very long and blessed revival of religion, I sat in my pulpit and counted ; and there were but twenty men in the congregation who were not hopefully converted. It did not take me so long to count my congregation then as it does now ; for in all my early ministry I do not suppose I averaged three hundred hearers until I came to Brooklyn. People sometimes say, " Oh, you have such great throngs, of course you can preach of this, that and the other thing." But I worked my way up. I labored for fifteen years where I had but a handful of men. I formed my habits in the ministry, not on the top of prosperity, but at the bottom of it, where men work and endure, and learn to work by enduring. It is only the flowers of early endeavor that I have in later life. Well, I remember looking through my congregation and seeing that lawyer, and that business man and that broker, and that half-reformed gambler, and that speculator ; and I recollect making an estimate of them. Many of them I had seen on their knees. Many of them had come to see me with tears in their eyes. I had seen one, I now remember, when he thought himself to be converted, and he began family prayer in his household. I know what the history of these men has been since. They are nearly all gone. Only one or two of them are yet left. The light of hope was not kindled in any single instance that I know of. I brought them to the border of the promised land, I pointed it out to them, I urged and urged them to venture ; some of them, with hesitating step, went over the border, but ran back speedily ; while others held back and looked

and wished and feared, and died in their sins. There are such men now. There are many in this congregation who have for years been living in the knowledge of the truth. Their understanding goes with me in everything that I say. In calmer moments all their moral nature responds to the appeals that I make. Nay, there are soft hours in which their hearts melt. They mean better things. They come up to the border line of resolution, and on one side are coarse passions, worldly indulgences, overweening and sordid cares, various ambitions and selfish strife, and on the other side are faith, and a pure and undefiled love, and a vision of God, and the hope of immortality; but although they go up to the very border, they never pass over; and many of them have turned away—or they have gone back into the desert; and many are turning away; and some there are here to-night. Oh, that my word might be efficacious with them! Oh, that they who have wandered so long and restlessly might, at last, looking over, and seeing the blessedness beyond, pass on into the presence of God, to be his forever! Oh, that they might now and at once cast in their lot with God's people, break away from all seductions, escape from every besetting sin, cast aside their evil habits, and begin to live a Christian and spiritual life!

I fear that there are many who hear these words for the last time, and in whose experience will be spiritually verified the old history; and that not until more than forty years have passed shall they see the promised land—nor then to enter. They perished in the wilderness who would not go when God called them; and greater yet is the wilderness that awaits those, and more dismal is the destruction which shall overcome them, who do not know the time of their calling and the day of God's visitation, who resist the strivings of the divine Spirit with their reason, with their moral sense, and with their affections.

If, then, peradventure, there be any who know the way of life, and have purposed some time to begin a Christian course, why not begin it now? Since God's burdens are light, and his yoke is easy, why not to-night, at this hour, with full purpose of heart, begin to live the true and ever-

enduring life? The flesh perisheth ; the passions all decay ; the joys that spring from them are transitory ; nor are they of the best kind when they endure ; but that which God gives to those who put their trust in him is a well of waters springing up into everlasting life ; it is bread that takes away hunger ; it is water that takes away thirst ; it is rest that abides for ever ; it is peace that is as the very life of God.

Oh, men, to you I call. For your own sake, for the sake of your immortality, and for the sake of Christ, enter the spirit land, the promised land ; and be obedient to your Leader, God.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE bless thy name, our Father, for the mercy of the day; for its light, for its inspiration; for all the associations that are connected with it; for all the thoughts which we have had; for all the feelings that lift us above our sorrow and our trouble, and into thy presence. We thank thee that we have felt this day the influence of the world to come; that we have been lifted up; that we have beheld thee as in a vision. And we pray, now, that we may not forget the blessedness of the truths of inspiration which thou hast been pleased to vouchsafe to us. May we bear into all the days of this week the Spirit of faith and the power of hope, and rejoice in the Lord with daily thanksgiving and trust unalterable and immovable. We are not worthy to draw near unto thee. We do not come because we are like unto thee, nor because we have fulfilled that measure of duty which is plain to us; we draw near to thee because thou art gracious, and thy goodness is our hope and our trust. We bless thee that, though nature be rugged, and though fate doth rule with cruel strokes, there is permitted us forgiveness under the law. We bless thee that thou art full of compassion and of tender mercy, and that thou dost never forget thy children. We thank thee that thou art thinking evermore of men who transgress thy commands, and wander from thy ways; and lapse from happiness, and fall into distress and trouble, and cry out unto thee for help. We thank thee that thou dost succor them and bring them out of the pit where they are, and from the evils by which they are held, and dost redeem their souls, because thou art beneficent, and because it pleaseth thee to do such things.

And now, O thou Sovereign of mercy and of goodness, we desire to trust in thee—not in our own wisdom; not in the might of thy right hand; not in our experience; and not in that which, little by little, we may have obtained of virtue and piety. Our trust, our hope, is the infinite mercy and goodness of our God. Abundant thou art in mercy, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin; and we desire to stand pensioners of thy bounty; for we are not disgraced that we are thy pensioners, such is thy grandeur. Wonderful are thy mercies with which thou hast crowned us. That which from the hands of men we might disdain, from thy hand comes as an honor. We pray that thou wilt make us to feel that the things which we reap, we gain from thee and achieve from thee. May we rejoice that everything is perfumed with the thought of God. We pray that we may be strengthened by thee and become more powerful by faith to forgive our adversaries, and at last overcome the final enemy, and stand triumphant beyond the reach of death itself.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all who are assembled here this evening. Look thou upon every one according to his need. Grant mercy and peace to every one. Grant the salvation which they need to those who are in affliction; and grant the guidance which they need to those who are in perplexity; and give the strength which they need to those who are ready to faint

and to perish by the way. Thou that didst lead thy people of old like a flock, we pray that every one in thy presence may be able to look up to thee as the Shepherd that leads them in green pastures and by the side of still waters.

And now, we pray that thou wilt send abroad that light of truth which hath made us happy, to all the known world. May the tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ be preached in every land. May a high and holy faith be more and more felt in the experience of the race. Lift men up from their barbarism, from their superstitions and from their cruelties. We pray that the day of prediction may speedily come, when, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, all men shall know thee, and shall love thee. May our land be an instrument in thy hand for the accomplishment of these great ends. We pray that thou wilt raise up men that shall preach with more fullness and power than any who have gone before. We pray that there may be men whose hearts shall be more perfectly ripened by the grace of God, and that love may assume a strength and perform wonders such as have never been seen. Oh, hasten the day when a purified church, knit together by faith and love, shall shine forth upon the world, and the daylight come for which the world so long has waited.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we thank thee for the recorded history of thy people of old. We pray that the application of their example to our lives may be such as shall profit us. May we avoid their errors. May we steer wide of their mistakes.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all that are present to-night. May there be wheat sown which shall spring up. We pray that thou wilt revive thy work in the hearts of thy people. We pray that thou wilt ripen all good impressions and right tendencies in the heart of every one. More and more may we hear men saying, I am the Lord's. More and more may we see the beauty of holiness developed in them. May thy kingdom come, and may thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.

We ask it for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

## “AS A LITTLE CHILD.”

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During the few weeks that I have been here, and have had the services of the Sabbath mornings under my charge, I have felt that both courtesy and good feeling required that, as far as possible, I should avoid all discussion and exposition that would raise questions of difference. Divided as the great Christian world is in various ways, internally and externally, into separate bands, it seems to me that the same courtesy should be employed when one stands in a promiscuous multitude in the community that is employed in the intercourse between families. In every neighborhood there are certain elements that are different in one family and another; and politeness requires that they should not interfere with each other's living. Every one is entitled to his own liberty; and there is a propriety in every other one respecting that liberty. I have undertaken, therefore, on the Sabbath mornings when I have spoken to you, to discuss those elements which were spiritually fundamental, and which belonged to all Christian sects in common—and I shall this morning do the same thing: for when you touch the question of true Christian experience; when you deal with the great subject of Christian character, all differences vanish. It will be found as you recede from the spiritual conception of manhood to the instruments by which men are educated that differences multiply and disputes increase; but as you go from the visible toward the invisible, and discuss the interior life of Christians, all differences gradually cease, and men come into perfect unity. If you could bring the whole great diverse brotherhood of Christians,

under various names, together into a scene where all were lifted up to a holy enthusiasm in admiration for some great and noble deed, or in aspiration, you would find that they would take hold of hands together, and that there would be no separation. The essential element of Christianity *unites* men. Its instruments and external institutions *divide* them. Therefore he who speaks from the interior, and to the interior of Christian experience, speaks in accordance with the best judgments and the best aspirations of Christians of every sect.

In the 18th chapter of Matthew, and the opening verse, are the following words :

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven ?

That is very much, if you should put it in modern phrase, as if one should say, "What do you consider the most eminent state of Christian experience? What is your conception of the most perfect manhood?"

"And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Let alone who is the greatest there ;—you shall not even get in unless you become as little children.

"Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

We are to recollect that our Master stood at a time of the world when in various nations the ambition of manhood had been, or was, very strong. The Chaldean and the Assyrian had their conception of what was the most becoming in a man—they had their ideal heroes, in other words ; the Greek had his ideal man and manhood ; the Roman had very distinctly before his mind that which to him was the highest spectacle of manhood ; the Jews, who were not one whit behind them, had clear conceptions of what was necessary to a perfect noble manhood ; and our Master fell in with the universal disposition of men in their better moods, or of the best men in their better moods, to seek ideal perfection ; and when they came to ask him, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"—that is, "What is the highest man-

hood?”—he took a little child and set him in their midst. And what was the signification of that?

The Master was surrounded by conceited men, whose ideal was so easily reached that there were tens of thousands in Jerusalem who had reached it, and who had gone, as they thought, as far as human nature could go; and perchance they were of those who said, “What lack I yet?” That was the spirit of the great mass of the best Jews. Their standard being so low, there were many elements that puffed them up; they felt that they knew a great deal; they had read the Old Testament—that is, the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms; their teachers had inspired them with the feeling that knowledge consisted in a minute rendering and an exact understanding of the distinctions of the exterior Mosaic law; they were very familiar with that; they therefore felt that there was scarcely anybody that could instruct them; and they were very proud and excessively conceited. Our Master stood in the midst of scribes, doctors, teachers, and eminent Jewish saints; and their feeling was, “We are ready to patronize you; we recognize that you are an able man, that you are a prophet, that you are one of us; and we will take you into our company if you will only disclose an *esprit de corps*. If you will go with us we will accept you.” In their conceit they felt that they were orthodox, that they were saints; and Christ says to them, “If you wish to be eminent in the kingdom of heaven you must be converted—that is, you must be turned to just what you are not; you must empty yourselves all out of yourselves, and start over again; and you must be like little children.”

Now, what is it in childhood that makes the model or conception of manhood? It is not that the child loves; it is not that the child is weak; it is not that the child is ignorant: it is that in childhood universally there is the impetus and aptitude to *learn*. It is not a sense of ignorance so much as an appetite for knowledge; and the whole force of the nature of the child, the whole impulse of the child’s mind, is, “What is that? What is that? What is that?” and the child sits artlessly and receives what every one tells it. It is hungry for knowledge, and knowledge pours into it in

ceaseless streams. But the Pharisees felt themselves to be like a bay into which the whole Atlantic ocean pours its tides, and fills it full, so that no more can be put into it without its running over; and the Saviour said to them, "There is no man among you that knows anything about the kingdom of God. Such is your self-satisfied state that unless you be converted and become as children, unless you are conscious that you are profoundly ignorant, unless you have a different conception of what manhood means, and of the ways of obtaining it, and unless you become my scholars, and let me teach you the first elements of noble living, you shall not see the kingdom of heaven."

What, then, is "the kingdom of heaven"? It is an oriental figure; and it is a figure which is better understood in a monarchy, and under a despotism, than in our democratic republican government. We have to form very artificial notions of it. But we are familiar with what is meant by a *cause*—the cause of temperance, the cause of virtue, the cause of truth; we are familiar with what is meant by purity and justice, and so on; and our knowledge of these things will help us somewhat to understand what our Master meant by "the kingdom of heaven."

The exact definition is given by the Apostle Paul, where he says, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink [referring to the sacrificial rites and feasts of the Jews], but righteousness, [right-living, rectitude of life, in intent and endeavor], and peace [not blindness nor stupidity]." *Peace* does not mean the absence of disturbance. Peace is a positive quality. It is the highest condition in which correlated faculties can exist. It is intense tranquility. When the strongest feelings are in accord and all right, the highest excitement is the most peaceful state. All excitements that are painful or injurious are so because men are not perfect enough; because they are not high enough; because they do not average enough.

When you hear one of the noblest strains of Beethoven's symphonies, in ten or twelve different parts, it seems like one sound. Take those parts from each other, separate them, throw them against each other, and they agitate one another;

but when they are perfectly concordant all the instruments swell together with their different natures. They are so related that their varying sounds become as one sound, and are completely harmonious.

When one feeling alone is excited, its excitement is disturbing, and the other feelings are in conflict; but when the whole mind is excited together, and concordantly, there is no disturbance, but all is peace. And that peace which is here meant is a peace of vitality: it is not a peace of stupidity or indifference. It is one of the noblest, highest, best and most comprehensive of feelings.

Then there is another element which the apostle mentions as belonging to the kingdom of heaven—namely, “joy in the Holy Ghost”—that is, inspired joy; that rapture which comes not from a sordid love of things which we can see or handle, but from the experience of those nobler hours, those supreme moments which are given to men; that ecstasy which comes from conscious communion, or from the unconscious possession of the highest feelings of our nature.

When, therefore, you put these elements together, and bring them into order, and weigh them, and interpret them in our familiar manner, the kingdom of God is simply the Realization of Manhood in the highest form. It begins on earth and terminates in heaven. He only is in the kingdom of God who has begun to develop in himself, with earnest purpose, all those qualities, that whole line of conduct, which is leading him toward the full idea of perfect manhood which God meant when he set up man.

Take a clock like that one in the office here, that never keeps time. What was it made for? To keep time. That was the design with which it was put together and set a-going. It may wander from the original purpose of its maker, and go too fast or too slow; nevertheless, that for which it was made was to register the lapse of time. That was the end which was contemplated in its construction. All clocks are made for that. It is what the man set out for who made it. He may have thought of selling it, and getting the money for it; but the constructive idea back of the commercial one was that it should register time. That is

the root of the matter in every clock ; and the clock is valuable in proportion as it does this, and worthless in proportion as it wanders from its maker's design.

Now, in the matter of manhood, the plenitude of reason, the fullness, richness, depth and power of the moral sentiments ; the illumination that comes through the imagination ; all those illusive graces that flash over the mind through fancy and mirth and humor ; all those domestic affections which go where the mother-nature may not go in society relations ; all those basilar forces which are indispensable to man in his warfare in the material world—all these elements (and how many there are of them ! How easily they are put out of adjustment ! How poorly they are constructed ! How much they lack that training which shall lead them to work upward and in the right direction !)—all these elements constitute the conception of man, in full disclosure, with all his powers of mind and soul and spirit developed so that the whole being is one that obeys the laws of matter, social laws, intellectual laws, moral laws and spiritual laws.

Next, what is it to "*enter into* the kingdom of God" ? In the first place, you want to throw away the idea of a city, of a gate, or of any material entering-in. Whoever undertakes to be a man according to the instruction of the word of God, though his ideal may not be complete, and undertakes to use himself so as to make himself better, and so as to grow more and more manly, has entered the kingdom of God.

Entering the kingdom of God, then, is entering a Christian, a higher and nobler, life. Entering the kingdom of God is being better. Meaning to be better systematically, as the end of one's life, is to enter the kingdom of God.

And what is being "*converted*" ? It is *beginning* to do these things. What is it to be a farmer ? Well, it is to obtain one's livelihood, or rather occupying one's time, in the cultivation of the soil. What is it to become converted from a minister to a farmer ? It is to stop preaching much, and to go to work on a farm. It does not necessarily mean that I shall be a good farmer, or that I shall earn anything, or that I shall do my work in the best way, but that I shall de-

vote my time to the business of farming. The moment I begin to devote myself to that business I begin to be a farmer.

What is it for a man who has been a liar all his life long to become a man of veracity? It is to set out with the purpose of fulfilling, as far as possible, the law of truth. It is hard for a man who has been living in an illusory world to get back into a world of realities; and it is hard for a man who has equivocated from his childhood up to speak the truth. No man speaks the truth easily who has not been trying to all his life, and still less one who has all his life indulged in falsehood. But when a man says, "I have been a liar; I see that lying is dishonorable and base; and I am going to try to be a man of truth," and makes a business of it for days and weeks and months, and means to keep on, he has begun to be a truthful man. He may yet falsify every day; but if, after all, he has his face set toward veracity, and toward overcoming the tendency to falsehood, and is growing in the belief of his neighbors, then he has begun to enter the kingdom of truth; he is a part of it; he is a disciple in it.

A man is taken sick. The physician says that morbid influences have a course that they must run; that when they have once started there is a tendency to keep on; and he will also tell you that by and by there comes a point where, under medication, or by the forces of nature, this tendency is exhausted, where it consummates itself, and where there begins to be a recuperative tendency. This man has been three weeks confined to his bed, and his physician says "The crisis is past; now there is a tendency to recovery." The man is "getting well"; he is "convalescent." But he is not well; his eyes are heavy; his bones ache; his organs do not perform their functions perfectly; he is on the "sick list" yet; it will be a long time before he will be on his feet; and when he is on his feet it will be a long time before he can make much use of himself; and after he commences to use himself it will be perhaps six months before he will be restored to full vigor and usefulness; and yet when the physician says, "The crisis is past," the man has begun to get well.

Now, to be converted means to set your face toward a

higher and nobler way of living—not to set yourself to do better according to the pattern of this neighborhood or according to the average public sentiment of the community; but to set yourself to do better according to the pattern of the highest manhood. The moment a man takes in a conception of his relations to God, of his eternal existence, of the change spiritual by which, by and by, he is to drop this mortal body and be associated with the general assembly and church of the first-born, and with the spirits of just men made perfect, in the other life; the moment a man comprehends the scope of his whole being here and hereafter, and says, "I am determined to live as a man should who has such a destiny in the life to come"—that moment he has entered into the kingdom of God.

We are stopped at this point by misconceptions widespread. In the first place, men say, "I understand by conversion a great change wrought in a man by which he passes from death to life, so that whereas yesterday he was a great sinner, to-day he is a child of grace; so that a man who is in the darkness of ignorance is immediately lifted into the light of truth, wherein everything becomes new to him." This impression is the more mischievous because it has a root of truth in it, a figurative expression being treated as though it were literal truth.

A man gets up in a conference meeting, a love-feast, or some church assembly, and says, "I was conscious that there was a great struggle in me against God and righteousness; and I was conscious of being suddenly led by the power of God so that everything seemed new to me. I never heard the birds sing so before. The world never seemed so beautiful to me before. I never before seemed to love everybody so. Everything appeared different. I was a new man. I was changed—completely changed." He really does feel as though he was completely changed. Well, is he? Let us see. He has been a stingy man. Is his stinginess quite dead? He has been a very proud man. The first effect of this spiritual shock that he has received was such that his head is not held so high, and his neck is a great deal more limber; but is his pride dead? You shall soon after hear

him say, “We have our trials and troubles in the Christian life as elsewhere. I have had much light and comfort since I became a Christian; but I have had my ups and downs.” What does he mean by “ups and downs”? He means that he was not completely changed by the Spirit of God. He *began* to be a Christian—that was the only change which he underwent. He simply started in the Christian course. His old habits were not burned up. There was a change; and pride, love of money, vanity, the affections, all the faculties of the mind, received an impulse in the right direction; but that impulse had not consolidated itself into fixed habits; and every man that is born into the kingdom of God, or converted, is merely started in the Christian life.

A man says, “I am going to emigrate. This is a poor country about the White Mountains; a man must be a stone to be contented to earn his living on these farms; I am going to Oregon, where the land is worth having;” but he cannot sell his farm; and he must look after his old mother, who cannot go; and he is hindered in various ways from carrying out his intention. He thinks about it much as many people think about becoming Christians. They want to be Christians; they never see any exhibition of Christian life, or witness any religious ceremony, that it does not stir them up and make them wish they were Christians; they feel that they must be Christians some time or other. By and by the mother dies, and the man says, “One string is broken that kept me here: now, if I can get rid of my farm, I will go.” But there are vacillations in his mind. He says, “Can I get enough money to go with?” By and by he begins to read and think and inform himself. At length he sells his farm, and he has, perhaps, a thousand dollars; and he says, “What can I do with it?” He says at last, turning it over seriously in his mind, “I will go—I will go next Monday.” Next Monday comes, and he starts. After traveling a day, he gets to Boston. An acquaintance meets him there, and says, “Hallo! I understood you were going to Oregon.” “I am going there,” says the man, “but I have not gone.” Yes, he is going; but he is in New England yet; and when he has traveled another day he will

be there still. He may stop in New York a week ; but he is on his way to Oregon. When he is out of New York State and in the Western States he may wish to stop and see things there and make inquiries, but he is on his way to Oregon. He has begun his journey, although the comprehensive object for which he set out is not attained but is yet in a far distant land.

A man says, "I have been living a wicked life, without regard to the future, and now I am going to take a larger conception of manhood, to live for my Saviour, for eternity, for my own welfare here and hereafter, and for the honor and elevation of my fellow men." He surveys the matter and forms his purpose, and says, "I will, by the grace of God, undertake to live from this time forth by a higher rule and in a better way." *That man is converted.* How much is he converted? Well, he has started in the right way. But every subsequent day of his life he will find out that it is one thing to resolve, that it is another thing to execute, and that on entering upon a Christian life a man enters, not upon a course which by the omnipotent power of God has been shaved smooth and clean so that he rolls like a ball downhill easily all the time, but upon an education the most comprehensive and the most difficult that a man can conceive of.

When you have entered upon a Christian life you have undertaken, under all manner of circumstances and with every influence operating upon you, to take the forces of nature which are working incorrectly in you, and to take your understanding and moral sentiments and spiritual dispositions, and overrule them and control them so that you shall fulfill the great law of love to God and man.

Now, when a man begins such a work as that, he is like a boy that has gone to school. We are not further along, most of us, than such a one. The exceptions I shall have occasion to mention in a moment. The popular idea of a Christian is, that before he was a Christian he was a sinner—in other words, that he was a bag full of all sorts of weed-seeds, and that the Spirit of God came along and shook them up and emptied them out, and put the bag under a hopper, and

filled it full of wheat, and tied it up, and set it in the church, where people point at it and say, “He is a Christian. He used to be a sinner full of vile seeds from bottom to top, but now he is all wheat.” Men speak of persons in the church according to that false theory. They think that God has burned up all the chaff and straw, all that is inferior in them, and that they are filled with the Divine Spirit. Instead of that, Christ says to a man, “Would you be saved? Well, come after me, and let me teach you.” That is the import of “Follow me” and “Become my disciple.” *Disciple* simply means *scholar*. Christ is a school-master to us. We must learn in his kingdom divine ideas, and then we must practice them. We must be not only taught, but *trained* and *drilled*, in Christ’s teaching, until it has become a part of our nature.

No man who is beginning to be a Christian is more than a beginner, or can be, in the very nature of the human mind; and when a man is converted—that is to say, when he has had a clear revelation of the enormity of sin, and he revolts from it, and turns away from it, and has a more or less vivid conception of the higher Christian life, and sets his face toward it, saying, “I believe that I am converted, and that I have entered into the kingdom of Christ”—he is like a little child, and has everthing to learn.

I make these explanations for a variety of reasons. First, many persons think, when they are converted, that they are perfect Christians. When a man has gone through conviction, and had an awful time, and wrestled with the Prince of Darkness, and he gets up in meeting, and says, “I remember that I could not eat my meals, that I tossed in bed two whole nights without sleep, and that when I knelt in prayer all seemed dark, till by and by I heard a voice, and peace came into my soul, and I shouted, ‘Glory, glory, glory.’” people feel as though that experience showed that he had been rinsed and cleansed and scoured out, and that all in him that was bad was clean gone; but it is not so.

These dramatic experiences I do not in any way ridicule; but I smite them when they are misinterpreted so as to be mischievous, and I say to persons who, though they have

them, are yet living a low life, "Do you not know that your conduct is inconsistent with your profession? Do you not know that you are constantly breaking your Christian vows? Do you not know that you are considered by those who are acquainted with you as no better than an infidel man, and that many who do not pretend to be Christians are regarded as more reliable than you?" They say: "Oh! well, you know that Christians sometimes backslide; but I have been converted, and I have the promises, and I am going to get into heaven." They think that from that dramatic experience which they went through when they were first converted, as they supposed, they are sure of being saved.

A man enters college and passes his examination, which is a pretty tough one, and is matriculated. But during term-time he does not study, but has his splees and frolics, and does not make any preparation for the examination that is coming round; and when he is warned by his teachers and classmates, who say to him, "Look here, my friend, you are getting into trouble by not studying and preparing for the examination," he says, "I'd like to know if I'm not a member of the Freshman class. Haven't I been examined, and haven't I got in? Don't I belong to this college? I may be worse or better in the coming examination, but here I am in it." Yes, and he may be out of it when the examination comes!

"Many shall say unto him, Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works; and he shall profess unto them, I never knew you."

Men say, "Don't you know what a time I had when I was convicted and converted?" What does God care for that? The secret purpose of God is to make you *men*. and redeem you from animalism, and from the thrall and narrowness of pride and selfishness, and augment and enrich your nature, and *edify you*,—as the Scripture phrase is, build you up,—into resplendent, heroic manhood; and what boots it, under such circumstances, that you simply began to be a Christian? The question is, have you been built up?

I have seen in New York City, ten or twelve foundations for buildings where the cellar walls were started, and I

have seen those cellar walls stand for six years, to my certain knowledge, without any superstructure built upon them. So I have seen many Christians converted who never got above the cellar walls. Nothing was ever built upon them. They never became perfect men in Christ Jesus.

We are converted, and have entered the kingdom of God, when we have become as little children, and have undertaken to be better men, according to our light and knowledge in every direction ; when we have undertaken to educate ourselves in a better way of thinking, and feeling, and living ; when we have undertaken to build up a better manhood : and it does not make any difference whether we come into the kingdom of God with uproar and a dramatic experience or not. If you are in the school of Christ and are faithful scholars, that is the main thing ; and if you come in with bands playing and flags flying, and you are poor scholars, it will not do you any good that you have been converted and are in the church. You are to become as little children, in order that you may grow in grace. It is the attainment which you have made toward Christian manhood that is to measure your growth and determine the finality of your life and disposition.

But while on the one side I would expose these mistakes that men commit to their detriment, on the other side I make this exposition for the encouragement of thousands and thousands of persons who were instructed by Christian parents all through their childhood, and who have a substantial knowledge of the truth as it is laid down in Christian schemes, and who have strong yearnings and desires to live better, but who feel self-rebuked, and struggle in their minds. There are before me persons who have said, thousands of times, “I do feel as though, if I were only converted, I should like to live a Christian life.” There are thousands who have wistfully looked on when father and mother or brothers and sisters have gone to partake of the Lord’s Supper and said, “I wish I were worthy and could go ; but I have never been converted. I do not belong to the church, and, therefore, the Lord’s Supper is not for me.”

Well, if you are standing and waiting for the Spirit of God instantly to catch you up, and strike light and heat through you, so as to transform you at once, then you are waiting upon an error; but it is possible for any one of you, at any moment, to be a Christian, now, here, before you leave your seat, while you are listening to me.

Suppose there were war again, and I were calling for soldiers, would you not become a soldier the moment you gave your name to me to be enrolled? Would you not consider yourself a soldier when you had separated from your friends and companions, and gone into the army, and signed your name, or given me leave to sign it for you? You would not be a soldier in one sense, but in another sense you would be. You would not have received any drill, but nevertheless you would have enlisted.

Now, it is not necessary that a man should be a whole Christian, it is not necessary that he should be educated in all the lore of Christ, in order to be a Christian. The moment he enters upon a Christian life he is like a child that has just entered a school. How does a child become a scholar? He enters the school as an abecedarian. He is not far along, to be sure; but he is beginning; and he is as really a scholar as he would be if he were further advanced in his education.

Suppose a child six years old on returning from school where he had just been received as a pupil should say, "Father, I am a scholar." And the father says, "If you are a scholar I will examine you;" and he takes down Newton's *Principia* and questions the child upon it. The father would show himself to be a fool in his idea of what constitutes a scholar. It is not to be supposed that a child in school would have that familiarity with an encyclopedia which belongs to the higher stages of development.

How much knowledge is it necessary that a man should have in order to begin to be a Christian? How much knowledge must a man have in order to begin to pray? He need not have any. The desire to pray is sufficient. That makes you like a little child. That was what you needed, and you have found it out; and the way to practice a Christian vir-

one is the way to show how very little you know. Let a man begin at any point in the Christian life with this thought: “I honestly mean to live according to the Christian pattern, the rule and law of Christ.” What shall he do first? I do not care what he does first. Christ says, “If you give a cup of water in my name to a disciple, you shall not lose your reward.” He says, “The kingdom of God is like a seed.” What is a seed? It is an oak-tree in embryo. How much of an oak-tree is it? It is an acorn. This is planted; it is hidden. The first year it sprouts; and the second year it rises a little above the ground; but you will have to wait ten or fifteen or twenty years before it will give much shade; and it will be a hundred years before it becomes an acre-spreading tree.

Now, the kingdom of God in the soul of a man, according to the declaration of Christ, being like a seed, begins at the seminal form. It is a germ which grows. When one wishes to become a Christian man, and begins to act upon that wish, he is at most a seed, a germ, which must grow. You cannot, therefore, accept any doctrine of grace which says that by the Divine Spirit you shall be endowed with Christian excellences miraculously. You must begin at the bottom, and learn thing by thing, thing by thing, all the way through.

I am asked, “Suppose now, Mr. Beecher, one should come to you, in Brooklyn, on communion day, early in October, and say, ‘I have been thinking of my past life, and I am not satisfied with it: my mind runs in too low a channel; my ideals are ignoble, base, worldly, and I have but an imperfect knowledge of the law of God, though so far as I can see it requires right living, and I am determined to attain it—may I partake of the Lord’s Supper?’” I would say to him, “Yes, you may. Not that it is going to do you any miraculous good, but that it will produce an impression on your intellect and imagination.” “May I join your church?” “Yes, if I have evidence that you are intelligent enough to know what you are doing, and if I perceive that you are determined, according to the best of your ability, to live a Christian life, and that you have begun it. Under such cir-

cumstances I will take you into my church as a child is taken into an academy." Is it asked, whether I require an examination? Yes, I do. I say to one applying for admission to a school, "If you do not know enough to enter the academy, you had better go into the primary school;" and I take him in, not because he is a perfect scholar, but because he wants to learn. And to a person applying for admission to the church, I open the door, and say, "Do you want to live a more manly life? Are you willing and determined to pattern your life on the ideal manhood as set forth by Christ Jesus?" If he gives affirmative answers to these questions, I say, "You had better come into the church, because the church is a place where we take men who are desirous of doing these things, and where they do them in little before they can do them in large."

If there is a person here who is discontented with his way of living, and wishes he could live a higher life, and can say, "I accept the ideal which is laid down in the Gospel, and will try to do better, taking Christ as my pattern," I regard him as a Christian—a Christian child. He is converted, and has become as a little child, and is ready to be further instructed.

Well, but, is not that a very loose and careless statement? Will not many unworthy persons say, "I have some virtues; I have enough stock to get into the church with." Will not people take advantage, and get into the church, and be satisfied with a superficial life, and undervalue the necessity of a deep moral subsoiling? I have no doubt that there may be such cases; but, on the other hand, in trying to keep them out, the view of the kingdom of God by which it is attempted to keep them out will also keep out many timid, sincere, sensitive persons. By such a course twenty will be hurt or hindered who ought to be in the church, where one is kept out who ought not to be there. I say, therefore, to the many young men and maidens here, You have a knowledge of what is expected of you; and if, having that knowledge, you have an impulse in the right direction, that is sufficient. Sufficient for what? Sufficient for *a leaven*, to begin with: not enough to end with (that comes by educa-

tion), but enough to begin with. It is not only your duty, standing with the light of truth shining down upon you, to accept it and live in accordance with it; but it is your privilege to take your ground on that, and say, “I am willing to become a scholar, in order that I may become a full-grown man.” And the mystery being all gone, why do not you begin to educate yourself?

Let me say, further, that many persons, as soon as they have gone into the church, are apt to feel as a person does who has insured his house. It may be burnt up, but it is insured, and he has a sense of security.

A man, going to Europe, may be sea-sick, and may not enjoy his voyage; but he says, “What matters it that I am miserable on the way? I shall soon be landed there, and then I shall feel all right.” So, many persons regard the church as a life-boat designed to get men safely off from this world into heaven; and when they are in the church they feel safe. They say, “I may be a little poorer, I may be a little worse off than others in a worldly point of view; but being in the church I am secure, and shall go to heaven. My passage is all paid, my insurance is taken out, and nothing can interfere with my safety.”

It is no such thing. The church is nothing in the world but simply an educating institution. A man may go to college and be a blockhead still. A man may enter upon a trade and be a bungler all his life. A man may go into the church and be coarse, and hard, and selfish, and proud, and vain, and not have at all the education that is adapted to a Christian life, or that it was intended to give him in the church.

Therefore, when a man goes into the church he goes there as a scholar goes into a school, or as an apprentice goes into a shop. He goes in for practice; he goes in to be taught; he goes in to learn a higher mode of life; and if we could get out of men’s minds the idea that a sanctity comes from adhesion to the church, as if it were an equivalent for personal endeavor, for study, for labor, for conscientious responsibility, for yearning aspiration, for pressing forward, it would save them from much misconception, and from many

mistakes. It is equivalent to nothing of the sort. It is a help toward these things. You may be better for being in the church, and you may be worse: if it helps you you are better, and if it hinders you you are worse.

A man is converted. He goes into the church, and joins himself to those who believe they are converted, and who are making a common endeavor to live aright. He says, after a week or ten days, "Look here, Parson, I guess you had better take my name off from that roll." "What is the matter?" says the parson. "Well, on such a night Jim and I quarreled, and I knocked him down, and I could not control my temper. There is no grace in my heart, or I never would have done that, although I do mean to live better. You had better take my name off." He is the very man that needs to be in the church.

Suppose, for instance, a man should say to a hotel keeper, in a terrific storm, at night, when the snow was blinding everybody, and when the wind was whirling everything about, "Look here! See how I am hurled about by the wind and storm. I'm not going into the hotel because I am not fit." That he is knocked and beat about is the very reason why he should go in.

And the fundamental condition on which you went into the church was that while you were under obligation to restrain your temper and conduct, and put hindrances in the way of your wrong-doing, nevertheless, you did not profess that your temper was completely under control. You went there to have it controlled. It got the better of you once, but that is no reason why you should not stay in the church. You knocked a man down; but the experience connected with that event may have been a good lesson to him, or to you, or to both. You should learn from your mistakes. A man who does not know how to learn from his mistakes turns the best schoolmaster out of his life. We ought to profit from our follies and weaknesses and blunders.

You went into the church and got drunk. Well, you have been sober for six months—a thing which you could not have said during ten years before. The fact that you have improved should be an encouragement to you: and the fact

that you are not wholly reformed is a reason why you should remain among those who can aid you.

“We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.”

We are subject to the same temptations as our fellow men, and we are exhorted by the apostle to shield them and sympathize with them.

A man goes into the church to learn how to live Christianly. He does not say that he is perfect in any point. He is under instruction. He swears. It is not less than wrong. He ought to be ashamed of his swearing. His conscience ought to smite him. He ought to blush at the thought of it. But he ought not to consider all as lost because he has sworn. He should profit from that wickedness. If he deals with it wisely it may be wholesome to him, like tonic bitters to a man who is in a feeble state of health. It is a thing to be condemned, but it is no reason why he should say that he is not a Christian, or why he should not be one.

A man goes into the church. He is in business, and every man about him is actuated by selfishness, and resorts to adroitness, and is seeking his own interest; he is obliged to watch and guard against their avarice; and he says, “I have been sordid, hard, untruthful. There I did not exactly tell the truth. I am afraid I did make a slight misrepresentation there. A pretty fellow I am, pretending to be a Christian, and playing the hypocrite! I have not been sincere nor honest. I have lied; and how can a man who lies and equivocates call himself a Christian?” Well, do not you think there is need of his being one? and do not you think he has a conviction of sin of the right sort?—not that great generic conviction which men have when they measure themselves against God’s law in a general way, but that specific conviction which a man has, when he says, “I am temptable in this faculty and in that; and my vanity and pride are leading me into temptation.”

If, when you are beginning to find out the reality of your sickness, the doctor is called in, and he asks what your difficulty is, “Oh,” you say, “I am a little unwell; I have a slight fever.” He gives you a little cream of tartar, has your feet soaked, and directs that you shall be put to bed; but he does

not know much about your case. The true way, when a man goes to his doctor, and represents himself as being sick, is for the doctor to take him one side, and inquire into his symptoms, and trace the disease to the vital organs, to the nerves, or to the muscles, and put his finger on the trouble, that he may know just what to do.

Now, in regard to a man who is attempting to be a Christian, it is a great deal better for him to know specifically where it is that he sins, and what power or passion or weak point it is that stands in his way. The incidental failures of men who are trying to be good are the very points where their convictions are practical, and where they have some validity. Aside from these their convictions are apt to be generic and imaginative, and of little practical force. You cannot, however, if you are proud, learn how to be humble in a day. You must not excuse yourself for the sins that you commit through pride, and say, "I am proud, and could not help it;" but if you find that you are proud, if you find that pride is organic in your nature, you are, in admitting its faults, to condemn yourself for them so far as it is in your power to prevent them; yet you are to recognize that it will require time to entirely correct them. It will take ten years to educate pride so that it shall work with benevolence; and to so educate it is a part of the business of being a Christian.

The mistake of many professed Christians is that of relying upon what they call their "hope." Many persons say that they are going to heaven because they have a hope. What is a hope? Suppose a snake should take its last year's skin, which it has cast off, and think it was bigger for that old dry skin? It would be very much like a Christian who takes what he calls his hope, that was never worth much, and that becomes less and less valuable the older it grows, and rests upon that. Many people talk in meetings about their hope, their hope, their hope,—but their hope is of no consequence if it is merely a thing of the past.

Now, the fact is, you are a scholar; and the question is, What have you learned? Are you stronger anywhere than you were? Are you better anywhere? Are you gaining, on the whole? Do you feel as though being a Christian was a

business all over, outside and inside, touching life everywhere, so that you must needs, day by day, be lifted up and empowered by the help of God? If so, you are leading a true Christian life. If you can get help from the church, do so—the church was made to give help to such as you; but if you cannot get help from the church you are not obliged to go into the church. The church is not obligatory any more than Fulton Ferry is. I can refuse to cross the river on the ferry-boat, and say, “I won’t pay the cent, or two cents: I am going to swim.” I should have a right to swim if I preferred; but I should be a fool if I did. And if you say, “I do not want to join the church,” you are under no obligation to join it. It was meant for your convenience and assistance; but if you think you can get along without it you are at perfect liberty to dispense with it. There is no obligation on any man to accept it. It is an overture of mercy, and not an overture of obligation, and is he wise who refuses it?

So, then, the kingdom of God consists in the actual existence of a superior manhood in men. Entering the kingdom of God is the beginning of education toward that superior manhood. No man can have the results of this education given to him at once. No man can overcome the tendencies that are in him immediately. It is not the office of the Divine Spirit to change a man from an imperfect to a perfect being by a direct command; it is the office of the Divine Spirit to *work* in a man to will and to do of the good pleasure of God, from day to day, leading him more and more into a perfect, completed manhood.

To be a Christian means to live right; to act according to the highest ideal of rectitude; to learn how, more and more, to carry one’s self in obedience to the divine law; and he who does that may have great joy (that is a matter of temperament), or great sorrow (that also is a matter of temperament). He may have great struggles, partly because he does not understand himself, and partly because he does not understand those by whom he is surrounded; but he may be a Christian notwithstanding. And the evidence of this is not whether he is in the church or out of the church. The

true evidence is a growth toward a nobler way of living, in thought and feeling—that is to be a man in Christ Jesus; and he that is trying to grow in that direction has a right to say, "If I persevere I shall by the grace of God be saved. I am not to be saved because I am so good, nor because I have attained so much. God's love saves me; but I must be salvable; I must be in a condition in which I can be saved; and I am passing more and more into that condition from day to day, and I hope at last to attain the blessedness of the heavenly rest."

Under these circumstances I wish to say to parents who are bringing up their children, that much of this work which is usually deferred until adult life may be accomplished in childhood. I think that children may often be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord at an earlier age than it is commonly supposed that they can. But all children do not require the same training, and the results of training are not the same in all children. It is said, "If you bring up your children right when they are young, they will not depart from their right bringing up when they are old." That is true as a general rule, but suppose you take a child that has a bad father and a bad mother, whose fathers and mothers were also bad; suppose you take a child that has inherited through several generations accumulating tendencies toward the flesh and to evil? It is a very different thing to bring up that child right, from what it is to bring up a child right, whose parents were good people, and who has always been under the best moral influences.

You have the greatest difficulty in bringing your children up right, and the man over the way has no trouble with his. On the one hand he says, "I never used a whip on any of my children, and I never had more than once or twice to rebuke this girl. None of them are vicious, and all of them have respect for and are obedient to the law." On the other hand you say, "I try to bring up my children as his are brought up; but they are selfish, and jealous, and quarrelsome, and troublesome in every way, and I cannot do anything with them. I do not see why his grow up so well-behaved and mine do not." It is because your children are

not his. Suppose a man that had wolves' cubs to bring up, should compare himself with another man that had lambs to bring up? It is one thing to bring up lambs, and another thing to bring up wolves' cubs.

Our children are of all sorts. If, however, they are taught from their earliest childhood their relation to God, to the other life, and to the nobilities of this life, and if they are *trained* as they are taught, it will be comparatively easy to bring them up right. But it will always be harder to bring up some children than others, because some are by their organic structure further away from God than others. You can bring all up so that the world will be better than if they had not been trained; but some can bring up their children with more ease than others.

Why should there be that difference? Ask God. I do not know. That is the way it works, and no man can tell why. The question for every man to ask is, “What is *my* duty? What is *my* privilege? What is *my* opportunity?” If God has given you children that are hard to bring up, it is your life business to bring them up, and you must accept it.

If your children are easy to bring up, you need not fret lest they will be mere moralists. Many people are concerned because their children are sweet, loving, and compliant, so that they cannot get an awful experience out of them. It is as if the bass viol should mourn because it cannot do what the flute does. It is as if the bass should complain because it is not like the tenor; the tenor because it is not like the alto; and the alto because it is not like the soprano. There is a difference between wind and stringed instruments, and there is a difference between the various parts of music; and there is just as much difference in human life between individuals.

Your children are susceptible of different degrees of education. They begin at different points in relation to moral perfection—some far away, and some much nearer; and that according to the great principle of heredity, as shown in the Old Testament. Every one must take his children where he finds them, and bring them up as best he can.

The point that I wish to make is this: that a child that

is brought up to seek truth and honesty and obedience, and that as he grows up to man's estate has these things presented to him, will find it easier to pass into the next higher stage of positive choice—of voluntary obedience, not to parents, but to God—than if he had not been rightly instructed. He will find it a world easier to enter upon a self-chosen life of higher consecration than if he had not been well brought up. If you say of a child that has been brought up well that he must be converted, I say that the transition in his case will be almost insensible and invisible, and that his instruction is right in analogy and runs parallel with adult life. It is a process by which he learns how to avoid evil and how to do good.

There are some who have always taught us that conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit, that without the Holy Spirit it is all an illusion, and that any other view tends to produce a sense of self-righteousness. I believe that as much as ever; but this also I believe: that when the Spirit of God acts, it acts according to the divine injunction,

*"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure."*

O Sun! bring me out violets and daisies from yonder sand-bank. For hundreds of years the sun has been shining on the desert sands of Sahara, and never has it produced a flower there; but in the meadow over against the house where my father brought me up, every year there were in the early spring an abundance of wild flowers. What is the difference between the shining of the sun on a sand heap and on loam? The loam is full of organic forms—full of seeds; and when the sun shines upon it, these seeds sprout and grow, and flowers, grass, etc., are the result; whereas, the sand is destitute of such organic forms, so that when the sun shines upon it no vegetation is the result. Where the soil is favorable, the sun's shining causes the plant to put forth a stem and throw down roots. Does it create those roots and that stem? No, it merely gives the stimulus which is necessary to their development. The preëxisting conditions are such that the stimulus which the sun gives is all that is needed to secure growth.

Now, in order to use the brain,—all the faculties, the reason, the affections, and the moral sentiments,—what we need is the stimulus of the divine Spirit. Then we use them according to great natural laws. God does not use them for us. He shines on us, and we use them. We are *workers together with God*, he giving the great generic stimulus by which our faculties develop, according to natural laws, the results which are required of us.

It takes nothing from the glory of God to have the world act as he made it to act, or to have mankind develop as he meant they should develop; and it is a hindrance to teach men to *wait* for that elapse of divine stimulus which is *every day* given to each one, and which needs only to be accepted to be enjoyed. If it is accepted in small things, it develops itself more and more, shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

So then, my mission to you this morning is ended. My discourse is delivered, the drift of which is, that every man must needs be born at zero, and go up the scale; that every man must needs begin at the lowest point and develop upward and come to himself at the farther end of life. Nature does not lie at the point where men begin: it lies at the point where, with the best education, they end. It lies in that which we are capable of coming to—not in that primitive condition from which we came. My nature is not behind me: it is before me. It is what I can unfold into. That is my true self. Every living creature is competent to become better, wiser, stronger, nobler than he has been. It is for every one of you to enter that higher life, the kingdom of God; and you are to enter it not self-sufficient. If you enter the church, you are to enter it as little children, saying, “I need help, succor, inspiration.” You are to enter it, if at all, that you may live better here and hereafter.

May God give you grace, every one of you, not to throw away even occasional good thoughts. They may not be sufficient to make up a perfect character; but they are sufficient to help you, and to enable you to help others. Do not despise the least things that tend or point in the right direction. If you but feel an impulse to live better in your neighbor-

hood and to do something for those around about you, by improving the road, by repairing the sidewalk, by being public-spirited generally, cherish that impulse; strive to benefit your fellow-men. Be generous. Do not retail current slanders in the community. Study the things which make for peace. Have more pity for those who suffer. If the impulse of prayer comes to you; if your darlings are carried to the grave, or your wealth or honor is fading from you, and your whole soul is lifted up toward something you know not what, do not throw away this experience. There is nothing that lifts you from animalism and above this wicked world that you can afford to put your foot upon. If you wisely heed such things and augment them, they will lead you to those higher experiences out of which you shall see God.

Dearly beloved, we shall not meet again in the flesh. We go our several ways. May the dear love of Christ go with you all. You are beloved of Christ. My Father is your Father. My hope for heaven is your hope for heaven. In sickness, in discouragements, in disappointments, in sins, or in guilt, never give up hope in God. There is no other friend like him. Nobody loves you as he does. You do not know how to love and nourish your children with the tenderness and kindness with which God loves and nourishes you. You are rich as long as you have God. You are poor without him. And wherever you may go, my last words to you, who may never meet me again, are, Hope in God. Your hope, your salvation, is in him. *Hope in God!*

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

DRIVE away from before us, our Father, all clouds and darkness. Remember our ignorance and our weakness, and help us to lift up our thoughts in their better nature, and our feelings in their best estate, that we may bring to thee that with which thou art well pleased—our love and our gratitude. We rejoice that thou art made known to us through the household; and that those names which are dearest to us and most full of meaning, and that have never died out in all our memory, are the names of God. Thou art, blessed One, Father of every soul, whether he knows it or not. There is none that may not look up and say, Our Father. We rejoice that thou dost deal with us in affection, whether thou dost smile or dost frown; for whom thou lovest thou chastenest, and scourgest every son whom thou receivest. Thy chastisement is for our good, that we may be partakers of thy nature.

We pray that we may have faith to believe in the inheritance of the future. May we have confidence that our life is moving toward a land which is transcendent in all excellence, in plenitude of power, where, when we drop these mortal bodies we shall come forth into glorious realities which but faintly appear in this life. Grant that we may feel that we are living toward summer. As they that are in the far north, and wait in the darkness of winter, and rejoice to see its coming, when the sun shall again rise upon their horizon with light; so may we, wintered in time, look perpetually to death as sunrise; and may our departure hence be our emergence in the land of light. For what are we here, poorly instructed, full of prejudice, with mistake upon mistake, and sin upon sin, buffeted and tossed about hither and thither, by circumstances which are stronger than our will, often bent and biased? Behold, in our earthly estate, how imperfect we are, and how much of that which is at all good we owe, not to ourselves, not to the power of goodness in us, but to the influences which surround us in thy providence, and in the whole framework of life in society.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God, since we are weak in all that is good, since we are so strong earthward, and so feeble heavenward, that thou wilt adjust thine administration over us according to our weakness and necessity through time. In the family the babes are most to us because they need most; and we should be most to thee if thou art our Father, because we are poor, and weak, and needy, and afar off. And this is the relation of God in Christ Jesus, blessed be thy name, that thou art a God of grace, capable of suffering for those that need some one to suffer for them; that thou art one that knows how to bear our burdens, and to carry our sorrows, and to make us better by receiving upon thine own self, in thy care and sympathy, and in thy nature, our troubles. Thou dost think, and wait, and labor, and mould, working in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure. We rejoice in this interpretation of a God adapted to the wants of men in this nascent state, just coming to intelligence, or just reaching forth out of intelligence into grace and moral beauty. We need longsuffering; we need infinite instruction; we need forgive-

ness and great compassion; and this thou art. Like as a father pitieth his children the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust.

We bless thee, O God of all light, that thou art also the God of all comfort. Thou art infinitely perfect. We cannot ascend to the conception of such royalty as is in thee. We are afar off, seeing dimly, and feeling but intimations of what thou art, and of what thy glory is.

O Lord our God, we rejoice that thou wilt overflow and fill up every imperfect conception, and that thou wilt be infinitely better than any goodness that we ever thought of; infinitely more tender than any tenderness that we have ever known; infinitely more faithful than any fidelity that we have ever seen; infinitely more royal than any royalty that the earth has ever witnessed. How great is thy power and how great is thy wisdom must needs appear from the world that is without; but that which is thy power and thy wisdom, that which is thy glory, thy disposition, thy real life, thy pitying care, thy wonderful power of making happy those that are in thy household—who shall tell us of these things? When we come to see thee as thou art, and not as thou hast been framed to us as one that dwells in the external world; when we have dropped earth-born terms, and we behold thee in thine innermost being, all heaven will not contain thy glory. Then, all that are present, and we among them, must needs break forth into transports of gladness, and sing that new song which ascribes honor, and power, and glory unto thee. And still, and forever more, thou wilt lead us on, loving and beloved. More and more thou wilt develop the soul that is with thee, and prepare it for higher duties, for more glorious labors. We are sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We know not the meaning of it. When our coronation comes, what the robe shall be, or the sceptre, or the harp, or the joy, or the employment, or the ways of life, we know not; but we know that thou wilt be exceeding abundantly more than we can conceive of here. It hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive of the glories that thou hast laid up for those who love thee.

We pray that we may have faith in these things even as those in winter have faith that the summer will come; or as those in the midst of storms know that sunshine will return. May we believe that the future is full of refinement, and intelligence, and purity, and fidelity, and all imaginable experiences of gladness and peace which are not permitted to earth, and which men cannot receive here. In faith and in hope of the blessedness which is beyond may we be willing to bear the cross, and take upon ourselves burdens, and cares, and sorrows which scour our pride. May we be willing to be disciplined now, that by and by we may be lifted up into thine ethereal presence.

May we rejoice in that providence of God which knows all our wants and administers to all our necessities. Be pleased, we beseech of thee, to bless all who are in thy presence according to their circumstances. Grant thy blessing to those who are advanced in life, and drawing near to the overlooking mountain, and beholding afar

off the promised land. May they, unlike thy servant of old, feel that their footsteps are going down to the Jordan, and that they shall pass over and behold the beautiful light of promise; and may the shining of the coming glory irradiate their faces before they pass out of our sight.

Look with compassion, we pray thee, upon those who are bearing the burdens of life. May they strive to serve thee in their daily duties, and endeavor in all things to be more and more conformed to the pattern of Jesus Christ. We pray that they may be diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. May they resist temptations to sordidness, and selfishness, and pride, and all things that are unlovely. May they fight the good fight in the midst of their daily avocations, and so become more like God.

We pray that those who are advancing into the midst of the fierce experiences of mature life may find themselves confirmed in virtue, growing more and more steadfast, holding fast to their ideals of purity, and integrity, and truth, and justice. Let them never be ashamed of the heartswells and exultations which come from faith and hope, and the prospect of nobler living. And we pray that as they meet the storms and trials of life they may be as good soldiers who go forth amidst rejoicings and bannered display to the field of actual warfare, where with hardship and ten thousand forms of aggravated suffering they still maintain patriotism and manhood.

And may the young that go forth into the battle of life remember that thus they are to be made warriors and heroes. Wilt thou give them integrity and faith. May they believe in truth, in fidelity, in heroism, in the spirit land, in the presence of God, in the loving angels that surround them, in all things that are full of brightness, and hope, and promise. May they never become selfish. May they never cast themselves into the slough of worldliness. May they never be content with the husks that the swine eat. May the divine Spirit guide them in all their ways. May they have longings for things high and noble. May their lives not be disfigured by things low and gross. May they rise above temptations, and pursue the right ways. We pray that all their joys and hopes, all their sorrows and sadnesses, may be sanctified by the Spirit of God to prepare them for better living here and nobler triumphs hereafter.

Accept the thanksgiving of those who, this morning, desire to draw near with thank-offerings. How many instances come up before the minds of thy servants of thy sparing mercies, and of deliverances from impending dangers! How many parents think of their children dead, and are grateful to thee for thy kindness to them in the most trying exigences of their life! And we pray, if any come looking back upon children gone from them, or scattered throughout the world, that thou wilt sanctify to them their memory and their affection for them. If there are those whose children are about them, whom they are teaching, and on whose account they are often in great sorrow, and disappointment, and surprise, wilt thou grant that they may yet be steadfast, full of faith, and hold fast to the promises of God, and never despair. We pray, if there be those who are but beginning to present their children to the Lord,

and who enter upon life with them, that they may feel this day the blessing of God resting upon them; and may their children become dearer to them because they are dear to God; and may they see upon their faces, not alone the light of earthly sweetness, but also the light of coming glory; and may they put more and more holy thoughts into the rearing of their offspring, and set them against the background of the eternal world so that they may shine upon them as stars shine from the other side; and may their children be brought up in all love, and with a nobler sense of rectitude than that with which they themselves were brought up.

We pray that thou wilt sanctify all our affections. May all our ways be directed in the light of that great undiscovered realm of the soul for which there is no language, where so much of our life passes, but where we have no communion and no fellowship. Sanctify the experiences of our life. Sanctify our silent sufferings. Sanctify all our aspirations, and hopes, and longings, and sorrows that come rolling, we know not how nor from whence, by celestial influences. Prepare us thus by joy and by sorrow, and measure thou both of them to us. Send us such schoolmasters as thou dost please, to make us better and better through our weakness and through our strength, until we are ripe; and then may the sickle flash and the reaper come, and may we go home with harvest songs sounding in our ears, garnered into the eternal heritage of our God.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

THOU best and most beloved in heaven, thou Father of all goodness and God of all grace and consolation, breathe upon the souls in this presence to make them discontented with themselves, discontented with their shortcomings, with their imperfections, with all that is wrong. Breathe hope into their hearts, that they may every one feel, in spite of all the past and its besetments, that there is for them a better life and a nobler manhood; breathe a spirit of tenderness into all that they may live together affianced in nobler friendship. We pray for the blessing of Almighty God upon every soul, upon all those that are dear to each one of us, upon all our households and all the consecrated hopes therein. We pray for our beloved land, and for all the nations of the earth. O Lord, how long? Behold the roaring misery of the world that groans and travails in pain; behold the fightings, the bloodshed, the terrible disasters and the speechless sufferings; behold around the globe how few know thee and how many are besotted. How long, O Lord, how long? Bring in the bright day when no man shall need to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, but when every man shall know him from the greatest to the least. Cut short the time, make haste, thou that dwellest in the infinitude of strength, and bring to pass the latter-day glory when the new heaven and the new earth shall come in which dwelleth righteousness. And to thy name shall be the praise, forever and forever. *Amen.*

## GOD'S WILL.

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“Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”—MATT. vi., 10.

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The divine will is universal law. It is the ground, therefore, of the universal hope and confidence, that the divine will or law seeks for the highest good of the creatures of God—and that, too, according to the circumstances of their creation and the conditions into which they have been put by the divine providence. We have been taught from our childhood that we were sinful, and so we are; that we were corrupt, and surely in some degree all men have corrupted themselves; nevertheless, the general conception which has been formed in respect to the nature and the character of man has, by reason of peculiar technical terms and modes of statement, gone wide of the truth. If it be said that every man needs to be transformed, to be educated, to be carried up from the point at which he starts, and in every part of his nature; if it be said that this is the universal necessity, it is true; but if it be said that all thoughts, that all actions, that everything which belongs to human experience, is in and of itself bad, it is not true. If it be said that men are all of them corrupted by reason of their own original nature,—who made that nature? It is the work of God. I was not born where I was by any choice of mine, and, therefore, not by any fault of mine. I was not born with the proportions which go to the making up of body and mind by any allotment of my own. That which is in me

was given to me. It is not the fault of the hawk that it is a hawk. It is no virtue in a dove that it is a dove. It is no degradation to a worm that it is a worm. These things but express facts which indicate a foregoing divine purpose. It is as God meant it should be.

Now, that the condition of the human race is one that needs infinite sympathy, infinite patience and forbearance, infinite and continuing influences ; that men need to be born again, not once nor twice, but continuously ; that they need the divine forgiveness, and renovation, and stimulation, and strength to upbear them ; this great fact, universal, both as it respects time and extent, is true : but it does not follow that it is true from the grounds and reasons that have always been alleged. It does not follow that there are not important discriminations by which men may avail themselves of the blessedness of that truth which inheres in our text :

“Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”

If by the will of God you take the highest conception of all perfectness which is possible to rational and accountable beings ; if you pray that God's will may become instantly and at once, not merely the general ideal, and so the point of aspiration, but an inexorable rule of judgment, and that all men may be judged here in their varying conditions just as they are in heaven ; if the poor African, born with his peculiar temperament, and in the circumstances where life found him, may be judged by the same rule as the archangel ; if the Asiatics in their long state of degradation are to have instantly applied to them the highest conception of manhood and they are at once to be judged by it ; if men all through our own civilized land—born, some of thieves, some of robbers, some of intemperate parents, some of stupid parents (whose genius they inherit), some where no culture comes, and some where there is much culture—are to be judged by that conception ; if you bring down the divine ideal of perfect manhood—God's thought of a perfect being—and apply it at once and continuously to all men in their infancy, in their boyhood, in their youth, in their manhood, and in their old age, under all conceivable circumstances, you might as well

with one wide sweeping flash of lightning cut off the whole race; for no man can be measured by such a standard. If the will of God were to become peremptory immediately, if the ulterior and final excellence were instantly applied as the universal daily rule of judgment, it would slaughter the race and whelm them in ruin.

Shall we, therefore, let down this conception? Shall we lower the standard of life? Shall we make virtue to be less than it is, shall we make morals to be less than they are, shall we make manhood to be less than it is, in scope? Shall we take away from men all responsibilities? Shall we remove penalties, which are God's goads and spurs? Shall we take away from the world the motives that already exist to drive men up from animalism and ignorance and degradation to a higher position? Nay, verily, not that. The standard must be kept up. It would destroy the race in one way if the standard were to become peremptory in its daily applications: it would destroy the race in another way if you were to lower the standard to the present conditions of the human family.

What need we, then? We need a divine Being, an administration that shall stand between the final form of human perfection and the state into which men are born in this life, with benign influences, with moral attributes, with patience, with gentleness and nourishingness, by which men shall be led, step by step, onward and upward until they reach this higher and final form of perfection.

So when we pray that the will of God may be done, into that will enters the conception of time, of gradualism, of evolution, and of successive developments. Into the conception of that divine will, also, since it is the creative idea of the world, enters a forbearance, a gentleness and a patience on the part of God, inherent in his nature, and organic as well as inherent in his moral government, which looks upon imperfections and unrighteousness with such allowance as is necessary in order to bring it up to the final form.

It is impossible for any man to frame a full conception of the divine nature. It would indicate that we ourselves were

like God in kind, and also that to a certain degree we were in scope equal to God. But only so much of the divine nature as we have specimens of in ourselves can we understand. If to the five senses there were added another, could any man be made to understand what the sixth sense was, not having it, but merely being informed that there was one, and that in another sphere some beings had it? It is not like the eye, you are told, and it is not like the ear, and it is not like touch, and it is not like taste, and it is not like smell. Well, what is it like? Oh, it is *something else*. But if you have never had any example of it in yourself you never could dream or form the slightest approximation to a thought of what the sixth sense might be. Although you might believe that there were persons who had six or ten senses, you could not have any conception of them. Nor can any man form a conception of a mental quality except as the rudiment or some germ of it is in himself. Only so much of God do we understand as we have in ourselves some specimen or some indication of.

Consider how very imperfect is our understanding of our own selves. Consider how little men know of what they are, of what the nature of their mind is, and of what are the causes which influence them. Consider how still less men understand each other—for although we have a certain amount of practical knowledge derived from familiarity with life, and more or less traditionary knowledge, so that men move with men, and act upon each other, and cohere together, and co-operate; yet, after all, the knowledge of the human mind is very small. And how much less must be our knowledge of that great Over-Mind which governs the universe! How much less can we understand of God (who understands all of us) that understand so little of ourselves and of our fellow-men!

That which is true in respect to the nature and structure if I may so say, of the divine Being, is equally true with regard to the divine government. It is impossible for the mass of men to understand all the elements of human government. Even statesmen understand comparatively little of it, and the more they understand the more obscure

they see the great national questions of life and administration to be. None know how far beyond any present attainment in human life is the science of right government, with all its infinite elements; and if we cannot understand human government, which is a visible thing, and which deals with visible qualities, how much beyond our conception is the divine government, which includes all sorts and variations of existence, and infinities in every direction!

Men speak of the divine will as though it were so clear and plain that it could be put into the catechism, or into books with chapters and verses. Men can almost count the shingles on the roof and the nails which hold the different parts together, with a perfect familiarity! And yet, after all, we are but children. We understand a little here and there of the divine government because we transfer our small knowledge of ordinary government to the divine; acting upon it by our imagination we transform it and give it magnitude in our conception; but, after all, the knowledge is very little.

There are, however, some things in the divine nature which we understand, because they are brought to us by a process which is familiar to our childhood and our thought. I refer to the adaptation which love finds in itself to all the conditions of an existence that begins at zero, and gradually unfolds through every stage of imperfection and fault and mistake to final manhood. That is the most familiar knowledge that we have. Every child born into a household, born under the government of a father and mother, born a babe, with eyes that see not, and ears that hear not, and hands that handle not, and feet that walk not, born with its prime function in the mouth—every such child beginning almost at nothing expands a little; but what is the babe of four months, or of six months, or of twelve months, or of two years, or of three years, but a beloved little bundle of ignorances? And how continuously is the hand of the nurse stretched out to guard it against water, against fire, against stairs, against sharp cutting instruments, against all manner of food that it seeks to its own damage! Something must take care of this unknowing child. Something is to bear

patiently with it, and teach it, and wait while it is being taught, until it learns enough to imperfectly take care of itself; and then, when it has begun to take care of itself a little, wait until it goes on through mistakes that lie on every side of it like pitfalls to catch its inexperience, until it passes through boyhood up to manhood, and is launched upon life, and is twenty-one years of age. He knows everything now, and has no need of any further watching! but all the way up to the perfect man of twenty-one he needs the schoolmaster, he needs magistrates, he needs monitors, he needs punitive as well as directive influences. In the prime idea of the parental relation under the administration of father and mother the child is nothing, and they are required to rear it from zero to maximum, a process which is forwarded in the spirit of love. In the household there is no liberty to do what you please simply because the father and mother love, and because they are seeking the good of the child. The true father and mother know what are the virtues of pain, of self-restraint, of disappointment, of self-denial. They know that tears are cleansing. Every child that has been well brought up, unless it is a child of extraordinarily happy endowment, has known the ministration of denial and penalty and tears and trial and suffering as a part of its education; and the more faithful the father and mother are, the more they reign, and the child is made to submit for its own good; and the more we, as children, are made to submit by our parents for our good, the more in later life do we revere and love them.

“They [fathers of our flesh] verily for a few days chastened us for their pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.”

God identifies himself in moral government with the parental relation of the household.

So then, though we may not understand God in his whole character and divine nature, though we may have but a very remote idea of the moral government of God, when we pray “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” we may have a clear understanding of this fact: that whatever God is in the stature and breadth of infinite intellec-

tion, whatever he is in the nature of affection overflowing for universal want, whatever he is in the wisdom of the adaptation of means to ends in the universal government, and however far short we may come of any perfect knowledge in these respects, we know that all things work together for good, and were designed to work together for good to them that love God—good to universal man, the condition being that we open our eyes to it, and behold it, and love God, and take it.

At this point we come to a much closer apprehension of the divine nature, and to a stage where we are better able to say, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Since God’s will is not a cogent will, acting suddenly with cutting pains or penalties; since it is the will of God to bear with men, to be patient with them, to be gentle toward them, to be forbearing with them—and yet never to give them rest because they are to grow to the stature of kings and priests, and be with him forever; we see that it is his will to meet them in the exigencies of their being as parents on earth meet their children at birth, and bring them up through all the necessities of their childhood life.

The government of God, then, seeks our final perfection, and never lets that down; but it assumes that men are imperfect, and that perfection is the result of growth, and not of instantaneity in any form. It adapts itself to the constitution and circumstances of men. So the divine nature is not one that sits in its own perfection, demanding instant perfection. The divine nature broods the world. As the hen gathers her chickens under her wings, so Christ said he would have gathered his favorite people under his wings; and we may say, without irreverence, that God gathers the world under his wings, and waits, warming them by his own body, feeding them by his own search, and attending and defending them by his infinite power and patience and long suffering. God is one that sits in the center of universal being to adapt himself to the infinite wants of imperfect creatures, made imperfect. He adapts himself and his moral government to the conditions of a world which he himself fixed, and which in every direction he reproduces.

Now, although we can imagine that a fallen race might be blameworthy, there is no principle and no moral government that can be addressed to the intelligence of mankind which can justify a being who perceives a race to be utterly degraded and destroyed, and reproduces them through years, through ages, not only, but through myriads and myriads of ages, that they may suffer, and is careless of their suffering. This is heathenism enshrined! This is demonism enthroned! This is an infinite insult to the reason, the honor and the conscience! That a race made perfect, and falling by their own fault, may be damnable, any man may say; but that there should be a system of government by which that race should swarm again, and then again, and not once, nor twice, nor thrice, but myriads of times, on the globe, pouring out populations more numerous than the drops of dew at night, or of the rain-storms in the tropics by day, every creature being a soul that is a kingdom, and every one infinite, like God, in duration—that such a race should be propagated and continued where the prime condition of birth is imperfection and liability through ten thousand reasons to sinfulness, with God sitting unmoved, cold as marble, perfectly finished himself; and that then he should lay the law of infinite perfection on that race which he has permitted to come into being in these inchoate and unformed and unlovely conditions—this is a tyranny compared to which Neroism and demonism were humanity! There can be no realization of God that can draw the universal heart to him until you have a God that is adapted to the conditions to which he himself brings men.

If, then, men are brought into life with the certainty of sinfulness, there must be an administration that adapts itself mercifully to the condition of sinfulness. If men are, by the very nature of their being, unable to perfect themselves, or round themselves out, except by a score or two scores of years, and then but imperfectly, there must be an administration that shall have in it an adaptation to the imperfect condition of the human race; and it is this that is in God.

As the mother knows how to love her child steadily

through growing years, his faults aside, his imperfections notwithstanding, to teach him, to build him up, and still by love to minister to him, whether it be pain or joy, whatever it be that is necessary to his perfect development; so God sits, in the infinite resources of his disposition, central in the universe, to give to them all the things which they lack, and to bear with them until these gifts, appropriated, build them up—until they are unfolded and educated by his long-suffering and gentleness and kindness, for the sake of exercising which men are permitted to come into this world as they are, imperfect, their imperfections being permitted to break out into mistakes, these mistakes being permitted to go on to faults, these faults being permitted to go forward to sins, and these sins being permitted to go on to crimes. All these necessities or possibilities inhere in a free moral government; but there must be taught a Governor over all that adapts himself to these positive universal conditions so that men may gradually go higher, or else the system of religion is a system of abhorrent tyranny.

It is on account of the gentleness and patience which are in God, which are the food of imperfection, and which are the exact equivalents of adaptation to the want of the human race, that we say, "Thy will be done"—not the will of God as representing final perfection, instantly employed for the destruction of the universe, but that will of God which, with the distinct knowledge that men are brought into the world raw, unripe, untamed, untaught, undisciplined, ungrown, and while bringing them in through countless conditions, yet holds itself adequate by long-suffering patience, by kindness and by *loving* kindness, by mercies and by *tender* mercies, by joy and by sorrow, by universal and infinite instrumentalities, to develop men from their low and animal states into high, angelic conditions.

When we conceive of all time as the theater of this vast evolution, not of organic matter crystalline, nor of the lower forms of existence in the vegetable kingdom, nor of the lower modes of animal existence, but of the human race after intelligence has been developed in it; and when we conceive of a God who makes it the business of his life to be the universal

Schoolmaster, the universal Nurse, the universal Burden-bearer and Cross-bearer, the universal Sufferer, in the sense of care and personal adaptation, the One supremest in activity and humblest in the sense of bowing himself down everlastingly to the want of the weak and the poor—when such conceptions fill the heaven, what heart can forbear to say, “Thy will [which carries gentleness, and sweetness, and forgiveness, and patience; which also carries pain and penalty and disciplinary education of every sort; which creates us at nothing, and fills us and develops us by experience until we are prepared for a higher stage of existence] be done on earth as it is in heaven”—done to-day, so far as it adapts itself to to-day; done in cycles; done according to the philosophy which God has of the way in which the universe is to rise out of inchoate matter up through various steps to find finish and spiritual existence in the life that is to come?

If this, then, be a legitimate general review of the nature of God and his relation to government and to the vast human family, there are many points in it which will bring comfort, consolation, instruction, and warning.

I remark, in the first place, that any system of dealing with men which proceeds on any other ground than that of the universal weakness and sinfulness of man is philosophically inconsistent with a true charity. There is no operation so unjust as that which takes a high standard and applies it peremptorily to low development. If one were to go into an infant school with the same rigor of instruction with which Oxford or Cambridge treats its scholars; if one were to demand of childhood that which is rightly demanded of manhood, such holding of a lower state of development to the responsibilities of a higher state would be the most crushing oppression.

We hold that men are naturally sinful; yet when we judge them in society we continually hold up standards that are not applicable to them all. We do not say of one and another, “He committed a fault.” We do not stop to reason as to what is their disposition, what is their intelligence, or what are the conditions and circumstances under which motives

press upon them in the direction of wrong-doing. We simply hold them to an abstract rule of duty. If they fail in that we chastise them with our thought, with our tongue, peradventure, also, with our hand. How many are there who perpetually take into practical consideration the doctrine which they so strenuously insist on in theology, that men by nature, by birth, and by necessity are imperfect and prone to fail ?

If a man tread on you, you regard him as guilty of heedlessness, until you turn and see that he is blind ; and then he that trod on you because he was blind has your compassion rather than your anger. So we should adapt ourselves and our judgments to what we know mankind to be.

In regard to the mass of men it is a great deal better to consider their imperfections ; and using the old nomenclature with a kind of latitude, I should say, If you do not believe the doctrine of human sinfulness, you are not on a foundation on which you can be charitable. It used to be the case that to charge all mankind with being sinful and corrupt was not only a violation of truth, but an insult to humanity. I aver, however, that that truth which was originally meant and sought after and felt for when men were declared to be depraved is indispensable to any right, charitable conduct toward them. If men are regarded as honorable, truthful, noble by nature, armed against evil and full of all impulses toward right, you have a right to require of them the highest conduct ; but if men are not by nature truthful, if they are subject to various impulsion, if they are germinant creatures seeking honor, gaining occasional glimpses and attaining imperfect developments of it, but pursuing it under endless complications and with continuous mistakes, then you have no right to require of them perfect conduct. The eye does not see what it looks at ; the ear does not hear what it listens to ; the senses are liable to fall into error ; and every scientific man knows that behind the first impression is something more accurate than that impression. The truth is not always what it appears to be. We are imperfect perpetually. Yet things in this lower state are what they were in the creative design—what they were meant to be,—and it is this

lower state which is to be the foundation of charity, which is to unite man to man, and which is to lead men to pity each other and bear one another's burdens.

It ought not to be considered so much a matter of degradation that men are sinful. Things that hitherto, according to the old theological notions, were called sinful are not to be looked upon as matters of degradation. We must bring moral judgment on to the same ground with material judgment. We never say that a child is born sinful because it cannot walk; we never say: "See that little guilty heathen, that cannot walk although it has flesh, and bones, and articulations all right." We accept the fact that the child was made not to walk; that it was created without the capacity to walk until it has first learned to use its feet; and we do not attach any blame-worthiness or dishonor to such incapacity of the body. Nor do we attach blame to incapacity of the lower forms of the understanding. If a child only eight years old has an arithmetic put into his hands, and is told to study and learn the first six pages, when he comes to the recitation and does not know a letter or a figure, do you spank him? You should be spanked, then! He cannot learn the lesson assigned him. The capacity for it is not in him. He must come to it. The unfolding is just as natural as that of the bud in spring. Can you go forth in March and say to all nature, "Behold, the sun shines! Out with your buds and blossoms"? There is an order in the growth of men; it is imperative; and you can not say to children in respect to the body or the lower forms of mind, "It is your duty to do so and so." You cannot say to them, "You are clothed with full responsibility because you have ample capacity." They have not ample capacity. It comes by usage; it comes by development, at first a little, and by and by something more; and the divine government adapts itself to exactly those facts. It is natural, it is in accordance with nature, it is a part of God's design, that mankind should gradually unfold from the lower to the higher states of their being.

When, therefore, it is said, "We are all sinful," that is, sinful to the extent that we need regeneration, men say,

“That is throwing a pall over creation ; it is the proclamation of a degrading state of facts.” No, not in the sense of voluntary transgression. If, for instance, I know what kindness is, and deliberately refuse it, if I know what wrong is, and deliberately perpetrate it, that is *sin* in the active form, and to that attaches the highest degree of ignominy in the divine mind ; but those mistakes which come from undeveloped conditions and from limited capacities, those errors which certainly do materially interfere with moral perfection, and with full allegiance to God’s idea of rectitude, are of the nature of infirmities ; and it is declared that our great High-priest is touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; or in the older Scripture it is declared, “As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him ; for he knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust.” It is our nothingness, our emptiness, our want of experience, and skill, and knowledge, that God looks upon and pities. It is true that we are imperfect, but because we are so is no reason why you should hesitate to look at your estate with open eye ; and you need not be repelled by that great gulf which theologians have opened, and called in olden times “total depravity,” nor shrink back from it. We have noble faculties ; we have reason ; we look beneath and above ; we stretch our thoughts, soaring as no eagle’s wing is able to soar ; with our understanding and imagination we fly and compass the globe ; we search the secret thoughts of the Most High as they have been incarnated ; we look at things to be with a power that almost parallels that of the divine nature ; and to tell us that we are degraded, and sinful, and totally depraved—I am not myself fond of using such phrases. But that which I believe the better thinkers of the world have been feeling after, the everlasting, essential imperfection, and inchoate condition of the race, this we may admit without fear or sense of degradation, though not without a sense of the necessity of being better ; not without a sense of the need of spiritual inspiration ; not without the admission that God needs to infuse something of himself into us before we can come up to ourselves. We believe that ; we teach it ; but there is a

great distinction that ought to be made between the degradation of voluntary sin, and of the mistakes and ignorances which come from the conditions of infirmity and limitation in which men are placed in this world.

Thus, then, as the sense of imperfection is necessary to charity in the judgment of men, so the sense of infirmity is the road by which men may be led to a sense and realization of their sinfulness. If you confound all sins, men still know of things that are not their fault; but if you discriminate those shortcomings and ignorances which flow from the necessity of condition and being, men will be more disposed to acknowledge the faults which are their own, and the sins which are blameworthy and penal.

Divine rigor in maintaining law is entirely consistent, then, with divine leniency towards men under law. Because we teach the universal beneficence of God we do not necessarily abolish the fact of the justice of God, nor the pains nor the penalties which justice bears in its hand. We separate divine attributes and qualities because we are too weak to understand them altogether in their unity, and are obliged therefore to speak of God's truth, and purity, and justice, and love, and integrity, as if they were so many separate things in the divine nature; whereas God is a unit, and all these qualities in him constitute a unitary being; but as we find that we can be lenient with wrong-doing in our children, as we know that a loving administration carries in it pain and penalty, so we may believe that the divine administration, while it holds men up by ten thousand influences to the ideal law, is yet kind and lenient and gentle in dealing with them under that law.

The divine sympathy, therefore, comes to every creature that is conscious of imperfection and of sinfulness in him. What is it that brings the lamb to the bleating mother but hunger? What is it that brings the colt to its dam but hunger? What is it that brings home the chicken flying to the mother when the hawk screams but a sense of danger and weakness? What is it that brings the tear-overflowing child back into the house from its sports but pain from having hurt itself? What is it that brings the patient to his

physician but the sense of the disorder of the system? What is it that brings the weak to the strong but the consciousness of the help that is in the strong? And what is it that brings the soul to God but the consciousness of its need and the feeling that there is in God the strength, the sympathy, the power, the love that it needs?

On this very ground of man's universal necessity, from his nature and from the conditions of his being, I hold up that great High Priest, Jesus Christ, who represents to the world under human conditions the nature and the attributes of God; who discloses the divine government to man; who shall stand in judgment by and by; who stands in judgment every day; who judges your right, but gives you more credit than you give yourself for the little you do right; who judges your wrong, and is even more lenient with your wrong than you are; who judges your sin, and, although in the light of his ideal he sees it to be a thousand times darker and more mischievous than you are wont to, yet has for you compassion and sparing mercy.

I hold up the character of the reigning God as one that is precisely adapted to your want—to your physical want; to your social want; to your economical want; to your soul want; to the highest necessities of the understanding; to the deepest needs of the heart; and to all that goes to make man higher than the beast of the field. Such is your God, infinite in government; more perfect than men can teach or comprehend; and he has destined you and me to rise to a higher state than it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive; and he yet stands at the beginnings of things, where we all must stand, and with pity and patience, with pain and pleasure, with joy and sorrow, with anger and a conciliated heart, he is ready to do just that which we need to have done for us—what a mother does for the child, what a father does for the son, what friend does for friend.

Ah! the loves of this world are but sparks that have fallen from that great Sun which stands to warm and inspire and save the universe. No narrow God, governing a province in which he elects myriads to be damned, do I preach to you. No God do I set forth in your presence who is less than

your mother or your father is. I preach that God who carries in himself all inspirations to virtue ; all incitements to purity ; all that has in it the sense of nobility. I preach to you a God in whom is infinite exaltation and excellence, harmonious and universal, streaming forth, inspiring law, inspiring government, inspiring the household, and inspiring the individual. I preach to you a God of supreme law, which law is final and perfect. I preach to you a God that is stimulating the universe for its development and growth ; and yet I preach a God coming down on the other side in humiliation and self-sacrifice epitomized, and by the life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ suffering for the sins of the world as the mother suffers for the sins and faults of the cradle. I preach a God who, by his sublime, stimulating, helpful influence, is endeavoring to bring men up to their true manhood, and waits patiently through the long interval between the germ and the blossom ; who is the Beginning and the End ; who is All and in all ; who is the First and the Last ; who is the Author, and, blessed be his name, the Finisher ; who moulds the first elements of human life, and who shall give the last touches to perfected life, when we are translated from these earthly shores, and stand in Zion and before God.

O ye that walk in darkness ! there is a light for you. O ye that walk in weakness ! there is strength for you. O ye that starve of hunger ! there is food—just that which you need. Ye sick, there is remedy. Ye friendless, there is outpouring and tropical love for you. Ye that find in the conditions of this world so little that makes life desirable, and that look even into the mouth of the sepulcher and say, “Be thou my refuge,” there is light, and joy, a home, a Father, and a Helper for you, that is adequate to supply all your need of body, of soul, of social life, of public life, and of business life. God is sufficient for man, and adapts himself to man. It is not you that placate him : it is he that persuades you. It is not you that make a bargain by your promises with God ; it is God that does exceeding abundantly more than you ask or think, for every one of you. And it is him that I preach.

If, then, you go lonely it is your fault ; and even that fault is condoned. If you go needy and weak, there is no need of it. There is not a soul in this house that has not a right to say, this morning, "My Father." You have no friend in this world like the One that you can summon.

And so, my friends, out of darkness, out of sickness, out of sorrow and out of trouble, look up. This is human ; but just above your head the divine begins. In that is luminousness, in that is joy, and in that is infinite peace. Dwell in God, and let his Spirit dwell in you, and you will not sit down in despair, but you will be inspired with all holy aspirations to bear up under the consciousness of imperfection. The indwelling of God, while it brings peace, does not bring contentment in the sense of being content with ignoble conditions. Generous divine love lets the objects of love stand where it found them, grafts them with higher excellences, inspires them through love, and lifts them up. Divine love is like summer in the world, which brings out from the very clod bud and blossom, and out of wood itself the luscious fruit.

This God is your God ; this life is full of God ; and it is for you, in all your infinite exigences and necessities, to say, "Our Father, let thy will be done in me as in heaven and in heavenly hearts" ; and God hears, and will, little by little, fulfill, until by and by he will draw aside the vail from his face—and that is death ; for when we look upon God the world fades, and we have escaped ; and as birds escape from their eggs, and from their nests, and from the near twigs on which they learn to fly, and at last emerge from the thicket and the forest, and fly under all the heaven, so from the egg and from the nest and from the darkling forest, by and by we shall emerge ; and they that listen shall hear us, as heavenward we fly to dwell forever in the *'Tree of Life.*

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, our Father, that the only strength is not our strength; that we are not left helpless in our own weakness; that we may rise up, if not in obedience to all the laws that control the body, yet in spirit, in soul, into thy presence where are all the secrets and sources of power. Though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day. By thy power thou dost dwell in us, and dost give us something of thyself. Thou dost enlarge our understanding by purifying it. Thou dost give us strength through our affections; and by drawing them toward thee, and cleansing them and inspiring them with the purity of thine own nature, thou dost give us a wider and stronger life to resist evil and take hold upon good. Thus thou art renewing us from day to day so that our life is not of ourselves. It is not the bread that we eat for the body alone, but that bread which cometh down from heaven that feeds us; for we are not what we are outwardly, but what we are inwardly and before God. There is the sonship hidden. There are all the aspirations and hopes that shall yet lift us into thy very presence, and make us sons of God in the full disclosure of the other life.

And now we pray, to-day, that we may have all that sensitiveness, all that affection, all that uprising of our innermost nature, by which thou art discerned; by which thy power is received; by which we are blessed in over-measure—for thou beholdest in this great multitude what are the diversities of want as no human eye can, and thy heart has compassion as no man's heart knows how to be compassionate. Thou dost perceive the troubles of weakness, and the troubles that come from ignorance, and the troubles that come from other men. Thou knowest all prejudices, and all biases, and all influences malign, and all over-actions and all under-actions. Thou knowest all combinations of circumstances, and how they beat upon men who are weak and oppressed outwardly, who are strong inwardly for evil, who have fallen into mistakes, who are seeking to unravel the tangle into which they have come, who are stumbling by reason of pride, and who are continually brought under trial through their selfishness. Thou knowest the sufferings of parents for their children; thou knowest what companions suffer one for another; thou knowest the sufferings of heart which men experience; thou understandest all the obliquities of disposition, and all the evils which spring from the imagination; thou dost understand all misreasonings, and all truths discerned but partially, and mistakenly practiced; thou readest the hearts of men—their thoughts and intents. Naked and open are we before Him with whom we have to do; and if thou wert stern, if thine eye made inquisition for judgment, who could stand? If thou shouldst let fall thy hand rudely among us, how many hearts would utterly perish in their insensibility and suffering! But thou art an High priest who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. Thou knowest us, having thyself been upon earth, tempted in every faculty, in all points, as we are, yet without sin, but enough tempted to know the pressure and the power of temptation, and to know how easily men yield. Where

thou, sustained by God, wert able to stand, we are cast down and overthrown. Yea, thine own lips did pray that the cup might be taken from thee; thou didst by angelic ministration endure and drink to the very bottom the dregs of sorrow; and now thou art on high not indifferent, but in an everlasting memory of love clothed with sympathy, and filled with power that thou mayest help those who need thee and perish without thee. May all who are bestead drawn near to thee to-day. May every heart bring its burdens and its sorrows to thee. May those who desire to confess to thee open consciously before thee their own innermost life though thou dost not need to have it opened before thee, since thou beholdest in light and in darkness alike. Draw near, we beseech of thee, to all who are in want, and teach them how consciously to recognize thee, and to feel their interest in thee, and to realize what power they have with God by reason of their imperfection and of their great sinfulness; for as we have power one with another, not alone by the things which are excellent, but by the things which we need; and as all our necessities cry out to love, and are voices of power; as our sicknesses call to those that heal, and they are drawn to us by those sicknesses; so much more is our weakness strong before thee to plead and to touch thy compassion, thou unslumbering Lover; much more are our necessities so many hands of supplication lifted up to thee; and we pray for every one—for the aged; for those who are in the midst of the battle of life; for those who are just entering upon the contest; and for the little ones. Look upon them; suit thy mercies to their condition. O thou gracious God, infinite, full of blessing; thou who art inexhaustible in the variety of thy resources, how thou canst adapt thyself to the varying wants of every one! And grant that each may hear himself called by name, and may he know that God thinks of him, and is giving strength to those who are under burdens, and hope to those that are desponding, and forgiveness to those who are out of the way. So may all find something in thee—yea, *all* in thee. Be thou the Bread of life; be thou the Light by which men shall see; be thou the Staff by which they shall walk; be thou the Door through which they shall enter into the tower of refuge; be thou the great Rock in a weary land under whose shadow refreshment shall be found.

We pray that thou wilt not follow alone the sins of men as thou seest them, but that thou wilt let thy servants think, and be compassionate to their thought of their own want.

Accompany the thoughts of those who to-day go wistfully out to those that are separated from them; the thoughts of parents for their children; the thoughts of children for their parents; the thoughts of companions and friends for each other. Under circumstances of peril be thou with men. Shield those whom our hearts desire to have shielded. Be with all who are upon the great deep to-day. Bring such of them home to us as are coming down hither again to lead in our midst the songs of Zion.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt bless all those that we have labored with, wherever they may be, in the wilderness or elsewhere laying foundations on which men shall build noble structures. Bless our whole laud. Be pleased to bless the President of these United

States, and all that are associated with him in authority. Bless, we pray thee, all governors. Bless judges in all courts. Bless magistrates everywhere. Bless the whole great body of citizens. May they learn obedience to the law. May they stand in morality, and in industry, and in piety. We pray that this nation may be great, not alone in its harvests, and in its lands, and in its ships, and in its wealth of any kind: may it be great in intelligence, and in love to God and man. Grant that it may become the shield of the weak and despoiled nations of the earth, building them up. And we pray that the time may come when nations shall learn war no more; when all malign influences shall be restrained; when intelligence, and purity, and wisdom, and love shall lift men above the power of the oppressor: and when weakness shall go and strength shall come, bringing liberty and justice with it. Let thy kingdom come, and may thy will be done upon earth as it is in heaven.

We ask it in the name of Jesus, the Redeemer. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

GRANT unto us, our heavenly Father, a longing for thee. Grant unto us such a sense of the manner of thy government, of the order of life, that we may feel that in all our circumstances and surroundings we are of the household of God, under his care, under his appointment and equipment, inspired, and guided, and led; and grant that those who have not known thee, those who lie down to die outside of their Father's house, may be aroused and brought in. We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to men, to cast-aways, to the unhappy, to the friendless, to the struggling, to those to whom life brings little pleasure and much toil, the joy of seeing thee and finding in thee and in thy smiles and love that which the world does not give them. How poor are we, what paupers are we, whom nature only blesses! and how rich are even the poorest and most miserable whom God blesses! Grant, then, thus *thyself*—the insphering of thy life in ours. Grant, we pray thee, the plenitude and power of joy in our souls as they have it with whom thou art. Enter in to sup with us, and dwell with us. Be our constant guest and our benefactor. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

## PRESENT USE OF IMMORTALITY.

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“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”—HEB. iv. 9

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The doctrine of a future conscious existence with the continuance of personal identity was a truth of individual hope and aspiration, among the ancient Jews, rather than an announced doctrine. It is nowhere expressly taught in the Old Testament Scripture. It formed no part of the Mosaic economy. All the threats and promises that were made of old were secular. And yet we see unmistakably in the nobler moral natures whose work or life or teachings are contained in the Hebrew Scriptures that they did expect a continued life hereafter. The annunciation of this truth belongs to a later and an advanced stage of the Jewish life. This expectation of another life has grown into what may be called a universal certainty. With the unfolding of the race it has not vanished as a shadow; it has grown. The foundations of hope are developed, and the uses thereof are multiplied in the proportion in which men are more men than when they were in a savage state.

This fact does not, to be sure, prove the existence of a continued state of being—of immortality. I do not think that desire is evidence or presumption of the existence of the thing desired; and the mere wish for continued existence is not presumptive proof of it. But where such desire exists in widening circles, and grows stronger and stronger with

the development of races, and becomes a deep-rooted belief in the hearts and minds of mankind, it does give fair presumption in favor of the thing desired. That is to say, where it attaches itself to reason, and the imagination, and all the noblest affections, and grows stronger as men grow larger and nobler, the universality of this desire is proof positive of the universal human sense of incompleteness without another and advanced stage of existence. It is a testimony to the incompetency of this world to fulfill that which man consciously needs. It is a testimony that the stage through which we are passing is partial and incomplete, and that judged by that sense of ideal completeness which belongs to reason—in its higher states certainly—it would seem to foreshadow a future existence. This is a kind of chrysanthemum world. In our latitudes the chrysanthemum grows all summer, begins to show its buds in October, and is cut off with frost before it is half or a quarter blossomed. The best kinds will not blossom out of doors, and need to be brought into the house, or green-house, or to be kept over in some way. And so the testimony of observation and reason in respect to this world is that men come about to the state of blossoming, or come into bud, but that their summer is not long enough here, and they do not fully come to themselves.

The great mass of the world do not, even in civilized society, really develop to the outlines that are marked in them, and that are discerned among them; and human nature, as a general thing, does not perfect itself here—certainly it does not perfect itself in any generation or in any cycle. Everything seems moving on with indications of something better than that which we attain in this life,—for the race, as a race, certainly improves. But by as much as it improves it indicates lines of yet higher development; and do they vanish? Is death that sponge which wipes life clean like a slate, or do all these indications prophesy something? I do not ask whether they demonstrate anything; I do not ask if they prove something as we prove mathematical propositions; but do they afford such a ground of expectation as comforts and satisfies the rational faculties

—the imagination, the moral sentiments, all the aspirations and all the affections? If they do, they are a kind of evidence—for evidence means a production of conviction. You can produce conviction in some minds by reasoning, and in some none at all. In some minds you can produce conviction by changing the state of feeling, by playing upon the imagination, by working through the sympathies so that the mind is convinced. I do not say that it is a rational demonstration; but by it many are led toward a better understanding of their condition in looking at the other sphere, for man needs the comfort and consolation of a future state of being. If all that is best in him with increasing intensity lifts up its hands imploringly for it, then there is in this fact, I would not say proof, but a foundation or reason for expecting it, because of its perpetual benefit; and, even if dying were going out, I would rather all my life long live strengthened and purified and inspired and comforted by more than a hope, by the belief, that I was yet again to live, and to live more gloriously; for if death is annihilation I shall not know what I have lost, while all the way down to it I reap treasures that the world is too cold to ripen—joys that can be plucked from no blossoming bough. The faith and hope of continued existence in higher conditions hereafter is of transcendent importance to the comforting of life; and I do not thank any man, even if the tapers that I have lit along my horizon are imaginary, who comes around and blows them out, and calls himself Scientist. I want the hope.

You tell me that I ought not to exercise my imagination in daily air-castle building. Do not I know perfectly well that the house that I am building every year at Peekskill is not built? I draw the plans—and that does not cost anything; I change them—and that does not cost anything; I make the rooms as large as I please—and that does not cost anything; I fill them with pictures and books and with such furniture as I want—and that does not cost anything; I imagine how the breezes will blow through the broad hall, and how the light will shine through the varied windows—and that does not cost anything; I weave fancies

as to how I shall live in that house, and what a comfort it will be to me ; and shall a man come to me and say, "It is all air" ? I know that, because I do not pay any bills ; but is not the house a comfort to me notwithstanding ? It is not nothing ; it is something : it is relaxation ; it is refreshment ; it is joy—and I think that is what we need much of in this world.

Now if the use of the imagination is allowable in limited spheres and in familiar things, nay, if it is desirable, how much more allowable and desirable is that prophetic, that spiritual use of the imagination by which manhood is lifted out of its littleness and pigmy proportions, so that we feel ourselves to be sons of God, though it doth not yet appear what we shall be ! There is grandeur in such a use of the imagination ; and it is not to be extinguished, nor is it to be rebuked merely because I cannot prove it as a chemist or naturalist can prove certain physical facts.

It may be demonstrated that man, as an animal, has very little conscious need. I watch my cows and my oxen, and one of the most striking things that I observe in them is how perfectly contented they are. I have heard men refer to the animal creation as contented, and as being an example to men ; but I would not be an ox for the sake of being contented. Such content as the ox has is the content of negation. There is nothing in him that is not satisfied with grass and water ; and how small an animal must be whose whole nature is fed with grass and water ! Are we to take our measures from stones and sticks and the lower animals, and only crave for ourselves that which nature furnishes to them ? Nature gives them all that they want ; but we want more, or ought to want more, being more highly organized and endowed. Men who are low want but little of the future. They want but little of to-morrow or next week. In savage life there is a want of foresight. In that life men live not in cycles of the future, but simply in days, and even hours, and scarcely enough conception have they of the extension of time and being to think to make provision in summer for the winter ; but, with every step of real worthy human development approaches the consciousness of the unfitness of this

world for our whole and completed manhood. In other words, culture, evolution, development, hope, desire for after-life or of continued existence, leads not to contentment here, but to the conscious need of something more and higher.

Men who use the trained reason are conscious that there is such a thing as what scholars call *critical judgment*, and what moral philosophers call *intuitions* and *states of exaltation*, in which the ordinary processes of reasoning seem to be suppressed, and the mind flashes light forward upon the themes which it is considering. In other words, there are intimations of a higher range of reason than that which obtains among men; and all of these seem like so many elements of a higher state of existence. So that men's comfort and satisfaction are not in the ratio of the development of their reason, for the more they are developed in that direction the more consciously have they need to be yet more. The sense of incompleteness is nowhere more strongly developed in desires than in the desires of reason.

That which is true of the reason, I need not say, is true of the imagination. We are not content in the proportion in which we are endowed with that—the all-creating faculty. On the contrary, that is perpetually setting before us such ideals of character, such ideals of harmony between mind and matter, or between men and their circumstances, that nothing is more disturbing. If it be refreshing in some of its moods, yet in its higher moods, and in its association with the moral sentiments, nothing is more disturbing than the imagination. Nothing produces more yearning and craving and longing; and these are so many symptoms of the soul's homesickness for its real existence and its true abode.

Nor do we find the affections of this life to be adequate. There is always in love a brief satisfaction; but love begets a nobler idea of love, if it be true. A false love degrades, and a true love always opens a conception of loving which rebukes the actual affection. It aspires to something nobler, something higher, something richer, something that carries in it more of bounty than the ordinary

affections. There are no parents that do not feel, in proportion as they love their children, that they fain would make their love something larger and grander than it is. They feel the weakness of love as limiting them; as taking away from their power; as introducing into affection many sharp or acrid elements. They recognize the limitations of selfishness and pride as being bound around about a true affection. There is in every parent's heart a sense, an ideal, of love which he never reaches. There is something in it of joy; there is a great deal in it that is satisfactory; there is very much in it, also, of yearning, of longing for a state of which it conceives; but it does not reach to it. The inharmoniousness of man's nature with himself is perpetually developed to those who are cultured. It may not occur to a man of low growth as a philosophical fact; but as manhood increases in bulk and rises in quality, this develops toward the future, following the line of the better manhood in man. In proportion as you recede from animalism and reach to higher and higher truths—those which we all agree constitute the truest manhood—in that proportion men feel that the world does not satisfy them, that it does not come up to their idea, but that there is need of a larger atmosphere and chance for a more perfect unfolding.

The seed develops itself by growth, and man develops himself by education, and perceives that his manhood cannot be perfected in time. We find in this world that happiness is a sign of health and of moral rectitude in a lower sphere; it is true that the normal use of a faculty is usually accompanied with pleasure, and it is true that a state of health moral and physical is generally presumptive of happiness; one would naturally say, therefore, that happiness is the proper state of man. Happiness *is* the proper state of man; but it does not follow that it *is* his proper state in this world, by a great deal.

If you take an exquisite surgical instrument made of steel, sharp, and polished like silver, and say, "We find the perfection of steel when it is thus polished and brought into uses," that may be true; but suppose you should go into the shop where the steel was forged and made, and should say,

“There, the sign of perfect handling is perfect polish, and there is no polish here”? The final form is polish; but are all the preliminary forms likewise? When the ingot is taken, when it is thrown into the furnace, when it is brought to the anvil, when it is in its rudest forms, are not these all legitimate states? It is going on toward that state in which polish is the final form and the true indication of perfection; but all the way up to that is rude, it is coarse, it is anything but radiant.

Happiness, truly enough, in the lower spheres of human experience, is the test of health and satisfaction, and these are intimations of what are the ideal states to which men can go; but taking the race collectively and universally it is a fact that happiness is not the best thing for a man. It is a fact that those men who are born under circumstances in which they are content, who are pleased all the time, who enjoy themselves continually, are usually a very poor sort of men. Joy is *to be* our portion when we are able to bear it; but in the nascent state of existence, in all the earlier stages of development, it is found that men are made by hardship, by suffering, by hard knocks and disappointments.

I can imagine a state of existence in which men's selfishness will be trained in drill-schools in such a way that they will not need the great outer secular life; I can imagine that pride may by and by be brought under such physical and moral influences that it will run straight through from childhood to manhood in normal ways; but as man is situated now, in his low condition, such a thing is not possible. In the present state of the world men are thrown out to take their chance in life, to hope, to aspire, to endeavor, and are thrown back and thrown down. The poor and weak are thrown down so hard as to be destroyed; but if a man has the root of the matter in him he rises once more; and as he rises courage comes; and with courage comes perseverance; and with perseverance comes patience; and as he still perseveres under difficulties there comes nerve-fiber; and as the result of all these comes victory. It does not come while he is enjoying himself smelling flowers: it comes because when he sat down there was a thorn, and he jumped

up quick and went to work. It comes, not because the perfumed breeze blows upon him, but because the north wind sends icicles, winter locks up everything, and summer has to be engineer of the year. He is made to suffer because he is so narrow ; because he is so little developed ; because he so needs to be unfolded in every direction ; because he needs to contest nature and extract from her that which shall nourish him by supplying food for his growth on every side of his being. Such are the trials which make bone and muscle and nerve in men.

We bring up our children softly—too softly, often ; because not unfrequently when we turn them on the world they have not skin enough to endure that which they meet. The children of the poor have a better chance than the children of the rich, simply because they are nerved to hardship and endurance. Men who have achieved success through suffering and adversity often say, “My children shall not walk such a hard way as I walked.” No, they walk a soft way, and are soft all through ! Men do not understand that though for the present chastening seems to be not joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Rasping, hammering, being subjected to hot and cold, all manner of things—belong to the education which we experience in this rough world. All seems to go at hap-hazards. Men are born as nails are thrown into a keg, where they lie every which way, with heads and points against each other.

At Salisbury there was a foundry ; and I remember that there for the first time I saw the way in which iron was polished. Hearing creakings and groanings, I went in and found a vast hollow wheel into which castings were thrown, a ton at a time. This wheel was revolved, and inside of it these castings were revolved ; and there they crashed, and crashed, and crashed on each other ; and the results of their tumblings one upon another, with nothing but the law of gravity to bring them together, was that they finally ground each other smooth, rubbed off all the rough edges, so that when they were taken out and washed a little they were bright.

The whole world is turned much in that manner, and men are tumbled together in mutual attrition. Some are ruined by it, and some are made by it. This is the order of providence, this the method of education, by which the race has been developed up to its present condition. It has been by rude raspings and conflicts that manhood has been made.

Now, pain, and sorrow, and disappointments, and discouragements seem essential to the production of higher forms of manhood in this life. Hitherto it has been so; and there is no reason why we should expect a different experience—at any rate, for vast numbers of years yet. Under such circumstances every man must feel that in this life, where he is taking the earlier forms of existence, or is being developed through them into some elements of nobler and higher manhood; where in the nature of things imperfection and rudeness reign; where violence takes the place of reason; where sorrow is the path along which men walk toward joy; where, for the hope and the joy that are set before them, men, like their Master, endure the cross, despising the shame—under such circumstances you can understand how all men may, should, look out to another life, to another stage of existence, where these things will have passed away because the necessity for them will have passed away.

In the other world we shall have learned much. We shall have become substantially different from what we are here. We shall start in our life there with a capital—with some experience. I know it is said that men have had an existence before; and when I consider the slenderness of most men, I cannot but think that if they existed before, and they accumulated anything, it must have been in a world where infinitesimals were common; still I do not know of any reason in philosophy why we may not suppose that there was a previous state of existence where human beings went from one cycle or state to another. I do not know why there may not be spheres behind us, as well as before us, though I do not see as much reason to suppose it.

Now, if the considerations which we have presented are substantially true, it is not meant, when we are exhorted to

look forward and crave that rest which remains for the people of God, to express a mere spirit of discontent. It is not a spirit of grumbling, it is not a spirit of fault-finding, it is not a spirit of charging the world with all manner of ill-luck, by any means, that is indicated in the passage which we have selected for our text. Nor is it a spirit of undervaluing the present life, present duties or present enjoyments. This is admirably expressed by that apostle of profound experience, Paul, where he says, in the passage which we read as the opening service :

“We know that if our house of this earthly tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring [what? Not to be unclothed but,] to be clothed upon.”

He did not desire to get rid of, to be dispossessed of, the cares, and burdens, and trials, and wearinesses, and sorrows, of this life; these he was willing to bear if there was good in them; it was not that he was tired of the hardships of the present state; it was not that he was unwilling to go into the conflict, girded, and armed with the sword; it was not that he would be unclothed—but that he would be *clothed upon*.

There was no man that ever lived who had a higher consciousness of what manhood meant than Paul. There was never a man in every part of whose being there was such manhood, as there was in him. There will be ten Shakespeares before there will be another Paul. He was peculiar in this: that aspiration belonged to every single part of his nature. He had an exquisite sensibility to the effect of the natural world, of the civil world, and of the great spiritual world; but his whole being sighed and longed for release, for redemption, for a higher life. He had a sense of the kingdom of God in its invisible form, and it acted upon his interior nature in such a way that every throb, every pulsation, which expressed itself in his writings, was that of a man who longed for a more complete selfhood. In speaking of himself, he says: “It is not because I am discontented.” Surely he had reason to be discontented if any man had. He was in fastings, in weariness, in sickness, in betrayals among false brethren, in perils of every kind, by

sea and by land, in all manner of troubles, so that he declared himself to be as an offscouring of the earth; and yet he says, "I do not want to be delivered from all these things; I do not say that my life is done, and that I have nothing further to do; I am perfectly content to live on as long as it pleases God that I should; I would not be unclothed, but would be clothed upon; I long for myself. I am too selfish; I am too proud; I am carnal; I am narrow; I am full of prejudices; I am filled with sins; this is not myself; I have not yet got the shell off; I am moulting, and I cannot sing; my wings are not grown, and I cannot fly; but I discern in myself the intimations of a higher existence. Not that I would be unclothed and lose what I have, changing my circumstances merely, but that I would be clothed upon and gain the new joys and duties of the better life." It is a longing for perfection, for happiness, but only that happiness which is the concord of a man's whole being in himself and with his circumstances. Certainly it is not panting for indolence, though there are many who speak of entering the rest that remains for the people of God as if it were simply a cessation of enterprise and activity.

Now, there are many things which we may be permitted to long to be rid of. I can conceive that a man may be content with crippled limbs who hobbles upon crutches all his life, and sees uses and yet is conscious of being useless; and yet I could imagine that it would enter his thought of dying and of glory that he should be as others are. Nor could I blame any man for having such a thought. I can imagine one lying bedridden, or one, though not bedridden, yet moving in such feebleness and with such a shadowy life that he could do very little for others; and I could imagine that such an one might long to depart for the sake of strength and vigor. Neither would I rebuke him. I can imagine persons undergoing such drudgery that labor itself might cry out for rest. I can imagine slaves' lives and the lives of boors and peasants, as being oftentimes afflicted in such a way with excessive taxation and tasking that it might be legitimate to desire to die. I can imagine parents who long to be released from the excruciating sorrows that belong to them in the

faithful discharge of their duties in the household. I can imagine a disappointed man, such a one as Kossuth, exiled, who loves his land, and longs for the best things in its behalf, and waits, but sees no prospect in his own life of anything better; and having no other mission in this world than that of serving his own beloved country, I can imagine that he might have longings for that rest which remains for the people of God.

These things are permitted; but they are the lowest forms, they are the bottom forms, if I may so say, of desire. In our best moments we long for the rest which remaineth for the people of God because that will be our true birth. We long to know what we are; we long to know what this feeble manhood means; we see in ourselves hints and indications of it, but we are perpetually coming short. We conceive of grand things which we are incompetent to reach unto. We are full of intimations; and we get tired, at last, of this aspiration and of these thousand calls which we cannot understand, and which we cannot put away from our ears. The inhabitants of the other life stand thronging on the walls of the New Jerusalem, saying, "Come, come;" but where is the way? How shall we go? "Are ye not of us?" say that great army that is there. Who are they? The children that we carried in our arms, the companions that took sweet counsel with us day and night, fellow-laborers and warriors with us, who have gone before, and who are realizing the blessedness of emancipation—men without the animal; men with whom are no more wearinesses, no more appetites, no more passions, first for defense and afterwards for vexation, no more sordidness, no more selfishness, no more arrogance of pride, no more hindering influences that come up like mists to obscure the observations which we would make of heavenly bodies. We long for our manhood; and they are calling out to us in our highest and best hours and moods. The ear is open even if not the eye, and we almost hear the motion of sweet wings around about us of those that call us thither. It is not unmanly nor unmanning for us to yearn for that rest into which they have entered, where they have found

themselves, and where they know as they are known. They have reached the blessedness, not of perfected existence, but of that which, as compared with this earthly condition, is relatively perfect.

We long for that rest which shall set us free from inharmony—from clashing within and from clashing without. We long for release from all those experiences which, though they are needful and beneficial here, we at last hope that we have had enough of. We long to be advanced to a higher stage.

In this world we are in bondage to a thousand laws and customs which bind the good and the bad alike; which belong to society because society is made up of all sorts of people. Laws must be universal, and the same to all; and yet the very things which help men when they are low down often hinder them when they are high up. The sepal holds the rosebud while it is trying to be a bud, and protects it in winter and in the early spring; and yet, when the time comes for the rose to blossom, if that sepal is glued together, and sticks, the rose cannot blossom—the sepal will not let it out. “Chaff,” we say. What is chaff? Why, it is mother’s milk. It is the bosom at which wheat sucks. It is that which is wrapped around the grain, and which, while it is nascent, in milk, as we say, nourishes and supplies it with the juice by which it becomes wheat; but after it has become wheat, shall the chaff yet stick? The blossom has to perish before the apple swells, or before there can be an apple.

So, in life, we are surrounded with thousands of things which are necessary to the raising up of our generation and to the unfolding of those that have not been developed, but which have become chaff, shucks, husks, to many that are developed, so that they can lay them aside. There comes a state of existence in which they can be dispensed with safely; and men long for liberation and exaltation.

Men may long properly also for release from sorrow—not from those sufferings which are purifying, but from that greatest of all sorrows, the sight of and sympathy with universal sorrow. The whole creation groans and travails in pain until now. And how can one be like unto God, and

become sensitive and manly, and not take into consideration the condition of things that are around him?

This is qualified by hope and by faith in God. The evolution of his providence is narrowed and tempered very much; but in this world no man can be a *man* who does not bear a great deal of sorrow on account of his fellows, on account of the race; and he may well long for a state in which he shall be lifted above that necessity. The cry of the nursery at last becomes wearisome to the nurse's ears; and she has the highest longing—that which may not be expressed, and which may not even be shaped in any definite form in ourselves—the longing to be with God.

I do not think this longing ever comes in any such shape as often the catechism, theological systems, and church methods attempt to produce it. When I think of God, and try to put his attributes together in my mind, I never long to be with him. The intellectual state is one which, so long as it exists, prevents the emotive state. But there are states of emotion. There are states of imagination, of ideality, of affection. There is a large, sympathetic condition of the soul in its higher moods, in which longing for God is as when the hart pants for the water-brooks. It does not sit down and say, God is omnipotent and omniscient and omnipresent, and holy and just and good; and therefore (everlasting impertinence of logic!)—therefore I long for him. Not at all. Do you suppose a mother, when she has been gone a week from her babe that she has left behind, and wants to go home, sits down and says, "My babe is so beautiful, and has such blue eyes, and such flaxen hair, and such a sweet little mouth, that I long to see it"? There is something back of all enumeration. There is something back of thoughts even. There is emotion that is itself the womb out of which thoughts come—which is the source and fountain of them all.

Now, in the soul of those who have been taught of God, and have attempted to live in Christian dispositions, there springs up a yearning and longing for God; but it is not preceded by thought, nor is it the product of thought.

It seems very strange to go back to the Psalms of David:

to find the noblest expressions of this. We find them, of course, echoed and re-echoed in the New Testament; but surely, human language never was framed before nor since to express such unutterable desires of the soul toward God, in love and reverence and holy fear, as was expressed in far off ages by the warrior king.

I hear men ridicule the king and "sweet singer" of Israel, and talk about how much he was under the influence of cruel, revengeful, passionate feelings. I do not see that the men who are such critics have the capacity to understand David when he rose from lower moods and stood in the grandeur and regality of higher moods. There has never been a human soul that has given record to such a depth of experience of the very highest character, and such spiritual longing as David himself. He reached the very topmost limits of experience; and he is not to be weighed in the balance of those who are competent only to estimate his feet, but cannot rise to his heart nor to his head.

I will say, then, in closing, that the uses of the future life are those of comfort, inspiration, courage, hope. The true use of the future is to inspire patience in the present; to give men courage under difficulties; to give them inspiration and support in all the labors to which they are called.

This is the result to which the apostle himself calls us, where, in the fifteenth of first Corinthians, he closes that immortal chapter, after having argued that resurrection and immortality were established by Jesus Christ, and having gone through a long and eloquent illustration of this glorious doctrine of the future, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, when death shall be swallowed up in victory, and when there shall be thanks to God, and shoutings throughout the universe, saying:

"My beloved brethren, be [on account of these things] steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

O ye on whom the harness girds! O ye that are tired!  
O ye that are heart-sick! O ye whose cup has been broken  
at the fountain! O ye for whom life has little left, weak,

infirm, sick, hopeless, disappointed, heart-aching folks, here is your consolation. It is but your night. The morning comes. Days hasten into weeks, and weeks into months, and months into years, and years fly swifter than the shuttle, and you are not what you seem to be. This is not all of you. Your experiences here are disciplines, the full meaning of which you cannot understand. The future lies before you unexplored by your eye, but proved and rejoiced in by thousands whom you have known. Do not be discouraged. Cast not away your confidence and hope for the future ; but from that high and blessed estate (do not call it a vision), from that kingdom, from that resplendent city, from God's home and household toward which we are journeying, bring down that strength and that comfort which hope shall give you, and be cheerful ; be patient ; do not count yourselves unworthy of suffering. Shall the Master wear the crown of thorns, and you never know one single nettle ? Shall he be cut off with ignominy, and you have no touches of sharp spears ? Is the disciple better than the Master ? By his sufferings what benefits have you reaped ! Be content to reap more benefits from your own sufferings. Be manly and courageous and hopeful. Do not look at the grave as being a prison's mouth, and shudder and shrink from it. Do not look at sicknesses, and limitations, and weaknesses, as so many evils to be dreaded. They are all God's messengers. And the gate of death—black, is it ? If you could but take the blackness from your eyes, the gate of death you would see to be the gate of pearl of which the record speaks, the most glorious of all gates. We come into life crying, poor, pining, miserable creatures ; and yet all men rejoice around about us ; but when, after having gathered the experience, and education, and discipline of life, we are graduated, and go out of this life, do not you suppose that they rejoice ten thousand times more, when we are born into the other life ?

Go toward the gate, then, and do not call it dark. It is the way the apostles went ; it is the way their Master and your Master went ; it is the way of all the earth ; and beyond it lies your true life, your real manhood, your best self. With the grave shall be the dust, the body which is a good servant

in poor things, but which becomes a hamper and a hindrance in the highest things; and then, having dropped that, you will soar into unknown realms in an unknown state of glory, with joy and perfectness forevermore.

There remaineth a rest for the people of God. Hungry men rush to the dinner for fear that others will eat it all up; ambitious men strive for the high offices of life for fear that others will supplant them; but there is a rest which no man can take away from you. There is a special place for each one in heaven. There is a glory for you that can hang about no other. There is a joy for you that no other can feel. Your rest remaineth, and none shall take it away from you.

So be patient; be glad; sing in sorrow; have songs in the night. When God wants you he will send for you; and when he sends for you it will be because he wants you. Then go home and be forever with the Lord.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE draw near to thee encouraged by the memory of the past, and comforted by all those words which thou hast strewn along the way of life. Thou hast made it easy for us to draw near to thee. Thou hast clothed thyself with all the associations of the household. Thou hast made thyself known to us by names that have in them our dearest experience. Though we cannot comprehend thee and must not think that thou art only as the best of all that we have known; though thou art transcendently more than we can imagine; though we cannot out of this limited state reach forth imagination or reason to compass thee, to take in the full conception of thy being, yet we rejoice to know in what direction thou art great, and that it is in thy disposition and not in the right hand of thine omnipotence, not in thy universal and penetrating understanding and knowledge, not in that thou hast had infinite experience in government, but in that all the resources of thy power and knowledge are in the nature of goodness, and that thou art beneficent, and art creating joy, or the conditions thereof, and preparing men even by sorrow for that higher state in which sorrow itself shall loose all its acrid elements, and ripen into sweetness and blessedness.

Now we thank thee, O Lord, that we may draw near toward thee, and that we may feel the light and warmth of thy light though we cannot take the measurement of thy being, and that we may trust ourselves implicitly in thy hand. We desire to know thy commandments; we desire with all our heart to obey thee as fully as we can. We feel our incompetency to understand, and to perfect in obedience even that which we do understand; but we strive toward a more perfect life, and from day to day seek to gain strength where we are weak, or, where strength is undue or wrong, to weaken it. We seek the things which please thee; and though we are conscious every day that we are ignorant, that we are full of infirmity, and that our infirmities constantly lead us into transgressions and sins, yet we rejoice in believing that thou art such a one as forgives iniquity, transgression and sin. Thy nature is a loving nature. Thou art not hard and stern. Thou dost not deal with hearts as thou dost with matter. Thou art lenient; and it is in thee that we have an everlasting atonement. Inherent in thy very nature is that which forever pours itself forth for us. It was made manifest in Jesus Christ; but it dwells in thee forever and forever, and is felt in the heavens and on the earth. Yea, in the infinite depths of the past eternity thou wert full of compassion for the erring. For wherefore are men weak but that so thou didst send them into life? Wherefore are men full of infirmities but that they are to progress through them to final strength and perfectness. Thou art adapted to the wants of thy creatures everywhere. Thou art full of goodness and patience. Thou dost *wait* to be gracious. More than we know, far more than we can comprehend, thou art gracious. As they that live in dungeons know not what the sun is doing that from seeds brings forth harvests, so we in darkness and doubt do not know what bounties of God evermore roll over our heads. We dwell in the midst of

benign influences which we do not discern. We are moving along lines of providence which we cannot understand. We are unable to perceive what is done in us by sorrow and trouble. In but a small measure do we know thy work. The ends thereof are far beyond our ken. O Lord our God, thou art wonder-working; thou art moving in a sphere which is infinitely higher than that in which we live or in which our thoughts do move; but we rejoice in that apprehension which we have of thee. We rejoice to think that all things work together for good to them that love thee—yea, that they work together for good to all, though that goodness is known only to them that love thee. We pray that we may with confidence repose our trust in thee for life, in death, and for the life that is to come.

And now we pray that thou wilt give us more and more the daily use of this knowledge. Grant to all those who are cumbered in life the strength and consolation which comes from the knowledge of God. Manifest thyself. Make thyself known to those who are in sorrow. Comfort those who are cast down, thou that art the Giver of all consolation and the Comforter. How many need thy offices! Pour out, we pray thee, thy bounty and thy healing spirit to hearts that are bruised. Bind up hearts that are wounded. May the suffering hear thee and feel thee. Lift up those that are overthrown. Inspire hope in those that are discouraged. If there be any to whom the way of life seems utterly empty, and whose life seems spent and run out, and who have nothing more to inspire them, open before them the life that is to come, that they may discern how great is their position there.

There is a rest which remaineth with infinite leisure above, where ages are as days are here, and which abides for all according as their souls do need. Something of it may every poor, and wretched, and racked soul be able to take unto itself now, as a foretaste and as a comfort in the troubles and trials of this life.

We pray that thou wilt enter into every household, and pour balm and consolation into every bereaved heart. We pray that thou wilt search out the hidden troubles of all, and heal them, or help them to bear them. May all who carry burdens feel the divine strength uplifting them. May those who are whelmed in disappointments be content to be disappointed if it be the will of God. Grant that hopes that, instead of blossoming, are subverted may be as the sod turned under by the plowman only that better harvests may come by and by. May men who are in trouble understand that if they wait on the Lord, ere long he will be gracious.

We pray that thou wilt teach all those who are seeking to know the truth, what it is. Teach them by the heart. Draw them unto thyself. Fill them with the spirit of divine love that they may understand thee. Teach us all to be humble, to be meek, to be long-suffering, to be patient, to be gentle, to be kind toward those that are not kind toward us. Teach us to love our enemies, and to forgive them. Teach us to bear this life not proudly and arrogantly, but humbly. Teach us not to complain as if we were worthy of better treatment than we receive. May we have such a sense of our inferiority, and humility, and worthlessness before God, that we shall

rejoice day by day that we have so many mercies, instead of complaining that we have so few. May we have better conceptions of manhood than we have had. May the ideal of truth, and honesty, and purity grow brighter and clearer to us.

Lift up the whole human race, we beseech of thee; and may justice, and peace, and love, and concord prevail among men. Save the nations from dashing insanely one against another. May wars cease, and the love of war. And we beseech of thee that thy kingdom in which dwelleth righteousness, which hath been so longed for, which hath charmed our hope so long, and which hath so long tarried, may come. Let it advance speedily. Arise, O Sun of Righteousness, with healing in thy beams; for the whole earth doth wait for thee, and is sick, is hungry, and needs thy touch of compassion, and thy wonder-working power.

And to thy name shall be the praise, both now and evermore.  
*Amen*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

THOU blessed Saviour, we cannot understand all thy words nor all thy life; and still less all that thou art; but we know that having loved thine own thou dost love them unto the end. We know that thou art gone before to prepare for us what thou didst declare upon earth to be in thy father's house—many rooms and apartments. There is one for us, and thou didst go to prepare it, and we rejoice in it.

We rejoice that thou hast entered into thy rest. No more art thou a man of sorrows, though thou art still acquainted with grief. Thou art lifted above the scoff and the scowl of those that persecuted thee, and thou art in resplendent glory, not for thine own self, not for thine own indulgence, but that thou mayest with might, and power, and everlasting activity and love, mould and bring up to perfection thy creatures that are here upon earth. We thank thee for thy care of us. We thank thee for all our gladness that has been good. We thank thee for all our sorrows. Thou hast not put the flail upon us once too much. The grain was in the straw, and it would have remained there if thou hadst not beaten it out. Thou hast made us suffer for our good, that we might be partakers of thy holiness. May we not be unwilling to be chastised. May we wish to be chastised if it is chastisement that we need to carry us up. We beseech of thee that thou wilt love us still, and do the things which love inspires. Take away anything from us which is hindering us, and send anything upon us that is necessary to our development, however heavy it may be to be borne. Thy yoke thou canst make easy, and thy burden thou canst make light.

Thus we pray that thou wilt be our School-master here, and by and by our exceeding great Reward in heaven. And in thy presence we will give the praise of our salvation to Thee, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

# THE TEST OF CHURCH WORTH.

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“But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”—EPIH. iv., 20-24.

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It is a doctrine of the New Testament that the knowledge of God is made known through the products of the divine Spirit in the human soul. It is that part of the divine nature which is insphered in us, and which shines out from us, that constitutes the essential and most precious part of our knowledge of the divine nature. The knowledge of God may be regarded as external and rational, or as internal and experimental. There are two causes which have turned, and which are still turning, our thoughts more to the investigation of the divine nature in its external aspects: the one in the past has been the embodying of the divine nature in philosophical systems, and teaching them in dogmatic forms, so that we approached the mind of man first on the rational side, or on the side of reason and intellectual apprehension. In our time the same tendency is carried on and intensified, though by an entirely different method—namely, the progress with which material, physical science is opening the secrets of creation, and so bringing the apprehension of God to men from the side of his working—from his creative side.

Now, both of these methods are, within certain limits, indispensable; but both of them are absolutely incompetent to represent the divine nature. That process by which God

may be known to men is one that differs profoundly from these ; and without it no substantial progress can be made in the internal and experimental knowledge of God.

One approaches a magnificent ground and, discerning through the opening trees a mansion, inquires who dwells there. He is told the man's name ; he is told his age ; he is told his occupation. He is a great artist. All this ground, this landscape-picture, is his. He created it. The very building in which he lives is also the product of his thought. Going past the premises from day to day, one comes to feel, " I know who lives there ; I know his name ; I know the man." He has never seen him, he knows him simply by what he has done ; and there is some knowledge which one can acquire in this way. But it chances, some day, that he meets the owner ; he sees his form and figure, and is enabled from his physiognomy to make up his mind somewhat in regard to the man's disposition. Now he may say, " I know the man ; I have seen him, I have spoken with him, and I have a general acquaintance with him." So he has, as much as the neighborhood have. But all this knowledge is as nothing to the knowledge which the man's children, the inmates of his family, those that live in the same dwelling with him, have. The laboring men and the servants all have more knowledge of him than this stranger has, who merely discerns the outer conditions of his life, and the products of his thought and hand-skill. There is not a hostler in his stable, nor a gardener on his ground, that would not say to an outsider, " You may think you know him because you have gone by and seen him, and seen what he has done ; but you ought to live in the same house with him for five or ten years, as I have done, and then you might say that you knew something about him." It is true that the gardener has the advantage over a stranger ; but let the boys from a window overhear this gardener talk with the man, and they laugh and say, to each other, " Hear him talk ; he thinks he knows our father ; but he must live with him as we do, and see him morning, noon and night, and see his disposition, and see the whole play of his inward soul, and then he will know him." The wife and mother, hearing them talk, smiles, and says, " I

love to hear my boys praise their father ; but even they do not fully understand him : I am the only one that understands him."

So it is that as you go in and learn the play of men's dispositions you consciously understand them. You can understand a tree, or you can understand an animal, much more nearly than you can a man. As being grows complex and subtle, it requires that men should become conscious of its interior life before they can be said to be acquainted with it.

No man can understand anything which he has not some specimen of in himself. No man can understand courage if he has no courage. No man can understand reasoning who is incompetent to reason. No man can understand beauty who has not some sense of beauty in himself. No man understands self-denial who has never denied himself for some generous end. And our knowledge of God depends on how much we have in ourselves of that which goes to constitute the interior and essential nature of God.

It is upon this principle that the manifestation of the divine nature is to be made through the church. That is to say, *the church* does not signify what that term was meant to signify in the New Testament, as I understand it—namely, not an organized body of men, but generically all men who are living for God and in personal communion with him. The assembly of illuminated souls, under organization, or with no organization, whose special purpose it is to serve God and their fellows, constitute the church. All men who know God by the interior, whether gathered together in assemblies with definite organizations or not, are God's church. All men interiorly connected with God ; all men who know him by having created in them something like him through which he has interpreted himself to them, and by which they interpret him to other men, are the church of God, are God's people.

It is, then, by the *experience* of those qualities which exist in Christ that we learn him. The pagan idea of God was creative, demonstrative *power* ; the Christian idea of God is *quality*. It does not exclude power, but it does not give it prominence ; it makes it the mere inclosure of something that is more precious—of the soul.

The true conception of divinity is, that it is quality of disposition. The power to create, to sustain, to administer, to govern, is within that which constitutes the divine nature, which is the supremacy of disposition, and the exquisiteness of it. It is the joy and the beauty that go with the interior dispositions of God and that direct the active manifestations of his power.

Now, the kind of knowledge which springs from a participation of the divine nature, or from the life of Christ made manifest in our life, or reproduced by it, is the supreme end of all instruments. This is the end of all culture. This is the end of ordinances in churches, which are instruments to develop in men such a sense of the comprehension of God as shall make them like him, or as shall bring them into a state in which they can understand him, and in a degree represent him to others, both consciously and unconsciously. We shall find in the thirteenth verse of the same chapter a recognition of this:

“Till we come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

He has been saying here that there were different gifts to men—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. He has been saying that all these were ordained, not for the sake of their own sanctity, but for the sake of producing in men a certain moral result; and this moral result was to be carried up to such a degree that we should come into the fullness of the stature of Christ—should be made Christlike.

This, then, is the supreme end of all church existence, of all theological teaching and of all moral institutions. The object is to work in the individual, and thus ultimately in the multitude and in the race, conditions which shall ally them dispositionally to God; and everything which relates to that, everything which tends toward it, is a divine instrument, because it serves the divine ultimate end which is sought in creation.

There is supposed to be a peculiar sanctity in the special moral institutions of the world—and there is, just as there is a sanctity in the household. It is unquestionably true that

children having a father and a mother, and brothers and sisters, and growing up in a well-organized and well-conducted household, are in those conditions which are most likely to develop in them amiable dispositions, industrious habits, and moral tendencies; but is the family the only thing that will do this, because it is one thing, and because it is a legitimate thing? Do my boys learn nothing but what I tell them? Do they learn nothing from what my neighbors tell them? Do they learn nothing by their life in the street and by their associations at school? Do they learn nothing by the playing in upon them of the great world? Some things are bad, and it would be better if these were not; but some things are good, and it is better that these are. Not I alone, but God, speaking in providence,—God, speaking through my neighborhood,—God, speaking in summer and winter,—God, speaking in sickness and in health,—God, speaking by a thousand other persons than myself, that come and go,—God, speaking, in other words, by life in its entirety, is the schoolmaster of my children; but that does not destroy the sanctity of the family. Nor should one turn and say, “There is no need, then, of the family, if children learn in these ways.”

It is by special institutions, and by God’s providence, and by the influences that surround men, that they are instructed; but we are far from saying that because God teaches men in the sphere of human experience, in national existence, in climatic life, in the great round of daily providence, in their business, in sickness and by personal experience, that therefore churches are of no use. They are of very great use; but to suppose that the only thing which God works through is the organized church is a mistake, again, on the other extreme. Churches are needed for their special work in moulding men, in instructing them, in keeping before them the great ends of existence, and in illustrating the dispositions of a true Christian life; but churches themselves are but single channels. All grace does not come through them. All influence does not. Is there no voice in the storm? There was in David’s time, and there was in Isaiah’s time. God spoke in the heavens by the stars, by the sun, by the moon; he spoke

by morning and by evening ; he spoke by mountains, by the ocean, by trees and by birds ; and does he not yet speak by these things ? In the olden times revolutions taught, industry taught ; and all manner of influences which bear upon men, and which directly and indirectly affect them, are teaching influences ; and are they atheistic and outside of what God intended because they are not in the church ? Did not God frame the whole world ? and is not the whole framework of society built up by the indirect power of industries and of social influences ? They are brought to bear upon the human soul as well as upon the church.

It is not that churches are not necessary, but that they are not the only things needful. They are good often, they are necessary always ; but certainly they are not, as they are organized by human instruments, large enough to convey to the world or to a community a rounded conception of God, or of the work of God on the race. The end, therefore, which is sought—namely, that development of the interior nature of man by which his dispositions and affections shall represent the corresponding but purer and nobler dispositions of God—the creation of men in Christ Jesus—this gives value to all the means that are employed ; and every church is good that makes Christian men. On the other hand, every church is invalid that does not make Christian men. The end of God in creation is that men shall rise into his likeness and become like him ; and whatever tends to bring them into that likeness is valuable in proportion as it does it, and is valueless in proportion as it fails to do it.

Any organization or institution, therefore, which diverts men's attention from the prime end of existence ; any theological teaching which leads men away from the external and does not develop in them the true internal disposition of Christ ; anything which develops the more rational understanding, and leaves the spiritual life dead, undeveloped, ungrowing, is relatively false. Although the tenets which are taught may be true, the method and the general influence are false. Any church organization that draws men away from true dispositions, whether negatively or positively, is

false. Any institution which is administered in such a spirit that men become partisan and critical, and which thus diverts them from personal holiness, and from living in the same feelings which God dwells in, are relatively unsacred. No ascription of sacredness, no tracery, no lineage, nothing can make that sacred which has not in practical operation the power of developing the love of God in the souls of men.

This, too, I qualify by saying that it is not to be understood as in any degree a fling at churches, or an undervaluing of them, but that it is simply a critical rule by which churches may prove themselves to be true workers, or to be inferior workers, or to be no workers together with God.

There are some methods of instruction and of organization which long experience has shown to be more likely to develop a true disposition in men than others; and it is that likelihood, it is that presumption, it is the fruit which some institutions bear and which others do not, that gives to them their sanctity. A tree that will not bear is no better for having a good name. You may plant the Northern Spy—one of the best of apples—in your orchard, and if it stands, as some of my trees do, ten or twelve years without bearing an apple, I do not care for the name; you cannot eat the name; and it is no better than if you had an elder bush in your orchard. Its lineage is perfect; it had the right origin; but there is not a Northern Spy apple on it, and it will not bear.

You may plant grape vines, as I have by the acre, that will not ripen their fruit—the Iona, the Delaware, and other varieties. They are all admirable grapes when you can get them; but on my farm many of them mildew in the leaf, and many of them spot in the bunches. I do not revile the grape abstractly, nor call it nought: nevertheless, I declare that every one of my vines that does not bear grapes every year is a failure, and that the mere name of the vines does not save it; and the possibility that other vines do bear delicious clusters does not help those.

Now, no church is sacred in and of itself, nor is any church made sacred by its name, by the line through which it has come down, by its relations, by its ordinances, nor by any appurtenances that belong to it. That is a good vine

which brings good clusters and ripens the fruit, and that is not a good vine which does not do these things, I do not care what the name is.

But do not think that this undervalues churches—it does not : it brings them to a higher glory ; but it is a criticism that strikes through formality and externality.

More than that, I declare the right of every man to be developed without church, without minister, without any external appointments ; but I do not attack external appointments, or minister, or church, in saying this, any more than I attack the great common school system when I declare the right of every man to get an education without the common school system. If a man comes to me for examination, and I find that he knows arithmetic, and writing, and geography, and that he has learned them lying on his belly, before a torch-light, with no master, am I to kick him out because he did not go through the common school ? If he has what the common school was built to give him it is all I ought to ask. But if you ask whether I object to the common school as a place where people should get their knowledge, I say, No. The common school was designed to extend general knowledge, and it ought to be established and maintained everywhere ; but it ought not to be arrogant, and refuse to recognize a man that has knowledge if he did not get it in a particular way. And I say that if a man has obtained knowledge of the Lord God, as manifested in Jesus Christ, it is valid, no matter where he obtained it. If a man has in himself patience, sweetness, the feeling of love, the bounty of benevolence, and a consciousness of the everlasting brooding and waiting nature of God, I do not care whether he comes to them through the Roman Church, or through any other hierarchial church, or through the denomination to which I belong, or whether he gets them from the Shakers, from the Quakers, or from anything or anybody else. If he has these things, that is enough. Whether their way of getting them is the easiest and best way for others to get them is another question, to be answered in another way ; but the fact that the mind and will of Christ is in a man is sufficient.

The County Commissioners often lay out great roads; and when they have bridged the streams, and filled up the valleys, and marked off the dangerous places by railings, I travel between point and point with great comfort; but by-and-by a man says to me, "I have a bridle-path, that is more agreeable than that great road, and that cuts off the distance," and he invites me to use it. I say, "Did the County Commissioners lay out this bridle-path?" "Oh no," he says. "they did not lay it out." "Is it generally traveled?" "No; there are but few of us that go backward and forward on it." "Well, if the County Commissioners did not lay it out, and if it is not generally traveled, I think I won't go on it, though it is easier and shorter." If a man wants to go on the great road let him; but he must not object to others going on the bridle-path. It matters not that some take one and some the other, so that they all reach the common point which they are seeking. The main thing is their getting there, and not the particular road through which they do it. And yet, the road is not unimportant, so far as convenience is concerned.

The revelation of God, then, by the lives of men, and by their personal experiences, is represented as the distinctive Christian method of making God known to the world and to the universe. I need not quote passages to show that Paul was full of it; but I make this point in order to show the indispensable necessity that there should be liberty of individual development, and also to explain that which I think is the most remarkable illustration of it that history affords. No man can read the letters and other writings of Paul without being struck, when his attention is once called to it, with the enormous egotism of the apostle. The word "I" occurs in some chapters from fifteen to twenty-five or thirty times; and there is not one of his epistles that does not bristle with "I," "my," "me," "mine." Such intense personality in any literary production of modern times would be esteemed unpardonable. I do not know of another author that ever existed who had such an overpowering sense of his own personality as Paul. There is but one way in which this can be reconciled to our sense of manliness, and

this is by considering that Paul, perhaps to a degree that almost no one before or since ever attained, reflected in every faculty, in every mood, in every phase of his life, the divine disposition. It was God manifest to him that he was speaking of. He was swallowed up in the divine nature. "The life I live," he said, "I live by the faith of the Son of God." He characterized the one that spoke as "not I, but Christ that is in me." He had so identified himself with the nature of God that in the glow of his enthusiasm it was not himself that he was thinking of, but that particular light of God which was shining out of himself; and in all his sufferings, and enterprises, and teachings, and personal experiences, whether in Synagogues, or before Roman governors, or in jail with soldiers chained to his wrist, or wherever he was, it was Paul manifesting Christ.

If the facets of a diamond could only speak, they would cry out, "I see the light; I see the light; I see the light; I see it;" and Paul, as he stood over against the divine nature, was exalted to the intensest sense of egotism and personal experience; and he gave it forth with a simplicity, a child-like frankness and earnestness, that not many of us can understand, and that certainly should not ally him to lower and gross forms of egotism.

Now, the liberty of reproducing in his disposition the nature of God, and of letting it be known, belongs to every man. Where the work of grace is going on in the hearts of men, there is a sanctity in that divine work which ought not to be unduly and rashly meddled with in our attempt to restrain men's liberty, to put them upon such and such spiritual allowances, or to develop them by such and such ordinances. The result of such mistaken meddling is to go far toward defeating the very work which it is sought to accomplish.

God does not work all things in one man. To some is given one grace, and to some another. There is no perfect man. There is no man large enough to represent manhood in all its developments. And much less can any man represent all that is in God. It takes all manner of men to do that. All the elements of a perfect Christian character even

are not found in the best specimens of human nature. Some sides are brought out in one, and other sides are brought out in another; and is it for him who has zeal and courage and power to make himself the critic of him who has sweetness and gentleness and humility? Is he who is in the glow of Christian fervor, and who has a speculative intellect, to criticise the practical man, who acts, but does not do much thinking? The human mind is limited; but the divine nature is so vast, its stores are so ample, that no museum in the world can give specimens of them all. It takes whole communities of Christian people—the zealous and the calm; the thoughtful and the unthoughtful; the emotive and the dry; the imaginative and the practical—to reflect the various elements of the divine nature, which is made up of the sum of the graces which belong to God's people, high and low, in all churches, and under all circumstances.

The economics of different church schools (I call a church a school) tend to bring out different sides; and we need them all. If you look at the practical work that is done, where is there a denomination that brings out all those qualities which we see produced by the sum of all denominations? In one church there is subordination to government, and in another church there is personal liberty. In one church there is taste and a sense of the beautiful, and in another church there is plainness and simplicity. In one church there is silence, and in another there is tumult. It would be very hard to reconcile the stillness of the Quaker with the boisterous experience of the Methodist. You are obliged to put them into different rooms in order that each may develop his grace; and yet both work toward the development of the one great ideal man. So the divine nature, the fullness of it, and the variety of it, cannot be represented by one individual nor by one sect. It can only be done by all men and all sects.

We are so made that there is a negative to every positive. Every truth has an opposite truth coming toward it, as every spoke in a wheel has another spoke coming toward it. And as in a wheel strength comes from these opposite spokes over against each other, so in the development of human **life**

strength comes from opposite elements. But you cannot make all these elements coalesce or co-exist in the same church. Paul attempted to do it, and see what a time he had of it. Some were prophesying; some were speaking unknown tongues; some were singing; some were praying; some were doing one thing, and some another, and some had nothing to do; and all these wild, divided, incongruous exercises made a vast clangor of confusion.

We are not, then, to attempt to defeat these special personal developments of man by any church regulations. The very diversity, provided it stands steadfastly and undeniably to the production in human experience of those divine elements which are made known in Christ Jesus, is eminently desirable. So that men reproduce these elements, there is no authority under heaven that has a right to say, "Why do ye so?" in respect to the external instruments and means. You have no right to say that everybody shall be sober, or that everybody shall be silent. You have no right to say that everybody shall have a reasoning religion, or that everybody shall have an emotive religion. You have no right to say that beauty and imagination shall be thrown down, or that there shall be no painted windows and no carving in the house of God. Nor has anyone a right to find fault with the plainness of our house. I like plainness and I like ornament; and as I cannot have them both together I take one sometimes and the other sometimes. Both of them are proper. There are all kinds of Christians; and oh, that they would admit each other to be Christians! Oh, that they would take the larger conception that God is served by all his children in all sects and denominations! Then how much greater would be the advance of holiness among men than it is now, where each church says, "The perfect Christian, if anywhere, is to be found among us!"

In this view of the method of divine disclosure, men must be suffered to enjoy personal liberty, or else it will not be possible to avail ourselves of all the means of unfolding the nature of God which belong to human life and human disposition. The spirit of Christ demands not only that there shall be liberty of the individual, but that there shall be

liberty of instruments; and the genius of Christianity is not to tie up but to untie.

Interpret in this point of view a portion of the 2d of Colossians commencing with the 8th verse :

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

There is a disposition to limit Christ, to narrow him; but no true system of religion narrows him or limits him. There is a Christ who counted not his own life dear to him. There is a Christ who saith, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends; and I lay mine down for my enemies.” There are many things developed by church history that are not unimportant; but the chief question with every man is, “What is the revelation of Christ to me? and what is that in him which is set over against me for my vindication?”

“In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh [the carnal body] by the circumcision of Christ.”

The apostle was reasoning with the Jews, who were as ignorant about circumcision as we are about baptism. Paul hit them in the place of their prejudice when he said “circumcision;” and when he told them there was a “circumcision made without hands,” he placed the thing signified in lieu of the image or ordinance, and when he spoke of “putting” off the body of the sins of the flesh,” that was what he meant by circumcision.

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

If a man is buried and baptized with Christ, he is risen spiritually, as much as a man is circumcised spiritually who is circumcised in him, though the priest’s hand does not touch him, the meaning signified by “baptism” having taken the place of the thing by which it was signified.

“And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was

against us [that is to say, that was cumbrous, and too heavy to bear] which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but that the body is of Christ."

Now, I say that while I recognize all ordinances and methods as being useful, yet no man has a right to take ordinances, or methods, or institutions, or creeds, or doctrines, or books, and with them oppress the individual conscience; for he who is of Christ, and who represents Christ in his dispositions, has the body, the substance, the spiritual element, by which all these other things were created. They are schoolmasters; but when I have learned my lesson, and do not need a schoolmaster, I have a right to get along without one; and if I do not need the church and its instruments I have a right to dispense with them.

The great conflicts of church organizations and of systematic theologies have been such as to give them undue importance, and make them an improper dynamical centre. In other words, men feel that a man must be a good man; but that being one, if he does not join a church, and the right church, and learn the right catechism, the mere being good is a secondary quality. The church has passed through such dynastic training, and has been so much associated with actual human governments, and has assumed such authority over the consciences of men, and its officers have claimed to be in such a sense endued by grace from on high, that there has sprung up in the public sentiment of the Christian world the idea that there is a heaven-derived authority in these associations of men. There is no such authority in them. The only value that the combinations of good men have is a quality that shall enable all those to whom they come to develop in themselves the true Christian life; but if they find men developing their true Christian life under other circumstances, they ought to bless God; and, instead of giving them the cold shoulder and the buffet, they ought to rejoice that God works by larger means than those which are contained in any special organization.

I plant flowers because I cannot get them generally in any other way; but having planted them, and they being in bloom, if I go across the hills and find that some chance seeds have blown there, or have come there I know not how, and that under some hedge or in some protected nook there are flowers even finer than mine, do I run in on them and say, "You are not in the right place, and you are not flowers"? Do I say to them, "Your business is instantly to get up and go into my garden"? No; I thank God for all the flowers that I can raise in my garden, and then I thank God for every one that grows out of it; and if I find flowers in unlooked-for places, I have the greater joy. I should be glad to see the very wilderness blossom as the rose.

So goodness among bad people, goodness in unexpected places, goodness in spite of hindrances and obstacles, goodness anywhere and under any circumstances, is a reason for thanksgiving. Anything that brings out in the hearts of men the divine dispositions we ought to be thankful for. It is that which the world longs to see, and it certainly is that which ought to be brought more stringently home on churches—as I will proceed to show.

The attempt to secure moral ends by multiplying instruments, or by increasing the rigor of administration, is contrary to reason, to experience, and to the analogy of divine providence.

While every sect feels itself at liberty to be free from every other sect in the world, every church feels itself at liberty to inveigh against all other churches—which is wrong. I keep house in my way; my friends keep house in their way; and I should consider it bad manners for me to criticise their method of keeping house. They have enough to eat; they are as well dressed as I am; they are active and useful; and while I should resent instantly their intrusion over my threshold, they have a right to resent my intrusion over their threshold. All I ask to know is whether they are respectable persons, worthy citizens, pleasant neighbors, good folks. If they are, that is enough. I have no right to go farther back than that. But while each church feels jealous of its

own rights, it feels at liberty to throw bombs at neighbor churches. Congregationalism feels at liberty to bombard Presbyterianism in its distinctive qualities; Presbyterianism feels at liberty to bombard Episcopalianism, and Episcopalianism feels at liberty to bombard everything.

This may be done tastefully, it may be done sweetly; but that makes no difference. It is not right on that account. If my pocket-book lies on my table, and a man comes in and snatches it, and says, "Mine!" I won't let him have it, of course, after he has taken it in that rude way. If a man comes with the utmost reasoning propriety, and says, "I think that is mine," and takes it, I won't let him have it any more. If a man comes and says, "Ah, my charming friend, what a beautiful life we are all living!" and slips off with it, I won't let him have it either.

When men, with violent arrogance and controversy, say, "You are ours, or nobody's," I resent that. When they undertake to restrict my liberty by elaborate and Baconian logic, I resent that also. They may do it as gracefully and sweetly as silk and satin can make it to be, and I resent it then. I resent the thing. I ask for myself personal liberty, and I ask for everybody personal liberty; and I say, While it is right for them to be jealous for their own faith, it is not right for them to claim that God has given them the only true faith, or that he has given them the monopoly of the true faith. That claim is simply—I will not say what.

At this time we are in much danger on account of the developments that are being made in many quarters. The fact is, the whole earth is hatching. Spring is on the world. There is a development of thought; there is a development of commerce; t'ere is a development in every form of mechanical industry. The nations are coming into new life. In other words, God is breathing life into the whole race, and men are making progress in every direction. There are more church organizations, there is more versatility, and there are more methods. Old things are passing away, and all things are becoming new.

In the woods, next June, when the trees are impleted

with sap, and are beginning to grow, suppose there should be a conference of oak trees, speaking by the voice of the bark? Suppose the bark should say, "I was good enough for these trees last year, and why am I not good enough for them now? There is a restless spirit of innovation that is swelling me off, and I have got to do something to hold on." Meantime the process of growth is going forward in the tree, and the old bark is beginning to be crowded off; and it rubs itself up, and tries to stick to the old tree, saying, "I was here before this impudent, underlying bark undertook to come out." All these counselings and complainings and determinations have no effect, and the growth continues, and the old bark has to give place to something larger and better.

Now, what are men doing but running back to their creeds, and undertaking to rub them up and fix them so that they shall fit the new state of things that has been ushered in?

My boy, sixteen years old, goes away from home to school, and his old clothes are put in the closet. After a year or so he comes home, and I want him to work on my farm, and I undertake to put those clothes on him. I observe that his ankles are shown more than I used to think they were, and that the jacket does not fit him as well as it did; but I say, "These are your clothes, and you have got to put them on. They were made for you, and you must wear them." I insist on his putting on those clothes and wearing them. You will readily see how absurd that is. But is there no advance of human thought? Is there no growth in the expression of spiritual truth? Are there no old doctrines newly stated? Was all the light shed upon the world in the past that it is to have? Is there no conformation of divine thought to human thought in order that it may meet the increasing exigencies of the time?

I insist that men have a right to state what they believe to be true in the language that is familiar to them.

There are many historic facts that will continue to be stated to the end of the world; but all facts of moral government; the philosophy of divine administration; theological systems; theories of mental power applied to the affairs of

mankind—there is not one of these things in regard to which every hundred years does not put the world in a different position ; and there must be a readaptation of fitnesses. There are continually new facts to be generalized, new deductions to be drawn, and new emphasis to be put upon points of importance.

Now, while the Westminster Confession, which I was brought up under (as you might judge), in respect to many external facts and historical statements is perhaps as good a condensation as ever will be made, and may not be changed, yet those things which respect its vital elements need to be changed. They do not answer the spirit of the time. I do not mean the wild, fractious uneasiness of our day : I mean the higher feeling, the larger sense of personal liberty, of personal obligation, of divine benignity and of spirituality. God is bringing into the world, by monarchies, and republican institutions, and civilization in all its forms, these great results which have been swelling in human experience ; and more and more they take expression in theology and moral government. Old systems and frameworks which were wise and good a hundred years ago do not fit us now.

You may bring together all the scattered facts and doctrines of the Calvinistic system, and you cannot adapt that system to the state of human nature in the present day. It must be let out somewhere. It must be enlarged in some places, and changed in some places. It was admirable in respect to much that is in it for the age that created it, and for the work that it did ; but you might as well go to war in our day with the chariots and horsemen of the old Assyrian empire as to take the systems of an old age and with it go into the conflicts of this later day.

At this time, when the world seems to be outgrowing its organizations, I feel that something must be done. I am at home now, you know, and I speak freely, and I confess that I have the fullest sympathy with every single one of the great struggling sects of Christendom ; I see that they are doing good, and I would not obliterate one of them. I honor them all, and there is not one of them that I would not cast my lot with if I were shut up to it. They are not

to me heretics or aliens. I look upon them all as brethren. Yet I retain my liberty to speak of them and to criticise them: not, however, as antagonistic to them, but as in fraternal relations with them.

There is an attempt to re-invigorate old instrumentalities, old governments and ordinances, as if that would meet the exigency which is caused by the great providential movements on the globe; but God is making the divine manhood in man more and more to shine forth through the experience of the individual. Here is inspiration: not authoritative inspiration, but the inspiration of experience.

Holiness is the property of every man that will aspire to it; and as it comes and works it requires change in men and in instruments.

There are different works going on in different directions, and in different fields. As God did not develop the fine arts in Judea, but did in Greece; as he did not develop moral sense or philosophy among the Romans, but did ideas of practical government; so he is developing the different elements of the divine nature among different peoples. As in a foundry the different parts of a vast machine are cast in different departments and brought together and made to work harmoniously, so the great elements in the world's growth are developed by different nations, and in different spheres of life. The mechanic is doing some work which will redound to moral ends; the speculative man, the metaphysician, is doing other work that will redound to good results; the scientific man is doing still other work that will redound to the welfare of the race; and in this age of the world you cannot meet the actions and reactions, and liabilities, and oscillations, which come from these various sources by making theology stronger or church ordinances more rigid. That which brings to the souls of men a sense of God in his benignity, and power, and holiness, and truth, and government; that which brings God nearer home to the human soul in its liberty and in its largeness; that which brings men under the control of the divine mind as children under parental control—that will meet the exigencies of the age. In other words, the development of Christ Jesus in the

souls of men will leave the church safe and the community safe. Liberty in holiness is a hundred times safer than liberty in politics—and liberty in politics is safe. Liberty of conscience, liberty of affection, and stimulation of the higher and nobler traits in man, will save the world. Government will not, ordinances will not—certainly they will not when men quarrel over creeds. The manifestation of selfishness and narrowness in the defense of truth is apostasy. Any man who makes the truth ugly, any man who presents the truth so that it leads to alienation and bitterness, any man who makes the truth unattractive to his fellow-men, is denying his Lord. He does not mean it, but it is so. When the truth is stated so as to go against the best instincts of men, it is the fault of those who propound it. They betray the truth. If you can point me to a church in which, when I go through it, I see that, in ranks and companies of matrons and maidens, and of old men and young, on the Sabbath and on week days, in all their outgoings and incomings, there is one radiant life, one perpetual summer, full of all sweet fruits that have ripened, and if they shall rise up and say, “The truth of God is with us,” I will acknowledge their claim on the ground that the power of the divine nature developed in any church is the highest evidence of the divinity of that church. But if any sect comes to me and says, “We claim authority for these views, these ordinances, and these vestments,” and I see that pride and envy and jealousy and all malign passions are working in them, I say to them, “The evidence that Christ is with you does not reach me. Christ does not come in such forms. He does not commit himself to the ministration of persons who represent him through their malign passions.”

Where the truth is, and where it produces patience, and where patience develops meekness, and gentleness, and helpfulness, and lovableness, and lovingness, there is orthodoxy. Orthodoxy is not in the head but in the heart. If a man loves God, and is like him, and loves his fellow-men, and is willing to suffer for them, he is orthodox; and if not, he is heterodox, no matter what church he is in. The church that gives to the world an example of narrowness, of com-

bativeness, of hardness, of uncharitableness, and of censoriousness, can never be made authoritative by putting the name of Christ on it. Neither can a man be made a true Christian simply by putting on him the name of Christ. Let him depart from iniquity, let him represent what Christ is by the development of Christian elements, let him manifest the spirit of Christ toward his fellow-men, and then he will vindicate his claim as being a worthy disciple of the Lord and Master. And let the test as to whether Christ has appointed one church above another be, that that church turns out more Christians of the right stamp than any other. How long shall we make the test to consist in doctrine and external organization? When shall men understand at last that the true church is the most Christlike, and produces the most Christlike members? When that is the test how shall we all have occasion to hide our faces! How few churches are there that would dare to stand before God and say, "Judge us according to our fruit!" We are all poor. There are none of us that can afford to revile and rail at our fellows.

What a scene that would be if the superintending physician of a hospital should come in and find all the patients quarreling with one another, one man insisting that the next man shall take the medicine that the doctor has given him; men with dropsics reviling men with fevers; men with fevers reviling men with cerebral troubles; pallet railing at pallet, and department at department; nurses and patients all mixed up and quarreling!

The church is too much like a quarreling hospital. It is filled with carnal men, men of narrow minds, men of intense selfishness and arrogant pride. There are in it almost none that bring down the dove. The eagle—how seldom the dove! The lion—how seldom the lamb! The armed warrior, with garments rolled in blood—how seldom the meek and the lowly, that imitate Him who yielded himself to the armed band, and laid down his life for the world! What we need above everything else is goodness, *goodness*, GOODNESS.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, O Father, that thou hast made thyself known to us by all the names that fill us with joy and confidence. We rejoice that thou art stable in government, and that all the powers of evil shall not have liberty to destroy, and to vex us; that thou wilt maintain steadfastly the great acts of kindness and beneficence; and that though vice and wickedness dash against thee, they shall be rolled back again, and scattered as the waves of the sea are when they dash against the shore. We rejoice that thou art strong in goodness, and that thou dost protect all goodness. We cannot rise to thy methods; we cannot take the measure of thy being; we can only comprehend some of the things which belong to thy nature; but we rejoice that the brightness of the light that lies in the direction of the revelation of thyself grows stronger and stronger, and that though we come into thy presence with conscious feebleness, and with conscious imperfection, nevertheless we come with the sense that the being of God is one of perfect purity, perfect truth, and illimitable power, using that purity, and truth, and power, for the growth, the uprising, and the development of the universe. Do we not behold men before thine hands spring up as structures fair and useful? Do we not behold men who draw forth from blind materials glowing pictures of beauty? and art not thou the supreme Architect and Artist? Art thou not working in human souls, and bringing forth things beautiful, things symmetric, and things enduring? Through the ages what other thing thou dost accomplish we know not; what other spheres thou art peopling we know not; what diversities of being thou art creating we know not; but we rejoice to believe that this world is a specimen of thy work, and that it is one single orb of many wherein thou hast manifested thyself. We rejoice to believe that what we see here is but a sample of what is going on elsewhere. We rejoice to believe that wherever we go in eternal existence we shall find divine unity—the same God, the same methods of thought, the same great ends of living. By searching we cannot find thee out; neither by searching can we find out the sun itself, and yet we rejoice in the light, in the warmth, in the life that springs under its touch; and thou, O Sun of Righteousness, art risen upon a darkened world; and under thy shining how all things come forth into beauty, and fruit, and usefulness! We rejoice in thee. Thine is the government and thine is the power, and we are glad. The glory shall be thine, and is thine where thou art beheld. We rejoice that when we shall see thee we shall ascribe honor, and majesty, and power, and glory and dominion to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever.

We pray that we may be caught up in life, and in our daily duties, into these great truths—into that blessed experience which shall lift us above passions, above prejudices, above all things carnal, of the flesh, and low born. Grant that we may live more in the spirit of sonship; that we may feel our nobility; that we may dwell in the regality of those experiences which are breathed from the

soul of God; and grant that from day to day we may walk among men serving them, blessing them, enlightening them, comforting them, and cheering them; and that we may so learn what thy life is, and what thou art doing perpetually in the joy of endless existence.

We pray that thou wilt draw near this morning to all thy servants who are gathered together, and look upon them with thine eye of beneficence, and that spirit of goodness which pervades the universe. Look, we beseech thee, upon every one in his limitation, and transgressions, and sin, with divine compassion and mercy. Help every one to be conscious of his weakness, and infirmity, and sinfulness. May no one seek to hide from God the real state of his mind and thought. May all stand willingly open before him with whom they have to do, knowing that his eye searches and knows to the uttermost act, and thought, and motive, and feeling. We pray, since we are naked and open before him with whom we have to do, that we may, so far as we can, ourselves discern ourselves; and may we ask for the light and for the searching of thine eye. Search us, O God! and try us, and see if there be any evil in us; and help us to cast out the sin of selfishness, and pride, and vanity, and untowardness that offends thee. Help us day by day to cleanse our hearts and our lives. May thy spirit evermore be cleansing to us.

And so we beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to all those in thy presence who need thy sustaining power; who need the sympathy and conscious presence of God; who need the over-ruling providence of God; and we beseech of thee that as thou seest their need thou wilt teach them how to pray, so that in their prayer they may feel that God is listening in his own time and way, and will work out answers of mercy. We beseech of thee, that we may be able to pray evermore, saying, Thy will be done. We bless thee for thine own example when, overborne and well-nigh crushed to the earth, thou didst pray for relief. We thank thee that when relief did not come thou didst say, "Not my will but thine be done;" and we pray that we may not count ourselves better than the Master. If he suffered, and drank the cup to the very dregs, so may we be willing, if it be the pleasure of God, to suffer to the end. May we be made courageous, and may we have faith that as thine angels came to strengthen thee, so God's messengers will come and camp around about those who are bestead. May we have faith to discern the chariots and horsemen in the heavens filled with God's messengers, as did thy servants of old.

Bless, we beseech of thee, those that are bereaved, with all tenderness and ministration of hope. May they be comforted. Grant that they may not feel that they are set apart for judgment, and that God deals unkindly with them, or that they have not deserved the chastisement of thine hand. May we remember that it is not in wrath that thou dost chastise, but that it is for our profit, that we may become partakers of the holiness of God; and so may every one who is in deep affliction know how to possess himself patiently; how to wait for God; how to be courageous; how to be more and more manly in suffering. And so we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless

to them present trouble, that by and by it may work out in them the visible fruits of righteousness.

May those who are standing in the midst of disappointment and overthrow not lose faith of God nor of man. Grant that we may repel the desolations of this present life by drawing upon the future life. We have no continuing city here; we seek one to come. The tabernacles which we build here on earth go down before time and the storm; but there is a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. There may our thoughts dwell, and there may we be sure that we have a place, and that there is rest where no storm shall ever reach us, and where it remaineth, waiting for our coming.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all the families that are represented here. Strengthen thy servants that they may come in and go out before their households in the fear of the Lord, and in the love of Jesus Christ; and may their children grow up in honor and usefulness.

Bless the labors of thy servants in this church. May all our schools be remembered of thee. May those who teach in them be themselves cleansed. Grant that they may not be puffed up with pride as if their service was so meritorious. May they rejoice rather that they are worthy to do anything for the cause of God. Revive thy work in all our classes, and schools, and households. We pray that thou wilt bless to-day thy dealings with this church. And make it more and more spiritual, more and more fruitful, more and more confident in the strength of God, and less and less confident in its own strength.

We pray that thou wilt revive thy work in all the churches of this neighborhood. May they be built up in holiness. In numbers may they increase by drawing men from darkness to light. May thy servants be strengthened to understand better the truth of God, and to preach more and more from the illustration of their own heart's experience.

May thy kingdom everywhere prevail. May knowledge spread. May teachers go forth to those who are desolate and in need.

We pray that our laws may be more and more just, and that their administration may be more and more equal and right.

May thy kingdom come among all the nations of the earth. Let slavery, and ignorance, and superstition, and everything that is wrong cease. May sorrows, and sighing, and tears at length flee away; and may the new heaven and the new earth in which dwell-eth righteousness appear.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
*Amen.*

## PEACE IN CHRIST.

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“I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Rom. vii., 25, and viii., 1.

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In this memorable passage of experience, there is the recognition that men are both sinful and imperfect.

They are constitutionally imperfect. Imperfection is the universal necessity. It is the divinely created condition under which humanity comes into this life.

Sinfulness springs in a degree from it, differing simply in this: that when men fail in the best things, or fail to live according to the laws prescribed for them, through ignorance, or through immature power, that is *imperfection*; but when they have the power to conform to any rule of conduct, and deliberately violate that rule, it is *sinfulness*. The difference between imperfection and sinfulness is not that one is a violation of law and the other is not, but that one is a violation of law from weakness and the other is a violation of law intentionally or with purpose—at any rate, with one’s own permission.

It is taught in these memorable chapters of Romans that in those who seek to live right there is a prolonged and painful struggle. Especially was this true under the twilight dispensation of the Jews. The struggle was mainly between men and matter—between the spirit and the flesh. If we were to drop Paul’s nomenclature and adopt the most modern, we should at once say that the struggle was between the

bodily appetites and inclinations and the higher sentiments—the reasoning faculties, the moral sense, the perception of that which is fit and beautiful. It was taught that knowledge and conscience only made matters worse. Paul gives an account doubtless of his own internal experience; and, without making it exclusively personal, he does not on the other hand avowedly make it general. In the seventh of Romans he describes the condition of a noble nature, a man of high character, seeking to reach nobility, baffled and brought into a state of painful self-condemnation by the fact that he reached a point short of his own ideal. He was held up by a ritual law whose drift, whose tendency was meant to be spiritual, and to cultivate the higher instincts and sentiments of his nature, but the actual operation of which was not such. It rather tended to cultivate in him a sense of right just acute enough to bring him into a perpetual state of self-condemnation—for it is true that the more we rise into a sense of integrity the more rigorous our idea of integrity becomes. The more men love truth the more sharp is the requisition which they lay upon themselves in the matter of veracity. Honor begets a higher sentiment of honor. Goodness raises its own standard. So, in the particular experience which I read to you in the seventh of Romans, Paul says that the coming in of moral measurement, the introduction of the law, instead of making him better made him worse; that is, it revealed to him how bad he was, how weak, how imperfect, and how sinful. Before the commandment came he felt that he was all right enough; but when the commandment came he felt that he was all wrong.

A dozen rough miners go into a camp out in California, and they grow regularly coarser and coarser. They are at home as if they were in a pig-stye. Now, the introduction of a woman produces a revolution among them. The sister or the wife of one of them goes out, bearing her refinement; and in one single day every man is convicted of his coarseness and vulgarity, and wants to “wash and fix up”; and is to-day uneasy in that in which yesterday he was at perfect ease; he is convicted of his essential lowness. Where there is no ideal standard and no exemplar, men gradually deteri-

orate, and become contented with their low condition ; but if you bring in a higher standard it incites thought and motive to higher character ; and recognizing this standard they become discontented, and seek to rise to a higher level.

Finally, Paul declares that relief came to him from Jesus Christ. He gives a most affecting description of the moral struggles which he went through, and which more or less epitomize what every right-minded man has felt in himself—the general wish to do right, and the continual failure in that particular. The general wish and will was present with him, but how to perform he knew not. Let any man rise in the morning and say, “ Now, to-day I wish to be considerate to others ;” he is doing well to wish and to say it, but how to perform he does not know ; for when the sun goes down he is satisfied that he has acted harshly and hardily, here and there, and everywhere. Set any standard higher than that which prevails in the average of society for yourself, and you will perhaps, in your better moments, with your conscience and your higher nature, conform to it ; but when you go into the practical jarring of life you will in conduct perpetually fall below it.

Now, at that point you have the consciousness and the testimony of reason and the moral sense that you *mean* the best things ; but you have the testimony of experience that you do not *do* the best things ; and it is just where these two things come together like saw-teeth that men are gashed with pain and suffering—and that in the proportion in which they are morally sensitive. It was just at that point that Paul was when he said,

“ I find a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. [I meant to be benevolent all day to-day, but I have been proud and selfish. I meant to be kind and gentle. I meant that my temper should not get dominion over me ; but it has flashed out here and there all the time. This law is imperative in me ; it acts every day.] I delight in the law of God, after the inward man [in my thoughts, in my calm moments, in my reflective hours. I rejoice in everything that is manly, and pure, and generous, and just ; I have inward testimony of that ; it is a fact as clear as any other ; and it is no less clear that when I go out into the battle of life I come short perpetually in my conduct] ; but then I see another law [I am under two laws], in my members, warring against this law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Oh,

wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"God, through Jesus Christ," is the answer. Then comes the refrain :

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

What is it, then, that happens? How does the soul's relation to Christ bring peace to men? That is the question which I wish to discuss this morning. Does it take away the law of conduct? Does it abolish the great distinctions of right and wrong? Does it give permission, as to Oriental favorites at court, to do things which in the common people would be wicked, and which are only not wicked by favor or prerogative? Without pain or penalty may one who is a favorite, or who is the elect of Christ, do things which if he were not elected, or before he became a favorite, it would have been wicked for him to do? Does grace—that is, does the law of the soul in Jesus Christ—change the great law of moral obligation under which men live? No, it does not. To take away the moral law would be to take away the ribs and the backbone of all moral government. No greater calamity could befall the world than the taking away of the obligation to a higher life, step by step. The inspiration of law which holds up a high standard of moral conduct and enjoins it upon every man is the grand influence which is redeeming men from animalism; and to take that away and put in its place a permission of wrong-doing—a permission of selfishness, of pride, of sordidness, of secular life—would be to give men permission to go back to the herds and the flocks. It would be to break down manhood. It would be to take away the whole inspiration which now exists in the stimulating knowledge of an ideal, or a law, by which men are to measure themselves, and by which they are to live. It would destroy, therefore, the everlasting vision of something better by which society is perpetually raised, and by which, through a vital elevation, men are growing better and better. Anything that displaces the law, anything that takes away obligation, or the sense of it, is just so far destructive, not only to happiness, but to humanity itself; and any con-

ception of the life of Christ which redeems men from obligation to the moral law—that is, from the obligation of making good better, and better best; anything that lowers the standard, and makes it seem a great deal less to be good than men have always supposed it was, is mischievous to the last degree.

When, in that magnificent passage of the Old Testament, God recounts his leniency and long-suffering, and declares himself to be “abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin,” men sometimes bump against the last part of the passage where he says that he “will by no means clear the guilty,” as if that were turning in another channel and wiping out as with a sponge the other part; but it is not so. That latter part of the declaration is one of the best parts; for it shows that God believes in the noblest forms of rectitude in his household everywhere, and that he will neither slumber nor sleep, nor let the inspiration die out, but that he will forever and forever, by pain and by penalty, as well as by joy and by hope, press mankind upward; that he will by no means let men down through transgression, but will bring and keep them up to the concert pitch of the universe—blessed be his name!

It is on this resiliency of moral feeling, it is on this aspiration which is wrought in us by the consciousness of a perpetual higher standard of thought and feeling and conduct, that we are forever rising to become sons of God.

When we are brought into relation to the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not such a relation as abolishes duty, or the idea of duty. It does not take away, it magnifies, it enlarges, it intensifies the conception of personal honor, personal truth, personal purity, personal love—the conception of holiness, in short.

Does this relation, which the soul in Christ comes into, if it maintains the standard of conduct and of character enlarged and unlowered, lift men by the divine power above all their former conditions and influences? Does it perfect men immediately? Does it stop the struggles of life, the outreachings of desire, the yearnings for honor, the strife for

complete attainment? Is that the result of the character which has entered into relationship with Jesus Christ? Does it, in other words, harmonize the spirit and the flesh? When a man becomes a Christian and loves Christ, does his body fall into line instantly, recognizing the superiority of his reason, of his moral sense and of his spiritual tendencies, and submit? Or, when a man has become a Christ's man, does this struggle still go on? *It goes on.* It goes on manifestly in the great mass of men, because they have had very little advantage of birth and of moral education. Here and there you shall find a person who has superior endowment, through the accumulated victories of his father and mother, and their fathers and mothers, and theirs. For many generations it rolls over; and when he is born, it is with a kind of already-harmonized relation of all the bodily and social and moral faculties in himself. It is not a perfect harmonization, but it is relatively perfect—far more so than that which exists in those who are not well born, or who do not receive from their ancestors any such endowment.

If, with this more fortunate and compensated organization, one is brought up from childhood in the knowledge of God, and is obedient in his will and feelings to the Lord Jesus Christ, then he has advanced still further. And when he comes to adult age, and by the act of his own mind affiliates himself to Christ, and gives himself to him, the change is not very great, because all that which ordinarily attends such a change has been gradually worked out in him through a process of Christian nurture; and the validity and perfection of it is simply the result of the action of his own will at last.

While these facts do exist in society, they are not typical of it. On the contrary, the great mass of men are born unbalanced. Some men are born with gigantic physical power and very slender cerebral power of any kind. Some men are born with enormous passions; and if they are not engineers or pile-drivers, if they have no opportunity of letting out the immense forces that are in them, on rock, in tunnel or canal, on timber, or on some other thing that is to be beaten, or hewn, or constructed, and if their mighty energy

is directed against their fellows, they become desolators. There are men born who are very feeble in intellectual conception, but who are tremendously strong in propulsive force. If you look at men (not in books, because books know so little about men); if you look through society as it is, you will see that these things are so. Do not listen to the theory of fallen Adam, of original sin, of this, that or the other thing: go down and ask what men are—not alone your sort of men, who go out with you and come back with you, and are chosen by you because they are like you; go out into the world where men of all sorts are, among the poor and uneducated, good and bad. What is the condition of the vast mass of mankind but one in which, with a certain sort of importunity, with a kind of infantine outcry for something better, the higher nature is perpetually swamped and carried away by the amount of force which is generated in the lower nature, so that the law of sin and death is predominant. Paul speaks of it as the law of his members, referring to lusts, to combativeness and destructiveness, to eating and drinking, to all manner of self-indulgence breeding all manner of sin in men as miasma is bred in dismal swamps. If you look at human nature as it is you will find that the great bulk of mankind are under the control of the appetites and passions; that they were born so, having, perhaps, just restraint enough to escape the halter or the prison.

Suppose, under such circumstances, you preach a gospel of hope and salvation to these men; suppose you set on foot a revival of religion among them—not one which is oiled and polished, and which has velvet strips on the doors; but a revival which moves with enormous force, with harshness, with roughness, with imperfection, but that all the more on that very account catches these great rude natures and whirls them into a torrent of excitement, and at last brings them to a point of submission to the Lord Jesus Christ, where they begin to shout, “Glory! Glory! Glory!” Do you not suppose that a man of hitherto unchecked appetites when he goes home after such an experience wants to gorge himself with meat just as he used to, and wants to drink as he used

to? Do you suppose that he anything more than just escapes swearing, if he does escape it? Do you not suppose that he wants to avenge the old wrong? And yet he thinks he is in Christ. Well, he *is* in Christ—or may be, even with this old leaven left in him. He has a flaming ideal of the One that he would serve, and that he has sworn to serve. That ideal is quite indistinct and imperfect; nevertheless, there is a real vital force at work drawing him toward a spiritual life. Here is the old man in him, red, bloody, lustful, vindictive, money-loving; and do you suppose that is all wiped away the moment he says, “I give my life to Christ”? We know it is not. It might be a good thing if it were, but it is not.

When a man is converted he is much like a railroad that is just laid out. Now come the choppers: their business is to cut away the timber. Then come the tunnelers: they must remove a great deal of rock. Then come the men who fill up the hollows. Then come the bridge men. All the work is going on in sections. In some spots it is only begun, and in others it is finished. All along the line are influences that are tending toward the final result.

It is about so with the great mass of mankind. The ideal law of God is revealed to them, they behold the divine nature as helpful to them, and they begin the Christian life; but the struggle does not end when they have begun. The distress may; the self-condemnation and despair should cease; many intermittent joys will spring up; and there is much that makes them feel like shouting, “Glory to God.”

Conversion does not harmonize men with their fellows, either. I have said that the first impact, as it were, of the divine life does not, of necessity, sweep away all imperfections, and harmonize one faculty with another, or the mind with the flesh.

Of how to carry themselves in all the complex and subtle relations of social life, civil life, and business life, men are ignorant. They do not know what is best, in the first place. In the second place, even with knowledge, power is intermittent. Men are not in their best moods all the time. To learn how to keep one's self in an elevated condition requires no small education. For a man who is full of sensibility and

strong vitality, who is apprehensive, and who has a thousand motives and impulses in him—for such a man to move up and down among men in the various conditions in which human society exists, is a difficult matter. It requires generalship. It is a consummate piece of work, requiring so much tact, so much wisdom, so much sagacity, that a man cannot reconcile himself to it in a day nor in an hour. It is a whole life's task for a man to become harmonized with the civil and social relations that are around about him.

It is not a thing, then, that takes place when a man first becomes a Christian. The purpose of it, the impulse toward it, is infused into him, but not the completion of it.

After Paul had wrought more than forty years, and when he had come to the position in which he was to be delivered only by the executioner, in the very last letter, I think, that he ever wrote, in a Roman prison and waiting for his release and his crown, he said :

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after [I keep at it], if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Oh, poor Paul! If he had lived in our day, we could have sent to him folks who would have shown him how he might be perfect. But as it was, he was conscious of the in-harmony which existed between the mind and the flesh—between himself and the world. His ideal of what it was to be a perfect man in Christ Jesus had grown so much faster than the realization of any such attainment, that when, at the very end of his career, he looked upon himself he was further from having realized manhood than at the beginning—and that, I take it, is the experience of every large-minded and intelligent Christian.

What, then, was it that took place? What was it that led him, in the eighth of Romans, to thank God that he had a victory through Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ, when made known to a man, as he is described in the New Testament and as he was upon earth, represents God. There has been

a world of discussion as to whether he was divine ; and perhaps that question has not been unimportant ; but in our day it seems to me we need not renew that discussion as to the possibility of the representation of the divine by a human being in the flesh. Christ did represent that, I believe, interiorly ; and in that respect, I think, he was equal with God. But the historical Jesus Christ did not represent the whole of God, and could not. It was a thing impossible to the flesh. Infinity cannot be bounded ; and he that is born of woman and in the flesh is bounded and limited. He, therefore, suffered obscuration and eclipse. He humbled himself. He went into prison to the body ; and standing thus he no more represented the whole of the Godhead than summer in the forest is represented by winter, when all the buds are hidden and all the leaves are rolled up and guarded. Winter can not represent the opening of those buds and leaves when they shall show themselves in the light and warmth of summer. He laid aside the glory that he had with the Father before the world was. He emptied himself of dignity and power, and was circumscribed. In his historical condition he manifested what he was interiorly ; but the historical Christ presents to us—what ? Everything of God ? No : it presents to us mainly the disposition and the government of God. What, then, was the presentation that was made of God in Christ Jesus ? It was a presentation of him as a Being in tender sympathy with mankind, and that too while they are in their sinfulness, and in their wickedness.

Now, very naturally I can see how it should spring up—and how it does—the tendency to represent God as one that is perfect, and loves perfection. It has been a part of the message of the Bible itself, it certainly has been the historical tendency, to attempt to present in the reigning Divinity of the universe the highest human conception of excellence. Even among pagans their gods, in the main, were originally attempts of men to present the highest notions of being. And if they made poor and vulgar ones, it was because they were not competent to make any others ; for the universal tendency is to embalm in the ideal of the

reigning God the highest conception of wisdom, and personal excellence, and character.

It is very natural that such a Being should be represented as intensely in love with goodness—and he is; with perfectness—and he is. But the Greek conception of God was one which lifted him above all care and all change. Sickness never came near to him, according to that conception. The Greeks loved youth and beauty, and hated old age and decay. They gave to God eternal youth, because they wanted to remove him as far as possible from that which made suffering on earth. The early theologians represented God as intensely in love with righteousness and purity and holiness, because law and moral government is inexpressibly dear to him on account of his love of these qualities. Some strains of their theology have come down to our day, and there are men of peculiar organization and temperament who are perpetually telling how God loves the pure and holy; and many feel, "Now, if I could become pure and holy, he would love me." The distinctive difference between the view of God in the New Testament and the Greek view of him is this: that the Greek idea is that of a God who loves holiness and holy beings, while the New Testament idea is that of a God who loves imperfect and sinful men. Why, when I suit myself as a father—no, when I suit myself as a man—I ask those into my presence who are either like me, or who harmonize with me by oppositeness. But in my family is every grade, from infancy all the way to manhood; and do I adapt myself to the babes and the little children in the same way that I do to the older ones, according to my own personal convenience? As a father or a mother in the household, it is inevitable that one should not apply to the babe or the child the same rules of character or the same requisitions that are applied by men to those who are intimately associated with them.

Now, the regnant idea of God in theology, in many quarters, is that he is One who, being holy, so loves holiness that he cannot look upon sin with allowance. Men extravagantly strain the real meaning of the passage which represents God as abhorring wickedness, so as to make it appear

that he abhors the wicked. They teach that God lives to take care of the holy and good. They also teach that he will take care of those who are not good and holy if they will wash themselves and come into a state of goodness and holiness. But the absolute Christian conception is this: that God, in his own nature, from eternity to eternity, is perfect, and loves those that are imperfect, and sinful, and guilty, and deserving penalty. It is sympathy of love that is the regnant element of the divine nature. When men say that God sits in the windows of heaven watching for his law, I ask, What is he doing for his people? What would you think of a father and a mother who, having written rules for their family, should be so intent upon seeing that those rules were obeyed as to forget the welfare of their children? What is a rule or regulation good for in a family but to benefit the children? The child is worth more than the law; and if the parents thought it would be better for the child to break up and throw away the law, they would do it; but many preachers are perpetually ringing on this anvil—how God is taking care of his law, his law, his law. Not once in a hundred times do they sound out the other thing—that God's law is of no use except so far as it takes care of his creatures.

How are men in this world born? What is a babe? Nothing? What are the race of men? What have they been in time? What myriads of wretches have there been! What hordes of bifurcated animals! How low have they been! How slender in intelligence! How wanting in moral sensibility! How little have they had of percipience of moral beauty and of moral worth! How undeveloped have communities and generations of them been! There are twelve hundred millions of men to-day, and not a hundred million of them are enlightened to the average of a Christian community. And we are taught that in heaven there is a God that thinks of nothing but crystalline, cold purity, with angels like so many white candles ranged about his throne, and singing sweet melodies. What to him is the great thundering world below, which he is making by his power prolific of misery, bringing in myriads every hour, bringing them in

at zero, and giving them no nurture, no privilege, no gospel, no light, while he thinks of eternal blessedness and purity? What is this but consummate selfishness? It is the most infinitely hateful and demoniac of conceptions. It is heathenism run mad through Greek philosophy!

What is the conception of God as we find it set forth in the Old Testament and in the New? In the Old we read:

“As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.”

That is right; that is good. If God makes men of dust, he must remember it. If they are made low by divine creative providence, they must be governed by One that knows their lowness. What the world needs is a God that shall adapt himself and his government to the actual exigencies and facts of the souls which he is governing. If God would have me perfect now, I ought to have been born very different from what I was. If he would have the myriads of my fellow-men perfect immediately, they should have been created differently. Beings cannot become perfect at once who are brought into life at zero. And how are the Africans to be lifted up? How are the Asiatic hordes to be exalted? How are the savages of our woods to be developed—if there is any such thing as developing them? How the nations have gone on spawning! How myriads upon myriads have been born into ignorance and vice and misery! And are you to lift over all these tremendous scenes a God who does not care? What is such a God doing? He is looking at pictures of holiness. He is viewing exquisite moral statues. He is beholding things like himself. He is happy, and is making others happy that are in sympathy with him. But he has no care for sorrow; he is too perfect to be sorrowful; and the great seething world pours in, and pours in, its multitudes; and over the brink it pours them out again into damnation and eternal woe! That is some men’s theology; and that is the God which it portrays. The whole universe lies in wickedness, and is mourning and crying, and there is no God that feels for men; there is no God that can help the poor; there is no God that can pity the distressed; there is no God that

can take care of mankind, imperfect as he has made them. Such is the view that theologians have presented to us.

Now, what is the presentation of Jesus Christ which we have in the New Testament? It is that he so loved the world, and so loved it while it was lying in wickedness, that he gave his own Son—that is, himself—to die for it. It is easier for a man to give himself than to give his son; and he gave his Son for mankind when they were yet his *enemies*; yet no greater love can one show than that which he manifests by giving his life for a *friend*. And how is it that this light of the nature of God has been kept back, and has been made an alternative thing? It is that which constitutes the distinction between the heathen god and the Christian God. Some heathenism has got into the world, and shows itself in men's conception of God.

It is impossible to reconcile the view of God's disposition as selfish, self-admiring, and loving that which is good and perfect, with the facts of life as they exist before our eyes, unless we turn our God into a demon. The facts of human life, I think, are a thousand times more terrible than anything which Dante ever thought of; for in the *Inferno* you are relieved by the hideous extravagance of Dante's imagination; but when you go into creation, and see how it "groans and travails in pain until now," how poor, how pitiable, the circumstances of men are, and how they need to be loved by those that are good, if we lift over all this vast charnel-house a God that does not care for sinful men, and that does not hear their cries unless they have got out of their sinfulness, how are they to get out of it? If I am on the sea in a storm, and the vessel is beaten about and wrecked, will you say to me, "Get ashore"? How am I to get ashore unaided through the roaring, surging waves? What I want is a life-boat. A man that is willing to put out for me at the peril of his own life may take me ashore, but nothing else can.

Now, if God undertakes to save the world,—as he does,—he must administer his government according to the exigencies of men. He must recognize the fact that the race needs sympathy. It needs penalty, and gets it; it needs suggestion, and gets that; but it also needs sympathy and patience

—and thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord it gets that too, most abundantly. It needs One who knows how to wait for men while they unfold by natural processes.

Suppose I went to the common school, and was put into arithmetic, and my master came around the first day and undertook to examine me from the beginning through to the end; and suppose when I could not pass the examination he should whip me! I say, Is it in the power of the human understanding to learn in that way? Can you teach so? Can you do it in arithmetic? Can you do it in writing? Can a person take one lesson in penmanship and then write? If such a thing is impossible in the physical realm, how much less is it possible in the spiritual realm? If a man cannot be instantly perfect in a lower sphere, how much less can he be perfect in a higher sphere? Development has to be gradual and continuous, and there must be a government that will wait for a man while he unfolds. God must be, by his own nature and providence, gentle and sympathetic, and must adapt himself to the condition of the beings that he has made, or he is not fit to govern the universe, which is of his own creation.

Clothed, then, with this patience and sympathy, Jesus Christ presents himself to us. He went about doing good. He looked in the face of the most hideous wickedness. He wept. He sorrowed. He walked with the poor and the needy. There was but one thing that ever led the Saviour to speak without measure or bound of severity, and that was religious selfishness. When anybody had, by education in religion, got up so high that he was a good deal better and bigger than anybody else, and separated himself from his fellow-men and did not care for them, Christ uttered against him, *Woe, Woe, Woe!* The disposition of selfishness in the higher moral realm is hideous in the sight of God.

And as for the Saviour, who was ever so considerate? Who ever so loved perfection, and yet was patient with all imperfection? Who ever so loved purity, and took such pains with the impure? Who ever was such a master of his appetites, and yet was such a friend of the glutton? Who ever was so self-denying, and yet was so lenient toward the

self-indulgent? He went about preaching, and men crowded to hear him. Under his teaching some glimmer of a better life dawned on them; and when he went in to dine with the rulers they flocked after him; and gibbering priests looking and pointing in, said, "He eateth with publicans and sinners"—that is, with extortioners under the Roman government and harlots. He sat down by them, and owned relationship with them; they touched him, and he touched them; and how he could be on such familiar terms with them was what the Pharisees did not understand. But this was what he came to teach—namely, that of all the places in the universe, the central place of power was not in the thunder, nor in the earthquake, nor in the devouring elements, but in divine love, that suffereth long, and is kind, patient, full of all resources. Love divine is of all things the most transcendent in power, and yet the most lenient.

It was the disclosure of this peculiar quality of the divine nature that made Jesus Christ the Son of God to an admiring world.

It is said that such a presentation of God as this—such a presentation of him as I have been accustomed to make to you—tends to relaxation; that what men want is not so much leniency as cogency; and that there must be positiveness, decision, firmness in government. Well, there is. Men do not doubt that sin is sin; neither do they doubt that penalty is penalty. Men are suffering all the time and everywhere, in stomach, in liver, in heart, in head, in hand, because they violate laws. When I take a hammer and hit my finger with it, do I need any one to tell me that violated law inflicts penalty? I guess I know that the penalty is inflicted before anybody else does. If I get drunk do I need some one to come the next morning and tell me that intemperance is accompanied by suffering? Do not I know that without being told? It is needed at times to enforce these practical lessons, but generally they tell their own story. We do not want a revelation to prove to us that there is sin. We know that. We do not, either, need a revelation to prove to us that sin brings penalty. We know that also. Nor do we need a revelation to prove to us that sin persevered in carries men to

desperate straits. What we want to know is where there is any cure for it.

The city is smitten with a terrible plague. One and another are dying on every hand. This street is invaded and that street is invaded. There is scarcely a house into which the scourge has not entered. The wail of distress goes up till it ceases with despair. Sickness, sickness, sickness is abroad everywhere, and death follows it. All the inhabitants know that. What they want to know is, Is there a doctor? Is there any medicine? Is there a physician that can heal? The whole world, groaning in its degradation, has known about condemnation. What we need to know is, whether there is anywhere any medicine, whether there is any balm in Gilead.

Jesus Christ came to tell the world what had been told by prophets but dimly, that the essential interior nature of God is recuperative love; that he is sorry for men; that he pities them; that he will help them.

I have been sick and have lain throwing myself back and forth on my bed in pain and anguish, and have become discouraged and given up all hope of getting well. "It is of no use," I say; "I have got to die!" But in comes the physician, and looks upon me, and takes me by the pulse, and I turn my eyes upon him, and say, "Do not trouble yourself about me, doctor, there is no help for me." He says, "My friend, be of good heart. You are not so bad off as you think. You are not going to die. I have the remedy for your disease. You are going to get well. I will bring you out of this in less than twenty-four hours." The moment I hear these words my hope is renewed. I have confidence in the doctor, and am sure that he will do as he says he will. Everything is changed in a moment. I am not well—not a bit of it; but I am going to be well. I put to, and he puts to; he and I and nature work together, and I recover.

A man does not so much need new conviction of sin; that is, it is not sinfulness altogether that he needs to have shown him. Generically mankind know how sinful and miserable they are. What they want is to be shown that there is a Heart that is omnipotent, that is infinite

in resources, and that is brooding over time and the world, not for condemnation, but for salvation. They want to know that God is a God of redemption, the God of all comfort and consolation and inspiration and gentleness and long-suffering; and that while they are trying to do something, and are doing it poorly, cares for them, loves them, and encourages them; a God that knows better than they do how imperfect and how wicked they are, but whose nature it is to wake the soul and lift it up.

What was your mother's nature, that cried when you cried, or laughed away your tears, and watched you by night and through the day, and died taking care of you? You know what that is in a mother. Oh! is there a God like that? Yes. One as much better than that as infinity is better than finiteness; as much better than that as divinity is better than humanity. No latitude or longitude can measure the orb of the glory of that heart which is in God, and which is manifested by Jesus Christ.

Now when I come into the faith of this God, see how it is with me. I am not, as I said in the early part of this discourse, a perfect man; but I am in school where I am sure I am going to be perfected. I have come into communion with One who says, "I am waiting for you while you are becoming perfect;" who loves me and will have patience with me; and One whom I can trust. It is not that I have peace or am conscious of perfection—I never was so conscious of imperfection. It is not that I have a bargain made. I have a God in my faith, I have the conception of a God, that adapts himself personally to pouring out his influence on me, that will stimulate me, that will keep my conscience awake, and that will not give me up because I come short, but will carry me over periods of decline and transgression; a God that will be more than swaddling clothes, more than cradle, more than mother; a God whose cathedral is as the household, and who fashions the race toward perfection by nature and providence and grace.

It is the hope that I have such a God, that he is forming my disposition, and that he is helping me—it is this hope that gives me rest in Jesus Christ.

When therefore the apostle Paul utters these words to those that have gone through this experience, they understand them, and are full of comfort :

“For the good that I would I do not. [‘Amen,’ says every one of you.] But the evil which I would not, that I do. [‘Yes, yes.’] Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I [that is, the better I, the upper I], that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me [that lower nature on which manhood is grafted]. I find then a law that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. [I am all the time making mistakes, slipping up under temptation.] For I delight in the law of God [I recognize that the law is holy, that it is just, that it is good; I am enthusiastic for that which is good]; but I see another law in my members [O yes! I see that the clearest conceptions are worn out by weariness; I see that my noblest moral impulses are extinguished. I see heaven, I see angelic purity; but I am gluttonous, and I lose it all] warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. [I am passionate, revengeful, avaricious, proud, vain, selfish, lustful; I am excessive in this or that direction; and so though I condemn sin, and mean to turn from it, there it is; and every single month or week of my life is more or less marked by these obliquities that come in spite of my resolutions and fightings; and this has been so for years.] O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

And what is the answer? “*God, through Jesus Christ!*”

That inspiration, that conviction of a helpful, loving, waiting, patient God, encourages and sustains me. To him I fly. My physician, cure me. Schoolmaster, bear with my stupidity, and teach me. Give me thy help. Lead me up and on until at last I see thee as thou art. Then, with all my soul, I shall say, “Not unto me, but unto thy goodness and thy love and thy wisdom, be the praise of my salvation, forever and ever.” *Amen.*

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

OUR Father, if we thought thee other than thou art as manifest in Jesus Christ, we could not draw near to thee; from the blackness and the tempest we should cower; before the strong wind, before the earthquake and before the fire none of us could stand; but by the voice of love, small though it be, and still, we are drawn where we could not be driven. We rejoice in thee when we have no complacency in ourselves, and are at last glad that all our good is wrought in us by thee, that in thee we stand and are completed in righteousness, that thou art by thy supernal power endowing us with a will to do and to be, that thou art gradually moulding us in thine own image, and that ere long the moulding season will pass away, and we shall come forth from the shop and from the furnace burnished and brightened, and shall appear in Zion and before God. We rejoice in whatever is beautiful in ourselves as thy creation. We rejoice in whatever is strong, and excellent, and noble in us, as the gift of God. We rejoice in every element of thy nature which is in us, as children rejoice in those things in them which are like that which is good and great in their fathers. So we take blessings from thee as little children take them from their parents, and we rejoice in our endowments because they are of God, and point to him, and ally us to him.

And now we pray that we may be able to lift ourselves so into the confidence of love that we shall ride over all the tribulations of the world, and outsail the storm itself, so that doubt, and fear, and mistake, and sorrow, and sin, and guilt may not overwhelm us—so that neither things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from that love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

May those that cannot run but only can walk know that there is also good news for those that walk; and may those that cannot walk but only can creep know that there is good news and kindness for those that creep. May they know that babes are thine, and may they become little children, and be willing to be as little children if so they may feel the cradling arms of God lifting them up in wisdom and power.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt sanctify the sorrows that rest upon any. Teach them how to illumine those sorrows by faith. May they know how to praise thy name in suffering as did those of old. May those who are called to suffer be very near to God as his disciples; and may they feel that they are under the administration of one who is acquainted with grief, and that they have joined themselves to him in such a way that their service shall be made to redound to the honor and glory of the name of Jesus.

We beseech of thee, be near to all those who are prosperous and joyful. Take not away their joy and their prosperity. May they know how to break forth into songs of thanksgiving. And by their happiness may they know how to illumine others and make them happy. May they be so imbued with the love of God and the divine Spirit that whether they are in joy or in sorrow they shall still testify of Him who called them and whose name they bear.

We pray for all those who are bestead with poverty, with disappointment, with overthrow, with all the ills that belong to the struggle of life. Wilt thou be with them to constantly open the horizon beyond that they may not look down and drudge; that they may not feel themselves to be like beasts of burden, weary on the road, and longing for the night to come. Grant that they may evermore see before them that horizon shining on which the sun never goes down, and that realm where dwells eternal summer, whither they are speeding, from out of which the spirits of just men made perfect are calling them perpetually, into which, every hour, some are entering, toward which we are all going, and where all of us ere long shall lift up ransomed souls and spread wings of faith, and for ever live above care, and sorrow, and trouble. So shed upon us the light of the other life that this life shall be bearable to the souls of misfortune. We pray that thou wilt grant that they may feel that things visible and secular, and that time experiences are of little account. May they discern the invisible, its permanence, its perfectness, its beauty, its gladness.

We pray that thou wilt teach us to be kind and gentle toward others as thou art kind and gentle toward us. We pray that thou wilt teach us to bear the yoke and the burden—to so bear them that the yoke shall become easy, and that the burden shall become light. Teach us to walk as seeing thee who art invisible. O Face of light! O Face of love! O Face of joy! shine upon us by day and by night, that, looking upon thee, we may be able to hide in the blessed light all things we do not wish to look upon, and that we may live above the world while living in it, and live in sympathy with its men, and its duties, and its wants.

We pray that thou wilt sanctify the individual experiences of thy servants before thee. Thou knowest every one's secret thought and secret life; thou art acquainted with every one's motive, and wish, and history; and we pray that thou wilt speak to every one, this morning, so that he shall feel that God is thinking of him.

Grant, we pray thee, that all the churches of this city may be purified and strengthened, and may go forward more and more with the tokens of the divine complacency in them. We pray that the various conflicts of opinion, that divisions, may not tend to inharmony and discord. Grant that at last the love of thy people shall be mightier than the remains of sin that are in them.

We pray for thy churches of every name. May those who are appointed as officers therein be inspired with divine insight; and we pray that their counselings together may be for the prosperity of all the church of Jesus Christ; and from that church may there stream a light which shall shine in the dark places of our land.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
*Amen.*

## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

VOUCHSAFE to us the Spirit of light, our Father. Grant, we pray thee, that we may hold what riches and strength we have in God, and realize how poor we are in ourselves; how we are driven hither and thither as the thistle-down before the wind! But in thee how strong we are! for we have all thy strength. We are enshrined in thy wisdom, shining brighter than the sun. We are comforted, and inspired, and held, and loved. O thou beneficent God, grant that we may have a noble conception of what is the power of thy love made manifest in Jesus Christ. May we learn more and more of thee, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. O what a knowledge! It passeth understanding. May we have this confidence and this everlasting surety, that nothing shall separate us from this love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Lord, may we be anchored so that no storm can drive us from our ground. Here may we stand rooted so that no wind can overturn us. Here may we find our refuge, not in our goodness, not in our attainment, not in our purposes, not in the imperfect building of a noble manhood in which we labor, but in the goodness of God who began and who will end; who was the Author and will be the Finisher of our faith.

Hear us, O Lord our God, hear us in these our petitions, and accept us, not according to our worth, but according to the greatness of thine own generosity.

And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be the praise evermore. *Amen.*

## THE INDWELLING OF CHRIST.

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“Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”—Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”—John xiv. 16, 17.

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The first passage that I read is the commission that was given to the disciples. While it covers the general ground of exterior work—of going forth and preaching to all lands—it contains the declaration that the source of their hope and their courage and their comfort was the fact that Christ was himself with them. Departing, he was to be a living power, and that, too, in a sphere where higher forces of life can be administered as they cannot be upon earth. There is a latent assumption or expressed declaration running through the teaching of Christ, and more particularly as it is manifested by John, that the forces, the instruments, of the physical and moral life were inadequate for the expression of the highest life and the noblest things; and the constant interchange of language on the part of our Saviour, rising out of obvious truths into seeming mysticism, and going again from these mystic and obscure utterances back to common life—this play backward and forward—is just what we might have expected; for to the consciousness the higher spiritual life was not represented. To him there was a life where

truth and faculty worked together differently from what they do here, and for the representation of which but the most partial analogies could be found in this mortal life. If there be any one truth that runs through the New Testament, it is the truth of the absolute superiority of the life which goes on in the bosom of God and of spiritual beings, to which we aspire, and into which we are to come ; and when Jesus died, and was buried, and rose again, without any considerable manifestation of power—that is, such power as he manifested before—the disciples, about to lose him again, might be in great discouragement. Therefore he declared to them that it was expedient that he should go forth from them ; that it was impossible that he could be so much to them by mere juxtaposition as he could by spiritual unity ; that while he was in the flesh and they were in the flesh, however near they might be to each other, however endearing their relations might be, there was substantially a bar to that union which was possible in a higher mode of existence ; and that when he was gone from them it would not be extinguishment, it would not be forgetfulness : he still would live, and his power would be enhanced—he would have all power ; and his promise to them was, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” The separation, then, was to result in a higher unity, ineffable, transcending all that is known upon earth.

Was this declaration of union official ? Did it belong simply to the band of the apostles, or did it belong to all Christians ? Is it that which they who are specially consecrated to the work of preaching and administration may hope for, or is it universal, and may it be appropriated by every soul that can rise up into the conditions of it ?

The apostles were designed to be witnesses, in the first place, of great truths which had passed under their eyes. Such was the fundamental ground of apostleship : for then there were no newspapers ; there were no printing presses ; there was no means of recording the knowledge which they had gained, and which was to be the foundation, afterwards, of writing the history or gospel. It was necessary in the beginning that the facts which had occurred in Galilee and

Judea should be witnessed to by competent men; and to them was given competent power of instruction, and of construction so far as it came within the work of preaching the Gospel. To be witnesses, to be instructors, and to be constructors—this was apostolic. Beyond this the apostles had no special prerogatives. They had nothing beyond this that lifted them above the ordinary Christian believer. Indeed, according to the moral measurements of the new dispensation, exaltation comes by excessive labor, by humiliation, by suffering, by going down out of conspicuity into obscurity, if need be; and if the apostles were prominent above other believers, it was by prisons, by stripes, by persecutions, by trials; and genuine apostolicity has not been so much coveted as the honors of apostolicity.

Any man, then, has a right to appropriate by self-instruction or otherwise the fundamental elements of life—courage, hope, character. Every one has a right to that which Christ promised to the apostles.

That this view need not stand merely upon general statement, I will read a passage from the words of Christ which were among his last utterances.

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”

So, then, by the most express declaration, whatever there was promised to the apostles of the indwelling of the power of divine life in their work, that Christ also prayed for in behalf of all that believe by reason of the apostles' preaching and teaching. This certainly is a truth of the most transcendent importance.

Is there, then, really such a thing as the intersphering of human souls and the divine soul? Are we, by this metaphorical language, if it be metaphorical, by these pictorial terms and analogies, taught that there is such a thing as the life of God in the life of man, or that man's life is intersphered by or caught up into the soul of God?

Now, in the very beginning, let me say that as there is nothing in the whole round of human knowledge that is so obscure as the operation of the mind of man in its higher elements, so this is the very point of our knowledge where we may be most ignorant of divine things, since it is to be laid down as an invariable maxim that we can only know so much of the divine as we have some specimen or likeness of in ourselves. We can only conceive of attributes the germs and elements of which are in us. We can think of no justice in God that is not a glorified form of the justice of which we have had some experience. We can imagine no pity which we have not felt something of. We cannot understand what self-sacrifice means except by having experienced it in ourselves or having witnessed it in others.

In attempting to apprehend the higher forms of divine life we are attempting to apprehend those things of which the types, or prototypes, or germs in us are the feeblest and the least likely to be apprehended. It is certain that there are very many parts of the experience of men which they reckon as transcendent, but which absolutely elude analysis. There is no person of any considerable magnitude of head or brain, or of any considerable sensibility of mind, who does not know that he has been brought under pressures and under excitements that exalted thought, and with that vision, and with that will, and with that the emotions, of which he could give no explanation, and concerning which he could lay down no journal and no chart. There are moods which men are exalted into, but which they know vaguely, and of which they are obliged to speak as Paul did of the things which he saw in the seventh heaven, when he said that they were not lawful [that is, possible] to utter or report. Have you had no feelings for which you never had ideas? Then you are shallow. Have you had no moods, the power of which you remember, and the experience of which was glorious, but which you were absolutely powerless to explain in any wise? Have there not been hours in your friendships, have there not been conjunctions of circumstances, when everything that was best in you was stimulated, so that it burst out towards objects of affection, which language was utterly inad-

equate to describe? Have you not had conceptions of heroism which immensely transcended any ordinary day-by-day conceptions? Are there, in your experience, no glorified hours, no hours of transfiguration in which you stand to rebuke the vulgarity and lowness of your ordinary daily experience? In the higher moods of your mind, are there no enthusiasms, no divine raptures, which you cannot express in words?

Now, consider with what royalty, with what power, with what amplitude, the soul of man moves in those occasional hours, and in those higher moods. Consider how different he is then from what he is in his common uninspired hours and moods.

Well, the comparison of those higher moods with our lower moods forms a kind of remote and dim analogy of the possibilities of the higher life. Not that it reveals the union of God with man, but it leads one to feel that it cannot be quibbled or reasoned away merely because, when you apply the strict rules of investigation, of thought-power and of analysis, you cannot define it.

Let science pursue her own round. We recognize the utility and beauty of it. All I have to say is this: Science shall not undertake to say, "You can," or, "You cannot," in regard to the higher experiences of the soul. It shall not undertake to define the possibilities of the human mind, or the soundness of the experiences which belong to that part of the mind which stands next to spiritual elements—nearest to the invisible. Science may undertake to show that in my description of a physical thing I have erred by omission or by exaggeration; science may undertake to determine that in my analysis of certain substances I have erred either by too much or too little; science may undertake to say that when I claim for myself a certain mode of activity there are positive evidences that it cannot be so or can be so, as the case may be; but when science goes further than that, when it goes beyond the material realm, the basis being granted, and the quality being acknowledged, and undertakes to apply the tests of the lower reason and understanding to the soul-quality, then I stand and protest.

You may tell me that a certain soil is absolutely unfit for vegetation; that it is nothing but dead, dead, dead sand; or you may say that another soil is a great deal better; you may go on and make your analyses of soils in all their various gradations, and tell what their probabilities or certainties are—that is, what their effects will be upon seeds: but when the seed is planted, and the soil has begun to nourish it, I say that there is in the future development, and growth, and life of the plant itself that which no man can foresee, and that you are bound to follow facts, and not foregoing analyses. And so far as the human mind is concerned, I care not whether you call it material or immaterial; but being a veritable entity, and having power in the exercise of its own nature to develop, I protest against applying to its higher forms those analyses which belong to its foundation and physical connections. It has a life of its own which can only be known by those who have had it, and which cannot be brought down to that kind of description and delineation which belongs to its lower forms.

I can say that my hand smarts, and you know what it means; or I can say that it tickles, and you know what that means; but who can take the soul in its most ecstatic mood of imagination and tell what its experiences are? The seer that beholds transcendent visions and things to come; the poet whose mind moves to music, and effloresces in the nobility of the higher region—how can he subject his experiences to an analysis that is only conformable to a lower standard?

What I say is, that these higher moods of men make their own rules; that they are subject to a law which is developed in them and which is peculiar to themselves. A knave cannot be the law-giver for an honest man. A coward can never lay down rules for a thorough hero. A cold-hearted wretch cannot be a legislator for an enthusiastic lover. Every man has his own criterion of judgment which is founded on his knowledge of truth as it is revealed to him by active and positive experience.

If there is one thing that we know, it is that in proportion as men live in the body,—that is, in proportion as they

live to eat, to drink, to work, to rest, and to sleep,—in that proportion their average sensations are united only by juxtaposition, as it were, and so are not united at all, except as a corporation, a company, or an army, is united.

The moment men rise from their lower physical conditions, and begin to work together for a common interest—for self-protection, it may be, or for the acquisition of money that will accrue to their selfishness in common—the moment they work for an invisible quality, which is common to them all, you are conscious that they are united by a bond which is stronger than exterior cohesion. As the thing sought is higher and higher, the enthusiasm in seeking it becomes not only more absolute, but more apparent. Unite men together with the enthusiasm of a real patriotic zeal, and mingle with that the enthusiasm of domestic love; let those things which make men better than the brutes unite them in the common object of defense and protection, and how much stronger is the union which is produced under such circumstances than where the enthusiasm and the objects are low and physical! How, when thus united, do men blend with each other! How is there a well-defined and not unconscious sense of one man's belonging to another, and being in another! How does it increase in proportion as you go up! And where men are banded together for unworldly things, how conscious are they of the supremacy of that union which makes them as one!

It is but a step beyond that to suppose that which probability would lead us to suppose—namely, that when we rise to higher moods, to divine moods, to absolutely spiritual moods, to a higher state and to higher experiences, there will be found to be methods of unity and intersphering of which we have no analogies here, and that there is a real, I will not say physical, but substantial unity possible between soul and soul.

I know not whether I have succeeded in making you understand what I mean, for I do not suppose any one has power to define that unity which Christ prayed for. When you have said that it exists in this, that, or the other form, you have not compassed it. All that I have attempted to do has been to lead your mind to the feeling or presumption that

according to the line of analogies there is in the higher experience a coalescing of souls for which there is no formula, which is not definable, which is not separable by analysis into its elements, and which so far transcends the ordinary experiences of man with man that it must stand alone, solitary.

That there is such an action of mind with mind, in the commerce of the individual human soul with the divine, and of the divine with the individual human soul, I think no man can doubt who reads through the New Testament. I think no person can doubt that John was teaching with authority such a truth as that, where he declared, as from the lips of the Master, "I am the vine, ye are the branches; and as the branches can not abide without the vine, so neither can ye abide without me; if ye are broken off ye wither, and are fit only to be burned." This is a physical image; but consider how intimate the union is. Every branch draws life from the common source of vitality. If we grow into God in such a sense that we derive from him the motive-power of life as the branch derives motive-power from the root and stalk of the parent vine, how intimate is our union with him. Again he says, "If any man believe, I will come in to him." The figure is that a man is a house. "Know ye not that ye are temples of the living God?" says Paul. The idea is that men are dwellings with rooms; and Christ, assuming it, says, "If ye are of the right mood or state, I will come in, and I will live in you as one lives in a friend's house; I will dwell in you; I will abide in you." Thus is expressed still more intimately the sense of a higher unity between the soul of God and the souls of believers. And in language which transcends even that, in the passage which I read in the opening service, it is said, "To those who believed on him gave he power to become the sons of God." And then, by express limitations, he throws off the idea that it is in any physical sense, in any earth-born sense, and asserts that it is in a divine sense: not a thing perfectly revealed or revealable, but a growing fact. He unequivocally teaches that there is an interior unity possible between the soul of man and the soul of God.

With this general statement of fact, I pass to that which

practically may perhaps be even more important—a consideration of the signs and effects of such union. We may not aim at it and seek to attain it so much from a distinct knowledge of its psychological state and condition, but we may bring ourselves into that state in which this unity is promised by the efficient power of the divine Spirit—the great Comforter and Enlightener. Then, too, it is a matter of more importance to us to know that it is actually in us, than to know how it is in us. If we find that we have the evidence of adoption in ourselves; if we find that we have that which breathes to us the consciousness that we are in God and that God is in us; if we resort to the proper tests and investigations as to the grounds and reasons of such a belief, this becomes of great practical importance.

One of the first tokens, then, of the indwelling of the divine nature in us is to be seen in the profound sense of humility which it invariably works—a humility that does not mean self-degradation or a feeling of personal meanness. A man may be profoundly humble, and yet not table charges against himself. The sense of elevation, the sense of personal dignity, is immeasurably enhanced by the touch of the divine Spirit in the souls of men. Yet no man can have this ideal produced in him without feeling conscious of how infinitely poor he is in the lower relations of his ordinary life, partly by the necessity of nature, partly by infirmities, and partly by positive sinfulness; but whether from one or all of these causes, his relative rank in the universe, the value that he puts upon himself, is very small. It is that which he hopes to be, that which dwells in him, that is great and glorious—namely, the Spirit of the Father. His own personality is insignificant. The sense of power, of skill, of beauty, of delicacy, of penetration, of thought—power relative to that which belongs to the truly great and to God—this with him is rather an argument of lowliness of mind and of humility.

“Take my yoke upon you and learn of me,” says the Master, “for I am meek and lowly of heart.” In his earth-born condition, in his circumscription and limitation while in the flesh, that was the experience of the Saviour; and

when the divine light comes into men's souls, though they may feel that they are but little lower than the angels, though they may feel that by administration and attainment by and by they may be kings and priests; though they feel that there is no end to the circuits and outlines of their coming glory; yet their present condition, even when they may feel that it is the most favorable, is lowly; and the sense of our own poorness and infinite need is greatly enhanced by the indwelling of that light which reveals all darkness, and that beauty which makes manifest all homeliness, and of that grace which makes inferior all the goodness which is in us. The presence of Christ in our souls is a perpetual argument of our humility and lowliness. When there is no light in rooms one is as beautiful as another; but the moment you bring light into a room, that moment, if things are in disorder, in vulgar contiguities, the light reveals them. And the indwelling light of God reveals to a man the essential poorness and roughness of his own life.

With this sense of personal inefficiency comes also inspiration and courage, for it is the effect of the divine nature to lift, and to fire with a tendency of growth and life, all that it influences; and courage and aspiration are infallible tokens of God's presence.

There may be moods of perfect quietude, of tranquillity—there are; there is a peace which passeth all understanding that comes to men; but we mistake if we suppose that a certain sort of non-exertion is inherent in the notion of peace or tranquillity. The highest peace is the highest excitement. Excitements are disturbing in proportion as they are partial and impure; but when the excitements of a man's mind are in subordination one to another, when they perfectly harmonize with each other, the highest excitement is the highest tranquillity. There is no such perfect rest or peace as that which comes to men when all parts of their nature, in proper relations to each other, are lifted to the highest possible tension. The indwelling of God does not produce the quietude of insensibility or of indifference, but it produces that peace which comes from courage and hope and aspiration, calm and intense.

I do not say that all will have this in equal power ; but I do say that when men find that their better feelings live in harmony under the highest tension, and do not distract nor exhaust but feed and fill the soul, it is one of the tests of the indwelling Saviour.

The quality of one's soul-life is another test. Sweetness and richness in all the affections, compassion, gentleness, tenderness, pitifulness—these essential qualities of the life of man afford another token or evidence, and a most striking one, of the presence of the divine nature.

The divine Spirit sometimes comes as the mother may come among her children, with the rod, or with the reproof of her tongue, short and decisive ; but the characteristic coming of the Spirit, like the mother's wonted coming, is a coming with gentleness, with tenderness, with kindness, with lovingness. When the nature of God is infused into the human soul, it brings the divine sweetness, the divine affection, the divine compassion, and that beauty which adorns what we know among men. God's nature infinitely transcends the poor and unfruitful natures which have been committed to us for our culture here. All that we know of soul-sweetness and affection and compassion is earthborn. These qualities to us are as the flavors of the undeveloped fruits of the wilderness.

Suppose he who first found the Siberian crab-apple had boasted of the richness of that apple, and then had compared it with the later products which were developed in the orchard ? But what apple is there, carried to its highest perfection, that differs as much from the germ from which it sprang as the soul of a man just "pawing to get free" from earth, scarcely unswaddled, absolutely untrained and unfledged, differs from the everlasting glory and beauty of the heart of God itself ? And the difference will vary in different men, just as the flower varies which grows in different places.

The sun comes down in some hard-scrabble neighborhood, and shines on the rocks, and there is little or no fruit produced. In another place the sun comes, and there is more fruit, because there is more soil for the sun to shine upon. In another place the sun comes, and there all the earth

teems, and things choke each other in rampant growings and unbounded tropical luxuriance.

Now, in the poorest soul something comes from the infusion of the divine Spirit. In other souls a great deal more comes from that infusion. In still others there comes an angelic sweetness which no hymn has ever sung, which no prayer has ever uttered, which no words have ever framed an adequate description of. The best parts of a man's nature are parts which he neither can speak of nor detain long enough to analyse. We are throwing off perpetually so many experiences, they pass so rapidly, that we cannot register them. They defy investigation ; and all we can say of them is, "I know."

In the tenderness of twilight, when there steals from the old cathedral gloom wonderful music, strange, weird, massive, and full of soul-touching properties, does any man stand and say, "It is impossible ; there is no instrument there competent to any such result" ? But the air is full of the music, which is its own evidence. If the instrument is played upon, and the music rolls forth, it cannot but be a fact.

Tell me, if you will, that the soul of man is a thing of body, and that body is a thing of limitation ; that when men have imagined certain experiences they are enthusiasts ; that when they have carried these imagined experiences forward to a greater height and a greater power they are fanatics ; and that these things are all illusions and deceptions. Tell me that a man professes to have a magnificent experience in the higher realms, while I know his life to be a burrowing in the lower realm, and I will believe that there is illusion ; but show me a man whose life is conformable to right rules, from the lowest to the highest ; show me a man all of whose aims are upward and divine, and who is kindled to a transcendent joy—a joy that never is distempered, that rolls no waves to the shore, and lies smooth as the lake of Galilee—and he is my magistrate, and must teach me what are the facts. I am not his analyst to pull him down and deny those things which are palpable to him. Enthusiasms and fanaticisms are far nobler than ignoble beliefs that lie darkling at the bottom of human life. I say that the human soul is competent to

sensations and experiences which altogether transcend the average experiences from which we derive our philosophy. I say that there is an atmosphere from which may come the opalescent lights of heaven itself. I say that there are states possible which shall ally us to the experiences of the other life, and which shall give token that God is, in most important respects, dwelling in us. If men say they are not possible, I point to the fact, and say that beauty is beauty even if worms deny that it is beautiful.

When the most elevated traits of soul, when the dignity of men's thoughts, and when those spiritual forces which are so unlike the lower forms of life, are gathered in one direction, and into one grand office, so that the conduct, the life, the character, and the work of the Saviour upon earth are again set forth or are grouped together to constitute a magnificent disposition of self-denial—then we shall have the highest token that can be given us of the reality of the indwelling of Christ in the human soul; for Christ came to teach the world by his example under the ordinary circumstances under which men are tempted, and was tempted in all points, in all his faculties, in all respects, as we are, and yet without sin. He was our Exemplar and our Guide in regard to moral truths.

But to me, if you go no further than this, you have left out the best thing—the sacrificial element. If you tell me that Christ came to make atonement for the sins of men; if you tell me that the atonement satisfied the law, that it satisfied God, that it was something interposed between the man and the original infinite and everlasting mercy and love of God, to unlock these qualities and make them available; if you tell me that in the bosom of the Almighty Father, who made me, and made me weak, and put me into a world where I should be environed by temptations that inevitably would produce sin, there was a sacrifice necessary to let out the divine healing quality, then I simply say, “That is coarse; that is Roman; that is of the flesh, fleshly.” But if you tell me that Jesus Christ came to lay down his life for men because he so loved the world that he was moved to make a manifestation of the utmost power and en-

deavor for its salvation, saying, "Greater love hath no man than this: I love you; and I give my life for you now, not only, but forever and forever I shall be giving my life for you; I shall come to you; I shall dwell with you; I shall live with you; I shall feed you; I shall give you of myself; and when I have gone up to the heights of power I shall still be one in God, and one in all that believe, and that will let me enter into their souls, and so be their eternal food and eternal support;" if you tell me that Jesus Christ came to die for men, that he might take away the fleshly covering, and that they might see the divine way in distinction from the poor corrupt methods of earth; if you tell me that God governs in that higher realm of ineffable love which is legislative and creative, and which impletes everything in the heavens and in the universe, and that it was to disclose him that Jesus Christ came, that he suffered, the just for the unjust, as every man must suffer who would lift up another, as every man must suffer who would take ignorance, and carry it up, and wait for its development from its low condition to the higher one; if you tell me that Jesus came not only to teach us that such was the essential nature of God the Father, the eternal Godhead, but to take upon himself penalty for the sake of the salvation of those who would otherwise perish; to be the great Burden-carrier and universal Friend of mankind—if you tell me that all this was the work of atoning grace, then I can join, too, in hallelujahs. If you can rejoice on a lower ground, far be it from me to take away your rejoicings. If you need blood in any any other way than as a symbol, if you need the actual or coarser form of legislative and judicial atonement, I would not take it away from you; but you must not put that over my head as indispensable to my faith; you must not wreath around the precious names of God these lower and coarser exhibitions, and call them "orthodox," and with them rule as with a rod of iron. They are essentially not orthodox; they are dropping, and will continue to drop; and in proportion as the hidden peculiarities of the Gospel in the human soul lift a man up to a higher conception of justice, and truth, and purity, and duty, and fellowship, and tenderness, and love;

in proportion as the average experience of Christian men rises higher and grows purer, the thought of development and attainment will be a thousand times more attractive. The higher disclosure of infinite strength, and purity, and goodness, and of the necessary suffering required in bearing with impurity and imperfection, elevates the thoughts and expands the minds of men.

It is this one point of self-sacrifice as connected with the indwelling of God that is the test. A man may counterfeit many other things, but he can scarcely counterfeit this. There are two qualities that it is difficult to counterfeit—love in its higher form, and self-sacrifice in its most ineffable form. Men may make themselves martyrs by special acts; but I refer to the even, uniform moving of one's life in subordination to another's welfare. Bearing each other's burdens; seeking not to please ourselves, as Christ sought not to please himself; living day by day so as to be succor and food to others, and not to build up our strength upon them—that seldom is counterfeited. A man may bear stripes and imprisonment in a zealous cause; but a man who is not persecuted, and who develops himself continuously for the welfare of those who are round about him, pouring out his bounty on the large and the small, on the good and the bad alike, and causing his influence as an effluence to shine as a candle upon those who are in darkness—if such is his notion of life and being and power; if he thus lives in a perpetual self-sacrifice which does not run to enthusiasm or fanaticism, and so is not carried to the ascetic stage—under such circumstances he gives evidence of having in him the genuine article.

If a man says, "I was in darkness; I read my Bible; I compared text with text; and by-and-by, after praying and praying and praying, the light broke on me, and I saw that I was redeemed, and that I was united to God, and that Christ dwelt in me; and now ten years have gone, and I have never known anything but the blessed light of that experience; I am perfect; I am as happy as I can be; O, how little do folks know the privileges to be had! Would that every one could be caught up into that glorious mood!"

—may be he has it. You cannot tell by the plumage of a bird how it will leap. You cannot always tell by the way a man talks what he is. I would not say that he has it not; but it does not consist in the production of a powerful impression on the imagination. It does not consist in intensity of feeling. It does not consist in the fact that a man has an inspiration which leads him in this exalted way to bear witness. I want to know something more of the quality of his disposition. If I find that where other men are proud he is sweetly humble; that where other men are sharp and acerb he is easy to be entreated; that where others are stingy he is liberal and full of good works; and that where they are dim-eyed he is endowed with intuition which comes from real faith and love in God; if I find, in looking into the jewel-box of his soul, that one after another of these jewels flashes brighter in him than in others, then I say, "Very likely it is there." He may not make the best proclamation of it; but if I find that there are these signs and tokens of it, I give him credit for possessing it. If, on the other hand, I see a man who goes about trumpeting his own virtues, and seeking praise and admiration for them from everybody he meets; if I find that he is arranging everything for his own benefit, and is living to enjoy himself, and that he is magisterial and imperial, then I come to the conclusion that he is empty; for he that has the indwelling of God, with all gentleness, and meekness, and humility, and tenderness, and pitifulness, and self-subjugation and submission to others,—he needs to bear no testimony.

You may go out, in these autumnal days, and bring in half a dozen sprigs of the golden-rod, and ten or twelve of asters from some sheltered place, and a few chrysanthemums, and put them in a room—all perhaps except the last—and insist that they fill the room with fragrance; but do they? See whether anybody perceives it. They are made into an immense bouquet, and put in a conspicuous place, and one comes in, and another, and another, but nobody speaks of it, or thinks anything about it; and I declare, when you say it is filling the room with fragrance, that it is not.

Now, I pluck one tea-rose, one blossom of tube-rose, and

one sprig of some other odorous flower, and put them in a little wine-glass, and set them in some corner out of the way, and say nothing; and one opens the door, and snuffs, and snuffs, and says, "What have you here? Haven't you something here?" They know there is something there. It is hidden, but there is no mistaking its fragrance.

Nobody has a right to say that he has the indwelling of the divine Spirit who is not, when he moves among men, beautiful. I tell you that you are counterfeit if you are homely in holiness. Whoever makes men that look upon him feel, "Well, I would be a Christian rather than be damned, but I should hate to be such a man"; whoever makes holiness homely, is travestying it. I tell you, the essential element of moral feeling, that which God produces by indwelling, is fragrant, sweet, beautiful. Even virtue is beautiful to vice in its deliberative moods; rectitude is beautiful to the criminal; the qualities that we lack are those that we most desire, often; and where there is a soul that has the heavenly moods brooding it, and that is filled with all the fullness of the Godhead, the sign is that everybody feels that summer is near him, though nobody may be able to tell why. Whenever anybody says of another, "His coming is joy, and his going is night," I care not whether he belongs to the Catholic Church, or the Episcopal Church, or the Presbyterian Church, or the Congregational Church, he is one of God's people, and carries the evidence of divine indwelling in the fact that he is so sweet, so genial, and so benign toward others. There is a sort of low helpfulness that makes men agreeable and sweet; but I am speaking of higher moral moods and spiritual instincts. Where they are acerb; where they are self-glorifying and self-boastful, and inclined to be imperious, and to legislate as with a rod of iron, they are not genuine—they are counterfeits. Where they are genuine there is softness, there is humility, there is patience, there is truth, there is pity, there is love; and where these qualities are combined in a man they are as a cluster of flowers from the heavenly garden, and their fragrance is everywhere apparent.

Is such a life as this possible? Yes. Is it attainable by

all? Yes; but it is not a lecture-room attainment. You want this spiritual elevation; you would be glad to have it; I think every one of you would hold up hands for it; but oh, what a way you would have to go through to reach it! Some of you are built coarsely. You are by nature full of the flesh; and by sickness, by waste, by disappointments, by overthrows, God could, as it were, hew you so thin that there might light stream through you; but you are opaque now, and that is the problem of your life. You need this indwelling divine Spirit; but it will come as discipline, and will be like the baptism of blood that Christ spoke of. You want it, being proud and vain: are you willing to take it at the end of those mortifications and flailings which God would give you before you were brought out of yourself into the sweetest humiliation to the will of God? You want it, being so idolatrous that you run riot like luxuriant vines that have to be cut back in their growth: and are you willing to be cut back, and have your household desolate, and lose here and there a loved one till the insufficiency of this world is demonstrated in your experience, and, at last, you say, "My darlings are gone; my friends are gone; I am alone: come thou, O God, and dwell with me"? Are you willing to gain it at that price? Many of you are suffering; you are going through calamities; you are wondering at God's providence. He is clearing away the snow, and chiseling off the rocks, and you are looking on and waiting to get back to this, that, and the other worldly thing, while God is thinking of that which is above all price, above all value, measured by any earthly estimation—the sonship that is in you; and he is trying one in one way, another in another way, and another in another way. Oh! understand what God is doing to you.

Is it not this indwelling of the Holy Spirit that we need more than everything else? Is it not this that we need for the cure of wrangling in the household, and quarreling in the neighborhood, and all those evils which torment society? Is it not this, above everything else, that the minister needs—the indwelling of Christ? Is it not this that the individual member of his charge needs—the indwelling of Christ? Is it not this that the church needs—the indwelling of Christ?

O, poor, ever-stumbling church! if it were not for the individual graces and beauties of its membership it would be a stench in the nostrils of humanity. It is so human that all its organizations are oppressive. With all its machinery, so cumbrous, with all its pomp and display, so vast, it has gone reeling through the ages, and the world has gone groaning and travailing in pain until now. Like every other human institution, it is a clumsy affair; and if it were not for its saints that could be pointed to here and there, it would be considered an intolerable nuisance. There has not, by the tramp of all the armies on the globe, been so much blood trod out as there has been by the feet of ecclesiastics. There has not, throughout the earth, been so much oppression and persecution, in any other direction, or in all other directions, as in matters of truth and religion. And what the church needs, is not apostolicity, it is not canon, it is not precedent, it is not wise laws and customs, so much—these will all flow of themselves, what the church needs is the indwelling of the Lord Jesus Christ. O for a convention, O for an association, that, when it rose and left, should leave the impression on the minds of the common people, “There is truth; there is religion!” O for convocations of preaching men, that, when they adjourned and went away, should leave a revival of religion, bright, burning, behind them! It is the want of the divine influence, it is the want of heaven in us, it is the want of Christ in our dispositions and in our lives, that makes men infidels. I will answer every attack from every source of scientific investigation if you will gather in every village a disciple band that shall manifest from day to day and from generation to generation the Master’s Spirit. If Christ dwells in you, and you dwell in him, as he dwells in God, there is no danger to society, none to the individual, and none to the church.

To-day, Christian friends, we close these services by the sweet and joyful service of Communion. We have the body of Christ represented by the loaf broken, as his body was pierced and broken; we have also the wine, that represents the shedding of the blood; and both the breaking of the body and the shedding of the blood represent the sacrifice of

Christ for the welfare of those who need him. Is there no one here who needs the Lord Jesus Christ to-day? These symbols are for you, and mayhap will help you to draw near by faith to Him that is above the symbols. Are there none here that are broken-hearted from losses that are greater than they can bear? If you, with a holy sorrow in your soul, were to say, "Jesus, come and help me," perhaps he would come. I invite you to try it. Are there not those who have stumbled in their worldly affairs, who have no comfort, and who look only to further confusion and confiscation? Why not sit down before the symbolization of your Master to-day, and say, "God, Father of providence, Author of all good, now to thee I come—give me thyself"? Why should you not try it? To any of you who are bestead by worldly perplexities and difficulties, is there not here a remedy and a release in Christ? Suppose you do not enter fully into that life? We grow into it. Suppose they are but the beginnings and first steps that you take to-day? Even so.

But I hear men of great grace and conscience saying, "Is not this a most perilous laxity? Do you mean to say that you will spread the table of the Lord's Supper with profound mystery, and then give invitation to partake of it, in your congregation, to every man, whether he is a member of the church or not, whether he has been examined or not, and whether he has professed faith in Christ or not?" Yes, I will. Till you tear out that scene where Christ preached to the multitude, and they thronged about him, and he went in to take dinner in a ruler's house, and when he was at the table the publicans and harlots sat by his side, and touched him, and took bread with him, and ate salt and meat with him, while the keepers of the machinery of the Jewish church stood outside, and said, "Hem! see! he consorteth with publicans and sinners, and eateth with them"—until you tear that out, I shall feel it to be right and proper to offer the Lord's Supper to all who love Christ and feel drawn to him.

Now, every man of you whom Christ would not have rejected, if you had lived in his time, and had been with him,

and he had gone into a house, and sat down at the table, and you had sat down by him and said, "Lord Jesus, my babe is dead; help me,"—every one to whom he would, under such circumstances, have turned in compassion, I invite to sit down at his table now; for he is as ready to have compassion now as he was then. If you had gone in and sat down with him, and said, "Lord, I am separated from communication with my light and guide, and I am trembling and ready to fall—what shall I do?" and if he would not have turned you away, he will not turn you away now. He is very accessible. He is very sacred, it is true; but he is very familiar. Your Jesus, if he come to you at all, is coming through your infirmities, through your wants, through your needs.

Now, do not make the Lord's Supper more august than the Lord Jesus himself. Do not raise up the emblem and make it more important than that of which it is emblematic. Are you afraid to go to God in prayer, by your thoughts, and ask for mercy and compassion? If you can go to him, how much more can you go to some picture or suggestion of him!

I ward off from this table every such person as comes by rote, and comes for nothing. If my children kissed me perfunctorily, they would not kiss me at all: I would not let them! If a man says, "It is Communion morning," and goes to the Lord's table, and takes the bread and wine because, being a member of the church, he thinks he must, I ward him off. But if there are any here who are weak, and know it, and want strength; who are sinful, and know it, and want grace; who are in darkness, and know it, and want light; who are conscious of the humanness of their life, and want divine purity, and are willing to make a beginning, and will come in all sincerity, and take these symbols in hope of that which they symbolize, you, brother, and you, sister, I invite; for the kingdom of God is yours. And I give this general invitation to all suppliants; to all who are poor and sinful and needy. All who desire to make this Lord's Supper really a means of grace to their souls are invited to partake of it.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

VOUCHSAFE, our heavenly Father, thy blessing to rest upon thy dear servants. Fill them with all hope, and joy, and grace. Since thou hast been pleased to bring them into our midst, grant that we may have toward them such holy affection and such brotherly welcome that they themselves shall no longer be strangers, but of the household. Grant, we pray thee, that we may ourselves be enriched in their coming amongst us. We pray that thou wilt bring into the midst and fellowship of this church more and more who have been wandering, who have been outcast, and who have known God by the outward ear, but not by the conscience and the heart.

We pray that thou wilt strengthen thy servants in this church so to love and so to make known the Word of the Gospel that men shall understand the teachings of God, and the privileges of the household of faith, and that they may be known by the exhibition of Christian living.

We pray that thou wilt grant that the weak may be strengthened; that those who are ready to perish under the cunning wiles of the adversary may be succored and drawn away from peril; that those who are whelmed in darkness and filled with doubts may be established in the simple faith and child-like love of the Gospel of Christ; and that thy love may be mighty in the hearts of this great congregation, and of the community that lies round about us. We pray for a more perfect disclosure of truth. We pray that we may understand more of the nature of God, more of the divine disposition. May we not wander forth to seek the measure of the universe alone. May we not question the stars, and the earth, and the ages, except to know more of the testimony of God who made them. And grant that in thee it may not be the power nor the wisdom that we shall admire, but the glorious holiness which belonged to thine administration of love, and wisdom, and power. Grant that we may enter into that nature which hath in it infinite sacrifice and which was made manifest by Jesus Christ—that nature which, out of itself, feeds creation, nourishes, restores, builds, establishes, saves and glorifies. The height, the depth, the length, the breadth of thy nature we cannot understand; but grant that we may grow toward it with finer apprehension, springing from nobler feelings in us. May our daily life, and all the habits of our thoughts and emotions, so bring us near to thee in kind that we shall understand thy quality; and yet when most understood by us, it is only the fringe or the hem that we behold of thy garment. What art thou? How transcendent, infinitely beyond the reach of all our thought! Thou art to us as to the child's eye the stars are, but a point of brightness; and yet in itself, if we might draw near, how would the orb swell out, transcending all measurement! Thou art to us but luminousness; thou art to us but the sun of glory. What thou art in thy lines and lineaments, what thou art in thy separate qualities and attributes, what thou art in the might of thy power and in the glory of thine empire, who of

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\* Immediately following the admission of members into the church.

us is large enough to understand? What purity on earth which gives to us our only conception of thy purity is adequate to its measurement? Who that has only felt the influence of love in this world can interpret the love of the divine nature? Since we cannot by searching find thee out, grant that little by little, day by day, we may learn the Spirit of God by becoming like him. Look upon us and love us; and by thy image, and power, and indwelling prepare us better to understand thee until the glorious day shall come when the silver cord shall be loosed and the golden bowl already broken shall be broken entirely, and we shall go home to see thee as thou art, and to be like thee.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all thy servants who are present to day. How great is the number of those who have come up with their secret needs! Grant us thy blessings, not according to our wisdom in asking, and not according to our judgment of proportions, but according to thine own goodness. Measure thy gifts by thine own abundance and generosity, and bestow them according to thine own kind and wise direction, so that we may feel not only that we are blessed of God, but that he has thought of us in particular, and meted out his graces and providences with reference to our trials, our burdens, our joys and our aspirations.

We pray that thou wilt bless all the households that are here represented. Grant that thy servants may live in such love and fellowship that they shall walk before their children imaging the divine life; and grant that children may be brought up under the influences of their parents more and more just, and true, and honorable, from generation to generation. We pray that thou wilt make our homes to a greater and greater extent altars from which shall go forth to thee light, and heat, and sacred incense.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are in trouble; upon all those who are snared and know not how to escape; upon all those who are manacled and in prison houses, and are unable to obtain release. Wilt thou who art the Deliverer come forth and fulfill thy mission-work, and open the prison doors, and bring out those that are bound, and set them free.

We pray that thou wilt comfort those upon whom sudden and strange afflictions have fallen, and whose souls are bewildered. Grant that they may stay themselves upon God, and find relief from their fears. If any seem tempest-tossed, and know not where to go for comfort, may they take refuge in God, and find in him that rest which they cannot find in this sin-shaken world.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all our schools; to all the teachers in them; to all the officers thereof; and may thy work prevail in their midst. Grant, we pray thee, that the poor and ignorant may be sought out, and that to them in the spirit of true brotherhood and in the condescension of love men may be found to go down and bear their burdens, and bear with their need of restraint, and with their uncomely passions, and seek to exert by their souls, divinely consecrated, an influence by which others shall be brought into the right way.

We pray that thou wilt bless all thy churches in this city. We ask

not that they may be without divisions, and contentions, and collisions, such as thou dost permit, but that all divisions, and contentions and collisions may be for the furtherance of thy cause among thy people. May the truth go forth. Grant that purity may prevail. We beseech of thee that all which is malign, and hating, and hateful, may be suppressed and done away.

Bless thy churches of every name throughout this land. May they rejoice in all the things wherein they may stand together. May they be united in faith, in hope, in love toward God, and in beneficence toward men. If they are divided in anything, may they in their separateness hold fast to thee, and imitate thy spirit, that they may be sanctified in the foundations of their lives.

Grant that the light of truth may go forth throughout this land. Raise up the depressed, give light to the ignorant and carry stability to those that are enfeebled.

May the glory of the Lord shine not only upon this nation, but upon all the nations of the earth. Everywhere may the spring-time of God come. We beseech of thee that all wars and provocations to war may cease. May all ignorance and superstition pass away. May all evils by which man hurts his fellow-man come to an end. May that bright and blessed day come when the new heavens and the new earth in which dwelleth righteousness shall be established.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be eternal praises. *Amen.*

## THE END, AND THE MEANS.

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“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”—MATT. x. 34-38.

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If you consider that this is a part of the commission of Christ when he was sending his disciples forth, and that it is in some sense, therefore, a proclamation made to the world of the new dispensation that was coming upon the earth, it must be regarded as one of the most extraordinary things that ever was uttered. Men are accustomed, when they introduce new affairs, to suppress every possible disadvantage that is connected with them; to smooth down all difficulties; to put the fairest aspect forward; to give every explanation with the most solicitous particularity, so that men may not be repelled. But here the Messenger of the new covenant, bringing good news from heaven to earth, from God to men, and establishing a dispensation which proposes to itself nothing less than the work of a God on the whole earth, and through all time, makes proclamation, not of ease, not of victory, not of a straight and smooth road: he heaps up before men almost everything that they hate and dread, and seems to strike at the things which men do most enjoy, and love, and guard.

Is there anything that all the world over is more consecrated than one’s own household? and yet, in a parallel passage, men are told to hate it.

“If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”

Here it is declared,

“He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me.”

Standing in this connection, and in connection with other things, it seems exactly as if it were a stroke at the family. It is something to be sacrificed for the sake of following this new Leader. When men enter upon a revolution or a campaign, there is always some prospect of victory, some hope of booty, some release, or some attainment that lies beyond and is to be the consequence or culmination of their endeavors, so that they are nerved by the expectation of good to come; but what says he? “I do not come to bring peace. I come to bring a sword. I come to bring not union, but division, in the family. A man’s foes shall be distinctively there.” Ordinarily the house is a refuge. A man expects to find rivals, enemies, in the world; but when he goes back home, there he expects to find confidence and friendship. Here, however, we are told that, “A man’s foes shall be they of his own household.”

“I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law [which might not require much!]. A man’s foes shall be they of his own household.”

This is the commission. It is the instruction with which they were sent out into the community. You recollect, too, that this is the dispensation which was ushered in by the angel-song, “Peace on earth, good will to men.”

Did Christ think what he was saying? Did he mean to say that? It is a mistake. It is no such thing. It is as if he had said, “You are not to expect peace on earth; you are not to expect good will among men: I come for an entirely different purpose.” And if he came for this purpose, what sort of good news was it that he brought? He came to make divisions—of which there were enough already. He came to set men against each other in ten thousand forms of oppressive modes of treatment or wars. He came to bring a sword, when a million swords were flashing already. It seems

very strange ; and it must seem especially strange to all those persons who have been accustomed to talk about the teaching of our Lord as being so simple and plain.

But there never was on earth a teacher whose instruction was couched in such figurative language as that of Jesus. There is nowhere else to be found—not even in the poets—such a continual necessity of translation in order to come at the root of truth as there is in his teaching. If you take these words literally they will land you just where the Sermon on the Mount would if you took that literally ; and if you were to take some parts of the Sermon on the Mount, as men are made and must be for generations to come, and follow it literally, it would bankrupt and revolutionize and destroy the world, unquestionably.

What is, then, our escape from the apparent difficulty that there is in this instruction ? When we look at a system with complex development we have a right to look at it in either of two ways : we may look at it as the final result, as the thing that is to be accomplished ; or we may look at the method by which that final result or thing is to be brought about. You can look at the end, or you can look at the instrument. You can look at the history, or the consummation of that history. You can look at the tree in the summer during the period of budding, and leaving, and blossoming, and immaturity, or in autumn, when every bough is bent with purpled fruit.

Now, our Master in this passage looked simply at the process ; for he was speaking to men, and he consulted their ordinary interests—men whose vice was shortsightedness ; men who refused to take a large, long look at their own existence ; men who rejected the spiritual idea ; men who asked for some immediate benefit from his new ministration. Before he was half through that ministration there came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, who said, "Grant, Lord [there is nothing more affecting than the solicitude of a mother for her children] that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom." They had come out and become his disciples ; and they felt that it was about time (for they had

been with him a few months) that they should begin to reap some material benefit ; so, hearing something in regard to his breaking forth into a kingdom, they wanted to take time by the forelock and secure places in this kingdom. If John, for instance, had been made Secretary of State, and James Secretary of the Treasury, why, the family would have found it very much to their interest to be pious !

All through there was precisely the same thing. The disciples wanted loaves and fishes ; they wanted palaces ; they wanted raiment for the body ; and the Master was obliged to check them, saying, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man [I, that am your Lord, the Son of God] hath not where to lay his head." He put it to them, whether it ought not to satisfy the disciples that they were as their Lord. He taught them not to seek the bread that perisheth. In multiplied instances he dissuaded them from fixing their hearts on outward things. He said to them on one occasion, "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat ? or, What shall we drink ? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed ? for after all these things do the Gentiles seek." He gave them to understand that they were entering upon a dispensation whose genius was interior, spiritual—not exterior, physical. All along he was obliged to rebuke the desires of the disciples for that which was present, and present to the lower life and sense. And he said to them, finally, "Go and preach." As they were carnal, dim-eyed, low-minded, it was necessary, in some way or other, as it were to stamp or burn into their minds the impression that they were not going out to establish a kingdom that was to have its rewards right at hand, or within reach of the arms. They were going to establish a different kind of kingdom.

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."

In other words, "Do not think that human nature everywhere is going to smooth itself down, and that everybody will receive you with open arms. You are going into the battle-field. You are going where there is to be trouble. You will find that your preaching of sweet affections will breed quarrels ; you will find that your preaching of the

domination of the noble feelings over the ignoble will bring revolt; you will find that your preaching to men that they are more than animals will make them worse than animals; and you will find that if you teach men that they are to be good one to another, they will fall on each other, and gnash their teeth at each other."

He was saying, "Go, preach this kingdom without the expectation that you will reap immediately what ultimately will be derived from it." There is peace—the angels were right; there are fruits—the expectation of them is justified; but they are to be the final results to which men shall come through struggle, through pain, through long endeavor. Leisure after strife; victory after battle; fruit after long culture and growing—not at the beginning.

Regarded in this large way, the passage is not only consonant with all the representations in the New Testament of the fruit of the Spirit, and with the annunciations made, but it is also consonant with the scientific views of the present day. It is an indistinct and obscure way of declaring the unfolding of things—the gradual development, progress and final consummation of the moral and spiritual life on earth.

There is a distinction between the nature of a quality or condition, and the road or process by which we come to it. A quality in and of itself may be joyful, but the earning of it may be very painful.

So, then, it is proper to say, figuratively, that a religious life is a joyful life—that is, that its final fruit is joy; and at the same time that men who enter upon a religious life enter upon a painful life.

It may be true that intelligence will be a source of unbounded satisfaction; but I take it that no boy when he goes to school thinks that the first taste of intelligence gives much satisfaction. It would be a matter of very great pleasure to every one to know how to read; but when a person—especially if he has let childhood go by—first attempts to read, reading is not so pleasant. The early educatory steps toward intellectual or moral states frequently are painful steps. They require patience, they require faith, they require self-denial, they sometimes require positive suffering; but the

ends which we are seeking by these steps are "ways of pleasantness and paths of peace."

According, then, as you look at things as ripe or green, you may use language at one time that is very opposite from that which is used at another time, and both will be true. For instance, it would be proper to speak of grapes as you see them in the summer as being sour and small, and not fit for the mouth; and it would be equally proper for you to speak of those grapes as you see them in September and October as being luscious, inviting, and rewarding. The autumnal grapes are one thing; the summer grapes are another thing. And that which is true of grapes is true of moral qualities.

Let us look at this necessity of conflict and trouble as we see it actually in life, and as it is intimated in the word of our Master. In building up the house of the soul in each individual, it may be said that the work of soul-building is a work of painfulness, of mortification, of annoyance, of fear, of doubt. If you single out all the pain-bearing elements that go to constitute soul-building, you can make the picture like midnight, and it will be justified by fact; and yet, will it represent fairly a process of soul-building? Look at the building of a house. What a choice place is a completed house, fitted to the wants of a household—a house of suitable size, erected with thoroughness, furnished in good taste, cool for the summer, warm for the winter, surrounded by objects of beauty! What a delight it is, for social reasons and for scenic reasons! How poets love to descant upon it! We employ the experience of home to picture the state of heavenly rest. From our life in the household we describe the ideal future life. In saying this I do not exaggerate.

Suppose a son wants a house? I describe to him a commodious and comfortable mansion, and he says, "I will build it." He goes out with the idea which he has derived from my statement, and he says, "Now for a house"; and the first step toward a house is to clear off the ground; but he grumbles, and says that does not exactly comport with the idea which he has formed of the beauty of a house. I should say to him, "Think not that I have come to instantly create

for you a house of down and plush and velvet." There must be a good deal of grubbing and digging; and it is laborious business to grub and dig. The foundation is to be laid; and to lay the foundation of a house in moist, cold, frigid weather is not pleasant. There is to be a great deal of filth and dirt; and that is very unpleasant to one who has set out to build with an ideal of neatness in his mind. The grounds are strewn with lumber and shavings and bricks. And when the house goes up above the foundations the wind whistles through it, and it is just the reverse of our conception of a delightful, comfortable home. When, by and by, the windows are in, and the external wind no more has free course to run and be glorified there, the house is damp, and the floor is stained with mortar, and you go stumbling over planks and boards, and everything is inconvenient and disagreeable. All manner of confusion reigns throughout the structure. And when, after a little everlasting, you turn out the masons and carpenters and painters, then come the scourers, and all things have to be cleaned; and though cleanliness is good, cleaning is not. Then come the decorators, and the walls and ceilings have to be gone over. Then comes the upholsterer; and we say to ourselves, "Shall we ever get these pests out of the house!" Every builder knows that there is a great difference between building a house, and living in a house after it is built.

You can describe a house that is building as it is *to be* when it is built, and say that it is comely and beautiful, and people will not misinterpret your meaning. If a person should read a description of a completed house as Tennyson would give it in his melodious numbers; if he should take the hint of a house as a sentimentalist would portray it, and were to start out to build a house with his eye fixed on that conception, yet knowing that the beautiful end must be reached by difficult means, every day as the work progressed he would see some mark of beauty that would answer exactly to the description.

Now, the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be transcendently beautiful; but it will be at the last. While the soul-house is building it is anything but beautiful.

It is full of annoyances. That is one reason why we are obliged to live by faith and hope. That which is to be our solace and our reward is far more than that which we have actually gained. For example, we attempt while living in the body to control it for great spiritual reasons. We undertake the double duty of employing the senses for material life, and also of gradually transfiguring the material element, and converting it into sentiment, into spirituality, learning to live by the invisible rather than the visible; and that, too while we are necessitated to maintain vigor and power in the lower life and nature. It is a glorious conception that one shall so live, born of matter, and unfolding in physical respects, that the spiritual germ shall assert sovereignty in spite of all the distinctively evil elements in the flesh, all the time gaining ground in the work of building up a noble interior house—a house indeed not made with hands, adorned with noble thoughts, with magnificent passages of experience, with all heroism of feeling, with friendships, with tastes, with refinements, with benevolences, with hopes, with faiths, with joys, inspiring the life so that at last it moves by the interior while it is yet moving by the exterior. A man in the world, dealing with it, being dealt with by it, and yet building within himself a household of pure thought, noble aspiration, holy endeavor, and divine commerce—can any one fail to admire such a person? Can any one help revering a perfected nature, a glorious soul? And yet can it be expected that such a nature or such a soul can be realized at the beginning? It can be attained; but not without patience, and cross-bearing, and yoke-bearing, and pain, and trouble. Both things are true in everybody's experience. Nobody is born into the kingdom of God from the flesh instantly. No one rises at once from the lower life to the higher as on eagles' wings. I do not say that one may not come instantly to a perception of truth, and to a consciousness of its reality. I believe there is such a thing as moral suffusion and inspiration which materially changes things; but who ever was born into the kingdom of God instantly, though he had the best temperament, though he had a harmonious mind, though he was surrounded by the most propitious circumstances, and though he was

under the most immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost? Was there ever a man converted so that afterwards he had no patience to exercise, no virtue to cultivate, no drill to go through, no sorrow to undergo, no bereavements to bear, no losses to endure, no thwartings of his pride to put up with, no temptations of selfishness to withstand, no proffers to his vanity to resist, nothing that should tend to make him like the world's men? Whoever is born into the new kingdom has to work for it. A man may rejoice; he may sing many songs: he may strive and sing at the same time; but nevertheless no man ever builds up a regenerated character except through struggles and annoyances and patient endurance. He has joys on the way if he is faithful in his endeavors; yet, after all, he meets with trials which justify the declaration of the Master when he said, "Think not that I am come to send peace: I came to send disturbance, excitement."

If this be so in the individual, how much more of necessity must it be so where men are collective—where men, instead of being as the individual is, one that in some sense controls his own self, collectively attempt to build up that which is to be the result of concurrent wills, as, for instance, in the household. You might trace the progress of civilization, and of Christianity I had almost said, by the way in which the table is regarded in the family. If there is anything in the world that is animal, it is eating. Every day, and three times a day, to convoke a whole household around a table to eat, is one of the most physical of things. If there is anything that pulls a man right down and back to the level of the beast again, it is eating and drinking. Where you see it in a savage, in a barbarous, or in a semi-civilized state, it is essentially, in all its accompaniments, an animal operation. Conceive how the old warriors, the old barons, in German forests held victorious feasts and gorged themselves with meat and drink, and became drunk with wine, and filled the night with revelry. This was their highest ideal of life. Vast leonine natures were they, who enjoyed only the utmost physical excitement on the field, and then indulged in the lowest conceivable form of animal enjoyment in the house.

Now, trace that all the way down to our day, in which,

when the morning summons comes, the mother descends, with a face like the rising sun in the east, full of sweetness and full of balm ; and then the children come down, hand in hand, the little ones carried or led by the larger ones, all frolicking ; and the father sits at the head of the table, and discourses, first with God in thanksgiving, and then with his loved ones, and, in a spirit of kindness, wit and repartee are mingled with the conversation, and all the family are enveloped in an atmosphere of affection and joyfulness. At length it has come to pass that all our best thoughts and feelings cluster about the table, and we have almost forgotten that there is any animalism connected with the act of eating. You used to have enough that was good to eat—particularly on Thanksgiving day, when especial bounties covered the board ; and yet when you think of father and mother at the household table you think not of eating, but of love. Eating in the family has been so spiritualized, it has been so transformed, that it has become poetic ; it has become a sentiment. The very lowest point in household economy has been so exalted by the development around about it of loves, and tastes, and inspirations, and refinements, that it has ceased to bring the slightest animal conception ; and if I am invited to tea, it is my friends that I am going to eat—not the food. If a friend invites me to dine with him at his house, it is a banquet of friendship that I go to. It is conversation that I go for—not bread, nor meat, nor wine, nor viands of any kind. These are not to be despised altogether, but they are certainly subordinate ; and they are so covered with blessed memories that they are well nigh forgotten. Woe be to that man who thinks oftener and more about his soup, and fish, and meats, and confections, and fruits, and wines and coffee, than about the social delights of his friend's house, or his own. He scarcely would be long a guest in any refined family. How have men learned to subdue the animal appetites, which are the most urgent and indispensable, and to clothe them, and train them to higher and nobler uses, so that they have ceased to be animal, so that when you speak of them they mean something higher—so that when you mention them *meat* means soul-meat, *bread*

means thought-bread, and all agreeable beverages mean inspirations of friendship!

In the building of the household, whether you look at it historically in the race-form or individually in the way in which things actually happen, the conception, the final idea, is entrancing, and one longs for such a consummation; but is it a thing so easy to be done? Is it so easy to bring up all the children so that they shall know how to harmonize with each other? Is it easy to bring them up so that those who are superior and those who are subordinate shall work harmoniously together? Is it easy to do it in larger families or small communities? Is it easy there to exalt the individuals so that ten or twenty children shall live harmoniously? Is it easy in a larger sphere to organize society itself so that men shall act on a plane of higher motives? The lower forms of society we know are animal, bestial; but as society is developed, and grows complex, and men seek more comprehensive ends, multiplying their emotions and aspirations, it becomes more and more difficult for them to live together. It is a slow and not easy work to teach men collectively to make good neighborhoods, and then out of good neighborhoods to make good communities or states; and then out of good communities or states to make good nations; and finally, to make the races, round and round the globe, cohere and interact upon each other by the higher Gospel principles. It is coming; but the road has been a rough one. Men have been polished by the hardest.

I often pick up from the soil in plowing (other men plow, and I pick up) a rounded stone, perfectly smooth. As I look at it an unclasped volume suggests itself. How came that stone so round? On the beach it has rolled and rolled for ages. Thrice ten thousand times torrents have turned it over and over and over again. It has been polished by rude violences. At last it rests in the soil, and I find it. It was not made round all at once. It has been rounded by the attrition of centuries. Ages have been employed in smoothing it.

As we go into life we find beneficent customs, and wise laws and policies. Where did they come from? Did they

drop down out of heaven? No; they came out of the woods, from savage men, through wars and insurrections. Prisons have taught men the value of liberty. Blood has cried out for humanity; tears have flowed in streams by which the iniquities of men have been gradually washed away; and we have come to even the imperfect betterment of modern civilization through toil, and wretchedness, and bondage, and the clanking of chains, and despotism, and the hardness of men. These things have taught men and developed them through long ages. Why God has dealt with the race as he has he never told me. I do not think he has told anybody else, though some think he has. These, however, are facts. Such is the way the race has gone and is going along the *Via Dolorosa* of tears and suffering. The whole world groans and travails in pain until now, and people say, "What is the matter?" I simply say, It is in accordance with the declaration of our Master, who said, "I did not come to give you instant peace; I did not come to give the full blessing of the gospel of deliverance at once: I came to bring the sword, to bring division, to bring trouble."

Whenever you bring out of a lower range of thought or faculty a higher ideal, there is a birth-process. Nothing is born into a higher state without birth-cries and birth-throes. Every time you go to animalism with something nobler than itself, that moment it begins to suffer, and must suffer.

I stood on the top of Amherst tower, and looked over all the great Connecticut valley. How tranquil it was! How beautiful it seemed! It was night,—the night of early morning,—and the mist like silver lay in the most perfect tranquillity. If night had always brooded over it, perhaps it never would have been disturbed; and it was not until the sun came up, and light and warmth began to strike in, that slowly there were seen mighty undulations, and little by little the mass broke up into cloud-forms; and these, as the light and warmth grew stronger, gradually rose in wreaths and disappeared. If the sun had kept down, I know not but that the fog would have remained forever; but the moment the morning light struck its rays through it, as if in torment it writhed and passed away.

So it is with ignorance, and all the lower forms of human experience. So long as they lie in darkness they are content and do not suffer; but the moment you let the light of civilization and Christianity into them, instantly there is suffering, and they lift themselves little by little, and sway hither and thither, and give place to something brighter and better.

The view which I have thus briefly illustrated ought to give us a new conception, in the first place, of the methods of divine providence in relation to human society and the ends to be gained. We are too apt to suppose that national life, as it is founded in the necessities of the individual and of men collectively, is of God in such a sense that God gave laws directly, instead of giving a nature that would itself evolve laws. We are apt to wonder why God has permitted oppressive and despotic governments; but if it be true that God gives the seed, and stimulates its growth, and it is obliged to develop itself through various stages, it is just as true that all national life has developed itself through various stages.

The conflict that has taken place has not been economical; there has been more suffering than was necessary for the results that have been gained; men have been ignorant of the reasons of distress and suffering; the world have been left to find out the best way they could, and it has been a stumbling way at best; mankind have learned by blunders and tentative processes; the world has lived empirically, and it has stumbled like a blind man; and communities and nations have gone through wide circuits when they might with a few steps have traveled the same distance. They have turned again and again upon their own paths, working up by spirals almost endlessly extended; and if you were to look simply upon the outer forms of human society, and were to believe that there is an immediate Providence, and that God is working for quick ends, it would minister to skepticism; but if you believe, on the other hand, in the genius that lies hidden in our text—namely, that the final end is divine, and that the intermediate steps are to evolve themselves—there will be reason for hope and confidence. There is a Power that watches over races and nations; and

the end will be glorious ; but the intermediate stages may be tempestuous. All we have a right to ask is, that the consummation of things shall be satisfying.

If the other extreme is stormy, if there is to be a final result that is to be forever darker than midnight, and fiercer than whirlwinds in the tropics, then we have no philosophy that can account for the condition of things here ; but if the world is working its way, slowly it may be, with needless suffering perhaps, but nevertheless to a grand consummation in the future that will be satisfying, then we can account in a measure for the intermediate steps, and can be patient with them. All that we want is to know that the building shall go up, and that what is rude now shall be symmetrical and perfect then.

Even the church has been subject to precisely the same law that has fallen upon the individual, upon the family, upon communities, and upon nations. The truth itself was not born all at once. All truth was not born with Adam, or with Abraham, or with Isaac, or with Jacob. Some truths have come from them that might as well have been still-born. All truth was not born with our Saviour. He did not tell us everything. What he did tell us we do not take in fully ; and why should he tell us more ? It would not have fallen upon minds that could have comprehended it. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." There is, and there can be, no reason for having a revelation that transcends the capacity of men to understand.

We have our senses of sight, of smell, of taste, of hearing and of touch ; and suppose there were two other senses that we had not ; suppose there were other doors through which knowledge came into the mind ; and suppose there should be a revelation, a knowledge of which could come into our minds only through those undeveloped doors, what use would that revelation be to us ? What use would be a revelation of something that should be different from anything that appeals to our sense of hearing, or smelling, or tasting, or feeling or seeing ? Such a revelation would be thrown away upon us. And an inspired revelation is limited to the capacity to receive of the person to whom it is sent.

All truth was not, therefore, revealed in the first seed-forms. The good of heaven, we are told by the Master himself, is like the smallest of all seeds, that of the oriental mustard; but when it is grown it becomes a tree large enough for the birds to lodge in its branches.

The truths of an early period, in their animal form, have gone on developing and developing and developing; and it is the misunderstanding of them at the present day that leads to such charges and recriminations as are indulged in between man and man. I preach to you certain truths which I find involved in experience, in society, in history; I preach to you the explanation of things that go far beyond the words of the Book; and people say, "You ought to stand by the word and testimony; you ought to stick to the Bible; you have no right to go out of it and teach of moral things."

But I say that the Bible is full of seed—divine truths that are merely in the seed-form. In order to understand them we must look and see how they grow, and not depend for our knowledge of them upon any philosophizing about them. The thing itself is what we want to see. The Bible cannot tell me what regeneration is. It can tell me that there is regeneration, that it is a great change, and that it leads a man from a lower to a higher plane; but if I would know what the actual thing is I must experience it in myself. A man who undertakes to learn moral truths by reading the Bible and nothing else is like a man who undertakes to go as captain or navigator to Asia in a steamship, and never goes out of the cabin to look at the stars, or winds, or currents, but only looks at the chart. Now, the chart is not meant to be the ocean itself: it is meant to be simply an index of what there is on the ocean; and if the chart says, "There is a rock," a man is a fool to be satisfied with seeing the picture when he can look over the bow and see the rock and avoid it.

The light of God spoken of in the Bible shines from the divine soul to sustain the child, the aged, all people, in their different vicissitudes; it is working in its own way, is bringing out in vital forms faith, and hope, and courage, and elements of civilization of every kind; but these qualities are not in the Bible. The Bible says "Babies"; but there are

not any babies in the Bible. The Bible says "Men"; where are the armies, and where are the citizens? They are outside of it and must be sought there.

Look at the church, and the truths that have been preached by the church. What have been the facts? I know that many persons think the church in primitive times was perfect. That is as absurd as to suppose that Adam was a perfect man in the garden of Eden. There never was a boy yet that knew anything without learning it. There never was a man that was informed at the start, having had no training nor experience. Adam a perfect man? A perfect Adam, without instruction or experience, or anything whatever? He must have been a different sort of man from any that we know anything about or ever dreamed of. When we attempt to make our children perfect we bring them up very different by from the way in which he was brought up; and yet we think it possible for a man to have been perfect whose faculties had no education, who was constantly without experience, and who came to full vitality and maturity without saying or doing anything worth recording, except to mind his wife and be kicked out of Paradise. The life of a perfect man consist in doing wrong? Why, it is a dream. It is a vision of the fancy. There is no such perfection as that.

Well, in a subsequent age, was that perfection unfolded in the patriarchs? Were Isaac and Jacob perfect? They were venerable; they were magnificent figure-heads of the past; by ancient nations they were regarded as heroes, and they were heroes as compared with the men around about them; but Jacob's conduct certainly will not bear investigation. His dealings with his brother and his father-in-law cannot be justified. Neither can his treatment of neighboring nations about him. Bismarek is not a circumstance to him.

If you come further down, and look at the history of the Jewish church, was there any perfect development of religious life, or any perfect unfolding of spiritual truth, by that church?

If you come still further down, to the time of our Saviour, the one man above all men, the divine man, and look at the

church that he is supposed to have framed, was there any perfection brought forth? But he had no church in his own life-time. He was a Jew. He worshiped in the temple and in the synagogue like any other Jew. And the disciples did the same thing. For forty years those Christians who were in Palestine continued to be a part of the Jewish church. And it is that early period that men look back to as perfect. It was as rude as it could be. It was subject to precisely the same law of development through experience that this age is. The knowledge of men at that time was very small, and their moral sense was very small. Look at the epistle to the Corinthians, where the apostle had to instruct men that incest was not a virtue, that getting drunk at the Lord's Supper was wrong, and ten thousand other things that we should be ashamed to mention in a Bible class; and are they to be held up as models of perfection? For three hundred years those questions on which a man's orthodoxy depends to-day were not agitated, and had no existence.

The church has been developing in spite of itself; but its greatest efforts have been to take and keep a fixed form. Such a policy pursued with a tree would make it impossible for it to grow. The moment you fix things and make them permanent, you reduce them to the level of a stone. Stones do not grow, but living things do; and a church, in its teachings and economies, should unfold a new light by growing. It is a shame if, after generations, experience does not bring us into life at a higher point.

People say, "Do you suppose you are wiser than your father was?" I ought to be. God meant that I should be, or else I should not have had a father whose advantages were transmitted to me.

Do I despise the lower steps because they are at the bottom and not at the top? No. I value them as a means of getting higher; but some men would sit down on the lower steps, and say, "These stairs are so sacred that I am not going to leave them."

If man, by this false view, this erroneous philosophy of life and growth and of the incipient conditions of development as compared with the ideal and final conditions, is

thrown into skepticism and doubt, it seems to me that every noble soul ought to find a way back again; and I think that in these declarations of our Master we are not simply to say, "These are metaphorical; they are extravagant; we cannot understand them": we are rather to apply to them the light of history and experience, and make them personally useful to ourselves.

Now, the whole human race, human nature, religion, Christian character—these are all subject to the same law of growth, of trouble and of suffering. When I ask you to come into the kingdom of God I do not ask you to come into sorrow, but I know you will have to go through more or less sorrow. We are to remember, however, that the fidelity of the ancestors is transmitted to the posterity. As God has visited the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations, so also the virtues of our ancestors have been accumulating, and coming down to us, and giving us a better starting ground, a better chance, more facility; and it is for us to be grateful for the blessings we enjoy, and avail ourselves of them as helps by which to rise to a higher plane than our fathers, with their more limited light and knowledge, could reach.

The struggles of all men are not alike. But somewhere you will have to struggle. Every man finds trials of his own at the point at which he is brought into life. The accumulations of his ancestors, good or bad, are represented in him, and he has to take them, and go on and up as best he can. And the way is everlasting. The unfolding is infinite. His suffering may make him nobler and better, but he is going to suffer. He will have strife, and burden-bearing, and cross-bearing. The disciple is not better than the Master, who also suffered, and who was tempted in all points, yet without sin, that he might be a perfect Leader among the brethren, taking their nature, bearing as they bore, and unfolding as they unfolded. I do not, therefore, call you to immediate blessedness: I call you to attainment. I invite you to the commencement of Christian unfolding. I invite you to the beginning of that large manhood which includes conscience, honor, truth, love, sympathy and

aspiration, in all things—in family life, in friendship, in business, in Christian fellowship. Refuse to adopt low standards of duty. Exalt your conceptions of virtue. I have in my study the engraving of an altar-piece from one of the old German churches. The altar is of carved wood. On the front, as the central figure, is the exquisite form of the Virgin Mary looking sweet in her simplicity and celestial beauty. Above her is the typical form of a dove, representing the Holy Ghost. On the right and on the left are the Father and the Son. There are venerable, grand human figures looking with intent interest on the Virgin. Beneath are carved angels, and at the ends of the altar are the angels of the Annunciation and the Salutation. All around these is a vine. The whole is cut in oak; and the workmanship is most exquisite.

Now, I can imagine that, as the workmen, having completed this altar, were conveying it to the church, an old oak tree, looking at it, might have said, "Why, that is just what I have been desiring to be like. How beautiful it is!" "Thou mayest be like it," say the architect and artist. "Will you make me like that?" "Certainly." So some morning out goes the axman, and commences chopping at the root. Down looks the oak, and cries, "Stop!" "Why should I stop?" says the axman. "I am reserved." "Yes, you are reserved." "I am to be made into a magnificent altar-piece." "Yes, I know it." The axman still swings his ax, and down comes the two-hundred-years-old oak; and it moans, and groans, and says, "What a fool I was to want to be an altar-piece! I have always been told that aspiration would lead me into trouble, and here I am." Then comes the sawyer, and puts the rude ripping teeth of his saw on the tree, and says, "This is the way to glory;" and the old oak sighs, and says, "Fool that I am, I have got to take it." At last it is sawed into planks, and then it is put into a kiln and dried under fierce heats, till the oak does not know itself. And then, as if its torment would never end, when it is thoroughly dried, it is taken and, as if no respect were paid to its feelings, marked, and scratched, and scraped, and pierced, and gouged, and scooped, and scalloped; and at

length you begin to see the rude outlines of the figures ; and as the work goes on there are seen the faces, and there is the divine face, and here is the exquisite dove, and at last the oak says, " Lord, I perceive, I perceive ; not my will, but thine, be done." And ere long the altar is completed, and stands in the cathedral, and prayers are said before it, and God's people stand about it. Oh ! it is beautiful, but ah, what a road it had to go over ! Oh, the divinity that is in it ! but ah, the birth which led to that divinity !

You want to be noble, eminent Christians, do you ? Well, then, do not complain of the ax, of the saw, of the gouge, nor of the cutting knife. You are badgered here and there in life : what is the result ? I do not care so much that you go through suffering : what is it doing for you ? Is it making you better, or worse ? Is it making you hard and unyielding, or is it making you easy to be entreated and kind ? You are going through experiences which are like thorns piercing you : are they teaching you love and aspiration, and giving you a large sympathy for men ? Are they making you more pitiful and tender and helpful toward people who are below you, and are undeveloped ? Are they fitting you for the rest that remaineth for the people of God ? or, have you a dull content in munching your daily victuals ? Is suffering making you a man in Christ Jesus ? Have you a presage of the angelic state ? Have you a sense of things unseen and untaught ? Have you a willingness to live or die ? Is your life something more than the round horizon that you see here ? Are men your masters, or is God your Master ? Do you fear the devil, or so love yourself that the devil has no domination over you ? Are you a victor while you are conquered ? Are you a monarch while you are trodden down ?

By faith we reign. By hope we have eternal fruition. The fruits hang over the battlements, I know ; and the leaves for the healing of the nations are trouble, and bitterness, and disappointment. Are they making you better ? God knows, and you ought to know. If you are becoming better, thank God for trouble. " Take my yoke upon you and learn of me," said Jesus, " for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

ALMIGHTY God, be gracious to these dear little children. Thou hast sent them forth as birds unfledged into the field and into the forest. Deliver them from their enemies. Let them not be overtaken and torn by cruel talons. We beseech of thee that their lives may be spared; that they may grow up in health, in strength of body, in strength of mind, and in strength of moral principles; that they may be good children, and a comfort to their parents in their age; that they may be virtuous citizens, and Christians that shall adorn the doctrine of their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Give wisdom to these parents that they may be exercised in all patience, in all fidelity of instruction, and in all wisdom in their mode of teaching. Grant that their children and they may be united in a common hope; and growing in the nurture and admonition of the Lord may they twine about each other, and be as one vine. May all the households that are represented in this congregation be households of faith. Therein may the spirit of the Lord abide; and abiding, may there be peace, and light, and joy. If there come great trouble may it be borne in such a victorious way that in the end they shall be comforted and made glad.

We pray that thou wilt grant to all those who sit in darkness in their households the light of thy presence. Have compassion upon mourning fathers and mothers who are in deep affliction; upon those who are joined together in the sacred services of trouble, in the school of sorrow, where thou dost deal most faithfully with thy beloved. Grant that parents who thus walk before thee in the probation of eternal life may have comfort and consolation, and believe that thou wilt not consume them though the furnace be hot, nor suffer them to be swept away though the flood be strong.

Draw near to all those who are contesting their way in this world, burdened with care, overtaken by unexpected disasters and disappointments, bearing heavy burdens, and carrying yokes that are not easy. May they have manhood ministered to them. May it be a comfort to them to know that their heavenly Father thinketh of them, and that day by day the sources of their strength are supplied from on high. May they learn to be weaned from an inordinate love of things present. May they learn that here they have no abiding city. May they seek one that hath foundations far above the reach of tides. May they desire to sit beneath those trees of life which no storm shall shake.

Bless all churches, and schools, and seminaries of learning of every kind; and may all those who diffuse knowledge be themselves blessed of God. We pray for those who are distributing the word of life through books and newspapers. Sanctify, we pray thee, these great instruments of power in our land, and may they carry intelligence to the nobler part of man, and disown the things which minister to malice, to evil and to corruption. And we beseech of thee, if it must needs be that there shall be fire and burning, and

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\* Immediately following the baptism of children.

that excitement shall wax warm, that the comely things of truth may gain thereby. May poison weeds not grow. May the nature of Christian industry prune the vines and cause them to bear abundantly gracious clusters of divine truth. May all the overturnings, and collisions, and contentions, and disasters that afflict men be as the smith's hammer, and beat out those forms and uses which shall be for the benefit of men, and to the glory of God.

We pray that thou wilt spread abroad light and knowledge in all the earth. Lift up those nations that are cast down. Let the darkness flee away from the coming of the Sun of Righteousness. May the long night at last find its dawning, and the morning come, and thy predicted glory begin to move through the earth.

We pray that nations may learn war no more, and torment each other no more; and that the jealousy of the strong may no more tread under foot the weak. Grant that all nations may learn the royal law of divine love. Let thy kingdom come and let thy will be done upon earth as it is in heaven.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, open thy Word in our hearts. Write there the mystery of truth. Communicate thyself to us personally—to each as he needs. Be as gracious to us as the mother is to her little children, O our Father which art in heaven; and grant that we may so trust thee as that there shall not be a robber that can take away heaven or thee from us. If God be for us, who can be against us? Illumine the dark ways of life. Have pity on the ignorant and on the poor. Teach us to have pity. May we learn how to sacrifice ourselves as thou didst sacrifice thyself, and how to live for others as thou didst live for others. And when thou shalt have perfected thy work by the different processes by which thou art developing us, wilt thou be pleased to give us a glorious translation to that rest which remaineth for the people of God. And to thy name, O Father! O Lord Jesus! O Divine Spirit of comfort! we will give the praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

# SAVED BY GRACE.

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“ For by grace are ye saved ; through faith and that not of your selves : it is the gift of God.”—EPH. ii. 8.

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Of necessity all divine revelation or teaching has a limitation which goes far to determine the method of instruction in every age. There can be no other teaching except such as is commensurate with the faculty, the intelligence, and the moral condition of those to whom the teaching is sent. Experience also avouches that in teaching men, their ideas, their institutions, their customs, the reigning philosophies of the time, will have much to do in determining the manner and the form of instruction. We see this to be so, viewed not only philosophically but historically. Such is the mode in which moral truth has been developed. It has conformed itself as to methods, as to magnitudes, if I may so say, to the want or the receptive power of the age in which it came to men. In the most ancient time we discern a mode of teaching very different from that which obtained during the period of the prophets ; and the instruction derived from them is very different in its adaptations and methods from that which was given by Jesus Christ. So, when the apostle to the Gentiles went forth preaching the great substantial truths of Christ, you will discern very clearly that when he preached to the Jews he adapted himself to them, through figures, through language, through illustrations, through manners and customs which they understood ; but when he went to Athens he conformed his mode of address to the intellectual habits and perceptions of the Greeks. At Corinth, in his letters to the various

Grecian colonial churches, and everywhere among the Jews in their synagogues, he adapted his instruction to the reigning ideas of those to whom he spake.

Now, the consequence is this : that in every age, among free and intelligent people who are raised above lethargy and general death, there are certain modes of conception, certain degrees of knowledge, derived from science, from philosophy, and from history, from the social conditions in which men live, from the nature of their government, or from those habits which have been established by climate or occupation, so that insensibly, and almost without recognition, different nations in different periods have their own styles of thought ; and springing from those is the necessity of adapting to each age, according to its mode of thought, the great substantial truths which have been held in the Christian church. At a time when royalty expressed the highest conception of dignity and beauty, there were derived from royalty certain ideas that would be more intelligible to those who were bred under royal institutions than to any others. The glory of sovereignty was a thing in which the subjects of Solomon had a very near and close sympathy ; but what is there in the glory of sovereignty that is sweet to a man who has been brought up in democratic New England or democratic America—save through the association of history or poetry ? We have been trained by our institutions, not so much to center the glory of the state in its representative head, making him magnificent for the sake of the reflection of his glory upon the people : we have a new political idea ; we are attempting to unfold and develop a pure state at the bottom, rather than at the top, and to make mankind more worthy, more powerful, not declaring, as the ancients did, that God gives power to the king, and that the king gives privilege to the people under him, but declaring the king to be gone, and aristocracy to be gone—declaring that God gives power to the *mass* of men, that education springs up from them, that government springs from them, and that all honors and dignities spring from them. So there has been a perfect revolution of ideas ; and if you attempt to talk to us in the language of the original condition

of men, you have to construe it so that sovereignty shall mean according to our democratic ideas what it used to mean to the ancients according to their royal conditions and notions.

It is this subtle process of translation, both linguistic and philosophical, that makes preaching necessary; and it is this that should lead every preacher to adapt himself and the Gospel to the particular characteristics of the age in which he lives. We are living in a transitional period. Everybody is saying that old institutions are relaxing, that customs are changing, that ideas are developing differently, that new philosophies are coming in, and that science occupies a position in relation to education which it never did before. The study of man is conducted on entirely different principles; and to go on, under such circumstances, and teach in simply the old language and phrases, is not to teach at all, or is to teach falsely.

On the other hand, to adapt certain great truths, that will be true until time shall end, to the particular forms or modes of thought in any particular age is not to destroy those truths, nor to take them away: it is to bring them under new phases and into new points of view, so that they shall convey the same sense of *truth* to men that they formerly did when they were taught according to the phraseology, the customs and the figures which belonged to the earlier age.

Now, it has been taught that all men are sinful, and upon that has been raised I know not how many theories of how they came to be sinful, and of what was the origin of evil. The tomes written on that simple subject would fill this house full. Where did evil come from? Was sin of God or of the devil? Why did God permit it to enter the world? Was he not free? Was he limited? Was there a division of power between him and his old antagonist of evil? Or, if he permitted sin, why did he permit it? Was it the necessary means of the greatest good? So says one school; and thereupon a long controversy ensues. "Is there such a thing as sin anyhow?" says another; and thereupon great latitudes and great mischiefs follow.

Now, in our age, however much men may seek to cover up these questions, such is the intelligence among the great mass of the common people, such is the habit of discussion in magazines and newspapers of great subjects like these, such especially, is the diffusion of scientific knowledge, such is the investigation into the nature of man, his physical nature, his social nature, his moral nature,—such is the study into the conditions which surround him in life, and the influences which are brought to bear upon him, that they cannot be covered up. In other words, the thorough, scientific study of human nature is going on, and it will not stop. It is going to be pressed clear through. It is diffused among the common people. They are reading and thinking; and if the church is afraid that heretical and heterodox notions will prevail, and insists upon the old terminology, and shuts out the light of modern knowledge on this subject, what will the result be? It will be that men will not go to church; or that, if they go, they will go for something else besides instruction. Either they will stay away, as more and more they are doing (at any rate that is the complaint), or they will go and make fatal divisions. They will go to church as a certain sort of charm, and will yield a kind of compliance which they think perhaps has some mysterious virtue in it, and inures to respectability, while they will underneath carry on their own thoughts and feelings; and there will be a division between men's belief and their conduct. It is much better, therefore, that the great truths of the Gospel should receive interpretation according to the generation in which they are taught.

But is not a truth a truth forever, and the same? No, it is not. Why, suppose I were to say of Agriculture that it changes from age to age? What! does nature change? Was not Agriculture in the earliest periods in Greece, and in Rome, and in mediæval Europe down to our time, substantially the same? No: certain great laws of nature were always conformed to, but development under these laws was different; so that the description of Agriculture in one age is not the description of it in another.

The question of man's sinfulness has been largely dis-

cussed. It has been taken for granted that men were sinful. Are they? It has been said that they were universally sinful. Are they? It has been said that they were depraved totally. Are they? These are fair questions, and they are questions that are very largely debated. Some men (and they are esteemed the most orthodox) hold that men are polluted, thoroughly undone, sinful in every part and particular of their nature. Others speak of the dignity of human nature, and of the beauty of the hearts of men before God. They surround the intelligence and moral sense of man with all majestic phrases. I belong to the first class; I believe that all mankind are sinful; and yet, I cannot accept the old terminology, and say that men are "totally depraved." I cannot say, speaking philosophically, that men are polluted. In the mood of profound contrition and grief, using the language of feeling, which is always a language of extravagance and of poetry, I can say that I am vile; but I cannot follow that out in the language of philosophy, and say "I am vile." In the language of emotion, I can say, "We are polluted"; but when I come to the exact philosophical statement of facts I cannot say that I think all men are polluted. I cannot use that terminology. The language of emotion is not the language of fact, nor the language of philosophy. It is something larger and different. In its place it is useful, and when first used and fresh used, like all symbolism, it is good; but the moment it becomes common by repetition it is false.

If, when I am overwhelmed by an ideal sense of the grandeur of God and nature, I call myself a worm of the dust, it is true, and I do not half express what I feel; but if I come in here and say to you, literally, "You are worms of the dust," is that justified by fact? is it justified by wisdom? The incongruity is such that men, though they do not want to give up the old canons and doctrines of the church, hold on to their orthodoxy as it were with their left hand, but go on preaching as things seem to them, almost never using what they have professed to believe, unless it be in Presbytery or Convention where some man's character is involved, and where all their orthodoxy comes out. Ordinarily, and for the

most part, they teach according to the facts of life, and according to the practical developments of truth as they see them. And that is what they ought to do.

Now, is no liberty to be permitted to a man by which his orthodoxy and common preaching shall run together, one helping the other? One school has held that mankind were brought into this world through a federal head, Adam, and that all men fell in Adam; and if that is propounded as a literal historical fact, then the inferences to be deduced from it are many: First, that we inherit a corrupt nature—a nature that from birth and from inherent necessity goes wrong. If that be so, then we are obliged to hold that the supreme Governor of the universe created a pair, and put them in the Garden of Eden, where, without any experience whatever as to right and wrong, they sinned by taking what their senses wanted—fruit—against the Commandment; that for thus sinning, without knowledge, and in obedience to their impetuous desire, their whole posterity was cursed; and that this God of love and wisdom has been pouring out that posterity, myriads upon myriads, the stream forever and ever spreading, and widening, and deepening; and that not only have these been inheriting penalty on account of the sin of their first parents, with which they had nothing whatever to do, but that after this life they are to inherit a nature which they could not rectify, and with which they had nothing to do; and that, suffering by reason of a corruption which they did not bring upon themselves, and which they had no power to correct, they were to be eternally lost in the world to come.

This scheme of the sinfulness of man, to have been held in ages before light dawned; to have been held because something had to be framed as a philosophical explanation; to have been held before men's rights were known, and before society was organized on any thing like a high and noble basis; to have been held when men were cramped and confined, and when manners and customs were such that men did not feel the acerbity and awfulness of such ascriptions, is not a matter of surprise. I do not wonder that it was held in the early ages; and those ages are not to be derided; that

scheme is not to be covered with obloquy, for it was a scheme of men in the childhood of reason; but in our day to preach such a scheme is to blaspheme the name of the Highest. To tell me that I am to love a being who damns myriads of men beyond all computation because they inherit a corrupt nature, which they had nothing to do with corrupting, from their first parents in the famous Garden of Eden—to tell me that, is an infinite violation of every conception which we have of rectitude of character, and rectitude of government.

But we have been educated in the spirit of the Gospel. Our ideas have been enlarged as to what a man should be, as to what a magistrate should be, and as to what a father should be. We have not gone toward barbarism: we have gone toward Christianity; and we are going toward Christianity. Every virtue becomes more radiant as the world advances, every trait of manliness and nobility becomes more resplendent; and we demand more of the individual, of the magistrate, and of the parent.

Now, taking the dignity and spirit of Christianity, we have a right to demand that the supremacy of the universe should center in a being who is not inferior to what we see developed in the household or in the state—in a being that is transcendently superior to any that earth has produced; and that that superiority shall consist, not in brute power, not in arbitrary will, not in the feeling, “I can, and therefore I may;” but in this: “I am the Lord God, slow to anger, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and” [best of all, as showing that this is done, not from moral laxity, but as a part of that great scheme by which men are brought up from animalism,] I will by no means clear the guilty.” In other words, “Pain and penalty for the violated law under all providences shall pursue men in the grand scheme that I am supervising, by which all men shall live, and grow, and expand.”

I can worship a God who has excellences that make my father and mother dear, and that make me love moral heroes or moral heroism; but to clothe a God with those traits which in human histories have been the attributes of Neros

and Caligulas, and which we detest in human righteous governments, is the broad road to infidelity. It is tempting every man, by the best part of his own nature, to revolt from what is called truth, if he does not know that it is not true. So he is often thrown away by his best instincts from the church; and he thinks he is infidel, whereas he is a better Christian in the thought of God than many that are Christian teachers.

“But, on the other hand, if you set aside any historical origin of this kind of man’s sinfulness, what have you to propose in its stead?” I do not propose anything except simply what I see. “And what do you see?” What has the world seen? I think, whatever may be men’s theories or philosophies, the facts of history will state with louder and clearer emphasis from this time on, that the human race came upon the globe at an extremely low point. Men were created, I will say (not following the mere imaginations or theories of scientific men) at the very minimum point of humanity—as near to zero as it is possible for human beings to live. Historically, the unfolding of men has been very gradual; and, beginning with very little knowledge, and with still less function, they have come up in the knowledge, for instance, of agriculture, of the mechanic arts, of legislation, of manufacturing industries, of commerce, of civil polity, of the organization of men into states, and of war. There has been a steady growth from a low seminal point up to the present condition of humanity, the world over; and instead of men giving evidence of having fallen from a very high state of perfection, they give evidence, of the most unquestionable character, that they came from the slenderest point. So that when we look at the facts, they are these: that man appears to have been created at the bottom; that the divine scheme has been to take men at their germinant point, at the alphabet of their faculties, and, little by little, spell out civilization by gradual instruction, till the present day; this brings them into the analogy of the development of the whole universe, as science is revealing it to us now.

But look at the actual condition of the race to-day. How are men brought into life? There will be, before the

sun goes down, a thousand children born in Africa, that were not born when you came here this morning. How are they born? With "original righteousness," as the theologians call it? Those black bushmen's children, those wild African children, those children of northern Africans under Moham-medan influences; those thousand children born into life to-day—were they stopped and asked how they would like to be born? Was a choice given them? No; they were pushed into life without consciousness, without faculty, with nothing but germs. They are what buds are to-day on trees that look forward to next summer, wrapped up tight. And how endowed? Bringing in with them the accumulated tendencies and traits of their parents. Are they to blame? When they first begin to grow they are as animals. Their first function is eating, drinking, sleeping—nothing more. As they grow a little, combativeness, self-defense, and such lower tendencies come in. They are born into the depths of darkness, never hearing the sound of the church bell or the organ's tone, never having the advantage of orthodox teaching, never listening to the preacher's voice, living in the bush or wilderness, or wherever they are, being like the lion's cubs—whelped! Such is their condition.

Now, did these children fall from original righteousness? How were they created? They were created, as I suppose their ancestors were, simply a bundle of capacities, depending for their development upon the institutions which they should come under, upon the men they should meet, and upon the knowledge which they should obtain. That is the real fact, I may say, in respect to nine out of every ten, yes, ninety-nine out of every hundred, of the people on the globe to-day; and when you come, not to look at what theologians say, not to look at the ingenious construction of texts, but to open your eyes and look on the world as God made it, and as it lies right before you, how do men enter upon this life? Do they come in nobles, heroes, saints? Are they sprung from the divine mint shining like silver dollars from the die, and bearing the image and superscription of God, ready for universal circulation? Do not individual men come into life, in the vast majority of cases, at an extremely low point?

and when you look back to the beginning, do you not see that the races have risen up by development from that low point? The whole creation beholds men born into life at a low stage, and subject to growth, development, education, unfolding.

It is on this ground that I say men are sinful—that is to say, as I use the term “sinful.” It is a term often used in a sense so vague and general that it will not bear to be measured with any literalness; but I hold that men are born into life without what is called “original righteousness.” This is defined in the Catechism as one of the signs and tokens of depravity. If you say that it is one of the signs and concomitants of inferiority, I agree with you. That is so; men are born not only without original righteousness, but without anything. When born they cannot sing; they cannot talk; they cannot walk; they cannot work; they cannot think; they cannot feel. They are at zero when they are born. They can cry; they can suck; they can sleep, and that is the sum total of their functions. When, therefore, the Catechism says that men were born without righteousness, it makes that a specific which should be a generic. They were born, by the divine decree, at the bottom; and it was the divine purpose that they should unfold and come up. Early writers on this subject were after the truth; in part they apprehended it, but they did not know how to state it. It is true that in the divine wisdom it was thought better that the race should start at the bottom and come up by unfolding. We know that was the decree, because that has been the universal fact. When, therefore, men are said to be imperfect, all creation rises and says, “Yes.” Call for the vote of high and low, bond and free, black and white, the world around, and there would not be an unlifted hand, if the question be, Are not men born with infirmity?—that is, without strength, weak, at the bottom?

Come with me. I will dismiss for the moment that mass of outlying humanity, with no literature, no institutions, the denizens of the wilderness; I will leave them out, as perhaps overcharging the picture; I will take men as they exist in civilized or semi-civilized society. Are those men who exist

on the higher planes of life living, in fact, according to the physical laws of their condition? It may be said that men do not know their own structure, that they are ignorant of the organs of their body, and of the functions of these organs; and that is true; but however you may limit or define it, the question is this: Are not men, as they come up, even regarding them from a physical standpoint, continually violating the conditions implied in their creation? In their best development, in their highest conduct, do they not fall short of even the physical law represented in them and in their surroundings? There can be no doubt about that. By ignorance children would stumble on every hand if it were not for the righteousness of the parents—that is, if it were not for their forethought and caution. It is by reason of the parent's intervention that the child escapes sickness and death, and grows to manhood. And in manhood, taking men as they live in society, when you look at their food, and sleep, and various dissipations and exertions, how few there are that live according to the physical law of obedience?

Try them by the social standard. How many men can say, "I am perfect," even according to the requirements of social life, which are comparatively low? How many men feel that they give all that is demanded of them by society? How many feel that they refrain from all that society has a right to expect that they will refrain from? In exalted hours, when they can measure manhood by a higher standard than that of the animal, how many men feel that they have been as good fathers and husbands and brothers and neighbors as they say they have been, when ministers talk to them?—for what men say when they are arguing is one thing, and what men think in their better moments is another thing.

Take the standard of citizenship, measuring by what the state requires, and there is no man who feels that he comes up to it. The more a man he is, the more he feels that that standard is so high that he cannot reach it with all his striving and unfolding. Even as a citizen he is conscious that he is filled with mistakes, with ignorances, with inaptitudes, and with all manner of non-observances.

Now, if you introduce a higher standard, and measure a

man, not by his physical structure, nor by his social relations, nor by his relations as a citizen to government and law, but by the divine ideal of perfect rectitude as represented in God, let any man ask himself, in a moment of rationality, "Do I live according to this standard?" and he will perceive that he fails utterly to reach it. It is when men measure themselves in this way, looking upward, that they feel inclined to lay their hand on their mouth, and their mouth in the dust, and say, "Unclean! unclean!"

How much of this depends upon their condition for which they are not responsible, is one question; but I shall not discuss it, because, although every man feels that a great deal depends upon knowledge, custom, circumstances and various influences about him, in consideration of which a large deduction should be made, yet, after all, every man knows that where his personality comes in he has fallen short of his knowledge, and moral sense, and purpose, and possibility.

I look at the oak that has been growing in old Virginia in the balmy temperate zone—the best zone on the globe—and see what a magnificent creature that tree is, which spreads itself abroad as if it would touch the east and the west, which stands triumphant over winter, which has withstood a hundred thousand storms, which has been the benefactor of uncounted herds that found shelter beneath it, and which has been the home and temple of myriads of birds that have sat in its branches and sung there; looking at it, I wonder not that the old Druids thought God lived in such places. But I go north till I come to the borders of the frigid zone, and there I find another tree of precisely the same species. I could take my cloak and cover it up. It is a hundred years old; but it is dwarfed, and scraggy, and undeveloped. Yet, small pigmy oak as it is, it is own brother to that vast tree of the temperate zone. Now, hear it tell its story: "I, too, would have grown; but the winter has pinched my roots; storms have abused my branches; I have seen every year but about four or six weeks of sunshine, pale and poor; and it is not my fault that I have grown so little." No, poor thing! it is not your *fault*; but it is your *fact*. There you are, and you are not any bigger than you are. You may say that there

is this, that or the other reason for your not being larger, but *there you are!*

Now, I say in respect to men : They may give a thousand reasons for their dwarfed condition, for their low moral state, for their lack of civilization, for their lack of refinement ; nevertheless, there they are ; and though the punitive sentence of violated law may not be issued against them, the fact remains that they are not any bigger than they are, and that they are small and undeveloped. Is not that fact in its own inherent nature enough ?

When, therefore (for now I pass to the next point), salvation is offered to the human race, what is Salvation, that it can be offered to such creatures as these ? We dispose of that very summarily in our popular theology. Salvation ? That is plain enough : You do not go to hell, and you do go to heaven—as if there were two places. Such four-square physical notions as these have very largely prevailed with regard to salvation.

As respects a sentient being, a thinking being, a being endowed with infinite expansibility, a being such as man is, what must salvation be ? Does it consist simply in the fact that he is not hereafter to be a creature of exquisite pain, and is to be a creature of exquisite joy ? That may be true, but does it at all adequately describe or hint at the essence of salvation ?

I set out as a missionary, and go north, among the Kam-schatkans, and win to my confidence a young fellow, bright and apprehensive ; and I talk to him, and draw a contrast, as near as I can, between what he has been used to and what I have been used to. As his intelligence lies largely in his sensuous nature, I try to contrast his underground, filthy hole which he calls a house, with that which we call a house. I talk to him about room upon room all above ground ; and he shivers at the idea of having a house above ground, judging from his Kam-schatkan experience that we must be very cold ; but I tell him of the artificial summer that we create down cellar, by which we warm the rooms. I tell him, likewise, of sofas, and chairs, and tables, and pictures, and carpets ; but what conception can he form of these

things who has seen nothing but that filthy, fish-stinking hole in which he lives? How can I frame in his mind a conception of that which is so superior to anything that ever came within his observation?

At last, when he has some glimmering conception of that, I say, "But this is the mere exterior: I am going to take you to civilization and refinement." So I try to describe to him commerce and manufacturing industry; I try to describe to him civil polity; but how little does he know about these things! What can he measure them by except the limited experience of a Kamschatkan? I say to him, in short, "Well, now, what are the worst things that you can think of?" "Oh!" he says, "the worst things that I can think of are being almost frozen and almost starved." "Well," I say, "when you come with me, you will never know cold again, and you will never know hunger again." His face brightens, and he says, "Oh! I should like to go to that place." But what idea does he form of the beauty of civilization from his thought that he is not going to be hungry nor cold any more?—for that is about all that he can understand. Beginning at that standpoint, how can I make intelligible to him an inventory of things which go to make up vigor of body, accomplishment of hand and foot, manly exercise, deftness and skill—all the things that make one a man among men; the amenities of social life; taste and affection; taking and giving; all that which kindles the imagination in the great invisible realm; all that which links a man to the ambitions and attainments of life; all that which pertains to the great historical relations of the race; all that which dignifies society and life; all the sweetness of motherhood; all the grandeur of patriotism; all those illustrious elements which make literature rich and glowing, and which no man can enumerate or paint? All these belong to civilized life; and what can the Kamschatkan know of them when I say to him, "You are going to be saved from your present condition, and are going to inherit all these things"? He is going to be saved from himself; he is going to be saved from stupidity, from inertness, from blank, arid ignorance; he is going to be saved from vulgarity; he is going to be

saved from all that allies him to the brute beast; he is a bone-gnawing animal now, and he is going to be a man; but you cannot measure to him the distance between himself and the average man of civilization; nor can you interpret to him by any possibility what it is to be translated from his low state to this other and higher state, which is to be fulfilled in him by ennobling him.

Now, when men ask me, "What is salvation?" I say, emancipation from everything that holds men down; from the bondage of matter; from the rigor of undeveloped tendencies; from all the infelicities of the lower nature which are accompanied with inaptitudes, with dullness of head, with unskillfulness of hand, with shallowness of heart; from low and degraded forms of affection; from the vast realm of inferiority into which men are born.

We are born at the bottom. We come into life as nothing. We have grown a little; but what do we know of the possible development and grandeur and glory of life? In every one of the faculties of our being there is the possibility of a growth of which we can have no conception in our present condition. For how can a man interpret that of which he has had no experience? I am told that I am going to sing in heaven; but I have about as adequate an idea of what that will be as the Esquimaux has of the comforts and advantages of civilization. I shall cry no more. That means that all those things which make me cry shall cease. This world is the workshop, and we are rough-hewn; but there is to be an enfranchisement which shall lift us out of this rude condition. There is to be transplantation and glorious liberation. We are to become, not companions of the animal, but sons of God. What that means, John says, does not yet appear. There is to be glorious development, wonderful uplifting, transcendent glorification, all centering around that which we do understand—the need of the heart.

God has organized our life so that all our wants center in love, revolving about it; and more and more through life every noble nature is conscious that he is being attached to that one center. God himself is infinite love, and all human life is drawn toward him; and all growth, all refinement, all

competency, all joy, are more and more centered in that magnificent conception of an all-wise, all-powerful, all-redeeming love.

What is to be the plenitude of summer in equatorial climes where no storms envelop the earth, where the globe swings around in its ecliptic without jar or hindrance, where the husk has fallen from the golden grain, where the rind has been taken off from the pulpy fruit, and where we stand transcendently higher than it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive? What is salvation? It consists in grandeur of mind and majesty of soul in the presence of God.

Now, have you ever done anything to buy that or to earn it? I tickle my ground with the hoe and the spade, but I never was so vain as to suppose that I made anything grow. Thou, O Husbandman of the heavens, silent, unboasting but unwasting, thou effulgent Sun, hast brought summer through the influence under which all things have grown. I, too, have done a little for myself; but if I am to rise to behold the majesty of God I shall see that I have but touched the earth with hoe or spade. O Sun of Righteousness, it is the healing of thy beams that must cure us.

Let us, now, go back and interpret the text:

“God, who is rich in mercy, hath raised us up together.”

Oh, what depths there are in some of these simple phrases! I asked, among the White Mountains, “What do you call riches up here?” The reply was, “A farmer who is not in debt, and has five thousand dollars at interest, is called rich.” At Concord I asked, “What is being rich, in this community?” “Well, if a man is not in debt, and has fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars, he is considered passing well off.” I came down to New York and asked, “What is it to be rich here?” “Ah, it would be very difficult to tell.” “Does having ten thousand dollars make a man rich?” “No.” “Twenty thousand?” “No.” “Fifty thousand?” “No.” “A hundred thousand?” “No.” “Two or three hundred thousand?” “Hardly.” “A million?” “Yes, a man begins to be considered rich when he gets up to the millions.” In New York being rich is measured on the scale

of Astor and Stewart. There are different degrees of being rich. And when you rise up from all inferiorities, and God talks about being rich—God, that out of the seed-bag of the universe threw out worlds for shining seeds, that dwells in eternity, that is Father of all things that are, far beyond the sweep of the mind-glass—when he says he is rich, how rich he must be ! and when he says he is rich in *mercy*, oh, what an affluence, oh, what a power, oh what a grandeur is there in that !

“God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God.*”

When my mother, with prayers and up-looking of soul to God, who loved her, looked on me, a little tottering three-year-old, and laid her hand upon my head, and wished me the blessing of life, what had I done to deserve it? Not of myself, but of her great love wherewith she loved me, she, soon to go from life, ordained me. With a mother's touch, more sacred than that of priest or bishop, she ordained me to the Christian ministry. Do you suppose I had earned it? Do you suppose I had anything to do with it? It came out of the abundance of the great soul which she had. And when God, manifest in Jesus Christ, sends forth his decree of exaltation and elevation, to all that have faith to believe, and sight to behold, and discernment to perceive the other life, and to long for it,—to all these he gives this translation, this grandeur of the other sphere and of coming development. To them gave he power to become the sons of God, though he did not give them power to know how much was involved in the blessedness of that gift.

Friends, do not stand weighing out your own motives; do not stand estimating your own labors; do not say, “God will be pleased with me to-day, I have been so obedient.” Yes, he will be pleased with you if you are obedient; he is glad of any appreciation of his loving nature; but when the melody of life is given to you—namely, death and transla-

tion—your own efforts will bear, oh how small a relation to that! The transcendency, the beauty, and the grandeur of the ransomed soul in its flight are such that no man will stand in heaven, or even on the threshold of it, and see the beginnings of the eternal inheritance, and not feel, “Oh, such a gift as this I have done nothing to earn; I am not fitted for it; it is of God; it is because he is good, and not because I deserve it; it is because he gave it; it is from his abounding generosity.”

May none of you fail to receive that gift of eternal life. When the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, may you walk with them, and inherit all that heaven means, but that is quenched in interpretation by the ignorance and selfishness of this world.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WHAT need have we, our Father, to bring before thee our wants? Or ever we had opened our eyes, or had conscious thought again this morning, all was open before thee; for thou dost not slumber nor sleep. Watchman of Israel, thine eye is upon all thy creatures. Thou knowest their uprising and their down-sitting, their going out and their coming in. Thou knowest the secret thought, the inward impulse, all the outward circumstances. Thou only canst weigh in just judgment, and balances of equity, all that pertains to man here; and we do not seek to instruct thee. We draw near to thee that we may have the inspiration of thy presence. We draw near to thee to make known our wants, because in making them known, thy compassion and thy goodness rise up before us, and give us a sense of trust and faith. Thou that art supereminent above all possible weakness; thou that art infinitely gracious, nourishing thine own life, and the infinitude of life around about thee, we desire to have our conception of thy grandeur, and of the richness of thy being, augmented from time to time; for it is not in ourselves that we are strong, or wise, or firm: it is in thee; and we desire to rise into such a thought of God as shall more than fill every capacity of our being. So may we walk by faith. So may all thy gifts, which are of grace, come to us as gifts of God. May we be made rich in our thought of thy favor, and of thy love—that great love wherewith thou hast loved us from the beginning—which thou hast manifested toward us through Jesus Christ, in whom are all signs and tokens which measure the utmost limit of human conception, feeling, love, and sacredness.

Deliver us, we pray thee, from all ignoble views, and from all thoughts that bring trafficking and selfish commerce into the courts of the Lord. Give us such sentiments that we may faintly conceive of the motives by which thou art acting, and may redeem ourselves in the nature of our ascriptions to thee from those coarser ways by which vulgar men act with vulgar men. Grant that we may have such a thought of God as shall reconcile in him our highest sentiments and our most glowing enthusiasm of purity, and love, and self-denial, and self-sacrifice, and generosity, and grandeur of kindness. We beseech of thee that thou wilt humble us so that our self-conceit may be attuned into harmony with the truth as it is in Jesus. Wilt thou humble us so that we may not be impetuous nor rash in zeal, so that we may walk self-restrained and with humility before thee, and so that we may have reverence, and the inspiration of that high and true love which ministers all to all.

We beseech of thee, this day, O thou all-merciful God, for thy goodness and graciousness. Draw consciously near, we pray thee, to every one in thy presence. May thine influence pervade the souls of thy people, and may they feel that God is within them. May their thoughts follow thee. May their sorrows bring them nearer to thee. May the many souls in whom night reigns feel that indeed the star has risen. O thou that art full of gentleness, if there be any that cannot open their eyes nor lift themselves up, nor come

forth from out of their prison-house, be thou to them that Deliverer who came to break the shackle, to open prison doors, and to bring forth those that are bound; and to-day, may there be many that are bound in spirit, that are bound tight by the cords of sorrow, that are bound up by pride, by selfishness, or by the tangled threads of life, and that cannot extricate themselves—may there be many such that to-day shall have deliverance from thee; for when thou dost sing thy song, when the spring shines upon the mountains, the snows go away, and no man can tell whither they have gone; and their places are known only by the flowers and fruits which spring up behind them; and so, O Lord, when thou dost shine down upon the soul, behold it is a garden, and men wonder where are those fierce winds, and where are those biting frosts, and where are those sorrows that beat them down, and where is their heaviness and deadness of heart; and in the place of great grief there are shouts of laughter, as when the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, and then our lives are filled with joy. In many a soul thou hast made paradise where before was purgatory.

Draw near, to-day, we beseech of thee, to all who are in peril; to all who are in sorrow; to all who are in despondency; to all who are perplexed in their affairs, and are trying to trust, and do not know how, and are as birds upon the ground cast out untimely from their nests, looking up and wishing that they could rise, but being unable to fly, help thou them. We beseech of thee that thou wilt deliver them from their enemies, and from all that seek their harm.

And we pray that thou wilt grant to us all, in the affluence of thy love, whatever we need—for what more do we want, if immortality is ours, and if God is ours? If we have heaven before us, what can harm us upon the earth?

We beseech of thee, if there are those in thy presence who are discouraged by their unworthiness, by their insincerity, by their accumulated evidence of sinfulness, and who are weary of striving to restrain unrestrainable passions, and of wandering along a way in which they are perpetually falling below their own ideal, lift upon them, we pray thee, such a gracious sense of Christ as that, though they are yet in a body of death, they shall be able to thank God through Christ for emancipation, for joy unspeakable, and for that peace which passeth all understanding.

We pray that thou wilt grant, especially, thy blessing to those who have come up hither to see if peradventure thou wouldst give them answer to their prayers. How many pray for their sick! Will the Lord be gracious to them. How many pray for their little children! Will the Lord remember them. How many pray for loved ones that are just starting forth upon life! Wilt thou be merciful in answering their prayers. Some are thinking of those who are upon the great deep. Some are striving to follow their kindred in their wanderings far away. Some are wondering what hath become of those that are precious to them. O thou God of all love, thou God of all consolation, listen to the prayers that silently go up before thee to-day. We pray that thou wilt grant that all perplexities may be removed, and that great luminousness of soul may come to those who have come into

thy presence clouded and dark. Thou that art Light, shine forth. Thou that art Power, give strength to those that are weak and ready to fall. Thou that art Love, give grace and forgiveness to all that stand trembling before thee. Reach forth those arms of infinite power, and wisdom, and love, and enircle us all, that we may feel lifted up by the nearness and might of God—that we may not feel that we are of the clod. May we feel that we are separated from our lower life in which we began, and that now we are created anew in Christ Jesus to higher aspirations, to better endeavors, to truer ambitions, to a nobler life; and may the Holy Spirit confirm us in all the upliftings and flyings of our soul.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon all the efforts of this church. May it be more useful in the days that are to come than it has been in the days that are passed. We beseech of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt bless all the schools that are under its care; all its labors for the poor and the outcast; all its endeavors to spread abroad knowledge and truth in the world. And we beseech of thee that thy servants who give so much of their time, and zeal, and thought to the welfare of their fellow-men may have fulfilled to them the blessings which they seek to bestow upon others. May they themselves be built up while they are laboring for the upbuilding of those around about them. So may thy cause be blessed in our midst, and be glorified.

Spread abroad the truth, we pray thee, in all our land. Remember thy churches of every name among men. Grant that they may live and be filled with the Spirit of God. May they not envy each other nor seek to beat each other down. May they walk together in the fellowship of love, leaving God to discern between the one and the other. We pray that the base passions, and envies, and angers which have reigned within thy churches, that the evil spirit which hath sought to launch out upon them furious troubles and afflictions, may be exorcised. O, thou that didst cast out the evil demon, though in doing it the child was rent and lay wallowing on the ground and foaming, behold how the child again, the infant church, possessed of evil, lies in frantic convulsion of passions, and hatreds, and rivalries; and speak thou the word; and grant that peace may come for discord, and that confidence may come for suspicion and for jealousy, and that love may come instead of repulsion and hatred. Deliver thine own people, and bring forth a people zealous of good works, whose power shall be in the power of manifesting God.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt let the promises speedily ripen to their fulfillment which respect all the world. Let the darkness flee away; let night be no more; and grant that at last that sun may rise which will stand without setting a thousand years.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
*Amen.*

## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

GRANT unto us, our Father, the divine blessing. Enlarge our conceptions of thee, of life, of ourselves, and of thy plan in life. Humble us in our sense of our own want of attainment, of our want of excellence, and of our want of being. More and more may we humble ourselves because we see ourselves as we ought to see ourselves. And grant, we pray thee, that by faith we may rest upon the Beloved, knowing that all that in which we are deficient shall be made up to us by and by through the gift of God, so that his righteousness shall become our righteousness, so that his wisdom shall become our wisdom, and so that we shall be justified by him, and sanctified by the blessedness of the eternal world. And to thy name shall be the praise of our salvation, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

## SOUL-REST.

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“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”—MATT. xi. 28.

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At the time these words were spoken it is probable that there was in the world as much confusion, revolution, overthrow of various kinds, and suffering of every kind, as at any one single point in history; and nowhere could our Saviour have planted his foot in the midst of so much uncertainty and distress as existed in Palestine. All his early ministry was in Galilee—Galilee of the Gentiles, it is sometimes called, because there was such an infusion of foreign elements in the northern part of Palestine. Through the valley of Esdraelon was the way of commerce from Tyre and Sidon, across to Moab and the interior lands beyond. It was desolated incessantly by incursions, because it was the richest portion of the land. It was the battle-ground of nations. Hardly any other point in the East has seen so much of fighting as the northern part of Palestine. It happened to be geographically so placed, it stood in such a way amidst the nations around about it, that there never was an invasion that Palestine did not take a portion of it. So the detritus of the Assyrian army in the early day, of the Roman army, of the Grecian army, of armed hosts from every direction, left something there; and the population was cosmopolitan, in the worst sense of the term.

Here, too, was felt the power of the oppression of government. The Jewish people were taxed to the uttermost, and the extremest cruelty in the execution and collection of the taxes was practised. All arts were blighted, all indus-

tries were scotched, and the common people suffered exceedingly—so much so that the bread for to-morrow was a matter of uncertainty to the vast majority, probably, of those who swarmed the great thoroughfares of the north. We may infer that from the fact of the petition being put into the Lord's prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." The nation must have been reduced very low when, in such a frugal prayer as the Lord's, the almost universal cry should be "Bread!" as it was.

So, then, as he stood and looked around upon the multitudes that followed him, and that would follow him by the week for the sake of getting the miracle of the loaves and fishes, or in the hope of gaining something, healing or what not, he never saw a more distressed crowd; and it was not strange that they thronged about him on account of these temporal benefits. It is not strange, either, that he was obliged to say incessantly to them, while healing the sick, while curing the blind, while raising the dead, while in a thousand ways exercising charity toward the feeble and the sick—it is not strange that under such circumstances he was incessantly obliged to say to them, "A man's life does not consist of lower things; it is not the bread that you eat with the mouth: it is the bread that cometh down from above—this is that which you need. It is not enough for you to be happy in your common social relations. You are more than the beasts that perish: you are the sons of God. You have something that cannot be fed with these lower elements. There is that in you which cannot be satisfied by secular things. There is a manhood-hunger whose wants can only be supplied by the divine Spirit itself."

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

He developed in them a consciousness of a new and higher life; and that higher life was fed by direct communion with God, and by the indwelling of the divine Spirit. So when our Master stands in the midst of this troubled throng, and says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," he goes on to show that

that rest is not to be the taking off of any actual physical burden, not multiplying the resources of daily life alone; but he says,

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Now, it is a truth that our enjoyments are multiplied by the successive developments of our nature—by education and refinement. Many think that it is a question whether or not, on the whole, we are happier for being educated. There can be no question that the education, that the development, that the opening of the whole metropolis of the soul, does increase the number of enjoyable avenues; there can be no question that the culture of any particular faculty does render it more susceptible to happiness than it was before; but the question is, considering the world as it is, considering all its vicissitudes, considering the ill-conditioned relations of men in society, is it on the whole better for a man to have this higher development and culture, rendering him more susceptible to happiness, and also, just as certainly, more susceptible to unhappiness, than he was before.

Consider what it is that makes men suffer. If you take an uncultivated man, and place him with a roof over his head, no matter how homely, with straw in a corner on which he may lie down and sleep, with the coarsest bread, and a little food of other kinds, but with none of the amenities and refinements of life, he is perfectly contented, his food is wholesome, and his sleep is sound. We pity him because he is not opened up more, and because his is just the life that pigs lead. They are housed, they have enough to eat, they sleep soundly, but they have no aspiration, and no nature that is capable of aspiring; and we pity them. A man has just that nature in the lower forms of human life; and we say pityingly, “He is content; he is satisfied with it.”

But suppose one has been a child of fortune, cultured from the cradle, developed in all the finest tastes and relationships of life; and suppose that by and by, through some mischance, he has been thrown out of the sphere to which he had been accustomed, and going down has come

to that condition in which he has only a crust, a bundle of straw, and a mere shelter over his head? He brings down with him all those acute sensibilities which have been developed in him, the memory of better days, and the capacity to enjoy much or to suffer acutely, and his bread is not sweet to him, his food is not wholesome to him. Why? The bread is good, the food is good; but the man has been accustomed to derive his enjoyment from his higher faculties. Much of his enjoyment hitherto has come through taste; but there is nothing in his present circumstances to feed the taste. Much of it has come from reasoning; but he is thrown out of the sphere of intelligent companionship, and so out of the capacity of reasoning. He has depended for his enjoyment largely upon the refinement and amenities of society—upon the multifarious givings and takings which go on between persons on the higher planes of life in this world; but now he is solitary and alone. He has enough to eat, to drink and to keep him warm; but he has had a development which makes it impossible for him to be content with only these things. He wants higher food, and not having it he brings to his lower condition, through the educated susceptibilities of his higher nature, an amount of suffering and unhappiness which would not be felt by a man far less cultured than he.

So, if you put happiness as the law of the aim of life, it is a question whether, as the world is made, a man is happier by being cultured; but I hold that though happiness may be the result of culture, it is not the end sought in life. Manhood, intrinsic excellence, the soul's appreciation of absolute moral development and spiritual growth—this is transcendently higher than the mere thought of happiness; so that a man should desire to be a larger and a nobler nature, even if that brought more unhappiness with it, rather than to be a small, diminutive nature. I would rather be a suffering man than a happy flea. It is not the law of happiness by which we are to judge of men's estate in this world. There is dignity, there is a sense of honor, of nobility and of moral excellence, that is far more important. There is an inspiration, if it but comes to us, and lifts us up with a consciousness

that we are sons of God and heirs of immortality, which gives to the soul a thrill that no mere pleasure-bearing influence can give it.

Now, in all our relations, it seems to me, we are being made to feel the inconveniences and hindrances of life, from a variety of reasons, which it will not be necessary for me now to state, or discuss. It is not on the line of the reasons of unhappiness, exactly, that I propose to develop my discourse, but on this: That, beginning at the lowest estate, unfolding largely as the animal unfolds, and carrying on the process of education, we must consider the question, How shall men meet the embarrassments, the limitations, the accidents, the calamities, the wearinesses, the unsatisfied longings, the bereavements, the sharp sorrows, the sweeping adversities of life? Is there any way in which men can find consolation in these things? Can they be turned to any profitable uses?

As I understand it, it is precisely to this point that our Master spoke when he said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I do not understand, in the first place, that he means that he will take away from men their actual burdens. If one be sick it is profitable to say that God may heal him; but I do not consider the prayer of faith as a means promised by Christ to give relief to men. I do not suppose that sickness will necessarily be removed. A man may carry pain, and yet have rest. A man may have sorrow, and yet rejoice. A man may be filled with infirmities and yet triumph. It is this super-imposition of noble faculties or elements upon men that gives explanation to all the paradoxes of the apostle. "Rejoice when you fall into divers trials and temptations;" "Rejoice in weakness;" "Rejoice in infirmities;" "Cast down, but not destroyed"—all those expressions, which are apparently contradictory, are perfectly explained if men consider that we are, as it were, created in strata, and that it is possible for us to be thrown into such relations that the lower part of our nature may be suffering, and yet that out of that suffering may rise such stimulus and consolation in the faculties that lie above them as shall make one, on the whole, happier by the higher

side of his nature, than he is unhappy by the lower side of his nature.

When Roman Emperors, glutted with bestial pleasures, and in roaring triumphs, were putting to death early Christians, or seeing them tormented by wild beasts, do you not suppose that the dying Christian under the lion's paw, or scorching by the torch, was happier than the Nero that stood and gloated over his suffering? Is it not recorded in hundreds and thousands of instances that men in the most abject circumstances of distress in this world have really reigned by the royalty of their thought and feeling? There is such a thing as a man's suffering to the very quick, and yet being conscious that he never was so happy as under his suffering. This could not be if a man was a unit—if the whole mind went into every experience. A man is not a unit in that sense. In one sense, man is a unit, as a church organ is a unit; but it is possible for the lower part of an organ to be out of tune, and for the upper part at the same time to be in tune. Some parts will not speak, or will only speak wrongly, while other parts will speak mellifluously and harmoniously. A man may be tormented by fear, or hunger, or poverty; a thousand mischances may come to his lower nature; and yet he may have such a conscious life in the higher relations that he shall rejoice. Suffering is not suffering any more, under such circumstances.

Much of the suffering which men have in this life is created by them. It is artificial in this sense. For example, a man is an enthusiastic poet or scholar. He lives in dreams and in visions. Having inherited an estate, he is so indifferent to it that one part wastes, and another part wastes, without his knowledge or care. He does not watch the progress of decay, and part after part goes, until he finds himself shut up in the narrowest dwelling, and with the fewest resources. Still he goes on rejoicing and living in his higher life. At last he comes almost to poverty, scarcely having noticed it. You cannot torment him by calling his attention to these facts. You may throw poverty at him, you may take wealth away from him; but it is not in the realm of these things that he lives.

You know that sometimes skirmishers, when they are on dangerous ground, put up the cap of a soldier upon a pole, to draw the enemy's fire, while they conceal themselves; and as the cap is riddled by bullets they lie in their safe hiding place and laugh. They are not there, and so they escape.

So, too, when relief is promised there are various ways in which it may come. A man may be relieved of distress by having it taken away, or by being lifted up in spirit to a higher level where he shall no longer be subject to the lower range of troubles. Both things we may expect from divine providence; but in our personal relations to the Lord Jesus Christ, relief comes in the main by such an elevation of one's life that the things which tormented him, though they are not divested of pain-bearing elements, cease to be so painful as if he had nothing but them. If you live higher than troubles you can rejoice when they come.

We may, therefore, look at troubles as leading us to a higher life, and as developing in us those dispositions which make communion with God possible—which bring the soul into such a state that it may commune with God.

This, it seems to me, is the secret of the universe—the problem of the ages. We are not what we seem. We are not simply unfolded beasts; we are animal in our nature, but we are unfolding to that point in which we take hold upon the possibility of communion with the everlasting God. Personal intercourse with God; the intersphering of our souls by the divine soul; the interchange of thought and feeling and sympathy with the indwelling Holy Ghost—this is not a figure; it is not a metaphor: it is an absolute reality; and it is the final end toward which all education and all culture in men is developing; and just in proportion as in the variety of the experiences of life, either voluntary or involuntary, men are by troubles lifted higher and higher so that they come into the actual possibility of communion with God, in that proportion is fulfilled the declaration of the Master, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” It is the rest of the spirit, it is

the rest of the nobler, divine man, that we are seeking to develop in ourselves, and that is promised to us.

First, these words are addressed to all those who are, or have been, or are likely to be, continually afflicted by sickness and suffering. To those who have a good constitution, who have good digestion, who sleep well, and who have vigor and power, there is apt to be very slender sympathy for those who all their life-long are sick with bodily sickness. It is sometimes hard to bear the lack of courage, the constant murmurings, the daily complaints of those who are sick; it is hard to bear the helplessness, the multiplying wants, and the unreasonableness of sickness; but do you know that one person out of every five on the globe is always sick? Do you know that for every three or four golden threads there is one iron thread that runs through the whole fabric of life? Do you know that we move together, a great company, and that the light which shines upon us is shaded by portentous darkness? And in looking upon men who are sick our hearts should go out toward them in love and in sympathy. It is not enough for us to say, "O well, somebody will take care of them." Some great heart must brood over the sick, and sympathize with them. No one can catalogue all the various forms in which the imagination torments them by a sense of their uselessness. No one can enumerate the ways in which they are tormented by the wounding of their pride, by the blighting of their aspirations, and by the restraining of their ambitions. The great realm of sickness is so populous in our midst that if you do not gauge it, and take statistics, you have no conception of the amount of suffering that is undergone by those that are sick, or by those that are feeble, and so are obliged to act as though they were sick, most of their time. O, that there could be such a thing as a light from Christ dawning upon them! There is. He himself took our sicknesses. He declared that he carried them. It is one of the precious declarations of Scripture that the nature of God is such that he has thought, and sympathy, and providential care, and spiritual inspection and mercy for those who are heavy laden by reason of sickness. So, every person who is invalided, every person who is pushed out of the ranks

of able-bodied men, every person who is carried along the way of sickness, has a right to feel that Jesus Christ was manifested in this world as one who had compassion upon the sick. Did he not have compassion upon them? Where was there more tenderness, where was there more exquisite mercy, than our Saviour showed to the sick? And how enthusiastic they were where he came! The whole community was convulsed. Those that had sick brought them out, a whole village or town at once, and broke into earnest importunity; so that he became an all-healing Saviour.

And to-day, what house is there without its shadow? The little child is no more; the old matron is trembling in her last days; the son afar off has been cast down and crushed; the ship sank, and the mother's hope is destroyed; and if its sad voices could be drawn out, the whole world would chant a requiem; for there is not an hour or a moment in which sickness, and suffering, and death, and anguish are not abroad.

I bring to those who are sick, those who fear sickness, those who behold the sick around about them, and who minister to them—I bring to all these Jesus Christ, who says to the sick, “Come unto me and I will give you rest. I am the Saviour of those that are sick. Lift up your thought. Abandon the light that is of the body. Learn to look to me. Direct your thoughts forward to that future, to that realm of everlasting glory, where there is no sickness, no contagion, no miasma, no pain, no suffering, forever more.”

There are those who are oppressed by reason of poverty. The curse of their poverty is sordidness and selfishness. It is certainly hard to be without the comforts of life; but men can get along without them, provided they have moral nature enough. Our boys who were brought up tenderly and in luxury at the North went into the war, and were inspired with the *esprit de corps* of the army, and with the highest feeling of enthusiastic patriotism; and they found it no great task to lie on the ground, and to eat hard tack and whatever else they could get hold of. It would have been considered a most unmanly thing to have complained. It would have driven a man out of the ranks. A man may be reduced very

low; he may see his comforts diminish until they become very scanty, and not be made unhappy, if he only has manhood in a high degree. But it is not so easy to see those whom you love suffer in poverty. The children of the rich can be sent to Florida, if their health requires it; but if you have not the wherewith even to warm your room in the short winter days and the long winter nights, if, with the slender means which you have you can scarcely give the coarsest viands to the child that is the joy of your life, though her face is pale, and she is wasting away, and you know that if she could spend one winter in a warmer climate she could be saved, you cannot send her. Death is coming, step by step, and in the accumulated suffering of love, the parent says, "It is poverty that is killing me by killing her." It is not where the shoes wear out, it is not where the coat is threadbare, that poverty is unbearable: it is where it gashes pride; it is where it pinches love; it is where it starves the soul; it is where we look out and see other children coming up to honor and power by education, while we cannot send our children to school, while we cannot clothe them for school; where for want of means we cannot do for our children that which we would—that is the place where the hardship of poverty comes in. Nor do I know of any way in which men can sustain themselves under the ten thousand trials which come upon them in life through poverty except by living in the higher realm of reliance upon divine sympathy and strength. If in the midst of poverty one can trust in God, saying, "I am his child; he knows my want; this trouble of mine is not a mere accident; it was sent of God; and I will stand here as a sentinel because he wants some one to bear poverty and at the same time exhibit the royalty of the divine nature; because he wants me to show what Christianity ought to be"—if one can do that, his example is the best education that the child can have. If the children see that the mother is trusting, and silent, and hopeful of the light that is to come; and if she says, "O my children, few flowers we have here; yet take heart, for in the garden of the Lord sweet flowers will bloom forever;" and if they see the father true, manly, noble in suffering from poverty, not

envious, not jealous, not complaining, but trusting God, and singing in the night, then they have in the vision of moral power which is presented to them an education that no academy and no university can give.

Now, if poverty tends to make you more animal, you are of all men most miserable; but if you will hear your Master, he will stand on the verge of your distress, and say, "Come unto me. Lift up your head. Carry your thoughts to God. Live in him, and he will draw your spirit up into such relations with him and into such an atmosphere that, while your roots may be covered with dirt, your topmost branches shall be bright with blossoms, reaching toward heaven."

There is a great deal of nameless suffering in the world; there is in the world a great deal of heart-hunger which is hard to explain; but certain it is that in the allotments among men there are souls that are endowed royally, but that have no legitimate objects on which to expend themselves. This is one of the strangest things in life. I see, everywhere I go, women that have received the highest development that education can give them, standing in the family, not called to be teachers, not called to be wives; in the providence of God having no especial function. They have treasures of learning and literature; they have refinements that fit them for great-souledness; but in life they have nothing to do. They are very often environed by such social influences as to prevent their devoting their talents to objects of usefulness. The proud father and the urgent mother compel them to refuse such and such openings because they think them demeaning and unworthy. So, hindered by parental influence or social circumstances, there are persons who go with great sealed fountain hearts through life capable of immense development—hearts that are as the very heavens above, full of dews, full of rains, full of sunshine—and yet a desert underneath like Sahara.

But to me the saddest thing in this world is not to see a man beaten out of his fortune and cast through various degrees of suffering down, down, down. Why, I know those who have gone from the utmost affluence to the very bottom of want almost, but who are nobler and more lovable to-day

than they were in their amplitude. I will tell you the saddest thing I have seen (I am speaking from life: though none of you know whom I mean). I knew one who was made to be a royal woman; who married herself to a man that developed as the pig develops, and that became obese, gross, gluttonous, hoggish. She, affianced to him, naturally delicate, refined, clinging insensibly to him, though virtuous, and in many respects admirable, yet, as I could see, underwent the process of deterioration. The taste was lowered; the thoughts were brought down; things were no longer vulgar which once were absolutely repulsive to her. She leaned against him till at last the odor of the sty was on her.

Now, to see a great-hearted nature go down in that way is the saddest thing in this world—not vice, not crime, but simple deterioration, lowering, lowering, lowering. Oh for a divine inspiration, oh for an angelic touch, oh for some misery that could wake persons out of such a dream of peace and contentment and make them unhappy, so as that unhappiness might make them lift themselves up higher!

How many men, how many women, there are who are conscious that they have never expended the best part of their nature because circumstances have not permitted it!

I recollect a man, most chivalric, noble, generous, like a prince, who married a selfish, petted woman; and he was one whose wife was to him very much what a wasp is in a man's hat. She buzzed and stung him. Hers was pretty much all the companionship he had. He shut himself up from the outside world. To develop largeness and susceptibility under such circumstances is to lay one's self open to a perpetual irruption of torments; and so he circumscribed himself till he was as dry as a hickory post cut twenty years ago, with no dormant buds, no blossoming flowers, perpetually shielding and holding in retrenchment the better powers of the soul, until at last in their place was absolute hardness and dryness. Oh what waste! Oh what distress! But now he is dead. I mean that he is buried now: he was dead a great while ago. I thank God that he is dead. We are shocked to hear that some persons are dead; but I wish that all such persons

as these would die. The greatest mercy that you can wish such persons is that they were dead.

These strange phases of life are described a great deal more often in novels than in preaching; because you know preaching must be dignified, and orthodox, and there are nice things about it which stand in the way of such disclosures. But what is preaching but medical practice? What is preaching but bringing the doctor to men, as they are? The church is a hospital. Ministers are practicing physicians; and if there be an ulcer, an ulcer I must call it, and I must treat it accordingly. How seldom are men's yearnings and hungers and heart-longings brought out in the light of divine truth in the pulpit; and yet how they exist in life! How many persons are suffering perpetual famine! How many have bread enough who from heart-hunger are dying! How many persons there are in the lowest walks of life who have all the aspirations and tasteful elements that fit them for the higher sphere, but who cannot go up. How many are ill-matched or ill-assorted, who are hampered in life and are unable to rise, though they are conscious of possessing superior qualities! How many persons, by reason of their peculiar circumstances, have to suppress some of the strongest and noblest tendencies of their being!

Do you suppose a mother could see her daughter badly married, and could hear of her suffering from week to week, and not experience pain in her behalf? And is the mother any better than God? Does not he care for people that suffer? He does. He cares for everything that torments your life. There is nothing that concerns your welfare which is not a matter of interest to him.

Then, O ye heart-sick ones; O ye that are afflicted with famine of soul, ye have a God, ye have a Jesus, that has suffered as you suffer, that has been tried in all points as you are, without sin, that he might be a merciful High Priest to you.

Who shall speak of all the suffering that goes on in life under the forms of bereavement? Who shall speak of domestic sufferings that can neither be thrown off nor borne? The best things in this life, of course, are the unwritable

things. The coarser things are the most easily expressed. We can go on and describe battles, and kingdoms, and commerce, and science; but that subtle life, that wonderful play of experience, which springs from the finest sides of human nature in their very finest relations—who can tell what that is? Who can describe it? Nobody can; but it goes on.

Persons are suffering in a way that only God can understand, from the loss of friends, or from domestic troubles that are worse than death. I go to them as a minister, and sit down, and say, "I hope you are sustained under your affliction." Well, that is a very good thing to say; but what does it amount to? I say to them, "You ought to be patient." That, too, is a good thing to say; but how far does it go? You cannot get near the real center trouble. The things which most torment many persons are things which they themselves cannot express in language. They are not such things as can be framed into ideas. There is soul-suffering which lies back of any analysis or any consciousness. Oftentimes persons cannot tell what ails them. They do not know what the heart-swells in them mean. Only God knows, and he *does* know. Do you suppose God is thinking about theology all the time? He is thinking about you. Do you suppose he is thinking about laws and governments? Not a sparrow falls to the ground that he does not notice it, he says. Blessed be God for such statements as that! The hairs of our head are all numbered. So there is not a trouble in any soul that the eye of the Lord, sweeter than any mother's, does not behold; and it is not without its meaning. If you could hear Christ speaking to you, he would say, "Oh, my child, I am with you in darkness, and I am leading you. Come unto me. Learn of me. I am meek and lowly. You shall find rest to your souls. Let this trouble guide you into a higher life, where, the moment your soul touches the light, you will find comfort and joy."

There is great suffering, also, of a more obvious and common kind, in the overthrow of men's ambitions. The ambitions of men may have in them much that is wrong and much that is selfish; but it is a noble thing for a man to be ambitious. The impulse to develop and go higher is a very

manly impulse. That contentment which leaves a man without any swell or root-power or springiness is the contentment of the brute and not of the Christian man. We suffer a great deal more from the want of ambition than from the excess of it. And the sufferings of overthrown ambition—who can tell them? There is no registration of these.

The cheapest things in this world are men. Here is a man who has filled the whole community with excitement. Everybody is talking about him. Everything is radiant. He is on the topmost wave of popularity. Something occurs to dampen the public ardor concerning him. New combinations are formed which are unfavorable to him. He gets one buffet here and another there. He begins to go down; and by and by there comes a swell of political revolution, and he is thrust out, and the newspapers ridicule him, and say that he has had his day; that he can go home now and stay there; that he will not be wanted any more. Men speak of him as having gone to the dogs. But he is a man full of sentience and sensibility. He had his various faults, one of which was that he was conspicuous, and that everybody saw everything about him; but when he is swept out of prosperity, and thrust aside, is he then to be an object of our ribaldry and contempt? Do you not suppose that God thinks of such a man?

One of the sweetest and most touching things, to me, in the whole life of Christ was that of which I spoke last Sunday night—namely, the circumstance that Jesus, when the man whose eyes were opened was kicked out of the synagogue, went hunting him up. There were all over Jerusalem thousands of rich and prominent people whom the Saviour might have consorted with; but instead of seeking them, hearing that this poor creature had been thrown out of the synagogue, that he had gone away, and that nobody knew where he was, he went in search of him. He cared more for him than for all the prosperous men in Jerusalem. Methinks that many a man who has been hurled out of power, and thrust into obscurity, and had men gnash their teeth upon him, and explode their jests at him, has had the heart of God nearer to him in his disfigurement and disgrace than when he was at the height

of his prosperity. Some men fall far down from worldly honors and land close by the gate of heaven. There are many men who were never so near themselves, and never so manly, as when, after having been chastised and cleansed and purified, they stand in obscurity. No poems are chanted to them, no orations are pronounced upon them, no receptions are given them, no honors are bestowed upon them; but there is a way opened between their inward life and the life of Jesus; and the power of the world to come overshadows them, and they are beginning to feel their pulse thrill to those touches that before long shall break out into the choral rapture of the heavenly land.

A word in regard to the embarrassments and worldly troubles which are falling thick in our time. Blessed are they who, when chastised by the Lord, follow the hand that has smitten them till they trace it back to the heart that moved the stroke. To lose one's property, to be distressed in one's business, sometimes is the best schooling that men ever have. Many a man has learned manliness by disaster who never learned it so well in any other way. And there is courage in trouble, there is patience in trouble, there is a way to one's self in trouble, there is a consideration of who are and who are not one's friends in trouble, there is an estimate of the world in its failures and successes in trouble, different from what men experience in prosperity.

I have before me those that have seen both extremes. Tell me, brethren, have you not gathered more wisdom out of darkness than out of light? Tell me whether the winter did not give you more health and strength than the summer did. Tell me whether that rude, acerb fruit which was put to your lips in the time of your distress, after all had not in it more medicament than the luscious fruit eaten in the time of your great prosperity. It is a good thing to be afflicted, provided affliction opens the higher life to a man, and draws him away from visible things, so that he learns that his life consists not in the things which he possesses. He walks in a palace—not in a palace made of marble, but in the palace of his soul. He that dwells in the midst of serene thoughts and heavenly aspirations; he that has contentment in hope

and faith ; he that, being hated, loves ; he that, being smitten, is like wheat that gives forth grain to him that threshes it—he is of God, and by every wind is driven toward God. Things that seem the worst are often the best things in life. Blessed bankruptcy that brings riches ! Blessed treading down that is as the ox that treads seed into the soil that it may spring up and bring forth fruit a hundred-fold !

But this subject is interminable. I am circumnavigating the whole orb of human experience. There is no end to it. Yet there is this clue. When our Master says to men who are weary and heavy laden, “Come to me and I will give you rest,” he strikes that one single note, that blessed chord, which has vibrated through the ages. For, by faith in this promise, how did the apostles themselves live, men of mighty suffering and mighty joy ! There is not so great a marvel in human literature as the New Testament, which is a recital of persecution, and disaster, and death, and suffering ; and yet there is not a morbid word in it. There is not a minor note in it. It is the most triumphant book in the world. You may push out John from having written a Gospel ; you may say that Matthew was not Matthew, that Luke was not Luke, and that none of them were inspired ; but I say there is not on the earth, and there never has been in the world, a book so in sympathy with men’s weaknesses and sufferings and sorrows, or a book that threw such light and hope on them all, and poured such balm and precious ointment on every wound of human life, as the New Testament. There is the book ; and it will live as long as the world has a groan in it ; as long as there is a sorrow to be assuaged ; as long as there is a weakness to be strengthened ; as long as there is an aspiration to be developed ; as long as there is a manhood to be unfolded. Just as long as men need to know the way to higher attainments, just so long, not because of this or that doctrine or theory of instruction, but on account of its essential tendencies, the New Testament will be the bread of life and the water of life to men.

To all you that are walking in the way of the old saints, I say, Be not surprised at the fiery trial that has come upon you. Do not count it strange. Do you shed tears in secret

places? Millions have done so before you who now laugh in heaven. Do you mourn in desolated households? Blushing are the flowers of those who planted seeds in darkness and night. Does it seem to you that your burdens are heavier than you can bear? Down through the ages the voice of Jesus and of God himself sounds out to men in dungeons, in the wilderness, in places of torment and torture, "Come unto me;" and down to us, through the clear air of this Sabbath morning, not as thunder, but as a sweet small voice full of love and sympathy, comes the message, "All ye that are heavy laden, come unto me."

The heart of Christ is a haven large enough to give anchorage to every craft that sails on the stormy sea of life. The soul of Jesus is rich enough, and full enough of gentleness and sympathy, to supply the want of the whole created universe. Come, taste and see that he is gracious; and by the power of faith and love lift yourselves higher into that nobler manhood out of which comes immortality.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

**BLESSED** be thy name, O Lord, our God, for the glowing disclosures which thou hast made to us of thyself, and of the dwelling where thou art. Blessed be thy name for all the testimonies which have been gathering through the ages of thy servants' victories in life over life, and of their victories over death. Around about thee now are innumerable hosts—the spirits of just men made perfect; and in their midst are ours. Our children are there; our parents are there; brothers and sisters, gone forth from the battle, are crowned, and are in the joy of victory, there. There are those who were poor upon earth, but who are rich now. There are those that on earth were wasted by sickness and long-suffering, but that shall never be sick any more. There are children of grief whose tears day and night were as the dews; but there shall never be any more crying or pain where they are, and thou shalt wipe the tears from every eye. There are those who were infirm in hope; and yet now they are strengthened with everlasting strength. Those that could not see thee now behold thee. Those who with much doubt and with many fears all their life long wrestled, seeking thee, are found of thee, and are swallowed up with sweet delight in thy presence.

Grant, we pray thee, to all who are weary, to-day, such an insight of the coming rest that their souls shall be refreshed. This is thy place of meeting; this is thine house; this is thy day; and these are thine own people. We beseech of thee that thou wilt look upon those who are discouraged by the greatness of the way, and by the infirmities, by the burdens, by the trials and by the troubles that afflict them. Grant that they may have a sense of thy nearness, and of the preciousness of thy thoughts toward them. How dear to us are our own children! What a joy to us is their prosperity! How do we sorrow over their trouble! But what are we compared to thee? We are as sticks compared with the birds that sing upon them. We are as stones compared with the men that walk upon them. Thou that art perfect in the fullness of holiness and love—with what ineffable sympathy dost thou look down upon thy children! The bruised reed thou wilt not break. The smoking flax thou wilt not quench. In thee we are glowing with Christian life and brightness. Thou dost look with compassion upon all—upon every soul that is in trouble, and upon every one that is wistful and yearning. Thou dost look upon those that are conscious of their want rather than of their supply; upon those that desire defense more than they desire thee; upon those that long for thy power more than for thy love; upon those who are yet under the impulse of fear, and not of trust. Thou dost behold all the varying experiences of the human soul, that is tried in a thousand ways; that is buffeted and driven hither and thither; that is tempted by selfishness and by avarice. Thou dost behold all conditions of men; and as by thy sun thou dost in the summer overbrood the whole continent, and bring forth all things of their kind, so dost thou brood over us, and bring forth in us fruit that is pleasing to thee.

Vouchsafe, we pray thee, this morning, to listen to all those who come murmuring thoughts of gladness and of gratitude. We rejoice that there are so many that are hoping. We rejoice that there are so many who have reason to be grateful, and are grateful. Look upon all those whose experience is that of hope and of courage. Grant that their fear may never take the place of their courage and their hope. Over the sea and through the storm, by day and by night, may they still be victorious, and be saved by faith.

We pray that thou wilt bless all the churches in this city. Wilt thou bless the pastors of them. Wilt thou give them strength of body and strength of mind. Enable them to preach the truth; and grant that they may do it under the divine inspiration, so that the truth shall be carried as a living power home to their people.

Grant that all the churches in the great city near us may be refreshed by thy presence; and may the living power of the truth be felt over all this nation. We look to thee, O Lord our God, to revive thy work everywhere.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that knowledge may prevail, and that the spirit of intelligence and holiness may shine abroad, bearing unnumbered blessings on every side.

We pray for the nations of the earth, that they may be bound together. May all mankind be united more by sympathy. We pray for the ignorant and the oppressed. Grant that the growth of men may be such that tyrants shall be unable to oppress them any more. May the nations of the earth at last learn war no more. May they no longer cultivate selfishness and organize it into law. Grant that the fellowship of the divine Spirit may bind together all people. Make the whole human race as one household in the Lord, their Deliverer and their Father.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit.  
*Amen.*



## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

**GRANT** thy blessing to rest, we pray thee, our Father, on the word spoken. Comfort the comfortless. Succor those that are imperilled. Deliver the tempted. Encourage the desponding. Give rest to the weary. Grant thyself, that thou mayest be all in all. Accept our endeavor to make thee known. Pardon the imperfection of our services. Complete thy work of grace in us, in life, and in death; and then bring us to thyself in the heavenly land, where we shall see thee as thou art, and love as we are loved. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

## THE WORLD'S GROWTH.

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“For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.”—  
1 Cor. iv. 20.

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This is not an accidental statement. It is a thought which dwelt very much in the mind of the Apostle. You will find in the second chapter and fourth verse of this Epistle the same thought :

“My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of *power*.”

In the first letter that he wrote to the churches—namely, the 1st Thessalonians, the very first chapter, and the 5th verse, you hear him saying,

“Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in *power*, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.”

It is very evident that by *word* the Apostle meant the whole system of teaching or of truth that was presented. The Grecian and Thessalonian churches were founded, in the main, in Grecian civilization; and Grecian civilization was then remarkable for its intellectual development to a larger extent than it ever had been before, and in some directions than it ever has been since. The Greeks had set forth the great outlines of truth as respects civility, the material world or science, and the æsthetic system of the globe. They were deficient in the ethic, though not in the æsthetic; and the Apostle makes a marked distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of intellectual statement, if I may so say.

We are to understand, not that he undervalued these,

but that he regarded them as secondary and instrumental. That which he regarded as of value was that which he designated as *power*; and as it is introduced into English, we may as well use the very term which he himself employs in the Greek. It is the dynamic condition of the world in which the kingdom of God consists; or, if we were to state it in a little different form, and in conformity with the modern habits of thought, we should say that the kingdom of God consisted not in its churches, in its books, in its theology, in its instruments of any kind, but in the potential condition of the human mind which had been brought up in it, and influenced by it. We should say that the kingdom of God was to be found in *Man*, and not in those things which are set up to influence him. We should say that it was the power of the human soul in certain directions that would measure the power of God's kingdom, or the power of the truth, in this world.

We are not to understand, certainly, that the Apostle regarded teaching, or the statement of truth, as a matter of indifference, but, rather, that he regarded the results to be sought, and the actual gain of such results, as more important. These, in his estimation, were the test and gauge of the growth or condition of the kingdom of God.

We have heard, but recently, in this place,\* that primary education is not mere learning: that it is the *power* of learning. It is not how much a child knows, but how much capacity he has to find out, that constitutes his education. In other words, it is the actual measure and strength of the thinking part of him: not how much has been put into him, but how much he has power in himself to excogitate.

Now, religion is not simply the flux of feeling: it is the inward condition of moral power—of moral dynamics; and to-day we mean to look at the world with reference to the question of whether or not the present conditions and tendencies and proper rational expectations are such as to be a matter auspicious and hopeful, and a reason for thanksgiving.

In measuring the world I shall use the Apostle's meas-

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\*Address of Hon. CARL SCHURZ, in Plymouth Church, on "Education."

ure. I shall not look at its condition in regard to the statistics of its instruments, but in regard to what those instruments have done. I shall ask what has been stored up in the human mind, or in its actual condition. It certainly is useful to know how many churches have been built, how many ministers have been settled, how many missionaries have gone forth, how many converts have been added to the church, how many Bibles have been printed and distributed, how many tracts have been sent out as winged messengers; all these elements are seeds, or instruments, one or the other; but could any man tell the condition of the agriculture of America by going into an agricultural warehouse, and getting an estimate of how many plows and harrows were made during a year, and sent out? Could a man go to Thorburn or Bliss and get an idea of horticulture by ascertaining how many seeds and bulbs and roots are distributed through the land annually? You would gain some knowledge of agriculture and horticulture in those ways; but you must actually estimate by an inspection of farms and gardens, and you must go to the seed-store and the market and ascertain how much has been produced per acre, and what its quality is, as well, before you can understand much about it. And that is not all: the self-producing power of the soil, and the intelligence and skill of its cultivators must go into the estimate. You must take an actual survey of the things themselves which seeds and tools are meant to produce.

So, in looking out upon the condition of the world, I regard churches as instruments, and schools as instruments, and books as instruments; but the question is not altogether, How many instruments have been created? or, What are their tendencies? but this: On the whole, what has been the product of these instruments, acting through so many years and centuries?

What is the power, to-day, among the civilized nations of the world?—for I shall exclude from our survey all that part of the world which may be considered as the ungrowing part, and take only the civilized portion of the globe—Christendom simply. The question is, What is its actual condition?

The two factors are *intelligence* and *moral sense*, or *the*

*moral feeling* of the world. What is the dynamic condition of the intellect and of moral sense in Christendom? Are they stronger than of old? Is their action in a wider sphere? Are they growing more complex? Is there actually stored up in the intelligence and in the moral sense of Christendom, to-day, an amount of power which was never before known? Is it the tendency of intelligence to increase? I scarcely need say, that above all other periods in the history of the world this is an age of growing intelligence. It may be said to be an age of scientific fervor. All nations are aroused to scientific zeal. There is a vast increase, not simply of facts known, or theories deduced, but of the power to know. The educated tendency in America to-day to investigate and to determine is wonderful, over that which has prevailed in any nation, and certainly over that which has prevailed in general Christendom, in days gone by.

Not only has this particular form of intelligence, the power of knowing, been developed, but there is a recognition of the power of intelligence such as never belonged to any period as it belongs to this modern period.

Among governments, it is not a great while ago that force, and then cunning, and then both, were considered as the main factors of government. It is only within a comparatively recent period that it has been recognized that there was such a thing as a public sentiment among the people which also must be taken into consideration by governments; but to-day the matter has advanced until all governments feel that for the sake of the dynasty, for the sake of national strength, for every sake, the people must be made intelligent. Education has always been in repute for the governing class; but not until within a comparatively recent period has it been esteemed by the governors that education was a necessary qualification among the governed. It makes stronger men for the State, stronger men for the army, stronger producers for the treasury, and, more than all, easier men to govern, if they are governed rightly; and therefore dynasties themselves are becoming educators. Nursing fathers and nursing mothers, it is said kings and queens shall become; and they are becoming such.

Among the ignorant, common people, the desire for knowledge is increasing as it never was before ; for it has been one of the misfortunes of ignorance hitherto that it has not felt its need. Even the great uneducated mass of men have lived long enough to see that the reason why the few could govern the many, why a thousand men could govern five millions, was that the former were more intelligent than the latter ; and so, this once having been brought into the consciousness of the common people as a method of their self-defense, and as a method by which they shall rise to the full participation of their manhood, they are demanding to be educated.

It is one of the most striking of the phenomena of to-day, that among the rudest, and crudest, and wildest theories for the reconstruction of civil societies, and of government, education is a universal constituent. The ignorant masses are saying : " We must die ignorant ; but our children shall *know*."

Philanthropists are beginning to understand that there is a larger function in intelligence than merely that it civilizes or refines. They are beginning to understand that neither fervor of spiritual emotions nor any amount of morality is sufficient to ward off tyranny, and exalt men to happiness. In other words, it is not possible to make men free so long as they are weak. Just as long as you keep the masses of men in a state of weakness, so long, in one way or another, the machinery of religion will oppress them, money will oppress them, political power will oppress them ; and the only way in which men can be saved from the various forms of intestine or external oppression is to make them of such stature that they cannot be oppressed. Intelligence, therefore, in the eye of the philanthropist, is becoming emancipation ; and we are learning that statutes and enactments do not make men free. We are coming, after two thousand years, to understand that the *truth* shall make us free ; that freedom is of the individual ; and that the only effectual bar, or counter-agent, to the cunning forms of aristocracy and despotism in the world, is to make men so strong that they cannot be driven ; to make their wrists so large that

the iron cannot be afforded to make manacles for them ; and to make the muscles so large that no manacles can hold them.

The actual power of the human brain has increased in the direction of intelligence in consequence of these findings out, and of this drift of the age in which we live ; and the power of public intelligence now, upon governments, upon industries, upon professions, and upon religion itself, can scarcely be calculated. Hitherto all associated and select forms of what we call "the professions" have had their life and their functions, as it were, under their own control ; but it is not so any longer. There is no profession whatever—not even the most rigorous association of science—that is not obliged to recognize the power of that great popular intelligence of the community in which it dwells and acts. I may not be able to tell you how it is ; but this I do say, that until science so far courts popular feeling that the whole mass of the community are willing to support it, scientific men will be unable to get a livelihood. Science is now obliged to live upon the bounty of the great body of common people, and it must be supported by their good will. When kings and nobles had the sole charge of the state, artists and art could flourish on royal patronage ; but no school of art to-day can flourish on mere royal patronage. The good will of the common people is the atmosphere in which art flourishes, and upon which art must grow.

There was a time when men had no right, being sick, to know anything about themselves ; it was the doctor's prerogative to know about them ; but to-day, father and mother are doctors. They have trenched far along on the province that the professional physician has held.

The time was, when, to learn a trade, a man must belong to a guild, and outside of that guild no man had a right to inform himself ; and they are attempting to bring back, in Trades Unions the same mediæval device, which was good as against tyranny, but which is bad as against their own mutual industries. Nowadays, it is the distinctive peculiarity of the Yankee brain that it is able to know everything, and to do everything. In other words, the function of creative

power is universally diffused by reason of the general intelligence of the community.

Law is no longer in the hands of lawyers, alone. Every business man in good standing is his own lawyer, to a large extent. What is peculiar is this: that while these professions have distributed their functions at the bottom they have been gaining at the other extreme.

There never was a time when art schools or professions were so honorable. Lawyers and doctors are more respectable to-day than they ever were before. They have gone up, and are going up.

The profession of the ministry is a signal instance of the change which has taken place. Once, a minister had the knowledge of theology: to-day it is distributed through the whole community. It is not what the pulpit says, altogether, that determines any longer the conscience or the beliefs of the community. In other words, popular intelligence has so increased that the pulpit itself is tried at the bar of the moral sense of the community; wild and extravagant statements are not able to live; they die of inanition; and every system of theology feels itself obliged to appeal to those great fundamental moral instincts which belong to the human race, and not to the select profession of theology.

So we see not only that the intellectual power of the human brain in Christendom has been increased and varied, but that it constitutes an atmosphere in which all the great organisms and interests of society are themselves standing as before a tribunal.

Nor is the tendency in any other direction; the tendency is to increase in this same direction; and the first supreme factor in the moral elevation of the human race in its religious development—namely, intelligence working with moral sense—unquestionably never was so strong as it is to-day. The power, therefore, of the brain in that direction never was so great and never was so fertile, and with such a tendency to increase in these particulars—and this is more than everything else.

It is a good thing for me to know that I have in my barn forty tons of hay; but it is a great deal better thing for me

to know that I have a farm which can cut eighty tons next year, and a hundred tons the year following. It may be a good thing for a man to know that he is worth a hundred thousand dollars ; but it is a far better thing for him to know that he has an incalculable property-producing power in himself. That power is more than any amount that he earns. The power to get is better than any getting ; and the power to know is better than any special knowing ; and if it is so in regard to the individual, how much more so must it be in regard to an age, or in regard to Christendom ! When we learn this condition, we can say, looking upon the population of the globe, "The power to know has been exalted immeasurably."

Look, now, at the other factor of which we spoke, namely, the moral sense, the dynamic condition of the moral sense, or the moral element in the human brain. We are liable to mistake here by looking only on the *word*, as Paul says, and not on the *power*. There are two great theological mutations going on.

You may say as much as you please about truth having been revealed in exact statements and proportions by a divine revelation ; but God never said anything to show that he ever thought so, and nobody ever should have thought so ; for revelation is only the unfolding of human life with an authoritative record of its results. From the beginning to the end of Scripture, there are but few passages in which any man in his senses would pretend that there was a statement from above of things which have not been found out by living—by the unfolding of human experience. Nine hundred and ninety-nine truths in a thousand in the revelation of God were revealed to man by the process of unfolding, through human experience, and the Bible is the authoritative record of what God has thus revealed. God can make revelation through language ; and he can do it as much through feeling. He is not restricted in what he reveals through this or that channel. If he choose to reveal truths by the progress and unfolding of the race, they are as much revelations as any others.

Now, truth being revealed through human experience—

national truth through national unfolding, social truth through social unfolding, and individual truth through individual unfolding—the revelation will be in proportion to the actual amount of development and experience, and therefore there will be a continual unfolding of our understanding of revelation itself. Things may be studied in set forms in one age, taken in their narrowest sense, and in a later age they may be stated in vastly more complex forms, taken in a much broader sense. For example: Anciently, “the knowledge of God” was a matter of prescribed forms which few even pretended to try to understand; but in our day “the knowledge of God” is only another phrase for speaking of the knowledge of the mind, and all theology is mental philosophy; for we cannot understand God except as a great, an infinite, mind; nor can we understand him as a mind except as we understand what thought is in ourselves and in others.

The progress of investigation as to the nature, and conditions, and action of the human mind, will go far to determine our conception of the divine nature and of the divine mind. Men sometimes say, “We understand God, and then we take our knowledge of him and interpret it, and apply it to men.” It is just the other way. We understand in men the qualities of justice, and kindness, and mercy, and forgiveness, and patience, and long-suffering, and then we take these things as we have them unfolded in our experience, and attribute them to God, and give them infinite proportions. The process of knowledge is different from what it has been supposed to be in this respect. So every advance which is made in the human mind will be a disturbing force to the old theologies. The human mind is being studied; the transmission of qualities from our ancestors is coming to be better understood; a fuller knowledge of the organs of the physical body and their functions is being arrived at; the different sides of the human mind in the progress of ages are being explored; great developments of truth, truths of transcendent power in this direction, are being disseminated and their tendency is to disturb.

The newspapers will be filled from end to end with the

Austrian campaign as against Prussia, or with the Germanic campaign as against France—and not unworthily, perhaps; they will be filled with that which addresses itself to our senses, and excites wonder and curiosity; whereas, man in the laboratory studies out the actual facts of human knowledge. The source of intelligence in regard to the human soul has developed truths a thousand times more important to the world than the rise and fall of empires; and every advance in the true knowledge of man, in the knowledge of the structure of his mind, and in the knowledge of the emotions which it experiences, is a force that is disturbing to old statements, and must be.

Then the revelation that is going on, the notions of government, must act back upon all our original statements of moral government. As men learn what they did not earlier know, that the individual is God's unit, that man in his simple sole self is a creation which is a unit of measurement through all God's domain, and that he has some values besides those which he has when he is merely put into society; that he is something in and of himself; that government is obliged to use him to make itself strong, and to use itself to make him strong; and that all governments are to serve the common people—as men come to this conception of the individual man, of his rights, and of his relation to government, they can not go back to the old Calvinistic notion of a God who governs the world simply because he has the power and the will, and who, if anybody asks, "Why do you so?" says, "Hold your tongue; I can, and therefore I do." Is power the source of right? Could there be a heresy worse than that! Would it not be flagitious for one man to govern another just because he could? Could there be anything more erroneous than to say that the fundamental qualities of right and wrong which exist in men are reversed when they are attributed to God, and that what is reprehensible in man when he governs is permissible in God when he governs, simply because he is all-powerful? Could there be a statement more mischievous than that while a man only has a right to do things that are proper according to some common moral standard, God has a right to do anything he chooses because

he is omnipotent? Could there be anything more damaging than to teach that it is right for God, because he is great and powerful, to do that which is a sin and a crime for man to do? You destroy moral sense in its very cradle by any such attribution to God as that.

Men say, "How is it that the fathers got along so well, that the churches used to be so at peace, that everything was taught in the simplest way; and that now there is such confusion, that nobody believes as anybody else does, that matters are so complicated? It seems as though religion was all wasting away. The Sabbath used to be kept faithfully; but it is not now. The church used to be grounded in this that and the other doctrine; but now there is doubt about this and about that. Once such a thing was taught by such a text; but now men say, 'In the original it does not mean so, and it does not mean so.'" Everybody is alarmed because truth seems to be shattered; but you should recollect that precisely this thing takes place every single year in the vegetable kingdom; for, going out in the month of June, I listen to the almost universal lamentation in the forest, and I hear the trees saying, "Last year we had the juiciest bark, and it hugged close to our bodies; but now, somehow or other, it is cracked, there is no juice in it, the young bark inside is crowding it off, it is dropping to pieces, and is worthless, and we do not know what will become of us." Well, when the tree grows, the outside has to crack, and drop off, and get out of the way.

So when men are learning higher truths, the lower, inchoate and primitive forms of statement must crack and get out of the way, or else churches will be bark-bound. Now trees that are bark-bound are full of lice and all kinds of vermin; but no insects trouble the bark of a tree that is full of power and real growth. Vitality is the best medicine, as well as the best nurse. So, if the moral sense of men be quick, and we see that rectitude has not been straight enough, that refinement has not been pure enough, that justice and equity have not been stated clearly enough, and that the laws which govern men and nations are susceptible of a far higher exposition and development; and if they begin to bring aug-

mented power of moral sense into the realms of life, then theology must conform itself thereto or perish. You must give a larger statement to truth, to love, to humanity and to government; and you must do it from the very topmost down to the very bottommost.

Then, there may seem to be a great waste and destruction in the religious realm, which is the result of growth—of life. The *power* is there—not the word; for the Gospel is not in word, but in power. Oftentimes the disturbance in the world is a sign of power, is a token of life, is an omen of good.

These conflicts are going on in ecclesiastical organizations, and I am glad of it. They, however, are domiciliary troubles. They are the result of narrowness and want of adaptation to the needs of men, or of false notions of authority or function.

There can be no question whatever that a hundred men, or a hundred families, may get together and ordain for themselves any method of worship which they please. No man has a right to disturb them. You may administer truth by preaching, or you may administer it by lights and shadows. There is no law against drawing pictures on a blackboard with crayon, and calling that preaching. There is no reason why people should not, if they choose, have symbols in churches. Some talk about symbols and liturgies and rituals as though they were in themselves wicked. No; I say, if anybody has been taught by these things, and he prefers that method of being taught, he has a right to it; but when a man steps out from the sphere of his own personal election, and says, "This is what God meant for the whole race, and you shall be damned if you do not take it," that is an entirely different matter. I aver the liberty of men to believe in popes, and in cardinals, in archbishops, in bishops, in deacons, in whole systems of specific forms, if they wish to; I declare their right to take anything that they want from the ecclesiastical-wagons that have come down loaded with plunder from the early days—here something from the Roman temple, there something from the Grecian, and perhaps some vestments from old Jerusalem. If they want

them, why should they not have them? Why should they not build their houses with them if they choose? I defend their right to them; but when they tell me that *I* shall worship according to certain forms, and that without them I have no right to live or die with any hope of the future—when all these things are packed upon me by a “Thus saith the Lord,” it concerns me!

When, therefore, men say that there are these divisions going on in churches, I am glad of it. It is auspicious of a better day. The day is certainly coming in which, while churches will not go down, they will be “differentiated,” as Mr. Spencer would say. There will be more and not fewer churches, the elements of religion coming together by elective affinity; and the idea of one universal church will be realized when there is one language spoken by all the nations on the globe; when there is one civil government established throughout the world—and when will that be? Never. Unity is not by the exterior: it is by the interior. Let all the stars be melted into one great orb; let the vast outlying universe become a solid cube, and then, but not till then, will all the diverse instruments and all the liberties which belong to those instruments coalesce into anything like objective, external, physical unity.

Because there is such strife and such conflict, the impression has gone abroad that religion is losing ground; that the church is growing weaker; that there is an incursion of errors into the church; that to an unwonted degree religion is falling from the right; but remember that “the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.”

Is the moral power of Christendom to-day greater or less than it has been hitherto? That is the question; and in order to settle it we must consider the distributions of moral power. If you had a book that gave an exact description of saw-mills, of grist-mills, of carding-machines, of looms, of sewing-machines, of all manner of machinery, and explained the method of making them, and if you sent that book out, so that every family on the globe had one—not a machine, but a book—how much work would it do? It might inspire people to build machines and do good work, but you would

have to examine the machines and the work, to know anything about it.

Now the Bible is a book of machines, as it were—of moral forces; and to ascertain anything about the power which it has exerted you must go, not to the Book, but to that of which it speaks, which it has created outside of itself, and which is in operation in the church and elsewhere. How much truth is embodied in the ideal of personal manhood in the world; in the social condition of the family; in the conceptions of industry and commerce; in the relations of society; in the primary impulses and in the products of men? I hold that the power of the Gospel in any age is to be found, not in the letter, not in the word, but in the power which these things are exerting upon the world.

Let us measure the outside. Is the world gaining or losing in this respect? Is the personal standard of manhood advancing or losing ground in Christendom? Advancing beyond all question. There never was a time when the physical necessities of men were so much studied—and that without at all animalizing men. Do you take notice that to teach a man how to cook his food better, and how to eat it more relishfully, and how to clothe himself better, and how to furnish the exterior conditions of life with more things that appeal to his fancy and taste—do you take notice that this is not to augment him as a physical being? Do you observe that the effect of it is to take away from him mere animalism, and to wrap about him higher attributes, which exalt him?

The ideal of manhood never was higher than it is to-day in Christendom. I do not mean that there have not been times when some Philip Sidneys had higher ideas of nobility, and when poets exalted to a greater degree the function and the destiny of man; but I say that while we have as many philosophers and poets who exalt the ideal of manhood as they had in the past, we have what they never had—a conception of the dignity of the individual man reaching down to the bottom of society. There never was a time when, in the whole mass of mankind throughout Christendom, there was so high an ideal of what it is to be a man.

Care of the bottom does not simply have relation to refinements, or to happiness. There is a fundamental necessity for a regenerative process which shall give to the physical structure more vitality and more power than it has ever had. You never are going to carry men to that state for which they were designed, until all the channels of the brain are suffused with stimulus. Where there is a great strain, and a lack of vitality of power and brain, you break a man down. You might as well build a corn-stalk carriage and put upon it a thirty-six pound cannon as to attempt to support a brain unfolded to the extent of its possibilities on man's physique in the present state of its weakness. It would break him down. When the whole mind is suffused, there is not power in the system, in its present condition, to generate steam enough to resist the action of it.

You cannot misunderstand me unless you want to; and if you want I will give you every chance. I say that man is dependent on higher agencies, and yet I say that our fondest dreams of the progress of humanity must be laid in a newly created body. While regeneration does much, generation also has to do much. The sins of the father must stop acting upon the sons. They must not sin; and the accumulated virtues of ancestors must roll over into strong bodies until by a blessed economy the race shall be exalted, and shall become competent to discharge its higher functions which belong to the days that are to come. There is no reason why, from the very beginning, we should not commence to build that new heaven and new earth in which dwelleth righteousness, by building men that can stand the wear and tear and exigencies of mental strife.

Is the standard of manhood receding in the higher classes? No man pretends that. Is man individually less among the civilized nations of the globe than he was in days gone by? He never was more. As I have said, there never was a time when he was so high. He is not worked up into states on the same principles that he once was. He is no longer regarded even in armies as a mere machine, as he once was. He lives better. His needs are more, and his supplies are greater.

I saw an ailanthus tree planted, not far from here, some years ago. In the pavement a little collar was cut for its trunk. One of the roots, lying along a nutritious bit of ground, took upon itself to grow. I observed after the second year that the flag-stone, which weighed many hundred pounds, began to tilt; in the course of the summer one side of it had been raised a good deal; and the next year that soft and spongy root had, by growing, thrown this great stone so out of plumb that it had to be taken up and readjusted to the want of that root. Society is full of disturbances. There are Trades Union associations, strikes and quarrels; and it is said that industry is disorganized. What is the matter? I will tell you. Reason, intelligence, capacity for developing the great mass of the common people till they are larger than they used to be—this is at work, growing; and you may put as many slabs, as many side-walks, as many paving-stones, as many regulations upon them, as you please; but the silent growth of the root will lift every one of them; and all society will be a-tilt until men have been brought to be what God gave them the power to be. There will, therefore, be various divisions and conflicts and struggles; in these there will be much that is unwise, useless, wrong and cruel, on both sides; but I am in a peculiar position in which I am on the side of the workingman generically, while, specifically, I am against him. I am for his growth and development; but I think many of his acts are not wise for himself, or for the community, and I do not know but that it is through his blunders that he must come to wisdom; for blundering has been the Minerva of the ages. Men learn what is right by learning what is wrong. Truth has been a great inclosure, as it were, having but one gate; and society has been like a blind man who goes butting on the right and on the left, and does not find the right place until he has butted his head against every picket, and finally gets around and stumbles in by accident. In various matters of right and wrong men have gone on butting their heads against this, that and the other error until at last they have stumbled upon the truth.

It is one thing for men to be born with bread enough, and clothes enough, and honor enough, and social life enough,

and it is another thing for a man to be born with none of these things. I do not know that from my standpoint I can judge correctly. I am inclined to bring my class feelings to the judgment of those who belong to another class; I must judge the best way I can under the circumstances; but I know that all these turmoils are full of meaning, and that their meaning is outswelling manhood. Men are more, and their wants are more, than formerly they were. Do you say, "Let them be contented to be as their fathers were"? I say that contentment under such circumstances is base—unspeakably base. All growth means complexity. Every single faculty developed is an appetite and want. Every man that grows must have more wants and must have them supplied; and if society has clamped itself down upon them by the old methods it must split and give way; for the plant shall come up and develop.

Look at that single declaration of our Master, when John says to him, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" He did not put his hand in his pocket and hand out the Articles of the Faith of his church. He did not say, "Go with me up to the temple, and I will tell you whether I am a Jew or not." What did he say? "The deaf hear; the dead are raised; and, [what was the significant climax?] *the poor have the gospel preached to them.*" If there is in our state of civilization a sweet and balmy breath of April and of May coming to the long winter of discontent; if the roots of the common people are swelling; if the mass of mankind are regarded as more important than the elect of mankind; if this great million-hearted race are swelling and rising, it is a sign that the gospel is preached among the poor—it is one of the signs of the times which show that the latter-day glory is advancing.

I mark with emphasis the swelling of discontent at present in the industrial classes as one of the best signs and tokens of the times. That which other men look upon with shaded eyes of terror I look upon with open-faced rejoicing, and give God thanks. Out of it shall come a better future.

Are the social conditions of unity, judging from the same general standard, such as should give us hope, or alarm?—

[But I am afraid I am not going to get half through my sermon! Sermon against turkey is not a fair fight! I will go on, however, for a time.] Is the family—that great primitive institution which will go on down through universal life and history, and will stand more admirable and confirmed at the very end, in the millennial and hoped-for day—weakened or strengthened? The idea of uniting those who are sprung from father and mother into a little commonwealth, where by reason of their smallness of number they come within the scope and power of parental government—is this idea lost out, or losing? No. I think the revelation above all other revelations is not of four-winged angels, not of the bright seraphim, not of the resounding chant, not of the shouting chorus of the Apocalyptic vision: though these touch one's senses more, and are more dramatic, yet, after all, they are not to be compared with one thing—namely, that God reveals himself in his own nature and government in this world by the experience of the father and the mother toward the child, and by the experience of the child toward the father and the mother. You might destroy the whole Bible, and if this was left you would have a germ from which you could reconstruct it again. You might destroy that, in the experience of life, and the Bible would not save mankind. It is the one thing in this world by which we know what it is to govern by love. It is in the family alone that wisdom, that justice, that truth, and that pain-administrations spring from love; it is there that love is sovereign; it is there that out of love all things grow; it is there that we have the primary, fundamental, typical institution of the race; it is there that we have the most precious thing that was ever given to mankind. We have constructed the universe from the throne, from theologies, from civil governments, and courts, and laws; we have constructed it from the mart, from the scales, from the yard-stick, and from the equities of commerce; but you will never have a universe in its full grandeur till you have constructed it on the central foundation of the family. Children are born out of their parents; they dwell in the atmosphere of love; love is competent to every necessary

function ; and human governments would be as much better administered on the family pattern than they are now, as the administration of the family is better than civil administration. The reason why civil governments are not administered on the family pattern is that men are not big enough and strong enough to administer according to that pattern so well on a large scale as they can on a small scale ; but God is big enough and strong enough. From the family the whole lore of true government springs, as literature springs from the alphabet.

Now, is the family substantially gaining, or losing ? Gaining, *gaining!* There have been some wild howls around about it ; there have been some missionaries of nastiness that have attempted to introduce their economies into it ; there have been hideous philosophies—Satan's, varnished and disguised like angels of light—wandering up and down and attempting to destroy it. But no sooner was the cloven foot seen than that was the end of it ; and never was the moral sense of the race so strong as it is to-day for the inviolability of the monogamic household. The family never before was so virtuous and refined, taking it comprehensively, as it is to-day.

Oh ! that we could have our eyes opened to see what was the condition of the family in Athens during her better days. Athens had her Phidias who adorned her with statues, and on every side in that renowned city were wonders of art ; there was a time when it was a proverb that no man should die without seeing Phidian Jove. But at that same time the streets of Athens were gutters without pavements ; they were common sewers of all manner of filth. One walking the streets of Athens sunk ankle deep in mud if it was wet weather, and ankle deep in dust if it was dry. There was not a house in all Athens that you would put your dog into and call it a decent kennel. The Athenians lived in houses that protected them from the sun and rain, and that was all. They had no carpets, no costly furniture, no pictures, no embellishments. Art was consecrated to the State and to religion. In Athens there were no newspapers, no magazines, no libraries. There was no home circle. The wife was a

drudge whose only duty was to take care of slaves. She could not unveil her face in the presence of men, nor could she even come to the door to greet her husband or her sons when they came back from battle. Though the lofty mount of the Acropolis gleamed with marble temples, the sun each day finding and leaving it the most resplendent point on the globe, yet at the bottom it was villainously stenchful; and the condition of its inhabitants was mean in comparison with that of the poorest laborer in our time. I will go to New York, and follow home ninety per cent. of all the men who gain their livelihood by daily toil, and will find them living in houses that are palaces compared with those in which men lived in times gone by. There are multitudes of mechanics who to-day have more comforts than were in palaces in the time of Queen Elizabeth. If you call to mind the way in which barons used to spread their tables and spend their lives, you will find that the day laborer of our time is better off than they were. The household has augmented itself since then. It requires more to make a good father and a good husband now than it did then. Men are so much larger now, in this country, that an American household to-day is an institution to compare with which, a hundred or two hundred, a thousand or two thousand, years ago, there was nothing; and the foundations of it are not shaken. Some folks think when the night cart rolls by and shakes the house, that there is an earthquake. No; and mud carts may run by the family, and shake it a little, but there is no earthquake. The social power in the family ministered by the affections, by refined taste, by ardent loves, by joys which have their pattern and equal nowhere else—it is this that marks the civilizing and Christianizing influence of the Gospel in our day.

The power of society, also, in right directions, was never so great as it is now—first to resist evil tendencies, and secondly to expel them when they are introduced at unawares. I meant to have made a more elaborate head of this; but I shall not: I will barely state the outline. We count that man to be healthy who, dwelling among morbid influences, has power to throw them off; but if through the over-taxation

of night and day a man's system is not quite strong enough, or he is not quite watchful enough, to resist the incursion of disease, we say that he lacks stamina and resiliency.

Now, in such vast inchoate masses as the whole of a nation or the whole of a State, it is scarcely to be expected that there will be the watchfulness or the power to resist, or to throw off, those influences which are distilled in society like malign dews in the night ; and the practical question is, What is the power of a nation, when diseased, to cure itself ? What has been the history of this nation as to its power to throw off evils ? When it had just gone through that terrific storm of the great war—Do you believe there ever was a time when this church was a kind of recruiting ground ? Do you believe there was ever a day when your streets were filled with regimented men ? Do you believe there was ever a Thanksgiving Day when the pastor of this church thundered on the subject of human rights and the liberties of men, and urged men to go out and fight ? Do you believe there were occasions when telegrams were received in this building on the reading of which the roof was rent by the acclamations of a vast audience whose hearts were all on fire ? It is gone ; it has died like fireworks ; it has passed by as a dream, thank God ! But remember, we went through four years of terrific fire. What a strain it was ! Remember that this great people, East, North and West, were united by a common desire to maintain this nation, and submitted themselves to that of which men are the most impatient. They voted taxation. They rolled up debt like a mountain. And you remember how, when the war was past, and the country was safe, and the question was propounded to this nation, “Will you not repudiate that debt ?” they refused to do it. Repudiation is the cunningest devil that ever tempted mankind ; and never was a nation more open to temptation than this nation was. Look at the millions of foreigners that had not taken root, and that could not be expected to have imbibed American ideas. How many laboring men there were who felt that they were being taxed heavily ! And yet, North and South, East and West, and among no part of our people more nobly than among the foreign emigrants, it was said, “Let

every dollar voted to save the country be paid according to promise." Was there ever a more threatening symptom than that of repudiation? and was there ever a more speedy rebound to moral health?

See what a universal disturbance there was of money relations. See what a spirit of wild speculation was introduced. That is settled, I take it. We have got over that.

See what dishonesties crept into every part of the public service; but see how the community has little by little been purging itself of these dishonesties, and of the men that committed them. See how rings formed in great cities have been broken up. See how our cities have had power to clear themselves of corrupt officials, and to set courts right, so that they are now resplendent, lustrous, as compared with what they were ten years ago. The power of the community to redress its wrongs without revolution, by the force of public sentiment, and to heal itself by not allowing pimples to become ulcers—this is a sign of health which is unimpeachable to-day. And this belongs not to us alone, but to the nations of the earth.

Consider, too, the resurrection power that is brought on the globe. It used to be thought (I thought when I was a boy) that when nations were once run down they were like a tree that had grown very old—like one of those old apple-trees that are shrunk at the root, whose bark is dropping off, and that are dead on the north side, the east side, and the west side, with only a clump of mistletoe here and there, and a few leaves on the south side and in the center. The idea of curing such a tree is preposterous. The ax is the only medicine for it. So I remember saying of Italy, "The stock and substance is gone; the ax must be laid at the root of the tree: it must be cut up; that is the only cure for it." But Italy—poor old decrepit Italy—is becoming the Italy of Count Cavour, that noble man of the Island. Italy is resurrected, and is regenerate.

Look at England, going through a regeneration which is not to end till her laboring men have their rights; till her whole economy is revolutionized; till her lands are marketable; till a man can buy land without paying more for the

legal steps of the purchase than the original price of the land. There is no more reason why a man should hold unlimited wealth than why he should hold unlimited political influence. The aristocracy of Mammon is not always going to rule in England.

Look at Germany, twenty years ago cut up like a checker-board; to-day the noblest empire in Europe.

Even Russia—especially in its hitherward portion—is growing in civilization and in the commercial elements of prosperity. It is yet a vast barbaric empire; but it is developing nobly, and is bound to have a magnificent future.

Austria was like a piece of cloth in a fulling-mill, for years together; but she has come out, and is turning her attention to the education of her common people—and no nation is decrepit, no nation can go down, that educates her common people, and makes them strong.

Look, to-day, at France—a wonderful kingdom of weakness and of strength, but significant in her wealth-producing power. At last she is manifesting a disposition to educate her common people. Of the whole revenue of the French empire ninety per cent. were employed for the Army and Navy, six per cent. for the civil government, and four per cent. for education; but that is to be revolutionized. France is coming up.

Even Spain is living again. She has heard the voice of Him who said to Lazarus, "Come forth!" and though she yet has the napkin about her head, and the garments of the grave about her person, the Master says, "Loose her, and let her go;" and they are loosing her feet, and loosing her hands; and they are uncovering her eyes; and the day will come when her superstition will flee away, and her indolence will cease, and her miscreant rule will come to an end, and she will touch again something of the grandeur and power and beauty of her early history.

Is this drift of nations nothing? Is this current which is carrying them into the realm of knowledge and wisdom of no account?

Whence comes all this power which is regenerating mankind? Science says, "I am doing it all." Nay, Science, it

is not in thee. Church, it is not in thee. Government, it is not in thee. School-house and college, it is not in you. "Behold," saith the Lord that dwelleth in eternity, "I create!" It is the breath of the Lord, breathing upon the great sentient human soul of every nation and tongue; humanity, touched of God, is lifting itself up; and all things are taking form or giving way, so that man at last may rise, the son of God, recognized of his Father.

There is reason for thanksgiving, for hope and for growing expectation.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE draw near to thee, our Father, to-day, with thanksgiving and with praise, for all the unnumbered mercies of thy grace and thy providence. It is by thy power that the earth doth stand, and that the seasons do move, and that their fruitfulness blesses all living creatures. It is by thy power that we are preserved in reason and intelligence, to appreciate the bounties of our God—yea, to lift ourselves above the flocks and the herds that know not how to recognize thee, who art like unto ourselves, except in weakness and impurity, being transcendent in wisdom and goodness; and to feel the sweet attraction and blessedness of those truths universal which thou hast made known to us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Redeemer.

And now, O Lord, we thank thee that thou hast put it into the hearts of the rulers of this great people to recommend this day, in which, separating themselves from secular avocations, they shall draw near, in their several places of worship, to recognize thy goodness and thy power, to review the year, and to select from all its varied experiences reasons of thanksgiving.

We thank thee that the seasons have been so propitious, and that to so large an extent, in this whole land, prosperity hath been granted; that the earth hath yielded so abundantly its increase; and that there has been over so much of it such continuous health.

We thank thee that thou hast granted unto us more and more a knowledge of thyself, reviving thy work in the churches of the land, and enlarging the hearts of thy people. Grant unto them the spirit of generosity, and a desire to build up the institutions on which the times stand. We thank thee that thou hast set us among the nations of the earth, one prosperous among many that are prospering. We thank thee for all the signs of the times which we discern in respect to the races to which we belong.

We desire, O God, to thank thee that there is so much of hope. And while yet there is so much of darkness, and so much in ourselves unilluminated that tends towards despondency, we rejoice that there is so much, also, that gives intelligent confidence that the future is to grow brighter and brighter, and that the promised days are not illusory, but shall come, bringing with them universal holiness, universal knowledge, universal strength, universal prosperity, and universal happiness.

We beseech of thee, O God, that thou wilt grant unto all this great people, more and more, a sense of dependence upon God, a desire to know his laws, and a spirit of obedience thereto. Look upon the hindrances, throughout the world, to the final perfection thereof. Bring superstition speedily to an end. Curb selfish power. Restrain the cruelties of unmannered despotisms.

Be pleased, we beseech of thee, to breathe humanity into the laws of men. Grant wisdom and bountifulness unto the hearts of all those who administer in behalf of their fellow-men. We pray thee that all those struggles which must needs be, that all those strifes which are seeking better things, may be so restrained and governed that they shall work out the greatest good and the least evil.

Look, we pray thee, with compassion upon all those in our own land who yet sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. We pray that those who have been reached by knowledge may speedily find the light rising upon their knowledge. Grant, we pray thee, that that healing of heart and spirit which is begun may be completed. May the divine influence restore again the old friendships more heartily than ever in this land. We thank thee, O Lord, for all that thou hast done, and for all that thou hast promised in the future.

And now, we thank thee in our own behalf, that thou hast been so gracious to this church. We thank thee that the afflictions which thou hast brought upon it have been blest to its spiritual good. We thank thee for the health which has prevailed in our families; and that where sickness and death have come, there has come also the Spirit of the divine Comforter, so that men have been strengthened in their weakness, and built up by their sorrows, and augmented by their wastes. We thank thee for all the happiness that we have had, individually and collectively; and we beseech of thee that thou wilt accept the dedication which we make of ourselves to thee, and our ardent desire that every power and every faculty that is in us may be consecrated to the work of God among men.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt hasten the day when we shall have no occasion to pray for the heathen, for the ignorant, for the weak, and for the oppressed; when no man shall need to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord; when all shall know thee from the greatest unto the least; and when thy kingdom shall come and thy will shall be done upon earth as it is in heaven.

These mercies we ask, and this thankfulness we offer, in the name of Jesus, to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, shall be ascribed everlasting praises. *Amen.*



## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Grant, our Father, thy blessing to rest upon the word spoken. Grant that we may rejoice in the on-goings of thy providence; in the disclosures of thy grace; in all the fruits which we see in the midst of blood, and tears, and groans, and sufferings, and sorrows. Grant that we may also see that the crucifixion and the tomb are bringing salvation and life, and that the race is following its Master, and, through suffering, coming to glory. Grant that our hearts may be able to interpret the signs of the times, and that we may be filled with great joy and rejoicing, knowing that the God of all the earth cannot but do right. Hear us in our thanksgiving, and accept us, for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

## FOUNDATION WORK.

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“Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man’s foundation.”—*ROM. xv. 20.*

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The converse is this :

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon.”

You will recollect that when Paul was converted he stood very high among his own people as a man eminent both in knowledge and in executive talent. He evidently took the lead in putting down a pestilent heresy that his countrymen thought had sprung up among them ; and he pursued the methods which have been very widely pursued since the world began in putting down heresies—that is, differences of belief. Instead of using argument, he tried the sword, prisons, stones, anything that would make an impression ; and it was when he was on one of his errands of convincing the world that Christianity was not true, that he was himself stricken down midway, and brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. His whole career before and his whole life development afterward show us that one very strong element—the axis, as we might almost call it, of Paul’s character—was his pride. He was a man of great firmness, with a temperament of the utmost fervor, and with fervent affections which had been held in check up to this time.

One would suppose that a man of such a nature, being converted, would have turned upon his heel, and gone to Jerusalem, and put himself at the head of the Christian movement. He was a bold man, fearing nothing, and ap-

parently all the opportunities for a man of his executive energy would open in the neighborhood of the mother church, or the mother assemblies, in Jerusalem. But instead of going there, after spending some days in Damascus, and preaching in that place until the Jews of Damascus, enraged at his apostasy, as they would call it, attempted his life, he secretly went to Arabia, returning thence to Damascus. How soon he returned we do not know; but he spent the first three years of his ministry somewhere in Syria and Arabia. Of these first three years we have absolutely no account. He gives a simple statement of the time in the first of Galatians. Then he went to Jerusalem; but he stayed there only a fortnight, and saw none of the apostles except James, who seems to have been the chief. After that he departed and went into Asia Minor. For fourteen years he labored without going back to Jerusalem at all. Afterward, when he went back, it was for a very brief stay; and he declares that he preached the Gospel in places where nobody had been before him, seeking them out of preference. He was not after a settlement. He was not in search of a parish or a good salary. He was not trying to find rich synagogues of Jews who were ready to be converted. He went nowhere in the footprints of men who had gone first and taken the brunt of opposition and persecution. He went to the Gentile world. He was proud to go where foundations had not been laid, and to lay foundations that other men might build on them—as they did. This was the Apostle Paul's feeling in regard to his labor: "I will take foundation-work. Let other men have the building upon that."

Now, foundation work is always the hardest, as you will see if you go back to the figure from which this language was borrowed—namely, the rearing of a structure. Have you stood and looked at the great buildings that are being put up in New York and Brooklyn? Did you go down, as I did, into one of the caissons on which one of the great bridge towers stands, and see what foundations are? Not exactly following the apostle's example, but tempted by a natural curiosity to see anything that was being wrought by my fellow-men, I went down into one of the caissons while

it was being sunk. A vast, cavernous, tripartite room it was. It was sunk by taking away the dirt from under it, and sending it up through appropriate channels. The place was gloomy, oppressive, and nasty. Thousands and thousands of men will stand on the bridge and admire it, and admire the architectural skill displayed there, and praise the engineers, who will not think of the poor dirty fellows down on their hands and knees, clawing out the mud and stones in order to let the caisson go down. I shall always be thankful that I went down and saw these poor fellows ; for though I shall never go over that bridge without thinking of the engineers and the men that early put their hands to that magnificent feat of enginery which was so much needed, I never shall go over it without also thinking of those that will not generally be thought of—the men that worked down at the bottom. I shall thank them, too. Men that do foundation work get few thanks from anybody.

Look at all those immense stores that are going up in these cities—for since the invention of hoistways men own a great deal more space than they thought they did, and they are going up heavenward ; a thing that in New York I am always glad to see men do. But in proportion as you go up, you must preliminarily go down ; and the consequence is that the laying of foundations is no small business. But it is the most awkward, the most difficult, the most unrequiting ; and the beauty of it all is, that when you have worked your best, and worked most skillfully, your work is all hidden out of your sight, and nobody thanks you for it. The very thing on which the huge structure stands, and the well-doing of which determines the whole future of the superstructure—that which is of the first account and the least remunerative in the doing—is the most hidden, and has no praise—nothing except darkness.

Now, that a man should like to do that work is scarcely possible. A man may do it for bread—a man will do anything for his bread ; but to do it for pleasure is not according to nature.

Offer a man a job, and ask him which part he would prefer to do. Say to him, ‘‘ Will you work as a mason down at

the bottom, on the foundation, or will you work as a plasterer up above, or will you work as a carpenter laying the floor, or will you work as a carpenter trimming and finishing the doors and windows, or will you work as an upholsterer, bringing in polished furniture, and carpets, and all things that decorate? where would you prefer to work?" "I would prefer," says the man, "to do the frescoping. I would like to put on those dainty touches which are to make this thing shine, so that people, when they come in and look up and around, shall say, 'Why, he is a genius, ain't he?' They say that the colors put on in the Egyptian temples and pyramids are as brilliant to-day as they were the day they were put on; and I would like to have this building stand a thousand years, and have people come in and say, 'Who did that?' And I am going to have my name somewhere up there to show who did it." But if a man of refinement, a man of capacity, a genius, should come and say, "Why, let me do the lowest work; I will dig, and clear away, and lay the foundations, and take charge of the cellars; other men may build the superstructure, but I prefer to do the under work," people would say, "He is crazy." Everybody would protest, and declare that it was a shame. They would say, "Other men can do that work; but this man has genius, skill, capacity, and we need him higher up. There are a thousand men who can do what he proposes to do, but there is not one in a thousand who is able to do what he can do." And that is true. Men should be suited to the work which they perform. A genius ought not, as a general rule, to devote himself to things which thousands of men can do. Nevertheless, there is an element besides all that. There is a question of heroism. In all the world the bulk of mankind must do low, coarse, and disagreeable things. The great body of men must do things that are not remunerative in and of themselves. They must do work that takes the bone and the muscle; that wearies out the strength; that is done without observation; that is done at low wages; that is done with great pain and suffering; that is done without any praise; that is done to be forgotten; that is done for the most ephemeral remuneration. This is the fact in regard to the whole world.

Now, is there no way in which the great mass of men, sons of toil and sorrow, can labor at this foundation work so as that they can enjoy themselves and be happy? That has been the problem of ages. It is pre-eminently the problem of to-day, whether we can bring to bear on low planes any light that shall redeem men who work there. I see streaming from Paul's example light for the ages, that has never disclosed itself yet, and that is yet to be a gospel to the working poor.

What, then, did Paul say that he did?

"Yea, so have I strived to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation."

He does not boast. It is simply an implication. "I went into Arabia," he says; "I labored three years where there was no apostle. I merely looked in at Jerusalem. I took my way northward into Asia Minor. I worked along the Euxine Sea, all through that mountainous and unsearched region where there had been no predecessor. There I was the first to preach, and there I took the brunt of opposition, or of indifference, which is worse than opposition. I not only took it, but I chose it. I strove for it." Yea, clear around to Illyricum—that is, the western part of Austria—he preached. He preached in Achaia, in Greece, in Macedonia, in all those colonies on the north, clear up to Austria, as it is now, and down to Italy and Rome. In all that country he says that he was the pioneer, taking the first and hardest work. Says he, "I strove to do it. I would not let anybody get ahead of me. It was my ambition, and I did it that I might not build where anybody else had built, but that I might lay foundations on which others should build."

What were the motives that actuated him? That is a very important question. In the first place, here is what you may call Christian pride. Paul never for a moment forgot that he had been a persecutor; but he declared that he was not one whit behind the chiefest of the apostles. When men undertook to invalidate his teachings, and said to him, "You are only a bastard apostle, you did not belong to the original twelve," he rose up and asserted his

apostolicity, and said, "The gospel I did not receive of men. It was not James that told me of this gospel, nor Peter. Of God I received it,"—alluding to his conversion on the road to Damascus. He vindicated his equality with the apostolic band—not for the sake of praise and glory, but because he would not have his message discredited. Not for his own sake but for the sake of the message, he declared that he was fully the equal of any of the apostles. His temperament was such as would make him feel himself quite as much as he was. So he says, "I am not behind any man. I am a match for anybody. I am a full-grown man. I am a Jew." When a man wants to praise himself excessively, he tells what country he came from. An Englishman says, I am an *Englishman*." "Thank God," says his neighbor over the channel, "I am a real full-blooded *Frenchman*." We say, wagging our heads at cathedrals and palaces and towers, "Thank God, I am an *American*." And we say, or shall on the approaching 22d, "Thank God, we are *Yankees*." So every man mentions his nationality as though that conveyed the highest conception of manhood. And so Paul said, "I am a Jew." He felt the dignity of being a Jew—and he had a right to; for there is no nobler stock, and there never was a grander mission, than that which God gave to the Jew. We that revile the Jews are dividing among ourselves the ideas and legacies which were wrought out by their prophets and teachers; and Paul had a right to say, standing as he did amidst ancient civilization, "I am a Jew, and I am not a whit beneath any of the apostles."

What, then, is it becoming in a man to do? He ought to do work that nobody else can do as well as he. A man ought to say, "It is my place to do the things that are the hardest, and that men take to the least naturally, and are the most inclined to shirk. My business is to work where nobody else will work." Such should be the spirit of him who feels himself to be a man. It is quite in keeping with the spirit which our Master urged when he said, "He that would be chief, let him be a servant; he that would be greatest must be content to be among the least."

Thousands and thousands of men are looking about for

places. Thousands and thousands of men want something to do. Oh! that the spirit of Paul was among young scholars, young preachers, young operatives. Then they would say, not, "Who will show me a good parish?" not, "Who will show me a remunerative place?" not, "Who will show me where honor is to be obtained?" not, "Who will put me, the Lord's candle, in a golden candlestick?" but, "Where is there a place that needs some one to fill it, and that other men do not want to go to? That is the place for me, because I am a man, and a *Christian* man."

Such is the ideal of pride. It is not saying, "Bring honor to me; bring to me praise; bring to me the fat of the land; bring to me all delicacies; I am the great man whom all things are to serve." That is infidel pride. That is devilish pride. But if pride says, "I am wise, and I ought to go to the ignorant, because the darkest place needs the greatest light; I am strong, and ought to do the hardest things, because the weakest folks can do the least; I am refined, and ought to go where there is a lack of refinement, because rudeness needs the most refining," then it is true pride. If a man says, "By as much as I am better than other people I ought to serve them," then he is proud in the right direction. People preach against pride. They do not see that they should put pride to such service as this. It is very easy for me to denounce pride in this pulpit; it is very easy for me to stand here and talk about the dangers of pride; but I tell you, the way to deal with pride is to set it to work. Thousands of men have been destroyed for want of pride, where one has been destroyed by excessive pride. Pride is a glorious thing, provided it is disciplined, and employed according to the canon of Christ, and not according to the tendency of wild nature.

Then Paul had a feeling that he never got over, thank God, to the end of his life, proud as he was with Christian pride. He always carried with him one wound which would not heal. "I persecuted the church," he said. He never could get it out of his mind that he, "the least of the apostles," "persecuted the Church of God." You will say that it was a sentimental thing. It was sentimental. He did not look

at it according to the way of the world. Most persons would have said, "Paul, don't feel so bad about this matter; you went according to the ideas of your age; you followed your natural instincts: you made a mistake, to be sure; but all you had to do was to turn on your heel, when you saw your mistake, and quit it." That, however, did not satisfy him. Oh, to have persecuted Jesus! The more he thought of it, the worse he felt. The more he knew of Christ, the more he understood his relations to the world and his love to the dying creatures of his kind, the more awful it seemed to him that he ever lifted his hand against the Saviour, and that he ever put to death one that believed on him. It was a perpetual sorrow to him. He knew that it did not stand against him; but he was a man of such a generous nature that he never could forget it; and he, as it were, put upon himself tasks which no other man would take by way of making amends for that wrong which he had committed. He said, "It is fit that I, who smote the infant church, should go among those who never knew Christ, and bear the brunt of advancing his kingdom all over the world." That is the kind of penance which one may well glory in. The humility of his fall was as magnificent as his pride.

Then there was his feeling of love to Christ—for wherever he was the main conception of Paul's life was heroic, enthusiastic, and, if you please, fanatical love of the Lord Jesus Christ. It filled his whole soul. It was the fountain which could not be restrained, but which gushed out in every direct and indirect way. And he felt, "There is nothing that love cannot do." *Is there anything that love cannot do?* Oh, how many times, when their boys were suffering of fever in the hospital, or of wounds on the battle-field, did mothers, feeble, and with scanty means, go on foot, threading their way through state after state, through the wilderness, through cold, through heat, through hunger and through thirst, to find out those boys! And all the way they counted not their own suffering anything. By day and by night, wherever they were, and under all circumstances, they were supported by the thought, "All this I do for the love that I bear for that boy." And love would do an hundred times

more if it were necessary. It has no language, and therefore it seeks by service to heap up some outward sign or token of what it is, and what it would do. The deeper the love, the more it glories in some form of expression that implies sacrifice, endurance, suffering.

“God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

These are magnificent, ultimate presentations of that which we see all about us. How love is crippled by language! How small it feels itself to appear in comparison with its intent! How poor it is for this world's use! How it seeks, therefore, some mode of making itself known! And to Paul it was not enough to sing, or pray, or praise. “O,” he said, “that I might do something to signify how I love him that loved me! What am I that Jesus did not make me? What is there noble in me that is not of him? Every worthy thought or feeling that I have is inspired by him! It is not to man's praise that I am what I am, but to the glory of Him that, loving me, redeemed me with his precious love.” And so he said, “Give me the hardest work; for the hardest work will show the greatest love.” When he had wrought everywhere, through all wildernesses, and all foreign cities—in the midst of perils of false brethren and riotous heathen mobs, on the sea and on the land, clear down to the end, and lay in the prison at Rome, chained to a soldier, he said, “Let no man henceforth disturb me.” When he was a prisoner, waiting his summons, he had this one feeling:

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me.”

It was Christ that occupied his mind to the last.

Besides that, there was one other thing. As out of the love of Christ comes the love of men, so Paul felt that in doing foundation work he was making a contribution to the happiness of his kind. This he intimates in the first of Corinthians, the third chapter, and the tenth verse:

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon.”

Elsewhere he repeatedly speaks of sowing and not reap-

ing, that others may reap what he has sown. He changes the figure from the agricultural to the architectural one.

This conception, that he was making the way easier for somebody else; that he was bearing pain that others might not have pain to bear; that he was going through personal suffering—hunger and thirst and sickness—that others might come, and in peace and comfort occupy fields which had been laid open to them—this it was that marked the truest element in the character of this true man.

I see that Renan and others undervalue Paul. I hear him scoffed at, or spoken disparagingly of in one way or another; but to my mind there never lived upon the earth more than two or three men. One was Moses, and one was Paul. Perhaps there have been one or two more; but two at least, of the four or five great natures of the world, have been Jews. Men of such magnificent zeal, of such glorious self-sacrifice, and of such long-continued service (thirty one years there were of his ministry)—such men do not come in every age; and when they do come in any age there are very few that know how to appreciate them. Paul stood head and shoulders above every other man. There never has been a greater than he. He lived and died for the love of Christ, and for the love of mankind.

Now, as I have intimated, this example of Paul's ought to throw light upon the great necessities of our age. The whole world is moving. There is a sort of fermentation going on among all nations. Aspiration has dawned upon those that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death, and they are seeking to work their way upward. Men low down are desirous now of equaling those who are more favored than themselves. The question of the rights of men is a question that is not half developed to its fullness; and we are having discontent, distraction, complaints, arguments, sympathies, or assaults, as the case may be. The great race is astir. There is a wind in the forest, and the leaves are murmuring, each one its own song.

One side says, "This is the result of going out of the true church. It is owing to the want of proper subordination. It comes from lack of faith, of obedience, and of

conformity to the prescriptions of the true church." Others say, "It is a process of escape out of the torpidity and death of the 'true church,' as it is called. It is a sign of life in universal humanity, and of its motion upward."

Whatever it may be, we know that manhood is tormented by these thousand questions. Nor do I propose to say that there is a cure for this fermentation. It must go on, if the race is to be developed, and is to come forth from its degradation. We must receive men at the bottom of life; we must take them low down, undeveloped, unrefined, coarse; and there must be tribulation in society until, in some way or other, they shall have largeness in manhood. It is of no use to measure the top to ascertain what mankind are. I do not look at the gold with which a rich man tips his lighting-rod, to find out what is the condition of his family: I go down into the house where the servants and children and people live, to see what their condition is. And you may say as much as you please about the higher classes, it is the base of society that determines civilization and refinement. If in a community there are a million cattle at the bottom under the name of men, and there are a thousand magnificent gentlemen at the top, it is not a prosperous community. The measure of civilization and of Christianity in the community must be taken where the mass of its population reside.

Now, the question of the times is, "What is the condition of the great laboring mass, the thousand to one, that earn their daily bread, and that eat their bread by the sweat of their brow? Is their condition ample, large?" No, it is not. And we know that everything goes up by birth-throes, by contentions. We know that it is necessary that there should be struggle, conflict, fighting, in life, in order that the fruit of the Spirit may be wrought out in men.

One of the lessons of the example of Paul is, that there is to be a consecration of men's pride in work. It is not inconsistent with elevation that a man should feel pride in his work. I mean not manual labor alone, but the labor of all men who are serving in the lower offices of life. There is a reason of pride why they should be faithful and contented.

They ought to carry pride into their business. Every true man should feel, "I bring to my work the worth that is in it, no matter how low it is. *I am doing this work.*" And as it was said, "Where I sit, there is the head of the table," so a man should say, "Where I labor, there is honorable work." That is legitimate pride. That is pride using itself to a purpose.

False pride says to a man, "Why are you bothering yourself with these trifles? What makes you work down here? this is not becoming to you. You are a man that ought to come up higher." That is the world's pride; but that is true pride where one, being placed, in the providence of God, under inferior circumstances where he has to do disagreeable work, makes things honorable which he touches.

If in the time of Christ you had gone to Jerusalem, with all its priests, with all its temples, with all its officers, with all its Herods and Pilates, tell me who would have been the man the least to be envied there. It would have seemed to be He who was about to be led out to crucifixion. Go to Jerusalem to-day, and I find a place where he put his foot, and a million men crowd thither, pilgrims from every nation, willing to bow down and kiss that place. Why, what did he give to it? Himself. It was the manliness of the man, it was the divinity of the man, it was the soul-element which he brought to it, that consecrated the place, and made it a shrine for the eternities. And men who work with a sense of their manhood bring their pride, their fidelity, their industry, and their integrity to their work, and impart something of themselves to what they do. When men consecrate themselves to their labor, that labor itself means something different from what it otherwise would. It is no more ignominious, and it is no more a bondage. The trouble with men who labor at disagreeable work is, that while the work is mean, the workman is meaner. There is no remuneration in it because they bring to it none of that large, glorious self which dignifies small things, lending them the color of the soul.

There may be a spirit of benevolence as well as selfness, dignity, and pride connected with one's work. In that view men who are doing low work are working for their fellow-

men. If you need to have a clamorous recognition of your contributions to life (which is contrary to the example, intent and precept of our Master), then there may be some reason for discontent on your part in doing obscure, inconspicuous work. But do you suppose the engineer who built Eddystone lighthouse, working through winter and summer to lay the foundations of that magnificent structure, never thought, in the intervals of his labor, "How many ships coming home from foreign lands and bringing the husband, the son, the lover, will run safely into harbor by reason of this work that I am now doing, putting stone upon stone, clamping block of granite upon block of granite"? Toiling hard in winter, and harder in the storms of summer, he was rearing that lighthouse; and though most of his work was invisible, he knew that it would be the salvation of myriads of men who never would know whose work saved them until they were in heaven. Do not you suppose that he had such visions? If he did not have them, he was not the man that I take him to have been.

Let men who are working in life think, for their encouragement, how many will probably be blessed by their work. Do not be selfish in what you do.

When the cook raises the bread and bakes it, and it comes out of the oven sweet and delicious, should she think, "Oh, those dear little mouths! oh, those hungry children! how happy it will make them all!" or should she think, "Well, now, my mistress cannot say but that I am the smartest cook in the kitchen"? One is selfish and the other is generous. Which is the most becoming? Which is the noblest?

"What is it that you are working at—you that work in feebleness and pain?" "I am making a cradle." "Oh! making a mahogany cradle. Whose is it?" "Well, it belongs to Mr. Applecorn. He has a family coming on, you know." "But it is hard work for you." "Yes, yes; but I think, as I work and suffer here, how many sweet little babies will be lying in that cradle, and how they will coo and sing. Then I think how, when they get out, others will get in—a whole flock of them. I follow them in my mind as they grow up. I seem to see them running in and out of the

door. I think how some of them, when they are grown up, will take that cradle for *their* children, and how many times mothers will sing by it—for mothers *do* sing, you know. They keep singing with their babies. I think how the children become young folks, and how the young folks get married, till it seems to me as though everybody was courting and marrying and having children. I have a real good time thinking these things over.” And he goes to work again. Now, is not that a good thing to do?

Suppose another man, under the same circumstances, should say, “Here I am, a poor cabinet maker. I ain’t half paid for my work. That old fellow is going to get this cradle. He ought to give me twice as much as I am going to get for it. I do not know what God made me for. I have no luck in this world!” Oh, you mean man! The most unlucky thing to such a man was his being born. If he had the inspirations of a noble life, how easy it would be for him to take the lowly tasks which are brought to his hand, and make them beautiful! It is not hard to make things beautiful provided you have a beautiful soul; provided you have sympathy with your kind; provided you slay the snake of selfishness; provided you have that benevolence which the gospel breathes in every single aspiration.

How many men, when they are performing their manual tasks, contrive to perform them from the meanest motives! How they go about, curmudgeons, groaning, and doing their work poorly, meanly, stingily, with a bad temper and with miserable remunerations! On the other hand, suppose a man should bring to the lower duties of life a manly, noble feeling. Suppose every time you met a man who was going about at night watching the dwellings of the neighborhood, you should stop and talk with him, and find that he looked with pride on his vocation, and rejoiced in his work. Suppose he said, “There are some hardships connected with it, and I do not receive very much for doing it; but I take a great deal of comfort in it. As I walk along Brooklyn Heights here, I think of the tired creatures that are fast asleep; I think of the children; I think of all the people in these houses. When I see a light burning late at night, I

know that somebody is sick, and I am sorry, and hope they will get well. So I have company in my thoughts, looking after one and another and another of those under my care. My monthly pay is not very much ; I have rather a hard time ; but I have enjoyment as well." Suppose, instead of that, another man, rendering the same service, should, every time you met him, say, "I have an awful hard time, and I have only small wages ; couldn't you give me a little more ?" The difference between two such men is as great as the difference between white and black, or between heaven and hell. A man who lives in his lower nature, and only in his lower nature, lives in hell.

So then, thus far, work may be largely redeemed by the spirit which you bring to it ; but if you add to this a higher motive, even ; if men, as Christians, recognize that there is a providence that supervises all human affairs ; if they listen to and reflect upon what Christ said—"Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Father's notice"—they will derive a comfort from that source which they can obtain from no other.

I sat yesterday by my back window up stairs, looking out into the yard, and saw twenty or thirty sparrows enjoying themselves down on my border. I never knew before why I left so many weeds there, but now I see that it was that the sparrows might play with them, and get green leaves from them in the winter. The significance of that passage came to me as it never had before. There I sat, and not one of these sparrows could move that I did not see him. I had an empty ink bottle and one or two soda bottles at hand, and if a cat had come near I would have sent her flying ! I was watching over them. To be sure there was all New York, there was the great harbor, there were the steamers and ships, and I saw them, and did not undervalue them ; I saw the whole panorama of industry ; I saw the dim dust and smoke, and heard the thunder of that dragon on the other side, that crouches down with its thousand eyes at night, and that roars all day long ; and yet the sparrows were as plain to me as that great city ; and it gave new meaning to my Master's words, when he said, "Not a sparrow falls to the ground

without your Father's notice, and ye are of more value than many sparrows."

How sweet and balmy is this kind of faith! Does He that gave himself for me take care of me every day? Does not a hair fall from my head that he does not know it?

Suppose you take that faith into your disagreeable work, and say, "I am serving my Lord and Christ; I came into life under his eye; all my ways are appointed by him; natural law and human agency are part and parcel of something greater than they, like the letters of the alphabet in a word, or like words in a sentence; men's joys and acts are elements that help to make the providence of God; and that providence is ordaining my work"—is it not a great comfort to you? Happy are you if you can say, "The Lord God hath put me here; and, standing here, whether I work, or whether I rest, whether I eat, or drink, or whatever I do, I am to do it to the glory of God." And if you say, "Lord, wilt thou receive this mixed labor of mine?" He says, "Yes, it is for me. Inasmuch as you do the least and the lowest of these duties, I accept them."

Then it becomes a question of allegiance—of love. Where there is love, it can transmute everything, and make it radiant. There is nothing so black that love does not change it to a bright white. There is nothing so low that love does not exalt it and crown it. There is nothing so impure that love does not cleanse it and make it divine.

Oh, that men could carry the love of Christ into their work! Oh, that they might feel that they serve Christ in whatever worthy thing they do! Oh, that their love for him and trust in him might bring to them light and joy and peace!

And then suppose, in the case of men in these lower places of toil unremunerated, there is this reflection: "I am working but for a little time here. Ere long I shall be translated; and then the last shall be first and the first shall be last. Dives was seen far down, and the beggar was seen in Abraham's bosom. There will be a redistribution." If men live vulgarly because they are very low in life, they will not rise much, they will start there where they leave off here:

but if men are in low circumstances, and if on that very account they develop a Christian heroism, purifying themselves, and converting into noble effects all the great forces of their being, do not you suppose that will make a difference with them in the other life?

You see it and you appreciate it everywhere. Why is it that in circumstances of peril a poor ignorant woman, giving her life for others, doing what others would not do, becomes immortal?

Grace Darling, who has saved so many lives at the risk of her own—what was it that gave her a name? It was that she heroically performed an unrequited service which was not demanded of her. Lowly in life, in rude conditions, she put forth a disinterestedness, a courage, a self-sacrifice which has made her illustrious already.

Now, in this great world of unrewarded service, of tears, of sorrows, of troubles innumerable, do you suppose God forgets, as men do? We do not see what is going on in the houses of the poor; we do not know what sufferings and sacrifices are playing up and down the ranks of men in low conditions of life, but God never fails to see. And, oh! what a revelation there will be when, not the men who live in ceiled houses, not the men who carry crowns and scepters, not the men whose names resound through the newspapers—not they, but men standing in poverty, men who occupy dangerous places, men in mountain fastnesses, uncombed, unfed, degraded—what a revolution there will be when these men are raised to the stations where they belong in the sight of God! There have been men in whom manhood grew in spite of their degradation. How glorious is such a manhood! and when God shall reveal it, and all men shall see it in the other life, it will shine as a star in the firmament.

O ye great army of unrequited laborers everywhere, be *men*. Weep if you will—every tear shall turn to pearl, and every pearl shall be a part of your coronation. Be faithful, be manly, be proud of what you are, and wherever you are fill up the measure of love and peace with all that is best, for Christ's sake, for man's sake, for your own sake, and for the

sake of heaven, that by and by shall give you ten thousand thousand thrilling joys, rolling forever, for every sorrow and every sigh that you have in this mortal sphere.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU, O God, art our Shield against ten thousand dangers of which we are ignorant, and against thousands which we perceive. Thou art our defense. We have neither wisdom nor strength to lift ourselves against those influences which malign and would destroy us. Thou art our Sun, giving us light; for if we had no light but that which is of nature, if we had only the natural sun, and the things upon which we tread, and which we use, to give us knowledge, how poor would that knowledge be, growing poorer! For as we lift ourselves high above the earth on which we tread, and are conversant with the ineffable, with things spiritual, our souls bear witness that they cannot live by bread alone. We cannot live by that which is within the horizon of time and earth. We need thee in the struggle of life where we battle manfully. We need the sustaining grace of God. We need the thought not merely of thine existence and power, but of thy presence, and of all those relations which bring us into intimate association with thee; and we rejoice, O God, that thou hast made thyself so manifest in the presence of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, as that every one of us can apprehend thee, and bring thee near, and appropriate thee. And the life which we live in the flesh we live by faith of the Son of God—of Him who loved us while yet we were afar off, alien, enemies of Him who brought us near by his own blood, by suffering, by sorrow, making known to us thy life.

We rejoice, O thou blessed Saviour, that thou hast addressed thyself to all that is deepest and dearest in us; that our hearts cling to thee more than a vine to its support; that our souls come forth to thee in all their wants; that thou art associated in our minds with whatever is comely, whatever is needful, whatever is blessed.

We rejoice that thou art all in all, so that our sorrows, our fears, our hopes, our joys, our lives, our duties, our daily experiences, are in thee. In thee we live, and move and have our being. We pray that this may be realized by every one of us. May it be a source of joy and strength to us every day. May Christ be in us the hope of glory continually. May he be our support in life and in death. And whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, may we do it all to the honor of God. So may we associate ourselves with thee by thoughts of thy glory that we can no longer feel our own littleness. Sinful and poor as we are in ourselves, we are not poor nor small when associated with God. Once beloved of thee, we have an eternal heritage of glory. When thou hast once adopted us and called us thine own, we are King's sons that stand in no mean place, wherever we stand. We pray that thou wilt grant that every soul may be so led to take Christ as to inherit with him all things. How great is he! How great is his glory! And yet, he is not ordained to anything of which we shall not partake with him. If he is beloved, so shall we be. If there are songs, and rejoicing, and gratulation for him, so there are for us; for we are in him, and his glory is in us.

We pray that we may have the preciousness of all these truths, and that we may be upheld by them now in the time of our darkness

and conflict in this mortal sphere. Grant that all those who are burdened with a continual sense of their own selves, and who are seeking to be good by looking upon the disfigurements and imperfections of their life, may at last look up; for as they who live in caves can never see the rising sun if they look only into the cave, so they who only look within themselves cannot see the light of hope. Grant, therefore, that thy servants may no longer look in upon their imperfect hearts and dispositions; but may they look out and see what glory there is in Jesus, in the Father, and in the eternal inheritance. May they live less and less revolving around themselves, and seek more and more to be good by drawing hope of salvation from things which are outside of themselves, and in the realm of the divine nature.

We pray that if there are any who cannot bring thee near to themselves, thou wilt draw near to them. Thou who didst go forth to seek him who was cast out of the Synagogue, and who was lying alone, and dying, among his own countrymen—wilt thou draw near to all who are in feebleness, and enable them to lift themselves up to thee. If thou art a Physician,—and thou art,—then search out the sick and the weak. If thou art beneficent,—and thou art,—then look after the poor and needy. Yea, thou dost go about doing good. Thou didst come to seek and to save to the uttermost. We do not ask that thou wouldst open thine heart; we ask, rather, that we may have faith imparted by thy Holy Spirit to conceive of the greatness of the glory of thine heart which hangs like a summer over the earth, and out of which comes all life and all blessing.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that the eyes of the blind may be opened, and that their ears may be unstopped. Grant that those whose hands hang down, and whose knees are feeble, may lift up holy hands of joy and praise in the presence of Jesus, the glory of heaven, the hope of earth, our Lord and our Salvation.

We thank thee, blessed Saviour, for all the past. We thank thee for the ministration of thy Spirit to us; and though our knowledge of thee is so little, as compared with what we should know, yet how great is it as compared with the ignorance with which we began! We pray that thou wilt continue thy presence and companionship with us, keeping us from despondency, and unfaith, and doubt, and giving us, from day to day, if not the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness, at least some star that shall lead us, and overhang the place where Jesus lies. Grant that thus we may follow thee as little children, if we cannot fight for thee as soldiers full-grown. And may we be willing to be here or there, high or low, so that we may have a consciousness that we are serving our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that we may not be unwilling to do the homeliest and the least things. May we not seek for the trumpet-call of praise. May we do the things which we do for Christ, and not for ourselves, nor for the praises of men.

We pray that thou wilt help all whose struggle is with pride; all whose struggle is with avarice; all who seek to overcome irritable passions—an ungoverned temper and an unruly tongue; all who strive against doubt and fear; all who are whelmed in uncertainties; all who are unable to fulfill their resolutions; all who do not know how

to minister in their perplexities; all of every class and condition whose trouble is known to them, and is far better known to thee.

Grant grace, mercy, and peace to every one to-day. If there be those who sit in the darkness of recent sorrow, let the light arise upon them—even the hope that shines from thy life. If there be those who are in the midst of remembered sorrows which will not let them go, and which still grow with their growth, we pray that thou wilt grant to them that divine succor which man cannot give, and which is of God. We pray for them, that they may have abundant tokens that thou art walking with them in the valley of the shadow of death. May thy rod and thy staff comfort them. May they lean upon thee. If thou dost use thy rod upon them may they rejoice to know that it is for their saving and not for their destruction.

We pray that thou wilt bless all who are working in thy vineyard. May they do it with more alacrity, with nobler motives, with more earnestness.

We pray that thou wilt grant, everywhere, that thy kingdom may come, that thy will may be done among men, that thy Gospel may be preached more purely and faithfully, and that out of it may come knowledge, and obedience to laws, and wisdom in the establishment of institutions, and equity and temperance. May whatever is beneficent spring up in our times, and may this nation be known as a Christian nation, and show forth the glory of God in its midst.

We pray that thou wilt hasten the day when knowledge and righteousness shall visit all nations, and when there shall be no more oppression, no more ignorance and superstition, no more war, no more sighing or crying, but when the whole earth shall be filled with thy glory, and when the new heaven and the new earth shall come in which dwelleth righteousness.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*



## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we pray that thou wilt give comfort and encouragement to those who are despondent. Send light into the dark places of the earth. Thou that didst come to open prison doors, open them and illuminate the souls of such as are in despair. Thou that didst come to break shackles, bring men out of thrall to their own passions. Thou that didst come to lift men up out of their low condition, raise those who are sunk in want and ignominy. Fulfill thy purposes in respect to those who are in any trouble.

We pray for the poor. We pray for the overworked. We pray for those who have no work. We pray for all the suffering families who are deprived of the means of support to-day. We pray that thou wilt overrule the folly and the wisdom of men, and cause both to praise thee. Hear, we beseech of thee, the groanings of the great human family who are striving to become divine, but who are

tempted of the devil. Mankind wrought upon, or unwrought upon, by fancies, by fears, by turmoils, by consciousness of sin and guilt, or of weakness—O thou Deliverer, we think of them all; and so dost thou. It is not enough that we are safe, that our households are safe, that our church is safe, that the brotherhood of churches is safe, or that our nation is safe: what wilt thou do for the world? Thou hast told us that the field is the world; and we think of it, and dream about it, and night and day our wonder is, what God does with the great family of mankind; but thou dwellest in eternity, all things are plain to thee; and when we rise out of this life, its mysteries dissolve before thy face, like the mists of the morning before the light of the sun. O Sun of Righteousness, all things shall be made plain when we come into thy presence. Therefore, while we see not, we trust thee; and we pray, Let thy kingdom come, and let thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be eternal praises.  
*Amen.*

# THE BIBLE.

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“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”—2 Tim. iii. 14-17.

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When this was written neither of the Gospels was in existence. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John had not been set forth. When this was written very much that now enters into the New Testament Scriptures was unknown. If it was known in several churches it was not generally known; and all are agreed that Paul did not include in the Scriptures the New Testament, but that this declaration had reference solely to the sacred writings of the Hebrews—the Old Testament Scriptures. And yet, this is by far the nearest approach to a philosophical definition of inspiration that exists in the Bible. It is one of the remarkable facts that while the Christian world has been for generations discussing the nature and validity and authority of Scripture, and especially while it has dogmatized on the subject of inspiration, the Scriptures themselves have been almost silent on the subject; the nearest approach to any precise statement is that which I have read; and that refers exclusively to the Old Testament Scriptures.

You will take notice that the declaration is very general. It is simply a declaration that in some sense, whatever it may be, the Scriptures of the Old Testament are inspired. What *inspiration* precisely meant in the writer's mind is not stated.

Because the words which are figurative, etymologically considered, signify a *breathing into* one, it is very easily and naturally supposed that the declaration of Paul is that the Old Testament was all breathed peremptorily into man from God, proceeding from him just as Milton's sonnets proceeded from Milton's brain, or as Cowper's poems proceeded from Cowper's brain; and yet when we come to look at the Scriptures themselves, we find that the Old Testament Scriptures were not inspirations in that sense. In Genesis we have given to us a certain amount of history; that book is a record of histories; in Exodus again we have a regular flow of history; and to suppose that facts which might be known by the ordinary use of the understanding, and parts of which were the experience of the writer himself, were poured into his mind by a direct breathing of the divine mind, is to set aside the usual methods of thinking and reasoning. When you come to the substance of the matter, it does not seem to me that you can derive from the Bible any philosophical idea of what inspiration is. We know that there is a distinction between inspiration and revelation. We know that strictly considered revelation is the making known to men of things that were before unknown—the revealing to them of things that were hidden. Inspiration has generally been defined to be either a divine afflatus which aroused in men certain sentiments or emotions, guiding their utterances, or, what is more rational and reasonable, such a divine guidance that they should unerringly state the truth, whether of history, of ethics, or of spiritual life; but from the Bible itself there is no authoritative definition or explanation of inspiration.

What, then, does it do? It simply declares that in some sense the sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, which were in ancient times the choice food of God's people, were inspired of God,—and this declaration refers exclusively to the Old Testament Scriptures, and is made not at all with our idea of the philosophical origin of the word "inspiration" in the mind of the writer. We are seeking to run back on the word to the method and mode of divine government in bringing into existence in historic concurrence the

various books of religion which are bound together and called "The Old Testament;" but that is not what the apostle was thinking of at all. He was thinking of this advice to his young friend Timothy: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them [that is, his parents]; and that from a child thou hast known the holy [or sacred] Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Having struck that note, Paul-like, he goes on to enlarge it, and says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is in that direction that he was thinking of the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, namely, not their origin but their practical uses; and it is as true of the New Testament as of the Old, although primarily applied to the Old, that they were of God in such a sense that they furnish food for rectitude, for character-building, for right conduct in this life, and for the attainment of blessedness hereafter. In other words, instead of having a philosophical and retrospective thought of inspiration, he had a practical and constructive thought of it. He asked, "For what *end* are the Scriptures inspired?" not, "In what *way* were they inspired?" He inquired, not as to their structure and origin, but rather as to their results. They are for training, for correction, for reproof, for the education and instruction of men in righteousness. They are to make a noble manhood. That is what they are for. In this sense he took them; and in this sense it is perfectly legitimate for us to say that whatever theory may obtain in regard to the inspiration of Scripture, this is a point on which we can all stand—that the word of God, as contained in the Old and New Testaments, in its representations of divine character, of divine procedure in government, of the divine method of conducting human affairs, is to direct man, to control his thoughts and feelings, to point out to him the distinctions between right and wrong, between piety and impiety, and between reverence and irreverence. In regard to all these great

fundamental elements it stands, from the beginning to the end, a book that is safe to put into the hands of men for their correction, their inspiration, and their building up in righteousness.

In that large way, then, the Bible is a book of practical life; and as such it is as valuable to-day as it ever was. It becomes, therefore, a matter of great importance, just now, when so much is being said against the Bible, and when the foundations of faith are so much shaken, to consider the right ways and the wrong ways of using this inspired book.

First, some of the wrong ways. It is a wrong way of using the Word of God to suppose that it is in a literal and philosophical sense without flaw or error. This would be a natural deduction from a generally abandoned theory of inspiration—namely, that every word and letter in the Bible was derived directly from the mind of God. That theory, if it were legitimately carried out, would bring a man to skepticism in an hour. No man can hold that theory and believe in the Bible unless he is inconsistent with himself—as fortunately, many a man is.

For example, if there be a single instance in which different writers, looking at the same facts, made conflicting statements in regard to those facts, it proves either that they did not receive them directly from God, or that God stated them in different ways, and sometimes erroneously.

Take, for instance, the inscription written over the cross of our Saviour. Matthew states it in one way, Mark in another way, Luke in yet another way, and John in still another way. It is not alike as stated by any two of them; and although the variation does not affect the subject matter, it does undoubtedly settle this question: that as the divine mind could not have been mistaken about so small a thing as the inscription written over the cross, the divine mind did not inspire or put into the minds of these men this element.

We are not to suppose that the value of the Scriptures is to be destroyed because you may find an error in a date. The Bible does not undertake and does not profess to be a book perfect in such a sense as a logarithmic table or a philosophic statement is perfect. If it is true in substance; if it is true

in regard to the great elements on which governments should stand, and households should be founded, and manhood should be built; if it is true in regard to those staple truths which pertain to the very structure of this life and the life that is to come—then it is sound. In the earliest day, in the intermediate day, in the apostolic day, from first to last, from beginning to end, it has been a safe reliance for personal character, for collective interests, for the development of the race, and for their perfection for eternity. To undertake, therefore, to stand upon incidental mistakes,—as, for instance, to say that because an event was said to have occurred in the spring, when afterwards it was proved to have occurred in the fall, vitiates the authenticity of the Scriptures,—is to set aside, not the Scriptures, but confidence in universal human testimony. We believe a man to be a truthful man though he makes mistakes and misstatements. We believe his word to be trustworthy although we find on sifting it that he sees differently at different times. The question is not whether a stick of timber has not a single check or knot in it, but whether taking it in its length and breadth it is usable, and fit for sill or bridge or roof. Now, in respect to the word of God, consider this: that it is a series of books which were written in different nations, by different men, in different ages, for different purposes, and that their collocation or juxtaposition may be called an accident. Genesis was not written with an idea that there was to be an Exodus; Exodus was not written with an idea that there was to be a Leviticus; Leviticus was not written with an idea that there was to be a Numbers or a Deuteronomy; and if you suppose that the five books of Moses were written with reference to any relation that they might have to subsequent books—to Ezra, or Nehemiah, or the Psalms, or the book of Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes, or Isaiah, or Jeremiah—you are mistaken. These books were not any of them written with the idea that they were going to make a unit, named “The Bible.” They come down bringing the results of the lives of mankind, and they state the experience of the best men—men who lived under the divine inspiration; men whose light was from above; men who were representative of the moral

sense of their age ; men who, in the providence of God, were called to deal with questions of personal instruction, or to stand as Ahab stood between the prophet and the Israelites, or as David stood giving utterance to sorrows in trouble, or as wise men stood giving expression to philosophy in the Proverbs. These various elements were gathered up and put together ; and the marvel is, not that in putting them together there are here and there minor discrepancies, differences of dates, and the like. Though these are trifling errors, they are errors such that one could hardly put in an extravagant claim for the accuracy of the Scriptures ; but when you take the larger view, that the Bible is a book of truths which respect fundamental life and fundamental distinctions ; when you consider that it is a book which never goes wrong about pride, about lust, about vanity, about submission, about obedience, about reverence and about love ; when you bear in mind that its teachings shine brighter and brighter on these subjects from beginning to end, what a contemptible criticism it is to say that the vehicle of such truths is faulty here and there and elsewhere !

If I had sent to me from out of Italy a precious statue, representing, in exquisite form and proportion, some eminent and worthy theme, do you suppose I would throw it away because, on examining the box in which it came, I found that there was poor stuff in it, or that the packing did not suit my ideas ; or if I found that the feet were mouldy ; or even if it was proved to me that one thumb was a little bigger than the other, or that one toe was out of proportion ? We should say that he was the veriest fool who did a thing like that— if we were not too polite to utter such a word.

So we should look at the Word of God, considering its scope ; considering its origin ; considering through how long a period its elements were collected ; considering that its office was to gather together the best thoughts and the richest experiences of God's people in different ages and nations, and to present them in such a form that men might, looking back, use them on the principle of common sense—for every part of the Bible implies that men have common sense,—an implication which, in our day, we should hardly dare to make.

It was written on that theory, and must be interpreted according to that theory. When we consider its minute structural and vehicular elements, mistakes amount to nothing; and for a man to stick on them is to damage his own credit for good sense, and not the Word of God.

If I take logarithmic tables and make calculations with Babbage's machine (it is a shame that a machine should do more accurate work than the brain which made it; the brain makes mistakes, and the machine does not; but still the brain is better than the machine)—if I take these tables, being a navigator, and calculate from them, it is a misfortune if I find an error in one of them; but would a single error vitiate them? If there were so many errors as to lead to men's running their ships wrong, they would be vitiated; but if average experience shows that in nine hundred and ninety-nine instances out of a thousand they are perfectly safe to be trusted, though there is here and there a trivial miscalculation, they are not vitiated.

Now suppose it shall be shown that a prophecy is in the New Testament applied, according to ordinary methods, to one event while in the Old Testament it is applied to another and very different event, what then? Does it vitiate the great substantial elements of truth in the Bible, its moral discriminations, its structural uses, and its relations to time and eternity? It does not touch them. Oh that men would bring as much common sense to the Bible as they find there!

Then it is a wrong way of using the Bible to suppose that all parts of it are alike useful, and that men are to read it all, and a great many times, with a kind of superstitious notion that it must be all taken in, as being a sacred book, and as necessary to be taken wholly by every man.

If I took a chart, with sailing directions, and were running a ship between Liverpool and New York, I should study that part of the chart which referred to the North Atlantic Ocean, and should endeavor to make myself familiar with all the soundings of the coast in that part. I might cursorily look at other parts; but I should do it only for purposes of general information: my business would lead me over a given track, and I should bestow my attention upon that track.

Now, this book is a chart; it is a guide to men; and each man is to take out of it that portion which suits his particular need. It is to adapt itself to the wants of each individual.

“Well,” it is asked, “do you say that a man should not begin with Genesis and read it all through?” I say, that occasionally a regular reading of the whole of Scripture is useful; but the moment a man says, “I *must* read it. I feel conscience-stricken because I have never read the books of Jonah, of Daniel and of Ezekiel: I somehow always fall upon the Psalms or the Gospels when I read, and I feel guilty”—why should you? I do not suppose that there is anything sold in Fulton Market which is not good for some people at some time; but I never feel that it is my duty to begin at one end and eat right straight through everything that is there. I have no doubt that almost every one of the remedies which are found in a proper apothecary shop are useful for some ailments and under some circumstances; but does any man suppose that he must take medicine by the shelf? It is not expected that a man will take the catalogue in order when reading the books in a library of a thousand or ten thousand volumes. In such a library there are many books which perhaps are not used more than once in a lifetime; but I do not denounce a library because half the books in it I have never read, and never expect to read.

A young man at Harvard University in selecting a book from the library took the first volume on the lowest shelf; and the registrar said to him, “My friend, perhaps I am better acquainted with what will suit you than you are.” “Oh,” said the young man, “I intend to read the whole library through, and am going to begin at the bottom”!

Some men feel a good deal so about reading the Bible. There are those who boast, “I have read the Bible through once a year for ten years.” Yes: well, I have known men that read it through annually for ten years who knew less about it than other people who never looked at it. Probably they have read superstitiously, or without the first idea of what it means. It has not occurred to them that it is a book of food, that it is a book of medicine, or that it is a book of

education, and that it is not meant to be read consecutively of necessity, but adaptively, nutritiously, remedially. If it is so read people must pick out portions which supply their own particular want. For instance, I very seldom read Revelation except for purely imaginative purposes; but an African girl, who was full of sensuous imagination, and rejoiced in just such a picturesque, glowing, vague mode of representation, said, "The only part of the Bible that I like to read is Revelation. I like to read that because I can understand it." That which is a stumbling block of critics to her was food. Wings, horns, beasts, trumpets, thunders, lightnings, sheets unrolled, visions—the realm of such things was where she got her nourishment, such as it was.

Some men find but one or two books which are helpful to them. Some men almost make their nest in the gospels. Some men read the Pauline writings more than any others in the Bible. Some men prefer the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is not Pauline. Some men choose the historical parts of Scripture. Children like the stories. Blessed be God for the stories of the Bible. How many Sundays have been saved to me by them!

The Bible is a book so large that you can walk in it as one walks in a Park, going through it a hundred times without crossing his own track. It is adapted to youth, to middle age, to old age, to men in prosperity, and to men in adversity. When a man is all alert with vigor and strength and thrift, does he want those Psalms which are requiems? But let woes fall thick and fast upon him, so that he feels that he is a mark for the shafts of sorrow and affliction, and then see if he does not flee to those Psalms. In the joys of prosperity they had no voice of comfort for him; but now they are his refuge for consolation. There is no mood of mind and there is no contingency of life in which men, if they go to the Word of God having knowledge of it, shall not find something to lift them up and console them. You may cut the New Testament to pieces by jangling criticism, and destroy faith in the gospels, but if you bring the Bible to men as a book that supplies the soul's need, then the sadnesses of life, the sorrows of life and the hopes of life will bring them to the

light that is in it; for of all books it is the most marvelous in its sense of manhood, in its sense of the actual unfoldings of life, in its sense of the divinity that is in universal affairs, in its sense of the relation of this life to the other, and in its sense of spiritual purity and sweetness in human character. It is a source of trust and of joy to those who are sinful, and even to those who are cast down. The recuperative power of the Bible wonderfully transcends that of any other book which was ever written even by those who have drawn their elevation and inspiration from it.

It is a great and grievous wrong in reading the Word of God to read it as a controversial book. That there may come times when as the least of evils it must be used in a controversial spirit I do not deny; and yet it is a calamity then. Just as in times of war houses are fortified to keep off the enemy, and ramparts are run through orchards and gardens, wasting those things which are most beautiful in times of peace, because in the emergency everything must give way to the law of force for offense and defense; so there may come times when even the sweet and pleasant places of the Word of God will resound with the din of battle; but it is the greatest calamity in the world to have the associations of God's word in your mind associations of warfare. To have been brought up as I was with this continually dinging in one's ear—"Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints"—is a misfortune. It so happened that *contending* was a grace that was very strong in my nature, and it grew stronger during my early life, and it suited me. Many have the grace of contention. If the Word of God is for the purpose of contention, I am a disciple, and so are thousands and thousands of men. But consider how sweet is the tone of the Word of God itself. Consider the life of Jesus; his childhood; his relations to his mother; the beauty of his affections; his simplicity and humility. He never entered upon the ministry in our sense of the term. He refused to take orders. The church to-day in making a man a deacon sets him apart, as it were, from his fellow men. When a man is made a preacher some badge of distinction and separation is put upon him. He is lifted up into a place above and differ-

ent from that in which other people stand. But Jesus, while all such official distinctions and separations existed in his nation, absolutely refused to take one of them. He joined himself to the common people, and made himself one of them, and obliterated all lines that divided between him and them,—so much so that the Pharisees made it a bitter gibe that he ate with publicans and sinners, descending to the lowest forms of association. Consider how beautiful were his sympathy, his gentle judgment, and his revulsion from hypocrisy and cruelty and selfishness and oppression. Consider how, clear down through the whole course of his life, he was led by the Spirit of God, blossoming more and more, and growing more and more lovely, to the end. And then consider the unwritable tragedy of his death. Who ever shall fitly describe the forty days that closed the earthly residence or the earthly labor of Christ? No man's mind can compass it. The depth of it was such as no plummet ever will sound. Its elevations are such that only a seraph's wing can reach them.

Now, to take this benign life, this exquisite history, this affiliation of the Divine with universal human want, this nature that formed heart-loves, and loved in the name of the Father of all, and brought the Spirit of heaven to earth, shedding gracious influences among men as clouds shed rain upon the fields, every drop being a bounty—to take this and tear it into texts, and ram it into your guns, and fire them into Calvinists, high or low, or into Unitarians and Universalists; or to make every text a sword or spear or arrow with which to attack those who chance to differ from you—how it is to discredit the Bible, and to set aside every proper use for which it was created! And yet there be multitudes who think they know a great deal about the Bible because they have chewed it into pellets, and made heaps of them, so as to be ready at any time to get at their opponents on any doctrine, any experience, or any ethical question. The Bible has been cut up into weapons of war; and men think they are using the Bible properly when they are using these. So it has come to pass that under the dominion of theologues for whole ages the only use of the Bible has been to find missiles; whole ages have passed away without nutrition from this

source. The church would have swamped and gone down if it had not been for the poor widows ; if it had not been for Bible readers who read from the heart ; if it had not been for the suffering and needy who cried, " O God ! comfort me in mine affliction and in my poverty." It has been sinners that have saved the church. Souls that have felt weighed down toward perdition, and have stretched out imploring hands to God, using the Bible, have kept that book in practical power, while theologues were weaving systems out of it, and pulling it asunder, and making it pugnacious. It has been preserved in being used by the great heart of humanity that needed it for food, and for medicine, balm, cordial, to assuage sorrow and grief. When you tell me that the church has preserved the Bible, I tell you that the Bible has preserved the church ten thousand times over. When you say that the church has saved the world, I say that the sin of the world has saved the church. The wickedness and want of men, the crying of their souls to God, and his answering through his Word—this has been the salvation, and this will be the salvation, of the church.

When, therefore, science is bringing up various questions affecting the Old Testament, and condemning it as not being the best book of astronomy, nor the best book of geology, nor the best book of geography, nor the best book of ethnography, and all the other graphies, what if they prove that ? Is any science likely to come up that will give us a benigner view of God than the Bible presents ?

Here is a book that has guided the world. At its breast men have sucked as the child sucks at the breast of its mother ; here is a book that men have read in caves, and forgot the caves ; here is a book that men have read in prisons, and forgot but that they were in palaces ; here is a book that childhood has loved to read, and that old age has supported itself on ; here is a book that every conceivable sorrow has stayed itself upon ; and shall we set it aside because on questions of fact it may be convicted here and there of less than perfect knowledge ? It never set out to be infallible in that respect. It never professed to be without flaw. It never pretended that it did not contain a mistaken phrase

But, ah! *it is profitable for instruction in righteousness.* Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are efficacious for the salvation of the soul. The Bible is that which men in their emergencies need. Go through that book with me and I will find you a great many cases where in the history of men there has been craft, cunning, falsehood; and I will show you that the Word of God states the thing simply and plainly, just as it was, neither exaggerating nor palliating; but point out to me if you can, in the Bible, any casuistry, any blinding of conscience, any dimming of the understanding, or any attempt to tarnish the honor and take away moral sensibility. Search the Word of God through from beginning to end, and you will find it to be a book that intones manhood; that gives the noblest views and conceptions of life; that makes men patient under burdens, and hopeful under difficulties, and lifts upon them the light of the eternal world, and inspires them with the feeling that they are sons of God.

Those nations that have the Bible the freest, and whose common people have read it most, are the nations that in modern days have taken hold of all things that improve life, strengthen society, adorn character and prepare men to go out of this life in the fervent hope of another and better life.

Of course I must leave a vast amount of ground untrod-den. I will this evening pursue the thought no further; but I do not stop quite yet. I think there is for very obvious reasons a much less use of the Bible than there once was. In the days of poverty and in the days of the unfruitfulness of the printing press, libraries were not common; but to-day the poorest man may own books. To-day papers and pamphlets, as well as books, fall thick as snow-flakes everywhere; and there is so much to read that everybody is overwhelmed with reading. Nobody catches up the whole. However much you may read, you leave ninety-nine per cent. drifting away from you to one per cent. that you avail yourself of. Then there is a great fruitfulness of books derived from Scripture, and expository of it. The supply of reading matter in that direction is enormous. Our Sunday-schools swarm with books. In my boyhood I had three or four. Now every

child has his pick from eight, nine or ten hundred—which are not a tithe of all that are published.

These are some of the reasons why there has been a growing discontinuance of the reading of the Word of God; but there is no substitute for God's word. It is the best book in the whole world; and after ages and ages and ages, when ten thousand times more books are written than have been written, you will not be able to get along without the thing itself. There is a peculiar flavor to it. It contains the best things in the best lives, the history of the best hours of the best men, and the best experiences of those best hours, through four thousand years. These experiences and histories are enshrined in the Bible. From it you get a knowledge of universal humanity which you can get from no narrow interpretations. I perpetually turn back from the scholastics to the Bible itself. It is more than commentaries; they muddle it. It is thought that they are useful, and they are; but they are useful in our day on the same principle that Layard was when he exhumed buried cities. They were overwhelmed, and he dug them out again. The passages of the Bible are buried six feet deep in old commentaries, and the business of modern commentators is to uncover them once more.

Consider in the Word of God its earliest histories. Consider those exquisite poems in prose—Ruth and Esther. Consider those matchless lyrics of the sweet singer of Israel, of Asaph and other psalmists. Consider the Proverbs, which one might take for a cud and chew on all his life, and not be done with them. Consider the grand statesmanship of the old prophets. Why, I am disgusted when a man thinks, as he reads Isaiah and Jeremiah, that his business is to see whether what they said came to pass. These were moral statesmen. Geniuses of rectitude were they, that rose in times of distemperature, and bore witness for truth and right. Magnificent men they were. Their heads were lifted high above the age in which they lived. Then consider the Gospels. I should as soon think of walking by proxy in a garden, I should as soon think of sending another man to court a maiden for my wife, I should as soon think of wishing a man to show his friendship by eating my dinner for me, as I

should think of taking in the place of the New Testament the commentary of any critic, or anything else. It is the thing itself in its matchless beauty and simplicity and adaptation to every want and feeling of the human soul that I need.

So, then, if there be any of you who have been disturbed by the criticisms which are being made; if any of you are concerned because the idea of inspiration in which you were educated is exploded, take this conception of the Bible: that it is a book for universal humanity. Select from it what you need. Feed yourself with it. Take it as nourishment for the reason and the imagination. Take it as that which the spiritual nature needs for its strengthening. Take it understanding that inspiration was given for doctrine, for reproof, and for instruction in righteousness. Use it as you would bread, or remedial agents; and using it thus, bear witness if it does not approve itself as from God. Though it is not blustering and arrogant as an authority, your life will feel it, and your moral sense will recognize it.

Are there not here many young men who are ashamed of the Bible? Are there not many of you who have brought it hither because your mother wrapped it up and laid it away in your trunk among your things? And now that you have come into different circumstances and into a different atmosphere, are you not ashamed to be thought reading your Bible? O young man! never be ashamed of that which has been the stay and the comfort of your father and mother. He is dishonorable who ever points scorn or ridicule at your most precious affections—at those sacrednesses of the household in which you have been reared.

Pluck out that book. Let it be the man of your counsel and your guide. I do not tell you to have a superstitious fear that you have sinned because you did not read a chapter in the Bible on Monday, or Tuesday, or any other day: but this I say: Let a man who would cleanse his life do it by taking heed to the Word of God, making himself familiar with its moral discriminations, and saturating himself in its truth.

Are there not many of you who have revered it, and

attempted to live according to its precepts, but who, alas! have been overwhelmed by business, or have been surrounded by other associations and influences, so that for a long time this voice has been silent? Your Saviour is buried in this book, and for years there has been no resurrection to you. Here walks to-day, in a four-fold vision, the benign and blessed Jesus. Here to-day Paul, that noblest of gentlemen that ever lived, who touched the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of every conceivable delicacy of feeling and courtesy of affection that was inspired by the love of Christ, walks and speaks. Here is a retiring place for sorrow that would weep unseen. Here are the tonics for weakness. Here are the glasses through which faith may look and discern invisible things.

Ye mourners, ye desolate, ye orphans, ye oppressed, ye men broken in hope, ye bankrupts, too old to begin again, ye misrepresented and persecuted and afflicted, ye great army of suffering humanity, if ye have forgotten the word of God, and turned aside into the desert and arid ways of this world, come back to your father's God. Come back to the Book in which you were instructed when you were children. And forget not from whom you received those things. Your fathers—where are they? Is your life leading you to join them in the company of the just made perfect?

I present this Book to you, not because I am a minister, but because I am a man. I present it to you not by the force of any ingenious plea, but because I have known human life. When the waves have been huge, and the night has been dark, there has been a Jesus revealed here to me, walking in the night on the sea, and giving calm amid the thunder of the waves and the roar of the tempest.

Are there those who have suffered the exquisite pangs of mortification? There is balm for them. Are there those who with unutterable anguish have overhung their children dying? There is comfort for such. Are there those whose heaven has been black, and whose hope has departed, and who have thought themselves doomed to destruction? I tell you, there is a daylight even for such.

I bring to you this Book that has been my counsellor, my

comfort, and my food. It is unspeakably dear to me, from all the associations of my life. I rejoice in it because my father walked through it, as his father walked through it, and men walked through it to remote generations. It is a precious Book, not because poems say so, but because my soul says so ; and I could present you no better gift for the holidays than this Book, with a spirit to live, in the innermost recesses of your heart, not in bondage to the letter, not in fear of the text, but in sympathy with the teaching, and to make it the man of your counsel, your guide, a lamp shedding light upon your path. Thus let it become a most precious blessing to the head and heart of every one of you.

Will you not go home to-night and look up your old Bible? Oh, is there a novel that comes out which has such novelty as the Bible would have to some of you if you were to read it? Will you not go home and open it? You may find inscribed in it your own name, or your father's, or your mother's. Perhaps you will find that it has been read more in some places than in others. Will you not look along the edge and see where it has been thumbed and turned, and where it was that those who gave you this precious legacy dwelt most frequently? Their feet beat paths, as it were, along the recesses of the Word of God. Will you not look at the marks made by your own hand, and remember when you made them? Will you not revive something of your own life by restoring to its place and to its honored functions this long-neglected Word of God? For your own sake, and, if you are parents, for the sake of your children, and for Christ's sake, be ye rich in the Word of God.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU hast heard our prayer, our Father, and thy Spirit hath been with us through all the hours of the day, thou hast granted us strength and health, and thou hast breathed peace and consolation upon our hearts. We thank thee for this day of rest that stands as an island amidst beating storms of the sea. This one day of all the busy seven is a harbor of peace; and we thank thee that thou hast from age to age saved it, and made it sacred to things pure and spiritual—to things pertaining to our everlasting life. We rejoice that thus there is a standing-ground, a place of assembly,—one day filled with most hallowed associations. We thank thee for all our culture, for all our childhood associations, for all our knowledge derived upon this day. We thank thee for thy word; we thank thee for all thy proclamations of truth made from it; grant that as we grow older we may not abandon the faith of our fathers, nor their hope, nor their Saviour, nor their instruction.

May we work in the light of thy truth, and rejoice in thine ordinances. Yet may we be delivered from idolatry; from worshiping the instrument; from seeking to develop the outward instead of the inward life. We pray that thou wilt grant us the privileges which were enjoyed in the past, and which are ripening the world and preparing it for a more glorious future. We beseech of thee that thou wilt save all those who are beginning life from doubt, from unbelief, from apostasy. Deliver them, we pray thee, from all the snares, and doubts, and difficulties that are around about them. Give them a true sense of this life, and a true sense of the life that is to come. Give them faith in thee. Grant unto them that divine influence by which they shall unerringly be led in all the ways of life.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all who are present here to-night—upon each severally as thou seest that he needs. Not what we wish, but what we need, grant unto us. Teach us to pray wisely; and grant that our prayers may not be supplications alone. May there be communion, and thanksgiving, and rejoicing in them. May we be brought near to thee as children are brought near to their parents.

If there be those in thy presence who have never learned to pray, grant that their hearts may pray before their lips know how to utter words of prayer. May their thoughts go silently up to God. May they open their inward life, their innermost thought, to thee and before thee, that thou mayest give them light, and healing, and new life.

Grant to those who are burdened and under afflictions the consolations of thy grace. Grant to those who are in doubt and darkness the guidance of the spirit of truth. Give honesty and considerateness to everyone, so that he may ponder the things which belong to his highest interest.

May we be delivered from levity and from want of earnestness. May everyone feel what is the responsibility of a true manhood.

May everyone, whether he be in darkness or in light, in joy or in sorrow, in peace or in perplexity, still feel how supremely important above all transient experiences are the truths of the life which is to come—for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are unseen are eternal. May we remember the counsels and declarations of God, and may we not count our present afflictions to be worthy of consideration as compared with the eternal weight of glory which awaits those who are faithful to the end.

We pray that thou wilt grant, especially, that the young who are now beginning life with a fair prospect, with an open field before them, may remember their God and their fathers' God, and that they may walk securely by walking according to thy precepts. Deliver them from selfishness and from that conceit which is leading them away from thee.

May there be more who shall be led to take the sickle and go into the harvest field. Multiply, we beseech of thee, thine inspiration to everyone. Grant that the truth may everywhere be known and believed, and wrought into human laws, into institutions, into the hearts of men universally. At last may thy Spirit rule in all the world. So may the glory of the Lord fill the earth.

We that speak to-night commend ourselves to thy will; and we commend to thee those that listen. We ask thee to go with us to our households. Bear peace and safety to every dwelling. Wilt thou prepare us for the duties of this week. May the Spirit of God, and the inspiration of the hope and faith of eternal life, go with us, and lighten our tasks, and direct our way, and comfort our troubles, so that we may live through all the week upon the food which comes to us this day. And finally bring us where there are no days of burden, where there are no hours of darkness, where there is no load hard to be borne, and where there are no trials, unto the land of rest and everlasting peace.

And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*



## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON

DEAR Father, we thank thee that thou art speaking every day, and to those that have an ear to hear. The rising of the sun and the going down of the same; the coming of the wind and the hush that follows its going—these are thy voice. It speaks of thy truth and of thy bounty. Day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night showeth knowledge. We rejoice in all this teaching; but we are glad that thou hast gathered together from the elect of every age joys, inspirations and experiences; that they are now as our histories; and that we do not walk in a strange path. There is no man that can know anything new. All things that can be in mortal experience have

been. We rejoice that thou hast given us thy word for wisdom, for instruction, for confirmation, for edification.

And now we pray that thy blessing may rest upon all those who have been gathered here to-night, and that they may go forth with their faith renewed, and fortified for trouble; and that they may find sweet flowers, fresh fruits, harbors of shade, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, places for rest and rejoicing. Grant that they may find thy banqueting hall, where thy banner over them shall be love.

Dismiss us with thy blessing; go home with us; and when Sundays and days and hours for us are ended, bring us where there is no time, where there are no revolving years, and where in eternal youth we shall behold thee and rejoice with thee.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

# THE WORK OF PATIENCE.

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“Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”—JAMES i., 3, 4.

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Language evidently took its rise at an early period of the development of the race; and of necessity words were derived from material things long before they were from the immaterial and invisible, and in greater abundance. As a mere matter of fact we know that the terms which characterize what now are regarded as the nobler experiences of mankind almost all of them had a physical signification, but have been made to accommodate themselves to a higher order of things. They have now a secondary meaning. Anyone who is familiar with the lexicon will see how wide the process of derivation is. He will see what a variety of meanings single words have, indicating how long a distance they have traveled from their primitive state and use. They have traveled long because their traveling is in some sense the unfolding of human nature itself. In consequence, one of the difficulties of interpreting Scripture has arisen—namely, that words are applied in various ways which have, or may be supposed to have, any of several meanings—sometimes even scores of meanings, or shades of meaning; and it is not always easy to select the precise meaning or shade of meaning that was intended in any particular place. At any rate, it gives opportunity for ignorance to be ingenious or blundering.

We have almost no terms, now, that philosophically and accurately designate mental states. We are obliged to use figures, pictures, metaphors, illustrations of various kinds; and these appeal to men's consciousness. That is, as they go

back to some sort of feeling men understand them ; but we have, and can have, I suppose, very few words which are capable of expressing accurately the various shades of thought and feeling which belong to the development of man.

Patience, for example, is derived from a word which means literally *suffering*, and would in the lowest stage of existence be simply power of physical endurance ; but as men enlarge and develop the word grows to mean the power of waiting and enduring—power of waiting as against time, and power of enduring as against trouble. And as you still rise and develop, as civilization takes the place of barbarism, and becomes, under Christian influence, finer and nobler, the realm of patience still further enlarges its meaning—grows ; and we do not at all understand its scope when we speak of it simply as the power to wait, or the power to endure.

Thus you will find in the passage which I have selected from James,—“ Let patience have her perfect work ”—the intimation of a building power. “ That ye may be perfect and entire.” It is an education, then. It is not simply the primitive act of waiting. What is meant by it in this passage is something that educates, symmetrizes the soul of man, and brings his whole nature into conformity with some ideal standard. “ Let patience have her perfect work.” There may be a superficial patience. There may be a patience that is not fruitful of very much good. In order to attain the highest benefits which are to be derived from this quality it must have perfect work, how long time soever may be required for it. “ That ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” One would suppose, by reading many of the passages of Scripture, that *patience* was only another word for *faith*. Here, however, *faith* and *patience* are separated. A true faith inspires patience. In other words, it reveals the future in some sense, and by the hope and conception of it furnishes motives to a man by which he is able to be patient and enduring.

What, then, is the work of patience ? and what is the scope of that work ? Or, what is the “ perfect work ” which is here spoken of ? It is very plain to every one who has been reared in a family, and who has occasion to teach little chil-

dren physical acts, how inapt, at first, the child is for those things which afterward seem to be spontaneous to him. It is very plain to every such one how much continuous drill and discipline are necessary to make the child walk, to teach it to use its hands with any deftness, or to bring it to any considerable perfection in the use of its eye. Every such one knows how much there is in disciplining a child to music, or to grace of action, or to good manners. Every such one knows how much there is of resistance in that which is to be overcome, and how many impulses there are in the child which are seeking to break away from restraint. Children do not love to be retained an hour in the house for instruction. No child loves, for any sake, to sit for an hour in a chair. A child that is accustomed to free motion does not like to stand in a school and take postures, and drill himself in them. One part of his nature is more impulsive than another; and while you are attempting the education of any organ, muscle or sense, there is all around about it more or less of uproar, or indisposition to be still. For we are made as commonwealths, and are populous within; and everything cannot be active at the same time. While one part of our nature is going to school, the other parts are obliged to keep silence. While one part of our nature is being exercised, the other parts cannot have sway. There must be bred in men the principle of self-control; and *self-control* means carrying one part of our nature so as to govern another part; and that part which is governed is obliged to hold still; and the holding still is patience, if it is anything. Thus, if one prefers poetry to everything else, and it is best that he should study mathematics, there will be poetic yearnings. The scholar would prefer other books than those which his tasks require him to use; but he must overrule that tendency. There is no single faculty that you can select and undertake to guide in a scholar, through patient perseverance, in any direction, that there will not be thirty-five or more faculties impatient to rise and have their play-spell, or have their functions developed; and self-government or self-control seeks the holding of one part of our nature in abeyance for the sake of developing another part.

Now, the whole man develops gradually—first the physical; then the social; then, co-ordinately, the intellectual and the moral; and, last of all, the spiritual.

For a thousand reasons the lower order of faculties tends to be strongest, the most ungoverned and the most ungovernable; but as the affections and social instincts come into strength, and begin to exert their influence, we are obliged to overcome those tendencies which we have assiduously educated. How carefully do we teach a child to walk? And then, in church-time, how do we make it a fault if he *does* walk? We teach him that there are times and seasons for the use of his feet. We are glad to see little children reach out their hands after things; but just as quick as they have learned to reach out their hands, and to use them, we begin to teach them that they must not use them indiscriminately—that they must be used rightly. Then comes the regulative process by which they are to restrain the hand and the foot.

How we teach our children to use their tongue! and what a nuisance that tongue becomes to the family! We have to teach them not to use it, or to use it discriminatingly—that is, at proper times and seasons, under the ten thousand influences which come up in the process of education!

The primary tendency is to give power to a function, and the secondary tendency is to make it drill itself into conformity with co-ordinate functions. The whole process of education is such an alternate liberty of particular parts, with such an alternate restraint, that, little by little, every part has its chance, every part gets its culture and strength, and all the parts are co-ordinated.

Now, *patience* means, in its largest sense, that self-control in any faculty by which it awaits its turn, and accepts its limitation, in order that others may have justice, equity, culture, development.

Looked at in this large way, patience is the fundamental necessity of a complex being, since we cannot bring up all the parts of a man at once. No man can sound every faculty at the same time. There is not wind enough in the bellows to give tone to every pipe in a man. There is not power

enough in the body to bear the reaction which would occur if there were a plenary inspiration of nerve-force, by which every part of the whole man should be developed in strength. Therefore, as a matter of fact, all development is in continually changing relations. Now one thought and now another thought, now one feeling and now another feeling, comes into the ascendancy. There is a perpetual play, a perpetual rise and subsidence, all through a man's nature, in the process of every-day life, and still more in that form of life which is expressly educatory.

Therefore, when we look at the nature of patience, we see this to be a command of transcendent importance. We see that it arises, not from an arbitrary, nor from any vague and mysterious providence. We see that it is an indispensable condition of the thorough education and development of a being so complex that one part must be developed at a time, and that all the parts must be made to harmonize with each other.

In the outside commonwealth every man has his own rights; but they are limited by the rights of others. No man has a right to power, to function, or to anything else in life, when it goes beyond his own sphere and trenches upon the corresponding right of another man. And that which is true externally of a citizen is also true internally of a faculty. No part of the mind has a right to have any such activity and development that it dwarfs, or overshadows or suppresses any other equally necessary part; and the inner meaning of *patience* is the holding still of some parts of a man's soul for the good of other parts. The scope of this is very obvious. We *build*, as the apostle in this passage indicates:

“Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing,” “knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”

Here, then, is the real philosophy of patience—the quality, and the reason for it.

The means that exist naturally, by which patience is taught in the divine providence, are many; and considering what the nature and function of patience is, the means that are employed to secure it and the occasions on which it

is required throw light upon many mysterious passages of life.

The necessity of industry is one of the great or universal conditions of human existence. Men are not, by nature, anything except a bundle of tendencies or capacities. They are to open and develop themselves by exercise. The necessity of the human race is the protection of the body; the supply of food; the maintenance of warmth; the security of all requisite physical conditions. It is the necessity of taking care of man in his very lowest primary condition that impels the universal family to exertion. As industries are complex, as they are co-operative, as they relate to different parts of the mind at different times, as they run through long periods of time, and as men working together have their rivalries and common interests, and are obliged to consider and consult each other; so in the conduct of the lowest functions of life, the physical industries of men are obliged to hold themselves in check. Men are obliged to live by faith. The husbandman plants his seed, and then he must be patient. It is the child who digs up to-morrow the seed that he planted yesterday, to see whether it is growing or not. The experienced husbandman waits patiently through months for the harvest. In mechanical pursuits, since there cannot be instantaneity in complex operations, every single step implies waiting, and therefore patience. And since men work together co-operatively, one must wait upon another.

The element of disposition comes in here; and the wider the scope of industry, the more apparent is it that the occasions and necessities for patience multiply themselves.

Now, out of this grows self-government. We talk about means of grace as if they were all in the Bible, or in the hymn-book, or in the church; but before there was a Bible, and as one of the steps toward the making of it; before there was a lyric, and as one of the points of education by which lyrics might become possible, there were physical industries which drilled men in the use of themselves; which educated the different parts of their nature; which taught them frugality, foresight, patience—and patience is self-control, under such circumstances. Here is a great primary

education which lays the foundations of morality; and on the foundations of morality piety is built—for reverence without ethics is void and vain.

So the work which men are obliged to do for their livelihood is a comprehensive means of grace, and an education to such an extent that we cannot conceive of a race being developed except through primary industries. If there be anywhere, among uncivilized tribes and nations, a preaching of the Gospel which leads only to prayer, and to various emotional experiences, you may be sure that it is not a perfect preaching—that it is a very imperfect one; for a true waking up of men, a true inspiration of the Spirit of God in them, always and everywhere develops industries, frugalities, sagacities, or elements which, although when compared to final results they may be inferior, yet as compared to the work which needs to be done among men, are indispensably necessary, and are sacred.

The avocations, therefore, by which we obtain a livelihood are real means of grace, as well as methods of instruction—and none the less so because they are comprehensive, because they do not break out into sects, and because they have not arrogated to themselves so much as the higher forms of religion have.

Then, in this great, and in many respects strange, economy of life, men are not free from suffering. I mean especially *physical* suffering. We often inherit bodies that entail a necessity of suffering. We deal in the world with elements which oftentimes inflict suffering upon us. Sickness, bruises, wounds, the various assaults that are made upon human life—these bring men to pain; and *physical* pain, in all its ten thousand forms, becomes an element of patience. It is the soul teaching itself to endure under conditions of suffering. It is a new manhood rising up, and it is generally the earliest manhood, which involves in it the primary condition of heroism. Ordinarily, men do not first learn to die for a principle or for their country. The primary element of heroism is gigantic strength. It is the ability to suffer with unwrinkled face, without emotion and without tears. It is the power to endure pain. This starts

the idea of the upward development of the race toward heroism. Afterwards it unfolds, and takes on larger forms and proportions, and becomes something nobler and more comprehensive.

As pain is universal, and will continue long, it is a matter of no inconsiderable importance to us to learn that there is a moral or spiritual result of enduring pain. There is a very great difference in the capacity of bearing. A little pain positively breaks down some men. Other men are competent to bear pain through long periods. A strange thing it is, that moderate pain may be almost a luxury. I have known persons who, for forty years, have suffered more or less inconvenience or pain from headache, in various forms, and who felt lost without it. It became a sort of stimulus to them. As the inhabitants of Boston drank their water out of brackish wells, when they went into the country and tasted pure spring water it seemed vapid to them, and they put a pinch of salt in the tumbler to give it a flavor; and pain, not excessive, but enough to keep the nervous system on edge, becomes almost a necessity to many persons.

Pain is a discipline of patience to those who are exercised thereby—or ought to be; and one who is brought, in the economy of God, into a situation in which he suffers, should ask himself, "What does this hirsute, rugged schoolmaster mean to teach me?" not, "What accident has brought this about?" A vulgar nature says merely, "What law have I broken? How shall I get rid of this pain?" A manly nature, not disdaining the question of how to get rid of it, says, "While it abides what can I make it do? It must grind for me; polish for me; build for me. This suffering is sent upon me; and the question is not alone, How I shall dodge it or get rid of it; the question is, What use can I put it to?"

In this way patience builds men under suffering. Some men are disintegrated by it. It triturates them. By it they become pulverulent. Some men on the other hand are by it not reduced to powder, but made into cement; and the cement becomes as hard as stone.

But still more we are obliged to go through the discipline

of patience by reason of our social liabilities. It is supposed that a man is in such a sense dependent upon himself for his enjoyment in life, that if he watches his own body and keeps it in a perfect state of health, and watches his own disposition and keeps that in perfect drill and play, he is all right. We hear from physiologists and teachers that human happiness is within a man's own reach if he will observe the laws which surround him. To a certain extent a man's happiness does depend upon the observance of those physical laws which surround him; but how is a man going to conduct himself in regard to social laws? You are to be happy; but you are to be happy as a sentient emotive being. You have a heart. It throws out its tendrils here and there. Can you guarantee that the investment which you thus make shall not be invaded by bankruptcy? Can you guarantee that the love which you bestow shall bring you no pain? Can you guarantee that the imagination which you develop, and which depends for its food upon a thousand others beside yourself, shall always be a source of happiness to you? Can you guarantee that the various faculties of your mind, exercised in affiliation with your fellow men, they acting on you and you acting on them, shall never bring you into trouble and sorrow? Who can say, "I rise at the right hour, and eat the right food, and take the right sleep, and am temperate in all things, and have my happiness under my own control"? What if your cradle is turned bottom-side up? What if your companion, that is everything to you to-day, is gone to-morrow? What if the plague or bankruptcy comes, and all the elements of your social enjoyment, of your highest instincts, are swept away or changed? Men *are* dependent for their happiness upon physical things; and it *is* wise for them to obey physical laws and to carry their dispositions aright, so far as they themselves are concerned; their happiness largely depends upon their own self-control; but there are conditions around about every man which he cannot govern. There is a stream of tendencies from your forefathers which through you are exerted on your offspring, that are beyond your control. Men are surrounded on every side, in the family, in their industrial avocations, in their

ambitions, in their pursuits of every kind, by influences which affect their happiness. Men's lives are so interwoven with each other that one's happiness depends as much upon those that he is associated with as upon himself, or upon his physical conditions and obediences. You must take strokes. You must love and not be loved. You must be disappointed in your affections. You must be joined to households in which there is a variety of dispositions. Your faculties must come in contact with faculties of others which are not in accord with yours. Men in society are like an unchorded band of musicians. Each knows his own part; but it is not in harmony with the other parts. They may learn to play together; but while they are learning there are discords and clashings.

So each man depends for his enjoyment and development upon society about him. Nor can he ever get out of it. Here then, is another field in which patience or self-government is inspired and necessitated by the original and fundamental government of God.

In the proportion in which men under such circumstances are rendered patient, they have aspiration. It is impossible that this work should go on under such circumstances and have no larger horizon than that with which it began. Faith illumines wider and wider spaces; it leads to broader conceptions; and with broader conceptions there come up nobler ideals; and in following these nobler ideals men at once bring themselves into collision with another class of influences—namely, the manners and customs of their time; the limited institutions that have come down to them; the courses of pleasure and business that are open all around about them, and that are not conformable to the higher ethics toward which their mind aspires. As a man becomes more than a physically sound and virtuously social man, as he rises to higher manhood through the lower and intermediate states, he finds himself in conflict with his age, with the selfishness of business, with pride, with avarice and with the love of power, which are at once the creators of institutions and the managers of them. So that it is necessary for a man living under such conditions to have a superior, a

supreme, patience, or power of self-control and endurance. The necessity of self-suppression and self-control which begins with the very first breath of life never leaves us. It rises to a higher and higher sphere; and no man ever perfects himself in the lower sphere of patience until the door opens and he goes into another higher school and begins there. Patience is a universal and continuous concomitant of human existence in this mortal state. It is on this account that it is so much insisted upon in Scripture.

“Thou, O man of God, follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.”

These qualities are the aristocracy of virtue; and patience stands as high as any of them—between meekness and love; and so we find it in every part of the Bible—especially in the New Testament. The attempt to live aright, which developed itself under the preaching of the Gospel, brought out the necessity for these things, and therefore they are much emphasized in Scripture.

“Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed.”

It is not a disappointing hope. We find, again, that in writing to the Colossians the apostle says:

“Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.”

Here the idea is unfolded and made radiant. Throughout the New Testament, and more and more as you come toward the end, in the grand drama of the Apocalypse, the patience of the saints; long continued endurance; standing to be pillars in God's temple—the importance of these things is emphasized in the divine thought.

If this general view be correct,—and I suppose none of you will differ from me so far,—there is a lesson in it for all men who act as if this world was created for nothing else except to make them happy. Some men seem to think that providence and nature ought to put them in a secure place, as it were, where they shall have water for their roots, and light and warmth to nourish them, and ought to remove them whenever there is danger; that their business is to stand and

bud and blossom and be handsome ; and when things happen contrary to their wishes in these respects they are filled with amazement. They do not know what they have done that they should suffer. Do you know what you have done that you should not suffer ?

When the axman has felled the oak, and with his broad-ax has hewn it, and fitted it for the mansion, suppose it should murmur, and say, "I do not know what I have done that I should be cut up in this way"? Yes, tree, if you are to be builded into a house, you must needs be patient and submit to be shaped. Brethren, if God is building you into his temple, you are to be squared and fitted ; and in what way shall it be done ? Not by your abstract volitions, but by the manipulation of the great conditions and laws of society, which unfold from within it perpetually.

Instead, then, of cares and burdens and troubles being so much waste matter, instead of their being so many misfortunes, they are the influences by which God means to develop every element of our being, and polish it, and make it meet for his kingdom.

There are men who, having failed right and left, go through life complaining of their misfortunes. There are men who even pursue sinister courses, and justify themselves on the general ground that the world owes them a living. The world owes nobody a living in any such sense. The world gives every man an opportunity for manliness ; but if he has not the stamina or will by which to evolve that quality, the world owes him nothing. Rub him out ! He is a cipher—a zero ! What a waste-heap there would be if all the ciphers were thrown together without one figure of value to put before them !

This necessity of patience, as a universal and primary necessity of the human race, cannot be too strongly impressed upon the young, nor upon those that are rearing the young. We attempt to give our children a good education : do we give them an education in essential manliness ? We lament that persons are in less favorable conditions. Who are these people that are in less favorable conditions ? Take, for instance, those who rear their children in remote districts of

our own land. Take boys that work on the hard hills of New England. What becomes of them? They come into the city and take the places of the effete and effeminate boys that have had "opportunities." For, blinded by what would seem to be an almost unaccountable blindness, we dread to put our boys through the same path which we trod. We were *tanned*; but we do not like tanning for our boys. We were hammered out on an anvil; but we do not like to have our boys hammered out on an anvil. We say, "I have made a road through the wilderness that my children may walk easily." Their walking easily will make them weak; for strength comes by endurance. So by giving them excessive opportunity without much motive; by supplying everything that they need, and not obliging them to find anything for themselves; by sheltering them, and thus taking away their power of endurance, we bring them up as hothouse plants. And by and by when reverses overtake them, and the pressure of want comes upon them, and they are obliged to work for a living, they cannot endure it. The most pitiable persons on the earth are those who, being educated to all necessities, are turned out on the world to get a living at a middle or a late period of life.

This is nothing against wealth, or the opportunities of wealth; but the indispensable condition on which it is possible to make our children better by giving them, through affluence, opportunity for culture, is that they shall be taught patience, endurance, hardihood to bear. If they have not that, they lack the very marrow and backbone of character.

Parents have occasion, also, to practise for themselves this patience. Strange economy by which children are born as they are! Strange that they should be put into the hands that they are put into! Strange that they should be born of the young, immature, unknowing, in families where father and mother are learning their trade on their children, caring for them and educating them under circumstances in which so much depends on their care and education! That children should be brought into life through such conditions is a perpetual mystery. When parents attempt to mold their children and shape them, how much ignorance they display!

How many things they think to be great dangers which are not dangers at all! and how many dangers there are that they do not at all suspect! How children differ from each other! How hard it is to reconcile them in the family! How unlike, oftentimes, they are to their parents! How many children having silent-tongued parents are garrulous, getting the tendency from some ancestor! and how many children having garrulous parents are perfectly silent! How many impatient parents have patient children! and how many mild parents have obstinate children! On the other hand, how many times a parent has himself over again in his child—the hardest of all things to manage! He cannot manage himself, and he cannot manage his double. How many things of this kind there are in every household, which perplex, annoy, and cover the horizon with clouds of care and fear! In every household parents need to have a larger conception of the mission and the meaning of patience as a soul-building quality.

To all those who are in trouble; to all those who suffer from fear; to all those who find themselves hindered by their surroundings; to all those who are tempted to go wrong—to all such let me say, Ye have need of patience. You may be pushed, but it is not necessary that you should go over the precipice. It is not for those who are in the midst of difficulties to ask, “How shall I get out of them?” or, “How shall I change them?” This may not be a disallowable question; but the first thing to be asked is, “How shall I maintain selfness, firmness and patience, and refuse to be made worse by these exigencies, so that I may be made better?” There are thousands of men who think that the perplexities which come upon them in business are strange. They are near-sighted men. They look at proximate causes, not at remote tendencies. All business men carry a necessity of suffering. Therefore all business is a kind of overture to patience. No man who assumes the cares and uncertainties and risks of business should fail to gird himself with this Christian virtue.

There are men who are laboring in discouraging circumstances and places. There are many ministers who are

preaching where they have but little sympathy and almost no help, using seed abundantly and seeing no harvest spring up, not appreciated, often casting pearls before swine. What then? Even here is God's angel, though he is cloaked so that you do not see the radiance. Be patient. Work at foundations, so that by and by somebody else, if you do not, will carry up the superstructure.

There are those who are thrown out of life, and who are too old to begin again. There are those who are compassed about with infirmities which they have not the nerve nor the strength to endure; and they are breaking down. There are those whose life in old age seems to be wandering further and further from the garden of happiness, and nearer and nearer to the wilderness of sorrow. Nevertheless, go forward; because beyond the wilderness is the promised land. Nothing can befall a man in this world which he cannot bear if he is ready to die. In measuring your troubles always look at the worst that is possible, and ask yourself, "Can I endure that?" and make up your mind to it. If you can endure the worst, then everything that is better than that in your experience is so much clear gain. Gird your loins, and by every consideration of what is becoming to you, tested by the example of noble and heroic men of old; by every consideration of what is becoming to you as a child of God; by all inspirations of immortality, as well nigh within the sound of those who chant their victory in the heavenly land,—stand patiently; for the time cannot be far distant. "How long, O Lord, how long!" may be sounded out from the temple and from under the altar; but in that land where there is no temple and no altar there are none who cry, "How long!" All who are there have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and now they sing forever, and rejoice without pain or sickness or tears. Take heed to their example; for in multitudes they stand on the battlements of heaven crying to you in your distress: "Come! The Spirit and the Bride say, Come! There is rest here. Let him that heareth say, Come! Whosoever is athirst, let him come and drink of the water of life freely."

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice that thou hast made thyself known to us, our Father, not as one dwelling in supremacy of power and joy for thine own sake. We rejoice that thy royalty is that which thou dost send forth—thy wisdom, thy goodness, thy mercy—for all the creatures which thou hast reared up, and dost govern. Something more thou art than we can understand until we rise out of the flesh and into the spirit. Our perplexities are in ourselves. We rejoice to believe that the things which here seem to us most obscure shall yet be clearer than the day. We rejoice that our doubts and our fears shall be swept away in the day of vision when thou shalt manifest thyself as thou art, and when we shall be like thee, so that we can come into sympathy and understanding with thee. Then we shall discern thee, thy ways shall be interpreted, thy government shall seem transcendently glorious, and we shall join with all thy universe in ascribing praise, and honor, and glory, and power, and dominion unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever.

Grant that the hope of heaven may supply sight. Grant that by faith we may have that consolation which does come from knowing. May we wait patiently for the disclosure of God. May we wait, disclosing in ourselves that which is divine.

We pray that we may have more and more restfulness and trust in God, not by what we understand of his way and method, but by our confidence in him, in his truth, in his fidelity, in his wisdom, and in his bountiful goodness. Thy loving kindness is over all the works of thine hands; and since goodness rules we are content. All things shall work together for good to them that love thee. Grant that we may more and more rise to this love of God which is wisdom and happiness. Take away from us all pride and selfishness. Help us to overrule those tendencies which strive for independence against the welfare of the commonwealth of the soul. Grant that we may be more and more docile to thine influence, and intelligent of thy methods, and that we may fulfill our duties here as the best way of attaining to knowledge of thee and of the great hereafter.

We thank thee for all the mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to us individually; for all the kindnesses and all the ministrations of the household; for all knowledge which has been poured in upon us by thy Holy Spirit. We pray that all our privileges may be sanctified to us, so that they may redound to our benefit, and to thine honor and glory.

Draw near, we beseech of thee, this morning, to every one that is in thy presence. Minister to each according to his necessity. Do thou interpret what is best, so that we may have that willingness, and that perfect trust in thee, by which we shall be able to say, in all exigencies, and under every circumstance, The will of the Lord be done. May thy Divine will seem sweeter to us than anything else. May we have no difficulty, under the discipline of thy providence, in yielding ourselves to it, and waiting patiently for the Lord.

We pray that thou wilt comfort any who sit in the midst of bereavements; any from whom thou hast taken dearly beloved ones;

and if they are untaught in sorrow, and learn with difficulty the first lesson thereof, grant that they still may have thy teaching; that they may come by the patience of affliction into all its benefits and virtues. If there be those troubles and sorrows which will not depart, then grant that thy grace may be sufficient for their bearing.

If there be those, this morning, who yearn for friends far away; if there be hearts that remember dearly beloved ones who are in perils upon the sea, or in the wilderness, who are wanderers in distant lands, or who live they know not where, nor even if they live at all—O thou loving Saviour, that wert upon the earth, and didst know its necessities, grant unto all such the communications of thy grace, and rest of heart.

Do any feel that life is too hard for them to bear? May they understand that the servant is not greater than the master. May they look unto their crowned Saviour, whose crowns were thorns, who deserved all good and had all ill; and may they be patient, waiting for the fulfillment of his providence and the interpretation of his dealings with them.

May the light of thy truth shine on any who are in darkness or in doubt. May men more and more seek to learn the truth of virtuous dispositions, of holy emotions, of the worship of God, of the services of their fellow-men; and so may they learn out of their own experience things that pertain to thy divine government.

Make thy blessing to rest upon all the assemblies that to-day gather in thy midst to worship. Let the light of thy countenance be as the rising sun to them. Unite thy people more and more together. May those divisions which have come upon thy church be healed. May there be trust and co-operation; may there be mutual loving; and may there be an avoidance of all those things which stir up jealousies and separations.

We pray that thy kingdom may come everywhere throughout all the world. May wars and their occasions cease; may injustice, and oppression, and superstition, and ignorance pass away; let virtue and true piety thrive everywhere; and at last may the whole earth be redeemed to the knowledge of God, and to the service of Jesus Christ.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises ever more. *Amen.*

## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

GRANT unto us, our Father, a sense of our unfolding, and of our coming immortality, that we may feel that all cares, and all frets, and all pains and all sufferings are but so many cogent influences pressing us forward toward our own selves, and toward our highest being. May we never be weary in well doing. May we never consider that we are called to suffer too much. May the multitude of our sufferings seem to us as the wagons and provisions which were sent to Jacob to bring him in royal state to Egypt and to the king; and may we learn to count it all joy when we fall into divers trials and afflictions. May we rejoice in infirmities. May we bear about the crown of thorns in our thought. May we carry with us evermore the cross. May we bear about the suffering Saviour, now the Succorer. May we remember that thy thought is with us. That thy sympathies are poured down upon us, and that the experiences which we are going through in this world are not vague and vain, but are ordered on a higher pattern than we can understand. So may we be patient and enduring to the end, and finally be saved.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit,  
*Amen.*

## THE DIVINE LOVE.

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“Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”—John xiii. 1.

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If this person Jesus were a man only, still on all hands, as much by those who disbelieve as by those who have the most faith, is he regarded as the greatest moral genius which the world ever saw. There be many who will not worship him as divine, but who revere him as the consummate image of a true manhood.

Even if you should rank yourself in this genus, I should desire, in the views which I shall open in this passage, to carry you along with me, inasmuch as the inferences and deductions which are to spring from it all have a certain degree of force even with those who take no higher estimate of Jesus than that he was the greatest of human beings; but to us who believe that he is divine, that he is the express image of the Father, and that God so loved the world that he sent his Son to die for it, the inferences which are to be deduced from it will come with greater emphasis and power; for now all the elements of mind which were evolved by him are interpreted into so many divine elements; and it is not simply what Jesus said or did, but that his saying and doing interpret to us what the Father says and does, that is important; and we come through faith in Jesus to a knowledge of that greater moral government which obtains in heaven and upon earth, and throughout the whole domain of God.

It was a moment of full divine consciousness of which John speaks. There can be no question that the consciousness of divinity was intermittent in our Saviour; that a part of his humiliation consisted in the relative obscuration of his mind; that though divine, he was in eclipse; and that, up to the latest period of his life, there were moments and occasional hours, when he rose into the fullest consciousness of divinity.

This was certainly one of those hours. He had come to the last days. Just before him was the scene of his passion, and beyond that the scene of his crucifixion. He was about to return to his Father. Knowing that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own, "he loved them unto the end."

There lies latent in this declaration a world of meaning and comfort and encouragement. It is not strange that one leaving should find in the hour of his departure all his affections touched and quickened. When the child leaves his father's house to go out into the world, the father and mother seem more dear and venerable to him than ever before. A thousand things which had lain dormant hitherto spring up and gush forth; it is an hour of intense quickened affection when the child leaves home to go among strangers; and it would not be strange, if this world were the Saviour's home, and if those around about him were to him as our brothers and sisters and parents are to us, that in this last moment, when he was about to separate from them, he should have felt a deeper and stronger impulse than at any previous time.

On the other hand, when, for purposes of health or pleasure or business, one has long been an exile, dwelling in a torrid clime, or in European capitals, and at last the day comes in which he is to set his face homeward, although he has made pleasant acquaintances, and though it may be that here and there he has given out heart-love, yet when once he thinks of his fatherland, of his childhood home, of his father and mother, and of his brothers and sisters who are there, the impulse, the outgo of affection, is such as to make everything seem shadowy where he has been an exile. Leav-

ing scenes that are strange to go back to old familiar scenes, his heart overleaps land and sea, and he rejoices with exceeding great joy to break all the ties which have been formed during his residence abroad.

Applying this, if Jesus had known no other life, and no other friends than these, we should not have been surprised that the latest feelings of affection toward his earthly friends should have been the strongest; but if, as it is declared, he was about to go out of this world into which he had come, and return to his Father, and his heavenly home, it is different. Who can imagine the vision that arose before him in that hour? Who can conceive of divine life at any rate? Who can bring before the mind, by the utmost stretch of the imagination, with any degree of richness or vividness, what that life must be whose outplay afar off we see in the choicest and best things upon the earth? If this is the footstool, what is the throne? Of the companionship, the nobility, the liberty, the ineffable power that exist in the spiritual sphere, we in the flesh have no knowledge. No man can define them. No man can paint them for himself. The grandeur of the conception of the other life which doubtless arose before the Saviour, was the immortality of his nature. The infinitude of his power was to be restored. There was the eternal Father. There were all the companionships which he had known from eternity. He was to go back to these glories; and it was in the hour of the consciousness of his divinity returning to immortality, that it is declared that, "having loved his own *which were in the world*, he loved them unto the end."

Now, this is wonderful; for consider the real nature and substance of these disciples. If Christ was divine, if he had dwelt in all the accomplishments of the heavenly land, if he had known being as it is developed there in infinite variety and in various perfection, what must the disciples have seemed to him? Consider that of the twelve there was not a single one that we should mark as a person of any extraordinary endowment, unless it was John. Consider that with the exception of three—Peter, James, and John—there were none that left any memorial or any record besides their

names. Consider that these men were not only without genius but without culture, and without the experience of the human race at large. They were mostly laboring men—not only men from the humble walks of life, but men who matched the conditions in which they were reared. They were no greater than their surrounding circumstances. Men they were who had not in them one single quality that should make them heroes, aside from the qualities that should make anybody a hero.

If the Saviour had made selection of men like Martin Luther, like Philip Melancthon, like Hampden, like Philip Sidney, like Washington; or, if he had selected men of genius, represented in the literary spheres by the highest eminence, like Dante, or Shakespeare, or Goethe, we can imagine how, surrounded by such a band of the greatest natures that the earth had ever produced, there might have been an effect produced upon his affection and upon his feeling that should have made him sorry to part from them; but these were the plainest of men, with no royalty of endowment such as we speak of under the name of genius. Nay, there was very little which his residence among them had done for them, up to this time. He had not rooted out from them their pride. He had not extracted their selfishness. He had not melted the hardness of their hearts. He had not quenched the fire of a cruel zeal which was in them. One is surprised to see how little they had loved, and how little they were changed during his long tarrying with them. They were selfish. They were full of prejudices. They had ambition. They had also its cut-throat meanness. In the passage which I read to you in the opening service it is shown how they were attempting to circumvent each other. Slyly stealing to his ear, through the mediation of their mother, the two brothers undertook to outstrip all the other disciples, who, when they heard of it, were enraged at these two men for undertaking to get the highest places in the coming kingdom. As Christ was journeying with some of his disciples, when they came to a Samaritan village, John asked permission to burn up the inhabitants. A sweet-minded gospel that! And it was rebuked by the Saviour, who said, “Ye

know not what spirit ye are of." And just before him lay the fatal defection and cowardice and treachery of Peter.

Such were the men who were round about Christ. He knew what they were. He understood their caliber. He was not ignorant of their mental and moral size. And it is of these men that it is said, "Having loved them [and having lived with them till he found them out, and knew them altogether] he loved them unto the end." He was conscious of a distinct, strong affection toward them; and he took them with all their limitations and imperfections and miserable passions, and lifted them up against the background of the eternal world, and of his Father in the kingdom of glory. Holding these poor, common, vulgar men up against the noblest conceptions of being, he still loved them.

Now, if he was but a man, this is royal; but if he was divine, it is something more than royal. There is an interpretation in it which goes far into the depths of moral government.

It is very plain, then, that divine love includes in it elements other than those which are usually imagined. It is not strange that God loves loveliness. We do that. He must be stolid indeed who, seeing figured before him all that he conceives to be admirable, feels no response; but so unapt, so selfish are we, that having fellow-beings brought before us in order that we may love them, there is in us a lethargy, or moral inertness, such that nature must be stimulated and roused up by exceeding loveliness. There are eyes which are so sensitive to color that you may take the lowest tone in creation, and they rejoice in it; but there are other eyes which are so leathery and so insensitive that it takes the most vivid yellows and the most violent scarlets to wake up in them a sense of color. And as it is in regard to color, so it is in regard to excellence of character. If you take an effulgent nature, transcendently accomplished, fascinating, winning; and if you add personal beauty, that the eye may feast while the mind admires, it would be strange if you did not love; you admire and love that which is admirable and lovely. But suppose a thing is neither admirable nor lovely?

Who of you loves that which is not lovely? Who of you loves a creature that is divested of that which appeals to the reason, to the moral sense and to the esthetic faculties? Can any one love under such circumstances? Can I love that which is hateful? Can I, who believe in humility, love that which is proud? Can I, who believe in generosity, love that which is selfish? Can I, who believe in amiableness, love that which is ugly? Is it in the power of a being to love a thing that is not lovable? Ah! that is the question. There is in a divine nature that which can love beings that are not lovely. God brings out of his own nature to us a capacity to love that does not in any wise whatever stand upon our moral character.

This is not effacing the distinction between approbation, complacency, and displacency; it does not follow that this love is not more gratified with growing excellence in man than without it; but whatever augmentations it may receive, there is in the divine nature power to love where the object itself is not lovable. It is not approbation; it is a sense of parentalness. It is that kind of love which every parent knows how to feel toward children who, although they are not ugly, are not in and of themselves attractive.

Take the only unfolding of this mystery that is given to love; take the universal experience of this world—the love which all creatures (insects, reptiles, birds, beasts, and the human kind in their savage state) have for their offspring. In these there is this rudimentary element. There is in them the dawn of this element in its lowest and most limited capacity. Our love for our children, however much it may grow and widen, and however much the imagination may play around about it, is a love which we feel for them by reason of that which is in us, and not by reason of that which is in them. The babe that lies new-born upon the mother's arm has in it neither thought, nor love, nor imagination, nor any power of expression; it is nearer to absolute zero than anything else that can be conceived of; it is almost like the pulpy sunfish that floats upon the sea, gelatinous; it is almost like the downiest down that flies in the air, void and empty of all power; and yet, there is in

the mother that which loves it with an intensity which is like life itself.

The father's pride and love are not the equal of the mother's, and yet they have a strong place in him. Things that are not lovely, if they be our children, find in us a capacity, limited and transient, but real, to love with an intensity which upon occasion will lead us to risk life itself for them.

So we have in ourselves the germ and analogy of this divine power to love things that are not lovely. We have a preparation for it—or, as it may be said, a faculty which leads to it. We are conscious that as our children grow up there is a transition, and that something is conjoined to this. We do not let go of them ; by the instinct of parental affection we hold on to them ; and as various excellences are developed in them, and they become more companions for us, there are more fibers of our heart that twine around them.

Now, in the great Father of the universe there is a nature that loves universal being, not on account of its perfection, but on account of the feeling that is in God.

Why see, to-day, how all the trees laugh in the sunshine because they are so beautiful ! They are not waving one banner. It is the fast-day of the year, and all the trees are clothed in sack-cloth and ashes, as it were ; and yet, over them all the sun pours light, and every one of them glistens by reason of the glory which the sun bears to it. Over all the fields of the North, where there is no verdure, but where the surface is brown or snowy white, the sun pours its radiance. And it is not because they are beautiful that he shines upon them : he shines upon them and they become beautiful. The light of the sun illumines those things on which it falls, because the sun has light and warmth in it beforehand. It is on account of this warmth and light that there is beauty and glory in all the earth.

The divine nature is one that does not come feeling and finding its way among men because here and there it perceives eternal excellences : it pours itself out that there may be such excellences. It stimulates and develops them. It goes before all amiableness, all beauty, all attractiveness, and is the cause of their existence and their activity.

In the earlier stages of our lower life we love that which is nothing. We love our children that are at zero. We love them at every step as they unfold and go up, with their mistakes, with their weaknesses, with their wickednesses, with their rudenesses, with their animalism, with their ten thousand little quarrels, with all the things which make them a source of disturbance and distress. Notwithstanding the various cares and pains which they cause us, we still love them, and our love ferments and develops and stimulates and works them up more and more.

That which is true in the family is true in the round world which God has been pleased to create. On the earth he has brought forth, and is bringing forth in constant succession, creatures of the lowest form; and he is guiding and developing them, and raising them up higher and higher. There is no God that is in sympathy with his creatures, if there is not in the divine nature a power of sympathizing with things at the lowest, at the poorest, at the bottom. He is full; he is complete in himself; and he has the capacity of loving, and of pouring love from his own nature upon things high and things low, things good and things bad; and when we are commanded to be perfect, we are commanded to be perfect in the same way that he is. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." How is he perfect? "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." That is, he is a nature that sympathizes with simple being, always and everywhere; and we are commanded to have universal sympathy and charity in the same way that he does.

In this simple thought that it is the nature of God to love, to sympathize, to pity, to have compassion—in other words, to send out the affluence of his being personally toward every human creature—we find the world's hope and the world's comfort. You may dismiss from your minds, if you can, all that part of the human race who are not your cousins and brothers and sisters; in your hearts you may roll South America to the devil, and say, "Poor miserable half-breeds! Who cares for them? I don't; they are outside of the true

religion ;” but I cannot dismiss them so. You may take Africa, and say, “It is one vast herd of animals ; and the world would not miss a single thought or sensibility if you were to rub out its inhabitants as so many aphides.” I cannot do that. I cannot get rid of the thought of the millions that swarm throughout the world. I cannot forget that there are ten that know not God consciously where there is one that does ; and as I drink in the spirit of Christ, and come into sympathy with his declaration that “the field is the world,” my thought goes out after some God who thinks for the Jew as well as for the Gentile. I cannot agree with the Pharisee who stood opposing the preaching of God to the Gentiles, and said, “He is our God, the God of our church, the God of the Jews ;” and who stoned those who threatened to go to the Gentiles and preach. I cannot imitate the old Pharisee. It is a burden on my soul, what becomes of the vast multitudes of Africa. Where go the swarming products of human life in Asia ? Where do all the poor go that are at the bottom of our cities, crawling like vermin and worms in and out of the crevices of palaces, and in dens and dungeons in abject poverty ? What becomes of them ? Where do they come from, and where do they go to ? What becomes of those whose education is neglected ? What becomes of the great under-mass of mankind everywhere ? I love the noble and the cultured ; I have the most fastidious sense of the ethical and the æsthetic qualities in society ; I rejoice in all that is resilient and beautiful ; there is in my heart a leaping sensibility to all these things ; but, after all, it is those who are low and degraded that are heaviest on my mind.

Now, if there is any light that is to come, it is that there is a God who has adapted himself to the wants of men, or that the world is adapted to the nature of God, in this : that there is a ruling Spirit in the center of power and wisdom that knows how to love things that are not lovable—that knows how to feel a parental sensibility toward objects that do not address themselves to the moral sense, nor to the sense of beautifulness in the divine character. If there is such an element as this in the divine nature, if this is the rudder of

history, if the ages are steered by a Pilot whose nature is fashioned on this principle, then I can tolerate and I can bear; but if I stand and ask, not what becomes of Presbyterian children, not what becomes of Congregational children, not what becomes of the higher New England villagers that have been trained in the school and in the church, but what becomes of the great myriad, myriad mass of mankind, that have no light, no schools, no priests, no teaching except of theft and violence, and that suck blood from their infancy—if I look out upon my kind and ask this question, my heart yearns for them. Is there nothing for them? Is there only stern justice for them? It brings me back to daylight and hope and faith again to know that the divine nature is one that is so transcendently lifted up that it can do for the universe of creatures which God has created what the parental nature is able to do for the little babes in our families; and the thought becomes a kind of sacred ark of the covenant to me. In this mystery of the mother and the child I can discern the elements of that great moral government which shall effulge more and more gloriously through the ages of time, and through the periods of eternity.

This universality of the divine sympathy interprets the declaration of the Bible, "God so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for it." Not to go into word criticisms, not to spoil the breadth of the fact by minute analysis, the declaration has flamed in the New Testament for ages that the divine feeling of sympathy and yearning toward a world lying in brutality and wickedness was such that he gave that which was most precious to him—his Son—to die for it; and that feeling is a testimony of what is the inspiration of the Center of the universe.

Men may think that this declaration of universal sympathy and affection obliterates the motives to right; but not so. Is there any other feeling stronger in the parent's heart than this: that the child that is loved shall grow out of nothingness and littleness into largeness and beauty? Is there any greater reward to a parent than to see the child do well? And God, blessed be his name, aims at universal righteousness. He aims to exalt human nature; to develop it; to

enlarge it; to enrich it; to purify and cleanse it. Whom he loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives.

Take away, now, the narrowness of figures which hinder the bringing out of the thought, and consider that this is the universal tendency: God loves the whole world in their nothingness, and meanness, and poorness; but for the sake of making them stronger and larger and better, he is administering the scheme of ages on that one great line—namely, that of a loving schoolmaster, instructing men in righteousness, love employing the resources of infinite wisdom and power for the glorification of human nature. God loves men without reason in them, but with infinite reason in himself; and he aims by his love to benefit men. His love is not simply good-nature. He is not like a very indulgent schoolmaster, fast asleep, and leaving the school to racket and play. God's love is intensely earnest. It stings. It pierces. It has in it the cramp and power of justice. It has sternness in it. Suffering flows from it. All these things are so many elements by which love is seeking to make the object loved worthy, though in the beginning it is worthless. By the divine nature we are taken up at the beginning and at the bottom. There is nothing that is loveable in us at first; but under the fruitful and fructifying influence of the Divine soul working upon our souls, one germ, and another germ, and another, begin to develop in us something loveable; and the Divine complacency takes hold upon us as we are perfected, and become priests and kings, and rise to higher love and perfection.

I love my babes; but do you think I love them as I do my grown-up children? Who can ever unroll that net which is woven in the silence of loving thoughts in a soul that every day weaves new patterns of love which disappear in the memory? Who can ever, in this life, unroll all a father's and mother's thought of their beloved ones, so that you may see the whole of it? There are no words which can describe that kingdom of love in the human heart whose height and depth and length and breadth can never be descried, through which no poet's wing can fly, which cannot be revealed, and

which belongs essentially to the invisible and unknowable things of this life.

And so God, with a compassion that takes hold at the bottom, at the lowest, at the least, at the poorest, of those that are the most needy, works us up by grace, by administrative justice, by a thousand tendencies, and develops in us a thousand likenesses that correspond to himself; and we shall become more and more distinctly and complacently loved as we develop these qualities. I rejoice that the love of God increases and rises in the scale as we become like him; but I rejoice more that antecedent to all that, before the reason or the moral sense is developed, there is a Divine stimulus that goes through the universe, and teaches the race how from animals to become men, and how from men to become angels. I rejoice that there is an infinite power that works everywhere, and that shall never cease to work till the sun goes empty of light, and the stars forget to shine, and the universe itself is lost—God over all, blessed forever, and forever blessing, and blessing because it is more blessed to give than to receive.

What a great consolation this representation of God presents to those who are weak and imperfect, and who battle with weaknesses and imperfections in themselves! I think there is no sadder sight than the soul-humiliation of men whose ideal is high, but whose performance is low, and who frequently are broken down with a sense of their shortcoming at the judgment-seat of their own moral sense. The obscuration that comes to them because they are so unworthy is sad in the extreme. How many feel so unworthy that they do not dare to pray! How many feel that if they had some accomplishment, some state of mind that they could present as sincere and heaven-reaching, God would love them! But they are sinful and hateful, and they do so much wrong, that they never once think that they have an open vision of acceptance before God; for they have an impression that God loves men on account of holiness. So he does; but only on the ground of holiness? Ah! no, no. There is a better love, there is a sweeter grace, of the divine nature. A man loves you more and more as you rise

higher and higher on the scale, and that you might expect ; but there is a Divine nature that antecedes all condition, and into that men may go as into a summer atmosphere, both to germinate and to grow. It is not probable that any one loves you on earth as God does, or that there is any one on earth whose love is so strong, so rich or so various, as the weakest inflection of the Divine sympathy toward every individual of the human race.

So then, God is our model and ideal of all that is true and just and pure and holy and good. He is the Center of all that is high and noble. He is all-helpful, all-healing, tolerant, forgiving and gracious. No matter how weak men are, God loves the weak. No matter how sinful men are, there is an element in the divine nature that knows how to love them. Not, however, to foster sin, but to heal it ; not to indulge weakness or to tolerate it, but to bring it out of weakness into true strength. The bosom of God is the food of the universe. Ye that need, there is no other one to whom you can go as unto God ; such is his nature.

How many are waiting ! How many there are striving to build themselves up ! How many there are who hope that yet all tears, and all prayers, and all mortifications, and all watchings, and all conflicts, and all practical resistance to evil, will at last bring the generations into that state in which they shall be able to come before God and claim the final reward of victory. Never, never, never, never ! The holiest man that ever lived on earth, looked at in the light of God's countenance, is distorted, and disfigured, and as filthy rags. Not a being in this sphere ever reaches to such a state that God can tolerate him on the ground of moral excellence. The ground on which God tolerates men is the nature of God. Not in your own nature, but in the divine nature, the hope of God's redeeming power lies. It is because he is what he is, that we have a ground of hope.

Take a cambric needle. Is there anything finer ? There is no roughness to it. How perfect is its eye ! What an exquisite point it has ! Take a solar microscope. Let me hold the needle so that its image will be thrown by the instrument on a screen, and it looks like one of the ruggedest

of New England fence posts. The point is all jagged and rough. The whole of it, from top to bottom, is full of obliquities. It will never bear being magnified, and having its real nature brought out.

Take the purest and best man, and let him stand and have his shadow cast upon a screen under the light of God's eye. The holiest prophet, the noblest apostle, the most heroic martyr, the purest teacher, the most self-sacrificing and best man—if God loves him, he must love him though he be full of imperfection. It is the nature of God that saves men, and not the excellence that is in them.

So then, let me say to those who are in trouble, and are waiting for the disclosure of God's grace, It is there. It needs no disclosure for you but to believe in it. You have One that has infinite sympathy for you, and infinite relish—strange as it may seem. You have One that is willing, for the sake of his sympathy and love, to bear with you. He has given a token of it by sacrificing his Son. He has made it manifest to human experience in all its various phases. His Word overflows with wondrous expressions of fondness, tenderness, grace, kindness and goodness; and they are addressed, not to men who are perfect, but to men dripping with transgression; to men full of faults and weaknesses. He says to every man, "Come." There is not a man so good that he does not need to come to God as a sinner; and there is not a man so bad that he may not come to God as a sinner. There is room in the heart of God for every human soul; and the hope and inspiration of a better life lies not in your wisdom, not in your power, but in the nature of the divine government, and in the nature of the divine soul. There is a remedy, and there is hope.

Are there those among you who have been traveling in a Christian experience for many years, and who are yet looking back upon your life conscious of how poor it is, and how unfruitful it has been? Do you have at times strange doubts as to whether or not you will be accepted of God?

I think one of the most characteristic and one of the most pathetic experiences of my venerable and dear father took place in his last years. He was brought up under the

most rigorous school of New England Calvinism, and he was always in doubt of his acceptance with God. When he was living here with me in Brooklyn, after several days of retirement and great thoughtfulness, he said: "I have been making a careful examination of my evidences; I have tried to deal with myself just as I would deal with any other person; I have looked it all through, and I have reason to believe that I have a right to trust that my sins have been forgiven, and that I shall be saved." That old hero, who had fought evil and built up good for more than fifty years—more than half a hundred years—in the last years of his life sat down in a grave calculation of himself, to know whether the states of his mind were such that he had reason, in view of his evidences, to believe that he was salvable! The only mistake lay in this: that he came to the conclusion that he was! If he had looked a little deeper, if he had applied a little closer measure, he would have seen that no man living, under the divine law, could say, "My evidences are such that I have a right to hope that I am going to be saved." Everybody, judging himself by that standard, would be obliged to say, "My evidences are as filthy rags. There is nothing in me that is good. I am as grass, in more senses than one. I am as the dust of the field. When I compare myself on any advanced scale with magnitudes, I am nothing; and if there is nothing in God that can save me, there is nothing in me by which I can be saved, and I shall go out as a candle."

If we are to be saved, it will not be because we are good, though we try to be good. It will not be because we are built up so far that God cannot afford to lose us. He might blow us as dust out of the balance, and we should not be missed. But there is in heaven, carrying perpetual summer through the spheres, a divine nature that knows how to love natures that are poor, and how to inspire them by his love with a desire for goodness, as the mother or the father does the child. It is because God loves me that I have hope that I shall live; and I hear sounding from the Word of God and from the heavenly land, this divine and blessed declaration. "Because I live, ye shall live also." My life is hid with

Christ in God. When he who is my life shall appear, then I shall appear also with him.

Trust not in your own goodness, though you seek it. Rest not on your own growth, though you are inspiring it with every attainment and every mistake. Remember that there is summer above your head. As long as God loves there is hope for you. There is hope for you because you are poor and needy. The poorer you are, the more you need God. God is the food of the universe, the bread of life, the water of life, the hope of life, and the reward in the life that is to come.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

OUR Father, thou hast taught us to be bold before thee. Thou hast made thy name dear to us; and we do not know how to tremble before thee as if thou wert a hard master. Thou hast overlaid the tokens of thy power with great gentleness and with great love; and thou hast above all taught us that greatness doth not lie in eminence, nor in the sounding power that moves external things, but in graciousness, and kindness, and self-sacrifice, and the service of universal love. Thou hast so taught us to interpret greatness that we are drawn to it. Yea, we are stronger by the sense of thy strength, and are better by the sense of thy perfect holiness. Even with a knowledge of our weakness and of our wickedness we still draw near to thee, and rejoice that we are filled.

And now we pray, this morning, that thou wilt accept the thanksgiving which we draw near to thee to bring. Not the lowest nor the least sound from the human heart but is sweet in thine ear. The mute endeavor of uninstructed yearning comes up as grateful incense to thee; and how much more dost thou accept intelligent worship! We do worship thee—not thine amazing power; not the fact that thou dost outrun our thought of things universal to the bounds of the infinite, but all that which comes into the soul, and interprets God to our nature and to our want. We rejoice in that; we crown it; we ascribe everlasting praise to it. What thou art we do not know; what the form or figure of the spirit is we know not; what are the conditions of infinite existence in thee—thou that art the source of innumerable forms of life in others—we do not know; but it is enough that the center of thy power and of thy being is infinite wisdom, infinite goodness, infinite beauty, and that those things which are scattered as gold in the rivers around about the stream of creation are but specimens of that which in thee is as the mountain from which these have come.

We rejoice that thou wilt answer every longing for knowledge. Everything that is in mastership of genius; the things that we love in the flow of speech; all that springs from the overflowing heart full of affection and from the iridescence of the imagination; all that which plays in infinite variety in the soul; all that we look upon and call genius among men—these are but forthputtings of thine. They are but sparks from thee that reveal thy nature. They reflect thee even as drops of dew reflect the sun that kindles its light in them.

O Lord, we rejoice that we shall not be disappointed when we see thee as thou art. Now we do not see thee as thou art. We figure to ourselves variously our God, vast, formless, uncertain by reason of our uncertainty of mood and disposition; but when we stand before thee what experience have we, from which we can gather the gladness of that hour in which, when we shall know as we are known, we shall be perfectly satisfied?

We rejoice in the anticipation of the future. We kindle again the extinguished torch. In the disappointments of life we have seen

hope after hope go out. Weariness comes upon endeavor, as satiety comes with enjoyment; and as we rebound from all knowledges with a sense of limitation, and weakness, and unknowingness, we rejoice, looking forward, to believe that it shall not always be so. These are but the beginnings of our life. Now we are being formed and fashioned. The full disclosure of ourselves awaits the other state of existence. There we shall see thee face to face—no longer through a glass, darkly. To that hour we refer all our doubts and all our fears. The majesty of that hour shall indeed dissipate all our doubts and fears, and we shall be satisfied. We shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. In that hour when we shall see and know and be more than it hath entered into the heart of man in this world to conceive, we shall find again those who have gone from us. We have carried them forth, and they have passed into darkness; but we shall find them in the light. They have left us with much sorrow, with soreness of heart, and with memories that shall still weep; but they are where tears can never fall. We shall greet and shall be greeted by our friends in a state better than that in which we gave them to thee. Our children shall come again to us, better than they were when we parted from them. Our companions shall be united to us once more, better than they were in the sweetest counsel of the selectest hour of love. We shall find that the branch that was stripped off hath roots of its own, and is bearing blossom and fruit which the climate of earth could not ripen.

How wonderful shall be the added wealth of our being! When we look at the grave with its processions, it seems as though it were sand of the desert on which life poured water that hid itself and brought forth nothing; but beyond this world we shall find how all the things which we planted in death have sprung up in immortality and glory. To this we constantly look forward, and bear our burden, and carry our cross of sorrow and despondency, remeasuring perpetually with the other life measure, and not with the estimate of this life,—seeking to be men according to the pattern of the future.

Vouchsafe to us more and more the interpreting light of thy spirit from which spring all these imaginings, thoughts and hopes of immortality. Grant, we pray thee, to all who are in thy presence this morning, the selectest memories of blessings in the past; and grant that there may be opened in us in the future memories of other and richer blessings. Grant that there may come peace to hearts that are disturbed. Give relief to those who are tempest-tossed and not comforted. May they have a sense of reconciliation who have been in offense with thee, who have violated thy laws, and who are reaping the bitter fruit of transgression. Grant that there may come a sense of our impurity on the one side, and a sense of the magnitude of our being on the other. Grant that we may be made small with a sense of time-greatness, and large with a sense of the greatness which belongs to us because we are sons of God.

We pray that this day thou wilt temper the souls of thy people to communion with thee, and so to fellowship with each other. May everything that is selfish and proud, and everything that is impure, be taken away from us; and may we have the clear shining light of

the heavenly life in us to-day, and rejoice in each other, and rejoice in Jesus, our common Head. May we forgive one another, as we hope to be forgiven. Help us to bear their infirmities, as God bears our infirmities. Help us to study the things which make for peace one with another. Grant that we may have more and more that self-denying love by which we shall carry others' sufferings rather than inflict suffering upon them.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt give us the blessing of the year. Gather together all the influences of the year that is speeding itself, that they may rest upon us. Give us presage and foretoken of the blessings of the year that is to come, and that is hastening to dawn. We pray that there may be more and more in this people, among all that are here gathered together to worship God, and to express their gladness in him by their good will, and kindness toward their fellow-men.

We pray that thou wilt bless this church, and that thou wilt grant that all its experiences may work out the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Bless, we pray thee, all the churches of this city, and all thy servants that are appointed to prophesy and teach therein. May they be inspired of God, and so set free from earthly faults and earthly hindrances as that they may more perfectly make known to men, both by their lives and their doctrines, what is the nature and purpose of the truths of Jesus Christ.

We pray that thou wilt bless our whole land. Bless the President of these United States. Bless the Congress assembled, and all that administer justice. Bless the legislatures of the several States. Bless all judges and magistrates, and the great body of citizens. May they be God-fearing and law-abiding. May knowledge prevail throughout this great land, driving away prejudice, and superstition, and darkness. May intelligence be joined to virtue, and virtue to piety, so that men may live together with ampler rights here, and with the hope of a nobler life beyond this world.

We pray that thou wilt bless, not our land alone, but all the nations upon the globe. We rejoice that thou art overturning and overturning, inasmuch as behind the plow goes the sower, and sows seed where the turf hath been laid over. There hath been destruction of old things, but better ones shall come. Thou that goest forth to sow among the nations, plow and harrow the land, that the good seed sown may spring up and bring forth fruit of truth and justice, and kindness and charity.

Grant that intelligence may prevail everywhere. Pity all those nations that yet sit in darkness. Bring upon them spring and summer, that they may grow. Lift upon this world the light of thy countenance. Stretch forth thine all-inspiring nature, thou God of omnipotence, and roll the ages fast, that have walked so slow. O bring to pass the promised prediction! Bring to pass those things which now are to be dimly described, moving toward accomplishment. Grant that from the East to the West, and from the North to the South, all the blessedness of a regenerated manhood may begin to be perceived. Let the day hasten when the glory of the Lord shall ripen the whole earth and all men shall see thy salvation.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

GRANT unto us, our Father, an enlarged conception of thy nature and of thy power. Grant that we may lift ourselves up into a consciousness of the sympathy of God for us, that we may take comfort in it. Now we are as those that shiver in dungeons though the sun pours summer all over the land. Bring us out of our caves and hiding places of fear and remorse. Bring us out of all those shivering regions where we have been driven. Bring us into a consciousness of that nature in us that fits thy sympathetic nature. May we realize thy love toward us, and may we rejoice in it.

Grant, we pray thee, that all who are in thy presence may have a sense of what treasure there is for them, how much they are thought of, how much they are beloved, how wonderfully they are lifted up, and how continually and unconsciously they are ministered to by all good things about them. O grant that the touches of thy hand may bring forth music from our souls; and may the harmony in us be increased until thou canst bring from us the royalties of the heavenly chorus. And when at last, through darkness and trouble, and weariness and suffering, and the infinite inflections of weakness and wickedness, we have come to the end of our term of probation, open thou, O God, the door that we who have thought we lived may live indeed, and rise into thy presence, to be guided no more by types or shadows, but by thine own personal self.

And we will give the praise of our salvation to the Father, to the Son, and to the Spirit. *Amen.*

## UNWORTHY PURSUITS.

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“To what purpose is this waste?”—**MATT. xxvi. 8.**

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The scene of which this is a part occurred within a few days of our Master's decease, at Bethany, not far from Jerusalem. It was in the house of one Simon. At the table where they were sitting (for it was a kind of feast or entertainment) sat Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead. Curiosity brought throngs of people to see him, as well as to see the Saviour. While they were thus sitting (or reclining, if they adopted the Oriental mode), a woman came behind Jesus and broke upon him an alabaster flask containing very precious spikenard ointment. This ointment was made in the far East, and was brought as an article of commerce to all their Western cities. It is called a “box” in one place, giving the idea of a casket; but it was a flask; and when it is said that it was broken, we are not to understand that it was broken to pieces, but that for some reason or other probably the neck was broken open or off, and that then it was poured upon the head of Jesus, and upon his feet. We are not familiar with any such custom as was universal in the East; for ointment was an article, not only of very great value, but of universal employment in ways which are altogether dead to us. We employ it still, but only as an occasional luxury. Such, however, was the prevailing custom in the East; and it had a reason in that rapid evaporation which took place from the skin in that torrid clime. Nor were the personal habits of the people in that day, as they are now at this time in many parts of Southern Europe, so

cleanly and pure that they could bear to stand in their own individual perfume. There might be, therefore, good reason for hiding any disagreeable scent of the body which might exist. So ointment was served to guests, and to persons of distinction especially. It was generally put upon the head. To anoint the feet, which usually were washed, as a matter not of honor but of convenience, was to perform the washing not only, but to perform it with signal honors attached.

Ointments were employed also as memorials. For a time they were employed likewise in ritual service. You will perhaps recollect that an almost exact apothecary's receipt was given by Moses for the manufacture of the ointment which was to be put upon the tabernacle, upon the vessels, upon the candlesticks, and upon the priests. It was made a penal offense for any man to compound that ointment. The making of some kinds of ointment then stood in the same relation that the uttering of coin does now. The government makes the coin, and it is a penal offense for any man to make it. The government reserved to itself the privilege of making certain kinds of consecrating oil. They were not allowed to be made or used by anyone who might choose to make or use them; they belonged to the sanctuary and the priesthood.

The same was true of art in the Orient. It was dedicated to religion. It was against the law for individuals to have pictures or statues in their houses. These things belonged in the temples and to the gods—not to men.

Now, in the scene of which we are speaking, Mary (for it was Mary), to testify her affection for Jesus, among the last acts that she had the privilege of performing toward him brought this precious flask of ointment, and poured it in part upon his hair, and in part upon his feet.

We are not to suppose that it was anything like such a flask as we associate with the oils which we serve upon our tables. It was more like those very small flasks which yet are sent out by the perfumers. So the quantity was not excessive; and the greatness of its price arose from its fineness.

The effect of this act was striking. We have three accounts of it—one in Matthew, one (brief) in Mark, and one

in John. It is said in Mark that certain among them murmured; in Matthew it is said that the disciples murmured; but in John it is said that Judas, who betrayed him, spoke. Collecting the facts from all these sources, it would seem as though Judas had an eye to commerce in this matter. The thought which he had was, "This is very precious stuff to be used in that way." He did not think of it in the light of love at all. It is not probable that Judas was a man of very fine sentiments; and when he beheld this act of affection and fidelity, he weighed it in the scales of the store, and not in the scales of the sanctuary; and he said, "To what purpose is this waste?" He was shocked; and to this day there are multitudes who are shocked when hundreds and thousands of dollars are sent out of the country to the heathen, and that so much money is spent in churches and in various acts of religious worship. Judas was shocked that so precious an article of commerce as this ointment should be wasted by being poured upon the head and feet of the Saviour; and it would seem that the other disciples were misled in the matter, and that they sided with him. The beauty of the act struck no one of them; and our Master rebuked them all.

There was but once in her lifetime that Mary could bestow upon Jesus any such token of affection. If that moment had gone by, never would there have been another like it. And Jesus said, "Me ye have not always with you: the poor ye have with you always"—for the pretense upon which Judas had condemned this proceeding was that this ointment might have been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor. John rather briefly and curtly says of Judas, "He said this because he was a thief, and carried the bag." It was to have gone into the treasury; and if, as he thought it seemed likely, there was to be a dispersion of this little band, in the scattering he would convey away what was in the bag; and he naturally had an eye to business.

This last emphatic title would seem to do away with the fine-spun theories which would alleviate the guilt of Judas. He was an extremely avaricious man; avarice was his leading trait; he found fault with tokens of affection for

avaricious reasons, and he sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Three hundred pence he thought ought to have been saved; he regarded it as having been squandered on Jesus; but he sold him afterwards for about sixty pence. This character of Judas, and this delineation of his interior motives, seem to set aside the idea which has been suggested by some, that he expected to sell Christ and then get him back again, so that he would have the money, and nobody would receive any damage. It was altogether an avaricious transaction.

Not only did our Master think this act was worthy; not only, in other words, did he think the expression of sentiment had the highest value; but he honored the act by declaring that wherever, in the whole world, his Gospel should be preached, it should be made known what this woman had done. Monarchs, and wise men, and soothsayers, and statesmen and generals—the whole crowd and mob of men who were seeking to make themselves conspicuous—have, with a few exceptions, died, passed from the stage of the universe, gone down and been forgotten; but this woman's name is fresh, and is as fragrant as was the spikenard which she poured upon the head of Jesus.

Of all the ambitions which men may choose, those services which associate them most intimately with God in this world are the things which will give them the longest remembrance and the greatest honor.

This is the brief account. I have selected it, not so much for the purpose of following out the history, as for the purpose of discussing, in another relation, the question which is here put—namely, “For what purpose is this waste?” If this ointment had been placed upon the head of Pilate, or of hideous Herod; if it had been placed upon the heads of the men who conducted the affairs of the Jewish government at that time; if it had been employed in empty forms and ceremonies, there would have been a waste, and the question of the disciple, now ignominious, would have been honorable and pertinent.

To expend the costliest things in worthiness is no waste. There is nothing too good for friendship; there is nothing

too good for love ; but to spend valuable things on objects of no consequence or worth is a waste which no man can afford.

The question then arises to-night (and it is the question which I wish to impress upon you as appropriate at the opening of the new year), What have you been expending yourself on ? What are you spending the most precious part of yourself upon ? Are you making waste of the things that are best ? or are you breaking them on the head of Jesus, so that you shall have his approbation ? Such questions follow very closely the analogy which might be drawn from this scene.

I propose, to-night, in a series of particulars, to bring before you, and especially before the younger members of this congregation, those hindrances to a full, manly life which beset them ; the liabilities that they will break their alabaster box on unworthy objects ; and the danger that they will pass by and miss those great ends which ought to take the affections of their heart and the consecrated treasures of their soul.

You will perhaps expect me to speak of those who pour out the most precious elements of their lives upon the most unworthy ends, and who live for the pleasures of the flesh. It is possible for men to live with the supreme object of physical enjoyment who yet live within the bounds of propriety which society requires. A man may be to a certain extent a glutton, or an intemperate drinker, and yet not forfeit respectability. The household that shields a thousand things, and should, also shields a thousand faults and mistakes, as it should. Men may live in their neighborhood and in general citizenship without reproach, and with a reputation even of being kind and good, and yet there may not be one single noble ambition in their life. Men may live so as to be respected by their fellows, and yet not do a single self-denying act, and be utterly devoid of magnanimity. Men may live with a constant reference to what shall please them at the table ; yea, they may go further, and may live under the shelter and secrecy of the household, in such indulgences as shall sap and draw out their very vitality.

There are multitudes of men who die early, and ought

to. They live in such a continuous self-indulgence in things excessive or illicit that the mark of death is upon them almost from the beginning of their lives.

I am not speaking of those outrageous vices and uproarious crimes which the conscience condemns : I am speaking of the conduct of men who slide along not parting company with good society, and who yet indulge themselves physically in every way, from week to week throughout the year, drawing upon the capital of health, weakening their nerves, effeminating their muscles, or rotting their bones ; who are bound to a premature death ; whose sun shall go down at mid-day.

Now, it does not follow that every man who does things which are wrong according to the rigorous schedule of virtue and propriety will hold on therein. I take no extravagant ground or theory as against the undoubted fact that men may do wrong and recover themselves ; but I do say that multitudes of men are so made and are so surrounded that to begin such courses as these, or to continue them with any considerable degree of intensity, is a sure presage of their destruction ; and I do say that if men fall into those self-indulgences which sap the body it may require years and years before they can regain that strength which they should have had during all their life. Often when men have long since repented of their secret sins and forsaken them, the effect of those sins remains. The penalty is frequently felt months and years after the wrong deed is performed. It shows itself in emasculation of the body ; in injury to the nerves ; in a want of contractile energy and productiveness of thought. These are results of evil-doing which not unfrequently go with men to the end of their life. This is the reason why so many hundreds of men, with apparently good constitutions, first begin to grow feeble, then fail of success, and then die prematurely. The secret life of multitudes of men is one that destroys them without destroying their reputation or their respectability.

I therefore say to every young man in this congregation who thinks himself to be in danger, who knows that he is implicated, who feels that he comes within the circle of these

remarks (that circle is large, and I need to go into no further particularization to give to every one of you the knowledge of whether you are included in it or not)—to every such one I say, You are breaking the alabaster box on the head of a beast. You are taking the most precious ointment of your nature, your soul's richest gift, the highest credentials of manhood, those elements which belong to you by virtue of your spirit, and squandering them upon an animal.

There have been critics who would scarcely allow even the great dramatist to depict so exquisite and ludicrous a thing as the conversion of a clown into an ass. An ass's head is placed on the body of a man, and the queen of the fairies, enamored with love, is fondling him, and putting wreaths over his huge ears. The transformation is so unnatural that only the genius of a Shakespeare could carry it out successfully; but he drew from life. There are thousands and thousands of persons who are putting flowers on asses' ears; who are putting the most precious things on the most hideous beasts; who are living for the flesh.

Let me pass to that which in criminal aspects is less fatal, but which in its results is scarcely less fatal—namely, the spirit of self-indulgence. I am not going to speak to-night at all *in terrorum*; I am not going to exaggerate: I should like to speak of the topics under consideration so that I shall have the consent of every young man and maiden that I speak with moderation and common sense. I am not going to speak of self-indulgence in its wasteful and gross and damnable forms: I am going to speak of a far more subtle, and in some respects a far more dangerous, element. There are thousands of young men who have good health, who are well equipped, well endowed, who have an average of good sense, who have sufficient to make them reasonably successful in life, but who rarely succeed. They may achieve a temporary success in the earlier period of their career, when the generous appreciation of youth gives a man a larger opportunity than he has in middle life or old age; but when once they are full grown, and are put upon their own mettle, and are judged by what they are and according to the effects which they can produce, then is seen the waste of their man-

hood ; and by the time that they reach the meridian line of life they are faint, feeble, and disappointed, and are swept out, so to speak, and they become the detritus of society—hangers-on, camp-followers, unsuccessful men. Though they start with high hope in their own breast and in the bosoms of their friends, yet they never answer their own expectation nor the expectation of their friends. Thousands there are, far from jails, and far from ignominy, who are weak men, unsucceeding men, whom nobody wants. They roam in crowds throughout the community.

What is the matter with these men? Aside from the reasons which I have stated, there is a reason in the subtle element of self-indulgence. No man should hope to succeed in this world who is not willing to bear as much pain as is necessary to buy the most precious things. Gold that is picked up in the rivers, or that is discovered near the surface of the ground, is very soon exhausted ; and the miners in California are now obliged to blast out the solid rock, and put it under the hammer, and grind it to powder, and gather out, by chemical processes, the precious metal. So men work out their successes in life. He who thinks he can accomplish any great end in this world without suffering makes a mistake. He does not understand the fundamental law of existence. We come into existence animals ; to be born is a painful thing ; and we are to be born again every time that a higher faculty in us gains ascendancy over a lower one ; and all the way up from mere animalism to social life is a way of self-denial—that is, of the suppression of the lower to give growth to the higher ; and so it is in rising from one plane to another, from the lowest to the highest.

Society is so organized that the same thing takes place in the large sphere that takes place in the individual sphere ; and the reason why Christ says to men, “ Take up your cross and follow me,” is not that there is anything intrinsically good in pain, but that the way to work out higher qualities is to put the lower ones under such restraints that they will suffer—is to put the bridle on the lower faculties, and hold them in, and when they are impatient still hold them in.

Now, let a young man begin life with this feeling

“I desire no unlawful pleasures; I want no wassail; I am not desirous of any riotous indulgences; I am not tempted in overmeasure in the direction of passions and lusts; and yet, it is pleasant to rise late in the morning, and it is gratifying to find everything just as one wishes it at the breakfast table, and it is pleasant to read the newspaper without a sense of urgent necessity pushing one out of doors. There is no great harm in that.” No, there is no great harm in it. To go about your business at ten, or eleven, or twelve o’clock, and have an occupation which shall not in overmeasure exhaust you, and attend to such duties as are rather agreeable on the whole, and shirk all those that are disagreeable, or that carry with them any pain—this is natural; it is no vice, no crime; it is simply seeking present pleasure; it is a mode of being happy at each moment by dodging severe duties, and hard things, and difficult tasks: but it is self-indulgence; it is indulging self; and it violates the great economic laws of God by which men who mean to be *men* must train, drill themselves to disagreeable things.

Let all begin life with this ideal: “Above all let me have aspiration; I am a child of God; I have in me an impulse of ambition.” [Blessed be the man who has ambition! Woe be to the man who has no ambition! He who has no ambition is as dough that has no life and is dumpy.] He that feels, “I am of God; I came from him and am to go to him again; life is before me, and I am willing to pay the price, whatever it may be, of succeeding in a noble way; and I am willing to rise early, and toil late, and take hardness and fatigue and long exertion of every kind; I will not spare myself; I will do the thing that I ought to do, irrespective of my enjoyment”—that man has a charter of success in him. But a man who says, “I have the testimony of my conscience that I am a good man; I mean to do right; I never intend to do anything wrong; but I like to sit down in sunshiny spots, I like to go where flowers are, I like to be in pleasing company, I do not like to go where people are who look down on me, so I do not go where my superiors are; I like to be with people that flatter me, so I go where my inferiors are; I am willing to work for a living, but not in things that are not

respectable"—a man that is all his life thinking of pleasant things, and delightful places, and easy ways, and that which will lift him up and give him prematurely what no man ought to seek except as the result of continued and honest exertion, the fruit of equity, of fundamental justice—such a man is breaking his alabaster box unworthily. No man should want anything for which he has not given an equivalent, a *quid pro quo*; and every man who undertakes to live an easy life by seeking pleasant things in pleasant ways is a self-indulgent man; and his self-indulgence is such as causes him to pour his precious ointment on objects that are unworthy.

Parents, think of these things. It is not necessary to make your children rude. It is not necessary that your children should have artificial self-denials; but in rearing your children courage, hardihood, and manhood are indispensable. That is one of the reasons why it is so blessed to be born poor, and in New England. We were born to nothing. We were swaddled and laid on a rock. We had winters that meant business, and summers that were penurious except in glory, and soil that would give nothing back except what was first given to it. All nature was organized on the rigorous pattern of justice. So men, pushed into life poor, but bound to live comfortably, took the right road to it; they took it out of themselves. They rose early. I think since the world began there never were so many hours put into life in each day as were put into it by every man, woman and child in New England, until after forty or fifty years, when, worn thin by toil, men and women looked like tools—like chisels. And the result is that New England has become a fountain of influences exerted on all this great commonwealth, giving to it largely its institutions and fundamental economies, social, political and religious. It is a source of commercial impulse. It is an organizing power. Not that there are no brains out of New England; but, taking the community comprehensively, New England has influenced the nation and the world. The undertone may not be heard, but it is felt. As here the thirty-two foot pipe of the organ does not sound so obviously as the sharp and screaming flute,

and yet is felt under all the rest of the notes ; so the grand undertones of growth and expansion through America came from New England ; and they came from New England because there were men there who did not count personal comforts the best things in life, but who counted the rearing of great households of children in virtue and industry as worth suffering for. They had a high ambition, and they were willing to bear the pain and penalty necessary to work out that ambition.

To every young person, therefore, I would say, While I warn you against vices and seductions which are injurious to life, there is a more insinuating and subtle and dangerous self-indulgence which will lead you to seek present pleasure at the expense of manhood and prosperity. Beware of it.

Another danger of waste is that by which men live, not in the light of everlasting principles and truths, but in the light of influences that are transient among their fellow-men. How widely these influences are spread you will not perhaps at first consider.

You are accustomed to say, some of you, "I do not care what people think of me, I am going to do what is right." The disposition to do what is right is very well ; but to say that you do not care what people think of you is not very well. When a man says he does not care for the opinion of the wise, the experienced and the good, he is in a bad way. He is either degraded, unmanly, or reckless ; and in either case the place where he is is bad to be in. We ought to care for men's opinions. But all opinions are not alike. Every man should sort them. Because I go into a shop containing ten thousand little tinsels and gewgaws, all manner of childish things, and despise them, it does not follow that I despise traffic or merchandise. Because I do not believe in gilt, it does not follow that I do not believe in gold. And in the matter of the opinions of men, every man should have some standard by which to judge of them, and sort out those that are worthy of consideration ; but no man can afford to ignore the opinions of those who are around about him. The tendency to regard men's opinions is one of the most civilizing of all the tendencies in society. It might not be to the loft-

iest spirits; but we are not the loftiest spirits, and therefore we are medicated by other agencies and influences.

On the other hand, bending to the influence of men indiscriminately leads to ten thousand mischiefs. When youth go out into life, if they have an excessive addiction to please men, they seek to adopt those things which pass current in society. Hundreds of young men endeavor to please those with whom they associate by conforming their opinions to the opinions of those that they think are popular. They are not industrious enough to investigate, they are not independent enough to come to an opinion of their own, or they are not honest enough to avow opinions that are unpopular; and in either case the adoption of opinions for the purpose of meeting the supposed wants of society is unworthy of true manhood.

Conformity of belief, infidelity when it is fashionable to be infidel, liberality when it is fashionable to be liberal, and rigor when it is fashionable to be rigorous—this is an unmanly and dangerous use of one's self; and yet more unmanly and dangerous are the ways in which men attempt at the beginning of life to stand high by reason of false show—by which they seek to be estimated by appearances instead of realities.

A young man's parents are rich. He has exhibitions of wealth upon his person. It is not a crime. It may not even be a weakness. He may be a participator of his father's wealth, and may be beholden to the household, and may be carrying out the ideas of his parents in the display which he makes of his possessions. I hold that it is right for a man to amass wealth, and to use it upon himself and upon his children. I hold that it is right for a man, having amassed wealth, to employ it in making his household beautiful in the eyes of the community. This, within due bounds, is as proper a use of his means as the establishing of a hospital or any other benevolent institution. But hundreds and thousands of men who come from parents that are not rich try to make people believe that they are rich, or seek to live as though they were rich.

Young men come from the country to the city. They

know perfectly well that their whole future depends upon their industry. They have so small a recompense that they can scarcely maintain what is called "respectability." They are unwilling to seem to be humble workers. They are unwilling to wear clothes such that, people looking at them, say, "He is poor." They are unwilling to practice frugality, though they know that frugality is the indispensable virtue in their condition. They are unwilling to say, "I cannot go on that pleasure expedition; I will not go without the money, I have it not, and will not borrow it, I can not beg it, and I certainly will not steal it." They are ashamed to say that. They are afraid of their companions. They are unwilling, if it has pleased God to affiliate them in matrimony with as big a fool as themselves, to live according to their means. They are going to housekeeping, and they must live as their sort live; and being without the means, or the prospect of the means, they cast themselves upon that current which fools call "luck." They adventure upon this heinous dishonesty because they want to be among "respectable people."

I honor the man who has been brought up with the comforts of life, whose father's house has been sufficiently endowed for all comforts, yet who is not rich, when he goes down to the anvil, if need be, or the loom, or the spade, or any lower occupation, and has a personal pride which leads him to say, "I will found my own fortune. I am willing to take all the responsibility. I am determined that I will hold in till I can afford these things."

I think there is not, this side of the stars, a more beautiful sight than that of a maiden whose father has brought her up with lavish indulgence yielding to a great and noble love, and giving her hand to a child of poverty; they begin at the bottom and toil together, she as sweet as the flowers, and as fragrant, and willing to wait and bear till he and she can work their way up to competence. God's angels, in large bands, and from their own pleasure, wait on such; but sorrowful is the mission of the angel that waits on the other sort.

Especially in great cities the temptations are innumerable; and when I see in a man the ability to stand on just

what he is ; when I see honorable shame in a man—not shame to be thought poor, but shame to be thought insincere, the shame of dishonesty in every form ; when I see a love of truth and uprightness by which a man takes his joy in expectancy of what will come by and by as a reward of well-doing—when I see this, I need no prophet's endowment to enable me to predict that the results of his life will be gratifying and praiseworthy ; but when I see men putting on airs, boasting of what they can afford, indulging in all manner of luxuries, entertaining their country friends in the most expensive ways, taking them to Delmonico's because it would not be the thing and would not do to take them to a cheap place, and doing it while they are not able to pay their washerwoman, their tailor and their landlord ; when I see them smoking the most costly cigars, and attending the most fashionable parties—I am ashamed of the whole rabble rout of vulgar men of this stamp ! They are dishonest scullions ! There are men in Sing Sing that are more honest than they are. They will not break open their neighbor's house and rob him of his goods, but they will appropriate in the most despicable ways what belongs to others. I think sneak thieves are bad enough, and Sing Sing is the right place for them ; but there ought somewhere to be a place worse than Sing Sing for such men as I have just been describing.

I make these remarks, not in wantonness or extravagance ; but I would that I could say something that would shame thousands of young men who have nobody out of the church whom they respect to tell them these things. You do respect me ; you know that I will not lie to you ; and I would that I might in telling the truth strike the key-note which should put you upon an investigation to see whether the ambition of your life is worthy of yourselves—whether you are not building on *seemings* and not on *realities*.

Be true, honest and fair, and have nothing that you are not willing to pay the price of. If you want pleasure of respectability or repute, wait till you earn it. It is not a shameful thing to be poor ; but it is a shameful thing to be poor and make believe that you are rich.

This takes close hold of another subject, namely: In pursuing the great ends of life you may be redeemed from a thousand petty vices and weaknesses if you put before yourself an ambition of wealth or an ambition of power; I would not dissuade you from that: yet there is a liability to danger in that direction. Men may know that they are right in saying, "I am willing to give my time, my strength and my thought to the acquisition of honest property, and to the acquiring of an honorable place among men; I am perfectly willing to take all the expense and suffering which is required in doing it." Now, provided this includes, as its central idea, the thought that the only real success is that which carries with it true manhood, I have not a word to offer, except to give you Godspeed, and encourage you on your way. You will make mistakes, and you will fall here and there: but be of good cheer; no man is perfect; every man stumbles; but when a man has stumbled, it is his duty to get up again, and move on, and not go back, nor sit down to cry where he fell. You must expect that you will commit many blunders, and do many foolish things; but beware, while you are seeking these very worthy ends, of the organized prosperity of your life, lest you forget that manhood is the condition of enjoying that prosperity.

I can recall in my mind's eye several wretches. "Do you mean criminals?" No, sir—oh no. "Do you mean vicious men?" Oh, no, sir. "Do you mean paupers and outcasts?" No, no. I mean merchants and others, who had made all the money they wanted, and got all the honor they wished for, but in whose face there was not a line of joy. They were unhappy. They did not rest well at night, and they did not rest well in the daytime. They went about all the time like one who says, "Who shall show me any good?" I have seen men whose life had been exteriorly a perfect success, but who had not manhood; who never lived in their reason except as a kind of workshop; who never lived in their moral nature; who stultified their higher faculties and disdained them, so that when they had achieved exterior success they were not successful at all.

What is the use of a man's building his house of marble,

and frescoing every wall, and making the most extravagant outlay in order that everything may be beautiful to the eyes, and then going in blind? What is the use of a man's spreading his table with the most opulent abundance of the choicest viands, and then sitting and groaning with his foot on a chair with the gout so that he cannot touch a thing? The only true condition of earning these things is that you shall be in a state to enjoy them when you have earned them. Men forget that manhood is the fiber from which enjoyment comes. A mean man cannot be happy. A selfish man cannot be happy. You shall see prosperous men who have lived selfishly all their lives, and who are not happy, fumbling about to do benevolent things here and there, hoping that there will be a rebound of happiness; but they are not happy. They do not know how to be happy.

Why, when a man has spent his whole life putting out taste because taste did not pay, putting out sympathy because sympathy made his pocket spring a leak, putting out conscience because conscience restrained him and prevented his working simply for his own selfish interest, putting out manhood because manhood was a spendthrift quality; when a man has spent forty years making the anvil and the loom serve him, making the plow scour itself bright for him, making every ship come in for him, and he is bloated like a spider—he *is* nothing but a huge spider swinging backward and forward, and watching for its prey. You might play Beethoven's symphonies to a spider till doomsday, and it would not care for them. It would rather have a fly any time!

There are hundreds and thousands of men who are magnificent outwardly, but who are penurious inwardly; and they are unhappy; they wish and try to do something that shall correct the mistake of their past lives; but it is too late, and whatever they do, happiness does not come to them. Outwardly they are great successes, but inwardly there is nothing of them.

Now beware, young men. Do not burn up those very feelings out of which you are to extract your happiness. If a harper on his way to the king's palace to sing his epic and

get his coronation should busy himself on the road in cutting his harp-strings, one after another, and using them to lead his dog with, or to play with his child, or to fix his harness with, so that when he reached the king's palace he would have no strings to his harp, he would be like thousands of men who are building up their outward lives at the expense of the sentiments of love, of fidelity, of friendship, of conscience, of aspiration, of magnanimity, of hope, of faith, of devotion, of reverence, and of belief in immortality.

Hence I bid you beware not to spend your whole life in building up external prosperity, forgetting that you must build up on the inside just as fast as you build up on the outside.

Let me say one word more than this, and in this immediate connection—that is, In making yourself prosperous, and looking forward to enjoyment, beware of seeking that enjoyment in single directions only. It is bad for one man to have only religious enjoyments. It is bad for another man to have only literary enjoyments. It is bad for another man to have only musical enjoyments, and for another man to have only political enjoyments, and for another man to have only mechanical enjoyments. God made man on a very large pattern. He did not put his enjoyment in only one spot; he distributed it through many faculties; and it is a part of every man's just education that he should accustom himself, from his youth upward, to enjoy himself on as broad a scale as possible; so that if sickness should stop up one source of enjoyment, and bankruptcy another, and other misfortunes others, there would always be enough left. Oftentimes persons who have but one source of enjoyment come to such a pass that, this being lost, they have no other resource.

The spider might instruct us about that. If you take a microscope and examine his web-spinning apparatus, you will find that there are some twenty holes through which the web comes out to make one cord; so that if one hole is stopped up, there are nineteen left. If another is stopped up, there are eighteen left; and it is not likely that they would all be stopped up at once.

Now, when you are building your web of joy, spin it out of as many holes as possible. See to it that you have enjoyment in meditation and in recreation. Enjoy wisdom, and also enjoy folly. I pity the man who cannot get down and talk fairy stories, and roll on the floor with children, and listen to their chatter. Men are afraid that they will forget their dignity; but it will do them good to bend themselves once in a while. It is not necessary that you should be starched up all the time. You ought to keep yourselves limber, and in sympathy with common life. It is right to live for taste and beauty, among other things. Indulge even in laziness, sometimes, if you will only call it leisure. Live for things high and low. Broaden yourself. Multiply the sources of your enjoyment. Then, by and by, when trouble drives you from one resource to another, and from that to another, you will be like men in old-fashioned cities with citadels on the highest points, so that when the city was sacked the garrison could retreat thither and be safe. Have faith in God and in immortality, which stand highest, so that when trouble drives you from one fortification to another and another and another, there will still be this fastness that cannot be stormed and cannot be blown down.

If I were to follow out all the heads that I have marked; if I were to circumnavigate the sphere of humanity, and point out all the shoals and rocks that I think of, the night would not suffice. I must perforce pause here, not completing my plan, but leaving it unsymmetrical.

We are just beginning, my dear friends, to tread on the soft, virgin days of the new year. Not the snow that falls upon the ground is freer from stain than is the year upon which we are now entering. What that year is to receive which is now opening like the white paper to the type, I do not know; I do not want to know; but it is for you, it seems to me, to-night, to look back just enough to ascertain what the lines of your adventure have been hitherto. It is for you to form some estimate of what your character is. It is for you to determine whether you have lived worthily; whether you have rightly improved the precious gifts which God gave you in your reason, your affection and your moral sense; whether

you are not in danger of squandering them unworthily; whether you are likely to shed the precious contents of your alabaster box on the head of the Redeemer. And it is for you, looking forward upon the threshold of this new year, to form some wise purposes. Let me ask you, Have there not been forming about you, for a great while, secret personal habits which are destroying your life, and which you have meant to break away from? And will you not, to-night, take the beginning of the year to carry your resolution into effect? When you do it, it must be an act most decisive. Is it not the time to-night to act? Is there nothing in your life that you mean to cut off? How many of you say, "Let the new year stand between me and my wrong doing"? What shall the things be that you will cut off? Are there not many social habits that you would do well to rid yourself of? Is there not peevishness, moroseness, obstinacy, that refuses to be entreated? Is there not quarrelsomeness? Are there not troubles in the family? If those who have sat with clenched hands could open them and touch palm to palm in love, and form resolutions of forbearance in the new year, what a good thing it would be!

I appreciate the courtesy by which friends visited friends on New Year's Day; it was a good thing, and I was richly blessed by the abundance of your remembrance in this matter; but is it not a better thing that one should open his heart and make good resolutions—resolutions that slay evils; resolutions that cultivate virtue and piety? Is there anything more acceptable to God, more worthy of entrance upon the new year, more manly or more rational, than that you should take the earliest days of that new year, not carelessly, but with some just judgment of your whole self, of what you are, of your mistakes and your liabilities to weakness, and form a plan of procedure? Include your business if you will. Consider the rectification that it requires. Look at industry, at enterprise, at social relations, at personal moralities, at religious elements. Survey your manhood through and through.

How are you going to bestow yourself for the year that is to come? God has given you most noble affections and impulses and powers. No alabaster box ever carried such

precious ointment as you carry in your soul. Your enthusiasms, your friendships, your esteems, are nobler than anything that was ever compounded of myrrh, and more fragrant than any incense of the orient. You are the incense-bearing plant of creation. God has given you great treasure in yourself. On what are you going to put it this year? How will you spend it? Let that thought go with you. Interpret it to yourself. What will you do, during the coming year, with the most precious thing that a man can possess? Are you as much as you ought to be, with the power committed to you? It is a shame for a man to set up business with five hundred thousand dollars capital, and do a hundred-dollar business. You are set up with an immense capital, and many of you are doing a very small business. It is time for you to enlarge your manhood. It is time for you to think more worthily of God, and better of yourself. It is time for you to make a new start. It is time for you to fire and cleanse your ambition. It is time for you to confirm your resolutions by definite steps. When the year comes round (and I expect to stand here next year, and preach the Gospel again to you), when we come again to this place, next year, and I speak of these things, or things nearly related to them, I pray that there may be one and another who shall be able to say, with rejoicings, to me, "That appeal which you made lifted me out and up, and I am a different person, by the grace of God, through the truth which you spake to me that night"—for I speak to your reason; I speak to your conscience; I speak to your self-respect.

Oh, sons of God, children of immortality, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, live so that you shall see God, and rejoice with him, forever and forever.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE thank thee, our Father, that we are permitted again to come to this place, long endeared to us—a place of knowledge, a place of inspiration, and a place of rest. We have brought many burdens here, and thou hast rolled them away, we knew not whither. We have brought here multiform sorrows and troubles, and when we looked upon them in the light of thy countenance they were drunk up as elonds before the sun. How often have we drooped, looking downward; and how, by thy touch, looking upward, have we risen up and gone on our way rejoicing! We confess the great mercies with which thou hast blessed us inwardly to be better than all outward good. And yet how many of us have occasion to give thanks for thy providential kindnesses—for the household with its remunerations; for social delights; for friendships; for all the occupations and ambitions of a just and worthy life. But these outward things are only the raiment with which thou dost clothe thine exceeding great blessings which interpret thee, and which fill our souls with a sense of thine ineffable goodness, and gentleness, and sweetness, and mercy. For if we, being evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall our Father which is in heaven know how to give us good gifts! If we know what things are beautiful, how much more wonderful is the sense of beauty in our God! If we know what is the beauty of gentleness and of kindness, what wonderful proportions must gentleness and kindness take on in the heart of the Infinite. If we know that it is more blessed to give than to receive, what must be the wonder of thy generosity! If we appreciate and rejoice in the sight of magnanimity as it exists among men, we have seen but the far away signs and tokens of it. It dwells in its grandeur only with God. We admire all fortitude and all fidelity; but what are these qualities as we see them, compared with what they are as thou seest them? How we love loveliness! But what is our love of loveliness compared with that in thee by which thou lovest loveliness, and yet thou canst take up into the scope of thy being those that are full of imperfections and transgressions? We pray, O Lord, that we may have evermore before us a worthier conception of what thou art. Ceasing to strain the imagination, and to expand thee, and to feel that thou art great by mere extension, by power, or by knowing, may we learn to think that thou art great, as thou thyself dost, because thou art good, and merciful, and long-suffering, and slow to anger, and abundant in the forgiveness of transgression. We pray that we may live more and more in the emancipating faith of God's goodness to us for his own sake, for reasons that are in his own nature, so that we may not forever measure our desert, and apportion to ourselves hope by reason of what we find ourselves to be, discouraged on the one side and conceited on the other. We pray that we may feel that we live in thee, so great is the scope of thy being, and so inclusive of all things needful for the highest life. We pray that we may realize that we dwell in thee; and may we rejoice in thee. And we pray that our realization of

thee may give us confirmation of faith. May we from day to day think that we stand, not in our own strength or wisdom or goodness, but in the loving kindness and mercy and wisdom and power of our Father who art in heaven.

We thank thee that thou hast conveyed us through another year. We thank thee that thou hast planted our feet on the threshold of a new one. Grant us to-night those inspirations, those providential surroundings, by which we may go forward severally according to thy will in the year that is before us. We pray that thou wilt inspire to-night seriousness in every heart. May every one review his life, and know whether he has turned it to the most profit. We pray that thou wilt inspire ambition in the young, and grant that men may not throw themselves vilely away, nor undervalue the preciousness of that which has been committed to their charge.

We beseech of thee, O God! that thou wilt grant a blessing to rest upon all the families that are represented here to-night, and upon all the individuals that are gathered together, according to their several necessities. Wilt thou stay up those who are weak. Wilt thou comfort those who are in any manner of affliction. Wilt thou give clear knowledge or understanding to any who are in doubt, or who cannot perceive the truth, or the way of duty. Wilt thou give impulse to those that lie becalmed, and are making no voyage. Grant to all according to their several circumstances that Divine gift, that Divine influence, that Divine leaning, which shall bring them on their way this year more and more richly than in any year of their past lives.

Bless, we pray thee, all the churches of this city, and of the great city near us. Unite them in a common zeal, and in a common consecration to Christ.

We pray for our nation, and for all the nations of the habitable globe—for those that are in darkness, and for those upon which the full light of Christianity shines. We pray that the time may speedily come when all the promises and prophecies shall be fulfilled, and when the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
*Amen.*

# TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS.

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“And be found in Him [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith!”—PHIL. iii., 9.

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Here are two expressions, the interpretation of whose meaning has filled the world with infinite pamphlets, and lumbers of books, and has given some comfort, I hope, at any rate, as a compensation for the confusion and stumbling of mind which have awaited the explications of *faith* and *works*, or *faith* and *righteousness*.

It is now the current doctrine, not alone of the Protestant church, but of the Roman Catholic church as well, that faith is of God, that faith is an indispensable quality, and that there is no such thing as salvation without faith. I suppose that multitudes of persons have a very vague impression that faith is a kind of celestial salt that God sprinkles into men, which keeps them, and stimulates them, and makes them relishful; that it is a quality bred, moulded, fixed in heaven, and that it is injected by a divine act; and that when God has breathed it into men, then they have it, exactly as, in a dark room, a coal of fire was put to a candle in the old-fashioned way, and you blew, and a little flame came, and that was a light. Men have an impression that there is a spiritual quality which grows up in God, or around him; that that quality is indispensable to salvation; that when men pray for it, it comes down in some mysterious way; and that when they once have it in their hearts, it is faith, and

they are salvable; but that until they have that faith they are non-salvable.

On the other hand, it is supposed that all attempts on the part of men to get to heaven by virtue of right-living, on the ground that their conduct is good, are not only abortive, but to the last degree presumptive. This feeling that conduct and character are not sufficient for hope of salvation has sometimes gone to such an extreme as that nothing is more suspicious than for a minister to preach morality. You have heard it said, and I have heard it said, times without number, "Oh, he is not a sound preacher—he preaches nothing but morality." If he preached high doctrine, deep doctrine, and above all, "justification by faith;" if he preached that though a man lived badly, wickedly, notwithstanding what he had been, with whatever there was in him, he could get this illapse of faith from God and be all right,—then men would not complain of his preaching.

The apostle Paul is here giving an account of his own experience; and he says that if any man has reason to be confident in regard to his own experience it is he:

"If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh [that is, trust in his own personal conduct], I more [than he]. Circumcised the eighth day [he had undergone what was equivalent to our infant baptism], of the stock of Israel [he had the right nation], of the tribe of Benjamin [a very choice tribe out of that nation], a Hebrew of the Hebrews [thoroughbred]; as touching the law [the ceremonial law], a Pharisee [there is only one beyond this, and that is the Essene]; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law [the great ceremonial law of the Jews], blameless, but [and he knew what he was talking about] what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law [he is not speaking about morality, or conduct, or character; he is speaking of ritual, routine observances], but that which is through the faith of Christ."

You will take notice that he makes faith an instrument of righteousness. He speaks of faith as a quality which, existing in a man, sanctifies him. Faith is a means to be employed for producing righteousness.

Suppose a man should speak of the eye in the same way?

Suppose it should be said, "If a man has an eye, then he can be a philosopher"? Well I suppose no man can be a philosopher without an eye. The eye is an instrument by which he makes observations. But is the eye the end sought, or is it the means by which you seek that end? And is faith a divine quality or disposition of a man, or is it that attitude of his mind by which he comes to a knowledge of God, of Christ, and of spiritual things?

You will observe that Paul does not in any way abandon the doctrine of righteousness as the great end of life. You will take notice that when speaking to Timothy of his departure, the language which he uses is very striking, though it is not emphasized. He says :

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith [that is, the system of faith]: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness [not a crown of faith, but a crown of *righteousness*] which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

It is as if he had said, "I am to have a crown of perfection—a crown which shall include in it that character which I have been seeking, inspired by the example and spirit of Christ, that excellence which I have studied, that conception of manhood after which I have followed, which I have longed for and striven after, but which I have not attained. I shall have the crowning of that ideal as soon as I shall reach my heavenly home."

His righteousness is not that he is going to have a crown, but that there is to be a crowning and completing of his character and disposition and manhood. That was what he was yearning for all his life, and that was what he looked forward to, and that was going to be the event that he should realize, having sought it.

The Hebrew moral nature is celebrated the world over. Some of the best thoughts on this subject are in Matthew Arnold's recent writings on the peculiar contrasts between the Hellenic mind and the Hebrew mind. He has, I think, joined in the affirmation that no more wonderful moral development ever took place than that which took place in the old Hebrew nation. The moral ideas of the world had their

leaven, and largely their model, there. It shows us the force of things invisible and intangible that the laws, the institutions and the civil procedure of associated nations to-day sprang from moral conceptions which dawned in that little pocket of the Orient on the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea thousands of years ago. The Hebrews struck so deep, and they struck so utterly the great moral laws of God in their relation to human life, and in their associated action, that in its development the world has more and more built itself upon that which was disclosed by them.

Now, the Hebrew moral nature sought perfectness in man. That was its aspiration, its ambition, its ideal. It is true that there was an attempt made among the Hebrews to build up a state, a commonwealth, and afterwards a monarchy and a church. So far as the official personages of the Jewish history were concerned they seem to have been absorbed largely, not in attempts to construct interior manhood in the individual, but in attempts to construct a state and a church, using men for the material; but the teachers of Israel were never their priests, and the most powerful influences of Israel were never their religious services. In the later periods the synagogue had a function, and did a great deal of work; but, after all, the foundation of moral power lay in the prophets; and, with perhaps a single exception, these prophets were never ordained men, or priests. They sprang from the common people. They were automatic. Jeremiah, one of them, is declared to have been called to be a prophet from his mother's womb. He was born to that office and function. Such was the peculiar liberty of this people that whoever among them had a talent could exercise it. If a man was a poet, a poet he might be; and if a woman was a poet, a poet she might be. Or, she might sing, she might prophesy, she might do anything that she could do better than a man; and that was right. There was that wonderful freedom of action permitted among the Hebrews of old.

Now, persons rose up to judge the people, as Samuel and others, in those times, who were not called or appointed by a vote, nor by a convention, nor by a caucus, but who had the

inspiration to do it. The feeling was in them, and they did it; and they were permitted to do it because they did it well. So, in long procession, came these men that inspired a nobler patriotism and a nobler morality, and that spoke of justice, of truth, of humanity, and of obedience to equitable laws. While the priests were making sacrifices, and teaching men various ritual performances, it was the prophet that was striking bold strokes right at the moral sense of the people, and lifting them higher and higher; and if you attentively read the prophets, you will find that what they were laboring for was a perfect manhood. They were striving to shape men into proportions of strength, and symmetry, and purity and beauty, so as to make them perfect. Manhood was the one thing that they were seeking, and the perfect man in their estimation was a man who acted right in every part of his nature—that is, as we should say, in conformity to law.

Now, to act right, or in conformity to law, is *righteousness*; he who carries himself in accordance with known standards of rectitude, continually, is a righteous man; and through ages righteousness has been the aim which has been set up. He is a true man who is a righteous man. Or, dropping that phraseology, which is encrusted by other theological associations, and giving it a modern form, we should say that that man who fulfils his duty in every direction, who develops all his inward nature, and who carries every part of himself in fullness and in the most manly way, or according to the highest standard or ideal of manhood, is a righteous man, one that works manhood out on the largest and best pattern.

Consider the struggle that has been taking place in the world. It is a sad thing to see, not only how the world has groaned and travailed in pain until now, but how it has *groped* and travailed in pain until now; for every nation has seen in its best men some attempts to work out the development of a higher idea of manhood.

If you take the Greeks, they were attempting to develop an ideal man. Some of them were attempting to do it on the pattern of physical excellence. They bred him right; they drilled him right. They sought to make him a hand-

some man, a strong man, a man that was perfectly healthy, an adept in every feat of arms, an athlete. A perfect man according to the conception of the Spartans was one who was competent to all the functions of a citizen; who was vigorous in every part of his body. It was a low standard, but it was their conception of manhood.

You will find the standard among other Greeks to have been a certain ripeness of mind. One school required knowledge, as being the test of a true and large manhood. Another school required what might be called intellectual athleticism. As one class required bodily health and physical power, so another class required mental strength, agility, and adroitness. The sophists sprang from the latter class. Others believed that the sense of beauty and symmetry was among the constituent elements of the highest manhood.

Thus you will find that the nations around about were severally striving to develop the ideal of a perfect man; and their best natures were growing toward it, or trying to.

The Hebrews said, "Fear God, deal justly, love mercy; this is the whole duty of man." In other words, they had a deep moral conception which included not alone man, but a God of transcendent excellence, invisible and united, not split up and frittered away in godlings as among other nations—one majestic God, as opposed to a polytheistic God; and they derived from him a nobler conception of holiness and purity and duty. The Hebrews were all the time striving, by their prophets and noblest natures, to fashion men into this grander manhood of righteousness.

A systematic form by which virtue and social conduct were degenerating from this seeking of manhood came into vogue at a later period. While the prophets were alive they rebuked, with the utmost vehemence, the degeneracy of men from their ideals or standards—their tendency to worship religious forms, and to forget that manhood for which alone all forms are of any value. There is a constant tendency to neglect this, and to look after religion—that is to say, the instruments of religion; and I have never said anything about dogmas or churches or ordinances that begins to compare in sweep and intensity of scorn with the words which

the old prophets uttered in respect to the most sacred things that belonged to the Jews. The Jews' noblest conception of righteousness was the ideal of perfected manhood. It included all justices and all excellences. The Jews regarded manhood as the object of life; in fact, it was that on which life was to expend itself; and among the things which were sought for were those very qualities in morality and in daily practical life that would be the evidence of the existence of these great primary forces in men.

But in the old time, as in the time of our Saviour, the external got the upper hand of the internal, and men worshipped in the temple, and at the altar, and sacrifices were made. The priests were splendid, their robes were magnificent, incense was abundant, and so many were the sacrifices that blood poured by streams and rivers from the temple gutters, and they felt that they were doing right. They went through all the ritualistic observances of their religion; but, meanwhile, they were in point of disposition and morality lapsing, here and there and everywhere.

Now, hear how the prophets came down on them. Amos, reproaching them, says:

"They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly. Forasmuch, therefore, as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right [the gate was the place of giving judgment.] Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time; for it is an evil time. Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you as you have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate."

In other words, "Be pure, be good, and let all your social administrations inure to uprightness and integrity."

Now, then, see how he comes down on their religion:

"I hate, I despise your feast days [yet they were appointed of God], and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies [that is, when the incense is offered up]. Though you offer me burnt-offerings and your meat-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But

let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Here was a divine protest against ritualistic and external observances of religion, in condemnation of the fact that there was in men no manliness, no morality, no character, no conduct, that conformed to high moral standards.

But this is comparatively polite phraseology as compared with that in Isaiah :

"Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies [going to church, that is], I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble to me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

That is what they were to do. Is that religion? No; not if a good deal of that which is popularly called religion is religion; but is it not the concurrent testimony of the Old Testament that the grand spiritualities which connected men with God gave light and ideal inspiration, and that the great justices and humanities which made men renowned and sweet benefactors to their fellow-men, were the great ends of life to be sought? It was for the sake of making men better in these things that temples were built, that services were held, and that sacrifices were made; and the whole drift of the Old Testament, and of the instruction of these prophetic teachers, was to make a nobler and higher style of manhood, which was called, comprehensively, *righteousness*.

When our Saviour came was there a change? Then did manhood cease to be the end which was sought by the church, by priests, by ministers, by Christian people who sought righteousness? Was there something else sought—namely, "justification by faith"? Was this put in the place of righteousness? I suspect that it is the impression of multitudes of persons that when the new dispensation came in, the old one went out, and that then righteousness was no longer the great end and aim of life, and that justification by faith was

the thing to be sought. And it is on this point that men stumble; for I aver that there was no change in this respect—that the New Testament was simply to teach a better way of seeking the same thing. It was still to develop this perfect manhood that God sent his Son into the world to die for it. And the Apostle Paul, in the passage of our text, does not say that now he was aiming after faith, as if that was a new gospel, righteousness having been the old one—not at all: he was as much after righteousness as Isaiah was, as Amos was, as any Old Testament saint was.

“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is the law [not having that kind of perfection which comes from fulfilling every point and particular of the law], but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

The New Testament is after the same thing that the Old Testament was—to build up men, and to build them up in thought, in moral disposition, in affections, in conduct and character. The Old Testament dispensation attempted to accomplish this by one sort of education, and that failed by reason of the weakness of men: but the New Testament introduced another sort of education, by which the same end was to be pursued—namely, the direct inspiration of the soul of God manifested by Jesus Christ; and faith is merely a perception of Christ, the eyes of men being opened to this new source of influence. According to the Old Testament dispensation men tried to be good by keeping feast days and fast days, by visiting the temple, by paying tithes, by all manner of observances; and they failed. These things did not make a large man: they made a narrow and pragmatistical man, a conceited man, a jealous, cruel, and persecuting man. The conceit of the Pharisee was beyond all measure.

When the New Testament came in, therefore, it said, “Seek the same great end—righteousness; but take your conception from the living nature of God made manifest in the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is the epitome, here is the instruction on which you are to pattern yourselves.” It gave a higher sense of man, a larger scope to duty, and a new inspiration to motive. It brought near to men, not the temple, not the altar, not the sacrifice, not days, not the ritual, not

the church, but the living God ; and so it was called *the new and living way*, in distinction from the old and mechanical way ; but both the one and the other were brought together.

I do not know of anything that is nobler than this strife of the old and the new dispensations for the supremacy of manhood. I go back and read with the profoundest sympathy of the genius, the fidelity and the skill of Phidias, who studied to represent a nobler heroism indicated by the exterior forms of men, and who carved in stone, and more often in ivory and gold, the images of the gods, that were only idealized and ennobled men ; and it was a very grand thing that he was seeking all the time.

I am not one of those who, taking up one of Phidias's statues, would ask, "How much would this sell for if I were to turn it into lime?" It is the mind that he put upon it that gives it its value. It is the result of his strife to embody a noble conception of manhood.

I see the various attempts of the old legislators to build up nobler states, and I have a profound sympathy for all their endeavors.

I sympathize deeply, also, with the architects of ancient and mediæval times. They were seeking by temples, by the most magnificent structures that ever issued from the mind and hand of man—those monumental cathedrals which are wonderful past all analysis and past all expression—to develop higher and nobler ideals, and they were worthy of admiration and reverence ; I do admire and revere those old monk architects who sat, and thought, and dreamed, and expressed themselves in these magnificent ways.

Three architects sleep under the roof of the Winchester Cathedral—that cathedral which, for grandeur of thought and for translucent and transcendent beauty, stands easily first of all the cathedrals that I ever saw in England or on the Continent. I walked by the tombs of poets, of sages, of priests and of bishops, not irreverent or careless ; but I confess that when I stood by the tombs of the architects, my enthusiasm was greater than when I stood by any of the others ; and I thought it to be a wonderful instance of the kind providence of God, that he should give to these great

geniuses of construction power to rear such a building, and that then they should have the privilege of sleeping under it, and having it for their monument. But when you have taken the measure of the genius of men who make statues that are well nigh immortal, of legislators who found States that stand for generations, and of architects who build mighty cathedrals, much as we admire and reverence them, how much grander is the conception of one who builds the statue of the soul, the temple of the heart, who is moulding, not inert matter, but living vital fire ; who is shaping the interior consciousness of men. and giving them largeness by which they shall possess two worlds, standing here ; by which they shall control elements of time and eternity, being, as they are, at once children of man and of God. A nation or a period that is busy with an ideal of the righteousness of the individual by giving larger scope, and force, and symmetry, and beauty and purity to human nature, stands easily far above all other nations and periods.

The Old Testament sought the grandest ideal, but stumbled by reason of the imperfection of its instruments. The New Testament sought the same ideal, and its instruments were abundantly adequate, though men have again largely thrown them away, and attempted to follow the Old Testament plan, adopting altars, and robes, and various Ritualistic ceremonies ; so that which in the hands of Moses and his followers proved to be incompetent, is still, throughout all the world, striving for a nobler ideal, with most incompetent and oftentimes hindering instruments.

Now, faith in Christ Jesus is not designed in the New Testament, and in the teaching of Paul, to intermit the entrance into the soul of a prepared quality, nor of a condition, nor of a disposition. It is that which is to help men in seeking the great ends of righteousness. We perceive righteousness by a perception of God ; by the opening of our minds so that the divine Spirit quickens and stimulates us ; and in seeking it, the act by which we recognize the Invisible is the act of faith. If I were to use my senses, that would be precisely the antithesis of using faith. You look at things, you see them, you handle them, you weigh them, you measure them,

you test them in various ways; that is the sensuous way of apprehending them. But men study, they reflect, they pass from seeing things that are visible to thinking of things that are invisible; and that is generically faith. *Sight* or *sense*, and *faith*, are two antithetical terms, one representing lower forms of existence, and the other higher forms. Reflection and inspiration are in the nature of faith. Whoever uses the mind in relation to things that *are not seen*, as it is said in Hebrews, performs the generic act of faith. The particular act of faith in Christ Jesus is a use of the higher and reflective faculties which brings the Saviour, a representation of God, up before man's mind as a reality, so that he perceives it, as by opening your eyes you perceive a physical object. All that superior action which belongs to the upper range of human faculties exercised in discerning and bringing nearer to the mind times and things that are remote and are not visible is of the nature of faith.

The righteousness that the apostle Paul gloried in and sought is a righteousness of truth, of justice, of benevolence, of personal purity, of infinite kindness, of lenity, of meekness, of humility, of superior manhood—which he had, for he was one of the noblest men that ever trod the path of heroes, which is a path of thorns. How came Paul by that righteousness which he had? He says, “I came by it through the sight of Jesus—that is, the inward sight, which was revealed by the Spirit to me. My own righteousness was as filthy rags—that which before I thought of and prided myself on.” Hear how he speaks of it: “I had everything to be proud of. I came from the best nation.” The best nation on earth to you is the one in which you were born. So Paul boasts of being of the stock of Israel. He also boasts of being of the tribe of Benjamin. Every man thinks that the town where he was born is the best town; and so Paul thought the tribe to which he belonged was the best tribe. He boasts of being a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He was circumcised the eighth day. He was of the stock of Israel and of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. And Paul says, “As touching the law, I was a Pharisee.” But he was not a tame sort of Pharisee—no, no, he was a man intensely

in earnest. He says, "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church." I believed that I was doing right, I believed that other people ought to do the same thing that I did, and I was not only willing to be what I was, but I was willing to compel other people to be it too." He goes on to say, "Touching the righteousness which is in the law, I was blameless." As regards the changing of garments I was correct. I knew how to cleanse myself after having touched a dead body. As to the wearing of phylacteries and dresses I was without fault. Respecting all these external peculiarities I was perfect. "But," he says, "after I had seen Christ, after I had come to a sense of what a noble character was, after there had come down to me out of heaven this picture of a true manhood, when I once saw that, oh! what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

The transition may be very sudden between intense admiration and utter contempt. A man out West opens a ledge, and finds what he thinks to be gold ore. Oh, how pleased he is! He digs out two or three bags full of it, and then covers it all up. He will not tell one of his neighbors. He immediately starts with these specimens for New York, all the while keeping his secret to himself. When he gets to the city he puts up at a hotel, and takes a handful of the ore and goes to the assayer. He thinks himself as rich as Cræsus; but the assayer, as soon as he sees it, laughs at him, and says, "It is iron pyrites; there isn't a speck of gold in it." The man goes back to the hotel chopfallen and provoked, saying, "I have paid my fare, and the freight on this miserable stuff, all the way from the West for nothing!" In the morning there is no value that could be put upon that supposed treasure, and at night it is mere dirt!

Now, here is Paul. He had been seeking for the ideal of manhood. He had sought it in mean ways, thinking that because he kept time with the clock, because he observed the ritual services here and there and everywhere, he was growing in manhood. But suddenly there came to him a benign representation of manhood as embracing love and self-sacrifice and holiness; he saw the Greatest making himself the

least; he beheld the glory of God in Christ Jesus; he felt the breath of God, which is the breath of ages, working and moulding and raising all things; he saw God represented as one who was a universal Nurse, giving himself for others; and seeing this exemplification of truth and purity and heroism set forth as a pattern of manhood, he says, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." In other words, the consciousness that he was being changed into these noble moods and dispositions which are in God lifted him above and carried him beyond those things which he had been in the habit of regarding as all-important.

Faith is the instrument by which we come to a perception of those higher qualities that constitute righteousness. It is the eye by which we see invisible things. Therefore faith is not to be regarded as not good; it is to be regarded as that through which divine dispositions are discerned—dispositions which are to be our impulse, and which are brought before us so that they shall influence our whole life and character.

If this be a proper rendering of this passage in Paul's experience, and if these views of righteousness as the grand end of human endeavor and education are correct, and if faith is simply that method of mind by which we attempt to educate ourselves into higher thoughts and feelings through a new and better way of divine contact, then you will see, in the first place, that praying for faith, except in the very general way in which you pray for everything, is love's labor lost.

When I undertook to study mathematics first, I had the blindest of heads for anything of that sort, and I cried and cried many times, and got mad a great many times more; but I never thought of kneeling down and praying, "O Lord, give me a solution of this problem of the couriers." I knew

that if I was going to solve that problem of "the couriers" I must go at it with my own hand and head.

Yet men pray for faith as if it were something such that if God would give it to them there would be an illumination in their souls, and afterwards everything would go of itself; but faith is simply seeing by the super-senses. Faith is the instrument of the faculties. Faith is the working of the mind on invisible things. It is sometimes a faith that works by love, sometimes it is a faith that works by fear, and sometimes it is a faith that works by avarice or interest. We have in the 11th of Hebrews any number of instances of faith; and you will see, if you analyze them, that it works one way or another, according to circumstances, but that it is a perception of invisible things by reason of the moral nature. So, to pray for faith is like praying for intelligence. It is like praying for eyesight. That may be well if you are blind; but if a man is going to study anything does he sit down and say, "Lord, be pleased to give me eyes?" The answer is, "Eyes have you, yet you will not see. You have eyes; use them." We pray for faith as if that were an end. It is not an end; it is a means. It is percipience. It is power of mind to dart into things which are higher than the ordinary things of life. The divine influence resting on men brings the center of manhood into a higher range of faculties, and makes it easier to use them; in that sense it is proper to pray for faith. It is proper to pray that we may exercise our higher faculties, in order that we may be better men, and in order that therefore we may find it easier to discern things not seen. It is proper to pray for the fruits of faith—trust, love, hope, courage, purity, fidelity, humanity, reverence, obedience, gentleness, humility. These are what we want.

Faith is worth nothing of itself, as the eye is worth nothing of itself. The eye is worth what it sees. A man might have a bushel of eyes, and if they were in a basket they would be good for nothing. Faith is spiritual eyesight; and it is what the spiritual eyes see that is valuable, and not faith itself.

This leads to the question, "Is righteousness, then, the ground on which men are justified?" No, oh no, that is

not the ground on which they are justified. I am a writing-master, and I call up my class. I say to them, "Bring your copy-books." Here is the copy—a fine, beautiful hand, with great flourishing letters, so ornate that you cannot tell what is written. One boy shows me what he has done. I know that stubbed-handed little rogue; I see how he has tried; I perceive that on the whole he has made improvement; he has succeeded so far that really I can make out some of the letters; and I pat him on the head, and say, "Well done, my boy, well done; you will make a writer yet; take your seat and go on, and do not be discouraged." Does he go to his seat justified on account of the fine writing? No. I approve of the effort he has made, I praise him, he has my good-will. The ground of his justification is simply this: that I discern in him the tendency to learn to write. I discern also that this tendency, if it continues and increases, will bring him to the end which he is seeking, and which I am seeking for him. He is justified, not on account of his attainment, but on account of my considerateness and my nourishing and brooding disposition toward him. It is *my* faith and trust in *him*, and not any actual quality that he possesses, that leads to his justification.

Now, when I have sought for righteousness, even by the inspiration of the divine Spirit, and have wrought by patience and fortitude and self-denial, and have done a thousand things, I am yet so far from the real fullness of that which is required to make a man in Christ Jesus that, when God looks upon the character which I have attained, it is rude and imperfect. It is as far from the ideal toward which I am aiming as the boy's writing is from the copy; and if God justifies me it is on account of the something in him, and not on account of what is in me. That is to say, he has good nature; he is generous; he is motherly; he is fatherly. He is father, and mother, and brother, and friend, and lover, and saviour; and he administers out of the qualities which these names imply, and not out of the legist's book; and when I bring to my God the results of my strivings and attainments he accepts me and them, not because they are perfect, nor because I am perfect—not at all; but because

he has such a nature that he can accept an imperfect thing on account of its relation to future development.

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.” “For he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust.”

Therefore, he does not, in judging us, lay upon us those laws which he would lay upon angels in judging them.

One other point. While we depend for our justification not on our righteousness, but on the goodness of God, the end which we seek is not invalidated thereby. Do you suppose that everything that a man does in this world is commercial? I do not think that half the bargain-making in New York proceeds from selfishness. It may come more or less from these elements, but after all there is many a man who pursues methods that are very exceptionable, who does not do these things because he loves falsehood and guile. You will find that the motive which inspires him is perhaps enterprise, perhaps emulation of success, perhaps the great pressure of circumstances, perhaps even the wife and child that are living at home. Away back there is the fountain.

But suppose a man frames himself on the pattern of Christ Jesus, and suppose he does not believe in Christ, what becomes of him? In other words, is there such a necessity for technical adhesion to the Lord Jesus Christ that—if a man seeks the influence that Christ inspires all his people to seek, and if he exerts himself honestly in those directions, and if he stands before God, saying, “I acted according to the best light I had, and my endeavors were measured according to my ability”—God will reject him because he has not the brand of Christ upon him? That is the question which Peter had to solve. There was a Roman centurion, that was a just man, to whom Peter was sent; and he went to him trembling, because he thought it was not right for a Hebrew to go to a heathen; but when Peter heard the centurion’s prayers, and received the revelations that were made to him, he said, “Now I perceive that in every nation where men fear God and work righteousness, they are accepted of God.”

It is not necessary that you should have this thing or that

thing put on you. The thing to be had is manhood, noble, full, including every element that goes to constitute the human mind developed with power and with fruit; and every man is responsible only to the degree in which the light is brought to him in the age in which he lives, or through the institutions under whose influence he is; and if he is conscious that according to his circumstances he is *endeavoring*, not without imperfection, and not without sin, but so far as is compatible with human infirmity, to do that which is right, God will accept him.

“Well,” it is said, “how can he accept him but in Jesus Christ?” Oh, fools! Why, I should think you had been brought up in a mechanic’s shop where Collins’s axes were made, and that you had the idea that no axes would sell which did not have “Collins” stamped on them. Do you suppose that God is working on so small and mean a scale as that? Do you suppose he looks for this name or that name, this sect or that sect? The question is not whether a man calls himself a disciple of Christ, but whether he is *Christ-like*. The question is, Has he those qualities which lead to Christ? When a man is released from the body, and soars into aerial space, if his nature is such that it loves truth and purity and holiness; if it is so pervaded with these higher qualities that, following the divine attraction, it shoots up toward God, then it will be found of God, and no janitor, nothing, can shut it out from heaven. “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,” says God. He is arguing against the idea that he has no right to save anybody but Jews—anybody but orthodox folks. Quality, the essential nature of the mind—it is this on which we must stand; and he who lives toward God, in sympathy with God, and like God, need not be afraid. It is not your doctrinal system, it is what your doctrinal system has done in you and upon you, that determines your destiny; and if, when you have done your best, you come far short of the final state which you are seeking, you will be saved by the bounty, by the grace, by the generosity, by the love-element in God, which ministers to you and takes care of you all the way up to the day of your death. You will be saved, not because

you have this or that stamp on you, but because you have the spirit of Christ in you—and that whether you knew him or not. Of course, in a civilized land, where that knowledge is possible, you are without excuse if you turn aside from it; but I believe there were men in antiquity who strove according to their best light to live as God would have them live; and I shall see them all in heaven. I do not doubt that I shall go there. You cannot put me in hell. I shall see these men. They were willing to give up ease, and self, and honor for the sake of living for others. In their sphere, and according to their limited instruction, they were like Jesus, who came into the world to show that God eternally is a being who does not ingurgitate the universe to feed himself, but who pours himself out with love and power upon the universe to feed them.

So, then, seek righteousness; but not for self-justifying and conceited reasons. Seek a nobler life and nobler dispositions. Be in sympathy with God. Look up to him. Bring him near to you day by day. Have that discernment, that faith, that inward sight, by which you shall realize the sympathy of God, the presence of God, the love of God, and the genial, the sweet, the soul-inspiring influence of God. If you have the power of the inspiration of God present with you, you will find it easy to get over faults, easy to do things that otherwise would be unattainable, easy to ripen.

Oh, how well things ripen if the sun will only shine; but when the sun is laggard; when, in June, the Eastern winds prevail, and there are dribbling, grumbling showers, the strawberries will not hasten; they swell, and are vapid or sour; but so soon as the sun wakes up, and drives away the clouds, and comes forth, pouring the effulgence of its beams on all below, out of its light and heat come sugar, color and fragrant odors. Then the strawberries ripen, and all the region round about matures.

Without the sun, a few things could be ripened in the greenhouse; but you cannot have a greenhouse for all the world. A few men could be ripened in the synagogue, or in the church; but now the Sun of Righteousness has arisen upon all the earth; and whosoever in any nation will fear

God, and do justly, and love mercy, is living by faith of God, which is faith of Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God for the truth. This inspiration never fails. The more we employ it, the more sensitive we become to it; and the nearer we rise toward God, the stronger the attraction, till, with the apostle, in the end we shall say, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, the time of my departure is at hand, and the crown of righteousness that God hath laid up for me I shall soon have." The crown of righteousness is the coronation of the soul in its perfection.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.\*

ALMIGHTY God, we commend to thy fatherly care these dear children. Thou hast lent them, and sent them forth from thy presence; and they are precious in the sight of their parents, and beloved of us; but they are dearer to thee. We rejoice that it is in the nature of greatness not to despise littleness; that it is in the nature of holiness to be deeply drawn towards impurity and imperfection; that it is the divine nature to inspire in all things rectitude, and enlargement, and perfection. And so we come bringing our children to thee, though we are conscious of their weakness and insufficiency and faults, and all the liabilities that are in them, knowing that no nurse nor mother hath for them the tenderness which thou hast. Thou art the God of little children; and thou, blessed Saviour, didst repeat thy Father's disposition when thou wert upon earth. Thou didst rebuke those who would separate little children from thee, and didst take them up in thine arms, and didst lay thine hands upon them and bless them; and we rejoice that we may believe that still in thought thou dost caress our children; that still thou dost guard them by the effluence of thine own heart; and that toward them in especial thy providence is love.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that these parents, who have openly avowed their determination to bring up their children in the fear of God and in the love of the Saviour, may be strengthened to the full performance of the obligations which they have assumed. We pray that their own lives may be a gospel to these children, and that their dispositions may teach them what are Christian dispositions. May they, while they thus sow the seed of good instruction, reap abundantly of comfort and joy in themselves.

We pray for all the children that are in this great congregation. We pray for parents in their care of their children. We pray for parents whose children are sick. We pray for parents who have been bereaved, and are mourning the loss of their little ones. Open to them the heavens that they may behold them, not lost, but glorified. Bring them nearer the other life, the invisible kingdom, and the joys which this world seeks vainly to imitate. Grant that through our sorrow and through the ministration of thy comforting Spirit, we may learn the height, the depth, the length, the breadth, and the glory of the joys that prevail above us. For while we sigh here, the chorus swells just beyond; and all our groanings, all our sorrows, are lost and swept upward by the grandeur of those chants of immortal love which are evermore heard in thy presence.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that all who are bearing burdens in life may be enabled, touched by the divine nature, to bear them more manfully. May those who are in trouble or despondency learn how to acquit themselves like soldiers in a campaign, and how to harden themselves against trouble, and loss, and fear, and danger, and death itself.

We pray that thou wilt grant that more and more thy servants

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\* Immediately following the baptism of children.

may be strengthened in all goodness, and may feel called to build in themselves the noblest manhood, knowing that thus they shall interpret the best views of God.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest, not alone upon this church as a church, nor alone upon this congregation as a congregation. We pray thou wilt grant thy blessing upon all that are with us from Sabbath to Sabbath, strangers in a strange land, and upon all that are in thy providence casually brought together here. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless them, not alone in the reading of thy word, and in the singing of sweet songs of Zion, but in the thoughts which they send back to those whom they have left behind, scattered every whither.

We pray for all who are in discouragement, and whose affairs are broken or are breaking. We pray for all who face tribulation. We pray for all who are of an unstable mind. We pray for all who have for any reason lost the light of the world and of life. We pray for those who are in any trouble. O thou that causest the sun to rise, thou Master of the night and of the day, thou that dost chase the darkness around and around the globe, and that yet shalt destroy it, when thy sun shall shine a thousand years, grant to those that sit in darkness a great light. Beam down upon them and toward them, we pray thee, thy thought and thy love.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the labors of this church, upon its schools, upon its missions, upon those instrumentalities which have been ordained for the relief of men in various directions, and which are pursued under the ministration of thy dear Spirit. Grant that those who water may be abundantly watered. But may none feel that they are doing a meritorious service. May every one feel that it is an honor to be permitted to labor for the welfare of men in the kingdom of Christ Jesus.

We pray that thou wilt more and more unite churches that stand in a common Christian circle. May they learn to look charitably and peacefully and sympathetically upon each other. May they cooperate in all useful labors.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt civilize the consciences of men. We pray that thou wilt teach them love, and faith, and hope; and that thou wilt teach them that true justice is of love, and so of God.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt pour out thy Spirit upon the land in which we live. Especially we pray that thou wilt grant unto all parts of this land where there are troubles, or where there is distemperature, that guiding wisdom and overruling providence by which every difficulty shall be amicably settled.

We pray for the President of these United States, and all who are joined to him in authority. We pray for the Congress assembled. We pray for all courts of justice, for all judges, for all magistrates. We pray for the whole people.

We pray, not alone that thou wilt look upon our own nation, but that thou wilt look upon all the nations of the earth. Grant that their laws may be improved, that their institutions may be made more benign, and that intelligence may still work toward refine-

ment, and purity, and strength. We pray that the day may speedily come when all nations shall be converted to thee, and when thy kingdom shall be established from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be the praise, evermore. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

GRANT thy blessing, our Father, to rest upon the word that has been spoken. May the light of truth shine into the heart, and may the darkness flee, and clear away all prejudice, all misconception, and all ignorance. Imbue us with a holy courage. Inspire us with more and more of thy nature. Give us a faith that shall be to our inward life what our eyes are to our outward life. Give us those influences of thy Spirit by which we shall be able to live nearer to thee. We rejoice in thee, We rejoice in thy providence. We rejoice in the belief that thou art bringing home so many sons and daughters to glory. And when the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head, may we be with them, and help to swell the chorus of thy praise.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be all the glory  
*Amen.*



## THINGS OF THE SPIRIT.

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“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And besides this, 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 kindness, charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—2 PETER i., 2-11.

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Here, then, is a theological school, and these are the topics of the lectures to be delivered to those who sit in this school; and it is a matter of more than curiosity to know what it is that the apostle in this passage sums up as the cycle of knowledge. We know very well what is the curriculum in our theological schools to-day. We know that men are taught of the existence and the attributes of God; of a revelation from him of the Old and New Testaments; of the character of God as disclosed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; of the divinity of Christ; of the depravity of men; of the possibility and the need of regeneration; of the passion and death of Christ as an atonement by which men are forgiven and saved; of a life of sanctification; of a

triumphant and glorious immortality to the righteous; and of a dark death and future punishment to the wicked.

Now, in this round of discussion which goes on in our theological seminaries, and which has been embodied in vast tomes of divinity, we have what may be called the Greek idea of Christianity; that is to say, it is religion turned into an intellectual form—presented in its intellectual developments and connections. It is presented, in every element of it, either as a fact or as an idea; and these are connected so that their relations one to another are shown. But the whole system as it is laid down in bodies of divinity, and as it is taught in schools of theology, is Græcized Christianity.

The question then returns, Was this the method in which the Saviour taught? Did he undertake to unfold to the intellectual and philosophical sense the whole nature of man and of moral government, and the whole theory of duty and of life? Was this the method of the New Testament? Is it the method of a philosophy founded upon a truer notion of men than that which has prevailed during the past centuries?

There are two great schools of knowledge—what may be called the outward and the inward. We are all well aware, so far as the globe is concerned, and so far as the qualities and quantities of its matter are understood, that we are dependent primarily upon observation, or that part of our reason or intellect which discerns external existence, or external objects and their relationships. When these facts have been collected, we reason upon them, and deduce, as it is said, certain great principles, which principles are themselves the creatures of our intellect. They are simply the statement of the condition of facts, or of the class in which facts are found.

No man ought to undervalue philosophy, dealing in its own sphere with its own subjects, and dealing correctly; and when the apostle, in his writings to the Corinthian Church and to the Greek Church, who were brought up to the highest degree in the schools of the sophists and intellectualists, seems to undervalue philosophy, it is philosophy “falsely so called,” it is the assumption of reasoning about things to

which the reason as it was then used does not apply, that he referred. If a man reflects for a single moment, he will see that there is a large other sphere into which no man's eye can see, which no man's ear can hear, which no one of the senses can appreciate. He will perceive that there are truths which may exist external to him, and which have not developed themselves in any visible form, or in any way in which he can by the speculative intellect discern them.

For example, if a man presents to me a picture, I see the frame, the canvas, and the whole grouping; but there exists in me corresponding to that picture a state of enthusiasm, an exquisite sense of beauty, that is personal to me, and that does not exist in the picture. The picture is the occasion of developing in me certain facts. There is a certain fact in it, and there are states of mind in me that are just as much facts as the picture itself is a fact; but they are of a different kind. They are emotions, and they are emotions that are classed under the general head of the esthetic or beauty-perceiving qualities of the mind. Now, when you come to take these out, I ask you, Is the sense that I have of color, or is my rapture in it, my joy in it, a fact, or is it not a fact? My sense of the pleasure that I derive from harmony of grouping, and from form and color together—is that response in me a fact? It comes from, that is to say it arises in, the presence of that picture; and is not that state in me which is produced by the picture a mental state? Is not my feeling a fact?

When we see things externally we are apt to say, "O, that is hardpan; now we have got down to something;" but when we rise above matter to the soul, which is nearest like God, which is the blossoming point of animated creation, and it acts, is the soul-action less than the matter-action? Is the inside man less a reality than the exterior world which the outside man discerns?

Are there not, then, facts of lower physical organization or consciousness? and are there not facts of higher spiritual organization and soul-consciousness? Are there not facts which address themselves to the imagination, and to that part of the reason which takes cognizance of higher states?

We find that the teaching of theology, to a very large extent, has been an attempt to take men's inward consciousness of those truths which when expressed in words are only expressed by symbols, and to render them into intellectual forms, and then to present those intellectual forms as the truth. This has characterized to a very great degree the theological teaching which has been derived from the Greek mind. I do not disown, nor do I denounce it, nor do I say that it has been useless; but I do say that this mode of representing the truth almost exclusively in a systematic form has led men away from the realities of the Bible, and has been a cause of many of the difficulties which inhere, not in religion, but only in the method by which religion has been interpreted. They have been errors of method, and not of the real substance of religious truth. And I hold that in regard to the dogmas, the schemes, the doctrines of religion, there have been periods in the history of the world in which they were far more useful than they are to-day.

If you will take the passages in the Bible which I have read to you, and similar passages, I think you will see that when the apostles went out to teach, the primary end, the drift, the breadth, the scope and the power of their teaching, lay in this: an attempt to develop in the souls of men certain emotional and moral states; to give them permanence; to create dispositions into character; to build up the inside man according to the highest ideal; and then to let that inside development, the kingdom of God in them, as it is called, be the fruitful source and motive of all their external conduct and actions. They came to men with a very different feeling from that with which the theologians of to-day do. Men are taught to-day to interpret the system of the universe, the nature of God, the nature of moral government, all the great essential facts which involve the most abstruse and abstract of all conceivable elements: but when the apostles came to men they came, not with a vast system, to put men in possession of the intellectual relations of it; they came with a power and a purpose, and with influences by which they meant to stir up the highest elements that were in the human soul, and to bring them into a habit of

action, which habit we call *character*; and out of that character was to flow external life.

So, then, they had a practical design upon the living consciousness of men. Although they used the truths of the nature of God, and of the various developments of religious history in the Hebrew commonwealth, they used these as collateral and as instrumental, and they were all the time thinking of soul-work.

It is very true that if I were to open an architectural school I should teach men what is the nature of bricks, and what are the best kinds of them. I should teach them, also, respecting all sorts of stone—brown stone, sandstone, limestone of various kinds, granites of different sorts, marbles of all descriptions. I should likewise teach them of all manner of timber—oak, pine, hemlock, elm, and others. And I should teach them the nature of metals of every sort—lead, copper, iron, and so on. I should teach them all those elements. But a man might know them all and not be an architect. They are quite necessary, but they are subordinate. They bear about the same relation to architecture that A B C do to literature. A man may know the letters of the alphabet and not be a scholar, a poet or a literary man. These things are all elementary, and are quite necessary; but to know how to build a house which should be convenient within and comely without, and well built, is another matter. Although, to do this, various materials are required, we know that a knowledge of these materials is lower knowledge; and we know that a higher conception in architecture is necessary, in order to erect pleasing and well arranged structures.

Now, the apostles were all the time thinking of the soul-house. “Know ye not that ye are the temples of the living God?” Or, changing the figure, the apostle speaks of men being “rooted.” It was a tree that he thought of; but he thought of many other things, and the next thought was of their being “grounded.” He had the foundations of a building in his mind. “That ye being rooted and grounded in love.” They were to be “edified;” and what is *edify* but a Latin word for build? And all through the

apostle's teaching runs the idea of building men up by the inside.

Now, the truths required for building up men are, of course, to a certain extent, the objective truths which are outside of men; but to a far less extent than men are accustomed to suppose; for, as in this passage, you will see what the Apostle Peter felt to be the essential elements of up-building:

“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue [in the original it is *by*. It means God's glory and God's virtue]: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”

There is the climax of the truth sought, which is to bring men into that state in which it may be said that they are “partakers of the divine nature.”

Then he goes on and adds:

“Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

If Mr. Darwin were a believer, as I am, and were to preach from his system, he would say, “All men are born into this world animals; and their earliest and most powerful developments are the animal passions and appetites; and the grace of religion is to develop a godly element, a higher manhood, out of this lower animalhood.” He would say, “That ye may be partakers of the divine nature, grow up, evolve, develop into that.” By “lust” in this passage is meant these lower animal appetites and passions.

“And besides this [in addition to this, it is in the original; or as a means of, or in connection with it; as the method of executing this entrance into the divine life, and escaping from the thrall of the animal life on to which the divine is grafted, or on which it grows, as a flower grows out of coarse dirt] giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control [which is the true meaning, or the true interpretation, of the term *temperance*]; and to self-control, patience [not the dogged, stupid patience of the stoic, but that patience which springs out of common sense and trust in God]; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness [not a contemplative and selfish state of mind which separates a man from his kind, and not that feeling of love of

attachment by which one is drawn to his family and to his neighborhood; but that charity which is the universal disposition of good will, or good will in a universal form]; for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is taught, then, by the apostle, and it is the implication all the way through, that the main end of preaching the Gospel is to build man up into that state in which his character shall bring him into communion and sympathy with God, so that he shall partake of the divine nature; that this is to be done by the knowledge of God through Jesus Christ; but that the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour is to come through this kind of faith, virtue, self-government, patience, endurance, brotherly love, godliness, charity. In other words, the knowledge of Christ Jesus is to be brought out through certain experimental states in ourselves. And so we are to study and grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This brings us again to the truth that the New Testament claims that its aim and drift is to shape human nature to a higher model, and that this is to be done by the truths of the Gospel, and that these truths are to be understood by being experienced. It is experimental truth that is to build in us the right character; that is to interpret in us the truths of the Bible; that is to make us understand the nature of Christ, and through him the nature of God.

Speculative reason can never determine the truth or falsity of the Gospel of Christ. Mere philosophical reasoning can never determine the truths of the Word of God. There are periods in the history of the world when religion has the go by; when it is not fashionable. We are coming into one of those periods now, in respect to technical and speculative religion. Just such periods have existed in different nations and at different times: and it is a matter very remarkable, too, that when at one period and another the Bible sank into contempt; when the Church became odious, and her officers were suspected and denounced and disliked in every way, and her authority was regarded as intolerable; nay, when what was taught of religion was full of superstition, full of mischief, full of evil, and was overthrown in the confidence of

men,—it is a matter very remarkable that then there was something that carried the Church and the faith of men in the substantial truths of religion through all these revolutions. How does it happen that when the philosophic mind of France, of Germany, and of England has been for periods of half centuries together adverse to the substantial teachings of Christian men, there is a deeper sense of Christianity, and a more profound belief in the reality of religion, to-day, than there ever was at any former period? In a lower sense of the term Christianity may be fashionable, but in a far deeper and more respectable use of that term than is ordinarily implied in it, I say there is nothing to-day that is so fashionable as the deepest moral feelings and moral truths. To-day, the great systems of theology are being shaken. All the claims of hierarchy and church organization are being disputed—and mostly on very good and tenable grounds. One after another of those things which have been considered sacred from generation to generation have been stripped off and thrown down. One after another of the great truths have been analyzed and shown to be more or less false in statement. Much that has entered into the conception of the Divine nature through whole ages has been taken out. The God that Calvin thought of, if he were to be presented to-day in the average of Calvinistic churches, would, I think, be turned from with simple horror. The doctrine of the nature of man, of his sinfulness, and of the desert that follows his sinfulness, is no longer taught or believed as it was centuries ago. There has been a vast change going on, and we have seen a different thought of church organization, of Christian liberty, and of the power and worth of ordinances: we have seen a vast change going on everywhere, which to some men seems like a destruction of religion; but in point of fact there never was so much conscience, there never was so much sense of the worshipful, there never was so much tenderness and charity, there never was so much soul-power evolved in any era as there is to-day.

It is said that in the apostolic ages we had the pattern church and the pattern experiences. Far from it—*far from it*. No subsequent age has produced single characters like

John and Paul ; but if you take the average of Christians in the apostolic age and in ours, our Sunday-school scholars could teach many of the early Christians. It is piteous to go back and see what a state they were in—how low they were.

To-day, there is more real soul-power working towards God and eternity than there has been at any other period, I think, in the history of the world. And yet it is a day in which there is more speculation, more assault upon the systems of theology, more disbelief in its ordinances and churches than ever before ; and what is the reason of it? The reason is this : that religion does not stand in the thought of religion. Religion is a thing that is in man himself. It is the soul acting in certain relations. It is experimental. First it is experience, and afterwards it is speculative reasoning upon experience ; but the beginning and the middle and the end of the kingdom of God in this world is a given condition of imagination, faith, hope, love, self-control, honor, and fidelity, in living forms among men. The kingdom of God is within you. It is the sum of all the higher impulses and nobler emotions and finer characters that exist on the globe in any one church. It is they that represent the divine element in living, glowing forms. That is the truest church of Christ, no matter how many or how few members there may be in it, which represents the most living Christ-likeness. In the world at large there is but one true church, and that is the contribution of all churches to this one great element—*Christ in you the hope of glory*. The “partakers of the Divine nature” are the men and women, ignorant or refined, low or high, who have that patience in sorrow, that hope in despondency, that faith in obscurity, and that love, which bring daylight every day, and strike even night with starlight. That faith which makes a man like God, who, with double hand pours blessings the year round, in all seasons, upon his creatures ; that likeness in men to God which makes them bountiful, singing and making song, beautiful and making beauty, joyful and making cheer—children of the light, and almoners of infinite divine treasures,—that is the element which characterizes the true church of Christ. These frag-

ments, wherever you find them, all the world over, constitute the one catholic and universal church. There is not a church organized on the globe which has not constituent elements of this kind; and there is no church so heretical that God does not take something from it, and make a part of the universal church out of it; and there is not a church so pure that he does not have to sift every part of it in order to get the true wheat, leaving the chaff behind.

If these views be correct, I remark, first, that the bodily life of Christ is not Christ; it is the soul-life of Christ that is Christ. He had a bodily life; but he who merely looks upon him in his outward relations; he who regards him speculatively; he who, in speaking of him, says, "How could he be born of a woman? how could he be God and yet be a babe? how could he be divine, and spend thirty years of his life as a mechanic, toiling, hewing wood, nailing up beams, joining and fitting, working in a carpenter's shop?"—he who does and says these things cannot understand Christ in his real nature. There be those who say, "The life of Christ opened; he went to Galilee, and made his headquarters there, leaving Nazareth upon his persecution at Capernaum; he performed wonderful works, making circuits in villages and communities round about; he traveled from Galilee northward, and pushed his way clear to the borders of Tyre and Sidon; he spent two or three years there, and then he came to Jerusalem." This itinerary of Christ has some relation to Christ; but it does not represent the true Christ, any more than that casket which contains your pearls, your amethysts, your opals, your diamonds, and is the means by which you carry them with you here and there, is the precious stones themselves. It was not Christ that ate, and drank, and slept. That which did these things was the vehicle of his life. That was the Christ who thought; that was the Christ who felt; that was the Christ who loved; that was the Christ who wept; that was the Christ who suffered; that was the Christ who brought down from heaven into the temple doctrines so high that the corrupt imaginations of men could not comprehend them. It is the inward, thinking, loving, living soul of Christ that is Christ.

Now, how are you going to understand Him? Can any catechism teach you?

I go to Italy [it is hundreds of years ago]. I want to become acquainted with Raphael. They take me where he lives, and I look at the house, and am profoundly interested in it. They let me into his studio. I am profoundly interested in that also. I see his work. I examine the pictures which he has painted. I am hidden behind a screen, so that when he comes in, without his seeing me I can see him. I see how his face, his eye, his mouth, all his features look. I watch him as he takes his palette. I see him work. I observe the smile play over his features. And when he has gone out again I go and look at his shoes, and at his painting-gown that hangs upon the wall. I thoroughly acquaint myself with his surroundings. And I say, when I go home, "One thing I know: I have been to Italy, and I know Raphael through and through." I have not spoken with him; I have not followed the line of his thinking; I have not had any correspondence in myself to his inspiration; all that which has made him what he is I did not touch. That which is common to him and every rude peasant in all Italy I know; but that which has made him the commanding genius of painters throughout the ages is just what I lost.

Now, men study Christ's life. He was born in Bethlehem. So were ever so many other persons. But he was born in an inn. Yes, and lots of children have been born in an inn. But he was carried to Nazareth. Yes, and ever so many persons have lived in Nazareth. But he was brought up by his father, who was a carpenter, and he worked at his father's trade. Yes, and hundreds of persons have been brought up by their fathers who were carpenters, and have worked at their father's trade. But he became a distinguished preacher among the Rabbis. Yes, and others have become distinguished preachers among Rabbis. But he lived two years in Galilee. Yes, and many people have lived twice as long, ten times as long as that, in Galilee. But he went to Jerusalem and got into trouble there. Yes, and many men have got into trouble in Jerusalem. But he was put to death for disturbing affairs in the hands of the regular authorities.

Yes, and thousands of men have been put to death for disturbing affairs at the hands of the regular authorities. You know all that, and yet you do not know anything about Christ. It is that which lies back of sensuous perception and back of intellectual analysis, that gives you a knowledge of Christ, and that you can understand only by having a thrill of it in yourself.

Have you ever stood where it was needful for you to give up time and profoundly dear objects of pursuit for others?

I see a kind sister. She is comely. She is deep souled. She has a deformed brother. He has no chance or prospect in life. All pleasures are denied him. All the world will touch him to hurt and irritate his pride. He has a soul, and he has genius. He shall see knowledge. She, comely as she is, says, "I will never marry until my brother is established with every advantage of education;" and for the love she bears him she goes to service, and cheerfully denies herself all ornaments, though they are precious to her. Admiration she will not receive. She devotes herself to her brother, who is so unfortunate, but who yet has a future that may be developed. Night and day, for a score of years, she toils, giving feeling, and enthusiasm, and bodily service, through deprivation and suffering, until he is able to stand before the community and receive that meed of praise which genius gets so easily when it is disclosed. And she meanwhile sickens with over-toil, and faints, and fades.

Take off thy robe, O thou disputer of the divinity of Christ! bow thyself down before the presence of this woman; for she can tell you more than you know of what it means to give one's life a ransom for another. She understands Christ. She has had him in her experience.

Look at another case. See a mother who, though cumbered with poverty and with toil, stands in the midst of a household of ten or twelve children (such I remember), and gives herself for them. There is hardly a single element of human knowledge that is not precious to her. By nature a philosopher, by nature a poet, by nature an artist, with high and noble tendencies, for these children's sake she dwells at home without books, without research, denying the

strong instincts of her being, and finding her happiness in giving her power to them, impleting them, inspiring them, lifting them up, and making them rich by her self-denial and disinterested love. Bow down to her, sharp theologian! This woman is giving her life a ransom for many. Not that I would compare any human creature to God, or to Jesus his divine Son; but in miniature and analogue the experiences of this woman interpret the grandeur of that sacrifice which was in Christ Jesus.

Whoever loves another better than himself in order that he may help him; yea, whoever loves another so that he is willing to lay down his life for him; whoever can stand and take buffet after buffet, and stroke after stroke, with sincere and undisguised sympathy pitying and praying for the wrong-doer, as Christ in the extremity of his torment said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do"—whoever can do that, is learning Christ. He has Christ in him. He has that knowledge which comes, not from reflection, but from experience. When I see men disputing and quarreling about the attributes of Christ and careless about the elements which go to make those attributes; when I see the want of kindness, of truth, of justice, of love, of self-sacrifice; when I see the emptying out of a man's self every one of those qualities which by sympathy and experience teach him of Jesus; when I see men, with dogmatism and arrogance and philosophical nicety, damn one another right and left by texts, and with compressed lips and red cheeks, because they are not orthodox, and do not believe in the divinity of Christ—when I see these things, I am not surprised that many professed Christians do not understand Christ. Could the devil tell what Christ was by anything that he ever felt in himself? and can the spirit of the devil in a man interpret Christ? But when you are in the mood in which Christ lived; when you experience those emotions which ravished his soul; when your mind moves in harmony with his mind, then he becomes apparent to you.

We are called, to-day, to very much discussion in respect to the source of our knowledge of religion—as to whether it is the church or the Bible, these being the two antitheses or

antagonistic fountains. One great part of Christendom derives its authority to teach the truth from a supposed Divine power that is inherent in it. Another derives its power to teach the truth from that which is laid up in the Bible.

Now, the Bible itself, and the church itself, both of them, become objects of suspicion and of doubt. On the one hand the imperfections of the church, and on the other hand the time-element that is in the Bible, give rise to a vast amount of questioning, of distress and of unbelief, in regard to the one and the other; but the test of the truth of the Bible is the reproduction in ourselves of those moral emotions which it enjoins as the ideal of a true life, a true character and a true manhood.

I read with much interest the journal of Marcus Antoninus. Though he was a Roman heathen, he was full of good sense and nobility. He was also full of narrowness and imperfection. Every one of those traits that he manifests which are really large, and which have in them an element of universal manhood, thrills me; but the very next page after the representation of such a trait may contain something which belongs to the narrowness of his education, of his age and his condition. This does not, however, take away from that which is good and true. We judge of things by the whole. That may be a noble steed whose harness has worn off the hair and left an ugly spot on him. That may be a comely person on whom there is a scar—especially one that was received in the day of battle. We measure things according to their essential quality, and not according to their incidents or accidents.

The Word of God is the best thing which, in every age, God could give to men in view of their endowments, their institutions, and their conditions, by which to establish them in manhood. It is a book that he employs in attempting to raise men out of their animal lusts. It is a record of that process by which he endeavors to lift them up from the lower state into the Divine nature. It is, as Paul says to Timothy, "Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that every man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Now, let a man who wants to be a *man* go through the Bible and take out what he pleases ; let him reject, if he wants to, Genesis ; let him reject, if he pleases, Exodus ; let him leave out Leviticus ; let him dismiss Numbers, Deuteronomy, I. and II. Samuel, I. and II. Kings, I. and II. Chronicles ; let him drop Ezra and Esther ; let him, if he pleases, set aside the books clear down, all the way through ; but let his soul hunger and thirst after righteousness ; let him say, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so thou knowest, O God, that my soul panteth after thee ;" let him be a man who searches for wisdom as for silver and gold and for hid treasure ; let him be a man to whom a knowledge of that manhood of which he has some glimpses is more valuable than rubies ; let him take the Word of God, sifting it all the way to the end, leaving out this thing and that thing ; but, after all, when he has got through, if he reaches a high and heroic manhood, he will say, as every other man must under the same circumstances, "That book is worth more to me than all the other books on the globe. All the other books on the globe do not give me such inspiration, such courage, such promises, such ideals, such models, as that book does. No other book awakens in me such emotions as does the Word of God." That is enough.

The mistake that has been made about the Bible is in supposing it to be an immense Cyclopedia, and that it teaches all knowledge on all subjects. This supposition is as absurd as to give a man a chart, and to tell him that it will teach him the chemistry of sea-water, the geography of the bottom of the sea, and a knowledge of all the ethnological subjects which belong to the countries that he shall visit. In regard to the Bible, men have stumbled and fallen by reason of this misapprehension. But if you want to be virtuous ; if you want a virtue that is not a sordid and marketable quality, but that is heroic ; if you want to know how to go through good report and evil report, and be a cheerful man ; if you want to know how to deny the flesh and minister to the soul ; if you want to have the life that never ends assured ; if you want to feel that you are not simply a mote that moves fluctuated by tides and winds, but that you are a

part of God, and that you stand by his power ; if you want to feel that joy is in sorrow, and that sorrow blossoms into joy ; if you want courage and fidelity and truth and heroism and everything that lifts men above animals and above common men and makes heroes of them—heroes of the kitchen, heroes of the nursery, heroes of the parlor, heroes in the Senate or in the field,—go to the Word of God. Where else can you find such inspiration, such ideals and such help as you can there ? Nowhere ; and that is the reason why you will never kill the Bible. It is a vital book. It is a book that sprang out of life, and that always is going back to life : and you may say what you please in disparagement of it ; you may seek to invalidate it ; you may prove that its dates are false ; but no man can prove that it is not a book which brings the strength and food of God to the soul of man in its emergency, in its sorrows, in its defeats, in its overthrows, in its humiliations, and in its aspirations and longings—for, oh ! the hardest thing to bear in this world is not loss ; it is longing. It is not what I have lost that distresses me, in common with all high-minded men ; it is the desire of more knowledge, more virtue, more purity, more disinterestedness, more equability by which to carry myself always and under all circumstances so that I can stand as God stands. It is this aspiration, this infinite longing, that distresses and disturbs the soul, and that causes more suffering than losses, than bankruptcy, than any misfortunes of the lower kind. And in this book you will find that which satisfies this yearning for nobility—for true manhood.

When, therefore, it is said, “ Science is going to overthrow the Bible and change many things,” I have no question that science is going to change many things, thank God ! I have no doubt that it will change a great many things in the church, thank God ! I have no doubt that it will change a great many things in the structure, in the administration, and in the philosophy of the church. I have no doubt that it will change things that belonged to certain times in the past, and which were best for those times, but which we have outgrown. We have larger views than the ancients had. They had elements of truth, but not truths in their largest forms. We are

never going to have a science which will show that man is not sinful; but certain dogmas in regard to his sinfulness will be overthrown. We are never going to have a science that will do away with the doctrine of man's responsibility, but that doctrine will be reconstructed. The mode of teaching God's moral government will be organized on a nobler plan when we understand human nature and the Divine nature better. There will be vast changes, but they will never go to the root of religion; for that root is mankind, in their living inner consciousness and experience; and no intellectual scepticism will take away from man that consciousness and experience. Nothing is going to take away the human consciousness and experience of want, of sorrow, of distress or of aspiration.

I look, therefore, with the utmost complacency upon all these things. There is going to be suffering for a great many people. There are many who, when they lose a bit of faith, lose everything. Because the ideas in which they were educated when they were children are shown not to have been exactly correct, they instantly say, "Well, if I have to give these up, how do I know but that I must give up everything else?" This is the complaint of weak minds—and I do not mean it in an obnoxious sense at all. "Receive the weak, but not to doubtful disputations." There are many persons who have not reasoning power; they cannot supply themselves with this power; and so they have to depend on other people, and upon the institutions which are around about them; and there cannot be much growth without a great deal of loss, and suffering, too. This I expect, and bargain for. I do not apprehend, notwithstanding, but that the world in any one hundred years is vastly augmented in its moral treasure. It grows rich in spite of the wastes that are going on. And so I hold that the faith of God as it exists in individual souls, and as it is gathered collectively in great bodies of men who express a given faith, and hope and longing, is not to be extinguished. The intellect cannot discern the things of the spirit. The spirit discerns its own facts. The intellect serves to arrange those facts in certain order, and to put upon them certain names; but so long as there is in man an innate conscience, an innate sense of

purity, an innate longing for that which is divine, innate love, innate charity, innate patience, innate hope and self-denial, and so long as these have, by the watering of God's grace, continual growth and development—so long will religion be in the world ; and as long as men betake themselves to the word of God they will find there ideals, food, nourishment, that will make the Bible precious, not on this theory or that, but because it brings light, and joy, and comfort to the soul.

Dear Christian brethren, do not wander away, misled by the intellect, from your faith in truth, in God, and in Christianity. Dearly beloved, understand that while you are not to disown external and physical instruction, if I may so say, while you are to give due weight to the outward history and relations of religion, after all, true Christianity cannot be taught except by developing the spirit of it in yourselves and your children. Do not be moved from your faith by supposing that this or that sweeping current is going to efface anything from this world which the world needs. Nothing will be swept away that is worth keeping. We have passed the barbaric days ; and no truth, certainly no dispositions and emotions, nothing that belongs to the inward life of man, will be destroyed. All these things will stand. Therefore abide in the faith of God's love. Abide in the confidence that God loves you, that you may be made better. Abide in the belief that in order to make you better he chastises you. He plies you by business ; he swings you through the different schools of infancy, youth, and manhood ; he gives you industry and enterprise ; he sends you summer and winter ; by ten thousand influences, within and without, he seeks to educate you in those qualities which shall make you partakers of the divine spirit. Abide in the faith that though you be weak, though your sins be multitudinous, though your infirmities be more than the sands on the sea-shore, God is the great and bountiful Father ; and that though you merit nothing you shall inherit all things, because it is the pleasure of God to make eternal life the *gift*—the gift without equivalent—to every one that can receive.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, our Father, that we have access to thee. We rejoice that our spirits may rise above the body and above surrounding troubles and rest in thee. Even as from the sea, tossed and driven of storms, the vapors rise and hide themselves in the air far above, to descend again fruitfully and blessedly, so we rise from storm and from tempest into the upper air where thou art; and we return again fruitful and joyful. We thank thee for this ascending power of the soul. We thank thee that there is this refreshment of faith in thee, and that our life day by day is fed from these secret springs—from the dews and from the rains that fall from the heavenly land. We rejoice to record thy bounty in days past—thy goodness that has never forsaken thy servants. Through long ages when cast out and driven from their land, when hiding in the mountains and in the caves, when imprisoned, when led forth to torture and to death, thou hast been present with them. The world was not worthy of them, but they were blessedly sustained by the secret, invisible power of God; and by ministering angels they were made victorious over every ill. That same love which thou hast manifested heretofore dwells undiminished. Thy faith is unwearied and unwearable. Thou art without change or shadow of turning. Thou art the God of the desolate, of the weak, of the tempted, of the oppressed, of the fatherless, of the widow, of those that are persecuted in every age; and we rejoice that there is thus in the midst of selfishness, and pride, and all the distemperature of this ill-regulated life, such a magazine of mercy open and accessible to all; that there is this pavilion where thou dost hide thy people until the storm be overpassed; and that the poorest may come without money and without price wherever they are and how ignorant soever they may be. They that put their trust in thee shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed. We rejoice that although our senses report thee not, that although we find thee not, that although thy voice is not heard in the street, yet thou art everywhere present. The most powerful of all power everywhere art thou present, doing thy work for the secret soul which cannot be done by visible and outward instruments. And thus from day to day when we seek lower ends, we behold what is related to our existence here, we comprehend things that are visible to our senses; but when we rise and are in our finer and nobler moods we drop all these outward and visible instruments, and are conscious that we are strengthened and fed by the invisible; and we rejoice that thus day by day thou art ministering to our faith by ministering to our hidden life.

We pray, O God, that thou wilt grant to all in thy presence the blessing of thine own appearing and of thine indwelling in them. We pray that whatever may be their necessities, that whatever may be the exigencies of their life, they may be conscious of the divine Helper. Be thou Immanuel to all those who are toiling and struggling, who are tempted, and who are variously distressed by trials. We pray that thou wilt be near to those who are suffering from the pangs of hunger, or who are harassed by poverty, or who are in

over measure wrought upon by fear of to-morrow. Be near, we beseech of thee, to all who are distracted in the various duties of their outward life, not knowing what is right and best. We pray that thou wilt bless all who suffer, not so much for themselves as for those who are put beneath their care. Will the Lord be gracious unto all according to their needs. Have compassion upon men's weakness and ignorance, and upon their want of faith, and discernment, and experience in spiritual things. We pray that thou wilt be near to all those who desire above all other things to be the children of light and of truth, and who are afraid on every hand of being misled by superstitions and invalid arguments. We pray, O God, that thou wilt lead them through a better way. Open to them thy will as well as knowledge of thyself; and out of that inward knowledge develop more of the truth as it is outwardly.

Be near, we pray thee, to all those who seek to teach others the way of righteousness; and when they feel their own impoverishment, when it seems to them that they have but little of the truth or of the Spirit, we pray that thou wilt fill their souls, quicken their imaginations, and deepen their affections; and grant that they may be able to preach the Gospel of Christ with all the beauty and sweetness and flavor that come with the truth of God in the human soul.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to all those who are attempting with conscious feebleness, and yet with fidelity, to discharge the duties which are incumbent upon them in life. Wherever they stand, whether it be at the highest point or at the lowest, may they feel that they are serving the Lord. May those who are in subordinate situations, and who owe duties to their fellows, honor all men—not alone those who are worthy of honor. May they seek for Christ's sake to fulfill the obligations of charity and kindness towards those that seem unworthy. May they be filled with the Spirit of Christ, in order that they may carry conviction of his presence wherever they are. May all pride, the swellings thereof, and its corrupt interpretations of life and duty, be taken out of the way. May vanity cease to cast its baleful influence upon the soul. May everyone of us know how to rein in his anger and indignation, and sin not even when angry.

Grant that everyone of us may look with kindness upon all men; and may we seek pity rather than vengeance. May we seek rather to do good to others than to have good done to us. May we seek to strengthen others rather than to be made strong ourselves. May we be willing to follow Jesus Christ—to follow him in his joy, in his teachings, and in his wonderful works; and to follow him, also, in his disputings with men of doubt in the temple, in his passion and humiliation, in Gethsemane, in his buffetings and trials. May it be our ambition to live the life of Christ. Grant that in our several places, as servants, as companions, as parents, as partners, as neighbors in brotherhood, everywhere we may be willing to be toward other men what we believe Jesus Christ would be willing to be toward us.

So may we have evermore not so much controversy as to what

Christ is, and where he is, and what are the limits of his nature. May we desire to know Christ in us, the inspiration of duty, the teaching influence, the restraining power, that we may be built up into him in all things; that we may be rooted and grounded in him; that we may have the fullness of the Godhead made manifest to us.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon this church. Grant that all its history and experience may redound to thine honor and glory. And we pray not only that thou wilt build us up, but that thou wilt build up all thy churches. May we think more and more of the world; more and more of other bodies of Christians. May we not be contracted to a religious selfishness. May we desire to have charity for all, and the large spirit of Jesus Christ, who beholds that the field is the world. May we live for mankind.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that thy kingdom may come everywhere, and that thy will may be done. May we discern it in the increase of intelligence; in more gentleness, more truth, more justice among men; in the repression of things evil by the exaltation of things that are good.

Be pleased, O God, to remember the President of these United States, and all that are joined with him in authority. Grant them thy wisdom, and strength, and success. We pray that thou wilt remember the Congress assembled, and all State Legislatures, and all courts and magistrates, and all citizens throughout this great domain. May our rulers be God-fearing men who shall faithfully administer the laws and the trusts that are imposed upon them by their fellow citizens. Grant that this great people may fear God, and obey the laws of God.

And not for ourselves alone do we pray, but for all those in other lands who are kin to us, and for all those in other lands who are speaking a different language, and are striving for the same great ends which we are striving for—a larger life and nobler career.

O grant that all those forces that to-day are rising up in the enlightened souls of men, and that are striving against the visible that is in us and under us, may gain the supremacy. May all that which is of God and all that which is angelic prevail, so that more and more customs, and laws, and institutions shall express the amenity of the Gospel, and not the rigor and rudeness of old and barbarous ages.

We pray that thy kingdom may come everywhere, that thy will may everywhere be done, and that the whole earth may be filled with thy glory.

And to the Father, the Son, and Spirit shall be praises evermore.  
*Amen.*

## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

BE pleased, our Father, to breathe into us that childlike spirit by which we shall come into sympathy with thee; by which we shall be able every day to do the things which in our circumstances thou wouldst have us do. We are glad that we live under so large a cope of influences. Thou art not narrow, nor pettish, nor jealous; thou art not a spy of the universe, hunting out every man's transgression, and setting them down against him; thou art a Father; and whatever concerns the welfare of thy children thou dost discern. For their good thou watchest; for their good thou dost chastise. Infinite art thou, dwelling in eternal summer. There where love hath its equator is thy throne, and thence come endless streams of influences that are moving upon the minds of men. Grant that we may come under the divine influence, and rise into the full perception of the divine nature, not in its largeness, not in its power or scope, but in the quality thereof, that we may be in our places as God is in his.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
*Amen.*

## CHRISTIAN CONTENTMENT.

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“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”—PHIL. iv., 11-13.

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This is a very remarkable declaration to be made by anybody. You will recollect a great many tales or fables that have been framed, of great gifts offered by an Eastern king to any man in his kingdom that was contented; and you will remember how ludicrous, in every case, the contentment turned out to be. It has been a matter of philosophical maxim and criticism that men never are pleased, but always are to be. Therefore, to hear one say, with the Apostle Paul, an intelligent and educated man, “I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content,” is to hear one of the most extraordinary statements that it is possible for a man to make. It is easy for one to say, “I am content.” It is easy to say and to feel this for an hour: I can understand how a man who lives for money, and has seen himself on the point of being choused out of twenty thousand dollars, and who, after nights and days of twisting, and chiseling, and contriving, and planning, and suffering, and anxiety, has, by a stroke, dextrous, keen, unexpected, got it, and goes home with it—I can understand how, for a whole evening, he may chuckle, and say, “This is worth living for; I am perfectly content.” I can understand how he should be content for a whole evening; for everybody is (I mean that some bodies are) content in the moment of the realization of any great desire.

Now, in all these things, if you scrutinize, if you question yourself, "Are you content with your life as a life?" can you say, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content"? Does not your expectation limit itself to the fulfillment of certain wishes? Do you take into consideration, or does any man, the oppositions, the thwartings, the overthrows, the disasters, the humiliations, the mortifications, the stings of pride or of vanity? and does a man, looking over all this play of life and circumstance, say, "I have learned in every state to be content"? How many of you will hold up the hand to that? And yet, this is what Paul said.

But consider: Is Paul quite sure of himself? Paul was a large man. Few other men have appeared so far above the horizon. We are not yet ourselves large enough to take in the full measure of this man—for in my judgment theologians in times past have very largely occupied themselves with those elements in Paul's writings which were clearly secondary; and for very obvious reasons they have neglected those which were the profoundest, and which could be interpreted only by men who had gone into substantial experiences of the same kind. Therefore, largely, theology has been made out of the washings of gold that were in the mountains; and they have been the smallest part: whereas the treasure lay yet mountainously abundant, but deep and shut up in the rock.

Consider, in the first place, that his being content does not necessarily mean being pleased. I may be content; that is to say, I may have a calm patience in waiting over night at a miserable inn where have congregated smugglers, and drunken sailors, and the riffraff of a bad neighborhood. If, after fighting for my life in my little yacht, I had at last been driven up on shore, myself a wreck, and had crawled out of the water, and staggered to the light, and gone in there, would it not be proper for me to say, "I thank God for my deliverance and for my safety"? And yet, every element is distasteful to me. The air reeks with bad liquor and worse oaths; and the company are obscene and vile and violent: the conditions are detestable; but I that have es-

escaped from the sea can say, "I am content to be here. Not that I am pleased at being there particularly; but as compared with something else it is tolerable. I have learned how to bear this." How did I learn it? I learned it by being swirled around for an hour in the whirlpools of the sea. I learned it by being thumped and pounded by the waves. I learned it by being chilled to the very marrow. I learned it by crawling up the beach, and stopping for breath at every rod, and falling and getting up again. I learned it because I thought I should perish before I could gain succor. I learned it because when I saw the light, and tried to go toward it, I almost gave up hope. I learned it because when I reached the house, being out of breath, I fell against the door and burst it in. So I learned to be patient with the surroundings in the midst of which I found myself. But it does not follow that a man is obliged to say, "I like these circumstances," in order to be content with them.

Then again, we must not confound content with a state of indifference. If a man has no sort of moral feeling, he is perfectly content to sit in camp on the plain and hear that which no human ear ought to hear. Not the common sewers of New York that empty into the sea all the concentrated feculence of that million-manned city are the worst streams. The worst common sewer on the globe is the mouth of man; and a man may sit in the midst of a crowd and have poured into his ear, hour after hour, tales of blood and pirate's narrations of hideous inhumanity,—themes and recitals that would make the dead shiver in their coffins; and, being as hard as an alligator himself, he may say, "Well, I am content." Content? Indifference is not content. Insensibility, the want of feeling—that is not what is meant by *contentment*.

And so the declaration of the apostle, "I have learned in all conditions to be content," was not that of a man who had no sensibility to what was going on around him—to right or wrong; to that which was good or that which was bad; to the success of right things or to the bad carriage of good things; to the exaltation of vice, crowned, imperial, carrying with it literature, art, everything resplendent; to virtue depressed, condemned, rolled in the gutter, yea, dying

in prison-houses. He knew these things; he was not thinking of all this waste when he said, "I have learned how to be content." He did not mean to say that he was content with all that he saw of the condition of things about him. Certainly not.

We are not to understand *contentment* in the sense of supineness or corpulent indolence. Paul was not a fat man, sure. He was a black-haired man, with a bilious-nervous temperament. He was a man of intense feeling, but of that intensity of feeling that does not stop. There is much intensity of feeling in the world that comes by gusts, and the very feeling necessitates a reaction, a lull, or a change; but Paul was one of those men who were tenacious of feeling, and went on and on and on with it. There were certain great elements in his nature that remind me of the old German story of an Eolian harp made by stretching iron wires between two great towers on the castle of a certain Count. Whenever the wind arose these wires began to sound; and as the wind waxed they sounded louder and louder; and when the storm and tempest came they roared out their strains of music: but it was always just those wires—no more and no others—giving precisely the same tones which rolled through the air.

There were two or three or four great strings in the mind of this apostle; and when the winds blew they sounded; and they went on sounding and sounding and sounding: and he seems to have had no art about it but that which is employed in creating the beauty of holiness—no historic curiosity; no sense of literary criticism; nothing Hellenic. He was sensitive to all that pertained to man's essential moral nature. In that he was a universal genius. And as to his being contented in any such sense as that of quiescence, the whole of his life, his passage from city to city, his unwearied labors, his sufferings, the things which he recounts of himself,—all these show that he was not content in any such way as not to be enterprising. In the same letter, and not far from this passage, he says that which indicates the intensity of his progressive nature:

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already per-

fect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

What is the figure? If he had drawn instead of spoken it, what would it have been but an arena, and the judges sitting, and a crowd all about? With a stroke of the chalk, he would have made this competitor and that competitor, stretching forward, not looking back, not minding what was behind, but pressing on, that they might reach the mark for the prize of their high calling in Christ Jesus. That is what he had just described himself to be; and yet this is the man who says, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Is that contentment, in the ordinary sense of the term?

In order, then, to see precisely the scope of this idea, we must develop the power in any man's life of a single great end or aim. Whenever a man (a superior nature it must always be) selects for himself a great ideal or aim, and pursues it with concentrated zeal and enthusiasm, it is in the power of that aim or ideal to make everything else relative, subordinate, and if necessary perfectly indifferent. Things that are good and things that are bad become indifferent relatively to the one main end that he is pursuing.

Take a low form of this idea. There are men who naturally are born to be fortune-builders, as much as some other men are born to be inventors, and some others to be skillful instructors, and others to be generators of ideas, and still others to be producers of music. There are men to whom the fortune-building instinct is a genius, congenital.

Now many such persons launch out in early life with as distinct a sense of their mission as though they had had an angelic visitation. They go to the farthest North; they go to the arid plains of Asia; they go to the East India Islands; they go to the equatorial regions of America; they go around the globe; they have educated themselves; all their powers work easily and concordantly toward the great end which they have set before them. They are not uninterested in the

course of time, or in the social life of the communities where they live; but the great aim of their life, and that which determines their likes and their dislikes, their moods, their elevations or depressions, is that of constructing a fortune. All things that tend in that direction are prosperities to them, and whatever things tend away from that are adversities to them. If it be needful, there is no exposure, there is no weariness, there is no sickness, there is no compliance, there is no self-denial, that they will not cheerfully go through for the sake of attaining that end.

A man is settled in China. It is necessary that he should have his house filled with the Chinese. It may be in a neighborhood where they are odious to his moral sense: but it is necessary; that is enough; he accepts them. It may be needful that he should bribe the Mandarin—if such a thing is possible; it may be necessary that he should make himself “hail fellow, well met,” with the natives, all of whose notions and customs are foreign to his education and to his instincts; but being essential to the supreme end of his life he accepts that. It is necessary that he should go out through the day. “It is unhealthy,” says his physician: “But it is necessary,” says he; and he goes out. Nothing can stop him. Fevers come upon him, and are a warning; but it is a warning unheard. He tosses it off. Here is a great end before him. His face is turned toward it. He says, “I will endure anything; and accept anything, for the sake of accomplishing this end.” And in communicating with his friends, he says, “I have learned to be content with whatever befalls me, so that I can gain what I am after.”

Take the generals that have commanded gloriously in the Indias. I am not now criticising the morality of the administration of Great Britain in those parts; I assume that the generals who went forth went to perform the duty which the Crown demanded of them. They are among a treacherous population with an ill-trained patriotism; they are suffering everything; they are sleeping in unhealthy neighborhoods; they are living in the midst of reeking morasses; they are oftentimes deprived of food and drink; they are performing the most arduous duties, debilitated, wasted to mere skele-

tous; and they write home, "The campaign is succeeding gloriously; it was hard on me at first, but I have learned to take everything; and I believe that ere long we shall complete the circuit, and that this Province will be humiliated and brought under the Government." In saying, "I have learned to take everything," they did not mean that they liked everything; but the great end which was before them had such a power upon them that it took away all care or thought of inconvenience and suffering, so that they might gain that end.

Better instances of that kind you can see in the pursuit of knowledge; as, for instance, when a poor student is determined to be a learned man. Certainly it is an honorable ambition. Don't you know that the best things in this world are not the things that are the most talked of or the most chronicled? If an apple-woman's stand is overthrown on the corner of the street, twenty reporters are at hand to tell how the apples went here and there. That goes into the papers. If a carriage is run away with, or a wheel comes off from a man's wagon, that goes into the papers. If there is anything visible and external and striking, that always goes into the papers. If the reporters can get hold of anything that anybody wants to keep secret, that goes in, sure. So there is a constant bringing into view upon the surface the small events and incidents of life; for a newspaper, a morning journal of the size of ours, with such a containing capacity, has a maw that must be fed. It is like a whale that takes in quantities of water that he may squirt it out and get the handful of shrimps that are left behind. At the same time, unsought, there are romances within reach, there are cruel histories, there are nascent heroisms, which are worthy to go down on the pages of history, and which are written in God's book of remembrance.

I had here, once, a boy that walked all the way from Michigan, with but one end in view—namely, to gain an education. He purposed to graduate at Columbia College in New York, I think. He secured, in part, and with some little help I was able to get him, a scholarship, so that his tuition cost him nothing. He took a round of lighting

and extinguishing lamps. He rose morning by morning to extinguish them, and he went out evening by evening to kindle them again. Soon he added to that a limited route of distributing newspapers. He had a room of his own; he bought his own little provender—his rice and molasses and Indian meal; he boiled his own pot, and was his own cook, and chambermaid, and washerwoman and steward, and treasurer, and factotum—happy man! He lived at the very border of frugality. So he worked his way, literally, on every side, that he might give to study some three or four hours of the day; and he never lost his courage, but persevered through good report and through evil report. He counted it a joy that he had a chance to light lamps, because thus he got some money, and counted it great luck that he could distribute papers, because that enabled him to make a little money. There sits the man who, I think, remembers it, and who, finding out something of the matter, helped the boy, and was his counsellor as well as his friend; and we talked together about him. Finally the boy went back home; he entered the army; he commanded, I think, a regiment, and returned home again, and died from the effects of the civil war. If I have the history correctly in memory, that was his career.

Now, what that man had within him was impatience at unknowing. He had a sense that manhood required intelligence, knowledge; that there was a power in that which, if he was going to execute the purposes of life, he must have; and he said, "I am content in my situation: I am gaining an education, and I am content with everything." Did he like to get up at three o'clock in the morning? How would you like it? Did he like to cook porridge over a fire, and to eat porridge every morning? How would you like it? Did he like these things? Not absolutely; but the end which he had in view was being accomplished; and the accomplishment of that end was so sweet and precious to him that all the subordinate inconveniences were as nothing. The joy that was set before him—that was the thing.

Look at the Rollinsons, and men of like reputation, that go abroad on the Asiatic plains, to Egypt, to Babylonia, to

the almost forgotten cities of Assyria, to Baalbec, and spend winters and summers among the treacherous, indolent and constantly rebellious natives, and suffer every annoyance and inconvenience, that they may dig out from the mounds the memorials of old cities, and satisfy their sense of knowledge, and add to the treasures of the world's history. All that they laugh at. It is not in itself agreeable; it is excessively distasteful; and yet they laugh at it.

A man will go out into the birch woods, and strike his camp and build his tent, and leave behind the thousand luxuries which, when he is at home, if he wants, and Jeems does not bring in a moment, the law is broken, and Jeems feels the severity of rebuke. He is out for trout; he is a fisherman; and when at the end of the day he comes back from the brooks that run into the lake, and brings in an eight-pound trout which he *caught*, did not *buy*, and exhibits it, it does not matter if he does sleep on a rock. He had just as lief sleep on a rock as not. The birch is sweeter and more fragrant than all the incense that Solomon ever brought to Jerusalem.

A man is a hunter. Men will go down on the South shore here, and, like lizards, crawl in the wet grass and reeds, and lie on their belly for hours together, waiting for a flock of geese which they believe will be brought so near by their stools that they can slap into them and bring five or six of them down. "I was content," says the hunter. Do you mean by that that you liked what you went through? "Not at all; but I got my pay out of that, and not out of this."

The same thing is developed continually in patriotism. Do you suppose that the men who are exiled, and who are universally detested and hated, are necessarily the unhappiest men in the world? I do not. If they were vulgar; if they were men of the flesh; if they were only disturbers of their country, and not emancipators; if they loved themselves, and hoped by change of administration or dynasty to be built up, that is one thing; but if they were men like Kossuth, who cared little for himself and everything for Hungary, it is another thing. What do you suppose this patriot cared if he *was* an exile? To him riches were nothing, poverty was

nothing, his suffering was nothing. Nothing was of value to him except as it stood related to the emancipation of old Hungary. He will see it yet before he dies, I am sure. Like Moses, he has been permitted to lead his people to the border of the promised land. He stands on the top of Nebo and looks over. He will not be permitted to pass in, but he will see it.

Take religious exaltation—and I am glad, here, to give one of the most remarkable illustrations of what men will cheerfully go through from a sect which is far removed from us. I mean not only the Roman Catholics, but those among them who are most disliked by Protestants—the Jesuits. I think there is not in human literature a scene more affecting than that which was presented by the early Jesuits among the Indians in Canada. I do not refer to the settlement of Quebec and Montreal; there was a civil administration there: but the Jesuits went to live in the neighborhood of Lake Simcoe in Upper Canada, and became residents among the Indians. They were without intercourse with the rest of the world; and the history of their ill-success, of the contumely which they endured, of their suffering night and day, of their patience and their faith, is not surpassed by the history of any equal number of men that have lived on the globe.

It may be said that their life was a mistake. Yes, in one sense it was; but, after all, it is a glorious thing to me that in every sect there are men who rise above self, and count not their lives dear to them so that they may be faithful to a principle—to an invisible cause. I would not take this laurel from the brow of the old Church. Nothing makes me so glad, for I believe in universal humanity. I believe in mankind, and every sect that has a martyr or a trophy glads me; for all sects are one in the greater church—the human household.

Besides this, how many men, inspired by the example of the apostles, have died deaths daily, and yet rejoiced in infirmities and afflictions because the grace of God sustained them, and because they had reason to believe that these very sufferings of theirs were connected with the

accomplishment of that great ideal end for which they lived, and in which their personality was so absorbed that whatever advanced it made them happy, and whatever retarded it made them unhappy !

The abandonment of a man's self to his higher instincts at the expense of all that is low in himself,—this it is that is alluded to by the apostle here. I will read the whole again, with some comments. He is speaking of the things that have been sent to him—presents ; for they used to send, in old times, one thing and another (I do not know that they sent flowers) to the apostle when he was here and there ; and he says :

“I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again [there seems to have been some interruption of it]; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.”

Paul was always a gentleman. He always took the best view of things. He always conceded the highest motives. He is a mean man who is constantly thinking that other people act meanly. He goes on to say :

“Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content [I am willing to bear all that is put upon me for the sake of the thing that I am living for]. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound [I know how, that is, to be without a cent, and I know how to have my pocket full].”

Now, there are a great many men who can do either of them ; but there are very few who can do both. Men there are who have learned how to be poor ; they have accommodated themselves to poverty, being satisfied that that was to be their state ; and there are other men who are going to be rich, and who say, “I am destined to that, and I must therefore form my character and religious feeling on that supposition, I must be a good man and live rightly, though I am rich ;” but to know how to swing and tick both ways—rich, poor—rich, poor—rich, poor ; to be a man with both ticks, that is not so easy.

Now, Paul says that he had learned that. I know not in what school he had been taught. I never heard of any school teaching such things as that. Why, Paul's doctrine of inspiration is enough to call out forty synods any time,

for expounding and discussion ; but here is a question which goes deeper than any question of that kind—How can a man live so that whatever place he may be in he is a full man, happy, courageous and strong ?

“ I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound ; *everywhere*, and in *all things*, I am instructed [drilled, disciplined] both how to be full and to be hungry, and both how to abound and suffer need. I can do *all things* [brave words these, until you put on the rest] through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

Yes, Paul ! with such love as thine, and such communion as thine, the strength of Christ did enable thee to do all things, to suffer all things—to enjoy without harm, to suffer without damage, and to be, in fullness or in emptiness, in exaltation or in prison, as grand a man as ever walked the crooked surface of the globe.

In view of the opening thus far of this passage of Paul’s experience, I remark first :

We see the absolute freedom which absorption gives to any great nature. Absorption in a great and worthy end sets a man free from those cares, vexations and annoyances which belong to a lower state or mood. You understand it perfectly, because you practice it continually.

The child is going home. Vacation has come. I pity anybody who has not been sent away from home to school, because there are some experiences which he will never get—those which belong to the two or three weeks before the vacation—the day-counting, and all that ; and the final blessed breaking in of the morning of departure, when, for the very delirium of gladness, the boy cannot eat his breakfast, and the teacher almost whips him because he will not eat ; and the stage comes, and he sets out for home.

I am thinking of a boy who was educated at Amherst, who lived in Boston, and who rode through Belchertown, and Ware, and Worcester and Framingham, to Boston, and got in there about nine or ten o’clock at night, and went up to his house, and having been all day long wasted with the very exuberance of sensibility, felt himself as cold as a stone when he got there, and wondered why he did not feel the gladness and outpouring which he thought would come. There was not any more in him. He was thoroughly used

up with gladness, the absorption of joy was so great. What if he had to ride on a hard trunk upon the top of the stage? He did not care for the hard trunk—he was going home. What if they were behind time, and the driver could not stop for dinner? A sixteen-year-old boy has a lively sense of dinner; but what of that? He did not want any dinner—he was going home. And what if, going down hill, the brake slipped, and he was pitched into the bushes, and rolled in the gravel, and bruised and scratched and scarred? He picked himself up, and laughed, and did not care anything for that. Abstractly it was not pleasant; but a boy that was full of home—what did he care for any such thing? It was nothing.

And so, as in this very familiar illustration, you are bound to some great pleasure; and all the little incidents which fall out on the way, however incommodious they may be, are merged and lost.

Now, the large sphere in which that acts which you feel in your business, and in other relations, is the religious sphere. It is where a man has a sense of need; it is where he believes in God and providence; it is where he has sanctified himself, in a conscious fidelity that has no limitation, to his Master and Maker and Lover; it is where all thought and will and affection are consecrated in him, and he has given himself to a cause—there it is that in the intensity of his life, as related to its great end and aim, all other things become indifferent to him, and he can say, “I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content.” This great controlling purpose, as long as he is under its inspiration, subordinates everything, and dominates everything, and for the most part treads everything under foot.

This is the way to escape the common troubles of life. My brethren, one reason why we are so much harassed with care is that we have taken our aim so low, and that we live and work in the midst of troubles, and therefore are subject to them. If we think only of some inferior end of life, without any great superior and crowning influence, without thought of any sphere so above that in which we are every day working as that we can by the power of that higher life

control the lower life, then we become subject to care, and vexation and trouble. If there is nothing to you but your mechanical pursuits; if there is nothing to you but your commercial interests; if there is nothing to you higher than the praise of men; if all you expect in this life can be talked about and can be inventoried; if you have no inward and spiritual aim, then why should you not be under the dominion of care and trouble?

There has been a great change in building in New York, lately; and it is going on still. Now men build with wisdom. There are buildings from six to ten stories high; and I do not doubt that one of these days buildings will go up sixteen or twenty stories high. If they can be secure from fire they will be the better for it. The elevator will take you up instantly; and the higher you go the further you will be from the noise of the street; the further you will be from dust; the further you will be from all that mud-rabble interference; the purer will be the atmosphere; the clearer will be the light; the greater will be the silence and, in a word, the comfort.

The fact is, we have, to a very large extent, been building hovels. They are based on the dirt; they are filled with fleas and gnats and flies and bad odors; and no disinfectant can do much to rid them of these. We must be built higher, and lift ourselves above the great body of influences which pester, and sting, and vex us, in this lower way of living.

I may say, too, that no man who lives in his lower nature can be content unless he abandons himself utterly to it. There is a way of living, I think, in a man's lower nature which is tolerable. Where a man, for instance, is strong enough and rich enough, and is circumstanced so that he can have an uninterrupted flow of physical pleasure at the table, and in all the moods in which the physical sensations of pleasure are gratified, and the man does not think of anything else, and says, "These are my end in life;" where a man has money, and can choose his companions and his surroundings, and whatever ministers to the sensuous appetites, he does not want anything more, and he lives a comparatively happy life. It is in vain for the pulpit to say

that there is no happiness except that which comes from religion and right-living. The pirate with his fellow-wassailers ; men with violent passions ; those who congregate in saloons, and talk of fights and all manner of brutalities ; human beings whose gods are dogs and cocks—they have their happiness. “Verily, they shall have their reward.” There is an enjoyment which belongs to their level. The *bon vivant* is happy : the fat fellow who does not care for politics ; who is never disturbed by the ups or the downs of religion ; who is not troubled by any ecclesiastical questions ; who is indifferent as to whether the North or the South has the ascendancy ; who has no funds to risk, and does not care whether prices go up or down on the exchange ; with whom, when there is any confusion, the only question is, “Is Fulton Market burned ?” As long as that stands, the fountain of his enjoyments is sure.

Therefore, if a man wants simple happiness, he ought to do one of two things : he ought to take one extreme or the other. A man has it in his power to extinguish in himself that which is peculiarly manly, and of accepting that which is brutal and beastly. By accepting the latter he may secure a low form of pleasure. But woe be to that man who gives considerable strength and latitude to his lower life, and accepts the ideal and purpose of a higher life. The moral sense of such a man acts as an inquisitor, a spy and a tormentor. He wants enjoyment, but his higher nature condemns and oppresses him, and his life is a perpetual conflict between the higher and the lower. As Paul says, “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh ;” and this internecine war in the soul is going on all the while in cases of thousands and thousands of men.

Oh, that men understood that if they want emancipation, harmonization, peace, contentment, they must give themselves wholly to the cause of God and truth, and go into it with enthusiasm, and make it dearer than anything else on earth to them. Then they would control in themselves all those ten thousand elements and influences which are the cause of their vexation and trouble.

Christian brethren, one more application : if Christian

ministers would stop disputing as to whether the laying on of hands gives grace or not; as to whether a man must have apostolicity or not; as to whether the church has a right to tell who shall and who shall not preach, how he shall preach, and when, and on what subjects—if they would stop discussing this whole question, and concentrate their zeal and power to bring themselves into precisely the same state and mood of mind that the Apostle was in when he said: “Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel:” “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain [victory either way]:” “Though the more abundantly I love, the less I be loved:” “Some preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; notwithstanding, I rejoice whether in pretense or in truth Christ is preached:” “My life is hid with Christ in God”—if they would so identify themselves with Christ as the simple expression of whatever is truest in thought, purest in sentiment, sweetest in affection, most glorious in happiness-producing power, and would live for it, saying, “Poverty is nothing, reputation is nothing; I take the one and the other indifferently; for me to live is to preach Christ in the wilderness or in the city, in places where it is thickly populated, or in places where few men congregate; I am willing to be put up or down; I am nothing, but the cause of God is everything”—under such circumstances they would be happy.

Where is there such disinterestedness? Where is there such fervor of affection for the grand elements which are in Christianity? Do you suppose that pulpits would have empty seats and that churches would linger and lag; and do you suppose that it would be hard to raise salaries for ministers, if that spirit prevailed? It is the want of full manliness, it is the want of intense consecration to Jesus Christ, it is the want of such love for God in mankind as pours oblivion and indifference over a man’s own reputation or standing, and fills him full of inexpressible sorrow if in any way the cause suffers through him, and with unutterable joy if by suffering the loss of all things the cause of God may go up—it is to the want of these things that the languishing condition of so many churches is due,

If, in the crisis of the battle of Trafalgar, Nelson had believed that victory for his country would be secured by his being thrown overboard, do you not suppose he would have said to his men, "Over with me, boys—over with me!" Dear old England was more to him, ten thousand times, than his life. And it is the want of continuous heroism and continuous devotion to the work of God, open and apparent to all men, that makes the pulpit weak.

There lie before men grand mountainous promises; streams of happiness run past them, and yet they are searching everywhere for water to drink. There is a river of the water of life coming down from above; and if there is anything on earth which is poor and pitiful, it is the church attempting to manage the grandeur of divine sacrifice, and the marvel and wonder of Christ's life, in the same way in which they would manage a stocking factory, or in the way in which they would quilt a coverlet, with scraps of their own garments, and what not. Is it wonderful that the church does not thrive on such food as it receives? I tell you, religion is to flourish in this world by a fervor of the spirit; by an enthusiasm of faith; by an intensity of love; by a consecration of soul and body to the work of God. There are many noble instances of faithful, disinterested and self-sacrificing working for Christ; but they have not been common—they have not by any means been universal; and we are going to have a victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil, not by apologies, not by philosophical treatises, and not by disputations with science: if we are going to conquer, the victory will come through faith in Jesus Christ on the part of men and women, the purity of whose lives nobody can dispute. I do not care whether the Pre-Raphaelite school, or any other school, is reputed to be the best; to me that is the best school that paints the best pictures, and that is the one that I shall choose. You cannot make glorious men and women, and deny that the cause which makes them is the cause which ought to have prevalence.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WHERE is the way that is cast up, O our God? Where is the road to the New Jerusalem along which the ransomed come? How shall we behold afar off its shining battlements? Yet there is a way which the bird doth not know, or along which the fowler hath not passed—the way of sorrow; the way of disappointment; the way of sickness; the way of death. By thy suffering and death thou didst open the truths of the great other world as never before; and toward that great other world we, through trouble and trial, do find the way, strait and narrow, often cutting our feet, and often bruising our hands; and yet the way of ascent it is; and thou dost grant unto us in the far-off and the imagined, in that which we can see and discern only by faith, truth, revelation therein, and comfort abounding—more than worldly comfort; and companionship—strange companionship with those whom we cannot speak to, with whom we cannot clasp hands, who set at defiance every earthly way of friendship and communion. And yet how blessed is the companionship which we have with those who are in the far-off and invisible!

So, though we seek for thee in the night and in the day; though we listen at times, hoping that down out of the infinite above us there will come some voice or whisper, and bring home to us the reality of God, yet in other times thou art pleased to send us those wings by which we are lifted up into thy presence, and our souls know, and discern, and rejoice, and are refreshed in the vision, and come back again chastened but strengthened, full of content, willing to bear and to endure.

Thy way with us is not strange to thee; and it is strange to us only because we are so unpracticed in spiritual things. We have but the dim discernings of the life that is to be. Its germs are with us. Its beginnings we perceive, and we are constantly measuring it with this common life of the body, and judging it by those rules which spring up from our outward and material forms; whilst thou art dealing from the fullness, and the glory, and the liberty, and the joy, and the largeness of that divine effluence which is in thee and around thee, and in which all do dwell who have escaped from the flesh, and have the freedom absolute of the Spirit.

Thus our life hovers between the flesh and the spirit, often in conflict, constantly in misunderstanding; and our vision, at times so clear, is clouded again by the exhalation of our passions; and it is only because we believe that thou art steadfast, and that thou art subject to none of the moods which sweep across us, because thou dwellest in a cloudless land and art thyself unslumbering and unchanging, infinite in thought, and love, and tender, nourishing mercy—it is only in the thought of this that we have victory sure and complete. *Because thou livest, O Lord Jesus, we shall live also.* This is our faith, and the sum of our hopes. We are struggling. We are fighting our way through the wilderness. The Amalekite, and the Philistine, and the Moabite, and the Edomite, and all the heathen

nations that are in possession of thy heritage are upon us, and we are weak and cowardly; and yet we are fighting our way through as fast as we can, faint yet pursuing. Our whole hope is in thee, in thy mightiness, in thine unweariableness, in thy patience that puts to shame all motherhood, in the reach of thy thought, in the grandeur of the divine nature. Thou liftest thyself at times above us more magnificent than the stars that look down at night upon us. More grand art thou than is the sun in the balmiest days of summer, when it walketh through the heavens borrowing effulgence at every step, and covering the earth with glory. Thou art more than the sun and the stars. Thou art thyself the Sun of the sun, and the Light of the stars. Thou art crowned with them, and filled with them; thy greatness, the plenitude of thy soul, the majesty of thy mercy, thine infinitude of love—these make thee what thou art. Thy great beating heart that sends warm blood and nourishment through the boundless universe—our hope is in it—in thee.

And now, O Lord, why should we look out of our cradle where we but prattle, and instruct thee in the way of the household, and in the way of caring for us? What can we do but to reach out our arms, and be taken up by thee, and then be content? In thine arms is heaven; and we need nothing but that, glory be to thy name! There are multitudes who are witnesses of the fullness and sufficiency of the presence of God in the soul. Here are children of darkness pressing forward to tell of the light that has arisen to them in their darkness. Here are the weary and overborne who lift themselves up at thy name to bear witness that thou hast taken off their burdens, or that thou hast given them grace to bear them. Here are those who have been perplexed and vehemently bestead by the wants of the world, and have made a safe harbor, and are bearing testimony that thou art the Pilot and the Captain of their salvation. We rejoice that thou art thus raising up witnesses. And whatever men may say, the human soul is a record and a proof of thy presence and of thy power, as well as of thine existence.

We pray that more and more thou wilt manifest thyself unto thy people, and give them the glory of faith, and the rejoicing of hope, and the confidence of assured and established love; and we pray that thou wilt thus glorify thyself. We cannot separate altogether our own interests from thy glory; but we believe and know that as the child is bound up in the parent, and its interests inure to the parents', so in some way we are tied to thee, and thou dost glorify thyself in those things which have become self interest and selfishness in us. Thou carest for us for thine own sake as well as for our sakes.

And we pray that thou wilt grant that each one of us—our children, our friends, all who listen to our witness for Christ—may be able to make known what is the greatness of his goodness toward us, and what is the magnitude of his power toward all those who will put their trust in him; and may the name of the Lord Jesus Christ become, above every other name, a name of grace, a name of fruit, a name of beauty. May we sit under it as under the fruit-trees of

the orchard; and may it shake down upon us all grace, all food, all joy.

We beseech thee that thou wilt grant that those who are attempting to preach the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ may beware of so preaching it as that it shall be represented by the carnal element that is in *them*. Grant that they may not disfigure it by anger; by an untoward zeal; by self-confidence; by rancorous passions; by envies and jealousies; by anything that shall misrepresent the sweetness and purity and infinite goodness of the Lord Jesus Christ, who died to save the world.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt teach us to walk among men as He walked—with the same patience; with the same faithful rebuking of evil; with the same discernment in the speaking of the truth; with the same sorrow for men—even his own adversaries, who slew him.

O Lord, we dare not speak to thee of the mystery of thy waiting, and of the condition of mankind. If thou art Father, what shall become of these? If they are thy children scattered throughout the continents of the earth, coming as the beasts, and going as the beasts, what shall become of them? Thou hast not revealed these things, We only pray that thy kingdom may come. Let it come, for the earth is waiting for thee. Thou art not forgetful, thou art not slumbering, King of Eternity. Thou hast thy reason. Thou wilt yet unveil thyself and make thyself known; and then we shall be satisfied. Forgive us if at times in our weakness we wonder and suffer. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.

*Amen.*



## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we beseech thee that thou wilt add thy blessing to the word spoken. Grant that there may be more power resting upon the hearts of thy people. Bring in again the pentecostal day and the descent of the Holy Spirit, with tongues of flame. Bring in, we pray thee, the consecration of the altar, cleansing it as with fire. We pray that the victory of thy church may be found in the holiness of its priests; in the exaltation of their ambitions; in the heroism of their lives. So may thy name be honored; so may men long to believe thee. So may men search after thee whose children are such as they. Grant, we beseech thee, that there may be this evidence of thy divinity, and of thy provident administration of the Holy Ghost in our day.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
*Amen.*

## MORAL STANDARDS.

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“For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”—ROM., xiii., 8-10.

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”—GAL. v., 14.

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I am not going to preach a sermon on the subject of Love; but I am going to employ these declarations for the elucidation of the philosophy of moral standards of conduct.

I read in your hearing, from Leviticus, a chapter in which love was as clearly and strongly enjoined toward one's own countrymen and toward the strangers also that were living among them, as it was by the lips of our Saviour himself. Neither in that remote declaration and origin, I may say, of the New Testament command, nor in the use of that command by the Saviour, and by his apostles after him, are we to understand that he enjoins the specific love which springs in a sentient being from the perception of excellence and of beauty. We are to understand that it is a larger feeling; that it is that state of mind which recognizes in all men a reason for wishing them well, and breathes out a sympathizing desire for their welfare.

This larger feeling includes the whole race, and it has in it no respect whatever to moral character. Men who are good will of course come under its jurisdiction; and men who are bad all the more, because they are more necessitous. It is that great mother-love that is enjoined upon every human creature in looking upon his neighbor, of high degree or low degree, rich or poor, good or bad, and whether offending him, injuring him or not, without regard to anything except

this: that the nature and state of every man's soul should be such that to every human being his strong feeling should be good will, and the desire—real, genuine, deep and earnest—for the happiness and welfare of every living human creature.

That is the grandeur of the moral law. Out of that springs the love of those who are artistic for the artist; the love of those who are humble for the humble; the love of the good for the good. All the specifics under it are admirable, and they all flow from this generic disposition.

Now this is the disposition that must precede any right conception of moral standards, and that must facilitate and direct the application of moral standards to conduct, to character, to one's self, to one's beliefs, everywhere. Every part of human life has a moral relation; and, in a large and just sense, all conduct is moral conduct. Even in the lowest conditions of life, and in the earliest developments of the race, men employ moral standards, both before and after every course of conduct. Men think, "What may I do? and, what may I not?" The Bushman thinks of it. His light is small, his standard is poor, the sphere of his life is limited: nevertheless, in that sphere, and in those conditions, he asks, "What may I, and what must I not, do?" Though the sense of moral obligation may be wrongly founded, though it may be conceived of in an exceedingly imperfect manner, the germ, the root-feeling, of obligation is there. And we find that, after the lowest men have gone through a course of action, especially if they are in any way impeded or threatened or harmed by reason of it, they use a kind of moral standard—each sort, each nation, each stage of development having its own kind, but all having a moral standard by which they determine whether things which they have done are right or wrong. So, in the lowest states of human development there is a rudimentary moral standard by which men measure the things that lie before them, to ascertain whether they may attempt them; or the things that lie behind them, and whether they are culpable or praiseworthy for what they have done.

No matter how erroneous, no matter how imperfect, the standard may be—that is not the question; it is simply that there is such a standard, and that by their very organization,

as soon as men come to act together in society relations, there grows up among them a more or less perfect moral standard, which, while they may not recognize it, they always use.

Civilization, in making more of such men, makes more of society; and the making more of the individual and of the social whole complicates spheres and relations, so that men, as society advances, find themselves acting in more and more spheres; and in each one of those spheres comes up again this standard of right and wrong. It is not thought of as we now are analytically considering it; but still, wherever a man acts, in all his relations to life, there is acting with him incessantly a sense of right or wrong—which is a moral standard. There must be some rule by which to judge of what is right and what is wrong; and the standard becomes extremely complicated, and too large, ordinarily, for any single man to carry—so large that it cannot be held and applied by one man in ten thousand. Not Whewell, not Fichte, not Paley, not Wayland, not any of the great moral writers seems to have been able to gather up the sum total of society, with all its infinite divisions and circles and spheres, where men act, and where there is a constant modification of the rules of action, and to hold them all before the mind so as to remember them and discriminate and state them. It is encyclopedic. The circuit of civilized human life is so large, the spheres and sub-spheres of it are so innumerable, the modifications of right and wrong are so many, that it transcends the ordinary power of the human understanding to take a comprehensive and continuous view of them.

Let us enumerate some of the intersphering relations of life. For instance, the child has the first consciousness of duty as it relates to his obligations to his father and mother and brothers and sisters in the family; but if he is brought up right he has something to do—at least, if he is brought up in New England, or according to the New England method.

As early as when I was six or seven years old, the barn was a part of my sphere of duty. I had a relation to the horse, to the cow, to the pigs, and to the chickens; and in the spring I had a relation to the garden, and to a great deal of outdoor work: so that I was conscious that there was a

difference of relation between my doing right and wrong in the house to my father and mother and the children about me, and in the sphere of operative industry and supervision outside of the house. Thus I began to have an industrial sphere joined to the primary, home, social sphere.

But soon (alas!) I went to school; and I felt that there was another section added to my life. I had duties at home, I had industrial duties around about me, and I had duties in school. I was conscious that things which I did in the barn I could not do in the house. I never reasoned as to why this was, but there was in me the sense that the things which were proper in any one of those spheres were not proper in the others—that the things which belonged to the school did not belong to either of the other spheres. I felt that there were three spheres in which I was acting. And every person is conscious of the same thing. Men everywhere have a growing sense of the complexity of the relations of life.

A man enters a sphere wider and more various than that of the family—namely, the sphere of the neighborhood. While he is under ten years old, the neighborhood to him consists of the boys about him that are nearly his own age. His ideas are, comparatively speaking, nascent and crude; but there is a boy public sentiment, if the neighborhood be at all populous, as in cities and large towns. Therefore another line of duty is added to those which he recognized before. He feels that there is a home duty, a chore duty, a school duty, and a companionship duty. These various duties do not change as time goes on—that is, they do not change in the direction of being lost in any part; but they multiply. For, very soon he comes into business relations of life, and at once finds that business also has different rules and regulations for which there is to be a standard applied somewhere. Not only that, he finds that each kind of business is separated from every other. The lawyer does things that the physician does not do, and could not do. The merchant does things that do not belong to the sphere of the mechanic. They not only perform different functions, but, by reason of the difference of these functions, there are some modifications of the rules of right and wrong.

Then, aside from these things, men have a consciousness of a relation to the State. That relation is generic. It takes on the relation to the parties through which they show their allegiance to the State, and it takes on their relation to the administration of public affairs. This is a still larger sphere.

Now, all these spheres are grouped together, and man is passing into them and out of them, and acting complexly in them continually, with a general sense that there are special rules for this and for that ; that there are standards here and standards there ; and these standards multiply as he goes up. This shows the divine method of the education of men.

A man, when he has gone through these various stages, and entered the different spheres which I have enumerated, where there exists a multiplicity of standards, is as different from what he was at first as the oak tree is from the acorn out of which it sprang, after it has gone through the processes of growth which belong to its nature,—opening up, expanding, splitting, widening and becoming more and more complex.

The savage, living in the lowest state, has few occupations and few relations, and cannot be large in his moral nature ; but in proportion as you begin to put him into domestic and industrial and civil relations his nature grows, he is obliged to think more, and to deal with complex questions ; and, above all, there is brought to bear upon him that incessant rule of life obedience to which brings prosperity and happiness, and disobedience to which brings punishment and unhappiness.

So life itself is a grand educating academy. Social life is a method above and including all other methods, by which God trains, drills and educates men in the knowledge of moral relations.

Now, so many are the spheres of life, and so many are the questions that arise in them with regard to right or wrong, that, as I have already intimated, it is hardly possible for men to take the whole of these things into their minds—and they do not. They are obliged to have auxiliaries or helps ; and the first element of help which they receive is home teaching and home-bred habits and tendencies. Children do

not know what is right and wrong except as they have the injunctions, "You must," and "You must not," and observe them until they become accustomed to the observance of them. Children do not do right at first by intelligence and afterwards by moral likings. It is training that radicates the child first in the sense of right and wrong. By practicing this rule the child forms it into a habit, and that is training. The foundation of our character is laid in the family by instruction and training.

A great many persons throw it up to young men, when they go out in life, as one of the fleers of skepticism, "You got all those notions from your mother and your nurse." I should like to know where I got the milk that supported me but from my mother! I should like to know what I was except what she made me! I should like to know what there was of me, or could have been, but for her! Of course it is a sneer against the fundamental law of nature. This is the condition on which alone the first step can be taken. It is contrary to natural laws that a child should learn at first in any other way than by the arbitrary dicta of father and mother. That is the foundation. Afterwards, by knowledge and discretion, they may modify or change it; but this is the primary step, and it goes a great way down in life. With many persons, where they have had the advantage of teachers, wise, intelligent, and endowed with deep moral feeling, it goes to the end of life. There are multitudes of men who, when they have departed from the more direct course which swept them out into the world, and have come under influences which biased their judgment and weakened their faith—there are multitudes of such men who have abandoned, under the stress of pleasure, or in the fiery heats of ambition, the instructions of the venerated father, or of the beloved and revered mother; and long afterwards, far down in life, they are brought back again, not by philosophy, nor by fiction, but by the revival of those early influences and trainings which made them what they were in their childhood.

There is nothing that is not changeable. But there is nothing in man that can so little bear mutation as his early instruction; and there is nothing so unworthy of a free

thinking man as to be ashamed that he got his notions and his faith from his father and mother : for, to a child that is under age, father and mother stand for God.

Next, the social customs in which a man finds himself become his standard, and to a certain extent *must* become his standard. A man is not competent to grow up by himself independently of others. Persons say to people, "Why do you not use your independent judgment? Why do you follow the fashions and customs?" There is a very limited amount of reason in that at certain times; but the great law is this : that that which the race has found out by successive experiments, and which has embodied itself in social customs and usages, has in it the presumption of right, though it is not always right.

The social conditions of men, therefore, represent the facts, the experiences, the findings-out which belong to human life. The custom-law of social life is in some sense a historic record of what millions and millions of men through thousands and thousands of ages have discovered; and it is not to be treated with contempt. It is a part of the moral standard by which men regulate their lives.

When men come into business they find distributed through it rules which they could not have excogitated. They are to adapt themselves now to new functions, and to new relations to their fellow-men; and it is indispensable that there should be provided for them some standard of right and wrong. There is a certain custom of business—a particular custom for each particular kind of business; and they accept it. It may not be high enough; it may be very imperfect; but the necessity of having an established custom in every business by which men can judge of what is right and what is wrong is indispensable.

The same is true of civil regulations. They tie up or they loose a hundred strings: and what men may do in their relations to the State; or in their relations to the laws that regulate the welfare of the whole, rather than of single sections; or in their relations to institutions, and to the various elements which constitute civil organization,—this is predetermined. I never pay taxes because I have reasoned

on the subject, and said to myself, "The commonwealth has certain great ends which relate to all, and all are therefore bound to pay their quota for its maintenance, because they have their dividend of its blessings." Some men think of this in the study, as students; but ordinarily men do not think of it. The assessment is made, (and it is generally about twenty per cent. more than it was last year), and they say, "We have got to pay that." It is the custom to pay the taxes that are levied, or to dodge them, one of the two; and they do not reason upon it. There is a standard of action in the matter, and men recognize it, and yield to it without reasoning. There is a standard of duty in every part of life under laws and institutions; and you get your notion of that standard, not as a philosophic idea, but simply as a course of conduct—as a thing to be done.

Then there is another life. We have a social life, a neighborhood life, a business life, a civil life; and we have besides these a religious life. As if there were, outside of everything else that man does or thinks of from day to day a sphere different from all others, called "the religious sphere"! That sphere is made up of doctrines and ordinances; it has its usages; and there is belonging to it a whole apparatus of instrumentalities.

Now, religion is a life of itself. It is doing right to God, and it is doing right to men. The way to do right to God is to treat men as your brethren. Your duty toward God includes your duties toward men. It includes love, and hope, and joy, as far forth as you can apply them to an unseen, unformed, unimaginable Being. To a grand comprehensive Center of wisdom and goodness we send up our aspiration or supplication or gratitude; but the practical development of love to God is that which we do for his household. He says so. In other words, he says, "You treat me as you treat your fellow-men. I know whether you love me or not by the way you treat your fellow-men. If you oppress men, if you imprison them, if you neglect them when they are in trouble, if you cheat them, if you hurt them in any way, you do the same to me. If, on the other hand, you are merciful and tender and gentle; if, going to the altar, and remembering

that some one has an offense against you, you leave your prayer and your sacrifice and go and become reconciled him ; if you treat men with charity, then you do that to me." In other words, the way we worship God practically is the way we treat our fellow-men.

Nevertheless, there is a large ecclesiastical world in which there are rules and regulations ; but this is artificial, and I mention these things to show the excessive tendency of men to multiply spheres, and in each sphere to multiply the standards of right and wrong, and the need there is that every man should have a generic idea or standard which shall be applied to his life, carrying and making an application of it to all the different spheres in which he is to act.

Now, one of the consequences of this state of facts (for I have been evolving facts, stating things as they are), is, that men have contradictory standards. They have their ideal moral standards ; and these are continually at variance with each other. We are taught that all men are depraved and wicked from their birth ; and if I should preach that it is not so, and I happened to be a Presbyterian (as I am not) I should be hauled before the Presbytery very quick ; and a discussion would arise, and nine men out of every ten of that body would vote that I ought to be silenced because I did not believe in the depravity of man, and that he was wicked from birth. But every one of these men will go right home, and say, "Well, there is an angel" (speaking of his wife) ; and, "Was there ever a more exquisite flower than this ?" (speaking of his daughter, that is growing up). Every one of them would thank God for this child or for that babe. No words are adequate to express their satisfaction when they go into their families and look at their children and their companions in the light of love. Their households are perfect enough and dear enough for them. When they talk generically of men in the sanctuary they apply to them the theological standard ; but when they talk of them individually in their own houses, they apply to them the love standard. In the former case they look upon them as wicked and depraved, and in the latter case they look upon them as sweet and delightful and good.

“Man never can,” we are told, “do anything that is right;” and yet the very men who will not settle a minister because he says a man can do something that is right will go to New York and hear of the case of a man who, seeing a great steamer wrecked in the bay, hovers around her with his boat night and day, and wears himself out in endeavoring to rescue the unfortunate persons on board, and saves many lives; and there is not one of these men, notwithstanding his rigorous theological standard, if he has a flea’s heart in him, who will not subscribe toward a testimonial to this man for what he calls his noble and generous deed. He is a hero in the estimation of the very men who say that no man can do anything right before God. They have one standard by which to judge men practically, and another standard by which to judge them theoretically.

I preach a sermon in the house of God on disinterested benevolence; and the father and mother, on going home, say, “I wish James had been there. He’s just going into life, and if he had heard that sermon I think it would have done him good all his life long.” It is wholesome to bring up children to be benevolent; but to-morrow the man goes to New York, and there comes up the settlement of a debtor’s estate, and five or six creditors get together, and, like so many—no matter what—pull and haul against each other; and what becomes of the poor fellow in the middle? Nobody cares for him. You say to them, “Is it right? Is it humane?” “Well, now,” they say, “business is business. You can’t introduce moral standards here.” The man who on Sunday believed in ideal manhood in a practical case on Monday not only does not believe in it, but he DOES NOT believe in it. Something in him tells him that there are different standards for different places; or, that there are different ways of applying standards in different spheres of life.

So, I have been told by men, “You do very well for a minister; it is eminently proper that you should preach these things; they ought to be preached; but really, if you were in our places, you would do as we do.” Says the lawyer, “If you were in my situation;” says the doctor, “If you were circumstanced as I am;” says the editor, “If you knew

what I have to go through with ;” says the merchant, “ If you knew what shark’s teeth I have to protect myself against—if you knew what competitions there are in my department of trade.” So, all through life, while men agree to great moral standards of character and duty ; while, on Sunday and in the Lecture-Room, they consent to these moral standards ; while they accept generic rules of conduct,—each man, speaking from his consciousness and reason and moral sense, declares that in his sphere of life another standard is demanded. And often he is correct ; for not unfrequently what is right in one sphere is not right in another.

Men say, “ Rectitude and truth never change ;” but there was never anything that changes so much. You might as well say that a printer’s case of type never changes. It is true that if there is anything that is unchangeable, it is those types. They are solid metal, and you cannot change them. But can you not change their combinations ? Can you not change what they will spell out and mean ? The elementary thing is not changeable ; but the thing you come to when you apply it to uses through an infinite scale,—is not that changeable ?

The fact is, right and wrong are so various that it requires an extraordinary genius to determine them where custom has not pre-determined them. Right and wrong will change with circumstances which require new applications. For instance, humanity in one age is not humanity in another. Mercy in one set of circumstances is not mercy in another. I will take a familiar case to show that while great moral ideas,—such as truth, justice, rectitude and humanity,—are constant, yet what is humane, what is right, what is just, and what is true, change. The applications of them change incessantly.

When men low in savage life were attacked by a horde of neighboring savages that meant to exterminate and destroy them, they defended their huts, their wives and their children ; and in doing so they not only beat off the enemy, and defeated them, but they took captive hundreds of them. And then they said, “ What shall we do with them ?” They were too poor, as a community, and too low down, to put

them in jail, and feed them ; and it would not do to let them go, because they would add to the power of those who were inimical to them ; so they determined to put them to death ; and we believe that they did right. It is the instinct of self-preservation that says, when society is in its lowest and rudest state, "They have attacked us ; they have forfeited their lives, and it is right to kill them." That is the law of defense which is appropriate between men where society is in its rudimentary state ; but is that standard of judgment which was right as applied to men in their early nascent condition right for us ? By no means. As society grows, men become stronger, and new standards are adopted. There are various influences which help men to grow. War is one of them. It makes strength fertile. There is no other heresy that is so bad as that of laziness ; and wars are contrary to laziness. As men grow, from various causes, society becomes more complex, and the rules of war change. Where there has been an advance beyond the primary stages of human development, and men take prisoners, they say, "We can watch over these fellows, and make them do our hoeing for us, instead of doing it ourselves. We will not kill them, but we will use them." So they put them in slavery ; and that is a great amelioration to what would have taken place fifty years before. Then they would have tomahawked them. Now they say, "Instead of putting them to death we can afford to have mercy on them ; we can safely permit them to live ; and we will set them to work in our potato and corn fields."

In the early stages of society, there was scarcely more than the thickness of a sheet of paper between one class and another ; slaves and their masters were not separated more than an inch : but by gradual development one class has been going higher and higher and leaving another class low down.

Then came the idea of redeeming one's self from slavery. Then came, in times of war, the exchange of prisoners. Then came the returning of men after war without exchange. And then came humane treatment during captivity. The humanities of war have been multiplied as its destructiveness has increased,

Now, with all these stages of growth and development, the standard of right and wrong has varied. At a certain period of barbaric society, it was right for men to cut off the heads of their enemies; but it would not be right for us to do it. Our standard is not the standard of centuries ago. It was humane to do it then, but it would be cruel to do it now. The law of self-preservation made it necessary at that time, but it does not make it necessary in our day. Humanity remains, but what is humane changes perpetually.

That which is illustrated by these examples is going on in every form of society. Things that were right a thousand years ago have ceased to be right now. Under the feudal system, certain obligations were laid upon the nobleman which do not lie upon him now. Certain rights belonged to the servant under feudal bondage that the freeman cannot claim. If a man belongs to a master, and may not move off at his will; if he is the abject servant of a lord who lives in a castle, he has a right to say to that lord, "You must look after me, and defend me, and feed me, as the condition on which I shall be able to render you any service." But in America, where there is no lord, no castle, and no feudal service, a man has no right to say, "Society owes me a living." Society never owed any fool a living. Society says back to him, "Earn your living. They that will not work shall not eat." That is the short way to the grave for a fellow that is lazy!

Now, to adopt moral standards under conditions where society is so large, and where there are so many spheres in society, and where in each sphere the application varies necessarily and rightly, it requires not only that a man should have great clarity of intellect, but that he should have moral genius.

We talk about geniuses. We mean by a genius a man who, in any direction, has such a cerebral development that there is automatic activity in his mind. Some men are simply recipients of impressions; some men in a feeble degree receive and give impressions; some men are stored full of powers which they do not use: but there are men who have such vitality and development of mind that they think,

that they produce results, that they make music or poetry, that they invent. They have an inspiration which they do not go out for, but which breathes itself into them, or descends upon them from the open air. They find themselves ridden by certain thoughts and impulses. Such, in a limited form, is genius; and where in a man it is generic, and covers any considerable department of the mind, he is a genius to that extent. Mozart was a genius in music, and Beethoven was another. There are geniuses in art, and geniuses in oratory, as well as geniuses in poetry and music and invention. There have been geniuses in legislation; but a genius in legislation is the rarest genius that ever came into the world. In other words, the power to perceive all the relations of mind in their various spheres, and to adapt a moral standard to each of those spheres, requires such a capacity of intellect, and such a power of determining what is just between man and man, as does not come to a person once in a thousand years. I could count on my hand all the great legislators of the globe, beginning with Moses. And if this be so rare a genius—the power of intellect, the discrimination, the moral inventiveness by which the difference of circumstances determines the difference of duty—how impossible it is that men can ordinarily judge for themselves.

What, then, shall we do? Here we have the laws of God, as they are called,—and by these we mean Bible laws; but Bible laws are themselves only the echoes of the same laws in nature. Great men caught the sound, and expressed it in words; but the sound was rolling forth from the lips of God, and through sphere after sphere. God's will was the law of the universe; and holy men of old, inspired, caught here and there parts of it, and put it into the record for men to learn: but the greater law, or the larger expression of the same law, yet lies outside of the book and outside of human expression. There are the laws of God; there are the laws of social life; there are the laws of business; there are the laws of politics; there are the laws of art; and men are living with an imperfect perception of all these elements. In the first place, there are conditions which are changing the applications of them; and men are without the capacity to

tell what ought to be right here, what ought to be right there, what ought to be just here, and what ought to be just there. Such is the condition of things.

Now I come back to my text. That which the Saviour taught, and which Paul, above all other writers of his age, sought to teach, was that righteousness, right conduct toward men, was the evidence of love to God; and that the problem of life was to learn how to adapt this principle to the different spheres of action—especially in those changing conditions in which spiritual elements were to be substituted for religion or ritualistic service; and this was the rule that was given: under all administrations and in all circumstances, he who loves fulfills the law.

“Love is the fulfilling of the law.”

In other words, in all the attempts of men to adjudicate, to administer, to apply great truths or great standards, let it be borne in mind that no man can determine what is right and wrong in his particular condition unless he is fully in a state of benevolence which makes him a really earnest desirer of the welfare of every living creature. A moral standard used in any other spirit than that may be right and may be wrong; but whether it be right or wrong, you can have no guarantee and no certainty. Moral standards which shall be adaptable to new or changing circumstances demand that they should be used in the one master-spirit of love. He who has that spirit is by it brought nearer to God, and has received something of that divine prophetic power by which he can discern things right and wrong. Love has in it no harm to one's neighbor. No matter what your standard is, and no matter what the relations are, it is from this one infallible spirit that all your applications must spring. There is to be a soul that moves toward men of every class and condition and nature and character with beneficence; with a desire for their growth, for their good, and for their happiness. If you possess that spirit, you will have the power to determine right and wrong and duty in all the emergencies and in all the circumstances of life; but unless you possess that spirit you will not have such power.

Now, in the first place, in closing this morning, let me

say that the infinite number of questions which you are constantly determining, individually and personally, require that you should be in the state of mind which I have described, in order to determine what is right and what is wrong. Parents fulfill this condition in regard to their children, with the exception of passionate people who cuff their ears first and afterwards wish they had not done it. All deliberate and wise conduct on the part of parents toward their children springs from love—from a desire to do them good. And the family is the best part of human society. There is mother wit and mother wisdom—and the difference between mother wit and mother wisdom and man wit and man wisdom is simply the difference in the affection that exists. The mother's is specific and personal. Sometimes women lose their children and adopt everybody else's—feeling that their life is dedicated to little children; and they go and labor in foundling institutions and orphan asylums. Then it is not special love, but generic.

And out of that sense of love and kind-wishing come all questions as to what one ought to do to his neighbor.

I once lived by the side of a very excellent man who, nevertheless, had his infirmities—which, of course, surprised me! and I recollect an occasion on which he became angry, and manifested his displeasure in a very striking manner. I, wanting a place to hang up a dipper in my yard, drove a nail into the fence between him and me, which went through on the other side. One day I heard a racket in my yard, and looking to see what was the occasion of it, I found my dipper ringing over the pavement. This man had got a hammer, and hit the nail a rap, and sent the nail, dipper and everything else flying. My first feeling was to fire the dipper over at him, and give him as good as he sent: but my second thought was, "Well, that man is made so, I suppose; he is a passionate man by nature; he was taken by surprise; he is a very good fellow, a kind neighbor, and I won't say anything about it. I was going to be satisfied so: but then I said, "I guess I had better say something to him." and I stepped in and said, "I ask your pardon, sir. It was thoughtless, my driving that nail through the fence, and I

am glad you reminded me of it." He shook hands with me, and said, "Well, well, well, let us not say anything more about that." The result showed the wisdom of treating the matter in a spirit of simple kindness. It was evidently the course of conduct which was best for him.

Now, every day, ten thousand grievances come up in your life, ten thousand annoying things are said to you, ten thousand little stories are told about you; and what is it best for you to do in regard to these things? To say, "He said that, did he? I know something about that man, and when I get a good chance I guess he will find it out"—is that wisdom? Is that the way to apply the law of duty? Is that acting according to the divine standard? Do you love that man? Can you go down on your knees to-night before Jesus and mention that man's name, and repeat it till you are conscious that your heart shines, and then say, "Lord, what can I do to help him? Bless him; shield him." If anybody undertakes to tell you anything about him, do not listen to it. Shut the ear-gate. Do not be an entertainer of contraband news. "Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, that you may be children of your Father which is in heaven." Seek that never-failing source of judgment, that standard by which right and wrong can be determined in the parliament of the soul, and can be wisely applied to the various emergencies of life. Wait on the Lord till your soul is as pure and gentle and kind toward that man in the sight of God as God's soul is toward you. Then ask yourself, "What shall I do?"—and you will be in a condition to apply this standard with any modifications which may be proper under the existing circumstances.

No justice is just that does not spring from kindness. No administration is just that economizes society and gets rid of trouble, but ruins men needlessly. No law is just that does not carry the spirit of good will to every human creature. No institution of penalty, no Sing Sing or Auburn, no prison of any kind, is just in which men are treated other than as the redeemed of the Lord. Not the man at the anvil, not the maker of shoes, not he who works at the cooper's trade, not the tanner, not the hatter, not any

man in the lower walks of life alone, am I pleading for; but for every man, though he be a burglar, though he be guilty of arson, though his crime be murder. Whatever may be his condition, no matter what he has done, he is a *man*, he is an expectant of eternal life, and God bears with him, God has compassion on him, and shall not you?

If you have a rigorous sense of justice which shuts with a snap, like sharks' teeth, and you say of a man who is punished for doing wrong, "It serves him right; he has made others suffer, and he ought to suffer himself!" can that be a right interpretation of the standard of justice? Not until you have thought of that man in the light of God's countenance, and in the light of eternity; not until he comes to your consciousness as one of God's creatures for whom Christ died, and as your brother,—not until then have you a right to apply a standard of duty to him.

Love, which "is the fulfilling of the law," means and perpetuates no harm to any man; and if you wish to know what your duty is in the family, in business, as a citizen, and in the administration of justice, remember that you cannot tell what it is until you have risen into that serene sympathetic and divine mood out of which comes the wisdom of the universe, and which is to rule here and hereafter.

We are pigmies. We are rude and crude creatures of the dust. In one sense, we are worms yet. And the way in which men manage themselves and their fellows; the blundering accumulations which we call society; the methods of administration which are employed in it,—these must cause the angels to weep. They must be grieved beyond expression to see the way in which we work, as compared with that bright, beneficent, sweet-souled way in which God administers justice. Says God, "Whom I love I chasten, and scourge every son whom I receive. "Be ye therefore perfect"—no, no, not perfect? "Be ye therefore perfect"—oh, no, not *perfect*? "Be ye therefore perfect"—*as your Father is.*" And how is he perfect? "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." That is the kind of perfection that we are to have. May God grant it to us!

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

O God, we rejoice in thee. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.

It is thy greatness in time and duration, thine infinite wisdom, thy goodness which is a part of that wisdom, and thy power that makes thy will of wisdom and thy will of goodness effectual everywhere, through all time, and to all eternity, that gives us confidence and trust in thee. For how weak are men! What shadows, indeed, they are, flitting across the earth, and leaving no impression upon it. How poor is human life! How little it attempts, and even less accomplishes! How much are men creatures of accident, and swept by surrounding influences, straitening up with no will of their own, bestormed and faint for the hour, and with the hour swept away. If only in human thought and in human will and foresight there were confidence for time and the earth, how vain were life, how utterly poor and impoverished! But thou art God; thou dost think for thinkers; and men are following influences they know not of. And all is not vain that seems shadowy, nor transient because it passes quickly away.

Thou art the Architect, not of the heaven and the earth alone, but of men, and of that great universe of living creatures to which man belongs. Thou art a God to whom yesterday and to-day and forever are one. Thou lookest upon a thousand years as upon yesterday when it is past. And what infiniteness there is in thy thought and plan! What undiscovered regions toward which blindly, though they be divinely impelled, men are moved, we know not, nor by searching can we find out; but we rejoice that there is this imperial power over time and life.

We rejoice that thou hast so far drawn the veil, and disclosed to us the future, that now we know that there is a life beyond. We are growing toward something and out of something.

We are spending and wasting things which are needful for this being, but which will be unnecessary for the being that is to come; and thou art, by this very spending and wasting, educating us in higher things and for higher ranges of life; and the hope, the conviction of that, redeems life. There can be no night to those who are moved on towards eternal day, where God is the sun. There can be no sorrow to those who hear thee say: All things work together for good to them that love God. There can be no disappointments, no infirmities, nor even any sins, that do not bear blessings to those who believe that thou art, by sorrow and by chastisement of sin and sorrow, fashioning and preparing us for a nobler being in the world to come.

Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Oh, may those doubts which have made our hands feeble disappear. May we have strength to stand, and strength to execute, in the full faith that though we are blind, God sees all things, and that though we are judging and misjudging upon

the narrow pattern of earthly standards, thou who art judging upon the cycles of eternity art making no mistakes. Let not our trust be in our wisdom, nor even in our understanding of how thou wilt bring to pass good from evil, but in our thought of thee as thou art supremely excellent, doing all things by the counsel of thine own will, infinitely lifted up above all counsellors, knowing in thyself, and infusing into us all that we know—the Fountain of human life, of human feeling, and of human wisdom.

And grant, we beseech thee, that thus we may walk by the strength of God day by day. May we in time of the storm have thee as a pavilion where thou shalt hide us until the storm be overpast.

When pursued by misfortunes, may we have thee as a tower where thou wilt defend us. May we have thee everywhere, when wandering homeless, forsaken, alone and discouraged, and say: In my Father's house are many apartments.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may have thus the heritage, the faith of our Father's love, and power, and wisdom, and presence. May we have faith, also, that all things in the end shall praise thee and rejoice us.

We pray that thou wilt grant that these truths, which come to us in hours and days appointed, may never depart from us; so that in the battle of life, and in the friction of every day experience, we may not be left to our baser natures, to our lower thoughts and to the interpretations of men. May we carry with us the supereminent wisdom of God, and learn to see all things as thou dost see them, and so walk securely and blessedly, whether it shine or whether it gloom, or whatever may be the experience of life.

We pray that thou wilt bless those who are in thy presence—each one as he severally needs. Give to us the greatest of all blessings, the in-bearing of the consciousness of God present with each, to love, and in love to discipline, to educate, to perfect.

Grant that every one in thy presence who is bearing burdens may hear thee saying: Cast thy burdens on the Lord. May those who have care in over-measure, or those who are met with its sharp edges, cast their care on him that careth for them. May they have that faith which works by love; and so may they overcome the world, and all that is adverse to thee.

We pray that thou wilt by these heavenly hopes and heavenly faiths join us more and more patiently to our tasks and our duties. May we not pick and select for ourselves. The servant is not above the master. Shalt thou be crowned with thorns, and we never be touched with the spine or the thorn? Shalt thou be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and shall we feel ourselves to be injured and oppressed when troubles come? May we rejoice to suffer with Christ. May we rejoice to be able, through Christ who strengtheneth us, to do all things, and to bear all things.

Carry, we beseech thee, the sweetness of thy love, the consolation of thy providence, and the faith of thy presence, into every household. Bring light where there is darkness, reclamation where there is wandering, gentleness where hardness prevails, knowledge

where the mind is blinded by unbelief, mercy where there is obduracy and cruelty, and meekness where there is haughtiness. Grant that men may be united to each other in all the affinities of God.

May thy blessing rest upon this church in its corporate capacity. Bless all the members in their several relations and duties in life. Remember all those avenues through which we are endeavoring to diffuse the knowledge of truth and the spirit of Christ Jesus. Bless our schools, and all who are gathered and grouped about them. Bless both the scholars and the households from which they come forth. May the teachers be the disciples of Christ, taught of God, not in the letter, but in the spirit of the Gospel. May the officers and superintendents be prepared for this great work by the indwelling Spirit.

We pray for all the churches of this city, and for all the pastors of them. We pray that they may be more and more strengthened to discern and to do the work of God which has been committed to their trust.

Bless the great city near to us in its varied interests. We pray for the President of the United States, and for those who are joined with him in authority; for the Congress assembled; for all courts and magistrates; and for the legislatures in the various States of this great Union. We pray for colleges and schools. We thank thee for books, for newspapers, for all the instrumentalities by which knowledge is sent forth to the great people.

We pray that thou wilt bless this whole land, and all its vast means not only for the diffusion of knowledge, but for the maintenance of rectitude and justice.

Bless with us the nations of the earth in the things in which they are in need, and in the states to which they have come in civilization. Grant that they may have from thee adequate strength for their special necessities.

We pray that thus thou wilt continue to advance the race of man toward the fulfillment of those great and precious promises on which we have relied, for which we have waited, and which shall be accomplished when the whole earth shall be thine, and the new heaven and the new earth in which dwelleth righteousness shall come.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
*Amen.*

## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we pray thee that thou wilt bless the word of truth. May it more and more dwell in our thought. More and more may it appeal to our understanding, to our moral sense, to our affections, and to all our sympathies. May it influence our whole conduct in life. We know how poor we are. We are conscious of our poverty in thought and feeling and wisdom. We know that when we puff ourselves up there is little in us. We know that thou must look with infinite and continuous pity upon us in our inferiority. Grant that we may come more and more into that spirit which springs from true love to God and man, and that out of that may come inspirations which shall teach us our duty, and teach us how to employ all the standards of duty in their infinite perplexing applications to all the spheres and emergencies of life, and bring us at last home—oh, bring us at last home—strangers no more, not foreigners, all brothers, none lost, all found and brought back by the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit,  
*Amen.*

## TRIALS OF FAITH.

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“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”—1 PETER i., 7.

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Peter called himself an apostle to the Gentiles. Paul also regarded himself in the same light. This epistle is directed to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. By *strangers*, doubtless, was meant exiled Jews—his own countrymen who had been scattered to all parts of the world, and were found with their synagogues in every principal city, and to whom, always, first, the Gospel of Christ was preached, and to whom, generally, as to a kind of nucleus, Gentile converts were joined; so that often the Gentile church, as it might be called—the church at Corinth, at Ephesus, at Galatia, anywhere—was at the center Jewish, and around it was a fringe of Gentile converts.

It is this fact that gives character to the different epistles which were written by Paul and the other apostles. Where the element in the different churches was almost wholly Jewish, the letter addressed itself to the actual opinions and difficulties and wants of that church, and discussed them after the manner of Jewish thoughts, from the Jewish scriptures, by Jewish illustration; but where—as at Corinth, for instance—a large part of the church were Greeks, the letters written to them (as the first and second of Corinthians) had a constant regard to Greek ideas, Greek morals, Greek difficulties. They did not exclude the Jewish, but they mainly bore upon the Greek. So that all of the letters of the different apostles that have been preserved, and that are authoritative, as we should expect letters from sensible men to do, not

only reveal somewhat of the personal characteristics of the writers, but bear upon the history and condition of the churches to which they were addressed.

Now, what was meant by the Apostle Peter, in writing to these scattered, exiled Jews in Asia Minor, and through all the regions round about Illyricum, by *the trial of their faith*? The preceding two verses speak of this:

“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. [That is, if the last day is near at hand.] Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.”

Then follows our text:

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

What are we to understand, then, by the *trials* that they were going through? What are we to understand by the *faith* that was tried? What are we to understand by the condition of faith at the coming of Christ that should appear unto praise and glory?

First, as to faith. We are to bear in mind that, in the earlier periods of Christian preaching, the main teaching was in respect to a personal Christ. That element can never again be in this world as it was in the very earliest stages of preaching. Peter goes before an audience, and says, “I am the man who was called of Jesus Christ. This is his history. I heard him say these words. I saw him perform these miracles. I was with him in Jerusalem when he was arrested. I followed afar off, unworthily, when he was tried. I saw him crucified. I witnessed the darkness. I was among those who went earliest to the tomb, hearing that he was risen. I saw him after his resurrection. I talked with him, and he with me; and these are his teachings.” We shall never have anybody come to us so. We shall never have a witness that will preach Christ to us. You can tell what Christ has done in you, and for you, morally and spiritually; but you will never have any one who will say, with the apostles: I am a witness, personally, to all that I tell you in respect to Jesus Christ.

The truths of Christ; the love of the living Saviour pres-

ent with them,—these were witnessed to by one who had seen him and heard him.

Such was the early faith of Jesus. *We* have to take him with a historic intervention. Then we have to translate him again into a kind of spiritual influence. They, on the other hand, thought of him as a Person, not only living, but before long to come again—to reappear. Doubtless Christians for the first hundred years lived in the expectation of seeing Christ themselves, in the body, before they should die. That was undoubtedly the faith of more than the first hundred years. The power of that expectation is inconceivable, unless it be by those who believe in the second coming of Christ. There is an immense power in that, if we only could believe it.

So there was a personal enthusiasm of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who had gone up to heaven to prepare a place for his followers, and who was soon coming back to earth; and they were waiting for his coming. Meanwhile they were making preparations by which they should become acceptable disciples and followers of him when he should come, in their last, or nearly last, days. Then all the dispositions, all the living experiences, which were the fruits and evidences of their belief in Christ, were a part of their faith. In short, their belief in Christ, and their fidelity to their belief, must be joined together in the conception of faith as it existed in the earlier disciples. There was very little intellectual teaching in that day. Systems of truth, as they now present themselves to you and to me, were not born. They are the product of a later stage of religious intellectual development. Not for three or four hundred years was there any system of doctrinal Christianity, such as we now have in books and catechisms, and from the pulpit. The primitive faith was an ardent and enthusiastic belief in a living Person called Jesus Christ, who was not far away, who was coming every day nearer, and who promised them that if they would wear his dispositions and fulfill his will, they should reign with him forever and forever. There was this enthusiasm of personal adherence to Jesus. He was their hero, of a transcendent kind. They had the highest form of hero-worship.

It was not doctrine worship ; it was not church worship ; it was not religion worship : it was personal worship of the Lord Jesus Christ. The personal element in Christ was intense, and glowing, and permanent. They were living close to the days in which he had suffered. We are two thousand years away from those days. To us, it is a long-time-gone event.

Empires have come up and gone down. Governments have grown from nothing to imperial proportions, and again have come to nothing, and are but forms. Laws that dominated the world are all sleeping in libraries, and in their places systems of laws and governments have sprung up which were utterly unknown before. Men stood where they could almost hear the footsteps of Christ. The events of his life were yet ringing as news in the world. There was, therefore, an intensity of faith in him as a *Person*, so near were men to the time when he was on earth. The men who taught them could tell them how he looked, the color of his eye, the form of his mouth. They could describe to them the brow, the hair, the gesture, the stature. They could inform them when he rose and when he slept. They could show them what was his gait, and what were his modes of conversation. Everything that makes personality sharp and clear could be told them. There is a great deal of difference between reading things in books and hearing them from those who have seen them.

I stood by the side of General Hancock, one of the greatest men in our late struggle, and he described to me some of the scenes of the battle of Gettysburg. I had read them and studied them ; I had gone over the field myself, to look at the memorials of those scenes and their localities : but here was a man that commanded in the center, and saw the terrific charge, and could tell me just how the men came over the barricades, and what transpired ; and there was in his narrative a life and power which I got from no books, and from no inspection of the battle-ground.

Why, when men were preached to about Jesus Christ, it was by a man that saw him ; that ate with him ; that sailed with him ; that stood aghast at the miracles which brought

the dead to life ; that went wondering out of the chamber where the daughter of the ruler was brought back again. This was the man that saw it ; and what a vividness he gave to the picture !

Then, the expectation of seeing him again gave intensity to all these personal representations of Jesus Christ.

There was, besides this personal faith in him, the ethical motive, or what might be called the faith-disposition. Christ said, "Be ye like me. These states of mind which I have shown you, are the states of mind which you are to be in." The divine life, the soul life, was what he taught ; and so, their faith included that whole life which is the antithesis of the life of the flesh. The world around them was living to the flesh ; and they were a select people, gathered out into fraternities for the sake of living a life in the Spirit, as distinguished from a life in the flesh. For the sake of the Beloved who was gone, but gone for only a day, whose footsteps would soon be heard again, who would return and apprise them of what he wanted them to be,—for his sake they were living.

Such was their simple experience. All the early Christians believed in Jesus Christ, and believed in the necessity of having such dispositions as he had. That was their faith. If I were to give it a general designation, I should say that it was living by the power of a vivid, enthusiastic faith in a living God. I should say that it was the living of men in their higher nature and by their very highest dispositions.

Now, as to these trials—what were they ? What was the trial of their faith ? Why were these men attempting to be like Christ ? They believed in him, rejoiced in him, and were getting ready to be like him, and to be translated with him. They were all of them training like a squad of soldiers. They were gathered together, and were being drilled, in the daily expectation that their General would come, and that they would be led into action. Day by day they were preparing themselves ; and they earnestly longed for the time to arrive when he would come and say, "As good a set of men as ever I saw ! Fine soldiers !" There was in them the ambition and enthusiasm of men in drill.

But a loftier trial than that of the soldier these men were undergoing—a spiritual drill. They were preparing themselves for glory and honor and immortality, to be revealed in the last days—days that were near, when they should die; for the end of their life was close at hand. What was the trial of the faith of these men in this life? It must have been a trial of all that is included in that faith, which is largely interpreted in the New Testament.

There was, in the first place, a great trial of the faith of Jewish Christians by reason of the perplexities which belonged to a transition from sensual worship to spiritual worship. They were brought up in the church. They were educated not only with a ritual, but with a provision for every conceivable side of their religious want, in the form of feasts, symbols, sacrifices. There were duties imposed upon them, both negative and affirmative. Their whole life was netted over with provisions for right conduct, within and without.

At length they came to a new life, in which the inspiration was Jesus Christ; and the whole drill was in the direction of right affections. Then innumerable questions came up, such as, "How shall we abandon that which we have been taught? Is there no value, then, in days, in feasts, in sacrifices, in meat offered to idols, in things consecrated?" These questions had to be asked, and they were grievous questions.

Some persons do not take anything hard. They are physically adipose, and they are mentally adipose; and the consequence is that they never suffer much. Yes, they keep Sunday because 'pa and 'ma told them they ought to keep it. They go down among the Quakers, who tell them that Sunday is a mere instrument, and that it is no more sacred than any other day; and then they say, "No, it isn't." They take on ideas easily and give them up easily; and it does not hurt them to do so. But there are intense natures that, when they believe a thing, it strikes through and through, and stains the very fiber of the soul with its colors; and when, by and by, with larger growth, they find that their early teaching was imperfect, and that their faith must

be changed, it is like tearing asunder the very structure of their minds.

You need not think that the greatest suffering has been that of martyrs: there has been as much suffering in sensitive consciences, on account of change of faith about which have clustered home associations, as martyrs have undergone. When one gives up father, and mother, and brothers, and sisters, and ventures into an unexplored, unknown region of belief, there is awful suffering. And among the early Christians there were many who, making the transition from Moses to Christ, were torn by fears and all manner of sensibilities.

We see the same thing going on to-day; and strange men meet each other on the road. John H. Newman, traveling from a spiritual faith towards an organized symbolic faith, with his face set as if he would go up to Rome, meets Père Hyacinthe coming down from Rome, where he has been disappointed and deceived, on his way toward a purely spiritual, and not a sensuous faith. So, men are going both ways: some from the spiritual, or from nothing, as they say, towards something, which they call the visible and the symbolic; and others from a dissatisfying use of the physical and ritual, down toward the spiritual and emotive.

It is always so; it always will be so; and the primitive Christians whom Peter addressed underwent this transition. Conversion with them did not mean the absolute settlement of all thoughts and questions. As long as it is summer, I care not how sheltered the lake is, the surface must be rippled more or less by the free winds. The only thing that will give it peace, is ice. Death gives peace; and when men come to torpidity or death, they have no more difficulties. Many persons say, "Why are not truths made so plain that we can understand them at once?" Why did not peaches grow so that we could get them everywhere whenever we wanted them? Why were not strawberries made to grow with sugar in the middle and cream all over them? Why was it necessary that men should plow? How much better it would be, if a plan could be invented by which plowing would be unnecessary! Bugs have nothing to do but run round and

round in the fields: why not have them do the plowing? Why was the world made as it is? To make men wake up from laziness, and work. The object in making men's surroundings such as they are is to stimulate them. God never meant that men should grow without effort. It was designed that they should think, that they should have doubts and perplexities, and that they should strive to overcome them. This is part and parcel of their discipline. It is by this that their faith is tried. There was a trial of the faith of the primitive Christians; it was a real trial; and it was severe in proportion as they had been deep and conscientious in their former beliefs.

The Gentiles had an equivalent to this, though we sympathize with them less than we do with the Jewish Christians. They had temples, and altars, and priests, and gods, and ethical religious duties. Because they were heathen, they were not, therefore, without any religion. The heathen had stamped everything with their own peculiar associations. There was hardly a common flower that had not some association with their religion. There was hardly a service or social custom that did not carry with it something religious. You could scarcely go in at a door or out of a door that there was not connected with the act some distinctive religious idea. If you ate, there were certain libations. If you drank, there were certain services. If you sat at table, you were crowned with flowers that meant one thing or another. If you took postures, they had a meaning. There were associations of heathen temple worship which spread themselves throughout society.

Now, when a heathen man became a Christian, being conscientious, he could not take such and such flowers, because they meant Apollo or Vennus. He could not take this kind of food, because it signified a given faith. He could not go in that procession, because it was in honor of gods in which he did not believe. He found himself at every step running counter to his convictions. And he was looked upon as an infidel, as an unbeliever, as a worse than heretic.

So the Gentile Christians, when they became such, found themselves surrounded with evils in maintaining their faith

in Jesus. They were continually gashed and bruised by running against, or having pushed against them, the various notions of their countrymen, derived from their religion. Both Jew and Gentile suffered for their faith, in social alienations, in business hindrances, and in various other ways.

Let us suppose a case. A man that works for the shrine-makers at Ephesus, earning a dollar a day, beating out gods in silver and brass and what not, becomes a Christian, and his elder in the church says to him, "You can make a livelihood by making idols; but if you join the Christians, you must give up your business." He is one of the best workmen of his craft, and his master expostulates with him and says, "What! are you going, Epenetus?" "Yes," says the man. "Have I done anything to displease you?" "No." "Well, what is the matter with you?" "I have embraced the new faith." "The new faith! Hem! And that won't let you work for me?" "Well, it won't let me make idols." "Don't you believe in idols?" "I believe in the living God that made the heaven and the earth." "And you are going to leave me on that ground! Well, go; and as to your back wages, get them if you can. I should like to see a magistrate make me pay you what I owe you. Go among your Jew friends, and see what they will do for you."

So he was thrown out of work. He could not get anything to do. The avenues of business were full then as they are now. He found himself running against his family and against his old associations. His sphere narrowed, and he stood alone. Persons looked askance at him, and said, "Oh! you are one of those Christians;" and they had their jokes, doubtless, that were hereditary, which they used over and over again to throw at each other as men do nowadays. A man who undertook to be a Christian set himself against social feeling, and was ostracised by his countrymen. The whole power of ecclesiasticism was arrayed against him.

A man, we will suppose, stood high, and expected to be Mayor of the city of Ephesus. His daughter had gone over to the Christians. He said, "If this comes to the ears of the influential people of the town, there will be an end to my being

Mayor. She sha'n't do it." So the father dealt with his daughter through his ambition, and the same effect was produced which is produced nowadays where questions of sectarianism arise. Men believe in taking care of those who take care of them; in helping those who help them; in sympathizing with those who sympathize with them. They do not believe in folks of any other church. On the one hand, some of them get so high (there are high churches, you know) that they cannot see anybody that is low down; and on the other hand, some of them get so low down that they cannot see anybody who is high up. So there is division in the Christian church. The Calvinists are arrayed against the Arminians, and the Arminians are arrayed against the Calvinists. Orthodox people throw fire on the Universalists, and the Universalists throw fire back on the orthodox people, saying, "They believe in it, and they shall have it."

So society is sp'it up. And if this is so to-day, what must have been the intensity of it in those early times! Yet, the early disciples were wretchedly poor; they were utterly unable to defend themselves; they were without churches, without precedents, without popularity, without anything except merely their own belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. How helpless they were under such circumstances!

But, after all, the greatest of their manifold troubles was to keep their spirit right; to be forgiving; to be charitable; to be benevolent. This was the charter of their faith: *Love your enemies*. They had no Thirty-nine Articles. They had no Five Points of Calvinism. There was not a catechism in the world for a hundred years after their time. They had not a gospel. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John had not written—not one of them. They had only a verbal testimony. They had the inspiration of the Divine Spirit. Their creed was: Love God who died by his Son to save you, and who soon shall come in glory to take you up; and prepare yourself for his coming by having such dispositions as will enable you to love your enemies, to bless them that curse you [and there were enough of them], to do good to them that hate you, and to pray for them that spitefully use you and persecute you.

Now, these simple-minded men, women and children, under that condition of things—alienated, hindered in business, ridiculed, in every way misrepresented, perplexed on many questions in their own minds—attempted to keep their temper and live joyfully in their own circle or little assembly, and give back for curses benedictions, for hatred prayers, and for spite sweetness, and all gentleness and helpfulness; and was there no trial of their faith? Did you ever try to live so? Did you ever make it a week's aim, not to command your thoughts; not to have your volition right; but to have just your conduct right? Did you ever take that declaration, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be children of your Father which is in heaven," and attempt to live in accordance with it? No man can undertake, as an actual experience, to live that life—full, strong, real, earnest—in the visible world, toward visible people, without knowing what the trial of his faith is—that is, the trial of his own ideal, or of his own scheme of duty, as it is laid out for him by God through Jesus Christ.

So then, we understand what the trial of their faith was. It was a manifold trial; it was a social trial; it was a business trial; it was a religious trial; it was a trial in every respect that made it hard for them to live above the world while they were in it, and to be like Christ while they stood waiting for his appearing.

Their whole Christian life, their faith, it is said, was by this trial to be brought to such a state as gold is in when it is put into a furnace and smelted. It goes in very large, and it comes out very small; but that which comes out is worth more, a great deal, than that which goes in; and the dross, the slag, is so much clear gain.

The Apostle takes that figure, and says, "Your faith, your high and holy hopes, your aspirations, are worth more than gold; and if gold, for the sake of making it more precious, is put into the fire, so your faith by these trials will be made more precious than gold, and will come forth to the praise and honor of God in the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ."

This, then, is the equivalent of the passage in Hebrews which says :

“Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”

It is an interpretation of that great law of discipline which pervades universal human society; and it is designed not to pull down, not to degrade men, but to exalt them above the body and above mere temporal influences, and to force them into that higher life of faith which is permanent; which death cannot touch; which belongs to the higher sphere. It is the same thought which John expresses when he represents Christ as saying :

“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth [pruneth], that it may bring forth more fruit.”

It is that law of discipline by which men are, by the experience of outward life, made noble and spiritual, and advanced to higher degrees of excellence, and prepared for final glory.

Now, let us see if this general view of the New Testament is not also the view which is derived from another source. We find it in scattered texts and passages; but we do not find it there alone. Precisely the same law exists in every cultivated family. Take, for instance, a matron—I care not whether she be Greek, or Roman, or mediæval, or modern. You can all picture to yourselves what we see in every town—some woman of great nature, whose household grows about her, and whose thought for her children, early and late, is, how they shall become noble in manhood and womanhood. If she be a Christian matron, this idea is intensified, broadened and enriched. As her sons grow up, one of them develops a tendency towards art. She watches it jealously. She has an impression that art life is dissipated life; and she would repress that tendency in her son. She says nothing of her secret motive and reason, but she seeks to draw him away from those influences which lead him in the direction of art. But he will not be drawn away. The call is on him, and he forsakes every other industry, and *will* be an artist. He goes

to Europe. His name soon begins to sound abroad. The mother's pride is certainly pleased that he has shown himself to be truly a child of art; but there come to her also other tidings. Travelers return, and say, "Your son is living according to the customs of Paris;" and her heart aches night and day. She forgets his skill. Neither form, nor color, nor name, nor repute, nor revenue, is to her an equivalent. "Alas!" she thinks, "he is going to ruin." She writes him letters that he will not read. His conscience cannot bear them. His will is determined to pursue the life that he is on, and his mother's letters are opened and glanced through, and then they are quickly folded, labelled, and put away in his trunk; and they are unread letters until after-years come round. At last, tidings come to her, "He has fallen sick;" and as soon as conveyances can bear her there, leaving all the rest, leaving the ninety-and-nine, she goes into the wilderness after the one that is lost. She speeds to his side. Sick indeed he has been; he is a mere shadow; but, oh, how gentle, how like boyhood, he seems to her! How fondly he talks to her! How he confesses to her that all is wrong! He says, "You are God's angel to me, mother. I needed some one to whom I could confess. I am sick of my life here. I want to go back home and be a man. I renounce all pleasure and all temptation. I probably never shall labor again."

Oh, with what deep and unuttered delight that mother goes back with her consumptive boy! In him was her pride and her expectation; but he has gone wrong; and now there has come upon him the afflicting hand of God, and he has been rescued from the devil of his appetites and passions and vices; and though he is to have no career here on earth, she sings songs in the night, and prays with eyes filled with tears of gladness, "O God, thou hast given me back my son. He is a man again. He is pure. He is filled with religious aspirations. The world does not domineer over him any more." In the mother's thought, the trial of that man, which broke him down, and took away from him all earthly fascinations and ambitions, but which brought him to spiritual aspiration, to faith in God, and to hope of immortality,

was a cheap price to pay for the blessedness of his redemption.

A father hears that his son has come to New York, and that he is wonderfully prospered. He writes to him, "O my son! let not wealth allure you. Remember that you build houses here which perish, or that you perish out of them. Forget not that other house whose builder and maker is God. I rejoice in your wealth, but, oh! my son, I hear that you are becoming luxurious; I understand that you revel too much; I get word that your courses are not such as you used to follow when you were at home."

The story grows worse and worse; and it cannot be doubted that in a hundred ways the son is living for the flesh, for the pride of the eye, for the lusts of life, for pomp and vanity. He has an over-swelling prosperity; he is apparently having all his good things in this life; he seems likely to lack every good thing in the life to come: but all his prosperity does not make the father happy; and he says, "My son has forsaken the light of his youth; he is prospered in worldly things; and his prosperity threatens to destroy his soul."

At length, the times grow hard; money becomes tighter and tighter; and a rumor comes to the father, "Your son is embarrassed in his business affairs, but he says he is getting out of his embarrassment." By and by, however, a crash comes, and all his prosperity is scattered to the winds. His house is gone, his carriages are gone, his pictures are gone, his apparel of every kind is gone, and all his schemes of speculation have come to naught. Yesterday, he walked the street and felt that he was a monarch; to-day, he walks the street and is all collapsed. He hardly has enough to get his dinner with. He was rich, and everybody said, "Great man!" He is poor, and everybody says, "What a fool!" But his father says, "What a blessed bankruptcy that was! If my son had gone on in the way he was going, and been prospered, and money had flowed in on him, his pride would have swollen, and his life would have been worldly, and he would have been lost; but God was merciful to him, stopped him in his career, broke down his idols and altars, and he has nothing left."

He sends for him to come home ; and then there is vacation and rest. Then there are communions. Then there come sweet and precious influences—those of a praying mother and of Christian sisters. Even the little village church brings back to him memories of his boyhood. On some Sunday, the word of truth is poured forth upon an ear, open, with no prejudices. He melts and is subdued under it ; and he asks, humbly, in a changed state of mind, to be allowed to come in as a communicant among the people of God. He is accepted, and he becomes a worker. Having some little gifts of speech, he says, “ Let me instruct others ;” and in a modest way he goes about the neighborhood teaching ; and, meeting with success, he becomes a missionary ; and finally, he takes a slender stipend—perhaps, six hundred dollars a year—and preaches Christ among the poor, the out-cast, the neglected. His father and mother rejoice over it, and say, “ Oh, how good God is to our son ! He took away his house, he took away his stocks, he overturned his prosperity ; and now he has blessed him with conversion, and kindled in him faith, and hope, and love, and benevolence.” The effect of the trial of his faith has been to purify it, to exalt it ; and he has been made a man of God by his troubles.

Everybody knows that a wise parent always judges of what is good or bad for the child, first by its relation to the formation of his character, and then by its relation to his whole future life.

Now, the apostle exhorts the early Christians somewhat after this wise : Take all your besetments, your trials, your disappointments, your overthrows, and see to it that they force you up to higher patience. Find something that is so high that storms cannot touch it. Find treasures which moth and rust cannot corrupt, and which thieves cannot break through and steal. Find viands that do not perish with the using. Let the trials and cares and burdens of life which come down on you, make you better ; let them make you nobler—that is the thing.

Down under the hill in Peekskill, where the wind does not blow, the trees stand up straight—and why should they

not? but on the hill, where the southwest wind blows all summer, the trees all lean, and many of them become bent; but some trees there are standing on the top of the hill which are not bent, though the winds have blown upon them. Sturdy trees they are.

And he that stands sheltered in life, where no temptations can come upon him, except in minute and petty forms, stands reasonably virtuous and moral and religious; but it is no great credit to him. When, however, men are brought into circumstances where they are tried; where their faith in men is tried; where their faith in truth is tried; where their faith in justice is tried; where they are overturned, disappointed, riddled, annoyed, vexed, maltreated, cheated, choused, and rolled over and over like thistle-down in a raging storm—when amidst all these annoyances and troubles they are enabled to rise into a higher form of life, and to feel, “This world is not my home; this house and these surroundings are not necessary for me; this body is not me, the *I* is higher than the things of this world; the influences by which I am to be controlled are above the elements of time”—then they, by the trial of their faith, more precious than gold, are being purified, and are being prepared for that praise and glory which shall come only from the lips of their Saviour.

Christian brethren, do not let us attempt to organize our households or our business on the principle that he is prospered who, no matter what his moral state may be, has wealth and position and honor. There are thousands of what we call good men, good citizens, good neighbors, who are good-natured people enough, but whose whole aim of life is to stand well with their fellow-men; to have a comfortable independence; to share some small dividend of the honor that men have to distribute among them. As compared with vice, or besotted vulgarity, or stolid ignorance, such a life as theirs is a good life; they are living very high in that comparison: but as compared with the Christian ideal of a man who is living in this life for the other, and whose faith (that is, whose whole thought of God and immortality) is richer and more to him than any riches of the world that now is and is passing,—in comparison with that the life they live is

almost nothing. This Christian ideal is beyond their horizon and ken.

Whatever ambition, therefore, a man may have, let him beware. Christian men, fathers that are bringing your children up to honor and to prosperity, mothers that are seeking a settlement for your daughters, remember that while you are not to despise the outward conditions of this life, no person is well off who has not a hope of the other world. No man is made a *man* by worldly influences. The manhood that makes a man, and the womanhood that makes a woman, is wrought out of higher stuff than any secular acquisitions. It lies in a higher realm of thought and disposition and character.

Do not, therefore, aim so low as to think that you are succeeding when you are standing well among your fellow-men, and when your lower secular wants are bountifully supplied. And, on the other hand, do not suppose that you are unsuccessful in life when you have lost all outer habiliments, and have no particular station in society.

You are poor. You had riches, but they are gone, and they have left behind nothing but the memory and the habits which they nourished in you. Thousands will call you unfortunate; and you are unfortunate if, with the loss of these things, your pride is stronger than ever; if you are more irritable than ever; if you are all the time complaining and saying, "It was not always so with me; I was up above where I am now; I remember when I had my carriage" (oh, fool!): but if with the departure of these things there is God's blessing left behind,—namely, the hope of a better and the certainty of a sweeter and more joyful life beyond the grave,—then you are not dispossessed, and you are not unfortunate. He is an unfortunate man in life who has outward good and inward emptiness; but he who has the riches of God in his soul, though he live in a pauper's hut or in a poor-house (which is worse) is a happy man.

The last—the last—who are they? You go into the great house, and the master says, "This is my wife, sir; this is my eldest daughter, married and settled; these are my sons; and these are my friends; and they are very happy to greet you."

You remain one day and another, and you make a pleasant acquaintance with the family. They are refined, proud, highly cultivated, exquisite in manners, and selfish. By and by, you see a fragile form passing in and out, and say, "Who is that?" "Well," says the man, "it is a cousin of my wife's. She has been unfortunate. Her father was poor. She had very little opportunity to learn. We brought her here to give her a home. The children all take to her, and we let her have the run of the nursery; but she withdraws from company; she does not care for it"—and evidently they do not care to have her care for it. She is not living in the large way that they are. The drawing-room is not spread for her. The ample store of books was not purchased for her. She is not the pride of their eye, nor the joy of their heart. These daughters and sons are living a life of gayety and frivolity; but this pale creature is living a life of disinterested benevolence. Out of her pure soul overflow treasures for others' goblets, and not for her own, and all the angels that God sends to minister to that household first pay obeisance to her: for God says, "Those prosperous persons are the last and the lowest; and that neglected, sequestered creature—she is mine;" and if salvation comes to that house, it shall come through the lips of that saint unknown. "The last shall be first."

Are there no poor folks here? Are there no staggering old men here, who seem to themselves to have passed a life almost worthless? Are there no men here whose ambitions have been smitten? Are there no men here who have found how sordid the world is, how untrustworthy it is, and how little they would like to try it again? Are there no men here who are tired, tired, tired of the battle and the defeat? Are there no men here to-day who need my message, saying: Your trials, if you know how to make use of them, will make you better?

When a thousand years have gone by, you will turn to me, if you see me in the kingdom of glory (and you will see me if you go there), and say, "Now I understand the goodness and love of God, and the love of my fellow-men, of which you spoke. I understand the higher spiritual influence

which you tried to teach me. I can see that I was hunting with a muck-rake on the ground for money, while in the heaven above my head were truth, justice, obedience to God, and disinterested kindness to my fellow-men. I did not think of these things—nay, I coined them to get treasure; but blessed troubles came upon me, which taught me that the world was not worth having.”

The world is worth having if you are worthy to own it; but if you are sensual and proud and devilish, all the treasures of Golconda can not make you happy. If, on the other hand, you are poor, and have patience, and are serene in the expectation of God, and are waiting for him, and are living a life that pours itself out as freely as the honeysuckle or the mignonette pours out its fragrance, unasked, and without reward—if you live such a life, no matter what your outward condition is, your trials and troubles are all purifying you and making you better.

Take care, rich men! Your riches will strangle you, and make you live for the present, and miss the dim bright lights which hang out for you in the heavens. Take care, men of trouble! Troubles often make men sordid, and selfish, and ugly, and vindictive. See that they make you better; that they take away the poison stings of your nature, and lift you up. All of you, remember that the life that is visible is not the real life; that the real life is the life that we do not see. The things that are visible are transient; only the things that are invisible are permanent. They abide; they wait for us; they call to us, saying, “Come; come:” and let our hearts say, “Even so, Lord Jesus, we come—through storms and through calm; through night and through day; ’mid the tempest’s shock, where abound sands that betray, and rocks that bruise—we come, O Pilot and Captain, to thee!”

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

BE pleased, O Lord our God, to kindle in our hearts to-day the light and the warmth of those that look in upon the heavenly state. How little is there in life out of which we can fashion our thought of thee! How little is there in the surrounding life, even of those who are best beloved by us, out of which we can fashion an idea of the general assembly and the church of the first-born, and the spirits of the just made perfect! How little can we understand, looking upon the work as it is going on in the heart, in ourselves and in our beloved, what is that wonderful thing which thou art doing in the inward and spiritual man, amidst all thy providential dealings and gracious work with the outward man! When we try to run our thought up into the heavenly realm where there is no selfishness, where there is no pride, where there are no bodily appetites, where there are no rivalries nor collisions, where there is no jealousy and no sin, nor anything that worketh harm, where tears are forgotten, and where sorrow is not known even as we know the distant sound of the ocean at night thundering on the far away shore, where all the past is as a dream, we cannot comprehend it—then how can we understand this heavenly state which is given to us by thy Spirit? Enkindle both our imagination and our understanding, O thou God of all truth and revelation, that we may have to-day some transcendent thought of the blessedness of those who die in Jesus; of the blessedness of those who faithfully are living in Jesus; of the blessedness of that mark at which all of us are aiming—the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. For this world is so bright, and the other brighter world is so dim; this world is so near to our senses, and that is so far away; our daily duties do so continually draw near and take possession of us; cares do so waste and grind us; all the way of life so thunders at our door, and beats in upon us; disappointments, and chagrins, and hopes unfulfilled, and bereavements, do handle us in such ways, as if we were captives and they were masters, domineering and cruel, that when we attempt to behold the land of freedom we have nothing wherewith to fashion it.

Oh, give to us some sense of ransomedness; give us some sense of the ineffable joy of those who, looking within, behold sweetness and harmony; and who, looking without, behold all blessedness, and gentleness, and goodness, and joy; and who, looking up, behold the glory of the Lord as the firmament above surrounding them everywhere.

Into this great life beyond, our thoughts pioneer; and we stand upon the edge, looking and beholding a little, and still all our thoughts must needs be in the fashion and shape of things that are; and things are so dissonant, so troublesome, so rude, so imperfect, that only from thee can come the inspiration we need. Thou who art peace, and who didst give to thy disciples perfect peace, which the world could not give or take away, breathe thy spirit of peace upon us. Thou that art pure, breathe into our souls that pure

love toward thee and toward each other out of which may come the revelation of that blessedness which awaits us beyond. Grant that God may seem to us more God than ever before—grand and merciful, and grand in mercy; long-suffering; patient, for the sake of releasing men from guilt; waiting through ages, nourishing the poor and sin-stricken multitudes—yea, giving himself for them a ransom. Oh, give us to understand what infinite power, what everlasting wisdom, what wondrous skill, and what unfathomable thought, are energetically employed from eternity to eternity, in the purposes of breeding and brooding love. Give us some insight into thy nature; give us something that we can worship—and not when we are afraid; not when we are thinking of magnitudes for glory, but when we are thinking of our own weakness, and of our yearnings for goodness which we cannot lay hold on. When we are broken in our own sense and thought, and in our feeling seem like castaways, then is there not something in thee for us? O God! art not thou the Saviour? When we are disjoined from one another, yea, when we are adverse to each other, art not thou the Friend? When we are in darkness and in trouble, art not thou the Light? When all the world is given to penury, and is stingy of every joy, art not thou the Consoler, the Comforter? When doubts hang heavy, and there is no compass by which we can steer, art not thou the Leader? When all things seem to contest us, and when we ourselves are against ourselves, and everything that we meet day by day strikes us, and the battle goes against us, and we are pressed sore, art not thou the Captain of our salvation, the Conqueror through whom we shall be more than conquerors?

Oh, for deeper insight into the depths of thyself; of thy nature; of thy glorious functions; and of thy power for all the needy; of the office work of the mighty God in this universe springing from nothing, and working slowly by groans and tears and sufferings up towards spiritual manhood. Give us to-day some sympathy with thee, and thy gracious government of mercy, and love, and healing, that our souls may be strong, not in themselves, but in God.

And now, we beseech thee, O Lord our God, help us to be more fruitful in time to come. We seem to ourselves like the sands on which many rains have fallen; and they are but sands still, with few flowers, and but bitter herbs at that. How little are we ourselves like thee! How strong and at times how avaricious is our pride! How bitter are our resentments! How do we love cruelty, and desire to strike and to hurt! How are we filled with uncharitableness! How hard it is to get near to thee! We can but touch the hem of thy garment. Oh! let us come so near that we may lay our head in thy bosom. And grant that thus we may be born again, become sons of God, bear the lineage of our Father, carry his spirit, do his work, rejoice in his presence, hope for his salvation—sleeping, wake in his arms, and rejoice for evermore. *Amen.*

## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

THOU that didst bear the burden; thou that didst wear the crown; thou that didst find thy throne in the sepulcher; thou that out of death didst bring everlasting life; thou that didst by tears, and sorrow, and suffering give us leave to laugh and to be joyful; thou that wert a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and that now art Prince and Saviour in the heavenly land, reach forth to touch our hearts with the significance of thy life and the reality of thy being, that the waning faith of men may be strengthened. Oh, fill again the heaven and the earth with the glory of God; and to all that are in doubt and misled, tempest-tossed and not comforted, interpret once more thy providence, that every one may learn to love, and to abide in that love, which, descending, shall lead them to acts of benevolence among their fellow men. And so, we beseech thee that we may be prepared by joy and sorrow, by gain and loss, by all thy dealings, and especially by the rude chastenings which thou dost send upon us, by thy coronation of thorns upon our heads, by the ferrule, by goads, and by thorns in our side, to rise into glorious affinity with Jesus Christ, that his sufferings may be filled up in full measure in us, so that when he comes to reign, we may reign with him.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.  
*Amen.*

## THE OLD PATHS.

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“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”—JER. vi., 16.

“Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up.”—JER. xviii., 15.

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The word *path* is equivalent to our word *road*. We have been so familiar from our childhood with the universality of roads, and their permanence, that we scarcely can imagine a condition of society in which a road was one of the highest marks of civilization. I believe there is in all Palestine, to-day, but one road—that over which the French line of coaches goes to Baalbec. Paths are still the only thoroughfares; and, in ancient times, when men grew dull, heedless of the common weal, selfish, even these paths were obliterated. Torrents washed them out, or they were overgrown. As there was no intercommunication of commerce, a species of lethargy pervaded the whole people, and paths, for the most part, disappeared. Then men who went from province to province, or from tribe to tribe, were obliged to thread their way, as best they could, through the thicket, and over the rock—stumbling, here and there, in the most inconvenient way.

The transition is very natural from an outward physical path to moral uses. Thus, the roads and paths in which men are accustomed to walk with their feet would very readily suggest the road that men's thoughts habitually walk in—the path in which their feelings are accustomed to move, and the way in which their conduct naturally flows. So we find the

whole Word of God full of "paths," "ways," "walks," as equivalent to the habits—social, moral, and political—of the people. The transfer from a physical to a moral path was almost inevitable.

You will find, upon investigation, in the Old Testament particularly, that paths refer to things physical—to the regular, constant habit of working or sleeping, or fighting, or whatever else the body did. It is also applied to manners and customs—to those established methods of intercourse which grow up in society, and by which complex communities are able to live at peace with themselves. Paths or ways, as they are laid down in the Old Testament, refer to the regular carriage of a man's dispositions, and to the line which his thoughts pursue—especially to his moral dispositions. They refer to worship, and to all those habits which were engendered by institutions and laws and customs.

It is in this secondary and moral sense, of course, that we shall use the passage to-day, for the sake of pointing out the wisdom and the necessity, in all those who would go right, of keeping upon the old ways—the ascertained ways—the ways which, in the experience of mankind, have been proved to be beneficial.

It will sound very strange to some to hear me talk about holding fast to old ways, old doctrines, old customs, old anything—me, whose whole life and ministry has been an incitement to new thought, to development, to on-going. As if there were any real antagonism between the hand that goes out to sow the seed, and the hand that comes back with the sickle to reap that which has been sown! As if growing, development, were not perfectly consonant with maintaining the stability of things gained already! As if there could be a wise conservatism that did not take into account a wise progressiveness!

We are not, in this world, to hold on to anything as if it were the perfect form of thought, or the final form of principle; but we are to hold on to all those things which long and ripe experience have shown to be beneficial until something else which is more beneficial can be put in their place.

There is something in the whole spirit of our age and na-

tion which seems to revolt from going in the old paths and ways. The idea of clinging to the past is held in much contempt among us. We are a new people, on a new continent, with new knowledges, new institutions, and new laws of various kinds; and we think that they are a great deal newer than they are. We look back and say, "Here we have no crowns, no sceptres, no aristocracy; here we have no such institutions as existed in imperial Rome or in mediæval Europe; here we have nothing that came down from the feudal ages. We are all new-made, and we stand in a bright contrast to the imperfect past." We glory in our newness, as if we were in advance of everybody and everything else.

Now, in the first place, we are not half as new as we think we are. Our ideas we have imported from Assyria, from Palestine, from Egypt, from Greece, from Rome, and from mediæval Europe. No man can sort and sift the knowledge on which we are building, or by which we are working, and say of any particular part of it, "This is modern." Our thoughts, and all the channels of our thoughts, are the result of the thought and experience of thousands of years that are gone by. Nor can we say that our institutions are new, or that our political habits and customs are new. The combinations are new, but the elements are old. Our knowledge of justice, of equity, of the rights of the individual and of the necessities of the State, —these have been gradually unfolded through thousands of years; and although we may have been building a different form of structure in our government from that which prevailed heretofore, the trees which we have hewn into timber have been growing through ages.

Therefore, we are not so new as we have supposed we were. We did not first dig up the precious gold; neither did we first unlock the secrets of philosophy; nor did we first give tone to moral sense. We did not, either, first think of the commonwealth, or of the welfare of the masses. We are not half so wise as we take ourselves to be. And yet, the spirit of young America is this: "We are the people, and the nation; and political and civil liberty will die with us, unless others borrow and keep that which we have developed." We

boast of being a progressive people, and of going on to something that is newer and better; and at certain points this is very meritorious, though at other points it is less so.

At this time, new machines, new processes of industry, better houses, improved furniture, finer clothes, easier methods of locomotion, increased facilities for the interchange of thought,—these things are bruited in the newspapers. We congratulate ourselves that we do not belong to the old, slow-moving, crawling, worm ages; that we belong to the age when men fly. Every day is disclosing more and more; and the sun and moon are about to bow down and worship us, we think. We are proud of our progressiveness; our newspapers ring it forth; and it is fashionable to make it a matter of boasting.

Then there is, at this time, an extraordinary outbreak of activity in thought. Perhaps the last fifty years have been the most active in thinking that ever were known. Probably there was never a time when thinking spread over so large a space and included so much. Probably a greater multitude of persons are given to thought at this period than there have been at any other period in history,—though it is difficult to measure such a thing as that. Certain historic researches, the revelations which have been made in respect to the truths of the past, religious freedom and religious activity, and, above all, scientific discoveries and prophecies, have in our time set on fire the imagination of the young; and men feel as though old things were passing away, and all things were to become new. The consequence is that thousands of men are inclined to doubt generally the social and moral results of past experience. There is a wide-spread feeling that probably we are blinded, as our fathers were, that we are living in a very narrow way; that it is doubtful whether the prudential maxims, the conservative customs, and the social usages of the past have not answered their end; and whether they are now more than straw which is to be gathered, that we may re-sow the field for another harvest and a better one. As if the experience of ages had learned nothing perfectly! As if there were not some things which learned once are learned forever! As if the social inte-

course of men, under a thousand different conditions, would not at last work out certain paths or methods of organization and inter-social relation which would last forever !

It leads many to throw general distrust upon the religious teachings which they hear ; not special, positive disbelief, but uncertainty : and, so far as the moral power of religion is concerned, simple distrust is just as mischievous as positive unbelief. It takes away thought-power ; for if there be anything that gives to religion validity and efficiency it is faith, it is conviction, it is belief ; and, just so far as you take that away, just so far as you shake the confidence of men in religion, you destroy its real power.

Now, the general uprising of thought, the reflex influence of new views and new principles, and a change of the relations of old truths and old customs, breeds, or tends to breed in young, unproved, and superficial minds, especially if they have a certain mental appetite, a great deal more of conceit than they have of intellect. It tends to produce in them the general impression that we do not know much about religion anyhow ; and that it is not worth a man's while to trouble himself about it : that, so far as it is convenient, by way of lubricating the wheels of society, it is well to foster it ; but that it is not best for a man to hit against the church ; that he had better get out of the way of it rather than to run over it or have it run over him ; but that, so far as its authority is concerned, every intelligent, progressive-minded young man should take into consideration that it is not wise for him to meddle with it.

Then, there is the question whether a larger liberty is not permissible in morals than used to be. Sociology is developing many scepticisms which are particularly mischievous because they tend to unlock and give greater freedom to that which is animal in man, and to tie up and give less scope to that which is divine.

So there are religious customs and institutions which men have been taught in early days to look upon as being of divine inception, and as carrying in them divine authority. Now, because men say that customs are good, and are to be retained, but are not of divine authority, there is a tendency

on the part of thousands to throw them away altogether. If, however, I teach that the church is an indispensable element in the moral growth of the community, and that, as men are, it is an institution wisely adapted to the maintenance of the truth, to its proclamation, and to the culture and drill of men in moral relations; if I hold that therefore the church is an institution vital to Christianity and civilization, is that view invalidated in the least because at the same time I hold that the church is not directly revealed, and specially ordained, of God?

I hold that, in the present state of intelligence throughout the community, common schools are wise, necessary, indispensable; but I do not think that on that account it is necessary to say that common schools are commanded in the Bible, or that the whole pattern on which we should conduct them is laid down in the Scriptures.

There are many things which experience has shown to be wisely adapted to the development of men, and to be essential thereto, and they are just as authoritative as though they had the Word of God behind them.

In early ages, before men are susceptible of moral reasoning, before they know how to see the relations of God in nature, an institution is made more sacred by saying that God appointed it; but in later days, when men are able to read, not only what God has given us in the Bible, but what has come to us through nature and experience, and the whole analogy of providence, the authority of an institution which commends itself to the judgment of men as adapted to their wants is as great as though there had been a divine word imprinted upon it. But, because it is said that the ground and reasons of religious institutions are changing, men are disposed to undervalue them entirely, and to say, "They have had their day; they are worn out; they have passed away; we must look for new revelations and a new era."

Thousands are, therefore, abandoning, in various ways, old paths, old thoughts, old usages, old customs, old habits, old convictions, old virtues, old manhood. And when you make inquisition, you will find that they are not the offscouring of society. You will find that among those who are loosest in

their adherence to the moral elements which belong to our common Christianity, are scholars. There is a tendency in this direction very largely developed in art, in literature, in journalism. I think that I shall speak within bounds when I say that, to-day, the educated men of England, of Germany, of France, of America, and, indeed, the leading men in history and in science, are tending away from the old grounds of Christianity, and that in many cases there is a positive skepticism in regard to it, and an absolute opposition to it. But in the great majority of cases, departure from old thought, old Christian sentiment, old institutions and old customs, is without any philosophical ground. It is atmospheric, if I may so say. It is the genius and tendency of young rising minds; and as such it is a matter of profound importance, and ought to command the attention of those who believe, as I do, that Christianity is the leaven of God to the world and to the ages, and that reactions from it, if they do not come back again, are reactions by which men are driven off into outer space.

Now it is no part of my purpose to caution you, to warn you, to persuade you not to think. For me to do that, would be as if a man should cure sore eyes by putting them out. It is no part of my purpose to exhort you not to change external forms, or to make re-adaptations of doctrine. It is a part of my business to help you to do it. I would not circumscribe your liberty; I certainly would not fasten you down by any ties of authority (I mean authority as standing in men and institutions); but there are many reasons why I can and should call you to a consideration of certain great permanencies in respect to thought, to moral character and to custom, which are peculiarly necessary to the young, and were never more necessary than in our time and in our nation.

First, we must not suppose that moral and social developments can ever be as rapid as physical developments, or that men can be changed in their principles, their feelings, and their inward life, in any such ratio as that in which we see external changes going on. Men say, "We are not living in the days before steam and electricity were known. We are living in a quicker age. We plow our fields by steam. We

talk across the ocean. There is a tongue that vibrates between Europe and America under the sea. We are traveling fast; we are living fast; and it is a shame for men to lag behind in the highest elements of humanity—in their moral and social feelings. We ought to be up and doing.”

Now, progress is always fastest in the lowest stages, and it becomes slower and slower as it goes higher and higher, because it grows more complex. That part of our nature which stands highest, or which is nearest perfection, is that part which receives the least culture, and which therefore develops the most slowly. Those social elements which relate to our growth work faster in the lower realms of human progress than in the higher. A nation may build ships, and warehouses, and docks, and cities; it may cultivate fields until the grain can find no roofs to store itself withal; it may travel rapidly, and it may learn to travel in the air; it may make more exquisite glasses, and bring nearer the most remote objects: but it does not follow, because men can do these physical things, that they are more generous, more sensitive, more pure-minded, or more disinterested. It does not follow, because single individuals can do these things, that the mass of men can.

You can teach men to eat better food, you can teach them to wear better clothes, you can teach them to live in better houses, very fast, because all these things lie along the line of their lower nature, where they are strongest; but if you go higher, and teach them to be more just and to be more merciful, the process is slower; and if you teach them the subtle elements of self-restraint it is slower yet. There is no proportion and no analogy between the rapidity with which we develop in physical things, and the rapidity with which we develop in that part of our manhood which is truest and divinest. So that when, in this hurly-burly of expectation, men, without thought or reason, say, “We are living in a progressive age, everything is going by steam and electricity, and we ought to go fast in art, in politics and in religion; everything ought to roll over and over, and keep on the move,” they are talking about things which they do not understand.

We must note, also, the danger of giving up any belief or custom which has been entwined in our moral sense. There is a ground here which is abundantly recognized, but which, generally, is not really felt—the necessity of regarding with a certain sacredness the lower steps or stages of our own development. Man is born at the bottom, and is obliged to go up steadily.

Our progress is like the progress upon stairs or a ladder. If you go up one step, and let the lower round stand, and you go up another step and let the two stand, and you go up a third and fourth, and so on, and let them all stand, you will gradually rise to the top; but suppose a man, taking his first step on the lowest round of a ladder, should say to his servant, “Saw the bottom part of that ladder off and throw it away,” and, taking the next, should say, “Saw that off and throw it away,” and should continue that process all the way up, when he had taken the whole forty steps he would be on the ground where he first started. It is by keeping the steps by which you have risen that at last you reach the top.

When a child has gone through his alphabet-book, in which are words of two and three syllables, he lays it aside; but he does not lay aside the contents of it,—he carries them along with him. They are the elements by which he is to go a step higher in reading. And practice there, when he has gained with it familiarity, carries him yet another step. So he goes from one step to another, from one range to another, taking with him, as he rises, that which he has acquired lower down.

What would be thought of a man who considered it necessary to perfection in literature that he should despise the alphabet? What would be thought of a man who should say, “The alphabet is good for pantalettes; but what has a *man* to do with the alphabet? I am learned. I do not want the alphabet.” It was as important to Isaac Newton when he was fifty as when he was five years of age. It goes on with a man all his life long.

It is not safe to remove or meddle with the lower stages of a man’s development, even those that are imperfect,

until they are superseded by something better. It is not safe for a man, when he is perfect (perfect, that is, in the human sense), to knock away the imperfect elements from beneath him, except by putting in their places something better. For instance, it is a thousand times better that the Parsee should worship light than that you should satisfy him by astronomical proofs that his gods are delusions, and so leave him with no God. It is better that a heathen should have the restraint which comes from even idolatrous worship, than that he should be left without idols and godless. It is a great deal better that a man should believe that the Church is the fountain of authority, than that he should be made to disbelieve in the authority of the Church without having taken in the greater authority under which the Church itself is an institution. I never would say to a deep-hearted Catholic, praying to the Virgin Mary, "That is an infatuation, a fiction." Until you can breathe into men the conception that in Jesus Christ is all that tenderness of the mother-heart which they long for, until you can preach to them the God that has in himself all these qualities which they seek in the Virgin Mary, it is better to let them believe in her; but when they understand that Christ is mother infinitely more deep, and tender, and compassionate, and quick to hear, and ready to help, than they ever conceived the Virgin Mary to be, then you may take her away—indeed, the Virgin Mary will die out of their thought then, and they will find in this new conception what they sought for in the Virgin.

It is not safe to take away a man's view because it is inaccurate, unless you give him a more accurate view. If you destroy a man's faith in those that serve him intellectually and dialectically; if you destroy his faith in the priesthood, in sacrifice, and in the system in which he has been brought up, in which his conscience has been trained, with which his associates have become interwoven, and in which is enshrined his memory of father, and mother, and brothers, and sisters, and neighbors, the tender thoughts of his childhood, and his early love; if you destroy a man's faith in the Ritual, the Cathedral, and all those things which are connected with

the religion in which he has been reared, and if you put nothing in its place, then, if you think you have done God good service, you are mistaken; you have neither done God service, nor the man either. You have destroyed the life that was in him, and left him a desert.

Wherefore it is a great deal better for a man to believe an imperfect thing, it is a great deal better for him to have partial truth, a little truth mixed with much error, than that what he has should be taken away from him, and that nothing higher and better should be given to him in its stead.

In the transition from a lower to a higher form of belief there is great peril. Strong natures are able to survive it; but it is a dangerous thing for a man to pass from one religion, espoused in his youth, to another espoused in his manhood. There have been a great many persons who have sailed out of the harbor of Popery and been wrecked long before they got into the harbor of Protestantism. Many have gone out from Heathenism who never got into Christianity. There are thousands of men who are brought up rigorously in Orthodoxy, and who start to go to Unitarianism, or Universalism, or Swedenborgianism, but who stop short of that at which they aim. They go out of one religion and do not get into another.

Orchardists often have to change the top of their trees. The fruit which they bear was thought to be good enough in old times; but better fruits have come up, which they wish to substitute for those which are inferior. Therefore they make the change by grafting. But it is not safe even to graft an apple tree, if it be large, all over at once. The shock which would thus be given it would greatly enfeeble it, if it did not kill it. So a skillful orchardist takes off a few branches one year, a few others the next year, and a few others the next, and grafts them; thus giving the grafts of one year a chance to set and grow, and then putting in others, and then others, the whole process occupying a period of two or three years. And if this care is necessary in the case of a poor, dumb apple-tree, how much more is necessary in the case of the human soul when its vital elements are changed! Where a person has been trained to certain beliefs

by family influences, by social customs, by public sentiment, by ordinances, by institutions, by music, by priests, by all manner of instrumentalities, to take away those beliefs rudely, and put nothing in their place, is the most perilous thing that you can do. You can cure a man of Papacy, and yet not make a Protestant of him. I would rather have a good Catholic, any time, than a bad Protestant; and I would rather have either of them than nothing, half-way between.

We are not, therefore, to consider, in a headlong way, that to change men's faith and their life-long habits, though they may be erroneous, is of course our duty. There is too often a partisan spirit in religion. If a man be of the Greek faith, or the Roman faith, or a Ritualistic faith, we consider him our lawful prey, and we go at him, and hunt him down if we can. Then, at once, an argument takes place, and he tries to convince us, and we try to convince him. As if changing from one mode of belief to another was going to change the conscience, the reason, the taste, the moral susceptibility, or any of the ten thousand subtle elements which belong to character rather than to mere dialectic belief.

Moreover, the relinquishment of trust or of practice should always be from worse to better. If a man has a poor way of looking at religion, it is not so much for you to convince him of his poverty as quietly to convince him of a better way.

If I were to go into the cabin of a pioneer who was brought up in the wilderness, and who knows nothing of bread except of the coarsest kind, and were to undertake to persuade him that his coarse bread was not worthy of a man's eating,—that it allied him to the ox, and to the horse,—and were to describe to him that which goes to make a feast in civilized society, would that be wise? Let me take a loaf of good bread, and go quietly and place it on his table, where the black, coarse, throat-scratching loaf is, saying nothing, and let him once pass a knife around, and scalp the good loaf, and begin to eat it, and he will say, "What is this? Where did it come from?" Is there not more conviction in tasting one piece of good bread than there is in forty arguments against poor bread?

Men are crying up this church or that church. Go and taste : it is just like any other church. But let men once be brought into a communion where there is more patience, more real brotherhood, more belief of man in man, better living, and sweeter life, and then they will not need any arguments. The tasting satisfies them ; and they say, “ How did you get it ? ” and, “ Where did you get it ? ”

I say to a man in-regard to the road he travels to market, “ Your road is like a ram’s-horn ; it goes up and down, and winds round and round, and it is not worthy to be called a road ; shut it up.” He says, “ How shall I get to market ? ” “ Oh,” I say. “ never mind the market ; shut it up.” But shall he shut it up before he has a better one ? Isn’t a poor road better than no road at all to market ? If you want him to have a better road, make that better road, and then he will not need any argument to persuade him to travel on it, any more than a man with good bread before him needs an argument to convince him that it is better than poor bread.

So, if you are teaching men that one intellectual system is better than another, and that one religious organization is better than another, present to them the fruit which it bears : and if that is better than the fruit of the other system or organization, he will not need any argument to persuade him of the fact.

A man that has been eating frost grapes will not want many arguments to persuade him to eat Hamburgh grapes, if he once gets a taste of them. I would not eat a wild orange, if I could get good grafted oranges. I would not eat crab-apples, if I could get pippins or golden-russets.

Now if a man is sweet and disinterested, and is a devotee in the Roman Catholic Church, what can you do but accept him as a Christian ? Here is the fruit of Christianity, and there is no gainsaying it. If I could not get it in any other way, I would go into the Catholic Church. I hold that a man should go where he is made more manly and nobler : and if you want to draw men out of other churches ; if you, being orthodox, want to draw men out of churches that are heterodox ; if you think you have the best training institutions and the most fruitful intellectual systems, and you want

to bring these to bear upon men efficaciously, let them see what you are, and if they see that you are better than they are, they will adopt your systems and institutions. If I think that men have a heretical idea of the divine nature; if I think that they have lapsed from Calvinism; if I think that they are devil's agents, and are destroying the faith of the saints, and that they ought to be damned, and if, under such circumstances, men see me advocating orthodoxy in a spirit of deviltry, what inducement is there for them to come to my ground of belief? If a man holds a better system of religion than his neighbor, the first proof that we want of it should be in himself. If you are better than another man, your life, and not the doctrine which you hold, will be the evidence of it.

A man whom I know to have been crumpled up with rheumatism comes to me walking erect, and I say to him, "Halloa! my dear fellow, how did you get well?" He says, "I applied to such a physician, and here I am." This is the story. His neighbor, who comes limping along at the time, says, "That is all quackery; I have the only doctor that is good for anything;" and he, still crumpled up, is a specimen of what his physician does. Who would go to his physician, after seeing him?

If a church breeds meekness, sweetness, gentleness, patience, fortitude, love, courage, manliness, and disinterestedness; if it makes noble men,—uncrowned but undoubted princes,—then it is a church, it is a living epistle which will convince men; but sects will never make much headway, except by some such methods as political parties resort to, using coarse and base influences, until they come to understand that it is in vain to change beliefs, notions, institutions, customs, and systems, if men are not changed in the same proportion or ratio. What we want, therefore, is not change, except for betterment.

Here are three or four wretches on the sea. They have been wrecked, and they have lashed four or five planks together. The raft which they have thus formed is a miserable affair. They have almost no provision. Their water has given out. They have not a shadow of a sail. Their

outfit is about as poor a one as ever half a dozen men started for a voyage a thousand miles from the coast on; but would you say to them, "Jump off: it is a miserable raft"? It is true that that would end the journey; but would you not advise them to remain on it until they were better provided for? By and by there comes a boat alongside of them. It is crowded, and there is but little room, and it is but scantily provisioned. Nevertheless, they are invited to get in; and I would say to them, "By all means, get off the raft and get into the boat;" for the boat is better than the raft, although when the winds begin to lift themselves up it is a poor thing to carry men on a long voyage, and there is peril. Still later in the day, as the sun goes down, something more glorious than the sun dawns upon their vision. It is the sail of a fishing-smack. She bears down on them, and they are taken on board of her. How glad they are! and they have reason to be. The fishing-smack is a small concern, and is not well provisioned; but it is better than the boat, and that is the reason why they should abandon the boat and get into the fishing-smack. To-morrow there is seen what appears like a speck on the long ribbon of the horizon. A steamer is coming. She draws near. They are transferred from this ill-conditioned smack to that glorious ocean-going steamer. And how glad they are! But even then they are not half so happy as they are when she lands them upon the good old solid continent. There they are safe.

Now, of men, some are on rafts, some are in boats, some are on steamers, and all are making the voyage of life; and when you can change from bad to better, or from better to best, do so; but do not change for the sake of changing.

I remark, again, that all new truths, like new wine, must have a period of fermentation. I am not a disciple of Darwin, I do not belong to the Darwinian school, or to the school of Huxley, or of Tyndall, or of Spencer; and yet, I thank God for raising them up, all of them. I believe them to be men who are throwing out ore which, when it is smelted and purified, is to be precious indeed. I think them to be pioneer working men. Much that they write I think is true, and much I think is not yet true. They have a large follow-

ing, and they will have a larger and larger following, because there are elements of truth in their teaching which are indispensable to the reconstruction of men's beliefs. You need not say that it is science which they are developing. It is something that covers the whole ground of human existence. It touches belief in every single point. It goes back to the origin of man; and that determines largely the nature of man. In respect to Scripture, it touches the question of inspiration, and the structural method by which the Bible was created. It rises higher, and touches the whole question of moral government. Not only that, but it touches the question of sin, of individual responsibility, and foreshadows the modification and the reconstruction of theology as a whole. It looks forward to material changes in religious belief, in the organization of society, and in the education of the race. Germs of truth there are in it.

Now, shall men abandon old beliefs, and take these germs of truth that lie in the heavens like nebulous clouds, not yet ready to rain and produce grain, grass, or flowers?

All truths are, at first, on probation. They must be fought; they must suffer persecution; they must be reviewed; for it is with truths as it is with causes. They are obliged to be martyrs, in the first place. They have to be ransacked and vindicated. Their relations to life have to be considered, and proper inferences have to be deduced from them. They have to be scrutinized. Their effect, when they are brought to bear upon men's dispositions, has to be considered. Their connection with laws and institutions has to be looked into. Their legitimate influence upon the moral sense and religious conduct of men has to be discussed. The work is great; and he is not a wise man who, in this crude and early stage of these truths, will rush after them, and abandon the faith of his fathers. We are not wise if we follow these new lights before we know what they are—before we know their extent and their practical application.

I would be far from urging young men to be moles and bats; I would be far from urging them to hang on old beliefs as air-plants hang on the branches of old trees, having no roots of their own. I do not do that myself, and I do not

want you to do it. But seest thou a man wise in his own conceit; seest thou a man who, looking on these late discoveries, is exhilarated; seest thou a man who engorges himself with new wine and spews it out speedily, because it is not fitted for digestion; seest thou a man who takes faiths which, though they may not be absolutely true, are, nevertheless, approximately true, and have been held for ages by nations and generations, and throws them away because there looms up something which may be added to them, or may modify them? What hope is there for him?

Let me say a word, also, in opposition to the wild and unreasonable urgency of those who say, "Every man ought to be independent, and ought to find out things for himself. It is not becoming for a young American, at this age, to allow such books to be written as are written, and he not read and explore, and fashion his faith, not on what his mother or his father told him, but on what his reason, by the aid of the light which he can get, enables him to arrive at." Suppose I should say to a dandy, "It does not become you to buy your boots, your hat and your clothes of others; you should make them yourself"—how absurd that would be! Why, I do not make my own shoes, because others can make better shoes than I can. I do not make the garments which I wear, because I can have them made better by others than I can make them myself. I do not make the watch that I carry. I should not know how to go to work to do it. I work for other men in some things, and they work for me in other things. It is indispensable that there should be an exchange of the results of men's training and skill. This is a factor in civilization.

But when it comes to belief, men think it is unmanly to have others think for them. Everybody must think for himself, it is thought. It is argued that man, having reason given to him for use, must see what truth is, although it is so immense and so complex.

Dr. Lindley, in the introduction to his work, leaving alone the sciences of geology, and zoology, and ornithology, and physiology, and all the other ologies, and speaking simply of botany, says, "Let no man think that he can in a

life-time become a universal botanist. A man should make his selection of some department—that of the mosses, or grasses, or some kind of flowers—and devote himself to that.” In this single science, a man must confine himself to one department, if he expects to attain to a perfect degree of knowledge. And if that is so in regard to one branch of physical science, how is it in regard to all the elements of a man’s faith, including the whole realm of government and its institutions; including the whole system of inter-filiation, man with man; including the whole sphere of religion that is the central city at which all the sciences meet? And to say to a young man, untrained, undeveloped, not accustomed to investigation, whose encyclopedia is the morning newspaper, “Why do you not stand on your own feet? why are you forever tied to the apron-strings of your nurse and your mother? why are you not an independent thinking man?”—would be like asking me why I do not make everything in my house—pictures, books, furniture, clothes, linen, ranges, bricks, stone and what not. It would be preposterous. We are so related, by the laws of God, one to another, that no man can think out everything for himself.

Is it then wiser to plunge into the realm of nothingness or the unknown, is it wiser to accept every rash theory that is set forth, is it wiser to give up your belief at once when its validity is questioned, or is it wiser to hold on to the faith of your father and mother till you can see something better? It is said (and I believe there is some truth in it) that the Legislature of Connecticut, when they first got together, resolved that the Colonies should be governed by the laws of God in the Old Testament until they had time to make better ones. It strikes you as humorous, but it was very wise. There was a vast portion of the ancient code that would not apply to the people of Connecticut. What had they to do with circumcision, and not carding wool and linen together, and performing sacrificial temple service? And yet, there were certain didactic and religious laws laid down in that code which were of universal application. So, it was well for them to be governed by the Old Testament till they had time to construct those special laws by which, in their peculiar

circumstances, they should be governed. It is better for any man to abide by the laws of God till he can make better ones! It is better for men to adhere to the faith of their fathers and mothers, or of the churches to which they belong, till they see distinctly a better way.

I must say one word more on the subject of new truths, and the advocates of them. I wish that words could change human nature. I wish, when men declare themselves to belong to the universal catholic church, it were an indication that they belonged to the universal catholic soul of God; but calling men catholic does not make them catholic. I wish men were orthodox when they say they are orthodox; but words do not make quality. A man is no better simply because he wears a broad-brimmed hat and a straight coat of drab. There have been admirable men, and some that might have been better, under the Quaker garb. A man is not changed by a name.

Now, there is more and more a tendency to praise scientific men who devote their lives to the investigation of truth, as though nobody else had ever done such a thing. They are praised for applying themselves to the finding out of facts, as if they were the only persons that ever applied themselves to the finding out of facts. Scientific men themselves say, "Oh, you are Christians, and you have faith; but we believe in truth." There is a conceit, an arrogance, a dogmatism, a bigotry of science, as really as there is of religion. Scientific men deride the old popes and bishops. They poke fun at the churches—especially the bawling Methodists, the tight-laced Presbyterians, and the no-laced Congregationalists. They look with pity or contempt upon the different sects and denominations. "But," say they, "we are disciples of the truth. Our business, morning, noon, and night, is to winnow the wheat from the chaff. We do not believe in anything that we can not prove. There may be a God, but we haven't found him out. It may be that the soul is immaterial and spiritual; but we will believe nothing that we can not reduce to a scientific fact."

Far be it from me to say that the world is not reaping, and is not to reap, abundant fruit from the labors of scien-

tific men ; but, I say that they are no better than other men. They are no more likely to be right in spirit. They are just as likely to be proud, and vain, and arrogant. They are just as likely to quarrel among themselves. They are just as likely to fall into sects—they are doing it. So, you need not think that there is any charm about scientific men, or that they are any nobler than other men. They are all human. They have the same traits, the same weaknesses, and the same liabilities, that other men have ; and they are to be absolute authorities for nobody.

There are many men in this world who follow them afar off. The guides and models are bad enough ; but their disciples are most intolerable—these little monkey disciples, pigmies, trotting around, knowing very little, and talking very much. What these really laborious men, in spite of their imperfections and human liabilities, are doing by patient toil, and much work, their followers are doing by sleight of hand and dexterity. I see on every side men who take the soap-suds of science, and stick their pipe into it, and blow a bubble, and seeing a face in it, say, “That is God !” It is only themselves, distorted in their own soap-bubble ! Folly is not dead yet.

In view of all the ground gone over—for I cannot pursue the subject further now,—let me say that all the tendencies which narrow the moral sense and enlarge the liberty of the passions, no matter from what source they come, are dangerous. Whatever may be taught in any direction, one thing is certain—that the flesh man is in antagonism to the spirit man. Whatever the theory of the universe may be, one thing experience has ascertained beyond all peradventure, that the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and that the right is with the spirit.

Anything, therefore, that unties moral sentiment ; anything that lowers the power of spiritual thought and spiritual emotion ; anything, especially, that strengthens the basilar appetites ; anything that works for the animal man and against the spirit man, is surely wrong,—I care not by what philosophy it is supported, and I care not what examples have favored it.

Our business in life is to bring under appetite and passion by the domination of reason and moral sentiment; and all tendencies which weaken reason and moral sentiment, and increase the power of the under man, are unquestionably to be avoided. There is death in them.

Secondly, all tendencies which increase self-conceit are to be suspected and disowned; for, although self-conceit is constitutional with some, this abides as an eternal maxim:

“Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.”

Well, now, how much hope is there of a fool?

“Though thou bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.”

Grind a man up, and the last thing that will appear, if he is conceited, will be his conceit.

But what does conceit do? It makes a thing true to a man just because he thinks it is true. It makes a man handsome, because he thinks he is handsome. It makes anything that he thinks better than what anybody else thinks. It stops his investigation, therefore, and precipitates him on rude and crude conclusions. It teaches him not the truth, but the reflection of himself—his own fanaticism.

These tendencies are peculiarly developed under the spirit of our own age and our own institutions. They are encouraged by the public sentiment of the nation. Having a democratic republican government, and being a free people, we are constantly tending to laud self and individualism, and to become conceited. We are far more vain than proud. Would to God that we had something of the nature of our paternal stock; for they were more proud than vain. Both pride and vanity may be bad; but pride is a tower of strength, and is greatly to be desired, if it is not inordinate. It gives a sense of what is becoming; but vanity runs under all colors. A man should be proud enough to have self-confidence; but self-conceit leads one to desire the empty applause of men, and to run into exhibitory spirit—and that to the very end.

Those tendencies which extinguish in a man all spiritual elements, such as arise from faith in God, immaterial and spiritual existence and immortality, must inevitably degrade,

narrow, pinch, starve those great essential qualities out of which manhood has grown so much. You cannot conceive of heroism growing out of the abnegation of these great truths. Teach a man that he is born as the grass, and that he dies as the grass; teach him that the beginning and the end of his life are but a hand's-breadth apart, and how can you make a hero out of him? You cannot make a hero out of a creature of an hour. Send out and gather into a Sunday-school the summer midges which play fantastic games in the air, and you can as soon turn them into immortal creatures as you can turn into heroes men who have no belief in God or in the future.

There is in such a limitation an in-bred corruption which would in a generation destroy all heroism. This is one reason why I should long hesitate to teach the doctrine of annihilation, even if there were more arguments for it than there are. If the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked were to be taught, the poor would be destroyed. Men would say of those low down in life, "Oh, these slaves, these underlings, these untaught and unbred creatures, are not going to live longer than through this life anyhow; they will die and go out; so that it does not matter much how they are treated." That which makes a man sacred before men is that he is sacred before God; he is sacred as carrying wrapped up in himself elements which are to be known in the grand future. It is what he is *to be* as well as what he *is*, that makes a man great among men, and that opens, or begins to open, that greatness which he shall have with God.

All tendencies which undermine your substantial faith in God and immortality, and your belief in the reality of a world of joy and a penal world (for these two great truths go side by side), that right and wrong are eternal, and that in the other life, as in this, obedience to right is joy, and obedience to wrong is pain, and that joy and pain go on forever—all such tendencies have the effect to take away your hope, and so, your motive for striving to reach a higher life. A man under such circumstances becomes a beggar, a pitiful creature, worse than the beast of the field, less than the swine. The hog knows the law of his own being, and does

not fall below it; but the drinking, vicious, lewd, lecherous man—how far is he below his conqueror, the animal? and what is there that should save him? Why should I not crush him? Why should he not be treated like the sheep, the ox, the bear, the lion, or the tiger? Because there is in him an inextinguishable soul. Because there is that in him for which Christ died. Because there is that in him which prophesies. It is this that makes a man in his weakness, in his state of unculture, in his degradation and corruption, still sacred before God, as he should be before men, before magistrates, and before communities. Take away our thought of God and our responsibility to God, take away the doctrine of immortality and of infinite duration hereafter, and you have removed the foundations from under society, and it will not be long before down will go laws, and governments, and institutions, and mankind will have a weary pilgrimage in a world of unbelief, until they come slowly back to their old faiths, and build anew.

Make better paths, if you will; but abandon not the old paths; and of all the paths which you are not to abandon is that one which lies straight through the land toward Jerusalem. And when the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, come thou! May I, and mine, and all of us, be there!

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Look down upon us, our heavenly Father, with that compassion which belongs to thee because thou art God. Because thou art perfect in holiness, have compassion upon our sinfulness. Because thou art perfect in wisdom, have compassion upon our ignorance. Because thou art exalted above all need of counsel, and dost dwell in an infinite strength of divine love, have compassion upon us who must lean at every step upon something, and who are of ourselves poor, foolish, stumbling. For it is of the nature of true greatness to have compassion upon that which is not great; and thou dost not look above thee, nor round about thee, to find thine equals or those that are akin to thee. Thine eye descends, and searches out all the infinite places of trouble on the earth; and thou art pleased to say that thou dost dwell with the broken and contrite spirit. Thou dost inhabit the heart which is conscious of its want, and is pierced with sin and sorrow and remorse. Unto such thou dost come to dwell, because thou art God. This is thy nature from eternity and unto eternity.

We rejoice that we have found out so much of thy being, and that we know so much of the meaning of divine greatness and goodness. We rejoice that thou hast said that thou art toward us what we are in our best estate as parents toward our children, but infinitely more and better. If we know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall our Father which is in heaven give gifts to those that ask him?

We are strong in this thought of thee. Once we feared thee because thou wert to us justice, and because justice, as we conceived of it, meant a sweeping condemnation of our weaknesses, of our infirmities, of our sharp and overwhelming temptations which brought in sin, and which also brought in fear and dread; and we had no refuge and there was no hope. Not until thou didst make thyself known to us as the God of infinite mercy and compassion, nay, not until thou didst manifest thyself through Jesus Christ, and give thine own beloved Son to die for sinful men, did we understand what was the greatness, and the grandeur, and the righteousness, and the power of divine love, so far removed from calculating selfishness among men; so far removed from all bargain and sale, and all the coarser modes of exchange on earth; so royal in its disinterestedness.

We rejoice as in treasures found—treasures that cannot be taken away from us—in these disclosures of thy nature; and we rejoice that thou hast not compassion upon a covenant, and hast not mercy upon a bargain; and that thou dost not govern thyself by arrangements, by outward provisions, as men by reason of their weaknesses manage themselves. Thou wilt have mercy on whom thou wilt have mercy. Thou art a God that dost take counsel of thine own feeling; for thou art everlastingly right, and it is safe for thee to do whatsoever thou dost desire to do; and in thy freedom, in the depth and purity of thy nature, and in the revelation that holiness seeks unholiness to heal it, and strength seeks weakness to exalt it,

we rejoice that thou art God because thou knowest how to descend and rescue the lowest and meanest creatures in thy vast realm, and supply their wants; and since we have known this to be God, we are not afraid. All our hope comes from this revelation of thy nature. Now, when we are weak, we know where our strength is. When we faint, we know where our healing is. When we stumble, we know where the hand is that will lift us up.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may not be led to presumption because thou art so kind and good. May we not blind our eyes, and harden our hearts, and tread under foot the blood of the atonement whereby we have been sanctified.

We pray that thou wilt grant a sense of thy presence and kindly thought and bounty to all who are gathered together this morning: to the aged, according to their necessities; to those that are in the midst of life doing battle, bearing burdens, harassed with cares. Give to them the sustaining grace which they need. To those who are entering full of the brightness of hope and courage upon the way of life, grant that providence and guardianship which they desire.

We pray that thou wilt bless the young—the little ones. Grant that they may grow up in all purity, and truth, and piety unto final salvation.

We pray that thou wilt draw near to any who are especially in affliction; to all those who have been called to darkness, to tears, to great heart-trouble. Be thou gracious unto them according to their need.

And we beseech thee that thou wilt guide this morning all who have come hither conscious of doubts and difficulties, and whose consciences are burdened therewith. Give them that light and that revelation of thyself, by which they shall know how to find the truth and to find God. May there be a witness of thee in the souls of those who are tossed hither and thither. May they have springing up in themselves a filial feeling and yearning. May their hearts cry out, Abba, Father! and so may they know that God loves them.

We pray that thou wilt grant unto those who are called in thy providence to labor among their fellow men, that they may be imbued with all spiritual wisdom from on high; that their power may be in the strength of God, and not in their own strength.

We pray that thou wilt bless the work of this church in its various fields of labor. We pray for our schools and Bible classes; for the superintendents and the teachers; for the scholars, for the families from which they come, and for the neighborhoods to which they belong. We beseech of thee that the blessing of the Gospel may be more and more diffused through the instrumentalities of this church; and may those who labor therein not be weary in well-doing, nor puffed up with success, nor discouraged because the fruit is delayed. May there be in each one a humble conception of his own power. May every one have such a sense of the grace and goodness of God toward him, that it shall seem to him an inexpressible privilege to labor even in the lowest places in the vineyard of the Lord.

We pray that thou wilt bless those gathered together in this congregation to-day who are strangers. Bless those from whom they are parted. Grant, we pray thee, that those whom they have left behind may be blessed of God and preserved.

Prosper those who are pursuing errands legitimate, and in thy providence. We pray that thou wilt be gracious to all those who are round about us. Bless those who are detained from church. Be mindful of those who are sick, and of those that watch with the sick.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all the churches in this great city. May they be filled with light, with warmth, and with that sympathy which shall draw them to men for the healing of their needs.

We pray that thy servants who are ordained to preach thy Word may more and more be taught of God, that their preaching may be with power from on high and full of fruit.

Bless, we pray thee, our nation; bless all the nations of the earth; and grant that that joyous day may speedily come when there shall be no more idols, no more superstition, no more ignorance, no more unjust oppression, no more weakness, but when all men shall be filled with the knowledge of God, and all nations shall rest at peace among themselves, and the whole earth shall be filled with thy glory.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be praises everlasting! *Amen.*



## PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we pray for thy blessing to rest upon the truth. Grant that we may be led by it, not by our own prejudice, nor our pride and vanity. May we put aside self-indulgence and obedience to worldly custom. May we be inspired by thy Spirit. May we rejoice in all truth. As it unfolds more and more, may we know that it is truth by that which it does to us—by the richness of our souls, by our self denial; by our humility; by our patience; by our power to endure hardness as good soldiers. May we rejoice in all thine outward bounties—in ships that sail, in warehouses that stand stored full of blessings for the body, in industries of every kind, in better houses, in all the comforts of home; and yet, may we know, and be assured every day, that the kingdom of God is within us; and may we believe that that is our greatest treasure and our whole hope. Bless religion to the young. Bless those who are seeking for it. Screen them from error. And we pray that the time may come when the glory of the Lord shall reign among men, and be manifested in their walk and conversation; and when men shall be exalted individually, and shall be collected into purer households and nobler estates, and shall stand forth the sons of God.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

## MEEKNESS, A POWER.

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“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”—  
MATT. v., 5.

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The beatitudes may be called moral paradoxes. There is an internal truth in them all; and yet all of them go against the general impressions of men in respect to what is true.

“Blessed are they that mourn.”

People have not been accustomed to think of affliction as any great privilege.

“Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you.”

Persecution has not been regarded as among the pleasures of life.

“Blessed are the meek.”

Well, yes; a good, round-faced, sunshiny man, sitting in a corner, and having no care and no business, is a very good thing: but when it is said, “They shall inherit the earth,” men are astonished. Inherit the earth? the meek inherit the earth? “Why!” say men, looking back, “where did you ever find one of these men of moon-shine that was worth anything when affairs were mixed, and when there was need of thought, energy, will, combination, power? Then it is, when the world’s face is changed, that there are armies on the land, and fleets whitening the seas, and counsellors planning together, and the pouring out of money everywhere; but the great forces of life are not derived from this meagre, moonshiny meekness of quiet men that let you punch them, and do not strike back, and let you do just what you have a mind to, and do not hinder you. This is as if zero were to be put at the head of all arithmetic.”

Now, if we should read in Buffon, or Cuvier, or Agassiz,

that in the animal kingdom rabbits and sheep dominate over all other animals, and that nightingales and canary birds rule owls, vultures and eagles, it would not seem more astonishing than for the Bible to say that the meek shall inherit the earth.

If it had said, "They shall have quiet," everybody would have responded, "O yes, they shall have quiet." If it had said, "They shall have a pure heart," everybody would have conceded, "Yes, they shall have a pure heart." Men would have admitted these things: but to say that they are to govern; to take that which is regarded as springing from weakness, and that which has in it less overtness, apparently, than any other quality, and to elect it to supremacy, and declare, "It shall be magistrate, it shall rule, it shall possess the earth," with this great roaring race, red with blood, flashing with arms, combining with all forms of victorious plans, rolling through time as the waves, storm-heated, roll through the ocean,—that is too much for anybody. Men cannot understand how meekness is going to inherit the earth.

And yet, it is very remarkable that this is not the utterance of a later period—that it is not the utterance of a mystic in Judea—that it is not the utterance of an inspired peasant, as men would say. It is the testimony of the sacred writings of the Bible, down through a period of four thousand years—years in which by reason of men's weakness, polygamy and slavery were tolerated, and evasions and untruths were not, by good men, counted as such vices and crimes as they are now. Through all the inchoate, nascent, emergent periods of the race, there has been still in every part of the Old Testament, clear down to the New, this steady testimony—namely, that the moral element is the strongest. Humility, purity, righteousness, yea, and meekness, by name, have been lauded from the very first, and they have been declared to be in supremacy.

"The meek will he guide in judgment."

As I read to you, in the 37th Psalm, this morning,

"The meek shall inherit the earth."

This is from the lips of that robust old warrior, as well as sweet singer, David. It was not by meekness that he gained

everything which he had ; but when he was inspired to speak out of the amplitude of his observation and experience, and from the predominance of his nobler and finer feelings, he saw that thread of truth even in his day ; and he declared (and the declaration becomes a more significant testimony since it is from a man of the spear and sword ; a man who built a kingdom and brought it into military power ; a man who subdued, for the time being, a vast portion of the East) that, after all, there was something more than the spear and sword.

“The meek shall inherit the earth.”

If you will take the trouble, with your concordance, to run through the words “Meek” and “Meekness,” you will be astonished to see this steady testimony all the way through, from beginning to end.

To me, this is one of those elements which go far to prove the inspiration of the Bible. We are all seeking to authenticate Scripture on bald, external and physical grounds. It is significant to me, therefore, that long before men found out anything of theology, there was a faith in certain moral tendencies which has been growing ever since. The fidelity of Scripture writers, and the clarity of their vision in discerning the power of moral elements, is to me proof of the inspiration of Scripture, far above any evidence of prophecy, or miracle, or other considerations of an objective kind.

What is meekness? Are we quite right in our understanding about it? I have assumed, all through, that meekness was in your estimation a sort of still, quiet, unfighting disposition. That, certainly, is its development, frequently ; but what is meekness? What is meant by the quality of meekness?—for it is a quality, and not a faculty. *Meekness* is a word representing the mode of activity of the whole mind. It is an attribute interlaced among others. The term is used to designate the spirit of the whole man, and therefore includes in it the conduct of the reason, of the moral sentiments, of the social affections, and of the passions and appetites. It takes in the entire man, and characterizes the particular mode of his carriage. It is all the faculties within, acting in a given spirit or temper. It is the holding

of the entire mind, when in great activity, and especially when under opposition and provocation—that is, under circumstances which tend to give to it the greatest amount of force—in a calm, sweet, and gentle mood, so that the action which proceeds from it shall proceed from its higher, and not from its lower, nature. It is such a holding of a man's self when he is aroused that the best and spiritual side of his nature shall lead and determine, and not the worst and human side. It is the activity and force which are developed from the divine side, and not from the human—from the moral sentiments and not from the animal passions. Therefore it has in it a certain calmness, a certain control, a certain peacefulness, a certain faith, trust, hope. It is that high and radiant state of mind in which all the faculties act as if they were held in the sweetness of the faith of God, and in the spirit of sympathy and love which is in God.

So, then, meekness is not a dawdling negative; it is not a lantern with a candle in it, cold and flickering, shining in a dark place: meekness includes energy—if you please the thunder of power—in it. It is all that is in man, thinking, willing, acting—but acting under calmness, under sweetness, under the law of benevolence. It exists where a man's nature is so under the divine impress as that the agitations which come from the passions cease, and the passions themselves become only auxiliaries, and are entirely subservient to the higher nature. It is the best side of man under provocation maintaining itself in the best mood, and controlling all men. The declaration is a general one—that this way of using a man's self is not only best for the individual, but will, in the long run, control the race. For it is not declared nor meant that each particular man who is meek shall be superior to everybody else about him. Facts contradict that. For example, if a man is very feeble—feeble in his stomach, and feeble in his lungs—then, of course, he will be feeble everywhere else. It is not meant that one man, simply because he is meek, is more victorious than another man who is strong and robust throughout, and has an endowment twenty degrees higher all around than he has. It is merely meant that if a man, with a given endowment, employs that en-

dowment according to the higher side of his nature, he will be stronger than if he employed it according to the lower side of his nature. We often see meek men go to the wall ; but it is because they are weak. There is the meekness of weakness, there is the meekness of the middle nature, and there is the meekness of the strong nature ; and the declaration is not that each meek man shall be victorious over everybody else, but that, in any given man, meekness is the strongest mood in which he can carry himself ; and that in regard to multitudes of men, in the long run, those who carry themselves according to their highest nature in meekness shall succeed, and shall overtop, at length, those who carry themselves by their lower nature. There is an essential and predominant power of the spiritual instincts over the animal instincts in a man.

It is not meant, then, that meek men shall at once, or always, succeed in their courage or enterprise, while men that are not meek shall at once and always fail. Our observation teaches us, every day, that it is not so ; but our observation also teaches us that in mixed affairs, in times of conflict, of rivalries, and of collisions, the men who are meek are, after all, the men who make headway.

Look at it. A very proud father has a son. He naturally governs him with rigor and peremptoriness. He finds out that the boy has, in his visitations, allied himself prematurely with a family with which it is very desirable there should not be a connection. On hearing of it, he rages and storms ; and his wife says to him, " My dear, don't you know that if you undertake to oppose this thing in that way, you will do more harm than good ? Don't you know that if you are violent with the boy, you will only ratify him in his determination ? " He recognizes that fact, and calms down. He goes to the boy and says, pleasantly, " Well, my son, how is it with you ? I hear that you have been visiting. " " Yes, " says the boy. " I have. " " Well, I am very glad of it ; where have you been ? " " In Mr. So-and-So's family. " " Ah ! there are many excellent things in that family. I suppose you have become acquainted with the young people ? " " Yes, sir. " " And it is very natural that young people

should become attached to each other." So he goes on with the conversation in a spirit of sweetness and gentleness, till, by and by, he has brought the young man round, and drawn him away from these dangerous grounds and connections. And the effect is the same whether he puts on the meekness, or whether he feels it; whether he holds in his bad temper, and brings the sympathetic element of his nature into play, or whether he acts as he is impelled to by his better feelings. Whether he believes in meekness or not, he arrives at the desired result by the use of it. The great thing is to carry himself so as to overcome the boy's proclivities. It is not an uncommon thing to put on meekness, in order to gain a purpose.

A man owes you a large debt—larger than you ought to have allowed him to run up; and things grow squally; and you think that it is only a question of time when he will fail: but you do not go to him in anger, and say, "You owe me fifty thousand dollars, and I want you to secure it to me this very minute." What do you do? You invite him to dine with you at Delmonico's, and you laugh and talk with him; but you do not say a word to him about that debt; at first. You do say to him, "If there is anything you want, let me know it, and I will help you." Thus you get into his sympathies, working your way along gradually; and by and by you say, "I am your friend, and I will see you through this thing"; (yes, you will see him through it!) and then when you have gained his confidence completely, you say, "Could not you just arrange this thing so and so?" And before you get through with him, you worm out an arrangement with him by which you are all secure,—and you go home and laugh. But when the other creditors come to get their debts secured, they do not feel meek at all! By meekness, you have inherited that man's property, pretty much all of it!

It is so, is it not, in domestic matters, and in commercial matters? Do not men understand how unwise it is to act, in critical circumstances, from basilar motives? Do they not know how unwise it is to manifest pride and temper and greediness? Do they not know that they must throw them-

selves on the side of generosity, of benevolence, of sympathy, of honor, of all helpfulness? Do they not know that they must pat men, and come to them with the very sweetest and best things they can get out of themselves?

So men do as old housewives do who keep sage, and penny-royal, and rue, and all kinds of sweet-smelling herbs. Almost all men have sweet-smelling herbs which they keep in a cupboard to use upon occasion. They are all of them rude and selfish; but they have wrought out, not by theory, but by experience, the knowledge that the power of a man does not lie in his brute force, nor in violent temper, nor in the domination of his will. Although these sometimes succeed, it is, in the long run, the man who thinks, who plans, who adapts himself to circumstances, who holds himself under, and who seeks his rights and the ends at which he aims by using the higher side of his nature, who is, speaking in a general way, always successful.

It is not meant either, that the meek shall inherit the whole earth, as a warrior like Alexander or Cæsar or Charlemagne takes possession of an empire. It signifies the appropriation in a moral sense of the higher forces among men of every kind. The highest force, as we have termed it, is meekness. There is a direct declaration of the superiority of the human mind, working from its higher elements and temper, over the same mind, acting from the inferior or animal temperament.

“When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?”

So asks our Master. No, we reply; not in the sense of theological faith. There was enough of that in his day; but men did not believe in moral quality, except in spots and occasionally. And now, there is an unbelief among mankind as to the superiority of moral forces. Men are slow to believe that what they see to be best in certain instances is best under all circumstances. Their tendency is to believe that cunning and craft are the elements which secure success. They clothe themselves with higher qualities for a special purpose; but they do not believe that the average conduct of men founded on those elements would give better success than if they only assumed it occasionally. Meekness is

looked upon as a luxury, as an artificial thing; but the Word of God teaches that it is a primary force, that it is a dominant power. So superior is it to all other modes of carrying one's self, that when the race shall believe in it and accept it they shall inherit the earth, or that part of it which can be of any value to them. They who know how to carry all their forces in that spirit shall be the aristocrats of the race, in the highest sense of that term—that is, they shall be the best men.

Men believe now in bodily strength. They have believed in it in other ages still more than they do now. They believe in arms and armies. They believe in craft and cunning. They believe in energy, and will, and perseverance. They believe in things. They believe in matter. They believe in influencing their fellow men, working upon them by threats, by pains, by fear. There are very few men who believe that, in all directions, that man is using himself in the strongest possible manner who is using himself by his highest nature, in the sweetest and most perfect accord with the Divine nature.

But, on the other hand, the whole Bible is a protest against animalism and physicalism, and in favor of spiritual power and spiritual wisdom. The whole Bible, from the rudest ages down to our day, through blood and groans, amidst kingdoms rising and kingdoms falling, with all the powerful men in the world exercising their lower nature, has had this doctrine running straight through it—that, after all, the sweet and calm use of the superior faculties is the best wisdom, and that they miss who take any other way, while they gain who accept that way.

Men have not believed this; but there has been a witness and testimony of it all the way from the beginning to the end of the Scriptures. Faith in moral quality is the characteristic element of the Bible. Faith in integrity, faith in righteousness, faith in the power of purity, faith in that meekness which is the antipode of rude physical violence,—this abounds throughout the Word of God as one of its most prominent features. “He that has an enemy, and can crush him, is a fool if he does not strike him down,” says the world. “He is a fool if he does,” says the Word. “He who has a

grievous burden, and can shake it off, and does not do it, is a fool," says the world. "Come unto me, and take my yoke and my burden," saith the Lord. All the way through the early revolutionary periods, the periods when men of righteousness were driven abroad over the earth, and wandered in sheepskins and goatskins, being men of whom the world was not worthy, there never lacked this one steady testimony. What? testimony to the church? testimony to the priesthood and the temple and the altar? testimony to sacrifices and dogmatic theology? No. The one line of light that shines like a silver thread, running from Genesis to Revelation, is the declaration that the son of God is the man who is in the exercise of the highest reason and the highest moral feeling—the feeling which love inspires—the feeling of humility and meekness.

Meekness is a power, and it is the highest known power. Men have found it out, as I have said, in single spots, enough to confirm, by nascent and limited experience, the truth of it; but there has been great unbelief in the world concerning it. Men, for the most part, do not believe in the power of sweet, calm high-mindedness. Yet, in the Word of God, there has been an unbroken testimony for it. The Scriptures have, in every possible way, been continually urging it.

In a whole life-time, then, each man can do more and better work by the use of his higher than by the use of his lower nature. This is true, even if he is seeking secular success; how much more must it be true, if he is seeking success in conscious manhood! and how much more yet must it be true, if he is seeking that success which lies in the hope of immortality!

It is not by your flesh force; it is not by the force of your passions; it is not by your assurance, or pride, or hatred, or envy; it is not by craft or cunning; it is not by the combination of worldly experiences, that men are, in the best sense of the term, successful: it is by that faith of superior moral excellence which shall enable them to wait through the years; to build slowly, that they may build surely; and to build with care, that they may build wisely. It is this faith by which men grow, in the long run, and which is the secret of the

best success that is known in the world—not the success which comes from the use of the lower faculties, and which is liable to the touch of corruption, and which may in a moment be swept away by adversity, like the dust of the field ; but the success which comes from the use of the higher faculties, and which is abiding. He who builds on the foundation of moral moods and moral qualities builds never to need insurance. Neither time, nor fate, nor death, can touch such a man to harm him. In the long run, the blessing of higher moral qualities in society is more than any other blessing. Even in a barbarous state he is the hero who does the things that are the least possible to the great mass of men. Self-government, and acting from a superior plane, will strike, gradually, the minds even of barbarous men. But as civilization increases—that is, as men become more *men*, as they open up more, as they have a better use of themselves, and as culture grows more—under such circumstances, in proportion as there is a development of the truth, that part of society which uses the best instruments is the part of society that prospers most.

You may divide the great cities and nations of the earth into three classes—the top, the middle, and the bottom. The middle is the great workshop. There is where the forces are in strife and struggle, and where they grind and crush. There is where the battle-shock is felt, and where the various elements are sent whirling in different directions. It is so in commerce ; it is so in politics ; it is so in all forms of human life. The great middle class are in perpetual antagonism, and are constantly striving against each other. But, out of this hurly-burly and conflict, there is now and then one who is lifted into a realm of peace higher than that which is attained by his fellows, and whom all men look up to. There are those who are the natural judges and counsellors of men. There is, once in a while, a man whom persons, dying, would like to have become the executor of their estates. Whom would you pick out? A man of great force, of great cunning, of great power of combination? No ; you would pick out the man who, in the battle of life, has shown that he works by the principle of righteousness. Such men are the

ones who, without election, rise by spontaneity. They are God's elect. I believe in election, if you do not—only I think every man votes for himself. He who lives by the higher part of his nature is elected; and, little by little, he rises into the recognition of society around him.

Then, there is the opposite tendency. Men in the midst of these grinding forces and conflicts of life fail and go down, losing an eye, an arm, a leg, or something else, and settle gradually into the under-class of the weak, the imbecile, the unfortunate, the helpless, the useless, the mischievous, and the criminal. You shall find that these are the men who undertake to build by their basilar forces. They believe in physics; they believe in the flesh; they believe in that lower range of wisdom which they have in common with the fox and the serpent,—and these are the men in the main who are ground up here.

There are apparent exceptions to this which I have not time to argue now; but there are no real exceptions to it. There is this great under-class which comes from the under side of the human faculties, and there is this upper-class that comes from the upper side of the human faculties.

Now, I ask you, who are superior? Who are the men that have succeeded best in life? Who are the men that have held their success, and have reaped from it that for which we seek success—have attained happiness, peace with God, and peace among men? I put it to your own judgment. I put it to the observation of the youngest of you, and still more to those who are well versed in life. Are not the men who best stand the weather, the dislocations which come from commercial revulsions, and all oppositions, those who live in the exercise of their highest nature in the world? Other men have gone up, oh yes; but they have come down again. The meek were at the bottom when the race began. They had conscience, they had scruples, they had delicacy of thought and feeling; and they could not consent to be gainers at the expense of the destruction of other men. They rather pitied them, and helped them. They could not exercise hatred here and there. They must wait patiently for their success. They must live right, whether they were

successful or not. But, little by little, they grew and advanced. It is the weed that runs up quickly on the dung-hill; but it seems as though corn would never get out of the ground. So men, laying the true foundations of life, seem to develop slowly; but there is steady progress in their growth, and finally their faith and patience are rewarded, and on their passage up they meet those who outstripped them at the beginning. We meet everybody twice: first, as he goes by us on his way up, laughing at us as we plod on behind him, and again, as he comes down, while we are still plodding on and up.

Men who believe in right instruments, in a right temper, in that wisdom which is in concord with God, in purity, in sympathy, in loving-kindness, and in well-wishing for every human soul, and who quadrate all their measures by these divine qualities,—such men go steadily on and up; and when you come to make up the account, and balance the books, they always come out on the credit side; they are always ahead.

Take the imperfect condition of things which exists in civilized society, and you will find that, as a general rule, men do not believe in men of meekness. But let us inquire as to who are really the men of power in the world. Ask, with me, who are the men that have lived whom time could not slay? Well, take the old Oriental monarchs. There was the Medean Empire, with its proud princes; there was the Babylonian Empire, with its proud princes; there was the Assyrian Empire, with its proud princes; and who were they? What were they? For their time, they were the richest, they were the strongest, they were the most successful men. All the world poured tribute into their luxurious self-indulgence. And what became of them? Who can tell? Time sits upon the ruins of the mighty things which they built, muttering; but we cannot hear even the name it pronounces.

“The memory of the wicked shall rot.”

Who are the men that are known to-day? Who are the men that almost every child knows? They are the men who have blessed the world. They are benefactors, right-doers, good men, inspiring justice, and peacefulness, and sweetness, and harmony, and goodness, and righteousness.

Why, we hear of Alexander; yet none of his blood beats in your veins or in mine: but in your veins and in mine beats the blood of Plato, who lived by his highest nature. New England is as much Platonic as Judaic, for the Yankee is a cross between the Greek and the Hebrew.

The great thinkers and legislators of time were wise men. Their memory remains. He lives, and is immortal, who lives to do good to others besides himself. If a man is a great and pure genius he stands so high above the horizon that he never goes down below it, but will shine in the firmament forevermore.

Paul says:

“I beseech you by the gentleness of Christ.”

Says Christ himself:

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

The prophet, in describing him, says:

“He shall not strive nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.”

He shall not be like the kingly warriors of old, who made a stand, and with crowds, with legions, and with battering-rams, dashed upon the enemy, and with yell and fury fought from house to house and from street to street.

“The bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.”

This mighty Conqueror, this renowned Sovereign, this Monarch of the ages, this Lord, this Jesus, comes not with pomp and show; his kingdom comes not with observation; his advent is not with battle-cry nor with garments dyed in blood. He comes so gently that the slender reed, which, when whole, quivers in the wind, but which now, bruised, only waits for a breath to bend it to its fall—he comes so gently that this bruised reed shall not break. He comes so gently that the flickering tip of flame on the lamp, that lifts and sinks, and lifts and sinks, as if it knew not whether to go out or to abide,—so gently that the smoking flax shall not be quenched. These are the extremest figures which you can imagine by which to express the wonderful

gentleness of this Mightiest of the mighty ; this Lord of lords ; this King of kings ; this One who is renowned of the ages past, and whose name is to be above every other name in the future : and he calls men to come to him and learn the power of meekness. When he came, it was with infinite sweetness and tenderness ; and he desires his disciples to partake of those same divine qualities. Where was there ever another name of such power ? and where was there ever a name that had in it so much of comforting peace and love ?

The whole world to-day sit as scholars at the feet of Jesus—not necessarily as learners of theology and dogma, but as pupils seeking the illumination of human nature, faith in self-control, and aspiration, and immortality, and knowledge in the exercise of the nobler parts of man. All mankind, to-day, are Christ's scholars. Not they that are called Christians are always Christians ; and not they that are called heathen are always heathen. They who have the spirit of Christ, whether they be in one or another part of the globe, are Christ's ; and they who have not the spirit of Christ are none of his, no matter what official robes they may wear, or what cathedrals they may worship in. Not all who are born of Abraham are Abraham's seed, not all that are born of Christ are Christ's seed ; but anybody who seeks to learn of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is in sympathy with him, and is filled with love, and with willingness to suffer—not for himself, but for others—and is giving his life for those that he loves, is a child of Christ. The tendency of the world, to-day, is in the direction of these higher qualities ; and it comes from the Man of meekness. No man ever sat on the throne that had such sway as Jesus Christ has. Go with Bauer ; go with Renan, who may be said, in view of his countrymen, to be one of the most eloquent eulogists of Christ, but who yet detracts from the grandeur of Christ's character ; go with the most renowned authors who disparage Christ ; read them all ; and dispense with as much as you please of historic verity and theologic unity, and yet no man can deny that there never has lived on this globe one whose influence was so deep, so wide, so long-continued, so enduring, so

fadeless, so ever-growing, and so full of promise of growth forevermore, as the influence of the meek and lowly Jesus.

“Blessed are the meek.”

You do not believe that. You will go home, to-day, from my discourse, and the servants will do wrong, or the children will do wrong, and you will get out of patience, and you will lay down the law to them, and, stamping your foot, you will say, “Now I want you to understand this matter.” You will not lay down the law as Christ did when he was going up to Jerusalem, and the disciples were disputing as to who should have the precedence in his kingdom. Peter says, “I am going to be primate;” and John says, “No, not if I am alive and around, you won’t.” They got into a regular quarrel. It was the orders of the priesthood again, all over. But did Christ say to them, “Here, you infamous fellows! I have called you to be disciples, and are you so wanting in a sense of respectability that, the moment my back is turned, you conduct yourselves in this way?” You would think that a father might talk thus, but you would not expect the Lord to do it; and he did not. He said, with gentle tone and manner, “What were you saying?” and they, shame-faced, undertook to tell him; and he set a child in the midst of them, and said, “Whosoever shall humble himself and become as this little child shall be the chief. He that would be greatest must be least.” Oh, with what sweetness, with what patience, with what love did he meet that which must have been most abhorrent to his soul! But you will return home to-day, and things will not go right, and your wife or children or servants will feel the exercise of your authority with emphasis. You do not believe in meekness.

When a thing is said that is distasteful to you, you do not believe in holding your peace. Especially if you are wronged, you believe in resenting it. But the spirit of Christ leads a man to say, “It is not for me to assert myself: it is for me to heal the wrong-doer, and help him. It is not for me to be everlastingly thinking, ‘What shall be done for me?’ It is for me to do what I can for everybody around me;” and in saying it, he exhibits meekness.

Now, will you do it? Will you do it among your ser-

vants? Will you do it among all the men whom you employ? Will you undertake to carry yourself so in your domestic and business relations? You will, if the sweetest and highest side of your nature is in the ascendant. In that case, you will be true disciples of Christ. Otherwise, you will not.

But you will say, "You take charge of a gang of men—a couple of hundred Irishmen—building a railroad, and try your meekness on them. It is very well for you to stand in the pulpit and preach meekness; but I should like to see you apply it to the practical affairs of life. Could you yourself exercise meekness under such circumstances?"

I know that it can be done; and I say that there never was a man of much practical experience who would not bear witness that he could get along better with men when he treated them like men, and dealt with them as if he had their welfare at heart.

You may take a couple of hundred men—I do not care how rude they are—and if you make it certain to them that you are studying their interests as well as your own, that you think of their families, that you care for them when they are sick, and that you are their defender in trouble, you will get more and better work out of them than you could in any other way.

That is a law of industry; but you do not believe it, or, you only half accept it. The best side of you, turned toward other men, makes the best side of them active. If whatever is honorable in you is brought out, it will bring out whatever is honorable in them. On the other hand, those things which are harsh and selfish and self-asserting, being brought out in you, will bring out the corresponding qualities in them. If you are bad, they will be bad.

There is what may be termed a moral echo among men. When you stand over against some cliff, and cry out, "Father," back comes "Father." Now cry out "Devil," and "Devil" comes back. What you say brings back its own response.

If you fly at your child, and say, "You imp of perdition you! What have you been doing?" the little imp of perdition may not dare to say what it has been doing, but there is

hell in it, and you have waked it up. I have seen parents go to their children thus with wrath ; and I have also seen parents meet their children with patience and sweetness and love. I have seen an infuriated child rush at its mother and strike her. The mother looks down at the child kindly and gently. The child strikes her again, but not half so hard as at first. She continues to manifest sweetness toward it ; and at length the child throws itself into her arms and cries. The mother has said not a word, but her meekness has subdued the passion of the child ; for what one feels with power wakes up the same feeling in another.

If you bring to a man selfishness and worldliness, you wake selfishness and worldliness in him, and these qualities answer back ; but if you bring to a man that royalty of true beneficence and manliness which carries in it sympathy for every human being, and treat him justly and kindly, you wake up a corresponding disposition in him. The best way to get along with men is to love them and bear with their weaknesses.

In diplomacy, it is the same thing. One of the noblest things that Count Cavour ever said was that the diplomatist who distrusted men would make more mistakes than the diplomatist who trusted men. There was the breathing of the spirit of the Gospel in that. Diplomacy has always been said to be like a lot of serpents coiled together, wily and cunning, and striving for the mastery ; but Count Cavour took a higher view of it. He was a great nature. He died too soon for Italy and the world. He perceived that a diplomacy which trusted men, which had confidence in them, and which was beneficent toward them, would get a response from them, on the whole, more favorable, less fraught with evil, than a diplomacy which distrusted them, and sought to govern them by craft.

And this is just as true in regard to the whole economy of the State. We have advanced a great way beyond the modes of government which prevailed in the olden times ; but we are far from being right. There are coming days in which the world will be still better governed on this principle of meekness. There is much less brute force and much more moral

sentiment employed in the intercourse of men now than there used to be ; but days are coming yet when a great deal that is animal will be purged out of the world, and when a great deal that is moral and spiritual will be ushered into it.

Do you suppose you are ever going to reform sixteen hundred men in Sing Sing, when you divest them of every attribute of manhood ; when you shave them like brutes ; when you make them pariahs, so that they stand out distinct from their fellow-men ? Do you suppose that you can treat men like animals and have them emerge like angels ? Do you suppose that all the committees and praying bands that stand at the doors of Sing Sing to take the criminal when he comes out by pardon, or by the fulfillment of his sentence, can reform him after he has been for five or ten years treated as if he were a brute ? You cannot reform him unless you treat him as if he were a man. You must believe in his manhood, and trust his manhood, if you would reform him. No State will reform its criminals until it knows how to treat them as Jesus Christ treated sinners. The law of mankind is, " God so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for it." Out of the Divine sympathy sprang salvation. This is the light that dawns upon the future ; and you will never govern your family well, nor your business well, nor the State well, nor will you ever recover and reform its lapsed sons and daughters, till you know what is the power of meekness—that is, how to carry yourselves, in the administration of your laws, and in the infliction of their penalties, in accordance with the Holy Spirit of God.

Then, better days will dawn. Then, more joy will be in the household. Then, the State will need fewer constables. Then citizens will live more amicably together. Then society will strive for higher civilization. Then there will be a healing of avarice and greed. Then selfishness will decrease. Then ambition of a nobler kind, and aspiration of the higher qualities, will supersede the domination of the lower instincts. Then the animal man will grow less and less, and the spiritual man will grow more and more, till the new heaven and the new earth in which dwelleth righteousness

shall come, and Jesus, the Model, the Exemplar, the Leader, shall be the one sole King.

All hail the day! He who acts in this spirit takes one step in the march of the world toward that blessed consummation.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, Almighty God, in thy being. We rejoice in all that we know, in all that we imagine; and we rejoice in that which lies beyond our understanding; for when by the utmost we have reached the limit of our height and depth, length and breadth, the love of Christ still passes knowledge; and we rejoice in that which is beyond. It throws light upon what is near and within our reach; and it stirs us, because it is so grand in quality that our best estate and highest nature is not able to reach unto it. So that what thou art which is known to us, fills us with gladness; and then there is the unsearchable realm of glory and of grandeur in thee which fills our souls with expectancy, and with tremulous joy and hope. Thou hast vouchsafed to us a knowledge of thyself in the outward world; and in that we rejoice. Shining on it, thou hast made it dear to us in every part. Thou hast vouchsafed a revelation to us in our own personal wants and experiences. And yet, dealing with us as with individuals in thy providence and by thy grace, thou art known to us only in part. We cannot rise to the high argument of thy dealing with the souls of men in all the variations of their continuous experience throughout the ages. We rejoice that thou hast made thyself known to us, therefore, in the life of nations, in the history of thine own church, and in the knowledge which we have of the progress of mankind through their low estate and vulgar needs up to that high estate in which they begin to represent the saints in glory. For all these various manifestations we thank thee; and though we cannot grasp them together, nor even fashion out of them, by reason of our weakness, the fullness of thy revelation of the ages, yet we do rejoice in it in parts, and in glimpses which we get of the whole that is in it.

And now, O Lord our God, to thee belongs all praise; but what is our praise to thee, we understand so little? To thee belongs the ascription of majesty and of power. Let them ascribe dominion and honor and glory who are lifted above the limitation and weakness of time, and who stand rejoicing in thy very presence. As for us, what can we bring to thee but love?

Babes can love; and little children that do not know how to interpret the household, or the reason of their parents' conduct, love them, and can strive to obey them. We bring the desire of obedience, and we bring the impulse and breathing of affection. This is all that we can do; and it is all that thou dost need. It is not the flower that lifts itself up to make the sun happy: it is the sun that pours its light and warmth into the flower, and makes it live; and we are creatures of thy thought. Thou hast poured forth thy love profusely through the universe, and therefore we exist. We are the creatures of thy thought, and love, and will, and care. Though we bring thee little, we represent to thee much; and we rejoice that there is some reason in thee why thou art glad of us. We rejoice that we are bound to thee by reasons that are in thee, and not merely by our own merit. It is this that gives us comfort and consolation. We stand, because thou dost stand. Because thou art what

thou art, we are saved. We rejoice that it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

And now, we beseech thee, O Lord our God, to help us live more perfectly day by day in that liberty and that restfulness and that confidence which they have who have made God their refuge. If thou art for us, who can be against us? If thy thoughts are around about us as a sure defense, what can harm us? What can harm those all of whose ways are appointed, and those whom all things do serve? For if we love thee, all things work together for our good. And we say, in every event of life—even in the things which come and try us—We fear not the things which are hard to bear. When we have reasoned with ourselves until we understand that this is the will of God, we are able to submit and say, Thy will be done, and to find strength, and comfort, and hope, and cheerfulness in trouble, in infirmities, in temptations, in various trials.

O grant that this life may be more perfectly developed in us. Grant that we may have this higher reach of life above that which is material—above that which belongs to mankind at large. May we have the love of God. May we be among the elect—those that live by faith, by trust, by hope, by joy, and by meekness. Grant, we pray thee, that we may live in the world as above it, and that so we may control it.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon thy servants who are gathered together in thy presence. May they be able under all circumstances to represent the mind and will of Christ. May they bear their burdens cheerfully and manfully. May they carry themselves in sorrow as those who are touched of God. It is not the darkness which comes from night or terror: it is but the overshadowing of thy wings which brings the twilight. Whom thou lovest thou chastenest, and scourgest every son whom thou receivest. May every one who is visited with affliction feel that God is dealing with him, not in wrath but in mercy, and that the hidden wisdom of God is doing for him that which he understands not now, but shall know hereafter. Grant that all thy servants may feel the blessedness of thine utterance: No affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous; yet, afterward it worketh the peaceable fruit of righteousness in them that are exercised thereby.

O how wonderful are the truths which are spoken until they have become trite to us! How ignorant are we of the fullness of their meaning till we are brought by thy providence to the need of them! How are those simple utterances that the ages have heard and neglected made to open like the very realm of heaven to us, when the soul needs them! Bless, we beseech thee, to thy servants who are in various trials and troubles, these truths that have waited so long for them. May the words of God open their arms and take into their bosom many a weary soul, many a mourner, many a disappointed one. May those who feel that the world is growing dim, rejoice that thereby the heavens may grow bright. And we pray that thou wilt remember those who believe that one and another thing is being taken away from them here. May they feel that the stakes and cords are being removed, and that their earthly tabernacle is being

taken down, preparatory to their departure for the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. May we rejoice in growing age and infirmity. May we rejoice that, as one thing and another is hidden and packed out of sight, we are getting ready for the journey to the new Jerusalem. We are pilgrims, and are on our way to that glorious city, to a noble company, to a blessedness that has no representation upon earth. May we live in the full faith of that coming glory, and be content with limitation, inconvenience, annoyance, burdens, cares, whatsoever things are needful for us. Make us patient, gentle, and forbearing, seeking above all things to represent to men the sweet and blessed mildness and gentleness of the Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered rather than to make suffering, and who died rather than to slay mankind. Grant that we may be burden-bearers for each other, and suffer for each other, and live for each other. Thus may there be a gospel which is not found among men—the new dispensation—the glory of the upper life in the soul made more powerful than the under life.

Grant, we pray thee, that this church may be blessed in all its labors—in all that it seeks to do in spreading the knowledge of Christ and the spirit of Christ. Bless its schools and missions and visitations, and all its works of charity and love. We thank thee for its unity. We thank thee that there are so many in it who breathe the very spirit of Christ. We pray that it may grow, not so much in numbers and outwardness as in the power of faith and love, and in the blessedness of an unshaken hope. May it shine out, and teach all around what is the true religion.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all churches, upon all thy servants everywhere, upon all instruments that are employed to civilize and evangelize this land.

We pray for the President of these United States, and all those that are joined with him in authority—for the Congress assembled, for all courts, for all legislatures, for all magistrates and for all citizens.

We beseech thee that thou wilt bless those who are teachers in schools and universities; the editors of papers; those who write books, and send them forth; all that are commanding the influences of civilization for the welfare of mankind. We pray that thou wilt thus sanctify the centers of influence, that civilization may not be material, but may rise to the highest spiritual forms. May nations no longer antagonize nations. Let not peace be in the intermediate sea or on the overtopping mountain, but in concord of men's hearts. May they look upon each other with love and desire for mutual prosperity and for common wealth.

So we beseech of thee that thy kingdom may come everywhere, that thy will may be done, and that the whole earth may be filled with thy glory.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

## EXTENT OF THE DIVINE LAW.

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“And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.”—ROM. viii., 10.

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As more and more is known of the nature of the human mind, and of its social and physical relations, more and more light is thrown upon these two matchless chapters of psychology—the deepest in all literature—the 7th and 8th of Romans. And although the terminology is of the age in which they were written, and the illustrations Jewish, yet, by translations, they will be made conformable to the ripest and latest knowledge which we have of the operations of the human mind, of the nature of responsibility, and of suffering under law, from conscious violation of it, and those reachings and yearnings for the peace which accompanies a sense of perfection, instead of the hopelessness of finding that perfection by obedience to the law, and, most blessed, for the opening of that glorious truth of God which was made manifest in Jesus Christ, that there is rest for sinful men, and triumph for those who are perpetually defeated by temptation.

But we are yet to grow through long ranges of knowledge before we reach the fullness of the comprehension, either of the 7th of Romans, which depicts a man struggling with conscious imperfection, or the 8th of Romans, which is a disclosure of the higher spiritual life triumphing over the lower and animal life, and reaching far into the invisible and spiritual world, and taking hold of the very nature and substance of the heavenly land, and of the Spirit of God himself.

Much dispute has arisen in respect to the question whether or not man is a sinful creature—dispute which has come,

largely, from an infelicitous mode of exposition. Of the fact itself, the whole creation that groans and travails in pain until now, is an unimpeachable witness. If there be no other thing true under the sun, it is true that all who are born of woman are born into imperfection—an imperfection breeding sin, a sin breeding misery, and a misery breeding infinite yearnings—yearnings that are blind, and that know not which way to lift themselves.

There is an impression, when we are speaking of law, that sin is simply the conscious violation of a given law. Paul speaks of the law as disclosing sin. “I had not known sin, if the law had not said, ‘Thou shalt not covet.’” A rule of duty, a rule of life, or a commandment (whatever term you choose to call it by), measures men’s obligations: and right and wrong, in the great majority of instances, is known, not from the nature of things, the organic law of creation, but simply from the commandment or the uttered law. Therefore the word of God, as it is recorded in the Bible, is said to be the law of life, not because it is the full declaration of that law, but because it is an interpretation by imperfect men of that which they were not competent to understand—namely, the law of God as it exists in the organic creation of mankind.

No matter what a physician says, and no matter whether he says anything, if you over-eat, you will find that the law is after you, for there is a law of the stomach. And if you over-watch, you will find that the law is after you. There has been no exposition of it. You stumble on its sharp edge; it cuts you—and that is the revelation of it. The penalty teaches it. And so, little by little, men have learned to deal with substances, to moderate their desires, etc. They have selected food and occupations and raiment; they have built dwellings; they have conformed themselves to climates, and measured their strength and their nervous vitality; and, little by little, they have found out what were the elementary laws of their creation.

There was no book of science which accompanied man’s birth into this world. There was nothing that taught him of bone and muscle. The heart had beat four thousand

years before men knew that there was a circulation of the blood, and then they did not know what it circulated for—that it carried food-tissue to every part of the human system; and yet, in all this time of darkness, there were certain fundamental laws on which men depended for existence and for happiness; and these laws meant just the same then that they do now. They were the original laws or conditions of existence and happiness, and they are as much in force to-day as they were at that time. A law is some rule of conduct laid down according to the original nature which was infixed in man at his creation.

Thus, if you were to receive from an expert physician a line of rules or precepts in respect to rising early, bathing, suitable clothes, proper food, the warmth or coldness of food, the use of the right kinds of food and the right kinds of liquids, the labor which it is right to engage in, the amount of labor to be performed, the pauses in labor, the various relations of the body to times and seasons and to occupations,—if you were to receive from an expert physician a line of rules or precepts in respect to these things, he would interpret to you in words that which inhered in you before. These rules, or precepts, or laws, would but express what was beforehand implied in the existence and structure of the body.

So then, a man may live in a world of laws which he does not understand, perpetually suffering in consequence of violations of them, because he does not know what they are, or how they operate, since they have not been interpreted to him.

Therefore the apostle says that the commands given to the Jews (in so far as there was a system of rules given to them to regulate their life and conduct in society, and in their various relations to each other), revealed sin to them—interpreted to them what was right and wrong; and so you see variations from that interpretation or revelation of right and wrong in men's conduct or course of life.

Now, consider for a moment what is the complexity of the laws under which men are living. Bear in mind that the original conditions of things, that the organic creative ele-

ments, are the foundations of law, and that a command is but putting into language a truth that existed before there was any command.

The physical and the organic laws I have already alluded to. In regard to the more serious violations of law in his physical constitution, a man finds the interpretation of the law and of the penalty in his experience. No man, whether he understands the nature of things or not, puts his hand into the fire without feeling that he has violated a law. A chemist who, in a laboratory, puts together two or three unknown substances, so that an explosion takes place and throws him to the other side of the room, has no doubt that there is a law which he has run counter to. Men find out laws by the suffering which the violation of them entails, or by the benefit which accrues from them; and in regard to the great bodily laws, or laws that have use through our body, there is comparatively a practical knowledge.

But then, we are not simply isolated, living in contact with the globe, and by our physical bodies. What we are, we never could develop, if there were no other persons with whom we were associated. How could I love a tree, if I were on a desolate island where there was nothing but trees? How could I ever have sympathy, if I lived among rocks, where there were no human beings? That of which I have a component in my own mind, and which is essential to its full disclosure or out-play; those ten thousand interchanges of imagination, or aspiration, or co-operation in zeal and labor,—these could have no expression in a dungeon, or on a desolate island, or in any isolation whatever. A man must live with mankind, in order to be himself. An individual is born of society; and as society is the aggregate of individuality, no man could be what he is, if it were not for the influences which flow in upon him from his fellows. And that society which, like the ocean, sends its tides in on the individual, is itself the product of a multiplication of these individuals; so that, through both, cause and effect act reciprocally.

But now comes the question, how to live together in society relations. There is a truth underlying the one which I have just been expounding. How to live with my body in

relation to air, water, fire, magnetism, sharp-cutting rocks, iron, wild beasts, etc.,—that is one department, and that I have learned little by little; but then I have a life with my fellow-men, which is called my civil relation. Gradually, through thousands of groaning years, men have found out how to live among themselves; and the methods by which men live with each other are called rules or laws of society. Some parts of them are embodied in civil law. Men feel how necessary the State is to the individual: this feeling has organized the State; and in order to its preservation, certain great elements, negative and positive—things to be avoided and things to be done—have been ordained into laws and commandments; and so many of them as are necessary for the well-being of society, surround every one of us.

I wake up out of unconscious infancy into nascent boyhood and manhood; and I know but little of the laws that pertain to my body, and still less of the laws that pertain to my fellow-men. I am a living and crying animal, that runs stumbling hither and thither in regard to natural things. From suffering I learn wisdom; but in respect to the great out-world I know nothing. I do not understand the texture, the structure, or the institutions of the State. I do not understand any of my obligations to the State, as a boy-citizen—for I am not a citizen. I am zero to the whole State. The State counts my father and my mother, but it does not count me until I am of age. Twenty-one years pass before a man is born into the State—and that is premature often. I am counted as a know-nothing until I have had time to learn; and the State says, “You are not accountable, or you are less accountable, or you are only partially accountable, until you come to years of discretion;” and when I come to these years, and assume little by little the obligations of manhood, think of how many things lie in the statute-book and in the common law of which I am ignorant. Think how many places there are where “thou shalt” is brought to bear upon me in the daily affairs of life, and how many other places, where “thou shalt not” blocks up temptation, and shuts the door of importunity.

Man is a creature that stands inwebbed in laws of which

he is more or less ignorant ; and these laws increase, multiply, and become more and more complex, as a man comes into society.

As if it were not enough that this great legislative globe should be hidden, and only gradually disclosed ; as if it were not enough that the mighty laws on which life itself and the right use of every part of the physical frame depend should confront us, we are admitted, as we grow in age and experience, into a still wider sphere of observation, which spreads out as society becomes more and more complex, as its interests multiply—as its wealth increases—opening realm after realm in life, each of which imposes some new law upon us, and teaches us how to get along—how to act and how to avoid action—as circumstances may require. Every new plane of knowledge is in the nature of a command which reveals to us some obligation.

But, as if that were not enough, there are infinite laws within laws ; for the State cannot regulate the household. The State cannot regulate public opinion. The State, except in mere externals, cannot regulate customs, trades, guilds, literature, the various departments into which men are perpetually dividing themselves up.

The child, while it begins to learn its duties as a citizen, finds itself in a little legislative hall of its own, where it is obliged to learn how to get along with father and mother, sisters and brothers, the servants, and those with whom it comes in contact at home ; and it is a different kind of getting along from that which he learns in respect to the State.

I am not obliged to run and put a chair, or draw back from the favorite dish, or be courteous, or exchange the civilities of the morning, in my relation to the man who lives across the street, whose house is shut up, and whom I never see ; but I am brought cheek to cheek, hand to hand, heart to heart, with my household. There is a commonwealth of the family whose laws are so distinct, so subtle, and so delicate, that they cannot be extended to the larger commonwealth of the State or of society, with its penalties and remunerations.

When I step outside of the household into this greater commonwealth of civil laws and natural laws—into the neighborhood, that other jurisdiction of public sentiment—first, it would seem, comes the great physical God, writing on all the substances of creation, “This is my law! this is my law! this is my law!”

Then comes society, and, looking to see what is lacking, writes another volume in regard to our conduct and relations to each other in civil organization, and says, “This is the law! this is the law! this is the law!”—and the volume is multitudinous and swells infinitely, almost.

Then comes the great body of citizens that, without legislation, without consultation, say, “If thou dressest so and so thou shalt go up, but if thou dost not dress so and so thou shalt not; if thou speakest thus and thus thou shalt be admitted to the highest circle, but if thou dost not speak thus and thus, thou shalt not; if thou hast courtesy and refinement and attainment thou shalt have such and such remunerations, but if thou hast not these things, and art vulgar and poor and mean, thou shalt not.”

Looking at what nature has legislated, it is not enough; and looking at what society has legislated, that is not enough; and so public sentiment comes in, and marks down more laws, and more laws, and more laws; and they are laws which are expressed, not so much by any written edict or any pronounced statute, as by men’s recognition of them. Men recognize them as the thermometer does the temperature of summer or winter, by the way they feel.

Surely, man has laws enough; and is he made for nothing but to be tied up like a fly in a spider’s web, caught and held by its leg or wing? He is made to be operated upon and educated by these laws. If he employs them aright, he will grow stronger and stronger, and, by and by, he will be superior to them. Their purpose is to tell him how to be larger; how to be better and stronger; how to maintain himself more worthily in society with its public sentiment, by which he is judged in a thousand matters of taste and disposition and conduct.

Is not that enough? Oh, no. Whenever a man goes out

into society, and enters any particular department of labor, he shall find that that department has its own peculiar laws within all the others. If he be a scholar, a scientist, a literary man, he finds something that nature has said nothing about, that society has said nothing about in its civil organization, and that public sentiment has taken no account of. The moment he comes into scientific, or learned, or literary associations, he meets new expectations, requirements, conditions. At every turn in life he meets some law, or command, or rule. Thus rules, commands, laws are infinitely and incessantly multiplied.

Then men say, and say wisely, that a true and large man, who has aspiration, ought to be more than is demanded of him by society, or by any section of it; that he ought to be superior to any law; that he should have in himself a sense of manhood requiring taste of a larger and finer quality than any taste that is required by the law of the land; that he should have a humanity larger than any humanity that is required by public sentiment; that his standard of manhood in himself should be incomparably higher than any regulations or demands of society.

So, not satisfied with being thus enmeshed in laws, a man becomes a law unto himself, and exercises his reason, and cultivates the heroic element, and judges himself by higher standards, and lifts before him a spiritual portraiture with which he compares his own spiritual countenance. In that way he becomes the severest legislator who sits upon his case. A man himself is severer with himself than any one else, if he is a man. If he is a fool, he is full of apologies for himself; but if he is a man, he is full of requisitions, demanding of himself more than the law demands, more than society demands, more than the public sentiment demands, more than any sphere of business demands, more than any profession demands—something that shall make him worthy of the name of a son of God.

But men say, "Besides all these, there are the laws of God." No; these are the laws of God. When a man would obey the command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," how does he do it? God's com-

mands are interpreted in the physical world, in the social world, in the civil world, in all the relations of life. That which shall make a man the largest, the wisest, the strongest, the best, in every relation, is the fullest interpretation which we can have in this world of the laws of God. We are commanded to love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength; and that command endures, but, blessed be God, Christ has interpreted it. When he said, with all the nations gathered together in judgment, "I was sick, and in prison, and ye came not to me; I was poor and needy and distressed, and ye did not care for these things;" and they said, "When?" and he replied, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to the least of my brethren, ye did it not to me,"—then he interpreted God's laws to men. God is in this sense pantheistic: that he lives in each soul; that his heart palpitates in every single creature; and when we think of the commands of God, we are not to think of them as insphered, crystal-like, above. He is speaking to us out of the rock, out of the soil, out of the seasons, out of trees, out of men, out of society, out of business. The manifold voice of God spells words letter by letter, and forms sentences word by word, out of the variety of things in which man touches life; and he who obeys this voice obeys the sovereign primal command of God, who dwells in eternity. The world is a book of legislation; and the higher we rise, or the deeper we go down, the more we become acquainted with the commands of God.

Now, no man ever did, and no man ever can, keep God's commands, when you interpret them in this way. The Psalmist said, "Thy commandments are exceeding broad;" and when you interpret them in a spiritual sense, they are broad indeed. The Ten Commandments, which were given on Mount Sinai, were given, evidently, with reference to the safety of man in the lower relations of life. They are so many bulwarks against the passions of mankind. Thou shalt worship no other God, nor shalt thou take the name of the Lord in vain; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not, thou shalt not, thou shalt not; shalt not, shalt not, shalt

not ; not, not, not ;—these commands are, as it were, so many banks or levees against the fiery passions of mankind ; but they are not all of God's commandments. The laws which belonged to the Jewish economy were not all of God's commandments. The laws which came through the prophets, major and minor, were not all of God's commandments. The laws which were evolved in the teachings of the Saviour, and in the teachings of the apostles after him, together with what has sprung up since that time, are not all of God's commandments.

Put an unskilled child in the midst of that great city of sounds, the organ, and let him begin, unknowing, to make harmony. Some of those mighty pipes are so large that he cannot tune them and manage them. There are so many of them, and he is so ignorant of them, that no sooner does he go in and work at one, and fix it, and come out to the keyboard to try it, than, though that may be proximately correct, when he draws another, there is discord elsewhere. When he finds that there is a clashing and battling of sounds in the instrument, back he goes to rectify the fault of the offending pipe ; and in doing that he produces conflict somewhere else. So, as soon as he gets one stop right, others are deranged. He is utterly incompetent, with his want of knowledge and experience, to manage this complex instrument, which is the fruit of ages. It is only by long years of study and practice that he can become familiar with it in all its parts.

Now, man is vaster and more complex than any cathedral organ. His faculties are more potential than any sounding pipes. His nature, above and below, is more capable of infinite expansion. He learns slowly. And now, after we have learned for five or six thousand, and it may be for ten or fifteen thousand, years, we have but just begun to learn what is the capacity of the human mind, and what are those relations which are increasing as fast as we increase. And to say that any man ever lived who fulfilled the law of God, in this large consideration of it, will strike every one as strange. If you say that the law of God is merely the Ten commandments, many a man can keep them, and say,

“What lack I yet?” Christian culture brings men inside of the Ten Commandments. There are thousands and thousands of men who do not touch them, or come in sight of them. They are born higher than the Ten Commandments.

I never would steal, even if there were no laws against it. You might unlock your safe, and throw your keys into the sea, and I would not take your money. I refrain from stealing, not because I am afraid of jails, but because I am an honest man. It would hurt me more than it would you, if I were to steal your money. I am not tempted at all in that direction. Therefore the command, “Thou shalt not steal,” has no application to me,—thanks to my father, and to his father, and to his father, and to his father, through a line of honest men. For I know I had an honest ancestry; I feel it in every part of my nature. Therefore I am relieved from bondage to that law: it is obligatory upon me; but I fulfilled it before I knew it.

Now, when you ask, “Are you a perfect man,” or “Are you a depraved, imperfect, sinful man?”—if you take a very narrow and external criterion of judgment, many men say, “What lack I yet? Why am I not perfect? I have kept all these commands from my youth up.” The way to corner them is to say, “You may have kept them outwardly, in a bodily sense; but you have not kept them inwardly, in a spiritual sense.” When you thus attack a man with metaphysics, you can puzzle him. You can so confuse him in five minutes that he does not know where he stands. So, when men say they are perfect because they have kept the whole law, we run them down with a spiritual explanation, and say, “You have kept the Ten Commandments, but have you kept the laws that are inherent in your physical frame?” Have you never gone to excess in under-indulgence or over-indulgence? Has all the law that relates to the whole economy of the body, which is God’s temple, and which is to be sacred to you, been fulfilled steadily all your life long? “But I didn’t know.” “Nevertheless, you broke the law.” “Oh, yes; but the circumstances were peculiar.” “Yes, that is the devil’s name—*Peculiar Circumstances.*” “But, I had to do it.” “Oh, of course, you had to do it: but the question is

not how far you are excusable; the question is, Have you broken the law an indefinite number of times—that law which relates to the maintenance of your happiness? Look at that law which applies to the passions of mankind—their anger, their combativeness, their self-defensory powers, those elements of their being which unite them to the lower ranges of society, to say nothing of those higher moral laws which refer to the mental and spiritual life of men, and tell me if you have not violated that. Have you understood it? Have you had a full conception of the relation of laws, as regulating all the passions and appetites of your nature? Have you not, on the other hand, been, to a great degree, ignorant of them? and have you not gone like a shuttlecock between two battle-dores, between peace and anger, between benevolence and cruelty, between desire and indifference, and between under and over excitement?”

When you look at what is embodied in the air, in the writing of God on the rock, in the various developments of nature; when you look at the divine command which is implied in the economy of your passions and appetites, is there any man who can stand up and say to himself, “I have not sinned”? Have you done anything else? Has not sinning been the business of your life? Is not imperfection, imperfection, imperfection stamped on your every act? Imperfections at the top may be more or less palliable, but at the bottom they are sin. Consider the relations of affection and of interlacing affinity which you sustain to your fellow-men. Consider all those obligations of delicacy, of happiness-breeding, and of joy-inspiring, which you have toward others. Consider that law in accordance with which your business is to live centrifugally and not centripetally—in accordance with which you are bound, not to open yourselves like a vortex and draw in happiness from every one else, but to open yourself and pour out happiness upon others besides yourself. Think of the obligation under which you are placed by the command, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Consider the application of that law to the children, to the servants, to the parents, to the disagreeable people that happen to board with you, to men in your trade

that you do not like, to small men, to mean men, to sharp men, to angry men, to old hunkses around about you, to every sort of creature—for Noah's ark is all alive again, and we have everything in it—that is, to human society. You are under that law. You are not to pick out those that you choose, and love them. You are to love your neighbor as yourself. And who is your neighbor? Everybody that needs you.

Now, what has been the carriage of your affections? Have you loved your neighbor as yourself? Can anybody say that he has fulfilled the law of God, as it is written in his affections? I know by the expression on your upturned faces that you recognize the law of God as holy, and just, and good; and can any of you, looking back upon your life, and judging it by those laws, say other than this: "I have been all my days a miserable sinner against God's righteous commands"?

Rise higher than that, and consider what your relations are, measured, not by the lower standards of this world, but by the higher standards of the world which is to come. Consider that you are an unfolding creature, and that by reason, by moral sense, by faith, by imagination, you take hold upon the eternities. Consider that you are so to live as that the body shall be dead, as it were, in comparison with the higher faculties. Consider that the center of life, the legislative hall of the soul, is to lie in the neighborhood of benevolence and conscience and reason.

Now ask yourselves: Have you lived there? Have you lived at the center of those radiations of obligation which take in universal being, and which bring you into sympathetic relations with the beast, with the bird, with the worm, with everything that pulsates or has susceptibility, in the lower realm of being, as well as with the angel, and the archangel, and the God over all, blessed forever? Have you lived in accordance with the fundamental law of your nature, and with your knowledge of your obligations? Is there a man that, looking at the comprehensive relations of manhood, and at the infinite depths of the soul's obligations, can say, "I am perfect"? Must not every man, in the light of those

relations and obligations, lay his hand upon his mouth, and his mouth in the dust, and say, "Unclean, unclean! God be merciful to me a sinner"?

Well, secondly, in application, when a man is determined that he will live according to the law of God, he enters with a most serious purpose upon a life of obedience. Men think, because they are convicted, and have the Holy Spirit, that they have got over the worst part of their journey. They have been convicted, they have been hopefully converted, ministers smile on them and converse with them, and they come into the church. Now they are in the car, and on their way. They will have to exercise patience; they will have to put up with a little dust and a few cinders; but they have got their ticket and are in the car of the church, and it is going to swing them right through to heaven, and they are all right—that is the carnal, narrow, and mechanical notion of a great many persons.

But when a man turns his thought to what he is, and what he should be, and is convinced of the multitudinousness of his sin, not only, but of the power of the influences which are perpetually augmenting and strengthening it; when a man sees how many are his evil thoughts and wrong emotions and impulses, and goes into the church as a converted man, what does he do? He is as one who enters a hospital to be cured. He is as one who, being sick, desires to get well. He is as one that is profoundly ignorant and wants to gain an education. There is transformation; but it leaves him at the threshold, in the beginning.

Now, let a man, under such circumstances, undertake to be happy. On what grounds can he be happy, or have peace? How can he have self-complacence and rest in himself? Let a man look at his sin and his obligation with a sincere desire to break off the one and to fulfill the other, and the prospect before him will seem discouraging; and it will seem more and more so as he rises toward perfection—for the better one is, the higher is his criterion.

When the converted man turns his eye on himself he says, "I ought to be happy: my sins are forgiven." What sins do you mean? "I mean those sins that were committed in

days gone by." But are not those sins multiplied every day? Our thoughts sin. Our imagination sins. Our affections sin. We sin both by doing and by not doing, incessantly; and are not men by transgression through infirmities, and by yielding to temptations, multiplying the infractions of laws which are as much laws as those given on Sinai, although they are written in their own souls? Are we not conscious that we are committing sins every day which are, for number, like the sands on the sea-shore?

When Job had a colloquy with his friends, and got the better of them, God appeared in the sacred drama, and unveiled his own perfection; and then Job said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself." The vision of perfection rebukes imperfection even in the most arrogant and conceited; and in proportion as a man goes up, and has a higher sense of obligation, in that proportion there comes back to him this rebound and refrain: "Miserable sinner; miserable sinner; miserable sinner!" Sin is abounding all the time. Every pulse, every breath, every volition, every single element of our life, if measured by the ideal standard of perfection, or if measured even upon our conception of that nature which is the interpretation of perfect law, is bearing witness against us.

Where, then, shall we find peace and rest? No man, in the contemplation of his conformity to law, can say, "I am living in such a way that I have a right to peace." But men say, "I have peace because Christ gives me his righteousness." I hope you understand that—I do not; nevertheless, there are many things that men do not understand which, in some fumbling sort of way, give them comfort. No matter whether they have an idea of it or not, if they feel that somehow or other, through Christ, they have a right to be happy, they may be happy; but there is no consistent reason which they can give, or which theology can give, why we should have peace. We are covered with a multitude of sins which are unworthy of God, unworthy of the divine government, and even unworthy of manhood. The idea that there is a transfer of God's righteousness to you and to me is a mere

fable. There is no such thing as a transfer of moral quality. Can I transfer my thoughts to my son? I can excite thoughts in him, but I cannot put my thoughts in him. Neither can I transfer my experience to him. No man can take his peace of mind, as though it were susceptible of distribution, and give it to another man. Can a man who is a perfect gentleman, and who has a dozen boorish boys, transfer his politeness to them? Can he give it to them by imputation? And yet men think that God divides his righteousness and perfectness, imputing it to them, and, as it were, saying to them, "You are not perfect, but I will make believe that you are, and in some sense I will take it for granted that you are."

Well now, although this is simply absurd, and very unphilosophical, yet it has a charm in it, because, in a blundering way, by what we might call a *legal fiction*, it carries with it a principle which is sweeter than the roses of June, and more fragrant than beds of mignonette. And what is that? Why, it is this: that we have a God who does not hold a man accountable for violations of law in such a sense as that he will not accept him, love him, and save him, provided his predominant desire, his real endeavor, is to keep the law. If his purpose is that, endless, successive, infinite violations of that purpose do not throw him out of the circle of the divine sympathy. I can interpret it, in a small way.

I take from the streets a rude, rough boy, whose father is a thief, and whose mother is a drunkard. He has been brought up in the school of iniquity; but there is something in him, probably derived from his ancestors far back, that has attracted my sympathy and regard. I bring him to my house, and say to him, "Now, my boy, I want you to grow up into an honest man and a gentleman." I say to him, "You must not steal: you have been educated in theft; but you must break off from that. You must not swear. You must not get angry and throw things at anybody." And I see that, according to the measure of his ability, he means to obey my directions; but when I come home to dinner the servant-girl comes to me and says, "I am going to quit." "Why?" I ask. "Because this boy threw a knife at my

head." I call him to me, and ask him what that means. He says, "She put a flat-iron where it fell on my foot; I thought she had no business to put it there; I was mad, and I threw the knife at her." "But, look here," I say to him, "that was wrong." "Well, I am sorry for it," he says. Then I say, "If you plead that it was an infirmity, and you feel that it was wrong, and assure me that it is your purpose not to repeat it, and to overcome your passion, I will bear with you." "Why will you bear with me?" he says. "I do not see as I am worth keeping. I know I shall swear, I feel so much like it; and I cannot help stealing—I stole a piece of pie this morning." He feels like swearing, he has stolen, he has thrown a knife at the servant's head. This is my precious *protégé* and yet, I say to him, "Be of good heart, my boy, I will get you over all this trouble yet." Why will I? On account of his being so good? No. What is it that saves him? It is my feeling toward him. I try to save him because I am sorry for him, and because I love him. I do not love his imperfection, but I love the sentient creature that he is. I think perhaps I love him more because he needs so much love. It is not the fairest and prettiest child that the mother loves most: it is the poor sickly thing, that stands on the outer circle of his companions when they jump and run, while he limps with a club-foot. She loves that child more than any of her other children. There is something far down in the nature of man which touches divinity where it loves want; and there is no want like dispositional want, or spirit want.

And I say to this thief of the street, this unlicked cub, this miserable creature that I have befriended, "I am not going to give you up; and the reason is, my heart is stirred for you. I am sorry for you in my very soul. All that is good in me goes out toward you. So be courageous, my boy. Do your best. Do not cry any more. Take hold again."

He holds out for a week or ten days, and then down he goes; and we have a "time" once more. I do not want him to feel that he may as well go down as not because he will be forgiven so quick, and will be helped up; but if I am satisfied that he is sorry, that his intent is good, and that his

determination is strong, I pass his misdemeanor by, with perhaps some little emphasis to keep his memory alive, and say, "I do not give you up yet."

Now, that is what is meant when men say that God imputes his righteousness to the sinner. There is no imputation about it. God, by his inherent nature, when he sees men imperfect, crude, stumbling among infinite laws, and breaking them, has compassion on them; not because he has bought the right to do it by a covenant, not because he has a plan that tells him that now he may do it, but because he is God, and because he is large enough and good enough to make good those who are bad, out of the bounty of his own soul.

That is what gives you hope, and it is what gives me hope; not that we are good, but that God is; and that by his providence and grace every willing soul is brought into a school in which, with patience, and gentleness, and forbearance and repeated forgiveness, he is being molded and developed, and brought into that state in which, by-and-by, the flesh shall drop away, and he shall shine as the stars in the firmament. It is that love of God in Christ Jesus which waits for you, which cares for you, which spares you, which succors you, and which stimulates you. The divine nature loves you though you are not lovely, and because you are not lovely, with an infinite sympathy and compassion. It is that love which makes Christ Jesus, dying, the only resource that can reach to the ultimate and infinite wants of the human soul. Jesus Christ came into the world to teach us that God, the Father, loves sinners, loves them in their multitudinous wanderings and stumblings, and by his grace and providence is raising them to the position of sons in glory.

There I have rest, not because I am good, but because I am in such a school of goodness; not because I have kept the law, but because, breaking it, times without number, and oftener than I know, or can register, I have One who loves me enough to bear with all my transgression, and to count it for nothing, so that the essential drift of my being is away from sin and toward holiness. In the contemplation of that I have a peace which the world cannot take away.

Now, so long as you are conscience-bound ; so long as you sit down and cipher, and find a balance against yourself every day, and say that you have no right to be happy because you are insincere, because you promise God that you will do so and so, and do not do it—so long as that state of things continues you will not have peace. For the further you go toward perfection, and the better you become, the more you will find that your sins multiply, and the stronger will be your conviction of sinfulness from the violation of law. The more a man tries to find peace and rest within himself through the fulfillment of law, the further he will drift away from it. But the moment a man says, “ I am born in sin ; in iniquity did my mother conceive me ; I was born without a knowledge of righteousness ; I am full of unrevealed laws, I am under a multitude of obligations that I do not understand ; and I stumble ; but my God is large enough in his wisdom and goodness to take care of me, provided only that I want him, and strive toward him,”—the moment a man says that, he has rest.

A wounded soldier lies on the battle-field. The ball has cut an artery in his leg. The charge, thundering on, leaves him behind ; and his life is ebbing away. With feeble effort, he stoops to press the artery and stop the wasting tide of life ; but he grows weaker and weaker, and his courage fails, and in despair he exclaims, “ I am dying here alone, and there is no one to bear my last words home to my friends.” Just then, an ambulance comes in sight, and approaches him, and the surgeon, seeing him, runs to his side, and taking him by the leg says, “ Is this the only wound ? Then you are saved !” Fainting, the soldier falls back, and as he does so a smile plays about his mouth, and he says to himself, “ What I could not do, my surgeon can, and I am saved.” Not because he was well did he feel safe, for he was wounded ; not because he had skill of his own to heal the wounds ; but because he was in the hands of the surgeon who could do it, and in view of his assurance, it was as good as done already.

The soul that feels itself driven by all manner of stormy temptations, battered, distressed, wounded, lacerated, looks

up to the physician of his soul, and, with the inward hearing, hears him say, "Behold, I have found a ransom for thee. Thou art mine. I love thee with an everlasting love. Rest in me, trust me, and, verily, I will crown thee with perfection by and by." The promise of Christ, the faithfulness of Christ, the love of God but partially made known in Christ Jesus, the length and breadth and height and depth of which passes all understanding—that I preach to you, not to lull you into sin, not that you may dishonor manhood by saying, "God is so good that I may do what I have a mind to," but that you may be touched in every generous sentiment, and that all that is honorable in you may thrill with the thought of the God that loves you, and sustains you, and will heal you, and enlarge you, and ennoble you, and make you princes, kings and priests forever in heaven. This God is yours—the God of the littlest child; the God of the poor African; the God of the stumbling Indian of the forest; the God of the rude, the unlettered, the unknowing; the God of those that have done wrong; the God of the jail, the penitentiary, the hospital, and the poorhouse; the God of those that have wandered from the right way; the God of the broken-down woman, whose whole best nature stands like a bright crystal barrier between her and relief; the God of the man of transgression, who has been the enemy of his race; the God of the highest and the lowest, and of every creature intermediate. We are naked and open before Him with whom we have to do; and if we will, we may inherit the infinite love of that God. But, as a man may shut his eyes even to the sun, and seem in midnight, so before the blaze of infinite pity and compassion, if you will, you can shut your eyes, and harden your heart, and lose your God and yourself.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, our Father, in the manifestation of thyself made to us through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Thou hast not made known to us what we are ourselves, although we are called the sons of God. It doth not yet appear what we shall be. We know that when he shall appear we shall come with him, and be like him; but what is the glory of that likeness, we know not. What are the ranges and the experiences of that transcendent life, when this mortal body shall break away, we cannot understand. We think, straining every power; we fly upon the wings of imagination; we reach toward the height; but we cannot comprehend the love of God in Christ Jesus, nor the fellowship nor the blessedness of the after state in ourselves and in others. We know not that there has been anything so bright that by it we can understand the brightness of the life which is to come. We know not that there has been anything so wise as to teach us the preciousness of that life. We know not that there has been joy so pure and so deep as that it may stand as a symbol of the joys which await those who reach the world of immortality. We rejoice that all power is outrun by which we may manifest to ourselves the glory of the future state. We are content to abide here, though we are burdened; though we feel conscious of shortcoming; though we are not what we should be as the children of God. Though we are in the midst of conscious sinfulness, and of imperfections without number, we nevertheless have the peace of God. Though we are perpetually stirred up by our conscience, and though the law of duty is every day out against us, we have peace through the Lord Jesus Christ. Though we do not deserve to look up to thee, yet we are taught to come boldly with an open face, and to ask, yea, to demand, with infinite importunity, the things which we need. For thou art the blessed One, and thou dost give forth that thou mayest satisfy thine own self, and not merely to fill the measure of our content.

O Lord, our God, we beseech thee that we may have made manifest to us more perfectly this royal way of the soul; that we may be able to drop quite out of thought the way of the body—all those imperfect relations and methods of life and duty and penalty which belong to this lower state; and that we may be enfranchised and lifted up into the citizenship of the higher sphere; that we may know the Ruler that is there, and the law that reigns there, more perfect, more searching, and yet more full of tenderness than any earthly being, dropping infinite bounty and compassion throughout all the world.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may be, not as slaves under the lash, convinced of evil, shrinking, shuddering, and fearing hell, but that we may be filled with sorrowful recognition of sin, as they that are loving, and seeking to harmonize everything, that divine love may be satisfied with us.

We pray that we may have this new life ministered to us from day to day by the Spirit. We cannot ask that the sun may rise in

full shining: grant, at least, that it may be a revealing light in every one of us, shining more and more brightly toward the perfect day.

Give to every one in thy presence, we beseech thee, some portion of this sense of sonship. Give to every one present some sense of right in God, and some sense of safety and security in the love of Christ Jesus. May every one in thy presence feel, whatever he may be in himself, that in the Lord he is rich and strong and safe; and may they who have no Christ, they to whom the name of Christ is empty, they who are without a God, they to whom the glory of the Lord is as darkness—oh, may they be touched in heart, and made to feel how worthless they are, how naked, how hungry, how sick, how sore, how much in need of all things; and may they be brought, through a sense of their infinite necessity, to a recognition of thine infinite bounty, and sit down at last with great delight beneath thy banner of love, and rejoice in thee with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

We beseech thee that thou wilt grant to every one of us thy guiding faith—the faith which works by love. To those who are in the trouble of life; to those who are bearing heavy burdens; to those who are under sharp cares; to those who are in their way and measure wearing the crown of thorns; to all who are going forth oppressed with the cross—oh, minister to them that faith by which they shall have consolation.

If there be those to-day whose hearts are sore with bereavement, whose thoughts are full of tears, we beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to them. We ask not that their wounds may suddenly be healed to insensibility, but that they may discern what is the blessing of sorrow; that they may feel its tenderness and its enriching power. May they feel, springing out of darkness and trouble, those tendrils which shall fasten them to thee. Grant that they may grow in grace, and that they may know how, learning in the school of affliction, to be clothed with patience and with resignation; that they may know how perpetually to look up to God, and find in him what they may have lacked or lost in those about them.

For mothers whose cradles are empty, we pray; for parents whose companion children are gone before them, we pray. For those who have lost themselves in losing those they love, and are in a mystery and maze and wonderment of grief, we pray. Be gracious to them all. Especially be gracious to those who behold wreck and ruin from which they cannot save their beloved. Draw them near to thee, and in the pang of their Gethsemane be to them as the angels were to thyself, blessed Saviour, and comfort them.

We pray, if there be no medicament for griefs unnamed, if there be no present relief, and they must walk in the flame, grant, at least, that the "form of the Fourth" may be seen, and that the fire may have no dominion over them. Grant to that band which always increases—to those who walk with tears and breathe with sighs, and behold their joys plucked up and withering—grant to them that there may be an ever-opening heaven, a God with them, and that they may feel that in their earthly lack and loss they are laying up treasure in heaven.

Oh, how rich are we in those that are gone before! How many blessed this day are around about thee, for whose going our hearts were broken, but in whose abiding glory now we have learned to rejoice! O Lord God of the redeemed host in heaven! thou that art their light and their sweet delight, art not thou, too, the God of those who are following after them, who are blinded by tears, and who are stumbling by weakness? Thou that leddest thy people like a flock in the wilderness, art thou not still leading thy people through the wilderness? Give forth these truths to those who need the consolation of God.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be near to all those who are in trouble or doubt; who are in the perplexities of life; who in the way of duty find it too sharp or too steep for human endeavor. Thou art the strength of Israel, and canst give strength to thy creatures; and we beseech thee that thou wilt succor all those who know the right, but who seem to themselves to be feeble and weak therein. We beseech thee that thou wilt be near to all those who are attempting to walk aright in the various duties of life. Teach them how to be more manly; how to gird their loins day by day; how to endure patiently unto the end. We beseech thee that thou wilt grant to all those who are drawing near to the close of life, to all those who seem to themselves to have failed in their earthly career, to all those who see others go past them to fame, and to wealth, and to honor, and to happiness, while they are bereft, and only waiting and longing for the time of their departure—we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that they may not think that their life consists in the abundance of the things which they possess. May it be theirs to know that God is theirs; that the love of Christ is theirs; that the hope of heaven is theirs; that the eternal blessedness of the other life is theirs; and may they not cast away their confidence, nor think themselves to have failed, when they are heritors of unfading and eternal riches.

We beseech thee that thou wilt be with the old in their growing infirmities. May they learn how to rejoice. May they know that when the stars are dying out, it is because the night is coming to an end; and that soon they shall be in a state of immortal youth, and that they shall see again, and hear again, and feel with sensitive nerve again, and live never more to grow old. May they rejoice, therefore, looking forth with complacency upon the taking down of their tabernacles, knowing that they are to have a house builded of God, eternal in the heavens.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all classes and conditions of men—upon the poor; upon the ignorant; upon the vicious; upon the criminal; upon the outcast; upon those that no man cares for. Grant, we pray thee, that there may be breathed into the hearts of men a deeper humanity, and more love toward those who have erred, and gone out of the way, and fallen into ruin.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt extend the knowledge of Christ throughout all our land, and the knowledge of the Gospel to every hamlet and household. Pity those that are in ignorance. Give them

light. Bless all institutions, and all the labors of thy servants by which evangelization shall go forth with civilization. And may all the nations of the earth at last feel the sacred impulse—the drawing of this mighty force. May all that is barbarous, and cruel, and proud, and hard, and selfish, lose power and die away; and may all that is pure, and wise, and humane, and divine, gather strength, and hold on its way toward that perfect day when all nations shall rejoice in each other, and perfect peace shall reign in the whole earth.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*



### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR heavenly Father, wilt thou grant to us the consolation of thine own nature. Shine in upon us with the thought of God. We are blinded by selfishness, even the best of us. We can hardly form a conception of such glorious virtue, such beauty of holiness, such disinterestedness, as is in thee, thou that art the Highest, the Fountain of all excellence unblemished. Grant that we may have the help of thy Spirit to discern something of thy royalty, to rejoice in it, to open our hearts to it, and by it to be warned, taught, guided, perfected. Lord Jesus, for thy faithfulness hitherto unrequited, for thy faithfulness that would not be discouraged, nor give us up, for thy faithfulness that never has left us nor forsaken us, and that never will, we render thee thanks. Thou hast fulfilled every promise abundantly, giving us more than we asked or thought. We have nothing to ask. We have only wonder and joy and gratitude to express. Thou infinite Benefactor of the soul, we are glad that thou art such an One as can look with complacency and love upon us, so unworthy, so far from perfectness, so far from the hope of it. O Lord our God, if thou canst find any pleasure in such beings as we are, accept the offerings that we make to thee of ourselves. Have compassion on us by reason of our sin, of our leanness, of our imperfection, and love us into beauty and harmony and immortality.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

## SOUL-GROWTH.

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“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.”—ISA. xl., 31.

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There are two facts which, in the light of modern philosophizing, are striking. One is that modern piety, much as knowledge has been developed, is obliged to go back thousands of years to the rude ages of the world to find its most fitting expression. All the exquisite experience of the last two thousand years has not framed language which yet equals the utterances of Isaiah, or of David, or of many of the men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and it seems strange that out of a rude age, where physical strength predominated, and where men lived by their senses far more than even now they do, there should have sprung up a vein of experience, a literature, a nomenclature which yet is the best that the world has—but so it is.

The other fact closely connected with this, which has in it some surprise, is that a people like the Israelites, whose religious system had in it no provision for instruction, and no tendency to develop individual independence or self-ministering piety, should have sent forth men whose thought and whose moral impulses have given direction to the religion of the world. For the Mosaic economy was a strictly hierarchical one, and contained in it no provision for the instruction of the common people, and no opportunity in the general services in which they had an individual and independent action. Priests prayed for them; offered sacrifices for them; cleansed them; took care of them; and although there grew up after the Babylonish captivity a system

of synagogues, it was not a part of the Mosaic economy. All that knowledge which has made the Jewish name an honored name in time sprang from men that were not accredited as regular teachers. But there was among the Jewish people this peculiarity: namely, they believed in the right and in the liberty of any man or any woman to exercise whatever gifts, to use whatever inspiration, was sent upon them. Out of the recognition of the liberty of the individual sprang up the glorious company of prophets and judges; and the chief spiritual nourishment which we have derived from the Old Testament comes, not from its priesthood, not from the temple, not from the altar, but from the prophets. I will not call them interlopers, because they were not regarded by their own countrymen as such; but they were the men, not official, who had a personal inspiration, and rose up by the side of the regulation religion, the religion of the nation, to exercise their liberty of free thought, and their moral liberty. It was from their hands that the truth came then; and in every age since, principally, it has come, not from men who were officially set to teach, but from men who had such personal impulse, and such special gifts of God, that they were trampled under foot or driven into the wilderness for declaring the divine word as it was revealed to them.

So we have, in such passages as that which I read in your hearing this morning, the glorious disclosure of the universality of the divine presence—of the infinite greatness of God, and his control over all things, with the consummation of them—of the inspiration which God gives to those who believe in him and wait on him—a renewal, especially, of their faith, hope, trust, and power.

The universal law under which men develop is that of variableness. We do nothing continuously except to breathe and pulsate. No man thinks except with intermission, and no man feels except with intermission. It is insanity to think upon one subject incessantly, night and day. Health demands intermission, even retrocession.

That which is true in this limited sphere of individual thought and feeling develops itself in a larger way, in all our pursuits and actions in life. We are not always after pleas-

ure. We are not always after business. We are not always patriotic. We are not always social. We go in rounds. So a thousand concurrent influences at certain times wake us to deep moral and religious thought and feeling. The whole community is pervaded with a spirit which has been dropped down from on high ; nor can any skill or device of men keep the community in that altitude to which it has been brought, beyond certain limited periods. The whole force of human nature beats down the tendency to assume any single condition. Men cannot live perpetually in one mood. To-day a man is in a predominantly intellectual state ; but that spends itself, and the man's nature craves something besides intellect ; and there is a rebound to the social side of his nature. But after pursuing that a certain length of time he is sated there, and the social powers long for release and rest, and he breaks into another development.

Now, regarding religion as a personal and emotive experience, all the endeavors of men to hold Christians, churches or individuals, to a high emotive condition of religious feeling are vain, because they go against the substantial law that is inherent in our minds. We must fluctuate, we must alternate. If you are high in religious feeling to-day that is no reason why you should not be comparatively dry and empty of specific emotive forms of religion to-morrow. The ethical forms go on always. Virtue, morality, the discharge of duties, the ten thousand offices of life which have in them latent religious influences—these are perpetuated ; but even in regard to these we are changing. We are one thing one day, and another thing the next day. Thus human life runs through an infinite series of variations, or changes. A want of knowledge concerning this leads men to put an unnatural force upon themselves ; and this unnatural force often works in a way directly opposite to that which they intend. Religious men who feel that they must always be on the mount exhaust themselves with such endeavors that they rebound, and, instead of being on the mountain, are in the deepest and darkest valley. By their over-exertion they lose their spiritual fervor.

The question arises, then, when intervals of this kind

occur in religious experience, when reactions, backslidings, comparative drought and barrenness take place, How shall men renew? Is there any renewal? How shall that be fulfilled which was declared of old by the prophet, that they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; fill up again the exhausted fountain; implete once more the sluggish vein; give pulsation to the heart, clarity to the eye, warmth to affection, zeal to faith?

Men must follow the disclosures of experience, very largely, as to the methods by which this is done. There is in the word of God no recognition of such processes; the method by which spiritual strength may be renewed, augmented, carried to a higher average level, we must learn from a study of the providence of God. We are obliged to take the Bible as men take charts. The harbor of New York is deeper than the paper on which the chart is printed. If you would know of the Swash Channel, or of Gedney's Channel, go out and lower the line and sound it. That will bring you into connection with the fact itself; whereas the chart merely brings you into the shadow or symbol of the fact.

The word of God is simply a chart, and we must go out of the Bible in order to learn what is in it. When it speaks of men, there are no men in it—only the letters which indicate men; and if you would know what men are you must go where they are. A thing that is spoken of in the word of God is but symbolized, shadowed, hinted at, there. If you would know what the thing really is, you must go where you can see it in actual operation, and study it.

So, human life is perpetually the interpreter and commentator of the word of God. The Bible is but a book of dry leaves, printer's ink; but the thing signified is never in printer's ink. Love is not as black as ink: it is as red as blood. You can find it out, not in the Bible, but in the heart. Thought and inspiration are never in a book, though the effects of them may be discerned there. The things themselves must be found in the fire and flash of actual vitality.

“How, then,” we are asked, “do you determine that men are to renew their strength and have an impletion of

spiritual influence? What right have you to put your philosophy or your explanation above the declarations of God's word?" I say, I do not put them above the declarations of God's word. I take God's word as a starting-point that gives me a suggestion, as the chart does a man who sets out for a voyage; and I go to the thing itself in life, where God is at work—for human life is his work-shop; and what he does and means we are to find out from the facts of daily experience, not from anything that is cut and dried and hung up in some herbarium.

What, then, are some of the methods by which men, in the divine economy, advance in spiritual impulse, and rise permanently higher?

1. First, we must not be biased by any theory of church or ordinances, nor by any preaching, to suppose that we are shut up to the dealings of God with us through these channels. That the church is a very powerful instrument, and that it will be indispensable through ages, none believe more than I. That ordinances have a value, and that there is a good reason for their maintenance and administration, I, too, very firmly believe. I also believe that preaching is blessed of God to the inspiration and stirring up of men. Why should I disbelieve these things? Why should I seem ever to throw any discredit upon the institutions and usages of the Christian Church? I do not. It is by the truth; it is by the preaching of the truth, though it may be the foolishness of preaching, often; it is by the collected membership in any community which we call the assembly or the church—it is by these that God works very great results among men; but who are you that dare shut up the sovereignty of God, and say that he works only by the church? Who shall dare to say that the great round world, with all its varied influences—its warmth, its heat, its cold, its winter, its summer, its ten thousand different forces, bearing upon men—is not employed of God, as well as the pulpit and moral elements?

Does not the village common school work upon the human soul? Do not books? Do not newspapers? Do not men in all the ten thousand struggles of business? Do not all the

influences which go to make up the swarming and ever-teeming society? Is there any thing which God does not use in operating upon the reason, the affections, and the moral sentiments of men? Is not he the God of the whole earth? and does he not employ whatever touches or modifies the human mind to mould men from low to high, from poor to better, and from better to best?

It is not because I regard these things as less than good that I caution you not to depend exclusively upon the church, or upon the reading of the Bible: I believe that God gives to them signal efficacy; but I believe, also, that he employs a thousand other things by which to exert his influence in the world. I believe that the heavens distill it, that the clouds bear it, and, overhanging us, drop it down. I believe it comes with the scents and odors of summer. I believe that it mingles with the joys and sorrows of men. I believe that it accompanies the ten thousand influences which shift and change men. God works by churches, and he works in spite of them. He works by ministers—and it is hard work, often. He works by ignorant and imperfect men, and he compensates for their ignorance and imperfection by the use of other influences. He works by everything. The universality, the infinite variety of the working of the divine Spirit, I fain would bear in on your minds.

When, therefore, men say, “How shall we renew our spiritual strength and experience?” it is not enough for me to say, “Listen to preaching, take the communion, read your Bible, and say your prayers.” If I were to tell you this alone, and you were to put it in practice, you would soon discover that it was not wise instruction; for you would find that though you observed all the ordinances of the church, your spiritual strength and experience was not renewed. Thousands and thousands of weary souls testify that having done all that was required of them by their religious system, they received very little if any appreciable profit.

2. It pleases God to make the spiritual development of men depend on time-growth. We know how it is with children. We know that they develop first by the body. Then come, secondly, the social affections, with the elementary forms of

the intellect. Nor can you force things in a normal and healthy child. You must take it in the hour of God's appointment. The body you may call all manner of names; you may despise the body; but a soul without a body is like a candle without a candlestick; nay, it is like a wick without a candle; nay, it is like a flame trying to live without a wick. The body is the foundation on which we all start; and we have to wait; and we learn to wait in respect to our children.

Then comes the next stage—that of the unfolding of affection and intelligence; and the intelligence is generally the effect, not of the relations of facts, but of the percipiency of the senses. It is not usually the fruit of reflection or reasoning. Next begin to develop the moral elements. Third in the order of time, and last, is the spiritual nature—for I distinguish between the moral, as including in itself the whole range of ethical truth, and the spiritual, which I understand to be the highest form of mental activity by which men discern invisible qualities or existences, or that whole action of the mind which is supersensuous, not being confined to the law of the senses, but belonging to the higher range of mentality.

I think in men, and in women, often, the development of a higher spiritual percipiency and emotion is the result of time and growth. Therefore, persons going into the church early in life, whether they go in upon a profession of their faith, or by birthright, or through confirmation, or by any of the different methods by which they are said to become Christians, or by which they are taught to think themselves to be Christians—such persons are not prepared for the higher forms of spiritual development, simply because they are not ripe, or are not mature.

Did you ever see how flowers grow—how first, lifting the clod, they develop two great leaves; how, out of these leaves, sucking up all that is in them, the stem begins to come forth; and how it grows through weeks and months? It breaks the ground in April; but August comes, and there is nothing yet except the stem, which is still growing and branching. Go out, if you please, and say to it, "O Aster, latest of all flowers, do you know how many flowers

in the hedge and on the road-side have blossomed the moment they were out of the ground—tulips, hyacinths, crocuses, jonquils?—and here you have been growing for three months, and you do not show a blossom nor a bud!” No, and it will not for some time yet. But by and by, when October comes, if you will go out into the field, you will see that its time has come in the order of its own growth, and that it begins to show the tips of little buds. And when the early spring-blossoming flowers are forgotten, and their very leaves are withered and gone away, then, when the frosts impend, and the hoarse northern winds begin to pipe their coming, the aster stands by, and irradiates the field; and it stays till winter slays it. We rejoice in the earliest flower because it is the earliest, and we rejoice in the latest flower because it is the latest; but do what you will, you cannot make the aster blossom in spring. You must wait until the time for it to blossom arrives.

Now, among men the same thing happens. There are those who have a premature development of spiritual impulses. There are children that develop these impulses early; but, fortunately, they die quickly, and go to heaven; and their lives go into Sunday-school libraries. But because the higher nature of some people is unfolded early, are we to make them the criterion for other people? You might as well go out to an apple-tree that ripens its fruit in October, and say, “Here is a yellow apple that was ripened in September,” and blame it for not ripening its apples in September. Would you, in September, say to an apple-tree whose fruit does not ripen until October, “Hurry up! hurry up! your apples ought to be ripe”? The tree that ripens its fruit early is pursuing its normal course; and the tree that ripens its fruit late is pursuing its normal course.

Many persons develop high religious emotions prematurely; and it is not desirable. It is better not to seek to produce ecstatic experiences in anticipation of the normal methods. Spiritual fervors thus produced are almost invariably artificial, not only, but drugging and deteriorating. Many persons begin to develop by the law of growth; but they have not ripeness. The strings are not stretched across

their mind from which can vibrate certain influences or truths. Persons renew, or are said to renew, their spiritual fervor, when they come, late in life, or in mid-life, into any considerable realization of the power of God, of faith in God, of insight into the heavenly influence, or into royalty of Christian experience; and often, when they come into that state, they turn themselves about, and say, "Oh, how much I have lost! If I had begun early, if I had been in this frame of mind from the time that I was ten years old, what a joyful life I should have had!" Oh, yes, that is so; but because my grapes are so sweet in October, I never think of going out and saying, "O Catawba! O Iona! If you had only been as sweet as this in June what a nice time I should have had eating you all summer long!" I do not reason so about fruits or flowers; nor is it wise to reason so about people.

Many may lose by neglect, or by delay; but there is an element of time which must be taken into consideration. There is a certain rawness or ungrowth of mind which makes it impossible for persons to develop the higher spiritual states until they have gone through a given number of years.

3. Then there are many persons who renew their strength, who develop into a higher spiritual life, into more fervor, more joy, and more stability by reason of the removal of false or imperfect views of truth.

There are many persons who are taught to believe that if they have not grace it is some fault of theirs. The minister hammers on that, saying to them, "It is your own fault, it is your want of faith and diligence, it is your neglect to use the means of grace"—whatever that may be. So they go home, and have a kind of constriction; their conscience troubles them; they wish they could do whatever is necessary to secure the desired end; they try, with a sort of half-physical endeavor; they read a little more, and study a little more; but they do not get any further along. They say, "The minister says it is my fault, and I suppose it is; but they cannot tell how or why."

One looks out through a window of plain, perfectly clear glass, and seeing a beautiful landscape he admires it, and

calls another to see it; but while the other is coming, the sash with the clear glass is thrown up, and a sash with ground glass is thrown down. He looks, and says, "I cannot see any beautiful landscape." And the other says, "It is your own fault. You do not keep the window clear." The man commences rubbing the window to get off the dirt, but he can not see through it. Nobody can see through ground glass, I do not care whether there are spiders' webs on it or not. The first man said, "I looked through the window and saw a beautiful landscape;" but he did not say, "I saw it through a different medium from that which you are trying to look through." The other man said, "You say that you see beautiful things, and that it is my fault that I do not see them. I have come early and late, and at all seasons, but I have not seen those beautiful things. It may be my fault, but I don't think it is."

If persons are brought up under such instruction that they have false or imperfect views of God, of the divine character, and of spiritual truths, how can they, looking through these ground-glass views, or these grimed views, see the beautiful things that lie beyond them?

We will suppose that I have been brought up to believe that God is a thorough-going policeman, and that being perfect himself, he says, "Now, look out! For every word and every thought that is wrong, young man, I will bring you into judgment." I imagine that he watches, day and night; that his eye is constantly on me. I regard him as a jealous God, as a spying God, as a rigorous God, as a God that loves some when he has brought them within a certain line, but that looks upon all who are outside of that line without allowance, and with a determination of justice. To me, he is a God that loves justice more than he does humanity; that loves law better than he does men. Suppose the heaven were full of a God like that? The more there is of such a God the worse it is. We will suppose I am attempting to love him. I look up, and see storms; but I cannot love storms.

Suppose John Zundel should instruct you and me in music, and suppose he should say to us, "If you are going to be true musicians, you must love this"—making one of

the most hideous discords that was ever brought out of a screeching organ? Suppose he should say, "Don't you like it?" and we should say "No;" and he should say, "It is because you are so unregenerate and depraved"?

There is a relation between things and things—between quality and quality. I cannot love things that are bitter, with a certain kind of bitterness; but I can love things that are sweet, with a certain kind of sweetness; and there is a relation between a man's reason and things that are reasonable. There is a human sense of justice which is the foundation on which every man must be just, or determine what is just. There are qualities which the race esteems as good or bad; and they do it because they are founded in the nature of things. If you take away from them that which is primary and rudimentary, the axioms of right and wrong, you destroy their moral sense, and all their capacity for moral development.

Now, if you destroy that in God himself, how much worse is it! If it is wrong for Nero to be a tyrant, is it not more wrong for God to be one? If to love blood; if to overhang a Roman amphitheatre, and see men drinking blood as if it were wine; if to rejoice in the contests of beasts and slaves, and in all forms of athletic cruelty; if to gloat over such things; if for a man to feel himself an emperor because he has brute power—if these things are hideous in Caligula, or in Nero, is it right for God to sit in heaven and look down into hell, and rejoice that out of the thirty millions who die every year, probably twenty-nine and a-half millions go down there? To teach me that that is God, and to call on me to look up and admire him, and say, "That is beautiful"—every instinct of Christianity, every sweet affection of my nature, everything that is noblest and best in me, abhors it. These extreme forms of statement are seldom advanced now, in school or church, yet if Christ is not transformed and made hideous by the exposition of men, at least they do not make him beautiful. The preaching of the divine nature to a very large extent is anything but attractive. It is not made drawing to men. The beauty of holiness; that glory of God which he declares stands in his patience, in his gentleness,

in his long-suffering, in his love, in his power to suffer for others rather than to make them suffer—how little is this preached among men!

So persons are brought up, under a rigorous system, frequently, thinking themselves not to be drawn to religion because they are depraved. They do not like preaching, and they suppose that is because they are depraved. Neither do they like Sunday; and they assign the same reason for that.

Sunday! I used to be a pin-cushion, and duties used to be pins, when I was a boy; and I did not like it when they stuck them into me. Therefore, Sunday was the dreadful day of the week to me. There were some Sundays of my boyhood which stand in my memory as among the most beautiful things in the world; and yet, while I believe that the world would suffer irreparable loss in the abolition of Sunday, or in its secularization, on the other hand in order to preserve Sundays you must make them beautiful, honorable and desirable. Intelligent natures must find in them that which feeds the really best things which are in them. If these days are only hoops, strings, manacles; if they are only "Thou shalt not, thou shalt not, thou shalt not"; if they are burdensome, it is worse than if you were to eradicate their existence altogether.

That which is true of Sunday is true of the church, and every part of its service. If you hold up inspiring themes of religion in such a way that they are clouded, misconceived, absolutely perverted, how can you expect men to rise? Frequently, when persons have been brought up in one communion where they are not developed and built up in their religious nature, they go to some other communion, where they have a different kind of preaching, and fall in with new kinds of books, or statements, or doctrines, or philosophies, as the case may be, and their difficulties are cleared away, and they break forth into a higher experience, and they feel, "There is a better life opening in me." Their spiritual strength is renewed, not only, but they seem to be created afresh, and they rise into a glorious communion with God.

Now, I declare I would rather see a person—a young man or a young woman—go out of the Protestant church and

come under the ministration of one of my brethren of the Roman Catholic Church, than not have that person grow. If you are in a state of adumbration here, if you cannot see the truth, and if something is not done for you here which breaks the cloud and lets out the glory, and if you can go elsewhere and be helped by picture, or statue, or robe, or service, I say to you, "Go." Your spiritual growth is more to me, and ought to be more to you, than any orthodoxy or regularity of Protestantism. There is nothing on earth which is to be compared, for one moment, to the breaking of the soul out of a lower life into a higher realm ; and if a man can be benefited spiritually by going among the Swedenborgians, or the Roman Catholics, or the Unitarians, or the Lutherans, or the Episcopalians, or the Presbyterians, or the Baptists, or the Methodists ; if his nature can be enlarged and lifted up by the words of this or that poet, or preacher, or philosopher ; if he can be carried up in his thoughts and feelings and actions by the finesse of reasoning or the glamour of imagination, let him avail himself of these instrumentalities, no matter where he may find them. The question is, What is it that stands related to the true growth of any individual soul ? and when that is determined it is the right of this soul to seek it. It is more important that he be hatched than that any particular bird hatches him !

So it comes to pass, often, that men, drawn from one relation to another, receive, by reason of their change of circumstances, and the new influences which are brought to bear upon them, a great impetus in their life. They are apt to suppose that the credit lies in the power of the preacher ; but in this they are mistaken. A man comes to this church, and hears me preach, and says, "That is the kind of preaching I like." He comes again and again ; and after six months, eight months, or a year, he is in the full disclosure of Christian experience ; and he says : "Ah ! that is because Mr. Beecher preaches so." Poor soul ! it is not. I simply preach in the natural and ordinary way ; but you have been brought out of the circumstances where the truth was hidden from you, and you are brought into circumstances in which my preaching happens to be medicinal to your particular case.

All your life and education have stood between you and the future, and I happen to be the instrument that draws the curtain and lets you see the real picture. No strength, no eloquence, no great wisdom, but God, has brought you where, at last, you get a view of the heavenly land, of the spiritual life, of our everlasting home. No human power lifts you up; it is the power of God that lifts you.

A ship is stuck on a mud-bank; and, the tide going out, it careens over, and there it lies, like many discouraged Christians. They do not need to anchor. The anchor is out, though. By and by the tide begins to come in, little by little. The captain calls up the crew, and orders them to hoist in the anchor. It is hoisted in, and stowed away. "Trim the sails," is the next command; and that is obeyed. The tide is still coming in, coming in, coming in; and by and by the vessel floats off; and the crew look up with admiration, and say, "What a captain we have! It was the hauling in of the anchor and the trimming of the sails that saved us. The captain gave his orders, they were obeyed, and then she floated." No, it was not the captain's doings. The Lord God, who swings the stars through the heavens, and exerts his power upon the ocean, did it. The captain merely foresaw the coming of the tide, and adapted the circumstances of the vessel to influences which existed before.

So the plenary inspiration of the Spirit of God fills the heaven and the earth; and when men are brought into conjunctions of circumstances where they meet the tide of divine influence, and receive comfort, the power is not in him who happened to draw aside the curtain and the screen, but in the mightiness of God who lies behind these things.

4. There are many persons who fail to come to the light of truth, and to the inspiration of the higher views of religion, by reason of worldly prosperity, which tends to satisfy their lower nature. Under such circumstances it is, that, in the divine ordering of things, what are called distresses, infirmities, and even great sorrows, are blessed of God to the opening of their nature and to the renewing of their spiritual strength.

Thus, it is the experience of thousands of men that sick-

ness has been greatly blessed to them. Men have an arrogance of health, and they do not feel how much they depend upon the sovereignty of God and nature in a thousand ways. I think that, to a strong man, next to the sense of power is the sweetness of dependence. I think nobody feels this sweetness so much as those who are strongest. Men like the exercise of power; that it is pleasant, everybody knows; but, after all, the sense of leaning, the longing for something better and higher and stronger than you are on which you can lean, is a source of still greater satisfaction. When men are in their strength, and are actors in their various spheres, that part of their nature which leads one to desire something to lean upon is not developed. But sickness comes, and they are made helpless and despondent; and under such circumstances they begin to feel, "How frail my power is! The difference between one mouthful and another sets me all wrong. A hasty walk or a little imprudence, when I am recovering, throws me down again. I am not so omnipotent, or so near omnipotence, as I thought I was." The sense of the power of the Ruler, or of God over all—what may be called the humiliation of bone and muscle as well as of spirit and soul—this takes place in men; and frequently the best thing that ever happens to a man is a fit of sickness which changes his whole life. To be sure, when men are sick they are always going to be pious. They do not always fulfill their intentions, but in many cases they do. So that which would at first seem to be obscurity, and a reason for lamentation, turns out to be one of the greatest comforts and blessings of life.

Often, in times of drought, wells give out; and in the West, where wells are shallow, when they became dry we used to go down and dig deeper till we struck water again, putting new casings inside of the old ones—for the wells used to be lined with wood. When another drought came, we used to go down again and repeat the process. This we continued till we got the wells so deep that they never gave out.

Troubles are well-diggers. Men find their pleasures pretty near the top of the soil; but troubles and sorrows

sink wells in them deeper and deeper, till, by and by, they stand, and are never dry, and are wells of water springing up to everlasting life in their souls. Sorrows and troubles are great benefactors. And the same is true of bereavements, great losses, and various hindrances.

Men never could see the corona of the sun—the red flame that surrounds that orb—until the sun was eclipsed; and the corona, the light, the glory of God is seen when men are under eclipse and in darkness. There are revelations made to men then which prosperity never brings to them. We are rich and strong, not by the things which we possess, but by the amount of true manhood which is developed in us.

5. It pleases God, also, to employ the companionship of friends and neighbors in developing men in the direction of their higher manhood. There is nothing that is so helpful to a soul as the contact of another soul. When you go through the door of thought, that is a visitation to be desired; but our Master, Jesus, is himself an Exemplar, and teaches us that, not his Sermon on the Mount, not his discourses by the way, healed the blind man, but his taking hold of the blind man's hand, and walking with him out of the village into the country, and then, with arm about him, laying his hand upon his eyes. It was his personal touch; and it is soul-touch, after all, that is the most helpful and most powerful influence that is brought to bear upon men in the world.

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding—if a man has this, and carries it with him, and it falls upon another man, there is more inspiration in it, and there is more instruction in it, than in a thousand books. Madam Guion's life has led and misled thousands of persons; and yet, doubtless, she, in her personal presence, was a blessing to almost every one whom she met. You who have cheer in you are God's missionaries of comfort to those who are naturally opaque-minded. It is a talent which God has given you, and you never exercise it. Many persons keep mirthfulness as a music-box on a shelf. God gave them an equipage of soul which the world wants, groaning and weeping in overmeasure for the lack of it; and yet it lies dormant in them. They have

it in their power to throw light and cheer upon the ways of life, and make men more buoyant and courageous in the midst of their cares and troubles, and they do not do it. Many men who are mirthful and genial could, if they would, throw over the hardships and trials of their fellow men a radiance which should illuminate their path, but they neglect to do so.

Well, I suppose it would set me outside of the pale of home missionaries if I were to say that a person could oftentimes do more for a sick person by a joke than by a prayer; but it is true, whether you like it or not. Many a man has been winged by prayers to the very gate of heaven, and many a man has been sunk into the very slough of despond by prayers. While many prayers are Jacob's ladders, easy of ascent and descent, many other prayers are dungeons—except that they are darker and damper than any dungeon ever was.

So that, frequently, companionship is the best thing in the world. I ought to say it. I am what I am, by the grace of God, through my old friend Moody—not Moody and Sankey of England, but a man that was at Amherst College, a class or two above me. He was a person of great piety, and he was given much to prayer, night and day; but, glory be to God, he had good common sense; and he took me by the hand. It was at a time when I was in the most morbid conditions of mind. I was sweltering under those views of moral government and divine nature which seemed as though they would suffocate me, and I was trying to eradicate common sense from my mind, that I might be pious—then it was that this man took me by the hand; and the encouragement, the hope, the comfort, which he threw upon me brings tears to my eyes when I think of it. Now he has gone to heaven, and therefore he hears what I say, and rejoices. I remember him more than all others. Dear old Doctor Humphrey, the president, I revered. He gave me certain sentiments of moral sturdiness. Right is right, and come what will, let the heavens fall, justice shall be done—I got much of that from him; and from my own father I got a good deal of courage and enthusiasm; but the trust which weakness may put in love I got from Mr. Moody; the sense of Christ's

favor for unworthy men, because their souls needed some other heart to brood them, I also got from Mr. Moody; and I never shall thank him until I go where he will not need any thanks.

Now, what is largely called "the fellowship of the saints" is very poor indeed. I recollect, when I was a boy, being taken into what was called a "Mother's meeting," where twelve or fifteen sad-hearted women would get together and pray for their children. They prayed for me; and if I had derived my notion of the communion of the saints from them, I think I should totally have misconceived the most glorious element which there is in our mortal life.

Let any one go into the average country prayer-meeting. Tallow candles are hung around on the walls. There are a dozen or twenty persons present, scattered about the room, one here, another there, another over there, and so on. A man, generally the minister, stands in the desk, and reads a chapter, and makes a regulation prayer. Then a deacon gets up and, as usual, talks about our living below our privileges. Another deacon gets up and descants on the duty of laying down the weapons of our rebellion. By and by, after a certain number of regulation prayers have been made, and hymns have been sung, and remarks have been offered, the hour is out, and the people get up, and they go out, and are very happy indeed that the meeting is over. It is your duty to love the communion of the saints, it is said; but any child ought to be whipped if he liked that. It is unnatural. It is stupid.

Take two persons who feel that it is their duty to talk on the subject of religion. A man gets up in the morning with his head full of business and care. He meets a brother church-member in the street, and thinks he ought to have communion with him. Although he is thinking about notes and bargains, he says, "Well, Brother Corning, how is your soul to-day?" The reply is, "Well, thank God, I am pretty well." After having thus exchanged about half-a-dozen sentences, and satisfied their consciences, they go into a discussion about the things which they are really thinking of. They have a good talk about stocks; about the state of the

market ; about profit and loss. The whole current of their thoughts runs in the channel of business. There is a vast amount of this mechanical communion—of talking about religion because it is thought to be a duty.

Now, genuine spiritual communion is a very different thing from that. When persons have real life in their souls ; when they have real peace, real sweetness, real faith, real hope, there is nothing in this world that is comparable to the quiet, natural, unrestrained interchange of thought and feeling—or if there be not interchange of thought and feeling, then to the reception of them as imparted by those who are filled with them, and are God's ministers to the soul in that direction.

A man tells me that I ought to be a lover of flowers. Upon his invitation, I go into his library and see his herbarium. He has put into leaves a large collection of flowers that are dried, and that have lost their color and fragrance. There is a prevailing smell of hay among them all. But I make believe that I like them. "Oh," I say, "these roses are delicious ! Oh, how sweet these violets are !" So I go through the whole collection.

That is very much like Christian people, who go through all sorts of experiences making believe that they like them, when they don't.

I saw, behind a hotel in Switzerland, a fine garden, and I unexpectedly found there American flowers ; and being far away from home, and half home-sick, they afforded me great pleasure, and I went into ecstasy over them. Every one of them seemed like a message to me full of affection, by association ; and I did not need anything to help me love and praise them.

Now, where there is a real fragrance ; in the garden of the Lord, where there is all that is manly and good—there it is the best thing in the world for those who meet to be in communion with each other ; but I despise all regulation duties of this kind.

6. Not to protract further the opening of this subject, I may say that when, by the use of these various instrumentalities—by the use of true views ; of communion with men ; and

of the sanctifying influence of our avocations in life—our souls have grown, and have come into the possibility of a higher spiritual disclosure, then I believe that there is a further soul-growth in us. I believe that God works through the natural world until we are able to be influenced through the social world; that then he works through the social world until we are able to be influenced through the higher forms of church association and teaching; and that, by-and-by, when, through these lower instrumentalities the soul has been stored with knowledge and experience, we come to a state in which there is a direct influence of the soul of God exerted upon us—as direct as sight and voice are to the bodily senses. I believe that the divine Spirit comes into the hearts of men in ways that are inexplicable to the lower understanding, and that, therefore, men who are on the lower plane of life do not comprehend. I believe that when men come to a higher Christian life they have days of spiritual insight; and that these days grow longer and longer, like the days of the coming summer, when the sun goes down later and later, and rises earlier and earlier. I believe that as the result of a whole life of education and practice in divine duties, men may come, at last, into that state in which the Spirit of God shines with a steadfast lustre upon them. Then there is the triumph of grace in the soul. Then intuitions become truths—not fitful, not irregular, not based upon inchoate and undigested knowledge, but constant, regular, and founded on sound judgment. I believe that when men have well-proved knowledge, and wholesome habits thoroughly established, and their higher spiritual nature is growing and opening toward God—I believe that then the prophet-gift comes to them, so that they almost foresee, and almost see with the bodily eye, the God who is invisible to the flesh.

I do not wonder—when saints begin to decay, or fall away so far as their outward bodies are concerned; I do not wonder—when they are dying, and the external ear and eye lose their power—then I do not wonder that the inward ear catches the sound of heavenly music, and that the inward eye beholds the angels of God coming. I do not wonder that children, dying, reach out their hands and call “Mother,”

and that mothers, dying, reach out their hands to greet their children. As we near the great spiritual reality, and the world, the flesh, and matter are losing power, then the emancipated soul is like a bird that has gone up from branch to branch, until at last it sits upon the topmost bough, utters one sweet song, and flies far away through the air. I do not wonder that the spirit rejoices, sings, and disappears singing, that it may appear in Zion and before God.

Christiau brethren, this view it is the privilege of all to have. It is the privilege of all to live the life of which I have been speaking: not to-day nor to-morrow, but as the result of patient continuance in well doing, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And now, dear brethren, when the blessing is pronounced we will join together around the table which celebrates Him who has revealed these truths to us in their most potential forms; and I invite all of you who are in the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, whether you are in the church or not, or whatever church you are in; I invite every one of you who believes in the indispensable need of God's forgiveness and quickening grace; I invite such of you as are in earnest, and have to-day the witness in yourselves that you accept the goodness of God through Jesus Christ; I invite all who would be glad to express their love for the Saviour by the most affecting of all symbolization, his broken body and his blood; I invite every sinful man or woman, every despairing soul that begins to have hope in Jesus Christ—I invite you to become brethren with us for the hour, and partake with us of these emblems.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.\*

WE rejoice, our Father, that thou art hidden from us, not because being high thou art haughty, and dost wrap thyself from thine inferiors; we rejoice that thou art obscure or hidden only while there is not in us that which can comprehend thee; and that by growing in grace we may grow in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We rejoice that there is provision for our rising to the consciousness of thy presence, and of thy nature, and of thy character, and somewhat to an understanding of thy government. None of us by searching can find thee out altogether or understand the Almighty unto perfection; but we may come near to thee, and understand more of thee than we do of father or mother, of brother or sister, or of friend. Thou canst be more to the soul than all other beings. Those that trust thee, and love thee, and are born into the spiritual life with thee, thou canst fill by thy power with all strength, courage and understanding. Thou canst clothe them with thoughts of thee. We rejoice that the testimonies from day to day of thy servants of far away years are recorded. The patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs, a thousand witnesses in every age, testify that in sickness, in sorrow, in persecution, in hardships, in all ways of trouble thou art able to send through the storm, the calm; through the darkness, the light; and through weakness, strength. Thou hast in thyself the resources which universal being needs; and thou dost not withhold, but dost give forth liberally. Thou art as the sun that doth not shine asking how much anything can hold, but that poureth itself abroad with infinite abundance, overflowing and transcending the wants of all that are upon the earth. And so thou dost grant of thyself unto us, not according to the measure which we have in ourselves, but according to the greatness of thine own being; and thou dost please thyself in giving of thine own generosity. Thine own benevolence, thine own love and thine own goodness are the measures—not our desert, nor even our want. Thou dost pour from thyself through the universe the vital spirit. It is of thee, thy life imparting life, rearing it up in gradations, through the ages, that, at last, in the consummation of all things thou mayest make appear what thou art by what thou hast done; and thou wilt have distributed the knowledge of thyself in so many ranks and gradations that spirits, thrones, dominions, principalities, angels, archangels, all that have kept their first estate, and all that have come up from the lowest planes, step by step, shall know thee, shall understand thee, and shall rejoice in thee. And then all other things shall pass away as needed no longer. Thou wilt be the day, and thou wilt be the night. There shall be no sun, nor moon, nor shining of the stars. There shall be no city and no temple. The Lord God shall have in himself all that all do need; and we shall rise into the joy of infinite blessedness.

We rejoice that so many behold, even dimly, this bright vision of

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\* Immediately following the reception of members into the church.

the coming estate. We rejoice that so many are drawn toward it, and are verifying thy promises to those who call on thee.

This morning we have received into our number a new company that seek to walk with us to the land of the blessed. We pray that thou wilt give to them the same grace which thou hast given to hundreds and thousands who have companied with us in days gone by, and who are still with us. And yet, how many are upon the other side; how many that laid foundations with us; how many that went forth in counsel, and prayer, and labor with us; how many whose voices sounded rejoicingly in our ears in the songs of earth! Still they are ours. Still there is communion of the saints. The church on earth and the church above are in communion. The spirits of the blessed look upon us as we gather together in the old familiar places, and rejoice over us as by faith we lift ourselves up to rejoice in them. Theirs is the victory; ours is yet the struggle; but the victory is as sure for us as it was for them. Ours yet are tears; theirs are smiles everlasting; but thou shalt wipe away every tear from every eye of those who yet linger in this lower sphere.

O Lord, our God, we beseech of thee, as one and another come into the communion of thy people, and into church relationships, that they may have administered unto them, not the superstition of outward membership, but the hidden communion of the divine Spirit, and that they may feel that the sources of their strength are in God. Grant that Jesus Christ may become to them a well-conceived object of joy and faith. Grant, we pray thee, that it may be a sweet and pleasant thing for them to walk in the ways of righteousness; and may they find them ways of peace. Deliver them from temptations which are mightier than their own purposes. Deliver them from despondency and distrust. Make them strong, not in themselves, nor in their own will, but in the Lord. And we pray that thou wilt bring many more out of darkness into light, and from the world into communion with the people of God.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt fulfill all thy promises to every one who waits upon thee. Behold expectant hearts to-day. Look down upon this congregation. How many are the wants which move souls toward thee in silence! How many are the sorrows of many hearts! How many with bitter memories come to-day into thy presence for help! How many are there whose hearts ache—those of parents for children, those of brothers and sisters for each other, and those of husbands and wives for each other! How many are there who need thee in their homes, in their dispositions, in their relationships in life one to another! Grant thy grace unto every one. As his day may his strength be, not only, but day by day give him that bread which comes down from heaven, and which feeds the soul, and strengthens it in all its nobler aspirations.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt quicken all who believe, that they may walk in the way of duty; that they may search out neglected duties; that they may take upon themselves the whole service of God; and if there be those who stand looking wistfully upon this congregation and upon this church from without, O Lord, we pray that they may be drawn by that same sweet spirit of hope

and promise which hath drawn us. May the love of Christ constrain them; and may they begin that higher and better life with higher aspirations—that life which overcomes this world by the power of faith. Grant that they may, at last, take the first steps, and commence that journey which, if it be steep and troublesome in the beginning, grows more and more easy until it enters the kingdom of God above.

We pray that thou wilt bless all the churches that are gathered together to-day. May all thy ministering servants be taught of God, and be equipped to preach the whole truth as it is in Christ Jesus. We pray for all the instrumentalities by which light and knowledge are diffused throughout our land. We pray that thou wilt extend the work of teaching among the neglected; of preaching the Gospel in places that are weak and destitute and afar off. We pray that thou wilt send forth in every part of the earth those who are consecrated to the work of spreading the knowledge of God, until, in every land, on every continent, in every dark place on the globe, the light and the glory of Christ shall shine forth victoriously.

Let thy kingdom come, let thy will be done and fill the whole earth with thy glory. We ask it for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

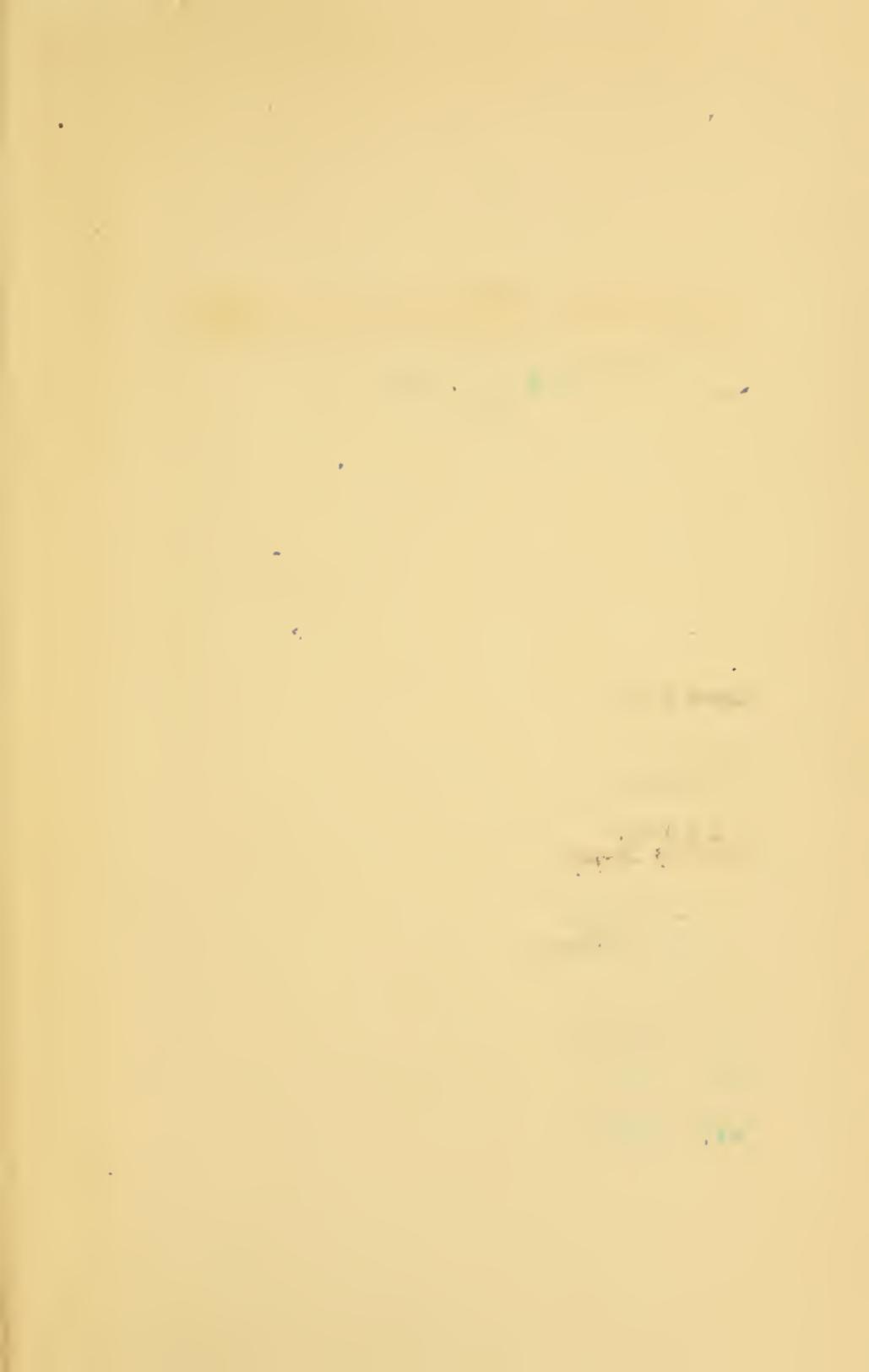




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