

BX 7233 .B4 S54 4th ser. 1
Beecher, Henry Ward, 1813-
1887.

The sermons of Henry Ward
Beecher, in Plymouth

THE SERMONS

OF

HENRY WARD BEECHER,

IN

Plymouth Church, Brooklyn.

FROM VERBATIM REPORTS BY T. J. ELLINWOOD.

“PLYMOUTH PULPIT”

FOURTH SERIES:

MARCH, 1870—SEPTEMBER, 1870.



NEW-YORK:

J. B. FORD & COMPANY, 27 PARK PLACE.

1872.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1870,
J. E. FORD & CO.,
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C.

PREFACE.

Most gratifying evidence is continually afforded that this weekly publication of sermons is supplying an important want. Without trenching upon the living preachers' function, printed sermons go where the voice cannot, and perform a work which cannot otherwise be accomplished.

There are thousands of neighborhoods without churches, and with but occasional preaching; there is many a village whose church is without a pastor, in which these sermons are read. In many instances, and some of especial interest, the services of the sanctuary have been kept up in the absence of a pastor by the reading of these sermons, and the congregations have grown from Sunday to Sunday.

They are carried by Christian people on travels and voyages, and even in the distant lands, on the Sabbath, they perform their benign work, not only refreshing to the wanderer's soul, but bring back to him the endearing associations of home and the home-church. They have also proved a great solace to those who by reason of sickness or infirmity are kept from the House of God.

I am devoutly grateful and thankful for the privilege of preaching the truth as it is in Jesus, to multitudes whom I shall never see in the flesh; and my prayer is, that these sermons may still go on their way doing good.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Sept. 15, 1870.

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I.

BORROWING TROUBLE.

INVOCATION.

March 13, 1870.

THOU that openest the day, and pourest forth the light thereof, so open the heavenly light upon us. And grant us that fullness by which our life shall spring up toward thine ; by which we shall understand the things of God, and all those blessed hopes and promises blossoming in us, which make us so rich in Christ Jesus. Accept our morning thanks. Inspire us to give thanks yet again and often this day, making melody in our hearts. May we sing together in the sweet fellowship of sacred song. Bless us in the offices of devotion, in the labor of instruction, in meditation, and all the pursuits and joys of this holy day. And whether in the sanctuary or in our homes, may everything be done to our souls' profit, and to thine honor and glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

BORROWING TROUBLE.

“Suffioient unto the day is the evil thereof.”—**MATT. VI. 34.**

From the nineteenth verse of this chapter to the thirty-fourth, we may find the theory of life as laid down by our Lord Jesus Christ. Every philosophy proposes to itself, or seeks, some such schedule or scheme of living; and every man has some idea of what is the way of happiness. Not only every philosophy, but every religion has it. Here we find the secular side of life, the earthly life, the chart for living in this world, contained between the nineteenth and the thirty-fourth verses of the sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel.

“Do not live,” says the Master, “for external things. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth. After all these things do the gentiles seek—what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed; but let not my disciple, who accepts my ideal of life, and means to be happy according to the pattern that I shall lay down, make external and sensuous enjoyment the end and aim of his life.”

It is not taught here that we are to pay no attention to external things. It is not a doctrine that lays the axe at the root of enterprise, or of commerce, or of secular industries. It does not say, “Be not engaged in any of these things.” Men must needs be occupied with these things. But we are told, “Do not make these the things *for* which you live: make them the things *by* which you live.”

If I go to see a brother, long absent, who has just landed in Boston, I go by the cars. I use them as a means of conveying me there. It is not merely for the sake of the car-ride that I go to Boston. The cars become instruments of convenience to me. My heart goes for a purpose disconnected from them. I am thankful for this mode of conveyance; but it is the means, and not the end.

And our Master says, “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven—incorruptible treasures. Do not lay up evanescent, earthly treasures, but the abiding treasures of the heavenly state.”

It is not a stroke at riches. It is not undervaluing worldly good, in its own place. It is substantially saying, "You are not beasts, that are born into life, and live only in this world; and therefore you ought to lay the foundation here for enjoyment in the future life. You are really children of God. You are to have a life so long, so noble, and so above all that is in the brute creation, that you should live for that other, interior and higher life, and not for the lower one. Make the higher life and the nobler development the aim; and make this secondary and secular life the mere instrument by which you attain that."

Here, then, is the grand aim. While the great mass of mankind live through the senses for the senses, and in the present for the present, exclusively, Christ says, "Do you live for the higher, the spiritual, and the eternal life. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness—seek ye *first* in the order of time, and *first* in intensity, the kingdom of God and his righteousness—and all these things shall be added unto you."

In this there is a profound philosophy. For that training by which a man *seeks first the kingdom of God*, is just the training which makes him, in the economic world, the most efficient, and the most sure of success. The less follows the greater.

Then he teaches us, as is already implied in the very statement which I have made, that the real treasure of this life is to be moral and social quality. That is to say, we are to seek our happiness, not by the things which we have around about us, but by what we have in us. It is what we *are* that is to make us happy, and not what we *have*.

I have seen Cremona violins, dusty, brown, black, split and splintered in fifty places, mended again and again, and as homely to the eye as anything can possibly be, and yet worth a thousand dollars apiece—not on account of what they are to look at, but on account of the capacity which they have of producing extraordinary musical sounds. It is their intrinsic quality of tone that makes them so valuable. And I have seen violins edged with silver, inlaid with gold, and covered all over with mother of pearl, and perfectly gorgeous to a baby's eyes, that had no quality or capacity for producing musical sounds, and that were well nigh worthless.

I have seen persons who have attempted to be happy by overlaying themselves with exterior adornments and pleasures, and who were like a violin without music in it, but with splendid stuff on the outside of it.

And so the genius of the Christian scheme says to every man, "Your happiness is to come from the essential quality of your nature, and not from what you put on yourselves." You may cover yourselves with pearls and jewels, you may heap up around about you silver and gold;

but you cannot be happy with these things if you have not the capacity of being happy in yourself. Happiness comes from the concords of a man's own nature, and not from outward circumstances. When a man is prepared to be happy, outward circumstances help him. Of course they furnish the material or occasion of his happiness; but the prime condition—that without which all other things fail—is that the dispositions in the man shall be set so that he shall be capable of being made happy.

I have thus said expansively that which is said in the most condensed, apothegmatic form in the New Testament—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness." "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven"—not perishable things of this world, but higher qualities, Christian graces, inward experiences and dispositions, which in their very nature are joy-bearing here, and are immortal there. Let such be the end and aim of your life."

This mode of teaching is the more striking to us because the modern spirit, and the American spirit before all others, is the spirit of fore-looking enterprise, and is restless, and insatiable, and indomitable, and for the most part sensuous and external. You could not rebuke the whole temper and spirit of the times more than by the exposition of this scheme of happy living, as propounded in the gospel. Every man feels, in the very air, as it were, the impulse to build himself up into a power in life. Every boy is born *to be somebody*, in this country. His parents, among their first inculcations, instil this into him. "It is vulgar," they say, "to stay where you start." Everybody has a chance for everything, we are told. And it has become hackneyed, that every man's son may be President, or Chief Justice, or something else. Everybody has the liberty to do everything, it is said. And therefore everybody is a-whirling and a-whizzing from the very cradle after everything. There is nothing that is looked upon more contemptuously in this country than content. There is no man that commands so little respect as the man that is contented with his condition. You shall hear it said of a man, "He was born of poor parents, he has been poor all his life, he is going to be poor the rest of his days, he knows it, and he does not care. He has no spirit. To be sure, he sings all the time, and is happy all the time; but then, he is *nobody*. There is nowhere that the modern spirit is more shown in contrast with the truly Christian spirit, than in this land of life, and enterprise, and fever, and restless industry, where every man is pressing forward. And although theoretically we are all orthodox, although we are all right with the creed, we are wrong somewhere else. It is not in their creeds that men are generally erroneous. It is in their business, it is in their out-door and every-day life, that they fall into mistakes. Out of doors we are all sin-

ners alike, no matter what we believe. We are all pressing on for outward exaltation; for treasures that the eye can see and the hands can handle. We are all living for the omnipotent present, and seeking to make ourselves happy by banking and building up on every side. And when we come to call men's attention to the fevered state of mind which grows up under these intensive goadings of industry; when we come to say to them, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and as much of these things as you need shall be added to you," they say, "Yes, that probably is true, *in a sense*." But that is only an evasion. It is not true to them. They do not believe a word of it. When we preach to men, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal;" when we exhort them not to lay up their treasure in this world, where at the best it is evanescent, and where it is very feeble to create happiness, but to lay it up in the world to come, where will be enduring, and where it will be to them a source of "joy unspeakable, and full of glory"; when we tell them to be rich toward God, to be rich beyond, to be rich in hope and faith and pure love—they do not understand that, or they do not believe in it if they do understand it.

The scale of living, too, is so much raised by the very power of Christianity to intensify the human mind, society has so developed, and civilization, which always goes from simplicity toward complexity, requires so much more to make a man the equal of his fellows, that no man can keep upon his level without a great deal of activity. That is not an evil, although it is oftentimes perverted into one. The world has become very much like a treadmill. Formerly the wheel revolved so slowly that men could keep step, the laziest of them; but the great world now whirls round so fast that a man must run or drag. And the consequence is that they who, at the start, are comparatively feeble, or lacking in power, in ingenuity, in enterprise, or in efficiency, find themselves obliged to bustle up their step, in order to keep along with the march of their fellows or their class in society.

We always measure ourselves by relative standards; and he is rich that is richer than somebody else; and he is strong that is stronger than somebody else; and he is good or pure that is better or purer than somebody else whose life is keyed to a certain elevated standard. And so men are crowding one another, and there is infinite rivalry between them on every side, because they are striving to reach their ideal. Some men say, "I want to heap up great riches." A great many others say, "I do not want to be very rich. All I want is to have a fair equality with my fellow men." But their fellow men live in a stage of society,

a civilization, so complicated, with so many and such various wants to be cared for, with a demand for so many "conveniences" (the most intolerable nuisances in human life are these same *conveniences*—conveniences that have to be watered and pruned; conveniences—that have to be dusted and cleaned; conveniences—that have to be packed and unpacked; conveniences—that become moth-eaten; conveniences—that run zigzag, and all sorts of ways; conveniences—that keep people busy all the time)—their fellow men live on so comprehensive a scale, that it is impossible to keep equal with them. And so it is with society at large. There is prevalent such an intensive spirit of enterprise, that men are placed under a continual pressure. The very wealth of society in the station where you are, puts you upon an immense amount of exterior industry and of necessity in order to take care of yourselves—and that, too, when you only mean to be at a fair level or a fair equality among men.

I do not undertake to say that this state is not better than a savage or barbaric state; but I do say that, all the more, because this higher state has its attendant temptations, we need to hear the cooling, calming declarations that, after all, our life does not stand in external things; that a man may be a *man*, and not be rich, nor powerful, nor surrounded by all the objects which we are seeking; that though he may have and be happy in them, yet if, in the providence of God, he is overruled, and misses them, he should not think that he cannot be happy without them; and that if in the poorest man on earth, in a pauper, the kingdom of God is rich, he has laid up treasures above, the reflection of which will make him light and bright even here on earth.

Against this tendency to absorb all the forces of life and society upon our material conditions, the Saviour sets up a totally different career and course. The indispensable physical things of life do not require excessive toil or anxiety. That is to say, "your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of these things." It is as if the Master had said, "The divine government is such that a man can eat, and drink, and be clothed, and have a reasonable amount of comfort in his household, without excessive toil and taxation." There are special exceptions to this; but this is the general rule, comprehensively stated, in regard to the races, and the nations of the earth. All that is necessary to take care of the body does not need to consume the whole of life's forces. If a man has sought first and chiefly the soul's treasure—goodness, kindness, gentleness, devoutness, cheerfulness, hope, faith and love—he will extract more joy from the poorest furniture and outfitting of life than otherwise he could get from the whole world. For excitement comes from our lower passions; but joy comes only from our sentiments. A man may by excessive taxation reap excessive exhilaration

and excitement: but no man can get joy except from those branches on which it grows—namely, the affections and the moral sentiments. The appetites and passions do not give joy. Fiery excitements come from them; but joy comes only from the higher and nobler developments.

Therefore, after this outline of the course of life, the idea of it, its method and instruments, the whole is summed up by the Saviour in this: "*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*" "It is needless," he says, "that you should be bearing troubles; that you should be worrying over long plans ahead; that you should be wearing yourselves out with cares; that you should be subjected to all the suffering of possible evils in days to come. The true scheme of life, the highest wisdom in living, the hope of immortality, ought to dispossess the low and beggarly way in which men live. No man should allow himself to live from day to day under all that accumulation of care and burden which the future foretokens; and especially all the evils and mischiefs which fear and the morbid conditions of the mind forebode. No man has a right to import all these into a single day. But this is just what men are accustomed to do.

Each single and particular day is marked out by the providence of God, so to speak, that it may cut off the past and all its mischiefs, and that it may intercept and prevent all the possible mischiefs of the future. The question is, Have you grace given you to-day to lift the burdens of to-day? Have you grace given you to-day to be content with the condition of to-day? It matters not whether you have food for to-morrow, ordinarily speaking. There are exceptional cases, which I do not need to instance, as of voyagers on desolate islands, or men making preparation for long expeditions; but as men live ordinarily, it may be said that if a man can bear the load of to-day, the sorrows of to-day, the joys of to-day, that is all he need concern himself about.

I do not mean to be understood as saying that we do not need to lay our plans far ahead. For forelooking is not burdensome. It is no more burdensome to plan for the next year or the next month, than it is to plan for the next hour or the next minute. The use of your intelligence prophetically, as it were, along the line of cause and effect—that is not forbidden. Nor is it wrong for men, by faith or by hope, to look forward. That is pleasure-bearing. But to look forward or back in such a way as to bring unhappiness—that is disallowed. You have no right to do it. In each particular day you are to concentrate, and burden yourself with, only the troubles which belong to that day—that is, the troubles which spring from the circumstances of that day.

"But," says one, "the child may die to-morrow." Wait, then, till to-morrow, before you mourn the dying child. "But bankruptcy may

come to-morrow." Well, if to-day is the last day that you are not bankrupt, at least enjoy to-day. "But, how shall I provide for to-morrow?" The Master says, "Sufficient for to-day are the evils of to-day." Let the evils, let the sufferings, let the wear and tear of the care which belongs to each particular day, be enough.

Besides, there is a piece of humor in the reply. You will worry, you will fret, for to-morrow? "Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?" Or, in other words, how absurd it would be, to see a dwarf foaming, and worrying, and fretting, because he was only five feet high, and saying, "If I had been six feet I should have been an orator?" How absurd it would be for a short man to say, "If I were only as tall as ordinary men, I might have made my mark in the world; but I am this diminutive little imp, and I go tripping here and there just like a little whiffet, and nobody cares for me; and, oh! if I could only be taller, how much better I should be!" Our Master points to the absurdity of it; and no man can think of it without a smile of ridicule. If there is one thing that is more ridiculous than another, it is a man's trying to make himself taller by stretching upwards. Height is one of those things that a man before he is forty years old generally concludes to be content with. Men learn before they are very old, to take their features and their stature, and not attempt to change them. There are things that a man must carry along with him to the end of life. He cannot help himself. And our Saviour says, "Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature?" And why take anxious thought for the things of to-morrow? What odds will it make? Suppose you think ever so much, suppose you rasp your mind with fearful cares, will it make your case any better? Can you change to-morrow? Can you render inoperative the law of cause and effect? Can you by solicitous forelooking throw light into the shadow? Can you dissipate the lurking, or the supposed lurking evils, by a consideration of them? It is an impossible thing.

You are master of yourself to-day; but God gives you supremacy for only one day at a time. To-morrow is not your kingdom. Of to-morrow you have no scepter till to-morrow is to-day. No man owns anything until it has been converted into to-day. As fast as time is ours it is brought to us; and then we administer over it. And to-day I can say, "Can I get through to-day?" I never saw a man that could not get through a single day. That is a space that almost anybody can stride over. Almost everybody says, "I could get through to-day if I had reason to believe that to-morrow—." Oh! to-morrow does not exist to you. If you can bear your burden to-day, if you can carry your cross to-day, if you can endure your pain to-day, if you can

suffer the shame of to-day, if you can put down the fear of to-day, if you can find philosophy of contentment to-day, you will get along well enough. Take what comes to you to-day. To-morrow you have no business with. You steal if you touch to-morrow. It is God's. Every day has in it enough to keep every man occupied without concerning himself with the things which lie beyond.

When the pilot is steering on the Ohio river, he looks at the headlands miles beyond him, in order to know where he is ; for he has been accustomed to judge of the twisting and torturous channel by certain of these headlands. And so a man may take headlands far down in the future to steer by, in order that he may be better enabled to run his keel in the channel that he is now in. By foresight we enable ourselves to get along better to-day ; and by so much we have a right to look into the future. But all the foresight of a given day is only to be such as shall better fit us for the duties of that day. And when a man has got through with the waking hours of any single day, he has got through with his duty up to that point of time. Duties will begin again to-morrow ; but all duties lapse and end with each sphere of active time given to man. You have enough work to occupy all your time to-day. And blessed be the man whose work drives him. Something must drive men ; and if it is wholesome industry, they have no time for a thousand torments and temptations which they would otherwise have. And let him be thankful who has every day enough legitimate work to keep him busy.

A ship that has headway steers easy ; but while it lies drifting in the tide you cannot steer it at all. It swings back and forth, and you have no control of it. First the stern is "on," then the bow, and then the broadside. And so it is with idle men. A man that has nothing to do is drifting and whirling around, and is liable to go on this mud-bank, or on that sand-shoal, or what not. He cannot manage himself. No man is so miserable as the man who is uncertain as to what he shall do. The French have invented a word—*ennui*—by which to describe the condition of such persons. We have not the word in the English language, but we have the *thing*—a good deal of it. The wretchedness which comes from a man's having nothing to do has deserved the invention of a phrase in language ; and we borrowed it from the French.

I know what this thing is myself. I know that when I have a week or ten days in which I have nothing to do—nothing *special* to do—everything, and therefore nothing—no fixed plan—no pressure on every side—they are unhappy days. I am glad to get out of vacation into term-time again. I am glad to get back from the pasture into the harness again. I am glad to throw off the harness and go to grass ; rest

in its place is appropriate and desirable: but work is also appropriate and desirable in its place. Work is not God's curse. Work is God's medicine. If it had not been for work when Adam and Eve were cast out of paradise, they would have died of their misery. Work comforted them. They tilled the earth; and in the sweat of their brow they ate their bread; and the sweat of their brow took off the fever that would have been in their blood and bones if it had not been for the work and the sweat. Every day ought to have enough work to occupy a man wholesomely. Every day has conflicts enough to fill up a man's whole time. If a man is trying to carry himself according to the spirit of true love, he has enough to occupy him every day. If a man is attempting to subordinate all his passions, he has work enough for every day. If a man is endeavoring to fulfill all the duties of life, he has enough to attend to every single day, without troubling himself about the duties of to-morrow. Every day has occupations of usefulness enough to keep a man busy all the while. A man's secular industry, his spiritual conflicts, and his life of benevolence, are ample contents with which to grace and fill up every day as it comes. And we ought not to meddle with to-morrow. You cannot do it without subtracting just so much from the fidelity of to-day. We have no strength to waste. The field is so large in any single day, that no man can perfectly till it; and why should he go over the bounds into the next field?

In God's economy, each day, well cared for, prepares for the next, as cause prepares for effect. Days are invisibly joined. You have, perhaps, jointed, anatomized, birds, or fishes, or animals. Did you ever play anatomy on your own action, to see what was the line of cause and effect all through one single day? Dissection requires the very nicest insight and judgment; but there is no such organization in matter and flesh as there is in that curious complication of cause and effect in things intellectual and social and moral, called human life. Each hour is the legitimate product of the hour which went before it. If this hour bulges like the arm joint, then the next hour is a socket into which it fits itself. And so one part articulates into another, each successive part being in some way logically connected with that which went before.

Now, if a man prepares for to-morrow by making to-day right, he can foresee what the effect will be. The next day will come up as the legitimate antithesis, or the legitimate consequence, of the right-lived day which prepared the way for it. And if a man, neglecting his duties to-day, thinks of what he will do to-morrow, the to-morrow which he thinks of will not come to pass. There will be a to-morrow, but it will be a different to-morrow from that which he anticipates. For each

to-morrow is the logical sequence of the right to-day, or the wrong to-day, as the case may be. "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." He that can get through any single day wisely, will find that the next day will be more easy than to-day was.

No man can see what is to come after him. You burden your time, therefore, with unrealities. More than half the things that have made you unhappy, have had no existence.

If one is jaded, overworked, dyspeptic, it is a familiar symptom that when he wakes in the morning, all the world is clouded with gloom to him. When an overtaxed and overcerebrated man gets up in the morning, before his system has had time to carry itself up by excitement to its proper pitch, he is nobody, he thinks; he never was anybody, and he never will be anybody; nobody loves him; nobody ever did love him, and nobody ever will love him; he never did anything, and he never shall do anything; and he does not care. Everything he looks at has a *blue* side, as it is called. But by ten o'clock, what with a good breakfast, and what with the social activities of the meal, his nervous system becomes strained up, and he begins to get the full use of himself, and one cloud after another goes off, and about twelve o'clock he looks back and smiles at himself, and says, "I was a fool this morning. I can see it now, though I could not then. Everything I looked at was dismal. It was all unreal. It was purely imaginary—no it was not even imaginary: it was the result of a morbid imaginary state." And that which is true as judged by the previous hours of the day, is not true as judged by the subsequent hours of the day.

If one would only make statistics of his experience; if one would only keep a book, he would find that nine-tenths of the things which trouble and vex him are unreal, or else things which he ought not to have thought of, anyhow.

Why are you unhappy? "Well, here I am: I used to live in a brown-stone house, four stories high, with servants, equipage, and all that; and now I am brought down to this two-story house, with the plainest kind of carpets and furniture. All my circumstances in life are changed." Well, have you enough to eat and drink? Have you self-respect? Have you a sense of honor? Is life as beautiful as ever to you in all the developments which God has made in the heaven and on the earth. The flow of time; the procession of the seasons, the honor and respect of good men; the love that one bears to another under the same roof, and in the household—are all these great treasures given to you? Have you Christ, and God, and hope of immortality? What is the matter that you are so wretched to-day?

"Well, I feel my crown; I am the King's son; I have an eternal

inheritance ; but this I have in a two-story house, and I want it in a four-story house!" Ought not such miserable creatures as he—that is to say, nine-tenths of us—to be whipped and scourged for so far lowering themselves as to forget all the magnitudes of manhood ; all the essential verities of life ; all the elements which go to make honor, and self-respect, and the mutual love and sweet endearments of the household ; all the cheer on the pathway to the grave ; the triumph of dying ; the glory of the resurrection ; the immortality of blessedness beyond death, where no wave-stroke of care ever comes ? All these things are theirs professedly, and really, oftentimes ; and yet they are low-browed, and anxious, and wearied, and have no comfort at breakfast, and have no cheer at dinner, and are miserable at tea ; and they go discontented to bed, and get up discontented in the morning, and wear out their lives in fretting because they are not quite as properous as they want to be ; because A. is more prosperous than they are ; because they are not equal to B. ; because the whole alphabet is against them !

More than that, if this class of frets and worries which we allow to disturb our happiness be taken out of the way, look at the anticipated ones that would be worthy of troubling us, and see how almost invariably they are like bubbles which we ourselves blow, and which we cannot breathe in the presence of without blowing them out.

A friend of mine explained to me his cure of speculating in stocks. It will not hurt some of you to hear the story.

He felt perfectly certain of making money ; but he was held back by the influence of a dear friend—though rather impatiently. Having promised that he would not engage in speculation in stocks at all (that being out of his regular business), he thought he would do the next best thing—take a little book and see how it would come out. So every day when stocks were in the market, he would watch his chances, and now and then he would say to himself, "There is something to be made in that, sure ; and if I could, I would buy a hundred shares ;" and he would put down a hundred shares, with the price ; and when he had a chance to sell a certain number of shares to a good advantage, he would put them down ; and so he went on charging and crediting himself according as he would have dealt if he had been allowed to ; and at the end of four months he summed the whole up, and struck a balance, and found that he would have been bankrupt four times over if he had done what he wanted to do ! His dry brokerage, his book brokerage, satisfied him ; and he attended to his own business with more content afterwards.

Now, if you kept a little book, I think it would do you good. If you would keep a book, and every day put down the things that pes-

ter you, and see what becomes of them, it would be a benefit to you. You allow a thing to pester you, just as you allow a fly to settle on you and plague you; and you lose your temper (or rather, get it; for when men are surcharged with temper they are said to have lost it); and you justify yourselves for being thrown off your balance by causes which you do not trace out. But if you would see what it was that threw you off your balance before breakfast, and put it down in a little book, and follow it up, and follow it out, and ascertain what becomes of it, you would see what a fool you were in the matter.

If you would in your housekeeping keep a little book, not of expenses, but of experiences, in this regard, just to see what comes of your forebodings and unnecessary cares, I think you would find out, in respect to your real, every-day life, that nine parts in ten of all the things which you bring into to-day from to-morrow, and from next week, are superlative ignorances and superlative impertinences, and that they are unreal.

But men are so conceited that the thing which they think of, they think to be true. This looming scare; this annoyance; this dampening and drooping of affection; this bereavement; all these spectral things which the imagination so lightly takes up—he does not stop to-day to see that they were all mistaken, but he goes over the same ground to-morrow, he takes up the same line, and allows himself to be scared here and there. And so cares, like mosquitoes, pester him. Each of them sucks a little speck of blood; but all of them nearly drain him dry.

Thus men wear themselves out by the attrition of little things not one of which is worthy of notice, but all of which together scour like emery.

We are to consider that God will give to every man who simply trusts with childlike faith in him, in his government, and in his presence, when trouble comes to a head, the grace and the strength that then shall be required.

I have known persons who anxiously foreboded their own death. "How," they said, "could I endure to die and leave this sweet band of children? I do not know what James would do if I were to leave him?" *James* usually is taken care of under such circumstances. "What would Mary do? It breaks my heart to think that I may die." Many a mother has sat with a slight cough, and with a little hectic color on her cheek, and studied as to how she could part with James or Mary and the little brothers and sisters. My friend, as long as you are alive and plump, it is not your duty to leave your dear ones. When you are called to leave those that are dear to you, it will be very easy for you to leave them.

In June, or July, or August, when the apple is green, you may go

out and tug at it, and it does not want to leave the bough, and it will not leave the bough. A multitude of strings tie it to the bough; and it says, "My business is to stick here till I am ripe." But by-and-by when it is ripe, all those juices which make the apple better, also prepare it to let go. And one after another of the fibres of the stem break, being no longer required to convey the juices from the bough to the fruit. And when, after this preparation, the time arrives for the apple to come off, down it drops so easy that it does not know what made it fall.

In the stillness of the night I have lain in my father's house in Litchfield, when it was so still that the silence ached in the ear, and have heard that sound, so joyful to the eager up-rising boy—the plumping down of the early bough-apple in the garden under my windows. It needed no wind, but only the difference of the weight of the dew at night, to pluck it off from the bough.

When the time comes for men to die, they die very easy, as a general rule. When your time to die comes, and you are to leave this world, do you suppose the Lord Jesus, who loves you better than you love yourself, has not arranged everything so that you will be willing to go? You want to feel willing now; but he does not want you to be willing. You want to be willing to leave your children when God wants you to stay with them and take care of them. You have the knowledge, the spirit of fidelity and the strength which qualify you for that work; and what are these but indications that your duty is to live and take care of them. This equipment is a sign and token that now, to-day, your duties are here; and it is right that at this time you should feel unwilling to die, though one year hence, or one month hence, you may feel, and it may be proper for you to feel willing to die.

And how absurd is this anticipating what is to come! When by and-by God leads you step by step, down to the trouble which you are thinking of, there will have been wrought such changes, and such preparations will have taken place, that it will not seem like a trouble.

According to my observation, there is nothing in the world which so rebukes forethought and anxiety as dying. I have seen the heads of the family go; I have seen the father and the mother go; "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." The taking the heads of families, is like the sowing of wheat. The seeds, being scattered, take root for themselves, and grow. And children, when thrown upon their own resources, take care of themselves. Partridges know how to do it on the mountain; and so do children in the household, and everywhere. God takes care of your children. He took care of them through you to-day. It may be that he will take care of them without you to-mor-

row. You may be a good mother, whose children do better with you than they would without you; but I have seen children who did better after their mother was gone than they did before. At any rate, God will not forsake the children whose parents are called to leave them.

When the trouble comes, Christ will come with it. Never bear your cross till the cross is laid on your shoulder. Never cry about a trouble until God brings it to you, and puts it on you. Then you will find that with the troubles comes the preparation, so that they cease to be troubles.

Livingston, the traveler, describes, in one of his letters, his experience when he was struck down by a lion. It has been supposed that it must be a terrible experience to be in the clutches of a lion, and about to be destroyed; but he testifies that, when he was set upon and borne down by a lion's spring, and seized in his jaws, and dragged by him, from the moment that he was struck by the lion's paw, all fear and all trouble left him. It was a dream of peace with him. His intellect remained, and he supposed that he was about to be killed; but he seemed to be under a magnetic charm until sometime after he was rescued by the fidelity of one of his attendants, and the lion was driven off. He says that when he was in the clutches of the lion he was in a state of perfect peace. It seemed as though there was a provision by which, under the influence of magnetism, or mesmerism, or something of the sort, the suffering was taken away from the prey while it was in the jaws of the devourer.

And that which he found to be true in the case of a literal lion, thousands of men have felt in the moral kingdom. When the lion that they feared in the way set upon them, God either stopped his mouth, or rendered the stroke of his paw painless.

Our troubles are not once in a thousand times what we anticipate them to be. Many of those troubles which we are to bear, when the day comes, so far from being what we anticipated they would be, become positive sources of enjoyment. Oh! that men would derive from their past experience some little wisdom in respect to their future! We do this in our pecuniary affairs. If a man by a certain arrangement makes money once, he does not undertake the same operation again without remembering it, and making the same kind of a business turn, or, at any rate, acting upon the same principle. But in moral things we have the most wonderful experiences—experiences that are very deep, very sweet, very instructive, very profitable, going right to the very core of life itself; but afterwards we come into the same exigency, and profit very little from the instruction.

How many troubles, my friends, you have been through! And the Lord has sustained you in every one. Where are the troubles of last

year? Look back on them. How many were there? You cannot count them. You have only a vague idea of them. You may have passed through bankruptcy, or there may have been a death in your family; but aside from these you have no distinct recollection of the troubles that you have had within the past year. That brood of things which lowered the whole tone, the temperature, of your spirituality, and made those wrinkles on your brow—what became of them? Did they hinder you, or hurt you?

I used, when I was in the West, and traveled on horseback, to dread, all day long, the fords. I had a peculiar fear of fords, arising from an early experience in which I was twice swept away, and came near losing my life. Though I was courageous in most things, I dreaded fords, so dark and pokerish did they seem to me. In those mud-rivers of the West, one never knew when the ground might shift, nor what condition a certain ford would be in when he got to it. In going from place to place the thought of the fords I would have to cross was a perpetual torment to me. For instance, I would go through White river all right, and Blue river would be back of me; but there would be Eel river to come; and I could not get there till five or six o'clock in the afternoon; that was the worst ford (the one that is before is always the worst). At last I would come to it; and now I would brace myself up and go across; but instead of there being a raging, foaming torrent, such as I had imagined, the water would be so low that the horse would not go knee-deep in any place. And then I would be mad because it was not deep, after I had been fretting all day about it! When I came back on the other side, it would be no comfort to me that I had lately crossed with so little difficulty. "To be sure," I would say, "the ford was not deep then; but it may be now. How do I know but it has been raining there?" But when I would get to the ford again, I would find that it was no worse than it was before, and would laugh at myself. And I never got any wiser. I always was afraid of a ford.

Now, my friends, we, every one of us, have a ford somewhere that we are crossing every day; and we dread it and dread it until we get to it; and then we go over safely; but when we get on the other side we forget the lesson; and when we come back to it again we come with the same dread. We are not wise in the things which relate to our own happiness.

The backward look and application of this inspired teaching is also in point, and valid for our comfort and instruction.

Although men mostly borrow trouble from the future, there are a great many persons who bring in trouble from the past. Nothing is more common than to hear persons who have lost dear friends mourning the past.

One person says, "If I had known, I never would have taken that journey. My child never was well afterwards. And I might have known. I was cautioned by my neighbors."

Another says, "I ought not to have had that physician. I was told that if I employed him my child would never get well; and I did employ him. If I had taken the other doctor, I think I might have had my child with me now."

Another says, "The child dropped off between two o'clock and four, just when I was asleep, though I slept but ten minutes. It was wrong for me to be asleep at all. If I had been awake, doubtless I should have seen just the turn; and if I had stimulated the child just at the time when it began to run down, it probably would have rallied. But when I awoke it was too late, and the child sank, and sank, and died. If I could only——" *If, and if, and if!* These *if's* are dragon's teeth to most men.

Now, did not you do all that you could? Did not you do the best that you knew how? Did not your heart prompt you to do everything in your power? Did not you bring all that God gave you to that hour? Even if you made a mistake, are we not permitted to make mistakes? All men make mistakes. I make many of them, and so do you. I do not understand all the laws of life, and you do not. And it is not surprising that this and that symptom were neglected. If we were omniscient and omnipotent, it would have been different. But we are finite, peccable creatures. And you did the best you could. Why not, therefore, shut up that chapter of experience, and let it go? Why mourn and carry heavy griefs on account of the troubles of the past? It is not wise. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

But time draws on. Let me say, in closing, that the grace which we need to enable us to avoid borrowing trouble from the past, and to avoid borrowing trouble from the future, is a divine grace. So are we fevered with life, so are we beset with a thousand provocations, so are we subject to the whims and caprices of the circle in which we live, so are we stimulated and excited by the very way in which life is organized, from which we cannot separate ourselves, and with which we are obliged to be in sympathy, that no man can be calm, contented, sweet-minded and triumphant in the present hour, unless he brings more than his own philosophy to bear.

A man said to me this last week, "When I go to bed at night, I say to myself, I have done the best I knew how all day, and I leave the rest with God." Brave man! That is the meaning of *Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you*. Lay your burdens upon him, and he will take care of all your mistakes, not only, but of all your wisdoms, and of your successes therein. His nature is benefi-

cent; and Christ says, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." Philosopher, you may cipher that out. He says that *not a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's notice*. Physicist, fix that to suit yourself. I tell you, I am not going to live without a God, and a God that is better to me than I am to my children. He has called himself my Father, and he has told me to call him Father—and I will. He has told me that *everything is naked and open before him*. He has told me that he is bringing me up through trouble and suffering for eternal life and immortal glory, and I believe it. All that is generous and manly in me, and all that in me which has aspiration for dignity and honor, makes me believe that I am being conducted through this great and strange world by an all-guiding Father, for the sake of making me worthy to be his Son in the kingdom of his glory. And I will have the benefit of that belief. I will bring down my Father into each particular day, and say, "The providence of this day is thine. Manage it as thou wilt. I do not seek to pry behind the philosophy and find out how it is. Sufficient is it that I may cry and thou wilt hear. It is enough that I may cast my burden on thee, and that thou wilt take care of me." It is enough that the voices of thousands of witnesses in every age have risen up and said, "We have cast our burdens and cares on the Lord, and he has sustained us." It is the living testimony of the church universal, and it is the testimony of scores and hundreds in this church—of many a father and mother, and husband and wife, and brother and sister; of many a professional man; of many a man of business; of many a mechanic; of many a sea-faring man or day-laborer—that say, "In my rising up and in my lying down, in my going out and in my coming in, in all the exigencies of life, I have waited on the Lord, and he has succored me in the day of trouble." *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*, is the promise; and the application of the apostle is, *So that I may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me*.

To disarm life thus of all unnecessary cares and fears—how blessed the task! how sweet the prerogative! How wise it is for a man to say, "My duties, my sorrows and my joys, for this day, are simply within the horizons of this day. I will take care of to-day faithfully. For, *sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof!*" How wise it is for a man so to live until the last and the ransoming day comes, when God shall lift us into that land which is without a cloud, and without a care, and without a sorrow, and when we shall see him as he is, and be like him!

Christian brethren, hold on a little while longer. Let God turn over the leaves of the book of life for you; read contentedly what is written thereon, and do not seek to interline nor erase.

Let God manage my affairs for me. Let him bring me sorrow, or exemption from sorrow. Let him bring me care, or release from care. It is his heart that loves, and his heart that guides, and his heart that is preparing me for the kingdom of glory. It is enough for me that my Father is taking care of me. So I will sing in sorrow, and I shall find the light in darkness, and victory in defeat, and joy through life and in death, and glory beyond.



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, our Father, for all the greatness of that help which thou hast manifested, and which thou art willing to bestow. Thou hast set before us the door of opportunity. Thou hast in all our exigencies provided relief, and succored us in our wanderings. We are graciously restored by the Shepherd. We rejoice that we are safe, and that we are victorious, and that we shall yet appear in Zion and before God—though not by the merit of our own wisdom, and not because our strength is adequate, and not because we have the wisdom of goodness. We recognize our sinfulness, and the weakness that springs from it. We recognize our ignorance which is itself a sin, in things pertaining to God and to duty, in the midst of that great light in which we have always dwelt. We recognize our helplessness. Although we were clothed with power adequate to all our needs, yet we have weakened ourselves; we have by disuse rendered that power no longer available. We are strong in single things; but for all the duties of life how feeble and how poor are we! It is because thou, O Lord, by thy providence and by thy grace, hast undertaken for us, that we are confident both of victory here and of salvation hereafter. It is the love which is like summer to our souls, it is the fidelity of the divine and infinite love, it is the wisdom unsearchable and past finding out, of our all-guiding God, that shall bring us safely through. And so our trust for ourselves is not in our wisdom nor in ourselves at all. By the grace of God we are what we are; and that same grace shall make us whatever we shall attain unto in all the blessedness of the coming world, where ignorance ceases; where knowledge begins; where all joy shall begin to spring from pure fountains inexhaustible. There, in our renewed existence, we shall be made worthy by the faithfulness, the love, the kind and nourishing care, of him who gave himself for us, that he might ransom us, and present us without spot or blemish before God.

We rejoice in thy goodness, Lord Jesus. We are thy disciples. We follow thee too often afar off; yet we are thine, and we would be filled by no other name. We would be found among thy people. We would evermore trust thee. Thou art here our solace, our example, our inspiration. Thee we follow in the way of self-denial and in the way of suffering. We would follow, also, in the valley and the shadow of death, and fear no evil there, because thou art with us, and thy rod and thy staff comfort us. We rise beyond into the certainty of immortality through thy divine power; and so shall we not praise thee and worship thee? Shall we not put thy name above every other name, and glory in it?

We rejoice, O Lord our God, that thou hast taught so many the secret way of life; the hidden joy; that thou hast caused thy name to be known

unto them as it is not known unto others. And we pray that thou wilt nourish in every such one the divine and secret life of the soul's innermost experience. Grant that such may grow strong in hope, and in love, and in patience, and in all suffering. And grant that they may learn to rejoice in infirmity and in trouble, and to bear every day their cross cheerfully. Grant that they may by faith annihilate time, and see the heavenly life begun even to-day, and begin that song which in sweet and inspired strains we shall complete in the heavenly land.

If thy people are vehemently tempted, grant that they may be rescued from temptation, and that the tempter may be driven away. If any of them are sitting in the shadow, bring light to them, and bring forth the day out of the twilight. If there be any hearts that are burdened with care, that cannot carry themselves happily, nor sing by reason of the troubles of the way. Oh! teach them how to cast away these troubles; how to gain victorious joy. Deign to remember them, and to sustain them by the grace of God in their souls.

We pray that the example of thy people may be such as to win men unto the Christian life. May they behold their sincerity, their uprightness, their gladness of heart, their exceeding great hope of the future. May they behold how thy people conquer the life that now is. May they behold them too, in sickness, conquering it, and in death triumphant. And so may the holy living and the holy dying of thy people be a perpetual lesson and gospel to those who are without.

We pray that thou wilt bless those to-day who are gathered together in thy churches. May they have communion with God. May thy servants that are appointed to teach them and comfort them, be themselves greatly comforted and instructed from on high. We pray that thou wilt make thy people everywhere more and more of one mind. May love prevail, and overcome reason, and overcome conscience, and subdue them both to its sway. May love conquer all things. And may men learn both to believe and speak the truth in love, and in love to be just, and in love to discriminate, to smite in love, and to bind up in love, and so to be sons of God, who is Love.

We pray that thou wilt bless our land, and all lands. And spread intelligence abroad everywhere. Liberate the reason of men, and guide it by the divine Spirit. We pray that all machinations for the enthrallment of the human understanding, for the ensnaring of men's consciences, may come to naught. Wilt thou overturn and overturn till He whose right it is shall come and reign, and all the earth see thy salvation.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech thee that thou wilt uphold us by thy promises, and by the trust that our hearts have in thee. To whom shall we go but unto thee? We will not plunge into the abyss of unbelief. We will not go into that dark and dreary land of skepticism. We will have our God. Our hearts crown thee. Thou art the necessity of our life. We rejoice that thou dost make us, and so make us that we must make thee again to our imagination.

And now Lord, we give into thy hand and care everything that is needful for our best estate. We accord to thee foresight and faithfulness and care-bearing love. Thou art the Father, and thou art the Mother. In thee are all those things which we divide and call by differing names. All loves go back to thee, and are unitized in thee. All carefulness, and all gentleness, and all generosity, and all tenderness, and all triumph of love are in

thee, and flow forth from thine administration in this world, and shall forever and forever. And our trust is not in ourselves. It is not in this, that we are able to endure what must come, and what we cannot be rid of. Our trust is in this, that the dear, sweet God loves us, and by perpetual ministrations is preparing us for the heavenly home. And so we endure; and so we rejoice even in trouble.

And now, Lord, we pray thee, accept our thanks for all the goodness of days that are past. And we pray that thou wilt accept the consecration which we make of the hours yet to come. Ours they are not yet; but we remit them to thee. We will not invade them. Grant that we may live every day, writing upon the threshold of all our labor and care, *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

And to thy name shall be the praise forever and ever. *Amen.*

II.

WITNESSING FOR CHRIST.

INVOCATION.

March 20, 1870.

VOUCHSAFE to us thy divine presence and power, our Father, by which we may rise above our natural life into our true life of manhood in Christ Jesus. May we understand invisible things. May our inward perception be more to us than our outward senses. This day shine by thy gracious Spirit, with soul-light, so that we may behold thee as thou art, and rejoice in thee, offering up thanksgiving and praise. May we be accepted and helped by thee in all the services of devotion and instruction. May we be divinely guided and inspired. May the hours of this day, at home, in the sanctuary, everywhere, be hours with God, in which our souls shall greatly rejoice in the Lord. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

WITNESSING FOR CHRIST.

“Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him. Go home unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”—
MARK V. 19.

This answer was in reply to an affecting appeal on the part of the man whose cure furnishes one of the most extraordinary scenes in the whole history of the Gospel. It was that poor wretch who lived in the tombs, and desolate places, cutting himself, crying day and night, stronger than armed men, stronger than chains and cords, and who, having gone through this terrific experience, was healed by Christ. And it is said of them, after the healing, “When he (Christ) was come unto the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.”

There is something touching in that clinging desire. Doubtless every tenderest feeling of gratitude was awakened in the heart of this man, and he clung to Christ with a true love. We may also believe—and it is not inconsistent with love—that fear mingled with it. That he was healed by this man he knew; but if he should go away, how did he know but his old enemy might take possession of him again? He was safe under the eye of Christ, and he felt safe nowhere else. It was not, therefore, unreasonable for him to beg that he might dwell with him. But, after all, home was for him a place of safety.

It is to be remarked that our Saviour, in selecting his disciples, did not, in any single instance (I do not recall one) select a man who had received great personal favor at his hand.

He selected none out of whom he had cast diseases or demons. He selected those who, though they were humble, came to him without special obligation. Whether he thought that such an one was not a fit person to be in the disciple-band; whether he thought that no one who had had an infirmity should be ranked in any sense as a teacher, we are not informed. At any rate, when the man begged to go with him, he answered, “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”

To do this was itself a kind of assurance, a preservative, to him. It

was just the place that a restored man ought to have gone to, not simply from considerations of his own personal safety and well-being, but from considerations of gratitude. Those who had borne with him, who had sacrificed much for him, who had suffered on his account, had a right to the joy of his recovery; and it is a rare touch of human feeling in the Saviour, that he sends this man back home, first, to comfort them. "Go let them know what the Lord hath done for you."

Our Master was especially sensitive to the recognition of gratitude. When he performed a work of mercy, he desired that men should confess it—make it known. That they would recognize it to his face was not to be doubted; but he wanted them to make it known to others. There are special occasions of exception, where the jealousy of the government was so extreme that the least addition to the popular excitement might carry it over the bounds, and give occasion to the Roman army to fall upon the Jews, and butcher them.

In certain cases, out of motives of humanity, the Saviour sometimes charged men not to tell any one of the miracles that he had performed in their behalf. Under such circumstances the reason was one of humanity, and was local and special. But generally, when there was no such harm to be apprehended, the Saviour, on the other hand, commanded men to make known their experience, and the part which God had had in it.

It is from this narrative, and this general statement, that I propose, this morning, to speak on the duty of witnessing to Christ's work in us. It is just as incumbent now, as it was in his own day. It is just as incumbent in respect to spiritual things as it was with regard to physical mercies.

In general, every man who believes himself to be a Christian, is bound to make such public acknowledgment that men shall know the source of his godly life. There is a vague popular impression that a man should join a church, and there are good cautionary reasons why he should; but that, it seems to me, is not the most felicitous way of putting it. Every man who is conscious that his character has been brought under the power of the Spirit of God, is bound to let men know that the life which is flowing out from him now is not his own natural life, but one which proceeds from the Spirit of God. He is bound to make a public witness and testimony that the work of morality, of virtue, of spiritual fervor, of higher manhood, to which he has been called, and in which he is beginning to live, is a divine work, and not one that springs from a lower form of natural causes, or from natural causes only.

This would seem too obvious for remark, did not facts show that multitudes of men endeavor to live Christianly, but are very cautious

about saying that they are Christians—and from shame-faced reasons, sometimes; from reasons of fear, sometimes; from reasons of pride, sometimes. Men who are endeavoring to live Christianly say, often, “Let my example speak, and not my lips.” Why should not a man’s lips and example both speak? Why should not a man *interpret* his example? Why should a man leave it to be inferred, in this world, that he is living simply by the power of his own will? Why should he leave it for men to point to him, and say, “There is a man of a well-regulated life who holds his temper aright; but see, it is on account of the household that he has around him; it is on account of the companionship that he keeps; it is on account of the valorous purpose which he has fashioned in his own mind”—thus giving credit to these secondary causes, and not to that divine inspiration, that power from on high, which gives to all secondary causes their efficiency? When the lines are drawn in this world, and there are but two parties—one comprising those that live by the Spirit, and the other those that live by the flesh—why should a man live by the divine Spirit, and yet not give credit to the Spirit, by which he lives?

A physician has a right to the testimony of every man that he heals. In proportion to the desperateness of the disease which he has healed, he has a right to an open and wide-spread credit for the skill which he has displayed.

The excuses are invalid which men make for withholding this open profession of faith in Christ Jesus. Not only are they invalid, but they are dangerous.

The uncertainty of the result is one reason that holds men back. They *do not wish to be premature*. They *do not wish to bring disgrace upon the cause of Christ by not continuing*. They express themselves in this delicate way. It is as if I should rescue a man from drowning, and he should say to me, quietly, and secretly, “I thank you now; but I do not wish to commit myself openly to giving you credit, lest I should not hold out in this grateful strain of my life. You have been my benefactor, and have saved me; but I want to see if the impression lasts with me before I confess it publicly.” What will make the impression last but being true to it?

A man says, “I believe that I have entered upon a Christian life. If I understand my own thoughts, if I know my own settled purpose, it is that hereafter I will accept the law and the example of the Lord Jesus Christ as the rule of my life. I am determined to acknowledge my allegiance to him, and hold myself responsible for living in accordance with his will. But let me see how I succeed for a time, before I let it be known.” Ah! look well to your heart. It is true that you may be actuated by a worthy motive, though it be a mistaken one.

for making this excuse; but it is more likely than not that you will find a sinister motive coiled up in it as well. While you talk of *fear of bringing disgrace on the cause of Christ*, is there not underneath that the fear of bringing disgrace on yourself, by falling away from an open confession? While you speak of not wishing to *wound Christ in the house of his friends*, may it not be that you are afraid of wounding yourself in the house of your companions or friends? While you seek to be *rooted and grounded in the faith before you openly profess it*, may it not be, after all, that you are leaving the root in dry ground, without water or nourishment; and that, for lack of that commitment, which you now need more than you will at any other time—for lack of firmness, and openness, and manliness—you may go back upon your steps?

2 The time to make known a man's purpose is when it is freshly formed. And surely, no man need say, "I have occasion to wait and consider," who has been taught in religion from the morning of his life. In the case of a heathen child that might be a wise purpose; but you who have been brought up in the knowledge of the Scriptures; you who have had doctrine exercised upon your reason perpetually for scores of years; you who have thought of religion in its relation to the time that now is, and in its relation to the time which is to come—you need to wait lest you should be precipitate? You, after thirty or forty years of instruction and vehement urging, need to wait lest you be precipitate? Why, there is no man that can be precipitate who has always lived in a Christian community, and had Christian instruction. It is not possible to take you suddenly and unawares. You are full enough of knowledge to make a simple beginning, and, making a beginning, to make an announcement of it.

But while this general confession is sound and obligatory, the emphasis and weight of this discourse I desire to rest upon what I may call the duty of a more particular or personal acknowledgment,—a more specific testimony to the help which men have received at the hands of the Lord.

3 In the first place, there is a mode in which men can bear testimony to their own conversion, to its need, and to its reality. I suppose that Dr. Chalmers's conversion has been blessed as much as any of his sermons, and perhaps more, to the conversion of others. He was a man who had true ideas of morality, based on the Socinian doctrine. He was a man of great power; of great imagination; and in the early part of his ministry he had all the qualifications necessary to make him a leader of his age in the Christian Church. But later than that he was convinced of his lowness in the Christian life, he was convicted of sin, before God, he wrestled in distress of mind, and he finally threw

himself on the mercy of the Lord Jesus, and was brought out of darkness into great light. And then, from that moment, began the real power of his Christian ministry. It was this personal Pentecost which brought him out into the open day, that was largely the secret of that saving influence which he afterwards exerted upon others. And the statement of that fact has been very powerful ever since—the fact, namely, that a man may be a good man, a true man, a preacher of the truth, and the doer of a great deal of good, without having reached the very beginning of a Christian experience. This after-experience of enlightenment, this lifting him up into a higher sphere, has been a very great power all over the world, to arouse men to a sense of the danger of rooting themselves upon a mere morality. Not that morality is to be despised, but morality compared to religion is what leaves are compared to fruit. Though the leaves are necessary to the fruit, they are not themselves the fruit.

Now, because a man may use this improperly, we ought not to infer that he should not use it at all. If God has revealed himself to you; if there has been an experience by which you have been made to know the hidden evil of your life; if you have consented to be the Lord Jesus Christ's, and if there has been a conscious change and elevation of your life, the fact of this conversion should be testified to. Others should know it. Sometimes it may be proper to state it in a public gathering, or in a social circle; but from man to man one of the most powerful instruments that you can employ for the conversion of others, is the relation of that personal history which God has given to you. If you talk with men, that in you which has been an experience is the most powerful to them.

Two men come together, one of whom is shrunk and crippled with a rheumatic affection, and the other of whom is walking in health and comfort; and the well man says to the other, "My friend, I know how to pity you. I spent fifteen as wretched years as any man ever spent in the world. I, too, was a miserable cripple, in the same way that you are." And the man with rheumatism at once says, "You were?" He sees him walk; he sees how lithe and nimble he is; he sees that he can straighten out his limbs, and that his joints are not swollen; he sees that he is in the enjoyment of all his bodily powers; and he is eager to know more about it. "Yes, I was as bad off as you are, and I suffered everything." "Tell me what cured you." There is nothing that a man wants to hear so much as the history of one who has been cured, if he, too, is a sufferer.

This is so, not only where the suffering is physical, but also where it is spiritual. It is so where a man suffers from sinful dispositions, and is discouraged, hopeless. Everybody makes some fight against

the evil that is in him, at times. Everybody has some hours in which he wishes he could be free from the body of death to which he is chained. Everybody that is living in sin, if he meet a man whom he believes to be honest and sincere, and who says, "I, too, was once diseased, as you are; I, like you, was under the condemnation of sin"—everybody, under such circumstances, has that in him which leads him to want to know how relief has been obtained. And if you can tell men that are in bondage to sin what God has done for your soul, clearly, intelligently, discreetly, the history of your experience is probably more gospel to them than you could preach in any other way.

We send out men to bear witness for Christ. It is the Christ *in them*—so far as he *is* in them—that they are to preach. It is not the theological Christ, necessarily, it is not necessarily the Christ of the Gospel, it is not even the Gospel, alone, that is to be taught. Your speciality in teaching is *Christ in you the hope of glory*. How much has been turned into personal experience, how much God has manifested himself as able to save you from sin—this is the Christ, this is the Gospel, that you need to preach.

This man whom Christ had healed went back to Decapolis, where he belonged, and began to publish all through that region what the Lord had done for him. It is not likely that he undertook to explain what Christ was, or what other works of merey he had done. He doubtless said, "Here I am before you—I, that miserable demoniac; I, that poor creature that raged, and foamed, and cast off all bonds, and all raiment, and went out from society, and lived in tombs. Wretch that I was, Jesus saw me, and had compassion on me. He spoke the word, and my enemies departed, and I was restored to my right mind. Here I am rational. Here I am wholesome and healthy. Here I am happy again. And Jesus did it! Jesus did it!" Through all the towns and villages of Decapolis this man preached Jesus, declaring that he had power to save men from the demons that possessed them.

There are multitudes of men who have been convicted of their sins, and have been lifted by the power of the Holy Ghost out of their state of condemnation, and into the Christian life; and yet, they never open their lips in acknowledgment of the benefit which they have received. Certainly they do not with that personality, that freshness, that minuteness which is necessary to make it valuable to others. They do not go to one and another person who is bestead as they were, and say, "I, too, was as you are. Let me recount what Christ did for me." Oh! there is power in that.

When a boy, healthy and hearty, living in a happy family, and the son of a man much respected, I had about everything that a boy want-

ed ; but I used to lie in my little cot and look across the room at Charles Smith—a black man ; a man as black as black could be ; a man without the suspicion of a drop of white blood—I used to lie and look at him, and cry, and wish I was Charles Smith. I, that had everything—heritage, family, influence, undeveloped resources whose first beatings I then began to feel—was deeply affected to see that *black* black man lying in his bed, singing his hymns, wiping his eyes, and every once in a while turning to tell me what the Lord Jesus Christ had done for his soul. I believe he was a Christian. I saw him in the barn ; I saw him in the fields ; I saw him when he had hurt himself ; I saw him under all circumstances ; and he bore silent as well as vocal testimony that he had seen the Lord Jesus, and been transformed by the power of his might. He used to tell me (and I used to get him to tell it over and over again) the story of his conversion, till he got tired of telling it to me. And oh ! how it sank down into my heart ! That was one of the earliest of my awakenings. My early life was very much like a corduroy road in Indiana. There were beautiful prairie flowers on every side of me, but the road that I traveled was full of chuck-holes, over which I went bump, bump, all the while. About half the time I lived under conviction, and the other half of the time I was getting over it. Every time I heard anybody who had experienced a work of Christ in his heart narrate the history of that work, I had days of anxiety, and days of longing. Oh ! if I had only had somebody to tell me that Jesus loved me ; if I had only had somebody to take me up in his arms and explain to me that Jesus loved me as my mother did, and did not wait, before loving me, till I was better, what a help it would have been to me ! I suppose that I had it said to me many times ; but it did not come with any of those illustrations or picture-forms which were so needful to my mind. And I went on twenty years before I found out the simplest truth in the world. But I found out one thing, and that was, that a real Christian man, telling what Christ had done for his soul, was to me like the sound of the eternal world. There is not a man in this congregation so poor and illiterate that, if God has had mercy on his soul, and he is converted, he has not the power to go to some other poor illiterate man struggling in his sin, and say to him, “ My dear fellow, it is not needful that you should die in your sins. I have been a captive like you, but I broke my bonds. And let me tell you how the Lord helped me to do it.” Go tell these things to men, and see if God does not clothe you with strange power. It is more than the power of eloquence. There is nothing so eloquent as the work of God in the soul of a man.

There is another testimony that I think ought to be borne—namely, the revelation of the progress or growth of the idea and consciousness

of sin. There are a great many persons who have dramatic awakenings. These are extremely fascinating to young ears. And where young men and maidens hear a person give an account of the great labor, of the darkness, and of the conversion that supervened on one of these dramatic awakenings, they feel that that has the divine signet; and so they want to have one of these supereminent, pictorial, scenic, almost tragic conversions. But they do not have it. And it would be a comfort to them, if they could have a man come to them and say, "God opened my eyes, to be sure, before I came to Christ, and was saved by him; but what I knew then was nothing in comparison with what I have learned since. I never knew what sin was until after I undertook to overcome it, to put the bridle and harness on my sins, and make them train according to method and rule. I knew that I had pride, and I had some sense of the wickedness of pride before God; but it was not until I undertook to overcome my domineering pride, it was not until I knew by further acquaintance what was the sweetness, and power, and exaltation and nobleness of the divine life in Jesus Christ, that I had a realizing sense of the enormity of that pride. And now my imagination seems poorer than ever, and my heart seems more narrow, and my best things seem feebler, and my worst things seem stronger. And this consciousness that I am sinful grows on me every year. I have a revelation of it every day. And I tell you, my friend, I was never convicted of sin at the beginning as I have been since that day.

Now, this growing sense of sin is more important than to have a great thunder-clap. There is nothing that it is more desirable to have go on to the end of your life, than this sensibility to the work which grows up in every faculty. It is wholesome.

There are thousands of men, who, when they talk about it, say, "I sometimes doubt whether I am a Christian. I never had such a work of the law as I suppose a great many men have, when I came into the Christian life—if I ever did come into it I came in peacefully. I came in tranquilly. I knew I needed forgiveness, and I hoped I had it; but I was not wrestled with. I was not flung up into the cope of fear. I was not plunged down into the abyss of despair. It all seemed natural. I came right along into the Christian life, without any sudden change in my state of mind." Well, how has it been with you since? Have you never had any sensibility? "Oh, yes. Since I have been trying to be a Christian, I have seen a great deal more of my sinfulness than I had ever seen before."

My friend, you have had a history of what is wanted in thousands of men around about you; and what you are called upon to do is to go to men who have been brought to the point where they are balancing in their minds whether to go forward, and who are waiting for

more feeling and deeper conviction, and say to them, "Get your conviction afterwards. March *first!* Start!"

When a watch-maker sets a watch, he almost always stops it first, in order to get the second-hand right; and then, at the right second, he gives it a turn, and starts it. But suppose, having stopped a watch, he should lay it down, and should not start it till he knew whether it would keep time or not, how long would he wait?

There are a great many men who are set exactly right, and all that is wanted is, that they should start, and go on and keep time. But no, they are not going to tick until they know whether they are going to continue right or not. And what is needed is, that somebody, out of his own experience, should say to them, "You are under an illusion. Your reasoning is false. You are being held back by a misconception. You have enough sense of sin to act as a motive. If you have wind enough to fill a sail, you have enough to start a voyage with. You do not need to wait for a gale before you go out of the harbor. If you have enough wind to get steerage-way, start!" And if a man has enough feeling to give him an impulse forward, let him move. After that he will have more and more feeling. The Christian life is one that quickens the imagination, gives clearness to the understanding, sharpens the susceptibilities, and brings a man more and more consciously into a knowledge of what is right and what is wrong, and fills the soul full of this special experience.

It is too often made to be exclusively the business of the pulpit to teach this thing; but it ought to be the teaching of man to man.

There is also a testimony of joy which we owe to the Saviour, to ourselves, and to our fellow men. The sweetness, the power and the frequency of that joy which God sheds abroad in the converted soul, ought to be made known. It may not be possible to express it with any considerable accuracy. No words can follow the feelings. Feelings lift themselves up so high, and spread themselves so wide, and are so evanescent, so changeable, so opalescent, that no words were ever made, in any language, that could fully give expression or symbolization to them. And yet, every man may be able to express his feelings sufficiently to excite hope and desire and strife in others.

There is a certain experience of joy narrated that I think is mischievous. I sometimes hear men speak in the most indiscriminating way in meetings (I do not mean in our own), where they say, "I used to be very unhappy, but since God shone on my soul, I have not seen a cloud. All day long, from morning till night, and from day to day, I am in an empyrean of joy." I do not believe it, in the first place. A man might just as well say to me, "I had my violin tuned fifty years ago, and it is in as good order now as it was then, and there has not

been a string touched since." I do not believe it. I do not believe a cat-gut was ever made that did not shrink and lengthen by the stress of weather. If a man tells me that he has an uninterrupted and uniform experience of joy, I do not believe him. If he says he has come into a high state of joy, I am not disposed to doubt that; but however high that state of joy may be, it must have gradations, sometimes flaming up into glorious light and admirable beauty, at other times lingering in twilight, and at other times going out in darkness, so that for a period there is a total abstinence from joy. That is the normal, and that is the necessary experience of joy, where it is wholesome.

A man may come, in the later stages of experience, to the land of Beulah, where he can say that he has continuing and abiding joy; but in the earlier period, during the whole period of struggle, when a man is casting out the Amalekites, and Hivites, and Hittites, and Jebusites, and Amorites, and taking possession of the land of promise, this joy is not continuous. It alternates. Sometimes it comes in large sheeted glory. At other times it comes trickling penurious as a rill from the side of a rock. But nevertheless, there is, in every true Christian experience, in the experience of every man who is at all living in vital union with the Lord Jesus Christ, enough joy to enable him to say, "Religion is a joyful experience. It has its struggles and self-denials; but after all, I am happier with it than I used to be without it. I am a great deal happier as a Christian than I ever was before I became a Christian." If your life is consistent (and this confession of Christ will help to make it so, by putting you under new bonds for good behaviour), there are many persons to whom this testimony of joy in Christ will be very powerful. Little children, I think, are generally happy; but after persons have escaped from childhood, they are like Adam and Eve when they were driven out of Paradise. Eden is behind them, and the wilderness is before them.

I am touched to think how little joy there is in the world. I am touched by the mute supplication of universal experience for some joy. The very wildness with which men rush after pleasure, the very remorselessness with which they seek first one thing, and then another, is a silent testimony to the desert condition of their heart. Men know that there is such a thing as joy; they long for it; they seek it; they strive after it; but alas! the experience of men is that there is comparatively little joy in this world.

When, therefore, one says, "Christ has blessed my soul, and brought me into a sweet knowledge of himself, and at times I have joy unspeakable, and full of glory," the knowledge thus conveyed that there is such a joyful state is most powerful to bring men into the Christian life, as it has been in the cases of multitudes in the past.

And it is the duty of every man that is a joyful Christian to bear witness to the good that he has received at the hand of God. It is his duty to go into all his neighborhood, and, with suitable words, and with proper discretion, to bear testimony to the joy-producing power of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I was as much struck, when I traveled in England, with the stinginess of the people there in respect to their gardens, as with anything else. It was afterwards explained to me, as owing partly to conditions of climate, and partly to the notions of the people. I traveled two miles along a park shut in by a fence that was probably twelve feet high, of solid brick, and coped with stone. On the other side were all sorts of trees and shrubs, and though I was skirting along within a few feet of them, I could not see a single one of them. There were fine gardens in which almost all the fruits in the world were cultivated, either under glass, or against walls, or out in the open air; and a man might smell something in the air; but what it came from he had to imagine. There were plants and shrubs drooping to the ground with gorgeous blossoms, and there might just as well as not have been an open iron fence, so that every poor beggar child might look through and see the flowers, and feel that he had an ownership in them, and congratulate himself, and say, "Are not these mine?" Oh! I like to see the little wretches of the street go and stand before a rich man's house, and look over into his grounds, and feast their eyes on the trees, and shrubs, and plants, and piebald beds, and magnificent blossoms, and luscious fruit, and comfort themselves with the thought that they can see everything that the rich man owns; and I like to hear them tell what they would do if they were only rich. And I always feel as though, if a man has a fine garden, it is mean for him to build around it a close fence, so that nobody but himself and his friends can enjoy it.

But oh! it is a great deal meaner, when the Lord has made a garden of Eden in your soul, for you to build around it a great dumb wall so close and so high that nobody can look through it or over it, and nobody can hear the birds singing in it. And yet, there are persons who carry a heart full of sweet, gardenesque experiences all the way through life, only letting here and there a very confidential friend know anything about the wealth that is in them.

How thankful I am to men who have sung their experiences in hymns! Those hymns are my bells. I have strings and strings of bells wherever I go, because I have hymns singing to me all manner of things. I thank those dear sweet Christian natures whose letters and journals, containing accounts of their higher Christian experiences, have been published. I read them over and over again. These are the places where I gather food for sermons. If a man's heart only rubs

against books, it gets rusty and dry. You want to rub your hearts against living hearts and real feelings. And I am under everlasting obligation to many and many a man who wept that I might not weep; to many and many a man who moaned, and saved me from a great many moans; to many and many a man who rejoiced, and doubled my joy, and gave me power to make others happy.

Christian brethren, if Christ has waked up in your souls the premonitions of heavenly joy; if you have sweet delight in spiritual things, you have a gospel to preach. It is *your* gospel. Christ is in it—*Christ formed in you the hope of glory*. There is your sermon; there is your lecture; there is your conversation.

But joy is not the only experience, I am sorry to say. Who is there among us that ever kept a sober, even, consistent Christian life? Who is there here that has not fallen into sin? Who is there here that has not backslidden? Who is there here that has not grown faint in his first love? Who is there here that has not at times been brought to the blush to think what things he has thought, what things he has said, and what things he has done? Who is there here that has not suffered shame, and whose shame has not sometimes well-nigh come to remorse itself? Who is there here that does not feel, though he is a Christian, and though he does not give up his hope of living as the Lord would have him, that he is filled with imperfections, and is perpetually backsliding?

It is worth our while to bear testimony to these things, partly for our own humiliation, and partly to show those who are less instructed than we are, how Christ brings us out of such states.

I think a great many are profited by hearing an upright, honest, straightforward man of business, whom they have thought to be rather a remarkably good man, whom they have watched and tried, and whom they believe to be a Christian if anybody is one—I think a great many are profited by hearing such a man relate his religious experience. Here is a man that for some years has been trying to be a Christian. Though he now and then has gained slight victories, he has kept doing wicked things, and has slipped here and there, so that he has felt that it was useless for him to attempt to go forward. But somehow he has held on, God being more faithful to him than he was to himself. And he gets up in meeting and says, “I have to bear testimony, to-night, brethren, to God’s great love and redeeming mercy to my soul, in calling me back again, and bringing me safely out of those dreadful conflicts which I have had with my pride and avarice.” And he goes on and narrates how he had been carried away by lust of money; how far it had taken him; what dangerous ground he stood on; how he began to look about for help to recover himself; how he prayed; how

God came to his rescue; how he was restored to his right mind; and how at last he got back again.

This man says, in his own mind, perhaps, "I do not know but it may do more harm than good for me to confess that I am subject to such wickednesses and such backslidings." But what is the result? There is a young man sitting in the corner, who has almost made up his mind that it is of no use for him to try to be a Christian, he has such terrible adversaries in himself; and when he hears this man say that he, too, has just such adversaries, he says, "Did you ever hear such a story? I would not have dreamed that that man had a flaw in him. If he has such struggles, there is a chance for me. He and I have the same difficulties to contend with. He has got along, and why may not I? I will take courage from his victory, and strive to gain one myself."

The sweet things that John said do not comfort me half so much as the wicked things which he did. John, you know, wanted to call down fire from heaven and burn the villagers, because they would not follow Christ, and entertain him, and obey him. That has done me an immense deal of good. I have great regard for the apostles, for they turned out well at last; but when I see the hole of the pit, and what work they had to get out, I say, "There is hope and a chance for me."

Ah! it is the fellow-feeling of sinfulness; it is the sense that we are weak, and that there is a power which takes Christians that are inconsistent, and are tempted more than they are able to bear, and lifts them out of their difficulties, and starts them again; it is this dear love and grace of God, that comforts and encourages a man. If to be a Christian means to go right straight forward without a flaw, then I have no hope. How is it with you? But if a man may be a Christian who is going zigzag, stumbling here, and falling away there, and if God's conveying grace will bring him out safely—that is, if other men are just like me—then I will strive on.

Are there not many burdened hearts to whom you could bear this testimony, and to whom it would be a ray of light and hope? A man might be as eloquent as an angel, and his voice might ring out like the music of a trumpet, and he would not do as much good as the simple testimony of a suffering heart that the grace of God was sufficient for it in the day of temptation.

There are a great many experiences in life to which we are continually called, and into which we go, where we need the testimony of our Christian brethren, as well as their sympathy, to hold us up. We are all of us subject to great providential trials. Sometimes they are trials of bereavement. Sometimes they are trials of great perplexity and

anxiety. And the worst of it is that prudence will not allow us to make them known. *The distresses, the cares, the vexations of business*—these are smooth words; but I tell you there is more suffering in a business life than ever was seen in the inquisition of Spain or Rome. I never saw such anguish as I have seen in men bestead with trouble in business. Every feeling in them was alive. Their honor was imperiled. Their prosperity was all at stake. Their love was apparently excoriated for their household—their children, their wife, and their companions; for those from whom they had borrowed; for those whom they had led into disastrous enterprises; for those whom in their fall they had crushed, as the great tree in the forest crushes the smaller trees around about it when it falls. Those things which lacerate and tear a man in the most sensitive places we speak of as *business cares*. But I tell you, the torments of the damned are suffered on this side by men of business. I do not myself wonder that sometimes men harrassed by business troubles lose their reason and commit suicide. I have seen men that were held back only as by a hair from self-destruction, on account of the anguish and agony of feeling induced by mere business matters.

If, then, a man who has gone through a great fight of affliction can stand up in our meetings, and say, as I have heard persons say, in regard to their empty cradle, "It was very hard to bear, but Christ was present with me in the midst of my affliction, and helped me, and I have lived through it," that always does me good.

I have had brethren come to me and say, "If it had not been for your hopeful style of preaching, I never should have gone through that great crisis. I used to think during the week that I should have to give up; and then on Sunday I would come over and hear you preach, and your sermon would lift me up and sustain me, and I would go over another week." And that did me a great deal of good.

But why did you not say that in the meeting? You knew that everybody was informed of your great trial; and why did you not get up and bear witness to what Christ did for your soul while you were going through that terrific scene of anguish and suffering? Why did you not say, "I have suffered, and been upheld in suffering?" Why did you not open your heart? Were you afraid that men would scoff at you? What is the church for but to afford a man the benefit of the sympathy of his brethren? And is it not right that you should make known your trials, not only that your brethren may sympathize with you, but that others may profit from your experience?

A great many men suffer under cover, shut up, as it were, in a tight place, on the plea that it is not prudent to make their situation known. I think the most miserable wretch on earth is a man who has to act as

though he were rich, when he is bankrupt; a man who does not dare to get along with less than three servant girls, and does not dare to live in a house less than four stories high, and does not dare to have his wife and daughters dress in anything less than silk, lest his creditors should notice it, and suspect his condition, and all come down on him, and crush him.

Oh! I pity men who are obliged to play that game before the world, and who have everybody running to them on the supposition that they are rich, and asking them to give to this and that charitable object, and saying, "Why do you not subscribe? You are not as generous as you used to be." I pity men who are raked inside and out by financial troubles, and cannot say a word, but have to be dumb and suffer. By-and-by God will give them bankruptcy, and then they will feel better. There is many and many a man who, when he struck bottom, thanked God for it,—though he cried all the way down.

It is this awful suspense, it is this rasping uncertainty, it is this terrific fear, it is this busy imagination which pictures ten thousand probable and improbable things—it is this that torments men. But is there not a grace of God in Christ Jesus that can carry a man through all this? Is not the whole Hebrew story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, a symbol to teach us that men can go through burning fire and come out without the smell of it on their garments, if the form of the Fourth is seen walking with the three? And how many men there are who have gone through the fires of affliction and trouble, and come out of them unscorched, and saying, "Jesus has been faithful to his promise. I have suffered, but no more than was for my good. And he has comforted and sustained me. And I am as happy now as a sweet little child in the arms of its mother."

Oh! bear witness. These are precious things that you are concealing. Wear those jewels. Let men see what it is to be comforted in the midst of trials and troubles.

I know how I feel myself. I am constantly called to funerals. Some that I see who mourn, I am sorry for. Their rain is turned to ice. Grief is beautiful, as in winter ice-clad trees are beautiful, when the sun shines upon them; but it is dangerous. Ice breaks many a branch; and so I see a great many persons bowed down and crushed by their afflictions. But now and then I meet one that sings in affliction; and then I thank God, for my own sake, as well as for his. There is no such sweet singing as a song in the night. You recollect the story of the woman who, when her last and only child died, in rapture looked up, as with the face of an angel, and said, "I give you joy, my darling." That single sentence has gone with me years and years, down through my life, quickening and comforting me. If it had not

been spoken, or if it had not been reported, it would have been lost to you and me.

Some of the most precious experiences that ever grew on the boughs of the human soul you have had, but have never uttered. You have never told them even to your companion. Frequently husband and wife are ignorant of each other's richest experiences. We do not talk enough one to another about these things. As we go through life, God is doing exceeding abundantly more for us than we ask or think, in every way; and there is great comfort and great evangelizing power in it; but it lies dead.

There are a great many who could bear witness in respect to what God has done for their households. I have seen households that were scenes of clamor and disorder and unhappiness, by the grace of God restored. Their foundations were relaid; frugality took the place of spendthriftness; and order, regularity and peace reigned where before were quarrels and all manner of outrages. The whole atmosphere was one of true morality and pure religion. Oh! what a testimony such persons could give of the power of God's grace in their experience!

I have known others who, according to the manner of this world, were living ordinarily well, some of whom, when I have casually spoken to them, have said to me, "I wish you would come and see me, that I may tell you what you have done for me. It is the truth in Christ which you have preached, it is the Gospel which you have made known, that has lifted my family a thousand degrees higher than they were before. We owe everything to Christ as held forth by you." These are precious testimonies. And if men could only hear them, if they could be made known with simplicity and naturalness, with the eloquence of true feeling, do not you suppose that the Gospel would have much more power in the community than it now has?

Doctrine is important; but this is not the work of doctrine. Exposition is important; but this is not expository work. So much of the Gospel as has been reproduced in a living form in your experience, is what the world needs more than almost anything else.

Are there none who have had many and many years of struggle, who have become veterans, and who could bear a testimony as to what God's grace has enabled them to do with fundamental faults of character? There are men who begin their Christian life when they are young, and who, during all the early part of it do not wish to say anything about their temper, which is fiery and ill-controlled, but who, after forty or fifty years, have got such control of it that they can manage it, and are satisfied that they have achieved a victory. And there is no Waterloo like that. Any man who has humbled his pride by the power of God's truth and God's spirit; any man who has put down his

temper; any man who has overcome his avarice; any man who can say, "I was growing up penurious, getting all I could, and trying to keep what I got, but I am becoming more generous by the grace of God; it was not natural to me, I began reluctantly, and learned slowly; but I have come to a knowledge of it at last"—any such man has a testimony to bear which the world cannot well afford to do without.

Christian brethren, these victories over constitutional faults are the true victories, after all. And there is not enough made of them. The young are not enough encouraged by them. Struggling men are not taught by them as they should be. A large experimental knowledge of these things is a most precious depository of truth. These instances are sufficient to suggest, in various directions, other parallel or analogous instances. And let me say, in closing, that no church can be prospered in which all the ministration comes from the pulpit. The pulpit was never meant to be a substitute for the living experience of the church. The power of the pulpit, generally speaking, consists in one of two things—either in steering by the actual life of the church, or else in reporting it as the subject-matter of its own discourse. It is the power of God's grace in actual life that is efficacious in this world. And one great trouble with doctrinal preaching is not that it is wrong to preach doctrine, but that men preach only doctrinally. They do not let their doctrines bear fruit. They do not carry them forward to the point of application in actual experience. They do not resolve the principle into the concrete experience. That is the fault with what is called *high doctrinal preaching*.

In the next place, in familiar church meetings there is not enough declaration and conversation in respect to the Grace of God in your experience. You know that prayer-meetings are proverbially dry and stiff. Men test their consciences by their faithfulness in attending prayer-meetings, and take great credit to themselves when they can say, "I go to the prayer-meeting every week"—as much as to say that a man who can do that can do anything, on principle. And I sometimes think it is correct. Men go to prayer-meeting, often, in a room that is big enough to hold four times as many as come together; and each, one would suppose, suspecting the others of some infectious disease, sits as far from them as he can; and they sing a hymn coldly; then they read a section of the Bible (if the Word of God is the bread of life, they take a very dry crust out of it); then they have a prayer, perfunctorily made; then there is another hymn; then there is another regulation prayer; and then the meeting is "thrown open." For a while nobody speaks. Then somebody gets up and says the same thing that he said two weeks ago—that they are all sinners; that they are all living below their light and privilege; and that they ought to feel

roused up and quickened to a sense of their duty. He sits down, and another man balances it on the other side. He is an elder, or a deacon, or some other regular speaker; and what he says is all good—they know it is, for they have heard it a thousand times. And when he sits down the hour has elapsed, and everybody thanks God that it has. And the meeting is dismissed, and they all go home. I really believe that prayer-meetings of churches are often the most waste periods of the whole week. And the most melancholy part of it is, that those men who are so unspeakably dry, have rich fountains of experience in them. They are really good men. That old elder who got up and repeated for the five-hundredth time, perhaps, that ritualistic speech, or uttered that stereotyped prayer, is as sweet, and as gentle, and as simple as a child. He is a man of purity. And if, in prayer-meetings, men only knew enough to talk about the things that are in them, and not about things that it is “proper” to talk about; if they would let out something of themselves, it would seem like a Pentecost there.

I have seen one of those stiff meetings seized by an old sailor that had dropped in, who did not know what was “proper,” and who, when he had listened to these dry speeches until he could endure it no longer, got up and let himself out in true Methodist style. Tears ran down his cheeks, and his voice was lifted up, and filled the whole room, and thrilled the hearts of all present. Although he used much bad grammar, there was a great deal of good sense in what he said. And at such a time I have seen people cry, and little children wake up, and look about and wonder what was happening. They had never heard of such a thing in a meeting before. And it was owing to nothing in the world but the fact that there was a man there with a fresh heart, who was not ashamed to say just what he felt, without thinking of grammar, or propriety, or what special thing he should say, but relating his own experience, and pouring out his little gospel in an earnest simple manner. It was the best meeting that the people had ever had, and they were delighted, and they got the man to come to the next meeting, and tried to get him to speak again as he did at the previous one; but they were disappointed. The moment you attempt to run two meetings in the same mould, the second one will be a failure. A meeting to be successful must be under God’s hand, and must follow its own sweet will, and develop itself according to the providence that prevails at the time. If men understood this, and would speak of things that they do know, and would testify to things that they have seen and felt, with simplicity, not caring for anything except to honor God and help their fellow men, what a different place a prayer-meeting would be! Is there anything sweeter than Christian experience?

Do not you know that the last thing which rises on *my* in the

dairy is cream? It is about so with prayer meetings. The first part is apt to be milk, and the last part cream. By the *last part*, I mean the time after the meeting is dismissed, when the people get up off from the benches and chairs, and come together in little knots, and become so interested in talking over their experiences that it is almost impossible to get them out of the room. Then there is just that which the whole meeting ought to have been made up of.

This subject shows what Christian converse should be. I know there is a great deal said about talking with one another. My own impression is that a great deal of what is called Christian talk or conversation is quite profitless. I feel it to be an impertinence when a man whom I do not specially know, and who does not specially know me, comes up to me and says, in a regular stereotyped way, "Well, brother, how is it with your soul to-day? What are your hopes?" Although I am a minister, and a very *proper* man, yet I cannot make a peaceable answer to such an interrogation as that. It would tempt any one to deride the man, though not to deride religion.

Neighbors should talk with neighbors, and acquaintances should talk with acquaintances. And if you talk with strangers it should be with deference to their feelings. It should be with a consciousness that you are invading their personality. You should honor them while you speak to them. You are not God's lords over other men. You have no right, because you are a pardoned sinner, to approach an unpardoned one in an arrogant or over-familiar way. Your business is to make men feel the sweetness which there is in religion. And if you talk of some real experience of your own, you will not be likely to go amiss.

For instance, while crossing the ferry, a brother comes up to you, and says, "I suppose you heard of the transaction I was engaged in yesterday?" "The transaction that you were engaged in? What was it?" "Well, you know, I was left to myself, and I was grasping, and, I admit, I made demands that I ought not to have made. I felt sorry about it afterwards. When I got home I told my wife about it, and she said she thought I had been grasping, and had not acted Christianly. And I am going over this morning to acknowledge to that brother that I did wrong, and tell him that he shall have it just as he wanted it." Perhaps you have been engaged in just such a transaction, but you do not make any confession of it. You say to yourself (this is the way the devil makes you talk), "I will not let him know it: if I do he will think I am no better than he is." But suppose you should say, "I have gone through that experience, too?" And suppose you should go on and tell him how you had been avaricious and grasping, and how you had been brought to realize your fault, and how you had overcome

it, do you not think it would be a comfort and consolation to him? There is great benefit to be derived from this comparing notes one with another.

When two men that have been sick for a great while come together, the time is not long enough for them to tell of all the diseases and sores that they have suffered from; of all the doctors that they have had; of all the doses that they have taken; of all the disgusting experiences that they have gone through. A little of that would do; but if you would talk of your failures; if you would relate your real experience in business life, this would be a Christian conversation that would cheer and comfort you.

My dear brethren, we do not bear witness to Christ's work in us half as much as we ought to. Every day, and everywhere, he is with us. It is by the grace of God that we are what we are—that you are what you are, and that I am what I am—in all that is good. He is not far from any of us. He is near to comfort you, and to inspire you with courage, and to press you forward in the Christian life. At home you are still with the Lord. He follows you out from home into your business. Where care and temptation are, there is rescue. Where suffering and sorrow are, there is comfort. Where darkness comes, there comes illumination. Where discouragement comes, there come instruction and hope. Your life is enveloped in a perpetual atmosphere of divine guardianship. And how much of all this wondrous experience of the dealing of God with your soul are you using for other people's instruction, to incite and encourage them?

When you go home to glory in the other land, and in music chant God's goodness to you, nothing will seem more wonderful to you than your own experience, except the mercy of God that delivered you by reason of it; and shall you delay until that glorious hour, all recognition of this living work of God in your soul?

I say to you, as Jesus said to the man, *Go to thy friends and tell them what the Lord hath done for thee, and that he hath had compassion on thee.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

Lord Jesus, again lay thy hands upon the heads of little children, and bless them. Again rebuke those among us who do not believe that God takes care of children, and who leave them to be swayed hither and thither by the impulses of their nature, until they have grown to man's estate, and think that then only are they able to ripen into piety. Teach us all to rear our children in the nurture and in the admonition of the Lord, so that their first thoughts shall be instructed toward God, and their first feeling taught to follow in the way of Christ and Christian love. May we have faith to believe that thy grace can reach to the very cradle. May we have faith to believe that thy holy spirit can change infant hearts. If, when rugged temptations and violent sins, and all the passions of life, have gnarled and distorted the disposition, thou canst change men, and make them gentle, and pure, and true, how much easier canst thou change the young before perversion has been followed by settled habits! May we look more and more to the sanctuary of home, and to the gospel of mothers' lips, and to the early instruction of our children, and to that life which shall begin with its roots in sacred love. And grant that thy church may be nourished by men who shall grow up, from the very beginning, in true holiness, that in the nurture and admonition of the Lord whole generations may be brought up.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those parents who are seeking to rear their children aright. Let not their faith fail. And if they seem, in later years, to swerve and go aside from the right way, may they have faith to bring them back again—a faith that will not let them go; a faith that trusts in the word of the Lord, that they shall not depart utterly from the way of their instruction.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless all the labors of those who seek to rear the young to a nobler life; to manliness, in honor and in Christian piety.

Grant, we pray thee, that thy kingdom may be established in the hearts of all those who are gathered into our Sabbath-schools and Bible-classes; and in the hearts of all the young that are in our households; and in the hearts of all the young that are not at home, and that have no friends, and that are strangers among strangers, and are subject to all the mischiefs of temptation, and all the troubles and trials of sin.

We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thy truth may be mighty upon the hearts of all. May the hearts of the parents be turned to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents. Grant that there may be in Christ Jesus more holy love, more pervasive purity, more earnest faith, more truth-speaking, and more fidelity, in all the relations of life.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt bless us this morning as we are gathered together, so many from so many ways, with such different histories, and with experiences that to each one are more than all the world. Who can tell his own life? What word can interpret the inward life? But we are all open before thee; and that which is even to ourselves intricate and mysterious in our own nature and experience is perfectly plain to thee.

Bless us according to thy sight, and according to thy mercy, and not according to the wisdom of our asking. Grant, we pray thee, that every one in thy presence may feel that God is near to him for good. Open to thy people, by faith, the sense of thy nearness and of thy blessedness, in mercy. Grant that they may be able, this morning, to take hold of thy promises with renewed faith; that they may look up to thee with renewed confidence, and feel, indeed, that they are brought into the very banqueting hall of the king. May they touch, not the hem of thy garment alone: may they, with

* Immediately following the baptism of children.

the disciple of old, be able to lay their head in thy bosom. We pray that thou wilt also speak comfortable things to those who have heard what is the greatness of thy power and glory, but wist not what to think. Grant that there may be some consolation to such to-day. Grant that unconverted souls may be touched with divine fervor, and brought into seriousness and earnest consideration of their way.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt look upon all who have wandered. Lord, most merciful, and long-suffering! how long dost thou bear with those who sin against thee! How wonderful is that mercy by which thou dost call them back again, and make all promises to them if they will but cling to thee! If there be any in thy presence, to-day, who are soiled and stained with sin, and who have wandered far away from God, oh! let them hear the voice of invitation, the pleadings of mercy, and the promises of hope and of success. And by the Holy Ghost may there be kindled in such hearts a light that will burn brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

And we pray that thou wilt bless those who labor for the outcast, and for the forsaken, and for the neglected, and for the ignorant. Lord, love them, and fill their souls with love, that they may go to their work, from day-to-day, with fresh unction, with new power from on high. We thank thee that within the hearts of thy servants thy words have not died, but that thou art raising up many in our midst who are laboring for Christ, and professing his name, and preaching him to those around about them; and that thy spirit follows their labor; and that there are many awakened and converted; and that the voice of those who rejoice is heard in many a family. Thou art reconstructing desolate places. Thou art bringing back wanderers. Thou art restoring wicked men to righteousness. Thou art fulfilling the prayers of parents, long dead, toward their recreant and sinning children. Thou art glorifying thyself in many a place. And in the day of final glory and final exhibition, thou wilt show forth what thou art doing for the hearts of men.

We thank thee, O Lord our God! for that arm of power, unshriveled, unwithered, stretched out yet; and for that great fountain-heart of mercy which bears thoughts more numerous than the drops of morning dew, upon all that are perishing in need. And we pray that thou wilt still speed thy work. Still may thy people rejoice in the Lord, and rejoice in the labors of the Lord. And may they go forth sowing precious seed. Though they sow and wet the seed with tears, may they remember that they shall come again ere long with their bosoms filled with sheaves.

And grant, we pray thee, that thy truth may everywhere prevail over error. May men learn truth through love. May they learn to bear with one another, and to forbear. May thy different churches no longer vex each other. May each, according to its light, labor for the welfare of men, and for the glory of God. And grant, we pray thee, that all of them may be drawn more and more into the blessed spirit of unity, of common faith, and common hope.

Let thy kingdom come in all the world, and fill the whole earth with thy glory.

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

III.

DESIRING AND CHOOSING.

DESIRING AND CHOOSING.

“Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”—HEB. XI. 25.

This is a part of that discourse of faith which was illustrated by all the historical instances which were then within the reach of the apostle, and in which were passed in review the greatest names of Hebrew antiquity, the element of faith in each being brought out. And in that whole group of noble souls, though living in the dusk of the earliest day, there was none greater than Moses, of whom this was spoken. Great, he was, by the native stature of his mind—one of the few pre-eminently great minds; one of the four or five men of the world's history, as a leader, as an organizer, as a legislator, as a hero.

His circumstances, you will recollect, were peculiar. Born of a despised race, that then were in captivity in Egypt; doomed to destruction; saved by the shrewdness and love of his mother; adopted, by a most romantic incident, into the family of the reigning house; reared as a prince; educated to the last degree of knowledge that then was attainable; with a mind peculiarly fitted to take on education, he stood apparently upon the threshold of all the things that men most desire in this world. There was nothing that wealth could give that the child of Pharaoh's daughter could not have. There was nothing in position, and nothing in honor, and nothing in government, that was not open to his hand. There was nothing in pleasure that was not accessible to him. Or, if he chose, he could turn aside to “the mysteries,” as science and knowledge were then called. Though knowledge was the prerogative of the few—namely, the highest class—yet he belonged to it, and knowledge was his.

Now, under such circumstances, the sense of righteousness, the sense of justice and equity, and the prospect of the future, were more to him than all the treasures of Egypt. And although he would have, if he chose his own people, to ally himself with all that was despicable in slaves; although he would have to bear, at their hands, the utmost indignities; although he was to be a vagabond, driven out; although when the pressure of the government came upon him it would be enough to destroy a score of men; and although he was to wear out

eighty most laborious years (and being a prophet all this rose up before him)—yet he chose it. That is to say, he *desired* it, he *sought* it, and he *had* it. And so illustrious an instance of choosing you scarcely can select anywhere else, now that we see the whole of it in perspective.

“Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ [showing that Christ was the Jehovah of the Old Testament, and that he was worshipped in the Old Testament dispensation just as we worship him now, though under the national designation of *God*] greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he hath respect unto the recompense of the reward.”

Afar off he beheld the ends and final issues, and chose them; and all the circumstances intermediate he accepted as the condition on which he was to receive the fruition of the final reward.

I propose to discourse, to-night, on the *Difference between Desiring and Choosing*; because there are a great many who are snared at that point, and because if we can separate the real nature of choice from all its incidents and accidents, there are some applications that can be made which will be of very great value to those who are honest, and who mean to follow their best light.

Of all the things that have been made in this world, there is nothing so susceptible as man. We are more accustomed to speak of man as a creature of power, producing effects, than in any other way; but if one will narrowly study himself and his fellows, I think he will be still more surprised at their susceptibility to receive impressions.

When we hold a mirror up before any object, it takes instantly both the form and the hue of that object; but it is without any power to change. It is the same mirror, and is unsusceptible to anything but the reflection of the objects that are presented to it.

There are some thirty or forty separate mirrors in the human mind—for every faculty is, as it were, a mirror held up to some side of nature, no one of them taking in everything, but each one of them being adapted to some corresponding element in the great round of creation. There is all that cluster of faculties which we call *the reason*, or *the understanding*, made up of severalties, each particular element of which represents, or stands over against, a line of truth, and is susceptible to it. And all the reason is susceptible to all the kinds of truth which exist in the earth, whether physical, or social, or moral.

Then there are the moral sentiments, of their several kinds, each one of which, as a separate interpreting mirror, throwing away every thing else, selects to itself some particular sphere of truth—the con-

science, moral truth ; hope, its particular kinds of truth ; love, its sorts of truth ; beneficence, its varieties of truth.

So, through the whole line, each one of the different faculties—the *susceptibilities*, as they are sometimes called—stands, as it were, over against a province of influences or truths. And it is not for man to determine whether he will be influenced by them or not. He cannot help himself. It is not for me, opening my eye upon color, to say, “I will not perceive color.” I cannot help perceiving color. It is not for me, in the presence of sweet music, to say, “I will not be affected by sweet music.” It takes care of itself. It affects me without my will. You are so susceptible, and I am so susceptible, that, certain influences being set in motion upon us, there is a side of us on which they strike. And this susceptibility, when it is carried up a certain way, is called *desire*. It culminates in a state in which you begin to want that which comes pleasantly or favorably upon the mind.

Here is an agent created with wondrous subtlety, and put together in a manner extraordinary, as to itself—the body, the mechanism of the physical organization, in all the animated creation. For, although single animals have specialties which surpass man, there is not in the animal kingdom any organization which, in its sum total, is to be compared with man. We cannot fly as the eagle can ; but the eagle cannot manipulate as we can. We cannot strike as the lion can ; but the lion cannot carve and draw as we can. We are feebler in some things in order to be stronger in others ; but the average is transcendently greater in man than in the animal creation. The physical organization is as inferior to the mind, as a casket is to the jewels which it carries. It is the mind, after all, that, being studied, is the most subtle, the richest and the most extraordinary, of all the things which a man can contemplate in this world.

It is no small thing to carry this mind in the midst of God's outward creation—in the glory of the heavens, and the glory of the earth ; in fullness of the summers ; in the endless variety of things that address themselves to each of the senses, and, through observation or reflection, to the taste and desire. It is a marvellous pilgrimage that a man makes, with such a susceptible mind as his, through the natural kingdom. But in society, all the combinations which men make among themselves, into neighborhoods, or into parties, or into schools, or into philosophies, or into social circles, or into bodies formed for the carrying out of ambitious designs—these things acting upon a sentient human mind, tend to create in it susceptibility and desire past all enumeration. It is no small thing to carry our minds, so sensitive, in the midst of all things that are desirable in life—its praises, its joys, its loves, its tastes, in endless profusion.

In the midst of all the things which address themselves to the eye, and to the ear, and to the tongue, and to the hand, and to the body; in the midst of all the priceless possessions for which men have striven since the earth began—one of the first truths that man finds out, is that he is not large enough to do everything; that every one has to live on a principle of selection. But a principle of selection is a principle of rejection. No man can ever appropriate all the bounties of creation which come providentially within his reach. There is not vitality enough in a man to supply all the faculties, all the time, with the sensibility which enjoyment implies. I have put that to proof.

In traveling abroad, in going through Switzerland, in visiting galleries, in seeking out those rarities of which I had read, and about which I knew much, but which I had never beheld, with good health and pleasing society, I went from day-to-day to the maximum of possibility. I enjoyed until there was no more power in me to enjoy, and stopped long before the sun went down, simply because I was used up. I could carry a pretty good load, for a while; but I frequently had a realizing sense that there was a definite limit to the capacity of a man to carry things, even when they were accessible to him. You may look until your eye ceases to see what you look upon. You may listen until your ear fails to hear the sounds which fall upon it. You may enjoy until the fibre says, "I cannot vibrate any more." And a man thanks sleep at last, as the unnamed and unknown luxury of luxuries.

So it comes to pass that with this susceptibility running through many faculties, the mind is not large enough nor strong enough even to take in everything that is accessible to it. There are many joys which belong to later stages than the present one in which you stand. They come in regular succession; they are articulated in the way of cause and effect; and if you are to have them, you are to have them just as you have clusters of grapes. First the seed is obtained and planted in the ground. Then it goes through the various periods of maturation. And you cannot anticipate or antecede this regular sequence of development. So it is in human life. There are many things which men, when they hear about them, desire. They want them, but have not got them.

In the first place, there are many things that are at opposite poles, so that if you have some things, you must give other things up. If a man wants to sleep, and wants to be wide awake at the same time, he must choose. He cannot do both—(out of Church!) It is impossible for a man to be asleep, and also to be attentive to what is going on out of sleep.

All through life it is so. Everywhere men choose, and in choosing always refuse or deny themselves what they desire. They desire one

thing more than another, and are obliged to make a selection. Selection on one side, as I have said, always implies rejection on the other side.

A man may desire all his grounds to be in forest, and at the same time he may desire all his grounds to be arable, so that he can plow and plant. He can have them either way; or, he can put a part under the plow, and a part in forest: but he cannot have them all in forest and all under the plow, at the same time. Though each way may have its advantages, and may be right, he cannot have them both. You can take one or the other, or a part of one, and a part of the other. And there is where choosing comes in. The desire is, "I would like them all forest, and I would like them all field," but you cannot have them all one and the other at the same time. You must choose; and so you must find out which you desire most, or which, desiring most, you will choose, and take steps to secure.

A man may desire to go to sea, and if he has ever been there, I think he will desire still more to stay on shore; but he cannot do both. If you select one element you reject another, all the way through life.

I make these familiar illustrations to show that in the selection which desire begins to breed in us, we are obliged to take things here or reject things there, because they stand opposed to each other; because they stand in conflict; because they stand in succession. So that if you begin at any one point, and say, "I desire that thing," that thing is only to be reached by given steps. It is not on your level. If you would have it you must ascend. If you desire it enough to take the steps to get to it, then you chose it; but if you do not desire it enough to take the steps to get to it, you do not choose it.

From this brief and familiar exposition of *desiring* you will perhaps make the transition yourself into choosing, out of desire.

I take a little child by the hand, and walk down the street to a shop window, and that child wants the first gay thing it sees, and then it wants the next one, and the next, and the next. It wants them all, and would try to take them all, if it could. I take the child into the shop, and it wants a wheelbarrow, it wants a doll, it wants dresses for the doll, it wants this, that, and the other thing, until its little arms are quite outspanned by the multitude of things that it has, and it cries because it cannot take home everything in the shop. As the child gets a little older, he says, "I want this, and I want this, and I want this;" but the parent says, "Take your choice, my dear. Which will you have?" The child looks wistfully at all the things, and wishes it could have them all; but as it cannot have them all, it finally chooses this; and the selection being made, he gets, and does not get, as the case may be.

When people are still older, the same thing is true. A woman goes out shopping, and wants to procure material for a dress. And oh! to go to that place of bewilderment, Stewart's! You wish to select a comfortable dress, a dress within your means, a dress answering to your circumstances. But oh, that the loom should have made such a provocation to the eyes! There it hangs, oh, so gorgeous! oh, so exquisite! "That is what I want," you say; "but this is what I am going to buy;" and there is a vast problem in that simple expression. You want that; and why do you not buy it? "In the first place, it is beyond my means. I have not the money to pay ten dollars a yard for that, or I would do it in a minute." Have not got it? Why, do you not own twenty times ten dollars? "Oh, yes, I own that amount; but then, I have got to pay it for other things." In other words, you prefer to spend your money for other things. You desire that dress; but all things considered, it is better that you should not pay ten dollars a yard for twenty yards of dress goods. You prefer to pay your rent, or to distribute the money among your children, for their education. You think that on the whole you will get more comfort out of that money if you dispose of it in that way. In other words, though you want the costly dress, you do not feel justified in getting it.

The love of dress is pitiful; but the hunger of the eye is not to be despised. There are other kinds of hunger besides stomachic hunger. Great numbers of people have a love of beauty; and many poor wretches are starving because they have it not, and do not know where to look for it. I pity people who have starvation of the eye.

I remember very well the bleak and barren rooms that I used to live in. I did not know what ailed me. I could not then tell what I wanted: I know now. It was some æsthetic beauty that I had not, and could not find anywhere.

And there are many people who are damned because they have this appetite for beauty, and do not know how to gratify it properly, and, for the sake of having dress, of having ornaments, of having something pretty to them and attractive to others, sell body and soul, and perish, soul and body!

It is a piteous thing for persons to have such an appetite and have it starved, until they have lost conscience, or ignorantly destroyed themselves, for the sake of it.

Well, now, while you were looking at this exquisite silk, and admiring it, did you *choose* it? No, but you *desired* it. You said, "I want it, but I can not conveniently pay for it, considering the other things that I ought to buy. When I think of the necessities of my husband and my children; when I think of what I must have to keep soul and body together; when I think of the house-rent, and the school bills,

and grocer's bills that are to be paid, I do not feel that I can afford to purchase so expensive a dress as that; and I *choose* not to have it, though I *desire* to have it."

There is no mystery in that. It is a problem that is coming up over and over again every day in persons' lives in this world.

What, then, is it, that a person does when he chooses? Why is it that he sifts the myriad influences that are exerted upon him, appropriating some and rejecting others? There are a thousand things that come in to-day, and there are a thousand things that come in to-morrow, to affect us. Each hour shifts the glass. The world, like a glass, is perpetually turning. We are all the time seeing different combinations. And we learn instinctively to choose from among the things that rise up before us. We have taken the line of our life, and we say, "All that I have must lie parallel with that line. I can not take this or that at pleasure." And our life is a system of selecting and rejecting. In looking around we put our eye on this, or on that, and choose it; and then we follow up that which we have chosen. A desire which is so much a desire that the reason, when it is true to its function, approves it as rational, and that the will applies the means to the end, and that you prefer it, together with all the circumstances which are required for getting it—that is a choice.

Choosing takes, not the thing alone, but the whole apparatus by which it is to be obtained. Choosing is not only desire, but the machinery by which desire becomes reality. Choosing always carries with it something more potential than mere susceptibility. So that when a man says, "I choose such a thing," it is as if he said, "I think that thing to be not only desirable, but more desirable than other things that are inconsistent with it; and so much more desirable, that for its sake I will give them up, and will apply all the forces that are necessary to getting it." Such is choosing.

Now, take the case of Moses. There was the Court of Pharaoh. There was everything that could dazzle the senses; everything that could gratify self-love and self-indulgence. And doubtless these things had their weight with him. And on the other hand, there was in his nature a deep moral want; a sense of humanity, a sense of justice, a sense of truth, a sense of God—for "he endured as seeing him who is invisible." There were those two lines of life—the one, that was calculated to attract and gratify the senses; and the other, that was calculated to attract and gratify the moral nature. They hung balanced, doubtless, in his mind. It was with him, probably, as it is with every other man who comes to a great choice. He perpended, he oscillated, he finally made his choice, and he stuck to it heroically, as long as he

lived; and he will be forever more transcendently blessed in the kingdom of God's glory above.

We are called to make *choices* perpetually; and we must not confound them with *desires*.

With this general explanation, we may now proceed, with some profit, to various points of application.

1. There are a great many young men and young women who desire very much to be cultivated and educated. They have some genuine tastes. They take pleasure in the finer æsthetic elements. They desire to have an education. And if you were to ask them, "Do you choose to be educated?" they would say, "Certainly, I do choose to be educated." But no, they do not. They *desire* to be educated; but it is one of those desires which everybody is subject to. Myriads and myriads of desires we have which never ripen.

Have you ever noticed what a profusion of apple blossoms there are every spring, and how few apples there are that come from them? There are a million blossoms to a bushel of apples. Just so it is with desires and choices. Men have a million of desires to a bushel of choices. Among all the multitude of desires that men have, there is only here and there one that amounts to a choice.

So that when you say, "I choose to be educated," you are mistaken. You do not *choose* it; you *desire* it—that is all. You have sometimes thought to yourself, "How nice it would be if I could speak the modern languages!" but you did not choose to take the pains to learn the French and German and Spanish. You tried once or twice, and got stuck in the grammar the first thing, and gave up. You desired to be educated, and you put yourself in the hands of a teacher, to be taught the various branches of instruction; you placed yourself in circumstances favorable to learning; but you found that it required self-denial to be educated perfectly; and the moment you were brought to the test of giving up bodily ease, and self-indulgence, and the gay throng, to the drudgery of learning a little to-day, and a little to-morrow, and a little the next day, for weeks, and months, and years, for the sake of gaining an education, you did not choose it. When you saw what such a choice involved, you did not venture upon it. You preferred to put it off till to-morrow, or next week, or next month, or next year, and take the consequences. Your choice was, "Give me present pleasure; give me good prospects in this world; give me something to eat, and something to drink, and something to wear; give me a place where I shall be praised, and where I shall be honored, and I will let intelligence go, and I will pick up what little information I need to get through life with." And so it turns out to be nothing more than a fair dream which so many young persons have in early life, when they say, "I

will be a knowing man." They desire knowledge; but they choose ignorance, or only partial knowledge.

2. There is many a man who desires to be rich; but there are a great many men who do not desire to be rich. I am one of them. I know all about it. But it would not be safe to offer wealth to me. As long as I know that I am not going to have it, I not only do not desire it, but I do not even think about it. I certainly am not going to give my life to obtaining riches. A great many people are poor; they are foreordained to poverty; and they make their calling and election sure in poverty. They say they do not want riches. They despise riches. There is nothing like a wholesome despising of riches among men that cannot get them!

But there are men who do desire to be rich, and make up their minds that they are going to be rich—that is, they say they are, until they begin to find out what it costs. They come down to New York to get rich. It was riches that they talked about at home. That is what they coaxed and persuaded their father and mother to let them come to New York for. They did not want to labor on the farm all their life. They wanted to cut a swath in the world; and the way to do it was with riches.

"But oh! my son, it is such a place of temptation!" "Do you think, mother, that I am such a fool that I do not know enough to resist and overcome temptation?" And so he comes down to the city. He comes to *seek his fortune*, as the saying is. And the first step is to get a place. He gets a place. And when he gets a place, he gets companions. And they are gay fellows. They laugh at him and taunt him because he is so trim and prim and proper. His plain country clothes are as good as he can afford, and he has supposed that they were good enough; but he is laughed into getting finer ones. He must shed his *country skin*. He must do as Romans do, among Romans. And he is drawn into this, that, and the other extravagance. And then, he is not going to shut himself up like a worm in its little cocoon. He must go out and see folks. And there are some folks that ought never to be seen; or that, being seen, ought never to be seen twice. And though he came down to get rich, he cannot resist the temptation to indulge in pleasures; and he wants to be kind and sympathetic; and he is not going to be a niggard; and so he must spend a good deal of money; and if it is not in his own pocket, he finds it convenient to take it out of his master's till. He is called up. "John, you have been very inconstant of late. Unless your habits conform to the rules of the establishment, you will lose your place." And it is not a year before he has lost his place. What is the matter? He has been caught drinking, carousing, and gambling.

This is the young man that came down to the city to be rich; but the moment he found that gaining wealth required self-denial, painstaking industry and integrity; the moment he found that it required that a man should rebuff the tempters on the right and on the left, and hold himself steadily to his purpose, he did not choose riches. He chose self-indulgence; he chose the wine-cup; he chose pleasures; he chose companionship; he chose the present, and let the future take care of itself. And when he came down to that which he had chosen—pleasure and its outcome—he was bankrupt and destroyed.

Oh! the destructions that go on! Oh! the annual waste of the best blood! Why, if men should be carried on purpose, by the hand of the tyrant, to such shambles of execution as they go to of their own accord; if young men were to be put upon such racks as I see them voluntarily bring themselves to, it would be thought to be a most outrageous thing. Sometimes for days and days it seems as though I walked upon graves and in charnel houses. Am not I in the confidence of those who are in trouble? Do they not come to me as to a physician? And do I not see that multitudes of men are on the rack, that they have been there till their brains and their marrow are rotten, and that they have destroyed themselves? Do I not see young men who are wasted by the cup, and by the damnable house of pleasure, and by the strange woman's snare? And do I not know that there have come down, hundreds and thousands of them every year, young men, the sweetest-hearted, the truest in their original nature, and the best-intentioned? And did they choose fortune? Did they choose to be something? No, they only *desired* it. They did not *choose* it. And there is a great difference between desiring a thing and choosing a thing. A fool can *desire*; but it is a man that *chooses*.

3. There are a great many among you who choose, as you suppose, to so grow up that you shall have an established reputation, and the things which properly belong to a good character. But stop! Are you not using those two words interchangeably, as if they were the equivalents of each other? You want a good character, and you want a good reputation, but there is a great gulf between these two things. There is many a man that has a good character, but has comparatively little reputation. In the long run, and ordinarily, a man's reputation will be as his character is; but for a little while a man may have a bad character and a good reputation, or a good character and a bad reputation. And every young man ought to know exactly what it is that he wants. Is it a reputation that you want? Is life a drama? Are you actors? Do you want a tinselled costume? Or, is life an earnest thing; and do you want realities? There is many a man that wants to be thought wise; but do you want to *be* wise? There is many a

man that wants influence; but do you want *power*?—for influence is nothing but the shadow which power casts. There is many a man that wants to seem high; but do you want to *be* high?

Oh! see what a scrambling there is. See how many there are who think that if they can get their names in the newspapers; if they can get themselves represented in some striking picture or book that is to come out; if they can connect themselves with some little successful enterprise, and get a name for shrewdness; if they can dazzle the imaginations of men, and get folks to think this, that, or the other thing of them, they think they have something substantial; but nothing that a man has is substantial, unless it has roots in himself. All that in you which is simply the reflection of other people's thoughts about you, is a mere shadow; and it avails but little. What you *are* stands by you.

If you are mean, your reputation for generosity will not spare you long. If you are stingy, I do not care what your reputation is, you cannot be so munificent in giving away that the gaunt bones of your stinginess will not stick out. People who give for praise, get what they give for. They get their reward for a while. Our Master, in speaking of those who made long prayers, said, "Verily, they have their reward." Everything gets its reward. Every seed produces its own kind. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Where men seek to build up a reputation without any concern as to their character, it is but a very little time that they deceive anybody but their own selves. They do not deceive their fellow-men, nor God, nor the devil.

There are many men who come into life, and begin life, feeling that they desire to have an honorable name. They do *desire* it; but whether they *choose* it or not we can tell when we see how they act. If they are circumspect, vigilant, and self-denying; if they take a high standard; if they steadily press their way up; if they buffet every temptation; if they are really forming themselves on a high model, and are seeking for honor and glory, then we say that they have *chosen* such a name. Otherwise we say that they have merely *desired* it.

4. There are very many persons who desire the happiness which comes from well-doing; and they also desire clandestine enjoyment of evil-doing. My friends, there is nothing in this world which more men are mistaken about than the possibility of being wicked underhandedly, and having good on the top of it. You can make a loaf of cake very heavy, and coat it with sugar, and put ornaments on the top of it, so that it shall look admirable. That is the way many people undertake to make their lives—at the bottom heavy as dough, and on the top covered with sugar. There are men who want to be selfish, and yet want to seem to be benevolent. They want to be mean, and they want

to look and seem as though they were generous as a prince. You cannot do it. You cannot join those two things together.

There are a great many men who want to have a reputation for purity and virtue, while they play with their tongue in secret places. They think that secretiveness can cover out of sight what is disreputable. They think they can do God's work with one hand, and the devil's work with the other hand.

Suppose a man should establish a magazine for grinding charcoal in the first story of his house, while his books and pictures were in the next story. Do you suppose a man can grind charcoal down stairs, and keep things up stairs clean? The charcoal will not go up by the ton, but the impalpable dust will find its way up. The ever-industrious air will carry it thither. Some will go out at the door, some will go up through the windows, and some will get through the crevices, until by-and-by his fine engravings are all smutted, and his books are all grimed, and the ceilings are changing in color, and the man's face is turning from its natural hue. You cannot grind charcoal down-stairs and keep clean up-stairs. But many men are trying that which is just as impossible. Dirty dogs, they are. Miserable, filthy creatures, they are. Wicked, self-indulgent men, they are. They are men who would rather die than have their secret life turned inside out, so that folks could see it. They are men that are not so much afraid of the great day of judgment hereafter as of the great day of judgment now. They would not for all the world have the truth respecting themselves come out. And yet, they think they are moving in the most eminent sphere, that it is all quiet, and that nobody knows anything about it. There never was a greater mistake made than that. You cannot harmonize these two things. "You cannot serve God and Mammon." You cannot obey Christ and Belial. You may have two masters, or twenty, if they all stand in a line; but if one stands aside from another you cannot follow them all. You cannot go in opposite ways. You must choose between them, and take one or the other. And *desiring* is not *choosing*. When men are doing wrong, and they know it, and regret it, as they often do; when wrong puts them into this or that misalliance; when they are filled with shame—which is God's quickener of the conscience; when they come very near the verge of destruction, and are filled with fear; when they come to a sense of their danger, so that they desire to be free from their wickedness, they only *desire* it. They do not *choose* it. If they did choose it, they could break their bonds, and rise up and be free.

When, therefore, a man says, "I want to leave my courses," I wait and see whether he does or not. When a man says, "I want to be a better man; I want no longer to transgress the fundamental canons

of morality ; I do not want to be employed in a wrong business, or in a wrong way of conducting a right business," I watch him to see whether it is so.

Ah! my friends, I dare say you *desire* reformation, but you do not *choose* it. You may just as well understand it. It is good for you to know precisely where you stand. Some of your fainter feelings do desire better things ; but your stronger feelings take hold of wrong things, and cling to them.

5. Rising from the question of morality to that of spirituality, there are a great many persons, who, all their life long, have the impression that they should be Christians, and mean to be Christians, and hope they shall be. They say, "I respect religion." That plea is often used as an instrument of defence. There are many men who employ it when a clergyman comes along. They say, "I know I am not as good as I ought to be ; I am aware that I am not a Christian ; but I have the greatest respect for religion and the Church." Perhaps you would not respect the Church so much if you knew all about it—for it is your ignorance, frequently, that leads you to respect it, even as much as you do.

I talk with these persons, and say, "Do you not choose to be a good man?" "Yes ; oh yes." "Do you not choose to repent?" "Yes." "And to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Yes." "To rise up into the spirit of communion with him." "Yes." "And to live by faith of Christ, and love to God and man?" "Yes." "And to purify your life with everything that is consistent with the divine will?" "Yes, it is eminently desirable," you say. This, then, is precisely the ground on which you stand : you have the moral sensibility to see that it is desirable, but you have not moral stamina enough to *choose* it.

You prefer the present. You prefer to act in the line of your habits. And there are a great many of you who act against your best impulses. There are men here who believe in conscience, and rectitude, and honor, and acknowledge God to be their Commander and Captain ; and yet they do not hesitate to break their promises to him, and violate their duty toward him. Multitudes of men there are, who, toward the divine Being are living in the most open violation of that which toward their fellow men they hold and cherish with their utmost sensibility.

How many, to-night, if I should say, "Do not you desire to be a Christian?" would not say, "Yes, I do desire it." Have you chosen it? are you willing to live for the things that it is necessary to live for? Are you willing to take the steps that it is necessary to take, are you willing to put forth the exertions that must be put forth, if you

are to be a true Christian? It is not enough for you to stand aloof and say, "Oh! that I were only as good a Christian as I think my father was!" It is not enough for you to sit in the gallery and look wistfully down and see the elements of Christ's body broken, and distributed among the people of God, and say, "I would give all the world to be among those persons." No, you would not. There is one little thing in this world that you would not give, and that is your *heart*. I like to see persons up in the gallery during the administration of the Lord's Supper, but I do not like to see them there too often. Stay on communion Sundays, and look at the solemn service, and let it sink deep into your heart; but oh! if you have been stopping once, and twice and thrice, the next time you stop, it should be down below, with those that are partaking of these elements. But for you to come years, and years, and years, as spectators of these things—you know it is not right. You know that while you *desire* to be a Christian, you *choose* to be an enemy of God—a man of the world, without God and without hope.

I will not, with applications, pursue this subject further. I will, in closing, make one or two remarks other than these.

The first is, that we see in the discriminations that have been made, and the illustrations that have been given, the explanation of a vast amount of religious susceptibility which produces very little result in life. We see how it is that men in church are carried up by singing, by prayer, by the present effect of preaching upon their minds, to a point which looks as though it would certainly culminate in true piety, and that then they go home and are as they that look into a glass, and see forms, and then forget what manner of forms they were of. Nothing but susceptibility was exercised in them. There was no moral purpose formed. There was no choice reached. But they think that they are getting better; they flatter themselves that they are real growing Christians, and that they are coming nearer to the Christian life.

There are a great many men here who think that they are sinful out of church, and do not think they are Christians. They *know* they are not Christians; yet they feel that, on the whole, their moral sensibility to some sides of religious influence is increasing. They have a vague impression that they are accumulating treasure. I do not undertake to say that men are not benefitted in many respects under such circumstances. I have seen men that were not gathered in at one revival, but were at the next one; and I have seen persons that went on acquiring more and more susceptibility, and gathering more and more of religious influence, and yet were going further and further from anything like decisiveness of choice, and contenting themselves with what amounted to nothing more than religious revery. They were persons

who took pleasure in thinking vaguely, and thinking at large, on the subject of religion ; but they never got further than that. They never came to a decision or choice. And so there are hundreds that go on through life, like the clouds that do not rain in summer. They gather, and promise a shower, and then break, and pass away, and there is not a drop that falls.

I remark, again, that a man's choice may always be known by what he does, rather than by what he says. Therefore let me see what a man's life is, and I know what his choice has been. Whatever a man is, he chose to be—I mean within the bounds of possibility. A man may be poor, and may not be able to change his condition. A man may be short of stature, and not be able to add one cubit to it. But in the department of men's choices, what a man is, is determined by what he does. If you drink, you choose to drink. If you swear, you choose to swear. If you lie, you choose to lie. If you are hard-hearted, you choose to be hard-hearted. If you oppose the ways of virtue, you choose to oppose the ways of virtue. You choose the thing that you do. If, on the whole, you are manly and true, you choose manliness and truth. It is well for a man to analyze his life, to journalize it, to write it down, and let it lie before him. He can then draw his own portrait. This is the more important, because men purposely deceive themselves, and hide from themselves their real preferences and their strongest tendencies.

I remark, once more, that the power of desire increases, and the power of choosing decreases, as men go on through the stages of an unregenerate and wicked life. It is the reverse in a holy life. The power of forming desires into choices increases as a man advances in the Christian life. Whatever he desires within the bounds of possibility he can seek after, and gain, and keep. In the case of men who live out of Christ and out of religion, the opposite takes place. Their desires augment, but their power to choose diminishes. And the want of power to choose is the destruction of thousands, and thousands, and thousands. It is the will-power which men need ; it is this central stamina that enables one to choose ; and they have enfeebled and wasted it. So that one of the final mischiefs of wickedness in this world, is, that men become *reprobate*. Some persons are opposed to that word ; but there is such a thing as a man's going on and perverting himself to so great an extent, morally, that there is not within his reach the means of recuperation. Can you tamper with the eye until you have destroyed its organization ? Can you tamper with the tongue, till it ceases to perform its legitimate functions ? Can you tamper with the physical structure, till it is unfitted for the offices which it was designed to fulfill ? Can you tamper with the intellectual structure till it is all

awry, and reports falsely? So a man can tamper with his tastes, and his affections, and his sensibilities, till they cease to have their normal action. There is many a man that goes on drinking, although he abhors the ditch into which he has fallen. There is many a poor drunken man who covets respectability in those hours when the illusion is dispelled, and there comes a little calm. There are hours in which he bethinks himself again of his earlier and happier days. And I believe that the bitterest prayers which ever go to heaven, are prayers of poor drunkards, in their intervals of remorse for the past, and longing for the future. Why, then, do they not break away from the cup? Because the power of choice is destroyed in them, almost—quite in some instances. For I believe that drunkenness becomes a disease for which a man is totally irresponsible after a while. He has broken down the very mainspring of character. And in such stages as this he should be treated just as the insane are treated. He should be put into an asylum. He should be dealt with as we deal with little children, and those who cannot take care of themselves.

And as it is with intemperance, so it is with other wicked ways. They come to that point where desires are more powerful than choices; and men may go on in them till their power of choosing is shrunk to the minimum, if not entirely destroyed.

This subject is full, not only of instruction, but of warning. Better is the man who lives in a very narrow circle of ideas, but who has the power to form wishes into choices, than the man who lives in a larger experience, but has no power of turning his susceptibilities into preferences, and his preferences into choices. The benefits which you receive do not depend upon how much susceptibility you have, but upon your power to choose them. And if you would measure your manhood, and ascertain the steps along your future course; if you would form a prophecy concerning yourself, measure at that point where desires are converted into choices.

If you choose the life to come, all your present life will be subordinated to that glorious choice, and men will see, and angels will see, and God will see, that you are giving up the pleasures of sense, and of this life, that you may take hold of life eternal. But if you choose this world, with all its risks and perils, God will see, and angels will see, and all men will see, and you yourself will see, that whatever you may have wished, you *chose* the life that now is, and risked, if you did not choose, the destruction of your soul. "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Take this lesson home with you. It is not in my power to convert you. It is not in my power to change you in any way. You must

change yourselves. And if it is difficult now, will it not be more so next year? If it is hard to-night, do not put it off, lest it be impossible next year, or in years to come. "Now is the accepted time." The difficulty to-day of turning from sin to holiness is the measure of the necessity—the *instant* necessity—for your doing so.

May God give you wisdom to emulate him of old, who *chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, and had respect unto the recompense of the reward, and endured to the end, and was gloriously saved.*



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Thou blessed God, lifted up above all human calamity, above weakness, above thought of sorrow, thou art the most merciful and the most condescending. And all that we see among men of tenderness and of kindness is something of thee. Thou art the source of pity and compassion. With thee is mercy. It dwells with thee, and was born in thee. And all things that are to be desired in thought and in feeling are of God. We rejoice that there is not lifted into everlasting power any hard and compelling dynasty without pity. Thou that art eternal love dost dwell in the centre; and above all power is thy power; above all wisdom is thy wisdom; and everywhere, in heaven and upon earth, thou art moving all things toward beneficence. Thou art bringing all causes to work together for good. Thou art filling the earth, little by little, with righteousness. And though thy delay seems to us long, it is because our lives are short, whilst thou dost dwell in eternity, and to thee things move fast, though ages seem to intervene between the beginnings and the ends. And thou art content, and art pressing forward the grandeur and glory of thy kingdom. It shall yet open and grow more gloriously than we have dreamed. And we shall discern it. As aforetime, holy men desired to see, and died without the sight, so we, in the consummation of things, discerning the beginnings of the blossom and of the fruit, long to behold the millennial fullness, and shall not see it from earth; but in more glorious vision, with cleansed eyes, and clear and steadfast hearts, we shall behold, from the other side, the ends, and all the glories of immortality.

And now we desire to be on that side in the struggle. We, too, have our own battle. Every one of us has his contest to fight. Give to us brave hearts. Give to us firm purposes. May we meet every adversary undauntedly, and stand to our duty. We are thine. We belong to thee. May we be ashamed to withhold from our lawful Master his just due. And since thou art not Master as much as Father; since thou art Lover as well as Judge and Commander, grant that we may with more willingness and alacrity perform every duty to thee.

Lord, we beseech of thee that we may be faithful according to our light; according to our consciences. May we not put away the things which are unpleasant. May we give ourselves manfully, and with all our heart, to the right way, that we may walk therein, and continue therein, and that we

may draw others with us, until at last we shall stand in Zion and before God.

Oh! pity the infirm. Pity those that are wistful, but are not resolved. Pity those who look from afar, and wait for help, and find it not. Pity all those who, without thy power, and without human help inspired of thee, most miserably perish. Lord, gather them, we beseech of thee. Fill our hearts with earnest desire. May there be more and more who shall labor for men's souls. Behold how great is the waste. Things are perishing on every side; but nothing so much as man. What waste there is in all creation! But nowhere is waste so piteous, so needless, and so wide-spread as among men. Pluck them, we beseech of thee, from their dissipations, and from their intemperance, and from their lust for greed, and from their striving, and from cruelties, and from immoralities, and from dishonesties and frauds, from vanity, and conceit, and pride, from hard-heartedness and worldly-mindedness, from every iniquity. Bring them, we beseech of thee, into the sweet realm of purity and love, into fidelity and worship, that they may love God and love man, and be saved.

And we pray for the outpouring of thy Spirit in more copious effusion from church to church. Come forth, O Prince of the Soul! Know thine own, and call them with an effectual calling, and bring home many sons and daughters to thyself in this great city.

And we pray that thy word may be preached with more power and fidelity in all the churches of our land. Cleanse the morals of this people. Set up thy standard everywhere. And to its bright light may there come trooping innumerable souls. We pray that thou wilt overturn and overturn until he whose right it is shall come and reign.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the word of admonition and instruction. We pray that it may give light to the understanding, and warning to those who are in peril, and caution to us all. May we examine ourselves to know how much we are living upon merely a vague and profitless desire, and how much we are building ourselves up by choices. Grant that we may choose not only the name of Christ and his service, but his spirit; and every day more and more. And may we convert all our tastes and all our susceptibilities into those choices which shall make us men in Christ Jesus. Go with any who desire more knowledge and light. Open their understandings. Fill them with light by thy good Spirit. If there be any who are inquiring their way to thee, bring them to a knowledge of Christ Jesus. And we pray that there may be many born into the kingdom, and that all our places may be filled with the sons of those that are ransomed and rejoicing in the Lord. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

IV.

SPIRITUAL STUMBLING-BLOCKS.

INVOCATION.

April 3, 1870.

THOU that dwelleth in light, and from whom come all sweet and pleasant things, our reconciled and blessed God, meet us this morning, and over against our sinfulness and guilt, place thy mercy, that it may shine out; and make it seem most beautiful. May we feel this morning, that we have a Father. May we rise up into thy embrace. May we be at home with thee. May we have that ecstatic peace which they have who know how to find their way home to their God. May every thought that is not in subjection to thee, be controlled. And may all our souls this day be enriched and come forth as to a wedding. Grant, we pray thee, that thus the service of the sanctuary, the meditations thereon, the offering of praise, the communion of prayer, all our fellowship with each other, and all the joy of the day at home, may praise thee and bless us: which we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

SPIRITUAL STUMBLING-BLOCKS.

“Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.”—ISA. LVII. 14.

In eastern lands it is, to this day, as it was from the beginning. Society has no life in itself, and is strong only through the government. Whatsoever, therefore, is for the common good, languishes. Roads, which are one of the distinguishing elements of civilization, were either wholly wanting, in olden times, and in oriental lands, or were mere paths. Whenever the king, or some great personage, would travel, couriers were dispatched in advance. The local chiefs were summoned, the people were drafted, and the road upon which the royal *cortege* was to pass was prepared for that special occasion. The holes were filled; the narrow places were widened; the rocks or fallen trees were taken away; the rough places were made smooth. This required both that much be added in some places, and much taken away in others—much “cutting and filling,” in the language of modern engineering.

In the passage which I have selected, the cry goes forth, not in behalf of a conqueror, or a sovereign, but in behalf of God’s people. They are the honored procession for which a road is to be prepared. “Cast up, cast up,”—that is, heap up, fill in—“prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.”

The figure, then, is striking. As royalty demanded for itself a smooth path, a road from which all dangers and obstructions were taken away, so a soul that is on its way to God has thrown over it, as it were, something of the sovereignty which it approaches, and a mysterious voice is heard, crying, “Clear the way! heap up! heap up! cast out the stumbling-stones.”

The application of this passage to ourselves is obvious. Life is a road. But each man must know his own way. It is smooth to some. It is rough to others. Some travel on fast and surely. Others are hindered, stumbled, stopped. Some of you have gone on conciously and very far in the Christian life. Some of you have hardly moved beyond the point at which you began.

It may inspire you to enterprise, if I shall point out some of the obstacles which hinder the growth of men in their life as Christians.

(1) To give a personal and spiritual application to this passage—*Cast up, cast up, remove the stumbling-blocks, the stumbling-stones*—I apprehend, in the first place, that the want of a true and large ideal of Christian life, as an inward spiritual and divine disposition, and the attempt to live in mere conformity to rules, and with a vague impression that if one conforms to the church he shall in some way, he knows scarcely how, be saved, is itself one of the causes of perpetual stumbling. The attempt to live merely for the fulfillment of social moralities; the attempt to live so that all the rules which are prescribed by all those who are governing in the Lord, shall be obeyed; the attempt to live upon any such low conception as that of regulations, conventions, observances, is sure to make the Christian life poor, and the travel uncertain. For *a new creature in Christ Jesus* is the apostolic definition of being a Christian. It is the endeavor to substitute for the worldly character a divine and spiritual one. The kingdom of God is to be within us. The evidences of it are to be hope, and joy, and faith, and love, and fidelity. And the aim of the true Christian life is not so much to keep its ordinances, or to believe in this or that disclosure of technical truth: it is larger manhood, patterned on Christ Jesus. It is to make yourself nobler, purer, sweeter, truer, more faithful, more heroic, and more worthy to look God in the face, and say, "I am thy son." We are exhorted to *live worthy of the vocation with which we are called*; and that vocation is son-ship in Christ Jesus. We are to live so that we shall feel worthy to say, "God is my Father, and I am his son."

Now, our aspiration and our effort will be in proportion to the dignity and the ideality, if I may so say, of our conception of what religion is. If we suppose it to be simply not doing evil, we shall put forth but very little exertion, and we shall receive but very little stimulus. We are not to pattern our religion on the Ten Commandments. I marvel to see them so much in vogue as they are yet—although the world needs them. The Ten Commandments, which were the common law for barbarians, but which do not at all epitomize Christian life, except by a stress and torture of construction which, if applied to the rest of the Scripture, would destroy it,—I marvel that men so stick to them. And yet I do not. There is so much stealing, and lying, and wickedness in the world, that I marvel that the Ten Commandments are not used a great deal more than they are. I marvel that, instead of being written merely in churches, they are not put up in the places where Christian men do their business. There is need of the Ten Commandments. However, a man might keep all these, and, like the good young man in the Gospel, do all the outward things required by the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet come short of fulfilling the demands of a true

spiritual religion. Our effort and our self-denial will be in proportion to the magnitude of the conception which we have of the life that is to be led. And if persons come into the Christian life with the impression that it is merely rubbing off little protuberances, or that it is merely acting in conformity with certain requirements of modern Christian societies, they will make slow progress, because there will be no motive to stimulate them to high endeavor and high development.

2) A *low ideal*, then, is one of the hindrances which men meet with in living a Christian life.

(3) Next, the attempt to live a Christian life with a *low tone of feeling*, is a reason why men do not make greater progress. For, if there is one thing that is exacted more emphatically than any other, it is intensity of feeling. Not only are the great characteristic traits of Christian experience enjoined in the Bible, but the modes of exhibiting those traits is enjoined as well. In all the writings of the New Testament you will find that fervor, intensity, is required in every feeling. For, although our Master does not use the same language that the apostles do, he just as much teaches the necessity of this intensity, where he declares that it is not to be so high nor so inward that it cannot show itself; that it is to be a light which cannot be hid. Men never phosphoresce until they come to intensity of feeling. Men never glow and develop themselves so that every one shall know that they are Christians, unless they have had intense experiences. In other words, one might say that the peculiar fruits of the spirit are like tropical fruits, which cannot ripen without tropical heat.

We have moralities. I may compare them to the plants which grow in the ground, with roots in the dirt. And most excellent crops they are that grow so. But some of the fairest blossoming plants, some of the most beautiful flowers which we have on this platform from Sunday to Sunday, are such as these air-plants which we have here to-day. They have no roots. They fasten themselves upon a branch of a tree, and swing loose in the air, and feed by their leaves, and never touch the dirt; and yet they blossom freely almost all the season. And most fragrant are they. Christian graces are air-plants which do not need dirt to root in. Moralities are good crops—oats, wheat, and what not. Although they root in the dirt, they are very excellent indeed. But we need to have both. We not only need to have moralities, but we need to have Christian graces, which are, as it were, *orchids*, *epiphytes*, and fed upon higher and purer things—light, and moisture, and other elements that the air contains.

Now, none of these can thrive in our temperate climate. A temperate climate is good for temperate things; but for intensities it is not good. And many dominant and characteristic traits of Christian char-

acter are such as never can be brought out without fervor. Yet, how many men there are who are afraid of it, and who, seeing it, at once think, "It is fanaticism!" How many there are who quote, until it is worn out on their lips, "Let your moderation be known unto all men!" Where is it that men are afraid? and what is this moderation that they enjoin upon us? You will never hear such men enjoining moderation where it is *bargain*. You will never hear men, when talking to their children about seeking worldly gain, say to them, "Let your moderation be known." It is when the child is so desirous of going to meeting, and is so much interested in this or that charitable enterprise, and is so addicted to prayer, and so loves the assembly of God's people, and is so intensely kindled with feeling, that they almost fear, as they say, for his reason, and tell him, "Let your moderation be known." If that same child, grown older, or some other youth, under evil counsel, becomes vehemently addicted to business, every day filled with fiery motives for quick gains, does the father ever say to him, "Let your moderation be known?" Never. On the contrary, he looks upon him with undisguised admiration. He can scarcely keep from spoiling him with flattery. And he says, "If his life is spared, he has the making of a man in him." Every feeling and impulse in that child is worldly. He is full of greed for gain. He is intense and sharp in his secular nature. But there is no counsel of *moderation* from the father now. On the other hand, let one become intensely interested in the welfare of his fellows; let him night and day ponder as to how men shall be made better; let him give up his comfort for the sake of reclaiming men; let him be filled with "psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs;" let him give himself to the Lord Jesus Christ, as if the invisible were real, and as if God were his, and men are alarmed, and say, "Let your moderation be known."

I would to God that there were more temptation to fanaticism than there is. I think fanaticism to be an evil; but it is an evil that *we* are not very liable to. Our temptation is the other way. And, in general, it seems to me that men do not enough mark the necessity of intense, fervent—continually fervent and intense—religious experience, to facilitate their courage along the royal road. If your feelings are right, do not be afraid of having them too deep. For, while the passions, while all the lower feelings, are apt to wear a man out by intensity, it is one of the peculiarities of the moral sentiments, that they nourish and feed men. Excitement in the higher realm of feeling does not wear men out. Hope, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost—men can go on feeding upon these experiences day in and day out, week in and week out, year in and year out. It is the passions that wear. It is the appetites that grind out the fibre of life.

Meanwhile, many who are well commenced in the Christian life, many whose faces are rightly set, many who have begun to walk in the royal road, fail from feebleness; from a want of intensity of Christian feeling.

Read, when you return home, to see whether these things be so. Read particularly the closing chapters of the various epistles of the apostles, and see in how many cases you will find the necessity for intensity of feeling repeated, and emphasized and re-emphasized.

I remark again, as one of the hindrances to growth in Christian life, *lack of deep and continuous devotion*. This is either from the want of a sense of the great spirit-world on whose border we live perpetually, or it is the result of excessive occupation, over-occupation, which crowds, all the time, and prevents one from ripening in a true Christian devotion. There is an utter liberty granted to everybody in respect to his mode of devotion; but there is no liberty as to whether he shall or shall not be devout, and worship from day-to-day. A flower might just as well attempt to get along in summer without the dew that falls upon it, as a Christian attempt to live without daily communion with God. An eagle that cannot fly; a nightingale that cannot sing; a vine that cannot bear grapes; a flower that cannot blossom—that is a heart that does not pray, and does not love to pray.

Why is it that there are so many whose prayers are formal; whose devotion is a duty, rather than an attraction, and a bewitching attraction at that? It is very largely, I think, because men know *God* rather than *Christ*. I do not mean that our prayers may not sometimes ascend unto God. I do not say that veneration may not seek for those peculiar developments of the divine nature which come to us through the eternal Father. But that for which the heart is hungry is companionship; and our companionship is to be with the Lord Jesus Christ; and our devotions will tend to become tender, and familiar, and nourishing, and companionable, if we are wonted to commune with Christ.

What is devotion? What is worship? If the young artist stands in the presence of his master, asking him of everything that pertains to the art which is common to them, recognizing the superiority of that artist master, revering him, and yet communing with him face to face, that is what we call devotion when the soul does it to God. This the soul may do toward the Father, if it is drawn thither. It may do this toward the Holy Spirit, if it is drawn in that direction, as some ideal natures—the mystics—are. It may do it toward the Lord Jesus Christ, if it needs the embodiment of God manifest in the flesh. Whoever draws near to God in the spirit of sincere, winning, loving, filial conversation, worships. This is prayer, this is communion, whatever may be the mode. Some shall pray by the lips of another; some shall pray

by their own lips ; some shall pray in silence—without uttered thoughts ; some shall pray at stated seasons ; some shall pray only in circumstances that inspire peculiar feeling ; some shall pray by written forms ; and some without them. The range is large. The liberty is absolute. That which your experience teaches you to be best, you have a right to. But one thing is to be common. We are to pray. We are to *abound* in prayer.

Why is it, then, that there is so little of it ? Why is it that those who have the privilege, and who have learned the language of prayer, so seldom or so ineffectually pray ? My own impression is that no person prays to effect who does not pray till the heart and the imagination are touched. It is not until some such effect is produced upon us, that we really do pray. So short a time frequently is set apart for prayer, and so unprepared do men come into the presence of God, that by the time they have finished their devotions, they have scarcely become conscious of the reality of spiritual things. They leave off just when they should have begun. But till we feel the power of the world to come ; till we feel that this suffocating and narrowing horizon has begun to open itself, and stretch out its circles, and that there is the touch of the infinite coming in upon the soul ; till we begin to feel that we do see Him who is invisible—till these things take place, prayer is wasted. The most of that which is called *family prayer*, and *prayer in the closet*, is, I fear, only the husk of prayer, and not the true kernel, and does not feed the soul.

The want of devotion makes every effort at Christian life a burden. With devoutness, with the fiery elevations which come from devotion, with the realization of the great spiritual realm above us and around about us, a thousand things become easy. The heart that loves God, and goes to him in prayer finds things to be light which others find to be heavy. Duties are no longer duties, but they become volitions ; and men do automatically what aforesaid they did, if at all, imperfectly, by force. And there can be no eminent development of Christian life without this. It is the breath of the soul.

This takes hold, naturally, of another prominent need—namely, the abiding sense, in the Christian life, of God's presence. I mean by this, the art of carrying the suggestion of God through the realm of sense and secularity. There be many who seek their God in the closet. There should he be sought, and there should he be found ; but no person can live in the full enjoyment of Christian faith who cannot carry God's conscious presence with him into the world, into his business, into his pleasures, everywhere. It is said of one of old, "He walked with God." That is, he lived with him. It is said of Moses, "He endured as seeing him who is invisible." That is the philosophical so-

lution of his wonderful success. It is said, "The pure in heart shall see God." It is said, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit"—*he that ABIDETH in me and I in him.*

There is a training by which every object of nature almost, and every evolution in society, will suggest the presence of God. It seems to me that men who invent symbols by which to suggest moral qualities and moral facts, are like persons who, by the side of the ocean, attempt to manufacture water to supply it. The great physical globe itself is one majestic system of symbolism indicating moral truths. The human mind is so formed in adjustment with the great physical, natural world, that if we are right with God, and rightly trained, every object in nature becomes suggestive of some moral quality, or some phenomenon in Christian life, or some spiritual truth or being. What is there that has not been appropriated and sanctified? The mountains; the cedars on them; the clouds above them; the birds in them; the fields below them; the brooks that flow from them; the rocks that compose them; the shadows which they cast; the refuge which they are in times of trouble and war; all events in the farming life; all processes in the industrial life of civilized nations; the sea; the summer; the winter; the house; the magistrate; the judge; the father; the animals upon the earth, and the fowls of the air; whatever there is all through nature—these things God has employed to convey to us some suggestion of the divine presence, and of divine truth. And no man can dwell in the conscious presence of God who has not the art of having the sense of God brought into him by some of the continually occurring events of life, or by some of the ever-existing realities of the physical world. He that can look up into the heaven at midday, and dwell long, and yet return his thoughts whence they came, without once having felt that God was there—I pity him. He that can look into the darkness of the night, and come back again to the light of his own countenance, and not have found God there—I pity him. He that can sit down upon a bank on which the sun shines moderately in the spring and watch the roots, and young insects, and all that nature is doing there, and not have one single thought of God—I pity him. He that can hear the sounds of the night, the voices of the sea, or feel the stillness; he that can look upon the face of a friend; he that can witness a marriage feast, or stand in the marble presence of death; he that can go anywhere, and not have the shadow of the eternal Throne cast upon him—I pity him. He that has to hunt for his God, and shuts his God up in a closet, and keeps a lock and key on him, and goes there to find him—I pity him. My God is everywhere. If I ascend up to heaven, he is there. If I go down and make my bed in hell, he is there. If I fly east, west, or any whither, he is there; and

he only can be considered a growing Christian who has the art of carrying him everywhere.

4 Another hindrance which men find on the road of progress in their Christian life, is their ignorance as to the effect of outward activity in developing inward fervor, and the effect of inward fervor in developing outward activity—as to the effect of the *reciprocal action of the inward and the outward life*. Men are accustomed to separate these qualities, which never should be disjoined. We ought to have strong feeling, and strong feeling ought always to take on the form of activity. Nothing is more unwholesome than strong feeling which gives itself no embodiment. That is the secret of the mischief which is done by fiction. Works of fiction are just as wholesome as anything else, if they are read wholesomely. But there is a principle which few understand—namely, that it is never healthy to excite strong emotions unless you give them a chance to commute themselves into deeds. All intense feeling ought to have the liberty of taking on some outward expression. If you excite a feeling, and deny the expression of it, it acts inwardly, and wastes and corrupts paralyzing the nerve out of which it has sprung. If, therefore, you read of heroic deeds, and your eye is suffused, and you shut up the book, and go back to the vulgarity of your every-day life without giving any other expression to this heroic excitement, it by-and-by lowers essentially the whole tone of capability in the soul. Whoever has pity, should do something to manifest pity. Whoever has love, should do something to show love. Commute high feeling into some form of action, and then it both blesses others and nourishes you; but mere emotion, without expression, is bad. And it is just as bad in the closet of the mystic as it is over the novel. There is many and many an unwritten novel. There is many and many a person to whom God gave the power of motive, and the production of feeling, and who has given himself up to what is called *meditation*, or holding one's self outside of life. All the power of his reason and imagination fill his soul full of beautiful thoughts and sweet feelings, but they remain thoughts and feelings, and never take on any other form of activity. And that is not well. It is one reason why persons are no better in monks' cells than out of them, or in caves than in houses. Simple meditations and fancies are not good for the soul, except as a change for a short time. The law of life is, *Feeling expressed*—feeling put into some form of activity befitting that feeling.

If, therefore, in your Christian experience, you worship God, if you love Christ, and if you would enter into the mystery of Christ's dying and atoning work, you must, when the feeling rises up, attempt to do the thing which the feeling itself indicates. You must become Christ to others in that real sense which was implied in the words of the

Saviour, when he told the disciples that if he, their Lord and Master, had washed their feet, they also ought to wash one another's feet. And so we commute into some form of positive activity whatever Christian experience or feeling we desire to have in the soul fresh, continuous, and harmless. I have known many and many a person that became very religiously selfish. I have known many and many a person that became so in sympathy with God, and spirituality, and ideality, that he had almost no sympathy with things as they actually are; that he cared very little to leaven life, and to benefit life.

But, on the other hand, it is just as important that actions should culminate in emotions, as that emotions should culminate in actions. It is not enough that a man should have a mere perpetual machine life. A man may be active in the Christian cause; he may disseminate tracts; he may attend meetings, and speak; he may organize, and work; he may do a great deal of good in various ways; and yet he may be imperfect in this, that his own soul is growing lean. He may become a mere factor in the spiritual realm.

Both of these things should play into each other. Men should be active that they may be emotive; and they should be emotive, that emotion may work into activity. And it is the want of this reciprocal influence of activity and emotion working together, that hinders many persons from rising into the higher moods of Christian life.

↳ I may remark, again, that a very common hindrance to Christian development is the attempt of men to perform their Christian work outside of their appropriate spheres. There are a great many who feel that that is Christian work which is different from their common every-day duty. There may be something more than every-day duty which goes to constitute the whole of our Christian life—there ought to be; but, after all, every man's first duty as a Christian is in the calling in which God's providence has placed him. We are taught, and we feel, that our position in life is the result, not of accident or chance, but of the divine ordering. And whether God has ordered you to stand in the household or out of it, in the mine or on the ship, in the store or in the office, on the farm or in the shop, wherever he has placed you, there is your first duty. Your first duty is to subdue that business in which you are engaged, to the uses of religion. What I mean is, that it is incumbent on every man to conduct his business so that it shall be a means of grace; so that he shall not have to leave his calling for the sake of his religion, or to get a chance to be religious, but shall be religious *by* his calling, and *through* it. That is the Bible teaching. And it is strictly illustrated by the apostle, in his reasoning, in many places. I will cite but one passage—that in the seventh chapter of 1st Corinthians, where he says,

“ Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it, rather.”

There you find, in that verse, the philosophy of all those questions that are struggling for settlement to-day. The question of woman's right to speak; the question of the subject's duty to his sovereign; the question of democracy—all these questions are summed up in that one verse. The apostle gave direction for Christian conduct in regard to the state of society which existed. He did not touch the question as to whether they might by appropriate agitation change that state of society. He simply argued, all the way through, on this basis: *As things now are, such and such is your duty.* He left open the question, *What will your duty be when things have been changed by development?* And in regard to servants and slaves, his declaration is, “Are you called, being a slave? Do not think that Christianity requires you instantly to break your bonds. That is not your duty. Emancipation is not the first fruit and result of being called. Are you called so? do not care for it. There is room enough, and there are things enough, in your state as a slave, by which you can glorify God, and set an example before men.”

“ Art thou called, being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it, rather.”

In other words, prefer it. Still, it is not indispensable that a man should be free. One may be a slave, and yet be a Christian, and worship God. And by his example, by his heroism, he can make all men know the power of Christ upon the human soul.

“ For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman [if he is not his master's]; likewise, also, he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.”

Here is a paradox. It works both ways.

“ Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.”

This, which was argued here in respect to just one relation, has been argued above in regard to the relation of husband and wife, where one is heathen and the other is Christian. The general principle laid down, is, that our calling, our business, our relationships one to another in which true religion finds us, we are to accept. We are, as it were, to permeate our avocation and our relations with the Christian spirit in such a way that our daily duty shall be itself a means of grace.

I think every physician should find in his duty as a physician the means both for nourishing his own body, and for doing good to his fellow men. I think that every lawyer should not be obliged to go out of his office and turn the key in order to find his God. He should carry himself in his profession as a minister of justice and peace; and instead of finding him quarreling and wrangling, we should find him administering his daily trust and duty with the feeling that he is serving both God and man, and that he is made more fit for secret commun-

ion by the very work which he is performing all day long. I think every merchant and banker ought to find in his daily avocation that which nourishes his conscience, his reason, his spiritual forces. I think every woman should find in the cares of the household that which should be an almoner of piety to her. Every child should find himself lifted up and made better by his association with children. Everybody, going to school, should find in his duty as a scholar—in his duty to his class, to his master, and to the whole school—not only the cultivation of his intellectual powers, but also food for his religious life.

Whatever your state may be, whether you are in a printer's loft or a collier's dark cave; wherever your lot may be cast, your first duty is to subdue your present business. When I hear men saying, "I cannot be a Christian in my situation," I say, "Probably you would not be one in any situation." When I hear men saying, "It is impossible for me to be a Christian where I am," I say, "You are discontented where you are, and it is not likely that you would be contented anywhere."

Wherever you are, there begin the battle; there subdue everything that stands in conflict with the law of conscience, and the law of love, and the law of purity, and the law of truth. Begin the fight wherever God sounds the trumpet, and he will give you grace that *as your day is, so your strength shall be*. But until we cease dividing our life into two parts—secular and religious—we never shall be very eminent and consistent as Christians; we never shall make any very great progress in the Christian life. Men are accustomed to think that their Bible is cut into two grand divisions—the Old Testament and the New. They think that the Old Testament is a pretty wild book; that there is a good deal of worldly matter in it; that in Old Testament times men were allowed a range, and did things, which would not be tolerated for a moment in the New Testament. That is to say, it is a book of the early growth of the race, and it discloses to us both what was the average attainment of God's people during the period which it embraces, and also what was the relative instruction required by that stage in the development of the human family. But men believe that it is a book of wild, and almost savage liberty. The New Testament they believe to be a book of piety and far more grace and spirituality. And they divide their lives just so. They have the old man and the new man, in place of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The old man does all the wickedness, and the new man all the piety. And so they have a religion that they try to take care of. During family prayers, and on Sundays, and on festivals through the year, they serve the new man; but all the rest of the time they let the old man have his way. You must slay the old man, and you must have a new man in Christ

Jesus—and that always and everywhere—or you cannot *grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

There are many who, although they may not fail in these respects, fail in an unexpected direction—I mean by excess of things right. I know many persons who are in right courses, and have substantially right views, but who go beyond all prudence and all bounds of discretion in the use of themselves. I know many women who, in the family, and in the school, every day exert themselves a half more than they have any right to. They give rise to swarms of morbid feelings which they always lay to the devil's charge, but which God always sets down to their own account. They exhaust themselves by an industry so far beyond their own capital and their own endowment of strength, that they are perpetually held back and hindered. They are hurt in their Christian life by excess.

The same thing is true out of the family and out of the school—in business. Many and many a man does more work in one day than he has a right to put into three. Many a man works so that he breaks the law of God in almost every single point. Excess of enterprise and industry is a national sin with us.

Now, I hold that there are special emergencies in man's life when he has a right to draw on his capital. If there is sickness in the household, and you are the only well one there, it is not a time for you to talk about health. There are certain things that must be done, and you must do them. It is right, in times of great peril, when the ship may be foundered, or in times of battle, or in other emergencies in men's histories, when they are not to hesitate to draw on their resources. But these are exceptional cases. The ordinary law is, that no man has a right to go beyond a certain amount of consumption of his excitability. If he does, there comes a reaction, with all its morbid feelings, its temptations, its suggestions, and its irritableness. You sacrifice a thousand times more graces of the spirit by irritableness which comes as the result of over-exertion and inordinate activity, than you can gain by prayers and reading. Great men like Count Cavour in Italy, Bismarck in renovated Germany, Bright in young England, and Lincoln in our own calendar—it is right that they should have wasted the very fountains of life to bear up their times. A great work God gave them to do. They live long lives who live much, and these men lived the life of a thousand ordinary men, though they all broke themselves down by excessive taxation.

But that is not the law of the private. It is contrary to the duty of the mass of men. And yet, there is many and many a man in this congregation who is sinning against God every day of his life by excessive industry. There is many a man and many a woman here who

is breaking God's laws in nature, and breaking them in society, and breaking them in social relations, by an unwitting exhaustion through excessive activity.

As long as people say, "I cannot help it," they will not help it. *Cannot help*, although it is an extreme excuse and remedy, is a very dangerous one.

I have known men who *could not help it*. I have expostulated with men on the subject of such an excessive addiction to worldly toil; and they have said to me, "My affairs are peculiar, and they are in just such a state now that it is impossible for anybody else to take charge of them. I must carry them through." But within a week they were taken down with bilious fever, and could not get off their bed. And yet, their affairs went right along just the same as though they had been able to attend to them. I have never seen a man whose affairs could not get along when he was sick and could not get off his bed. The affairs of such a man may limp, they may creep, but they will *get along*. There is one thing that you may be sure of—that you will get through life, and that your affairs will get along, in one way or another; and half the time it is conceit, as much as it is conscience, that makes a man say, "I must keep my hands on the reins, or things will go so that I shall defraud and injure those who are connected with me on every side." Retrench. Draw in. Be less, and do less. Do better, and be better for doing better.

There is many a man who does not suspect it, but when he says, "I do not speak in meetings; I have had no great experience; I do not wish you to call upon me to pray; I have no gifts in prayer," it is as if I were to take a sponge full of water and dripping, and squeeze it till there was not a single drop of water in it, and then ask the sponge, "How do you feel?" and it should say, "Dry and arid. There is no moisture in me." No, it is all squeezed out. Here are men who take their hearts, that are just as full of feeling as anybody else's, and squeeze them so dry that there is not a drop left. Business has got it all. And they come to meetings, and say, "I have no experience to give. There is nothing in me." Why should there be? If you have used it all up for this world, of course you have none for the world to come.

I may remark, again, upon *too powerful companionship* as one of the influences which impede men in the Christian life. There is a very great benefit designed, to be sure, in the divine economy of life from companionship; but too much companionship is not good. Being too much in company, being too much with each other, being with too many people, is not good for those who would be Christians.

Did you ever know the difference between lumber grown in an open field and lumber grown in a forest? Ask the men at the Navy Yard

whether they prefer pasture-grown white oak or white oak that is forest-grown. They will tell you that they prefer three times over the pasture tree, that has had the wind and rain strike it on every side, and that, with its wide-spreading branches, draws to itself more nutriment than it is possible for the forest tree to get. Such a tree is tougher, and hardier, and better, and lasts longer, than a tree in the middle of the forest, that cannot send out any side branches, and derives strength from the wind, and nourishment from the rain.

People in cities, or people out of cities, with too much company, are like forest trees—long and spindling, so that nothing but the top ever gets the light; and they are weak from top to bottom. The need of a certain tough individuality, requires that a man should set himself free from over-addiction to companionship, even though it is good. The breath of men in a crowded room is not healthy for you to breathe; and the breath of many souls is unwholesome. Every man should have a chance to swing his arms around in every direction without hitting anybody. You ought to have room for your own being. The packing of men together destroys that individuality in which is all progress and all merit as before God.

This stands closely connected with another social hindrance to the development of true Christian life, and that is, the addiction of men to *pleasure*. I mean, not indulgence in wasting and disallowable pleasures, but an excessive addiction to recreation of any kind.

The first law which I should lay down, is the sovereign right of every man to make himself happy, and to be happy, in due measure. Not that happiness is the ultimate object to be achieved. Happiness is the concomitant of every right step toward the true end of living, which is a noble manhood in Christ Jesus. We live to make noble men and women of ourselves. And in doing that we have a right to enjoyment. For enjoyment flows with the normal activity of every faculty of our nature. But no person has a right to any pleasure, no matter how good or innocent it may be, in kind or in degree, beyond that which makes him a stronger and a better man. And nobody can tell that so well as the man himself, or his nearest friends.

Let us come right down from general statements to the questions which are agitated among you. May persons play cards? May persons dance? May persons go to the theatre? May persons go to the opera? May persons go to promiscuous parties and balls? My general reply is, that whatever thing you have tried, and have proved, and shown yourself to be superior to, in your religious development, so that the men around about you do not doubt it, you have a right to. If you make such an impression upon all whom you meet, that they say of you, "He is a God-fearing man; he has religion," then you have a

right to pleasure, though it may come through these adjuvants or instruments—going to opera, playing cards, and the like; and any particular kind that you may ask about will not hurt you. But if you are a man of pleasure, and if when you go among men they say of you, “He has no savor of religion about him; he has no power of the eternal world on him,” then your pleasures harm you.

It is the flavor, not the name, that sells fruit. If I take an apple and I am told that it is a wilding or a seedling, and when I bite it is mellow, full of juice, and full of sweetness as well as juice, and full of spiciness as well as sweetness, I do not care whether it grew on this tree, or that tree, or the other tree, I pronounce it a good apple. On the other hand, if it be a *Mela Carla*, of Italy, and it is hard and insipid, I do not care for its name or honored growth: if it is a poor apple, it is a *poor apple*. There is a law of soil, and there is a law of growth; but, after all, *by the fruit shall ye know*.

If a man comes to me and says, “I have a right to hear Booth’s Hamlet,” and I know that he is foremost in the prayer-meetings, and foremost in reclaiming men, and foremost in works of self-denial for the good of others; if I know that when I go into his presence I feel rebuked for my worldly-mindedness; if I know that he has a nature that lifts him higher than common Christians, it is not for me to question his right to that pleasure. But if he does not go higher than that pleasure, it is for me to say to him, “Your pleasure swamps you.” If he says, “It is not harmful *per se*, and it does not hurt anybody.” I say to him, “I do not care whether it hurts anybody *per se* or not, it has a bad effect on you. And whether it hurts you or not, is to be found out by looking at the way you live, and the way you talk, and seeing where the end of your life is, and where the emphasis of your spirit is.” If a man is living above the world; if the tendency of his nature is away from worldliness, nobody will criticise his indulgence in pleasure; but if he indulges in pleasure, and lacks spirituality, then even permissible things have become harmful to him. Here is the law. We must live for God, and for our fellow men; we must have a heart that feeds higher than mere self-indulgence; and if pleasure is a mere minister of self-indulgence to you, you are to disallow it; but if, living preëminently in the Christian life you find that you can take pleasures without harm to yourself, then they are yours, as between God and yourself.

Well, is there no other question? Yes, oh yes, there is another question. What is that? It is the great question as to what a man may do with his rights. Paul takes the ground that every man must assert his personal rights. Now the question is, having once shown that I can indulge in such and such pleasures without any harm to me,

and with some benefit, shall I go on and indulge in them without any regard to the effect which my indulgence may have on others? "Oh no," says Paul. "There is no harm in your eating meat dedicated to an idol, but if your brother sees you do it, and, misunderstanding the whole of it, is led conscientiously into wrong, then you do not act wisely or kindly; for you use your right to break down his conscience and his right.

There are two principles in regard to rights. The first is to ascertain and vindicate them; and the next is to subject them to the law of love. There are a great many things that I have a right to, till love comes and says, "Will you not forbear them for the sake of others?" I have a right to eat meat; but for me to do it under circumstances such that my whole household are led to eat it, and they are thrown into a fever, is wrong. For the sake of keeping my children well, I would abstain from eating meat. I have a right to drink wine; but if I found that my drinking wine would lead poorer men to drink whiskey, or the young men around about me to drink wine, I would say to myself, "Shall I use a right of mine in such a way as to destroy my fellow men for whom Christ died? That would not be acting wisely nor well."

There are a great many persons who take pleasures to excess—things which do not agree with their stomachs; and they are dyspeptic all the time simply on account of their pleasures. There are a great many persons who take pleasures which disagree with them because their effect is to bring them into conflict with their fellow men; and so they are violating the law of love in their natures. And in both ways pleasures impede their progress in the Christian life.

Let no man, therefore, suppose that I hold that pleasures are to be disallowed. I am the son of a King. The owner of the universe is my Father. He owns the heavens and the earth. There is nothing on the face of the broad earth that he has not made, and that he does not own. And it is all mine. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;" and all the fulness of the earth is mine. But it is my law as well as my pleasure to use all things in such a way that they shall contribute to the welfare of my fellow men, and to my own spiritual elevation, and to the glory of God.

But that is not enough. You have not settled the whole question when you have asked, "Is the thing itself right? Nor have you settled it when you have asked, "Is it right for me, so far as my individual profit is concerned?" There is a third question, namely, "Can I do it and yet discharge all the duties of pity, and mercy, and helpfulness to those around about me?" When you have settled this question, "Is it right before God and my conscience, and is it benevolent to

those who are around about me?" then you will have settled the whole matter, and not till then.

There are a great many persons who are not conscientious about pleasures. Some do not take enough, and some take a great deal too many, for their own good, or for the good of others.

But time fails me to press and probe still further these practical questions. Every man must find out his own hindrances and obstructions in the road which he has to travel. He may receive help from the admonitions of the pulpit, and from the councils of faithful Christian friends; but the duty of searching himself is incumbent upon every one. We are bound to *grow in grace*. If we do not grow, we are bound to know the reason why.

Christian brethren, are you fulfilling this duty? Are you moving forward on the way of life? Are you further along in the Christian life than you were when you began? Do many of you look back upon that time as the brightest in your history? Woe to that man who finds the brightest experiences of his Christian life in the very beginning of it! For, although there are joys that will be fondly remembered forever, there ought to be fruits of substantial victories in later life that shall quite eclipse in depth and power any early experiences. It is a shame to say that the whole after manhood is not so potential for serving God as the nascent state of Christian experience. Are you living in a nearer communion with God? Do you have a better understanding of Christ? Is it easier for you, when you are in trouble, to lift yourself up above it? Is it easier for you, when you are in care, to lift yourself above care? Is it easier for you to stand with your hand on the lion's mane, as the old prophet did in the lion's den, and yet suffer no harm? Can you walk in the fiery furnace? and do you find that the form of the Fourth is by your side? Are you living so that neither sickness nor health, neither adversity nor prosperity, can reach up to touch your settled peace? Is your life hid with Christ in God? And are you growing in these directions? If you are not, what is the matter with you? Is it some secret sin? Is it some desirable thing which you know of in your affairs? Is it some hatred? Is it some feud? Is it some bitterness? Is it some revenge? Is it some cherished selfishness? Is it some neglect? Are you living in the full light of God's countenance, and in the enjoyment of perfect peace in Christ Jesus? If you are not, why should the children of the King go mourning all the day? And why is it that you are living so far behind what you ought to? Is it not time for every one to examine and ascertain why?

For, the time is drawing near, to many of us, in which the greatness of the way will have been passed, and all our battles will have been fought, and we shall approach the celestial city, and Him who

dwells therein. And then, in that hour of royal meeting, to have been in conflict, and to have gained victories through suffering, will be more to us than to have empires or treasures uncountable in our hand. Remember Him who bought you with his own blood. Remember Him who waits for you in heaven. Think of them who have gone before, and are victorious to-day. And lift up holy hands of fresh consecration. Begin again, and fight boldly unto the end of life.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We bless thee, thou Eternal King, manifest to us both in Jesus Christ our Lord, and by the Holy Spirit in our own hearts, and in our own experiences, that thou art crowned with praises; that there is a land where there is no crying; where there are no tears and no sorrows. There is a land which is ripe; where eternal summer dwells without, and yet more within; and where every affection blossoms, and exhales the fragrance of love and gladness. And thou art walking in the midst of thine own redeemed ones, and in the midst of those who have kept their first estate. And thou art forever to them the Chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. They behold thee; and as flowers upon which the sun looks cannot but open and grow beautiful, so thy looking upon them becomes life and joy and gladness, and they begin to sing, and their every thought is praise, and their very life is worship, and worship is love and joy.

We are glad that above the storm, and above the sound of earthly troubles, there abides this land of sacred peace. Thither have flown some that sang by our side. There are some whom we folded and taught to speak with earthly language. There rest many who taught our hearts to love. There are the chief desired ones. And we are glad for their escape. Nor is the world altogether poorer for their going. They are with us yet, with more power than when they were bodily present. When we rise to our better selves, and by faith can discern the invisible, we are not separated from them. In our holiest thoughts, and in our purest affections, we are more theirs than ever we were in the infirmities of the common earthly life. They are not taken from us. They are but a step before us. It is their voice which we hear crying out perpetually, from the invisible city, Come, come. And we are coming. We are coming toward them, and toward thee that hath made them lovely, Lord Jesus. By faith of thee, by the strong drawing of thy love, by the gracious light and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we are coming to that higher and better life. Would that our steps were faster. Would that we might begin to fly. Yet we are grateful for any movement. We are grateful that we have learned thee; that our face is set thither; that the light strikes upon our countenance; that we behold thee sometimes, and see the city itself afar off, as pilgrims behold the glimmering city which they have not nearly reached; that we are in sympathy with them; and that there are many hours in which we can stand in Zion and before God, with the Spirits of just men made perfect, and enter into sympathy with all their rejoicings and thoughts. For all these things we thank thee.

And now, we pray that thou wilt not suffer us, by reason of any earthly and remaining desires, to bind ourselves fast. Especially permit us not to set up for ourselves idols anywhere along the road. Let us not seek ever to build tabernacles in which to worship thee. May we feel that we are strangers and pilgrims in this world. Here we are trained. Here, by the labor of our hands, by the care of each day, by the lesson of the sanctuary, by the duties of home, by the inspiration of a common and struggling life, thou art educating us for a higher manhood. May we bear our part well. May we not seek to throw off our burden before thy will is made known to us. May we not desire to go before we are called. May we be willing to abide here, although it is better to be with Christ than to be in this mortal life. And may we be willing to dwell, if need be, at the foundations, where no man shall see us work. May we be willing to work, though we see the work of others bringing the admiration and praise of men, while ours is hid. May we be willing, for Christ's sake, to work in obscure things, in things hidden, in things which men will never know. Oh! that Jesus might be to us so near, so dear, and so real, that all our work of life should be consciously done for him. Whether we serve or are served, whether we

are in high places or low, whether we are in joy or in pain, may we still feel that every breath and every endurance in life is an offering to Jesus.

And so, Lord, since thou hast suffered for us, may we be willing to suffer a little for thee and for ourselves. Wert thou crowned with thorns—and shall we not have some thorns? Shall we not drink that bitter cup which thou didst drink? Shall we be unwilling to be children of pain, that we may be children of glory? Rebuke, we beseech of thee, our faint-heartedness, and our want of courage, and our want of honor toward thee. May we be willing, we beseech of thee, O Lord our God! to be chastised at thy hands, that we may rise from servants, and become sons, and become worthy to be sons, and be inspired with that same filial love, and that same sense of honor, which children have toward honored parents.

We pray that thou wilt bless all those who are beginning to seek thee, and to find their life in thy ways and commandments. If at first it is rough to their feet, if at first the burden is heavy, and the yoke is hard, let them not be discouraged. May they remember thy promise, that the burden shall grow light, and that the yoke shall become easy. And we pray that their faith may not fail them until they prove thy word. Turn not any backward, nor suffer them themselves to go away. To whom shall they go but to thee? Where is there such patience, where is there such love, where is there such provident care, where is there such example, as there is in thee? And if they turn away from thee, on whom shall they lean?

Save the imperiled. Rescue the tempted. Strengthen the weak that are to be carried into captivity unless thou dost rescue them.

And we pray that thou wilt fill thine own people with some of that compassion, with some of that pity, which thou hast felt for lost men. And may they never be weary in well-doing. May they labor on, not knowing which shall prosper, this or that, or whether both alike shall fail.

And we pray that thou wilt bless all those who labor in word and in doctrine. Remember our schools. Bless the teacher and the taught. Bless all those who go forth to preach to the lowly and the ignorant. And we pray that thou wilt grant that those who are merciful may themselves obtain mercy.

Wilt thou spread the tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ to all; and may the power of the Saviour's love be felt by all hearts. And that glorious day which has lingered too long—may it at last begin to show its bright colors on the mountain, and the glory of the Lord begin to shine, and all the earth see thy salvation.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word spoken. We beseech of thee that thou wilt send it home to every understanding conscience, and to every heart. May we all live in a glorious discontent with ourselves, and in a glorious peace with thee; and may we so look upon our sins, and the sinful estate of our hearts, that we shall turn away perforce, and find our rest in thy glorious goodness, and in thy great mercy, and in thy redeeming love. Lord Jesus, thou hast nourished us. Thou hast rebuked us by thy providences and chastisements. Rebuke us still, and suffer us not to settle down into such captivity of indolence, or into such wrong ways, that we shall fail at last to see thee in thy heavenly home. Still smite us, and disturb us. Still stir us up to activity. And bring us, at last, when life is over, and all its conquests are won, to cast our crowns at thy feet, and say, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, be the praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

v.

BEAUTY.

INVOCATION.

April 10, 1870.

BE gracious unto us this morning, O Lord our God! and unveil thy face, delivering us from all fear, with sweet invitation beckoning us to thyself, that in thee we may find ourselves; that we may find our God to be not Him whom fear hath appointed, nor such an One as the imagination conceives diffused abroad, but One like unto ourselves, whom we know how to love, and with whom all our powers are acquainted; that we may take hold upon thee with joy and delight, and feel that God is the Father, that we are his children, and that we are one with Him. So bless us, we pray thee, this morning, in the service of delight. On this day of rest, give our souls peace. On this day when all things are ripening and putting forth their new life, grant that we, too, may have spring dawn upon us, and that our souls may rejoice as the garden of the Lord. Bless our fellowship, our friendship, our good will, our cheerful gladness. Bless all the services of song, the communion of prayer, the word of instruction, our meditation, and every service of the day. We ask it through Christ Jesus, our Redeemer.

Amen.

BEAUTY.

“For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!”—ZECH. IX. 17.

The prophet is speaking of the Lord, and has been showing his wisdom; his overruling providence; his special kindness of deliverance toward the people. And in the last verse of the chapter he breaks out, “How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!”

One by one the various traits of divine excellence came before the mind of the prophet; and at last he, as it were, generalized them; and the whole vision struck him as a vision of extreme beauty.

This is not a singular representation of the Bible. We are apt to be misled by the fact that many figures which are applied to God are figures of an Oriental monarch. He is robed in state; he is represented as crowned and sceptered; and the beauty of royalty is attributed to God. And we are apt to suppose that as this is borrowed imagery, so the use of the term *beauty* is also figurative, metaphorical, and that the attribution of beauty as we usually understand that term, to God, is unusual—perhaps improper.

On the other hand, the wisdom of God, his justice, his purity, his truth, his love—all of these, in quality, in quantity and in harmony, form a symmetric whole, which deserves, if anything deserves it, the epithet *beautiful*, and meets the highest conception and overreaches the highest aspiration which the human heart has for the element of beauty.

The Church of God, by a like figure, is often painted as a queen or a beautiful woman—a woman wise, beautiful, and clothed in beautiful garments. This is particularly so in the book of Canticles, where human life is spiritualized, and the divine character, and the divine tenderness, and the divine affiancing to the human soul, are set forth through that bold and peculiarly Oriental mode—the household love. And heaven, as it is represented in the New Testament, is represented upon the same substantial principle that is employed to make known to us the Church of God, and God's own nature. According to Scripture, heaven is the land of beauty. Whatever elements, by the general consent of men, represent utter joyfulness and perfect beauty, are selected and put together, and called *heaven*.

Priests in garments of praise, with precious stones, represented to

the age the highest type of a man, and they are transferred to the heavenly vision. Of all places that the Jew knew on earth, there was none for situation so beautiful as Jerusalem, and nothing so beautiful as that city—"the joy," as they termed it, "of the whole earth." And heaven was called "The New Jerusalem." And in Jerusalem there was nothing that struck men with such admiration and wonder as the temple, which blazed in its pristine glory of silver and of gold, and was carved with an elaborateness of art which was at that time unknown anywhere else. Then the temple was the very center of their conception of architectural exquisiteness; and it was employed to help them to form a conception of the heavenly land.

All things in nature, also, were gathered up; and it was on the principle of gathering up all the transcendent elements of beauty which create joy in man, that the heavenly city was reconstructed, and that it stands painted in the Word of God.

Is beauty, then, a reality in the higher spiritual life? Is there, in the inward, invisible and truly spiritual life, that which answers to our idea of sensuous beauty? Or is it figurative? Is it one of those childish things which the apostle says is put away when one grows up? No. I hold that beauty is first spiritual, and afterwards natural and material. I hold that it was divine; that it inhered in the nature of God, and the nature of spiritual existence; and that we call the outward and physical world beautiful, borrowing the term from the higher sources of beauty, instead of, as men are accustomed to think, calling spiritual things *beauteous*, and borrowing the term from sensuous pleasure. "That was not first which was natural," says the apostle, "but that which was spiritual." That is not highest which is material, but that which is invisible. And there is more and more real beauty, and less and less figurative and decorative beauty, as one advances toward the spiritual life.

Let us examine the relation of beauty to moral qualities.

As God has created the world, beauty is not a kind of seasoning scattered upon the weightier realities. Men think that the beauty of this natural world is a kind of decoration. As one builds a house, and then puts pictures in it, which are not really necessary to the well-being of the house; as one spreads a table, and over and above that heartiness of food which is needed to supply the body with strength, gives something for the eye, sugaring over the loaf, and tucking in flowers here and there—things that are very well, but things that are not food, and might be dispensed with; so men think that there is beauty, to be sure, in the world, but that it is incidental in the great framework of things. The substantial verities of things in this world, men think, have nothing to do with beauty. But I aver that beauty is not only a part of

the course of nature, so that if it were excluded the whole structure would be changed and re-formed to a new ideal; that it is not merely a frosting; but that all things in the great scheme of evolution and development tend towards their highest estate by tending towards beauty. Ripeness and beauty are identical. Perfectness and beauty are identical. Maturity, whether it be of fruit, or flower, or what not, works by stages towards beauty, in the material globe.

So that beauty is not an accident. Still less is it the trimming which God gave to the perfected work. It is the divine idea of a mode of creation. It inheres in the structure and in the subtle nature of things. God so-made the world that when organic life began to work towards higher and higher forms, it evinced that higher tendency by the evolution of beauty. It is a kind of goal toward which all right things are tending. It is in nature a kind of signal of attainment. So that it might almost be said, taking it on the great circle, and as a generic fact, that just so far as things are material they are remote from developed perfection.

As the human mind is cultivated, it becomes more and more sensitive to this quality. The less culture men have, the further they are from the admiration of beauty; that is to say, the less comprehensive is their admiration. The uttermost savage admires a glittering bead; but that is not admiring beauty. As men grow cultivated, every single faculty demands beauty. The reason, the social affections, the moral sense, the whole nature, comes more and more under the esthetic; and even the ethic clothes itself in the esthetic. So that when the human mind develops and grows toward its perfection, it grows toward the sense of beauty.

As beauty is the highest thing in nature, as all things have been seen to be developed in the direction of beauty, and as the chief, the sovereign fact in this world is man, so man himself indicates still more signally what is the law and thought of God in the creation of the world, and of the beings for whom the world was created.

Perfection in matter and ripeness of mind, then, are indicated by the tendency to develop, or the actual development and perfection, of the element of beauty.

But moral qualities come under this law, just as much as physical qualities do. *Fullness, fineness, and harmony*—there is the formula. In nature, it is called *quantity, symmetry*; and the equivalent of this in moral elements, is *fullness, fineness, harmony*. And this makes beauty in anything and in everything. Whatever elements the mind produces when it acts so as to give fullness and fineness and harmonious proportions to the product, are beautiful. That is to say, they produce the

sense of beauty in those that look upon them, and tend universally to do it.

Now, not only are right things commanded all through the Bible, but you shall find, upon analysis, that though the Bible does not use the term *beauty* as we do, it is not enough that we should be just, or that we should be conscientious, or that we should be true, or that we should be amiable, or that we should be benevolent. There is to be fullness in each of these elements, and there is to be harmony among all of them. And here is the formula fulfilled which goes to make social and moral affections beautiful.

It would seem enough to say to men, "Be kind, be generous, be benevolent;" but no. *Let love be without dissimulation. God loves a cheerful giver. Give without grudging one to another.* These are the elements that go to make beneficence; that free it from wrinkles; that give it largeness and generosity.

Men think of humility as being a stoled and draped nun, clothed in black, and downward looking. No; the humility of the Bible is not the exaggerated sense of a man's wretched imperfection. No man is humble who is looking down. Humility is the sense of such ineffable excellence that when a man's aspiration looks up, and he compares what he is with what he would be, he is humble. It is a state of appreciation in a man of excellence, and an ideal of an excellence beyond, sitting in judgment on his relative position, that makes humility. Humility is a head-up quality—not a dragging, miserable, mean feeling. Many men have mortified-pride, and call that humility. Many men have the blues, and call them humility. Many men palm off all the wretched and reactionary feelings of their nature, and call them humility. Humility is one of the noblest and one of the most resplendent of all the experiences of the soul. When every part of a man's nature is sensitive and apprehensive, and when the sense of character and of being is so radiant and large that the man feels his own relative imperfection, compared with that which he now perceives to be possible—then it is that humility is born, and is the child of aspiration.

So of conscience. Conscience is to be draped and clothed in gentleness and tenderness. And so of all the moral excellences. You will find, in one place or another, in the New Testament, not simply that they are commanded, but that they are commanded in certain modes; that they are to be exercised in certain ways; that on the one side the evils to which they are liable are cautioned against, and on the other, innocent, admirable qualities, which make them beautiful, are enjoined. You will find in the New Testament commands in respect to loving, and truthfulness, and generosity, and activity, and various other excellent qualities; and you will find that they are all

enjoined in their modes as well as in themselves. And in the instruction of the disciple, there is as much anxiety manifested that he should be *beautiful in holiness*, as that he should be holy.

The growth toward ripeness in moral experience is analagous to development in physical nature—that is toward beautifulness. Just in proportion as any one of our better feelings becomes predominant over the others, men feel that character is growing *lovely, attractive, admirable*, as they say. And these are only step-stone words that bring you to the last one—*beautiful*. And when a man whose passions have been in the ascendancy, puts his affections over his passions, everybody says, “How much he is improved!” When a great truculent, bull-headed man, who has been living in the indulgence of the most beluine parts of his nature, begins to be subdued by home influences, and the little child is able to lead him; when his great strength begins to be brought under the control of his tenderer domestic affections, everybody says, “How beautiful the sight is!” It *is* beautiful. The term is exactly well applied there. And when you find that superadded to this, there comes over a man’s nature the higher graces, the magnanimities, the generousities, the fervors of devotion; when one begins to live by the power of hope and faith and love, and maintains purity of living, men look upon him and say, “Admirable! Beautiful!” And it *is* beautiful—*literally* beautiful.

There is nothing so beautiful in this world as beauty of character. Oh! how men long for it! I do not wonder that men have worshipped Gods that they made out of men. Man is a worshipping creature, and if he cannot get anything better, he will make his own God. A God he will have, and a God he will worship. Men hunger, they long, for some Being that they can reverence and adore. The artist does not more long for beautiful features or faces or forms, than every moral nature longs to see characters that are so well, so strongly, so harmoniously, so finely and fully developed, that they impress those who behold them with the idea of admirableness, and make them feel that it is pleasant to sit and look at them, and to be where they are.

I have known some persons that impressed me just as some pictures do. Now and then there is an elect picture. Most of the pictures in this world are *in their sins*; but now and then there is one that has been converted, and is elect and precious. And to sit in the room with such a picture is to have a perpetual blessing. If a man could swing the rainbow as a hammock and sleep in it, how the poet would like to do it! But now and then there is a rainbow-picture in the room which is like the falling down upon me of all sweet and celestial influences. I know not what it is; and I am lifted before I am aware what lifts me. Now and then there are picture-persons; but they are rare. Wo

are obliged to take each other just as we are. We are only good in spots, at any rate. Most persons are like these street organs, that have been very much used, in which only every other note sounds, and in which each of the notes that do sound has an individual liberty of its own; and so it is crank-turning, with a hop-skip and a jump, one note being hit here, and another there, with a blank between. Now and then there are harmonious natures, well chorded, well put together, even in quality, admirable in proportion, entirely self-restrained, and with force enough to throw out a continual influence. Under such circumstances we feel not only that they are beautiful, but that they are beautiful in both senses—that they are physically beautiful, and morally beautiful. For it is not possible that one should be under the dominion of a noble feeling, and not look beautiful in the face. So really is beauty the creature of the mind and the soul, that when the body is never so homely, if the soul has the power of expression, it will shine through and fill the pores of the skin, and transform the individual. There is no person who is not radiant when he is under the inspiration of the highest feelings. There is no person, though he be hump-backed, and dwarfed, and disfigured, who, if he has the love of God, and a soul of praise, will not shine with divine outward beauty. Though his body may not be symmetric and harmonious artistically, yet everybody will say, “He is handsome. The deformed lump is not as homely as I thought.”

Ah! the visions that have gone from men! The most beautiful things are the things which you remember, and that were fugitive. Many of you remember the day when you thought God had sent a ministering angel to wait upon you all your life. That ministering angel became your companion; and you were imperfect, and she was imperfect; and you went on battle-door and shuttle-cock fashion; and by-and-by you settled down into a kind of humdrum life of toleration one for the other. And you would laugh at what you called sentiment and sentimentality, saying to the young, blasphemously, “Take it all out now. I know what that means. I was once in your place.” And yet there come hours in which such an one remembers how the most beautiful thing he ever saw in this world was the fair virgin face of the loved one, in that moment when the full assurance of love dawned on her soul. And she remembers his face. And there was not in all their life another point of time in which they looked reality so absolutely in the face.

Men say that that was sentiment. Men say that that was fancy. I say that it was the very alphabet of everlasting truth. I say that it was one moment's gleam through the opaque and sin-contorted world, so that these persons saw how beautiful the soul was in its best feelings, in their best moods, when they were radiant. That was seeing the soul

itself. Ah! that the curtain should have fallen so soon! Ah! that the literature should have been so little! Not only do men know that these things are beautiful, but if they grow in this knowledge, if they go on learning, the longer they live the longer and the more perfect becomes, not simply their appreciation of beauty, but their conviction that of all beautiful things there is nothing in this world like a beautiful soul and like the beautiful experiences which proceed from it. Moral quality, then, is beautiful.

Now for some applications.

1. All the world recognizes beauty in the lower grade of qualities. Everybody recognizes gentleness as something very beautiful. Everybody recognizes amiableness as something very beautiful. It is the higher moral experience that men lack a knowledge of. Devotion is more beautiful than passion. The love of God in the soul is far more beautiful than any love to man can be. Faith and hope in their full fruition are to the eye of anyone that looks upon them far more attractive and far more beautiful than a cheerfulness or buoyancy or hopefulness of the lower life.

The qualities of religion to which we are called are supreme, not alone in importance, but in art even. They are essentially and intrinsically more admirable, more noble, more beautiful, than all the lower experiences. Men recognize the truth in regard to the lower ones. We look at what are called the *moral virtues*, and we think them to be admirable. But I will tell you that the analogy of the same experience which you have had in regard to the lower forms of emotion, goes on up to the very highest. And when I call you to a Christian life, I call you to the supremest art. I call you to the highest range possible. For to be a Christian man does not mean that a man should become meager, and poor, and mean, and low. It does not mean that he should become, as it were, the offscouring of the earth. There is more nobility in the Christian idea than in all others put together. You recognize beauty in body, and you recognize a faint idea of beauty also in the lower social qualities. And that same God, so much of whose handiwork you recognize, has made beauty to rise and be more impressive, and more grand and glorious, as we go up. And when we come to the heavenly land, methinks we shall be yet more impressed with the wonderful radiancy of beauty than with all other things. We shall be like men that look the sun in the face. The light will be so strong that if we should gaze full upon it, it would blind us.

2. How great is the variety of spiritual things in the Christian life! and how few things are gained! When one looks at the varieties of spiritual beauty which are possible, he is struck with the meagerness of actual attainment among men. There are very few Chris-

tian experiences which have become strong and powerful. Little fineness is given to our Christian feelings. Everything is defective in harmony. In other words, if I may so say, Christians are barbarians yet. And what I mean by that is this: A barbarian will be half-naked, with no clothing except a ragged blanket about his loins; but if he has a string of beads around his neck, and something in his ears, he is immensely tickled with his beauty. And you laugh at him. But Christians are just like him. They have two or three tinkling virtues that they put on which cover a part of their nakedness, and leave the rest uncovered. Miserably elated, they are, in the garments of nature; and they are quite elated and quite proud of their attainments, and their beauty and grace. Ah! a sense of beauty requires more largeness, and more harmonious adjustment of all the parts of our nature.

How many persons are there that are beautiful in temper? How many Christians are there in this audience, who, under provocation, blossom into beauty—that is, who have meekness? How many persons are there, who, in the midst of all their gains, are humble—that is to say, have such a sense of that which lies before them that they are *not puffed up*; that they do *not behave themselves unseemly*; that they do *not think of themselves more highly than they ought to think*?

How many persons are there whose good nature is anything more than the mere product of good health, so that when they are unwell they are cross, and when they are well they are good natured? How many persons are there in whom there is anything like disinterested benevolence; who really like to do good; and who act benevolently without stopping to ask whether it is for their interest or not—who do not depend upon the poor crutch of self-interest to hold them up to their benevolence? How many persons are there who sow not expecting to reap again? How many persons are there who do kind and beneficent things from the love of doing them? How little of that which we call evidence of piety or Christian character, has strength enough to go alone! How it is mixed with lower motives! How few there are in God's choir on earth! and how discordantly they perform together when they attempt to emit the sweet sounds of Christian experience in life!

The Bible declares that God's people in the world are the bride of the Lord. The church is spoken of under the figure of a bride. It is compared to a bride adorned for her bridegroom. Paul represents Christ as preparing to present us before the throne of his Father, without blemish, wrinkle or spot. That is to say, as a young man, going forth, finds the companion of his life, wins and marries her, and brings her home with unutterable joy and gladness, sure that the household will all admire his choice, and presents her, fair and admirable, to his

father and mother, so the Bible says Christ is doing by us. He is wedding us to himself, and is preparing us, that by-and-by he may present us perfect before the throne of his Father.

But how little is the Church beautiful in its grace! How little is there which makes us so comely that God will be glad to look upon us, and will say to his Son, "How fair is thy bride!" Life has done so little to us that death must do a great work if we are beautiful when we get to heaven.

3. The unbeautifulness of Christian life is sadly shown in the popular impression with regard to religion. What is the impression of the world at large in respect to religion? Is it the general feeling that it is desirable and beautiful! No. To a very large extent men feel that religion is something that may be obligatory, or as a duty, but that there is nothing attractive about it. Or, they regard it as a policy of safety, for the most part, and feel that if religion can be got along without to the end of life, it had better be deferred, that they may take their enjoyment and spend themselves in worldly pleasure, but that in their last hours it is well for them to step in and take religion, and so be safe for the future. That meets the idea of men.

The true idea is, that a man who goes into a Christian experience, goes into a larger liberty, and goes into a larger joy—not the joy of the mystic; not the unsearchable, hidden joy of faith; but any joy by which a truly Christian man may be made happier. Whatever it is right for any man on earth to do, it is all the more right for a Christian man to do. May the hired servant eat? and may not the son eat? May the servant respectfully speak to the master of the house? How much more the son!

If a man has come back to the divine conception of human nature; if he is attempting to shape the whole character and life so that manhood shall be what God purposed in the great outline of nature; if he is brought into communion, through grace, with God; and if he is made an heir of immortality, and he feels both worlds, around him and in him, and the whole power of the God-head is resting upon him, and his mind is coincident with God's, and the divine thought mingles with his thoughts, do you suppose he is made mopish and miserable by these things?

We are told that we must *take up our Cross and follow Christ*. Yes; but every step the cross of Christ grows lighter and lighter, until by-and-by the cross carries us, instead of our carrying the cross.

Why, we are as men that are in a dungeon, and to whom the word comes, "Break your chains, and get out of your prison, and follow liberty." To be sure, they must put forth exertion to break out; but the moment they are out, are they not better off than they were in prison?

The word of the Lord comes to us in our bondage to the animal appetites, in our bondage to opinions, in our bondage to carnal and secular pursuits, where we are all moping, and groping, and looking down; and we are called to a higher life. We are called to more freedom in reason; to more freedom in moral sense; to more freedom in affection; to a wider, purer, finer, nobler way of living. There is not one feeling in ten in your nature that you use. But God calls you to the whole of yourself. And the way to come to one's whole self is through a true Christian experience. A man who knows how to be a better husband, a better father, a better friend and a better neighbor, is happier for it. A man who is called to a Christian life, and responds to the call, does business easier, and more naturally. Whatever a man does, he can do better if he does it as a Christian does it, than if he does it as a man of the world does it. There is nothing that so helps a man in the discharge of the ordinary duties of life, as harmonizing his whole self with the divine conception.

In being called to a Christian life, then, we are called, not to circumscription, nor to gloom, but to largeness, and power, and symmetry, and fineness, and fullness—in short, to *beauty*. And every man who becomes a Christian ought to seem more radiant than ever before. And he will if he is living in a full understanding of his privilege, and up to his privilege, or anywhere near it. For it does not require perfection to be handsome. A moss-rose bud is handsome before it blossoms.

4. Christians should at least be as sensitive to spiritual beauty as to physical. I do not blame men who want to surround themselves with outward beauty; but I do blame them if that is not a suggestion to them of that other and higher kind of beauty from which it sprang, and of which it should be a symbol perpetually. All men should love beauty in common things. I think less of a man who does not. If a man drives horses, I like to see knots on his horses' heads. If a man is an engineer, I like to see him polish the brass and the iron on his engine. I like to see a man that has a little corner stuck full of flowers, though he is obliged to earn his very daily bread off from the scant ground that he owns. The sentiment of beauty is a thing which belongs in a man; and the absence of it is a deformity.

Some men thank God that they do not care for these folderols; but it would seem to me just as sensible for a man to come in with the stump of an arm, and hold it up, and say, "Other folks are proud of two hands, but I thank that God I have only one." Are a man's deformities things to boast of? Are they subject-matters of gratulation?

Every man who is a true man has in him, and all over him, if he only could get at it, and give it culture, a sensibility to that which is

harmonious and fine and beautiful. I do not, therefore, blame men for building themselves handsome cottages, instead of homely ones. I do wonder that they build such homely ones, when it does not cost any more to build a fine line than to build a foul line. I do not wonder that people have their trellises covered vines, and their gardens filled with flowers and sweet-smelling shrubs. I marvel that men should be so insensitive as not to admire these things about their houses. I cannot imagine why it is that men should build fine houses, and pay thousands and thousands of dollars for carpets for the floors, and for paper for the walls, and for perpendicular carpets for the windows (spending great sums of money to get the light in, and greater ones to keep it out), and for upholstery—I cannot imagine why it is that people should do these things, and then have no pictures in their rooms except those miserable Swiss machine pictures (I wish all the ships that start to bring them across the ocean would founder on the other side), every one of which represents a mountain, a stream, a bridge, and a fool looking at it generally! They go all their life unhungry, unthirsty, needing nothing, wanting nothing that shall feed the soul with higher beauty; but they must have a carpet every five years; and they must have a big, fat, plethoric sofa. That which shall minister to the fancy, to the esthetic nature, they can dispense with. They do not want anything which shall lead them to look beyond the profitable; which shall teach them to carry the idea of profit higher than that which is measured by money or by the esteem of men. I marvel that men do not have a larger sense of beauty. I do not marvel that they have a sense of physical beauty; but I do marvel that when men have learned to love things beautiful, they stop short at the body, and do not want to be beautiful of soul.

I see men that groan because they are neuralgic. There are men whose temper has been neuralgic all their life; and nobody groaned but those who lived with them. I see men who are retiring from business, on account of nervous depression, over-work and over-anxiety; and they nurse themselves, and care for themselves, and every morning look at their tongue, and every day they feel of their pulse; and the road between them and the doctor's house is beaten hard. And yet they have been a great deal worse inside. If they could see their soul's portrait, they would see that they are sick enough there. But they never went to a doctor on account of their soul. They did not care much about that. They could not bear to see the pains of the body, but it did not trouble them to see the pains of the soul. They could not bear to have outward things inharmonious, and less than full and powerful and symmetric. They loved to clothe whatever they had with the garments of beauty. And when they come to the higher form of beauty, why is

not the analogy carried on? Why do not men want to be beautiful in their higher nature? Why do they not desire the best and noblest things? Oh! the conflict of life—the damaging conflict of life! How many there have been that started out brave, pure, true and noble, but that, by the time they were forty-five years old, shook their heads, and said, “These things are very pretty to talk about; but there is not much reality in them. Life does not permit their realization.”

Now, I believe it is possible for men to be men in this world, harmonious, brave, noble and beautiful. It costs some trouble; but it is worth all it costs, a thousand times over. And we are called to it. I do not believe one word in cynicism. The cynic is my abhorrence. When men tell me that this life is to be poor in order that the other one may be rich, I deny it. It is not so. If we are only willing to be rich and beautiful in the right place, in the right way, and in the right elements, then this life calls for riches and beauty. This is the meaning of the Master, when he says, “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

In a town—or city, as it called itself—where I had a former parish, there were but two or three gardens, and I undertook to preach the Gospel by the garden as well as by the pulpit. I had my little acre, and filled it full of things that I could ill afford to buy, and which I could not beg; and on Sundays, I used to see many of the German population out looking at them. I had a bed of three thousand hyacinths one year; and they were an attraction to a great many of these common folks. And, to their honor, I will say that I never lost a flower. But then, they were *Germans!* My roses and other plants blossomed, and the neighbors continually saw them. And my efforts in this direction were not without their fruit; for, though I never said a word on the subject, it was not long before my example began to be followed by others. Now and then there was one that came and looked over the fence and shook his head as though he doubted the wisdom of my devoting so much land and so much time to the cultivation of flowers. I recollect that an old elder of my church stopped one day, as he was passing, and, with a twinkle in his eye, said, “Wall, I s’pose you enjoy all these things. I think the purtiest flower I ever seen was a cabbage”—which was very well for him. Nevertheless, taking the young and the old, they saw my bright flowers, and the love of flowers grew, and it was not more than two or three years before there were ten times as many flowers in that town as there ever had been before. It was a small and humble way of fulfilling the law, *Let your flowers so shine that men, seeing how beautiful they are, will go and make gardens for themselves.*

You have a garden, but how miserably it is kept! People go and look over the fence into that garden, but they do not see anything there which they want to reproduce. And I do not wonder. I should not want to be a Christian if I had to be what some of you are, just as you would not want to be one if you were obliged to be what I am. We are not handsome enough to make folks want to be like us. We are not true enough Christians. We do not live high enough. We are not beautiful enough. But Christ says to every one of us, "Plant. Let all sweet graces come up in you. Let them blossom. Let there be something for every month of the year. Let the twining vines and the trees hang low with fruit. Let the whole garden be filled with fragrance and beauty, that men seeing your good things—your blossoms and fruit—shall glorify your Father which is in heaven." That is the way we ought to live; but alas! alas! it is not the way many of us do live.

5. God is bringing all good men toward that realm and that indescribable experience which is hinted at in the words of Scripture. The work which is going on in us, we do not ourselves at all appreciate.

Have any of you ever been present when an organ was set up? I have, on several occasions. Imagine a child looking at the litter, at the glittering pipes that are scattered about, at the unfinished outside, and at the mysterious and obscure inside. Little by little the machinery is put into its place. One by one the stops are introduced. And at last, after pretty much all is in, one man goes in, and another sits at the keys, and they begin to bring the organ into tune. Did you ever pass by a church where this process of tuning was going on? Do you recollect passing by this church when this organ was being tuned? One note was taken as a comparison note; and the next one, being put down, began to squeal in the greatest discord. Then it was subjected to a series of tappings and knockings, when it came up, and came up, and came up, until at last it was brought into a perfect blending. Then the next was taken, and that began away off, and came up screaming like a child dragged to its parent, and gradually was subdued, and finally was all right. And if I thought once, I thought a thousand times, when this organ was being put up, "Well, that is just like me. The Lord is bringing me into accord in that way, and I scream when I begin, but work up to a tuneful state at last."

That is what is going on all over the world in the churches. We look upon this great scene of human life, and are apt to think that it is a mere chance, hustling conflict. No; there is an Eternal God; there is a divine providence; there is a work, mystic, mysterious and hidden, going on. And under tears and pains and cries, and in the midst of conflicts, and with ten thousand things that seem to be jang-

ling, harsh discords, the tuning hand of God is at work ; and little by little the whole human family is being brought up higher and higher, and God's people are becoming more and more harmonious, and more and more beautiful ; and very soon we shall be carried forward into that land where the whole work shall be completed upon us, and the glory of the Lord shall rest upon us, as the sun rests on the blossoming fields in June.

Let us not be discouraged, brethren. Let us mourn that there is such imperfection and such discord now ; but let us remember that we are to go into heaven, not by our perfection in beauty, but by the grace of God, by the gift of love. Let us remember that we are being carried into the other land as the struggling wretch is carried into his father's house, for discipline—a discipline that shall make him a sweet child. Let us remember that by our trials and sufferings we are being made beautiful. Do not count them to be the most fortunate who seem to be the furthest removed from God's discipline. "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 ? But if ye be without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then ye are bastards, and not sons."

God is working. Trouble, anxiety, forelooking, foreboding, anguish, bereavement, disappointed affection—these are only so many tools which God is employing, by which to polish, and make fair and comely, the qualities of your soul. And by-and-by, out of this shop-work, out of this tribulation, you shall rise fair as the sun, glorious forever, and shining as the stars in the firmament of God.

Take courage then. Do not look down and within. Wait for the hour of transfiguration. As from a mountain-top behold your hope, like Christ, whiter than snow. And in that royal moment look up and take your measure and conception of life from this highest and most radiant point. And then rejoice.

Soon pride will have done its battle. Soon selfishness will have run out. Soon all disturbing passions will have lost their power. More and more time itself helps you to bring all the royal attributes of your soul into fullness and harmony. And pretty soon death shall put the crown on your head. And then you shall be as beautiful as God—he being Father, and you children, and heaven the glorious land of beauty.

Are there any who wish to go with us ? Who would be crowned for a moment and dethroned forever ? Who would wear the garments of praise for a single year, and then moan forever more ?

My friends, we are living an invisible life. There is a kingdom of God within us. There is a work of God going on there. It is a hard work. It is a work in which our progress is slow—it humbles us to

think how slow. Nevertheless, we are called; and being called, we are being educated by the hand of the Lord. Will you not join the number of those who are preparing, by the strife of this life—by its joy, by its hope, by its precious experiences, as well as by its cares and sorrows—for dying, and who shall be more and more disclosed as they draw near to death?

In that last hour, you and I will be very different, oh man! You are richer than I am now; but when you come down to the grave, and your will is made, you cannot take one penny of that difference which there is between you and me with you, and I shall be richer than you are then. My treasure is laid up in heaven, but yours is laid up on the earth. Oh friend! when you go down to the grave in your old age, and the wine, the dance, the exhilaration, the gay associates, and the wild wail of wickedness, are gone, you will think of them as of a storm on the horizon, in the past. And you will be withered. And you will have no hope, no outlook. Then the poor man, that seemed to have nothing in this life—the Lazarus that lay at the rich man's gate—will begin to come to his immortality. In that hour his joy will begin to rise above the horizon. They that have nothing but the hope of immortality are stronger and happier the nearer they come to death; and they that seek this world as their chief good, drift further and further from their possessions, the nearer they come to the mortal hour. My help will come to me when I need help most. You have your help when you need it least. By-and-by, when heart and flesh fail, you will have none at all. My joy is to come. Come gray hairs, come dimness of vision, come dullness of hearing. In me these are signs that I am about to sprout and grow in a higher life. But when infirmity whitens your locks, when your eye grows dim, when your ear grows heavy, have you a future? Is there immortality of joy and blessedness for you? If not, are you living right? Are you living according to the dictates of your own reason? I do not ask you to join this church, or any church; but I put the question to every sober-minded man's conscience and understanding, Are you living so as to be rounder, larger, finer, purer, in every respect, all through? Are you living so that you know you are coming nearer to God, and nearer to the spirits of just men made perfect? Is your future growing radiant, or is it growing sadder and sadder? Are you living right? and if you are not living right, is it not time that you should gird up your loins, and step out of the old ways, move out of the old ruts, and take a new start, with a new purpose, and earnestly call upon God for help, that, peradventure, before the day be past, he shall come to your rescue, and your soul shall be saved?

May God make us all wise unto everlasting life and everlasting beauty.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, with humble boldness, our best Friend, and highest. With thee is all power and all discernment. With thee is all goodness. Infinitely more tender art thou than man knows how to be. For the human soul is a desert, parched, that bears no good thing; but thou hast an everlasting garden on which comes no winter. Thou art infinite in all excellence, beautiful in holiness, standing above all conception of man—beyond all power to conceive. Thou art the One overflowing with excellence, which is imparted to all that are near, and that can receive the joy, the light, the life, the love, of all that are garnered in heaven. Toward that blissful centre tend all things that are good. Time, that sifts all things, shall collect and bring to thee whatever is worth preserving in all the wide outlying realms of universal being. And thou art the Father, the best Companion, the nearest Friend. Thou art the One most suited to all the moods and exigencies of the human heart. And though there are gradations of being infinite, and those that reach nearer to the companionship of the Almighty than we do, yet thou dost condescend unto us; nor dost thou stop upon the outskirt where they are that have reached the highest, with the noblest endowments. Thou dost also dwell with the broken in spirit, with the humble, and with the contrite ones. Thou dost love, not because of our excellence, but because of the stores of lovingness that are in thy nature. Thou dost come to us as the day comes, that does not seek out the things that are the fairest, but rests upon all things, and makes them fair in its own beauty. And so is thy righteousness unto us, which covers our imperfection and homeliness. In thee we become gracious and beautiful. All our good is of God. Thou art perpetually sending forth that influence which should create us into true holiness. We bless thee for what thou art, and for what thou hast revealed of thyself. And we are glad to believe that this is but the beginning; that we know but the alphabet; and that though even this little so transcends the measure of human experience that we can scarcely take it in, yet, forever and forever, in ascending vision, we shall still find thee out, and forever there shall be more to be known than has been compassed. Thou art infinite; and in our immortality we shall not exhaust thee. And we rejoice that we may call ourselves the sons of such a God; and that we may, with humble boldness, draw near to obtain mercy and help in every time of need. And we come, this morning, because there is no hour and there is no moment that has not its need. We need thee for sanctification. We need thee to instruct us and to warn us. We need thee to rebuke us and to chastise us. We need thee in thy providences, in our own volitions, in every home experience, in all our work and way of life. And we rejoice in that fullness of providence, and in that divinity of providence, by which we are still with God.

We pray, this morning, that in every heart there may arise gratitude and thanksgiving for all the mercies of the past. And may every heart lift up a consecrating fervor to-day for the future. May we desire to be more truly thine than we have ever been; and may we lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. May we behold him in all things, and always behold him, and live in him, so that there shall be but one life—thine in us, and ours in thee.

Wilt thou bless this congregation, and look upon all that are gathered here from diverse ways, but that have one nature, pointing in one direction—toward the great future. We all march together. Grant that it may be under one banner, and to the sound of one voice. And we pray that we may be united in fervent faith. And grant that in the great union of hearts in the love of God, and in the hope of immortality, we may stand more to rejoice in this unity than to look upon the things which dissever us out-

wardly. Oh! may we be ashamed, as a part of the universal church, that we suffer the figments of our own imagination, the inventions of our own hearts, to dis sever the body of Christ. May we look upon God; and knowing that love is greater than all other things, and that all thy people are united in love to God and in love to man, may we refuse to thrust away our brethren, or to be separated from them. And still, though in outward life walls and partitions are built up, grant that there may be that fervor of love which shall fly over every wall. And as birds find each other in the upper air, loosed from the entangling thicket, so may thy people of every name fly high enough to reach each other when they reach their God. And so may there be spreading upon the earth the one living, blessed church of God, and the union of all true hearts.

We pray that thou wilt bless thy cause in every form. Wilt thou advance civilization throughout the globe. Wilt thou lift up the poor, the naked and the needy, from the outskirts of creation. Grant, we pray thee, that barbarism may cease, and that civilization may take its place, and that superstition may pass away, and that a true religion of love may be breathed upon all hearts. May wars cease, and therefore the provocations of war. May oppression pass away, and may the glory of the Lord arise and shine in all the earth.

We thank thee for the great things that thou hast done in our day and generation, for the regeneration of this nation. We had not hoped to live to see the day of emancipation. We had not expected to behold that wondrous work which thou hast done, and by which thy name shall be glorified for ever and for ever.

We thank thee for the mercies which thou hast granted to this nation, and that after so great and cruel a war such peace hath come, in such measure, upon the land; and that the channels of industry are filled again; and that prosperity comes with the seasons over the continent. Still be our God, as thou wast our fathers'. Let us not provoke thee by our sins. May we humble ourselves, and cleanse our hands, and learn to do justly, and to live rightly. And so we pray that we may have peace in our time.

Bless, we pray thee, all the nations which struggle for their liberties. Strike on the side of the weak that are right, against the strong that are wrong. And we pray that thou wilt overturn in all the earth till He whose right it is shall come and reign. And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, we pray that thou wilt bless us. Out of the wealth of thine own nature, pour upon the poverty of ours. For we are the sand that has nothing, and thou art the cloud that is full and waiting to drop down fatness. Grant, we pray thee, to all that are whelmed by influences which are greater than their own resolution, the mighty strivings of thy spirit. May none grieve the Spirit of God by which he is filled. May every one hear God calling him to holiness, to glory, to immortality. And grant, we pray thee, that there may be many who, instead of being enemies, may be sons, rejoicing in the Lord, and in the full liberty of the household of faith. Wilt thou bless us while we sing again. Go home with us. And when life is over, bring us home with thee. Which we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

VI.

ALL HAIL!

INVOCATION.

April 17, 1870.

OUR Heavenly Father, vouchsafe to us, with the light of the morning that inward light, the shining of thy soul upon ours. Lift up our thoughts, if they droop and are sad. If they are buried in sorrow, then bring them forth even as from their graves, and give them a bright and blessed greeting this morning. Deliver us, if we are buried in care and the trouble of the world; and bring us to newness of life, that on this morning we may greet thee, and receive from thy lip, *All hail!* Grant unto us, we pray thee, in the service of song, in communion of prayer, in fellowship one with another and with thee, that divine blessing which shall make the day precious to our souls. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

ALL HAIL !

“As they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came, and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.”—MATT. xxviii. 9, 10.

It seems appropriate that on such a day as this we should turn aside from a more formal discourse, and review, with some familiarity, the scenes, or some part of the scenes, which transpired upon the occasion which all the world joyfully celebrate to-day.

We have selected, for our opening sentence, the first words which our Master spake, and which are recorded. They are the words of cheer and of hope. He brought from the grave with him no chill. He came back from death with no message of terror. He had been in the spirit-land, and in the spirit of it had returned again most companionable, to recognize his friends, to pity their weakness, to reassure them with love and confidence, and to fill them with joy.

All the circumstances of our Lord's return are full of exquisite beauty. The things omitted, as well as the things told, are worthy of note. The sepulchre is shut. And during his sleep no word is spoken. There is no dwelling upon the morbid features of his death. The whole description of our Lord's crucifixion is sublimely abstinent and simple. A few strong lines are drawn upon the dark and stormy background, and the main features stand out never to be forgotten. Beyond that there is no attempt at effect—nothing minute—no stroke after stroke to work up the effect. He is laid away quietly; and just enough incidental record is given to enable our imagination to follow the events—and not always to follow them consecutively. There is many a gap to be filled up. There are some things that we cannot reconcile: not because they were irreconcilable, but simply because some link was left untouched. There is a sublime carelessness in the record.

He was conveyed by loving hands—though not by those of his disciples—to his rest in the rock-hewn sepulchre. Nothing more is said. How he was borne in, what tears fell upon him, what lamentations

there might have been, we are not told; nor anything of his condition while lying there. No light is held, by the record, at the sacred portal, to reveal the form that lies muffled within. It might have heightened some dramatic interest: it was deemed, however, not profitable to deal in this matter. Nor are we shown the act of the resurrection itself. In none of the narratives is the precise time of the first act given, nor any approaching symptoms of emotion. All that we know is reflected from the experience of those outside. There is no revelation, by a line, of what went on within. Nor has the Master ever spoken a syllable of his own experience. All that is recorded from his lips is of the most general character. He speaks of the past in the most generic manner. He never specializes, never details, and never draws out at length any one experience. Had we, that are of an inquisitive temper, with a habit of analyzing our own experiences and those of others, and with the philosophic curiosity which is so common to our age—had we been in the disciples' place, we should have asked a thousand questions of our Lord respecting his sufferings; of his thoughts while suffering; of his state after death; as to where his spirit roamed, or went; of his resurrection to life; of the power by which it was effected; of his earliest thought in rising from his bier. But none of all these things ever appear to have been asked, and certainly to them no answer was given. At any rate, there is no trace, there is no record, of any.

The time, however, is to be noticed. For, in reading of what the affectionate women did, we learn what was the period of our Lord's resurrection. No stress is laid upon the fact; no effort is made to set forth the divine reappearance in the dawning light of the early morning; but it is said, not with reference to Christ, but in explanation of the women's conduct, that it was between dark and light that Christ came again. "As it began to dawn," says one; "When it was yet dark," says another; "Very early in the morning," says a third; and all of them are descriptive of the dawn of day out of the darkness of night. Long before men came forth to work; before the air was burdened with noises; just as the first tentative notes of waking birds began to be heard; while the leaf unshaken was yet loaded with dew; while nature was cool, and pure, and tender, as if newly made—in this early morning hour it was, that Christ came forth into newness of life from the sepulchre.

Think what you will of it, I never stand in a summer's morning before the sun dawns, long before waked by birds, to look out upon the yet dim and dusky landscape, that I do not think that this is the hour of resurrection. As the night held the day, but could not long hold it, and unclasped its dark arms to let forth the morning again, so

every day is, to them that have an imagination therefor, a resurrection day, and sets forth all these most noble and beauteous features in nature, and symbolizes forever and forever the resurrection of our Master.

Why do we need robes, and why do we need church symbols, when every feature of nature itself is one divinely constituted symbolization, not simply of spiritual truths, but, if well used, of almost every event that occurred in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ? And no other one thing more beautifully symbolizes the resurrection than the silent coming of our day, every morning, from out of the darkness of night, saying to those that have ears to hear, "All hail!"

But of all this there is not one word of detailed description. He waked, he arose, he came forth, he looked abroad, he cast off his grave-clothes, and moved away—though not out of the garden; and yet, all this we must imagine.

Is this history, then, an invention? A thousand hands are busy to-day, to tear away the evidence of its reality, some tracing all the way up through the ages, if peradventure they can find some superstitious monk, or some counterfeiting hand, to show that the Gospel sprang thence. A thousand are scrutinizing the events, and laying one over against another, if peradventure they may find that it was not written by the men who professed to narrate it. Is this history an invention? Did cunning hands form it to impose upon the world? Did superstitious devotees forge the narrative, and then leave the most tempting parts for effect untouched? These omissions, these very neglects to specify the personal experiences of our Lord, are themselves evidences of divinity. The points of ordinary, ardent curiosity are passed by. An inventor would have seized them. They would have been strong points in an invention. But there is a noble negligence in the Gospels which can be explained only on the theory that artless men were telling the truth as it appeared to them, not for a purpose, not even with a philosophical insight into it, but as a simple record of facts of which they or some of their company were eye-witnesses. And there it stands, beautifully simple, and in many respects imperfect—not imperfect in the sense in which that phrase will convey a meaning to your ear, but imperfect in the sense which John means when he says, "If all the words which our Lord spoke, and all the things which he did, were written in a book, I suppose the whole world would not be able to contain it."

We have but a portion, we have but a fragment, of any part of the life of Christ. None of his discourses are fully given. None of his days are fully journalized. None of the great events of his history are entirely made out. It is but a sketch. And since we have but this outline, the beauty of it, the coherence of it, the divinity of it, the power

which it has exerted, and still is exerting in all the world, can scarcely be accounted for on any other ground than that it is true.

It is to be noticed, too, that it was love and fidelity that first found out the resurrection, and that it was not the love of the disciple band—not even of John; but that the deeper and more tender love of woman was the pioneer of discovery. The disciples doubtless held in their hearts the memory of Christ. We may well suppose that theirs was a sleepless night—a night of watching, of prayer and of supplication; but the night and the morning to the women were of tender service. It was still the heart of woman to do. It was still the labor of her hand, if might be, to crown with memorials of tenderest affection, the form from which the life had passed. And of all the women, there is no intimation that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there. But Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Joanna, and other women, were present. They had come laden with ointments for embalming the body. They had no hope to see the eye beam upon them again. They never expected to hear those words from his lips which had thrilled their hearts before. It was a service of disinterested, complete and ever-remembering love, such as women's hearts know best how to cherish and how to express.

They gathered around about the twilight tomb. They came, and oh! surprising was the sight. That massive stone, which defied the lifting of their tender hands, was already rolled away, though on the road they had communed with each other, how they might gain entrance to bestow their pious care upon the body of the Saviour. And on the stone sat the angel. Two there had been—the angel at the head, and the angel at the feet. Francesco Francia of old has represented these two angels most exquisitely—one as the angel of the past, remembering grief, and the other as the angel of the future, only hoping for the time to come. And so one angelic form is sad, and the other is bright and radiant.

The women counted not these things; they felt. They communed, with full alarm and full joy—for both strove within them for expression.

The narrative is as dramatic as words can be made. It came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, entering again into the sepulchre, behold, they saw two young men sitting on the right side, clothed in long, white, shining garments. And they were afraid. And as the women bowed down their faces to the earth, in obeisance—for there was something divine in their appearance—the men answered and said unto them, "Be ye not affrighted, for we know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, that was crucified. Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here. He is risen, as he said." And they remembered his words. And they departed quickly, and fled from the

sepulchre, with fear and great joy. For they trembled and were amazed. Neither said they anything. For they were afraid, and did run to bring his disciples word.

But Christ was yet lingering in the garden. He had not gone forth. He knew that they were coming. He had already, by that divine insight which he had, perceived their coming on, and waited for them. He waits ever more for those who are seeking him, whether it be in the early morning light, or in mid-day. He is ready to receive those who are seeking their peace and their joy through love in him.

It is somewhat significant that he did not go to the great city over against him. There is no evidence that he went to it at all. It was then coming slowly into light. There was nothing in Jerusalem that his heart craved to see again. Galilee was his early home, and it was thither that his thoughts were now moving. And therefore it was that he charged those that first found him to go on toward Galilee.

His first words, of which we shall speak more in a moment, are memorable in this, that he seems, without saying it, to have turned away from Jerusalem, the scene of his trial, of his shame, of his suffering, of his anguish, of his death, and points back again to Galilee, the scene of his fair youth, the sweet remembrances of which doubtless came back to him even in this hour of the morning of the resurrection.

But mark the words:

“As they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail! And they came and held him by his feet and worshipped him. And then said Jesus, Be not afraid!”

All hail! Be not afraid. These may almost be called the voices of the grave. Within the hour of his coming forth, doubtless they had met him. The cool of the rock was yet upon his brow. The sadness of death was yet scarcely cleansed from his eye. He came from death and the grave, saying, “All hail! Be not afraid.”

His was the inspiration of the other world coming through, as a narrow passage, the grave—the rock-grave. He spake in the spirit of the land from which he had come; and to every one that has heard of Jesus, from that day to this, that voice still rings out. His salutation to each one is, “All hail!” and to every one his greeting is, “Be not afraid.” Very God, our Judge yet to be, holding the destiny of every man in his hands, the sovereign Lord and Monarch, yet he meets every one who goes to him, how poor soever he may be, how sinful, how neglected, how outcast; and his greeting is, “All hail to thee!” And to every one that looks up, and is conscious of his greatness, still his greeting is, “Be not afraid.”

But, in the local interpretation of it, going back to the thought that this is the language which first was breathed from Christ's lip as he came forth from the sepulchre, how strange is the interpretation which

it gives to the grave! What does the grave say to you, and to me, and to every one that looks into it? What "hail" has it, as we stand by its side, to look down into its narrow passage? What cheer breathes forth from it? What does it say to us but, "Corruption and Decay?" What does it say but, "I am the end of all glory?" Oh! we go from the clasping and the caress and the kiss to the grave, that has neither kiss nor caress nor clasping. We leave behind us the heart as we go to bury our dead. We cling to them. We look wistfully after them. And as the sad soil beats upon the drumming coffin, with horror in the sound, what says the ground to us, but, "Go back again, earth to earth. All is over and ended?" And yet, what might it say to us, if we were but wise to interpret it. "Here thine eye shall see nothing more, but look up, and look through, and look beyond; for to thine heart there is immortality beyond." The grave is but the shutting of the angel-hand that keeps the treasure, and conveys it safely to the other side. As they that sail over the seas go down into the vessel, and are hid, so the grave is but the resting-place of the dead for a little time—not decay; not loss; not final separation in darkness. No; instructed by these words, the voice should sound out to every one of us, that comes to the grave-side, "All hail!" and as we look again, "Be not afraid." And as we are cheered and comforted, and lift up our heads, the voice is still, again, "Go tell my disciples. Make known to them that which has been joy and peace to you."

And see; this is not only the voice of the grave, but there is in this *hailing* of the disciples, and in this cheer, the interpretation of the truths of Christ Jesus. The very genius of Christianity, as it is afterwards developed in the recorded words of Christ, is contained in this simple greeting of our Master to those that so early sought him. This cordial greeting, this greeting as of blessings—"All hail!"—is the greeting which Christ makes still to the poorest, to the most needy.

For, foremost among those that thus early met him, was Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast so many devils. And whether the ancient legend of the church be true or not, that she had been a woman lost to virtue and restored again, it is very certain that she had been under the dominion of foul demons, and had been restored by the hand of Christ.

This woman was first and foremost in the love of gratitude, as well as the love of common affection. And so she seems to have led all the rest, and to have been first and foremost in seeking for Christ. And to her the voice of the Saviour was a voice of sweet familiarity and of greeting. It was as if he said, "All hail, to thee and to each!" This soothing their fears; this lifting upon them the light of hope; this radiant face of resurrection that they saw; this coming forth from

the dead, not maimed nor crippled, and with no blood curdling in the veins; this at once entering upon the social relation, with "All hail!" and "Be not afraid"—does it not interpret the whole after-spirit and mission of Christian life in this world?

There is in the world a superficial and perishing pleasure of the senses which we are permitted to have. It is good of its kind, and for its uses; although, as compared with better it is poor. And there is nothing in Christianity that frowns upon this. An excessive addiction to it is frowned down; but even philosophy learned to do that.

Christ taught a deeper joy, a soul-regaling joy. He opened the eye to the world everlasting. He taught men to derive their satisfaction, not from things that perish, but from thoughts; from pure emotions; from noble ambitions; from all tender relationships; from a sweet and divine and spiritualized taste. He opened the eye to the world everlasting, coupling this with that, and making them a part one of the other—this but the vestibule; that the temple.

And since then the empire of joy has been extended. It is true that through misinterpreting the spirit of the Master, his suffering has by some, and for periods of time, been made the most significant; but he looks with an uninstructed eye who supposes that the history of Christ, or the peculiar genius of Christianity, is sorrow. In spite of all the symbols that he employed, though he said we must take our cross and follow him, yet by his own disciples, among the apostles, in the early church, and in the words which he himself uttered, it was still taught that the empire of joy was the empire of Christianity; and that it came, to be sure, to make men weep—but tears that should dry up tears, they were; to make men sorrow, only that they may be lifted above sorrow; to make them bear the cross, only that the cross might by-and-by bear them. Christianity was educating and reforming. But it made men suffer—yet only as the surgeon does, who takes them from pain toward sanity; from sickness toward health. And though the medicine be bitter, the bitterness is that the tongue may be cleansed from bitterness. And they are made weak by medicine that they may be made strong, and do without it. And Christ came with tears, came with suffering, and died; but that he might put an end to suffering, and establish joy in all the world. And when he returned to his disciples, after his short sleep in the grave, his first spontaneous, outbursting greeting, was, not that of his own suffering; not that of the weary world which he had re-entered; not that of the awful and affrighting mysteries that might have been imagined in the other life. He came back young, and sweet, and, as it were, vivacious, with "All hail!" upon his lips, and "Be not afraid" cheering them from out of his heart. And since that time, they that have truly known the Lord Jesus Christ

have never ceased to have, from day to day, this sweet greeting. As the morning comes, it is still "All hail!" to those who know how to listen. And in the great and hot noons of summer, when all the air in the great ball above our head trembles as wine in the cup, it is still, from out of that great air above us, "All hail!" And when evening, coming forth, approaches with tenderness, it is still "All hail!" And every day and every year, the voice still sounds, to those that have an ear to hear, and shall to the very end of life, "All hail!" And when death itself shall come to us, still the greeting will be, "All hail!" And as we leave things certain, and venture into things uncertain, still the voice will say, "Be not afraid." For these first words with which Christ came back to his disciples, are words that now sit high in the heaven, and sing forever and forever the notes of the world's joy and of the world's deliverance.

I will not follow further in this line of thought to-day; but there are some points of application which I may well make before I leave you to your own reading and to your own better meditations.

These words of our Master are words which may be called *messages*, to-day. They come to those who are beginning a Christian life with peculiar appropriateness. You are entering upon a life, my dear friends, such of you as have been called to Christ, and have listened to the invitation, and are becoming, in the sight of men, the recognized disciples of the Master—you are entering upon a life which has its trials, its watches, its sufferings. I should scorn to call you to any life not demanding manhood. To be a Christian man requires you to be a full and noble man. You are called to reason. You are called to all the noble variations of moral sensibility. You are called to every depth of affection. You are called to discipline. You are called to enterprise. You are called to all achievement. You are to make yourselves better, nobler, happier, that men may be won to your side. You are to make your companions better. You are to make the world better. Ye that have put your first steps into the royal road have entered upon such a life as this. And to you the word of the Lord comes this morning, "All hail! Be not afraid." He that has called you will walk with you. He that has begun the work in you will complete that work in you. Be not afraid of temptations, that they will be mightier than your faith. With every temptation he will open a door of escape. Be not afraid that men shall harm you. If God be for you, who can be against you? You are created by him. He has suffered for you. He has lain entombed. He came forth, perfected by suffering, to be the Captain of your salvation. And in the earliest experiences of your Christian life, he says, "All hail! Enter. Live on. Be not afraid. Because I live, ye shall live also."

And to those that are far along in the Christian experience this voice sounds out, likewise. To you Christ still says, looking upon all that remains of your mortal life, looking upon the uncertainties which many of you feel, looking upon the many difficulties which you are now wrestling with, looking upon providences which you cannot scan or interpret, looking at the mysteries which hang over your life—Christ still says to you, “Be not afraid!”

This morning, full of memories of his resurrection, is full, also, of suggestions and pledges of his faithfulness to you. Since you have proved him in days past; since his word to you has been “Yea and Amen;” since he has never broken a promise; since he has done exceeding abundantly more for you than you could ask or think, how full and emphatic to you should be this greeting of your Saviour!

And to you who are out of Christ; to you who have looked wistfully, to you who have felt yourselves unworthy to speak his name, if he could look upon you, with majesty and love in his gaze, he would gently beckon to you, and say to you, “All hail!”

To you who have never loved him; to you who have done him despite; to you who have set at naught the instruction of your childhood; to you who have by a thousand judgments and warnings been often and often adjured to remember your own souls, and your God, he still would say, “All hail!” And if you turned with penitent heart to him, with open arms he would receive you, and say, as you lingered and looked wistfully, “Be not afraid.” Oh! that there were in us to-day this heart of confidence and boldness, that we might venture boldly upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and *be not afraid!*

Once more. That which was true of our Master, and that which is true of us, and will be as long as we live, we shall find to be true in the life which is to come. We soon shall pass the allotted bound. We, too, must lie down in the grave. We must go forth into a life unknown, after so much that is known. A pathless path we must tread; companionless go among the infinite hosts of the spirit land, alone, surrounded by millions; go as though never taught to make proof of the first elements of experience there. And who shall bear us up? Who shall stand by us in dying? Who shall teach our thoughts to be strong, and our hearts to be brave? And when flesh and heart shall fail, who shall be our salvation?

Dying, the voice shall still be to us, “All hail!” And when, bewildered, in the valley and the shadow of death, we seem almost to stumble, the rod and the staff shall be brought to our hand, to hold us up. And the voice shall still guide us, “Be not afraid.”

And upon the other side, when these eyes shall open again, and these hearts, chilled in death, begin once more to beat, then the first

words of greeting, oh mother! shall not be from your child; oh husband! shall not be from your wife; but Jesus shall meet us, and say, in the early morning of the eternal world, "All hail!" And, trembling, lost, uncertain, we shall be clasped in his arms, while he shall say, "Be not afraid."

And then, as if the seas had broke forth, and as if all the heavens were but one mighty music-band, the angels of God shall acclaim us ransomed, and bring us where death shall have no more dominion over us forever and forever!

To the faith and the love of this ascended Saviour, I commend your souls.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Father, thou hast made us to need thee, and thou hast blessed us with the knowledge that thou dost need us. Thou hast spoken by thy Son, and thou hast made known to us that he loves his own, and loves them unto the end, craving for them, that where he is, they may be also. Thou givest interpretation to meanings of our own hearts. Our inarticulate yearnings, the longings which come, we know not whence, and point we knew not whither until by the Holy Spirit we were enlightened; the prayers uttered through us by the Spirit; the groanings for us which cannot be uttered—all these teach us of God's work, and of his wonderful way toward men. What we are we know not. We find our forces less than all the agencies around about us. We are filled sometimes with admiration, and oftener with pity, and sometimes with contempt for ourselves and our fellow men. In the great aims of life; amidst all its strivings, and supersessions, and treacheries and deceits; in its cruelties, and cryings therefor; in all the great round of fears, and rivalries, and excitements, wherein men are lifted up and measured, and cast down as in a moment, if we look forth into the boiling tumult of human life, to behold what man is, measured by time, how poor a thing is he! How weak and worthless is life! A dream; and a dream mostly filled with nightmare. But if we look at thine heart, and at all the way of manifestation which thou didst make upon earth, there is something more to man than that which is revealed here. This is but the first summer, and not the blossom-bearing summer. There is another life; there is a higher realm; there are other developments. He is worth more than he seems to be. His weakness is not the index of what his nature is. Thou hast reserved him for a higher sphere; and all the outgoings toward him of thy nature, and thy thoughts, and all thine acts, do interpret him to be of a stature worthy to be called a son of God. And it is in this future enlargement, it is in the fact that we carry the germ of immortality, and that we are not known now even to ourselves nor to one another, but that we are walking disguisedly, and that we are better than our best, and that there is more in weakness than might can understand, and that we are to rise far above the power of sublunary things, and stand redeemed from every trace and taint of sin and weakness—it is in this that we have joy, and it is in this that we glory. For, if we sleep forever when we sleep, we are of all beings most miserable. And if, with such a height of expectation, with susceptibilities so acute and so wide, we are to be quenched as the taper is, and to go out in darkness, life is not worth having, so little is that which we have in life. It is the beyond, that we long for. It is the right to be ourselves in all the largeness of a true and royal nature. It is that we may become like unto thee. It is the hope of that blessed society in heaven which makes life tolerable. And we rejoice that we are not left dimly to guess; that our pulse is not left to beat feebly with pulseless expectation. Thou hast spoken it, and the words have come to our ears and to our hearts, and we believe it—that *because thou livest we shall live also*. Thou hast ascended up from on earth. Here thou didst walk and speak the words of eternal life. Here thou didst hold forth thy heart of love, and thou didst cheer us in all the way of life. Now thou art waiting behind the screen. It is but a veil. Only these mortal bodies hide between us and thee. Ere long they will be taken down, and then we shall see thee as thou art, and shall be like thee. Oh! with what greetings shall we be received! How blessed it will be when we rise to meet thee in the other land! But now we are exiled children, away from home, taught in school afar off, and awaiting the summons of blessed affection. Yet we desire, oh Lord our God! during all the time in which we are tabernacled in the flesh, to walk by the faith of the Son of God; to have no idol, and no other God but thee. We desire to cling fast to thy words and to thy love. For if we are with thee, nothing can harm us.

And we pray that thou wilt grant that thy people may be augmented. We thank thee that so many know the hidden glory of thy Spirit; that so many know the secret of divine love; that so many have walked by faith, as seeing Him who is invisible.

We are gathered together, this morning, to celebrate again, to renew all our thoughts and all our sensibilities in view of thy resurrection, and thy rejoicing life. Come forth again the flower of the world, the light of time, the blessedness of the universe, the hope of eternity. Thee we hail this morning, and we acclaim thy name. We rejoice in thee. We rejoice in thy power, which not only brought thee again from darkness and death, but is bringing us forth from darkness and death. And now we beseech of thee that we may with all our hearts renew our life and our service to thee, and cling to thee only, so long as we live.

We pray for thy blessing upon our households. May a new light come with the Sabbath day. If there are any who have not been wont, with their households, to seek thee from day to day in prayer, may this be the day of all the year in which they shall come before thee, and establish in their households the daily prayer. Rise upon them with a more blessed resurrection even than that which is recorded in history. Bring home thine own self to them, and stand in the midst of every family, and say to them, *All hail!*

And grant, we beseech of thee, thy blessing to rest upon any that are wandering. Restore them. Clear the sight of those that see a little, but do not see distinctly, that they may have a guide on the way of purity and truth and love. Reclaim those who are gone astray. We pray for the outcast and the neglected. We pray for the ignorant and the uninstructed. May there be many that shall be filled with that suffering love of Christ which shall go forth to seek and save the lost, and have them restored.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless bountifully, this day, the assemblies of thy people which are gathered together in joy to worship thee. And may thy servants that speak be prepared to speak the very truth of God. May there be those that shall go forth with the light and knowledge of Christ unto all the nations of the earth.

O Lord! let thy promises at last hasten. Long, long have the predictions waited. At last let the morning dawn, and the night flee away, and all the joy of the earth be consummated.

And to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, shall be praises ever more. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, how shall we ever thank thee in mortal language for that gift of nature and of grace for which the world waited long—the gift of thy Son, Jesus Christ—a blessed gift. Oh, Purity of heaven come to earth! oh, Gladness of love made known to men! oh, Grace of truth and justice, yet not acerb! oh, Joy, yet not sensuous and impure! oh, Blessedness of God, and Hope of man! let others leave thee, we will not, if thou wilt not leave us. Since the day our souls heard thy call to us, we have loved thee, and through thee have learned to love the Father and the Spirit. But thou art nearest to us, and most comprehensible to us, and art personally concerned in us, and all thy thoughts are around about us, and we are drawn to thee with irresistible attraction. We would be better. We would have thy friendship purifying us. We would be redeemed from the weakness of the flesh, and from the power of temptation, by the majesty of thy victorious love. And since thou art willing, we are willing. We rejoice that

thou takest us in all our defilements, and all our imperfections, and art teaching us how to be tender, and how to be forgiving, and how to be magnanimous toward those who are unworthy of the greatness of thy love and magnanimity toward us. Oh! what despite hast thou suffered at our hands! Oh! what long tolerance has thine infinite purity had! Oh! how gentle and gracious has thy sparing mercy been! So blunted have we become, that we do not appreciate the way of grace with us from day to day, and through all our life; and yet, it has been through thy goodness.

And now, O Lord Jesus! we will not leave thee nor forsake thee. We will not let doubts drive us from thee. We will not suffer any cunningly devised philosophy to drive us from thee. We will not suffer the world, nor the pleasures thereof, to seduce us from thee. Hold us fast. Do not let us go till the day break—nor then. Hold us fast while we live, and, by living, bring us unto that greater love, and that greater joy, and that greeting of the morning when the shades have fled away and the singing birds shall be far behind us, and the rolling time shall no longer be heard, and no storm shall be felt or dreaded; in that sweet morning of everlasting peace, when thou shalt receive us with *All hail!* to heaven. And then we shall see thee as thou art. In amplitude, in transcendent glory, in ineffable love, we shall behold thee. And as those that are around about thee sing forth their everlasting joy, we, too, caught in the sympathy, will praise thee, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

VII.

NIGHT AND DARKNESS.

NIGHT AND DARKNESS.

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”—EPH. v., 11.

The term *fruit—unfruit*—is not uncommon in Scripture usage. The origin of it is very obvious. That which the tree produces, or brings forth—its fruit—is very naturally transferred to that which a man develops in the form of conduct; and that is called “fruit.” “The fruit of the Spirit” is said to be “love,” “joy,” “peace,” and what not. And things that are *unfruitful*, by contrary, are worthless. “The unfruitful works of darkness” are such works, or disclosures, as are without profit; without juice, as it were; without benefit, sustenance, goodness.

“The works of darkness”—this is the phrase for which I have selected the passage; for I wish to-night to speak on the subject of Night and Darkness. “Have no fellowship with the works of darkness.”

Light and *dark* are employed in the word of God to signify good and evil; and, again, sin and obedience, virtue and vice, right and wrong. They have passed so perfectly into usage that “darkness” is considered as equivalent to sin, and “light” is considered as equivalent to virtue, without any figure. Not only so, but comprehensively viewed, in Scripture the whole realm of evil is called a kingdom. All that proceeds from men’s passions and appetites is considered as a kingdom; and those people that do evil are the inhabitants of the kingdom. So Satan is called “the ruler of the darkness of this world,” because he is the ruler of bad men. And so, on the other hand, there are the “kingdom of light,” and the “household of light,” and the “children of light.” Therefore we are commanded to *let our light shine*; as if it had been said, “Let your virtues shine.” It was not necessary to make an interpretation even.

The context carries this figure out in a variety of ways. “Ye were sometimes darkness”—that is, Ye were sometimes *wicked*—“but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light,” “and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove

them ; for it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light ; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Why did such a use of terms come into play ? Was it accidental ? Did it merely happen so ? And then, having received a start, was it copied, so that at last it becomes common usage ? For it is not peculiar to either Scripture language or to our own. Neither have we borrowed it from Scripture alone. It belongs to all languages ; and, as far as it can be traced, it is peculiar to all nations from their very earliest days. It may be said that as far as literature interprets human habits, the race has been accustomed, from its earliest infancy, in all languages, and under all circumstances, to regard darkness as the equivalent of misconduct, and light as the equivalent of right conduct ; so that if there is any such thing as a natural term, those are natural terms. Light and virtue, and darkness and wickedness, are convertible terms, the world over, and through all time.

How, then, did it happen ? Was this a grand chance, or is there some connection between these things ? Is darkness congenial to wickedness, and productive of wickedness, more than light is ? Do men sin easier, more, worse, in darkness than in light ? Is there any natural principle involved here ? Yes—most certainly, yes.

Let us look at the normal uses of darkness and of night. It is very difficult to say much about them. It is difficult to say anything about creation. It is difficult to say why it is as it is. The moment you begin to ask why, there is no end to it. You might say, "Why are men created to average five feet ten, or eight ? Why are they not made twenty feet ? There is no end to *whys* in the matter of creation.

Why it is that full one-third of one's time is for death ; why it is that of every twenty-four hours there are eight hours of substantial death, no man can say ; but so it is. It takes eight hours to wind up the watch—that is, man. And experience teaches us that during that time of sleep darkness is beneficial—chiefly in this regard, that it puts everything to stillness ; that it withdraws excitement ; that it leaves the whole physical system, and the whole nervous system, quiescent ; that it leaves it in just the state in which the peculiar function of assimilation which goes on during wholesome sleep, finds its most auspicious circumstances. Darkness, to this extent, therefore, is a benefit. It is medicinal, in that it withdraws excitement, and gives full opportunity for rest, and for that recuperation which comes by rest. This is what it was designed for, in the economy of providence.

But in undue continuance, darkness is depressing to the physical

state. The amount of knowledge now collected on this subject is such as to leave it without a question. Outside of its normal uses, and beyond a certain extent, darkness is unhealthy. Men are not strong and wholesome who live from day to day in darkness, and work in darkness. Men that dwell in unventilated and unlighted dwellings, are never robust, and never have that peculiar stamina coming from light.

It is with trees just as it is with men. A forest-grown tree; a tree that is not sound from top to bottom; a tree that has not grown, and become seasoned, as it were, in the sun, is never so tough, is never so elastic, is never such good timber, as a pasture-grown tree.

Pasture-grown oak brings a higher price in the Navy Yards because it is stronger and more enduring for being grown in the sunlight. And what is true of timber, is just as true of men. Sunlight men, who have lived in the sun, are sturdier than men who are deprived of the sunlight. And statistics show that men who live in north rooms, in rooms facing the north, in any street, are more addicted to illness than men who live in rooms facing in the other direction. It seems as though this was carrying things too far. Not at all. Statistics show that among men in unsunned quarters of barracks or hospitals, there is some twenty per cent. more mortality than in quarters where the sun rests the greater part of the day. The fact is, the best medicine in the world is sunlight. The best doctor is the sun; and he does not charge anything for giving the medicine either. There is nothing better for health than the sun. And there is nothing worse for health than the want of the sun.

So that if you look at it purely as a physical question, you find that there is a reason why light should be assimilated to virtue. It produces health of body, just as virtue produces health of mind. And darkness, on the other hand, like sin, aggravates disease, depresses the vital functions, and retards recovery. There is a certain analogy in these things; and there is a reason in their very physical operation why these terms should be used as they are.

But there are other very important results of a moral kind connected with darkness, and therefore with night which is the kingdom of darkness. It is capable of producing even more depressing effects upon the moral nature than on the physical. The dangerous passions of men are held in check mainly by those elements which exist strongly and most generally in publicity. Fear, shame, self-respect, and self-interest—these four elements check our basilar nature. For, at the bottom, we are animals. And how to keep the animal under; how to restrain it within its service-bounds; how to prevent its riding; how to keep back cruelty, and cunning, and all forms of passion, and all

gross and sensual appetites—how to do this, is the work of civilization. It is the teaching of time.

Fear is a powerful repellent of temptation, a powerful restraint; and with many natures it is the only one. As we go down on the scale, fear becomes more operative; and as we go up on the scale, and as civilization and moral culture increase, fear becomes less and less operative, and less and less heeded. But in regard to the great mass of men, anything that breaks the realm of fear is unsalutary and dangerous, because it takes off one of the hoops that hold the barrel together in which the evil spirits are confined.

Shame, too, is a thing of publicity. There could be no shame if there was no ear to hear; if there was no eye to see; if there was no other mind to know. For shame is a sense or feeling produced in the soul of a man by the consciousness of other people's opinions of him. And this, in its very nature, requires disclosure, development. And any circumstances which should prevent exposure and development, would remove the tendency to shame.

Self-respect is very largely dependent, also, upon the opinions of others—though not so much as is shame. Self-interest, too, is largely dependent upon the opinions of men. Our prosperity, our standing, depends upon men's thoughts of us, to a very great extent. Certainly this is so with the lower class of men; that is, uneducated and undeveloped men.

Now, darkness tends to relieve men from the pressure of all these restraints. In darkness men can hide; and therefore they are not afraid that they will be detected. No man can reel in the street by day and not be seen. At night he can—or he thinks he can, if he cannot. Men cannot do works of wickedness by day, openly, without being known, and being put to shame; but at night they can—they think they can. That is the time for concealment, when the sun hides, and virtuous men go to sleep. At night, when good men and all responsibility are within doors, then out of doors bad men ramp and riot. Now comes the kingdom of darkness. Now they have their chance. All day they have been afraid; all day their interests would not let them out; but as the sun has gone down, and is out of the way, and the children of light are out of the way with it, they mean to hold carnival. And they do. And night is found to be a time peculiar in this regard, that it sets loose the lower passions of men, and tends to do it, and has a powerful tendency to do it. There is a permission of wickedness in the night that there is not in the day. There is not only the provocative to wrong doing, but there is a guard, a conservative influence, thrown around about it at night, that is not thrown about it in the exposing hours of noon-day.

Night and darkness suspend men's labors, and give them release, so that they are able to congregate. And this, joined to the foregoing consideration, shows why wickedness multiplies itself so fearfully at night. During the day, industries are being carried on, and thousands of men are earning their daily pittance in the shop. And work is a great benefit. Men, while at work, are orderly. They are being wholesomely drilled. Their energies are concentrated on useful purposes. But at night all their energies are diverted from these legitimate channels, and are apt to be concentrated upon their self-indulgence. For men that toil, particularly men that live by toil, and are in some degree of circumscription and limitation of means, feel as though they had a right at night to pay themselves for what they have gone through during the day. They have worked hard; they have been temperate and under others' control; and at night they say, "Nobody is our master now. We have eaten our plain fare, and performed our hard work; and now we will pay ourselves for it. Men have strong tendencies at night to react from regular and virtuous method into license; and as they have the liberty of congregation, as they go out and gather together in their places of resort, whether they are vicious or virtuous, they form a public sentiment among themselves, and uphold each other. Men in hundreds indulge in language that they do not when they are alone or in mixed society. They indulge in practices which would seem loose and unvirtuous to them if they were in promiscuous assemblies. Men herd together, the good with the good, and the bad with the bad; and night is the time for bad men to come together, not only because they are shielded, but because they are released, and have liberty of congregation.

As a general thing, under such circumstances, the bad men in a community are more influential at night, and in the circumstances which night produces, than good men. There are certain situations in which good men are by far more influential than bad men; but they are usually exigencies. They are usually times in which the public sentiment calls for the exhibition of nobler and more manly traits. But the moment you step aside, the moment you step into the crevices of life, and into the abnormal ways of life, bad men rule it over good men. In a crowd of routs, a simple, plain, truth-speaking, moderate-tongued man is nothing. He is negatived. It is the violent, the noisy, the impudent man that there carries the day. At night, where men are gathered together in disreputable places, they that are the worst are apt to be the most influential, and to lead the rest. They give tone to the society, curreney to its maxims, and stimulus to its temptations.

And therefore it is said, I think, in the next chapter of this very book, "We wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but against prin-

cipalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world." In this world they are "the rulers of darkness" that are the bad men; and there is, as it were, a great prince of darkness that rules over all darkness, and all bad men that are bred in darkness.

There is a curious phenomenon of moral change in society. Every twelve hours, if we will watch the thermometer, we shall find that the temperature of the day regularly changes, rising in the day-time, and going down at night. Taking the year through, that is the normal condition or range of the thermometer. And there is an analogy or parallel to it in moral temperature. We shall find that the virtue and the moral feelings ascend upon the scale in the day-time, and descend on the scale at night.

If you could interpret the sight or the thought of the guardian angels of these two great cities, how different would be their experience during the day from their experience during the night! As they hang poised over the great out-lying Babylon all day, they see in the main, useful industries. They see some violence; they see much craft; they see strifes of selfishness and rivalries of ambition and of pride, to be sure; and for the most part the sins that they see are of this class. But when the sun goes down, and sheeted darkness comes upon the face of the city, how does the whole aspect change! How does the great caldron begin to seethe and bubble with another class of sins! Now how does drunkenness, how does lewdness, how do all the crimes of treachery, pelf, sneaking theft, and burglaries, begin to come forth! And the angel, looking on the sight, sees a spectacle of lower life. The whole temperature is gone down. The kind of deed is changed. And as at night heat disappears with the light, and the temperature sinks physically, so in the community the moral temperature goes down at night.

So much for the effects of darkness and of night. Now for some applications. And at the outset let me make some milder ones.

1. It is a very desirable thing (and this for those whom it may concern; for those that are beginning life)—it is a very desirable thing to begin life with nature, and run parallel to nature. For a man's strength is in the proportion in which he runs parallel with great natural laws, and with God's great providence. He is strong, he goes fast, who goes in the Gulf-stream; and he sails slow who sails against it. And great natural laws are streams that expedite men.

As a general thing, men can control their time; and the time for study and for work is the day; while the time for social recreation and rest is at night. The general rule, though there may be occasional exceptions to it, for every young man and every young maiden entering life, is, *Do your work in the day time.* Do not turn yourself into a stu-

dent at night. The practice has some charms, because we read in history and in literature about the *midnight oil*. The worst oil that a man ever burnt was midnight oil. It wastes society. It not only induces artificial excitement during that late hour just preceding sleep, which makes sleep less wholesome and less nutritive, but in every way deranges a man's habit. If a minister studies late Saturday night, or if he works late at night during all the week, you may be perfectly sure that he cannot be a robust wholesome man all round. I can detect the tendencies induced by habitual night-work. And, although the night, when everything is still, is the only working time for hard-run professional men, frequently, yet working at night is always pernicious, and should never be resorted to except as a choice between evils, even under such circumstances.

I think the judgments formed at night are never so solid and fresh as judgments formed in the morning. If in the morning a man is without clarity, if he is despondent, if he is dull, if he is unnerved, you may be sure that he is living wrong. For the order of nature is, that a man should rise from his bed in the morning as birds rise, singing, and in perfect health. A man rises buoyant, and has his best hours in the early day. For although perhaps the fancy may not be so brilliant in the early day, the judgment is better. The conclusions and determinations which a man forms in the early day, are apt to be sounder and safer than those which he forms at night. Fancy for the night; judgment for the day. And I would say to every young person whom it concerns, Form, if it is a possible thing, the habit of doing your study in the day time, and reserve your nights for lighter tasks, and keep early hours with your bed. You do not profit, (I do not care who your exemplar is,) by departing from the great influences and laws of nature. There is many and many a man that wears out prematurely, because, without one single unvirtuous or vicious habit, he grinds his life out by night-work.

2. I protest against the use of night for social pleasures, to the extent which, in cities and in fashionable circles especially, it is prostituted. Pleasures, even within moral bounds, are not wholesome in the untimely hours of night. The turning of night into day, the creation of artificial lights; the use of the day again, amidst all its glare and din of excitements, for sleep—these things are not wholesome. They are not wholesome either to the body or to the soul.

Men laugh at the old fashioned New England custom of going out to tea at four o'clock in the afternoon, getting home again at seven in the evening, and going to bed at nine; but the men that that custom made were not to be laughed at. The men that are wearing out are city men. It seldom happens that city men breed strong men.

For, the city, like the grindstone, takes off the edge and the very steel from the sword. And the country has to send in its new men all the time. No city could perpetuate its power and maintain its influence, if it were not for the continual recuperation of its populations by the transmission of country-bred men, who have kept right hours and observed wholesome natural laws. They come in to make up for the waste and the consumption that arise from city practices.

Now, it is not wrong in the same sense that burglary is wrong, for a person to go to entertainments at ten o'clock at night; but it is wrong. At ten o'clock the festival begins, and by twelve or one o'clock it is at its height. And then comes the infernal feeding. And all men at night are pigs. At any rate, my observation of the bibulous and gustatory habits of men away from home, with curious viands, is such that I cannot but feel that the lower nature gets the ascendancy.

Have you ever seen men on a steamboat, where the table was spread, stand around the door ready to make a plunge and a rush for the table the moment an opportunity was given? Have you seen how men at parties take pains to get the most favorable situations at the table? Have you seen how men stretch and lean over in order that they may fare the best? Men, too, that are well fed at home, and that do not seem to need any special feeding—have you seen how they gormandize, how they stuff and fill, and forget everything but to eat, and eat, right and left, and eat something of everything—and this at twelve or one o'clock at night? And good men they are—deacons, elders, class-leaders, ministers—all good men! But when a man leaves his home at ten o'clock at night to go out for amusement, and takes his second supper, at one or two o'clock, what would you expect of him but that he should make everything consistent, and the whole abominable mess a violation of natural law? And in the world of fashion they keep this unnatural excitement up to most absurd extents.

By two, or three, or four o'clock they begin to go home; and then they retire. About the time they ought to get up they go to bed. Now comes the restless sleep of the forenoon. And then, about ten or eleven o'clock, dreary, and headachy, and desponding, they get up most dolefully to talk about their enjoyments!

The old fables say that there were creatures—salamanders—that could live in the fire. I believe it. For I have seen persons—men and women—that lived in a round of parties nearly every night for ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years, until they were perfectly drained, perfectly used up, and had to go to Saratoga or Newport to get over pleasure. They had enjoyed themselves so much that they were all run down. Their energies were all wasted. Their vitality was

all gone. Their nerves were unstrung. Their digestion was impaired. Their whole system was marked for disease.

And consider what a disreputable thing this is. Consider what a use it is of one's refinement, civilization, wealth, social position, to make them the instruments for destroying his body, ruining his nerves, taxing and racking and draining his system, and going on every single winter in this preposterous conversion of night into day, and day into night. Talk about a thief being wicked—a man that is habitually practicing such violence, although he does not sin against society, sins against the laws of God in his own body, and will have a day-of-judgment account to give for it. It is an abomination before God, and ought to be an abomination before every decent person.

There have been, in this congregation, many who have sinned in this way unwittingly. I have not been faithful to my duty in this matter. I ought to have told you these things before. But if, after this, the young people of this church carry sitting up at parties to the excess of which I have spoken, I do not mean that it shall be because they are ignorant of what I think about it. I want them to understand distinctly that I regard it as a gross violation. These dancings and feastings and fooleries at night, besides being wicked on the ground of the waste of time, are utterly unpardonable as being a sin against health, and against the great functions of life for which you were created of God. Did he create you to be a thistle-down? Were you born to be butterflies? Were you made to be mere triflers? Is there nothing for yourself, nothing for mankind, nothing for the glory of God, that is to try and task your energies in this life? If you are so using yourselves, or prostituting yourselves, as to turn day into night, and night into day, there will be a burning account for you to render by-and-by. There is many and many a dissipated one that will suffer retribution not only for indulgence in disallowable things, but for indulgence in allowable things in disallowable hours.

I can say these things, when some others could not, because I am known, and want to be known, as a friend of liberty, and a friend of pleasure. I rebuke the young who would turn monks. I do not believe in solitude. I do not believe in melancholy. I believe in gayety and joyousness. And I believe that the closer a man keeps to the laws of nature, the happier he will be, and ought to be. Therefore, being on the side of liberty, though not on the side of license, being on the side of wholesome, manly pleasures, and freedom in the indulgence of them, I stand, and have authority to stand, and say, When you pervert nature in this way, it is utterly wicked and utterly abominable.

3. There is another application which, although partial, is of great range and of supreme importance, addressing itself to doctors, to

guardians, and to parents, chiefly. I refer to the practice of allowing children to go out at night into the streets, if in cities; or, if in the country, allowing children to find their companions at night, and their pleasures at night, away from parental inspection. If I wanted to make the destruction of a child sure, I would give him unwatched liberty after dark. You cannot do a thing that will be so nearly a guarantee of a child's damnation as to let him have the liberty of the city, or the liberty of the town, after nightfall, without your inspection, or the inspection of some person who has the right to govern his conduct. It is invariably true that under such circumstances children will fall under the influence and dominion of persons that will taint their blood; that will taint their imagination; that will untie the bonds of all equitable and just authority; that will make them deceitful, and lead them to seek their pleasures clandestinely. And before you know it, they will be specked, and often rotten to the core.

I do not like to sow the seeds of suspicion in the minds of parents about their children; but there are thousands and thousands of parents in these cities who think, who *know*, that their children "never lie"; and yet their tongue is like a bended bow. They think their children never drink; but there is not a fashionable saloon within a mile of their homes, that the boys are not perfectly familiar with. They think their children never do unvirtuous things; and yet they reek with unvirtue. There are many young men who, when they return to their father's house, are supposed to have been making visits to this or that person. It is a mere guise.

The practice of allowing children to go out at night to find their own companions, and their own places of amusement, may leave one in twenty unscathed, and without danger; but I think that nineteen out of twenty fall down wounded or destroyed. And if there is one thing that should be more imperative than another, it is that your children shall be at home at night; or that, if they are abroad, you shall be abroad with them. There may be things that it is best that you should do for your children, though you would not do them for yourselves; but they ought not to go anywhere at night, to see sights, or to take pleasure, unless you can go with them, until they are grown to man's estate, and their habits are formed. And nothing is more certain than that to grant the child liberty to go outside of the parental roof and its restraints in the darkness of night, is bad, and only bad, and that continually.

Do not suppose that a child is hurt only when he is broken down. I have quite a taste in china cups, and such things. I like a beautiful cup. And I have noticed that when the handle gets knocked off from a cup of mine, that cup is spoiled for me. When I look at it

afterwards I never see the beauty, but always see the broken handle. If I have a beautiful mirror, and it is cracked, it may still answer all the purposes that I want a mirror for, to reveal my beauty; but nevertheless it is spoiled for my eye. There is that crack, and when I look into the glass I never see myself half so much as I see the crack. Its perfectness is gone. In the matter of beauty, a speck or a blemish is more than all besides, and takes away the pleasure of all besides. And it does not require that a child should be broken down, to be made useless by his exposures to temptation. I aver that there are many things which no man can learn without being damaged by them all his life long. There are many thoughts which ought never to find a passage through a man's brain. As an eel, if he were to wiggle across your carpet, would leave a slime which no brush could take off; so there are many things which no person can know, and ever recover from the knowledge of.

There are minions of Satan that go around with hidden pictures and books under the lappets of their coat, showing them to the young, with glozing, lustful, hideous, infernal scenes represented, which once to have seen is to remember, as if they were burned in with the fire of hell. And I do not believe there is a man in my hearing who will not bear testimony, if he ever heard a salacious song, where wickedness and nastiness were sheathed in wit, that he regrets to-day, and will regret to the day of his death, that he ever heard it. There are men that have turned from wickedness who look back with unflinching mortification and regret upon the fact that certain things have happened, and that they know certain things.

I do not believe in bringing up the young to *know life*, as it is said. I should just as soon think of bringing up a child by cutting some of the cords of his body, and lacerating his nerves, and scarring and tattooing him, and making an Indian of him outright, as an element of beauty,—as I should think of developing his manhood by bringing him up to *see life*—to see its abominable lusts; to see its hideous incarnations of wit; to see its infernal wickedness; to see its extravagant and degrading scenes; to see its miserable carnalities; to see its imaginations set on fire of hell; to see all those temptations and delusions which lead to perdition. Nobody gets over the sight of these things. They who see them always carry scars. They are *burned*. And though they live, they live as men that have been burned. The scar remains. And to let the young go out where the glozing courtesan appears; to let them go where the lustful frequenter of dens of iniquity can come within their reach; to let them go where the young gather together to cheer with bad wit; to let them go where they will be exposed to such temptations—why, a parent is insane that will do it. To say, “A

child must be hardened; he has got to get tough somehow, and you may as well put him in the vat, and let him tan"—is that family education? Is that Christian nurture? Is that *bringing a child up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?*

I thank God for two things—yes, for a thousand; but for two among many: first, that I was born and bred in the country, of parents that gave me a sound constitution and a noble example. I never can pay back what I got from my parents. If I were to raise a monument of gold higher than heaven, it would be no expression of the debt of gratitude which I owe to them, for that which they unceasingly gave, by the heritage of their body and the heritage of their souls, to me. And next to that, I am thankful that I was brought up in circumstances where I never became acquainted with wickedness. I know a great deal about it; for if I hear a man say A, I know the whole alphabet of that man's life, by which I can imagine all the rest. If I see a single limb, I have the physiologist's talent by which I know the whole structure. But I never became acquainted with wickedness when I was young, by coming in contact with it. I never was sullied in act, nor in thought, nor in feeling, when I was young. I grew up as pure as a woman. And I cannot express to God the thanks which I owe to my mother, and to my father, and to the great household of sisters and brothers among whom I lived. And the secondary knowledge of these wicked things which I have gained in later life in a professional way, I gained under such guards that it was not harmful to me.

If you have children, bring them up purely. Bring them up with sensitive delicacy. Bring them up so that they shall not know the wickedness that is known, unfortunately, by the greatest number of men.

And if there are children that are sometimes impatient of parental restraint, let me say to them, You do not know what temptation you are under; and if, held back by your mother, if, held back by your father, you shall escape the knowledge of the wickedness that is in the world, you will have occasion, by-and-by, to thank God for that, more than for silver, or for gold, or for houses, or for lands.

Keep your children at home nights. Oh! there is many a sod that lies over the child whose downfall began by vagrancy at night; and there is many a child whose heart-breaking parents would give the world if the sod did lie over them. And oh! what a state that is for children to come to, in which the father and the mother dread their life unspeakably more than their death! What a horrible state of things that is, where parents feel a sense of relief in the dying of their children! Take care of your children at night.

4. As night and darkness are so full of mischief, so in every sanita-

ry work that we undertake in life, we ought to act on these great and acknowledged truths. Broad streets, clean above and below, with an abundance of light, and a judicious police, will do more toward repressing vice (though not toward promoting virtue) in cities, than all the benevolent associations and churches put together. It would be impossible for all the churches in the world to reform against the influence of night.

Therefore, while we preach the Gospel, and while we attempt to reclaim the vicious and the wicked by means of reformatory associations, we ought to join in the application of those great physical laws which interpret life, and explain to us that darkness and circumscription are inevitably full of temptations which common men are not able to rise up against and resist.

Broad open streets, where secrecy is impossible, are of the first importance. Let there be light enough. It is the worst economy in the world to light a city as some of the streets in this city are lighted. I wish the Alderman of the First Ward were in my congregation. I would ask him to go through some of these streets—for instance Pineapple street, from Hicks to Columbia—and see what a light there is there. There is but one lamp for all that distance, so far as I can see, and darkness reigns well nigh supreme. And in going through the city I have seen many such unlighted streets. If a street is narrow and out of the way, it seems to be thought not worth while to waste gas on it. It is worth while. Every time you multiply gas posts, you save the need of schools and churches. It is lighting these streets, it is taking darkness out of them, that diminishes temptations. And all over the city, not simply as a sanitary measure, but as a moral measure, there ought to be provision made for abundant air and cleanliness and light. Then, with the good example of virtuous men, with the preaching of the Gospel, and with all the agencies of industry, the populations of our cities might be healthy, moral and Christian. But we shall never Christianize cities till we know how to apply natural law and material law in connection with the power of moral influences and the *stimuli* of moral example.

These words which I speak to-night are not simply for those whom they may concern, but for all the teachers of the community. Doctors are ordained to teach men the laws of health. They know better than any others, perhaps, how much morality carries health, and how much immorality carries sickness. And it is for them to teach sanitary measures, and anticipate temptations and sickness. The duty of educators is not simply to teach the text of the books. Their duty is to bring up the young to virtue and honor and immortality; and this duty ought to be imposed upon them. And ministers and philanthropists

also have a duty in this matter. I take to myself blame for not having spoken on this subject before. I know not why I have not. It slipped my thought until circumstances lately brought it to me. But now I bear my testimony. I have examined before you the conditions of bodily health, and pointed out the sources of temptation. And it is the duty of ministers to raise their voices on such subjects. It is their duty not any less to preach dogma and doctrine—there is a time for everything, and so there is for dogma and doctrine; but they ought also to preach the application of these great sanitary laws and their great moral influences to the people.

If all the churches would contrive to make perpetual Lent the year round, I am sure that virtue would flourish and religion would revive in all the members of the churches, and in all the members of the congregations; and we should hear ministers preach—and the public sentiment would corroborate it—that the day is the time for work, and the night is the time for rest. Night for home; or, if it is to be used for purposes of social enjoyment, then it should be used with regard to timely hours. And no man ought to see the middle of the night out of his bed, unless he is called out by works of necessity or of morality. A man should violate Sunday quicker than the twelve o'clock hour. It is well to be in bed at ten o'clock. If our nights could be shortened at one end, and lengthened at the other, it would be better for us. Get up early. Breakfast early. Work early. Use the day for the works of the day, and the night for works of recuperation, and not for works of darkness.

May God grant that we may be *children of light*, not alone in the literal sense in which I have been speaking, but also in the figurative, in the transferred sense, that we may love rectitude, that we may love virtue, that we may love righteousness, that we may love good men, that we may love God, the supreme Goodness, and that we may be drawn by his unspeakable grace into that land where there shall be no night, but where the clear shining of his face shall be daylight forever and forever.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We gather ourselves again around thy feet, our Heavenly Father. We look up again into thy gracious face. We rejoice that there is no terror there for those who have learned to know thee. Thou lookest with peace and with joy upon us; and thou seest in us, not what is, but that which is to be when thy grace shall have wrought out the old, and brought in the new. And we rejoice that there is a refuge; that there is hope and rescue; that He that is most offended is most placable; and that the Being who is holiest and purest is the most patient and lenient with those that are impure and unholy. Though thou canst not sin, thou hast been *tempted in all points like as we are*. Thou knowest the burdens of temptation, the trials, which men go through. The secret springs of difficulty in the way of life are plain to thee. And standing in our midst, bearing our form, upon thee has beaten sorrow, and all the stream of sadness has set against thee in vain. Thou hast endured; and thou art able not only to pity, but to succor, those that are tempted; and we are drawn near to thee by this fellow feeling. And since thou hast been in our place, and borne our nature, and known our trial and trouble, and art willing to help us, why should we not come to thee? O thou Nurse of all that is good! O thou Teacher of all that is wise! O thou Captain of our salvation! to thee we come to put ourselves under thy care, sure that thou art interested in us, and that thy heart engages itself in our behalf. And why should we need friendship, with whom is God? Why should we need hope, upon whose hearts thou dost pour the twilight of thy hope? Why should we be solitary and alone, and discouraged in our loneliness, since thou art with us? All things are for our sake. The blessedness of thy life, working in providence, working in divine channels of grace, working by nature, working by thy heart and by thy spirit, working by all things that surround us, is leading us to the heavenly manna—to the heavenly spirit—to that blessedness which shall only pass from glory to glory.

And now we thank thee for any steps which we have taken; for any sins which we have overcome; for any knowledge which has enabled us to rise higher in our estimate of life, and to take higher standards. We thank thee for all the things that are good, or that in any wise point toward goodness in ourselves. By the grace of God we are what we are. All our good works thou hast wrought in us—to thy name be the honor and the glory. And we commit ourselves still to thy fatherly care. As thou hast begun, so continue and end thy work in our souls.

We pray for the prayerless. We pray for the children of parents that have gone home to glory. We pray for those that have been instructed all their life long, but with whom wisdom has brought forth no fruit.

We beseech thee, O Lord, that thou wilt make the word of truth sharper than a two-edged sword. Search out the hidden thoughts of men. Follow those that are gone from thee. Both by fear and by stripes make manifest thy fidelity.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that there may be heart-searchings; that there may be many that shall be pricked in the heart, and turned from wickedness to righteousness; from darkness to light, from the service of Satan to the service of the living God.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt accept our thanksgiving for the work of good that thou art doing in so many hearts; in the hearts of so many that have been brought forward into the Christian life. And may their numbers be doubled. We pray that thou wilt still go on ripening more and more the precious seed that has been sown. We thank thee for the courage which we have in that the Gospel is not dead, and that the power of God is yet in the letter and in the spirit of truth.

We pray that thy servants may everywhere be encouraged both to sow

and to reap. May they be bold in the service of God. May they not fear the face of man. May they go forth untrammelled by corrupt customs. We pray that they may have that wisdom which shall make them wiser than the maxims of selfishness. We pray that thou wilt grant to all those that are walking in the Christian life greater fruition; greater blessedness; more light; more experience of gladness; songs in the night, if they be in adversity; testimony, if they be in prosperity, that God can keep the soul even in prosperity.

Build up thy kingdom everywhere. Unite all thy people. More and more cordially may they work together for the things which respect their common Lord. Make haste to fulfill the promises which are delayed and unfulfilled respecting the final glory. O Lord Jesus! wait not. Advance thy banner. Bring forth the light, we beseech of thee, of that long year—of the thousand years—which shall stand upon the earth. Grant, we pray thee, that the day may hasten when sin and sorrow shall flee away, and joy and gladness take possession of the earth.

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



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Grant, our Father, thy blessing upon the word of warning which we have spoken. Grant, we pray thee, that the young may be cautioned, and that those who are in charge of them may take caution. Grant, we pray thee, that those may be rescued who are without care, and without any who look after their souls. Pity the outcast. Pity the needy. Deliver them from those that would destroy them. And we pray that thou wilt bless more and more the teachings of the sanctuary. More and more let thy Gospel be made known to men, with healing power. We ask these things, not because we are worthy, but in the adorable name of our Saviour, to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

VIII.

THE TRUE ECONOMY OF LIVING.

INVOCATION.

April 24, 1870.

THOU hast revealed thyself, our Father, and the day shines; but brighter is the light that thou castest from thy soul forth upon those that can behold it. Arise, O Sun of righteousness! and shine with enlivening beams upon our souls, that, if we are in the night, we may come forth; that, if we are in sin, or doubt, or trouble, or unbelief, we may have a blessed resurrection, and find our morning joy in thee. Draw near to us, that we may know what are the privileges which we have. Shine upon all the mercies which are around about us, that they may seem to us as beautiful as they are. Grant, we pray thee, that we may find thee to-day. And that which we cannot do by the feet, nor by the hands, may we do by holy thoughts, and climb up into thy very presence, and see thee as thou art, and rejoice in thee altogether. Bless our communion in prayer. Bless our fellowship of sacred song. Inspire the words of instruction which shall be spoken. Bless our meditation. May every service of devotion both here and everywhere, this day, be under thy divine inspiration and guidance. And so be pleased with us, and teach us to be pleased with thee, above all other things. Which we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

THE TRUE ECONOMY OF LIVING.

“He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.”—MATT. x. 39.

We find the same teaching repeated in the same Gospel. In the 16th chapter substantially the same phraseology is employed. In the 25th verse of that chapter, it is said, “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.”

It may be supposed that our Saviour, from the current impression of his simplicity and truthfulness and straightforwardness, would not be addicted to parabolical teaching; but his style is eminently characterized by paradox, as was also his life. He was not a being made up of straight lines alone. Born in beauty, his life was full of those curves, those unexpected ways, those hidings of himself, as it were, peering out to excite surprise. He had so many ways that were provocative, that excited expectation, that won attention, that fascinated, that wherever he went he was the one man of observation. And we see traces of it in the Scriptures which are reported from him. In his life, (although but a very small portion, a mere fragment, of the life of Christ is recorded, and in our hands) you will find this same paradoxical utterance repeated again, and apparently under other circumstances, as recorded in the 12th Chapter of John's Gospel, and the 25th verse.

“He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.”

This is said immediately following another figure:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

Now, it is not to be supposed, because it is contrary to the tenor of Christ's teaching elsewhere, that we are taught to hate life in the very literal and more obvious sense of that phrase. Just such another parallel instance occurs where we are told that we are not worthy of Christ if we do not forsake father and mother, brother and sister, hus-

band and wife. And another rendering of it, in another Gospel, is, that if we do not hate them and come to Christ we are not worthy of him. But, certainly, the Saviour does not mean that men shall hate their parents, and all their connections; or, that coming to him is in every instance to involve the sacrifice of all men's affections and relations. It is simply a mode by which relative affection is indicated. Our love for God must be first; and if any other affection comes in collision with it, then that other affection must be sacrificed. The love of God must be free. Under that all other affections may be justified; but there must be no rivalry with it. And so here we are not in a literal sense to hate our lives. That would contravene the teaching of Scripture, as well as of life itself, and produce infinite confusion in the ideas of men.

We are, nevertheless, by this very strong language, taught that there may be an ideal of life and a form of living which we are to tread under foot; and it is to the illustration of this that I shall address myself.

The order of values in the nature of man are in an inverse order to the development of his powers, and all their values. Men are born into this world little animals. There is no other animal born so low as man. There is no other animal of which there is so little in its beginnings. There is nothing that has to wait so long and travel so far before it finds itself, as the human animal. It would seem as though the shorter the time of existence of any creature on earth, the more perfect it is at its start; as though, having no time to get right, it therefore had to be made right at the beginning. And the seed of human life is put as remote as possible from the point of maturity; and then it is, by successive experiences, to be developed to that maturity.

Man, as the highest animal organization of the globe, has the longest term, not simply of life, but of development. And in developing, he develops first a lower class of faculties, purely physical. A babe is a mere thing of suction. The lowest, the least, is it, of all created beings. If it were not for the prophecy of love, if it were not for the transfiguration which maternal hope puts upon it, we could scarcely think of anything less attractive than a new-born babe. And yet, there is nothing on the globe so precious to the heart of love—not for what it is, but for all that it is to be when it shall have come to itself. Through days and weeks and months this little hope of life to come, this little mass of nothing, lies in the mother's arms, waiting for liberty to be. And as it begins to develop, and comes out of the lower periods of life into some degree of automatic action and experience, the physical is developed fastest and most.

And first are developed the appetites or faculties which have to do

with our physical condition, and which are ministrant to it—the feeding instincts, the nutritive instincts, by which the body is to be built up—that body in which the whole experiment of life is to be tried.

As the child develops beyond this point, the order is, next, the development, in simple, of its incipient passions. But more rapidly we develop these *engineering instincts*, if I may so call them. Men call them *passions*, on account of their excess and abuse. Those working powers by which men strive with nature, and strive for success in the bodily life, begin to develop the force-elements in men. They come in, perhaps it may be said, the second or third in the order.

And then come the higher social relations, by which men begin to please each other; all the affinities by which society affiliates; by which the household is founded; by which men have commerce with men; by which all finer elements begin to help each other.

Then, beyond that, and afterwards, in the more perfect development, come reason and the imagination. But the real growth and strength of the reason comes after the development of the passions and the affections.

And last of all, the latest, and with most waiting, and most working, and most suffering, comes the development of the moral nature of man, and particularly the spiritual-moral—that is to say, that part whose food is invisible realities; whose food is the remote, the impalpable, the insensuous.

This is the order of time, and it is the inverse of the order of ultimate importance. In the beginning of life, the most important thing is that the child shall have a good body; but at the end of life a good body is not the most important thing, by any means.

In the beginning of life it is important, next, that the child should learn how to engineer its little body in the midst of the elements surrounding him. But when one has become ripe, these engineering traits and endowments fall into a relatively lower position.

When birds build their nests in spring, as they are now doing out of doors, the most important thing that they can do is to build those nests, as every robin knows, and every blue-bird knows, and every sparrow knows. But by-and-by the nest will be filled with eggs; and everybody knows that the eggs will be worth more than the nest. And by-and-by the eggs will give place to the young fledgelings. And everybody knows that these fledgelings, homely as they are, all mouth, will be vastly more important than the eggs. Then by-and-by the bird gets its feathers, and flies away. And who cares now what becomes of the egg-shells, or the nest, or anything else that is left behind? The bird is what has come of all these things. They are the instruments by which the bird was built up. But now that they have fulfilled their

office, they are not good for anything—not even for next year: the uselessness of a “last year’s bird’s nest” is proverbial.

So it is in the beginning of human life, to a large extent. The figure of Christ is to be taken with allowance, and not with extreme application. The things that are indispensable to start the little creature in life, are, at the time, of transcendent importance; but when it is once started, carried along, developed, brought to a maximum, then those instruments that were of prime importance, sink lower and lower until they become absolutely insignificant. And all the way through life there is this phenomenology—there is this lower physical life, this intermediate, engineering life, and this higher and more intellectual life—as you might say, three lives wrapped up in the one.

The order of development, I have said, is not the order of value. The value is relative to the period. But, after all, a true manhood in Christ Jesus is the ideal at which human life is aiming. It is that which we are taught man is created for, and which if he loses he loses everything.

In the lowest materialistic idea of life, drawn from the lower orders, the end of life seems to be, to be born, to eat, to propagate, to die, and then to do it right over and over again, forever and ever. Nothing comes of it. There is no extension, there is no generation of power, beyond the simple capacity of maintaining in the world the series of existences that have filled it. And so we find that the insect family never get beyond what they were. They are born perfect. They run through a short line. And the next generation are just like them. And in a thousand years there is not one single step of appreciable progress made.

It is not so in the human family. As we go up, more and more is added to life. As we rise from the lower forms of organized existence, new organs appear, and with them new functions. More time is involved in their development. They have a more complicated sphere of activity. Their experiences are more complex. The climax in this line of development is reached in man, who begins lowest, as we have said, who takes the longest time to get a-going, who averages the greatest time in this world, who has the greatest store of permanent acquisitions within the range of our knowledge, and who, above all, and characteristically, secures at last what we have no evidence is secured anywhere below—a manhood that is worth preserving.

When Van Mons would have new pears better than the old ones, he sowed thousands and thousands of seeds of wildings; and when they came up, to expedite the process, to hasten maturity, he took grafts and put them into old trees. And among all the pears that he got there was not one that was worth eating. But they were a great im-

provement on the wildings. So he took the seeds of these advanced ones, and sowed them; and when they came up, he grafted them also into the old trees to expedite their maturation. And among the second generation there were none that were worth saving. But this generation was a great advance on the first. And he took the seeds of the last growths, and sowed them. And when by-and-by he had carried them through four or five generations, he began to get Flemish pears, which were better than any that he had known before. And he said, "Now I have got something that is worth having." And these he propagated and carried on.

This will stand as a sort of illustration of the order of creation. It would seem as though the divine creative thought of existence stood in innumerable forms. And in the first stage it was worth what it *was* worth. It lived and died, and that was the end of it. Then higher and better than that, but not worth keeping, are other gradations through which we pass in coming to man. And until we come to man's estate, to this higher race of animals, we cannot find any intimation in the Word of God that there is such a thing as saving them over, preserving them. But when one, by the wise application of his own faculties, and of the knowledge which he acquires through those faculties, knows how to carry himself up into manhood in Christ Jesus, there is immortality for him. Then, at last, nature has reached the point in which it is worth saving and carrying over into the other life.

It is precisely this developed ideal manhood that the Gospel holds out, which we are aiming at. And all the stages preceding it are but so many steps ascending to it; so many organizations ministering to it; so many instruments relative to it. And if men secure it, they secure the end of their own existence. If they fall short of it, they fall short of everything. For it is in this manhood that immortality inheres—this salvable manhood, which is something more than the engine of this mortal state. There is a nature that has been so developed and trained that it has something in it besides that which eats, and drinks, and sleeps, and overcomes, and fights, and strives with passionate earnestness; a nature that has in it stores of elements and powers that fit it for the communion of higher beings, and of God himself, for evermore. All through the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is this last communion that is represented as the true life. It so transeends every other, so much better is it than everything else, that Christ in speaking of it calls it *the* life, knowing all the time that men call other things the life—eating and drinking, and pleasures. And taking these two ideas of life, and uniting them, he plays upon them, one after another. "He that will save his life"—that is, the lower one—"shall lose it"—that is, the other one. He that would save

his life, he that will not risk anything for it, he that is all the time looking after the lower life, and not the higher, shall lose the higher. He that wants to cultivate himself, and wants to make himself happy, and wants to live in the present moment; he that wants now, now, now, to be made munificent, and cares nothing for then, then, then, shall lose the thing for which the race was created—the immortal life.

Now, men make the order of nature and of time the order of their value. Men perpetually tend to live for the things which make the body strong, skillful, wise, and enjoying. They tend to overestimate the body. They tend to overestimate present pleasures, present power, the secular development of man, and to underestimate all those yet higher developments and elements for which the secular was created as instrumental. They live *by sight*, as it is said. They live by the senses. They live sensuously, or for physical enjoyment. Whenever either one or the other is to be sacrificed, men sacrifice the higher, the impalpable, the least immediately productive things. If it be honor or profit, profit is preserved, and honor is given up. If it be truth or influence and station, truth must be waived. Men seem to feel, and act substantially as if they felt, that, having been created with powers in this world, it was lawful, right and manly for one to put those powers into use, and by them carry himself to any attainable degree of strength, and wealth, and pleasure; and that he is not to be interrupted, or resisted, or overruled by any conceptions of right and wrong, of purity and impurity, or of manhood. So that in the great battle of life, generally speaking, the senses prevail against the insensuous. The visible is victorious, and the invisible is sacrificed.

The fact, however, is, and is declared to be, that in every respect, the higher elements of human life are so superior to all below them, that it may be truly said in each element, that he who takes the lower loses the whole. I firmly believe that the higher wisdom, the moral wisdom, though it takes it longer to ripen and work, is more profitable for the world that now is, than the lower wisdom.

If you consider that man is at the bottom an animal, midway a citizen, and at the top Christian or divine, I hold that the wisdom of the citizen is better than the wisdom of the animal. Thought is better than cunning. The animal is cunning. It does not think. But men think; and thinking is better than cunning for the process of life. But there is such a thing as intuition, which belongs to the higher life, and which is as much better than thinking, as thinking is better than cunning.

Men, in the great battle of life, say, "We cannot conduct life successfully and still live by the highest rules." I aver, contrariwise, that there is no way in which human life can be built up so firmly, so

broadly, so impregnably, and so bountifully in joy, as by the wisdom which comes from the highest moral intuitions and the highest moral truths—in other words that the Spirit of Christ is not a Spirit that shall sweeten a man's closet any more than his shop or store. The laws of truth, of sensitive honor, and of the highest Christian spirituality, are applicable to the commercial aspects of life, or to the dealings of men in civil life; and they are as much more profitable, in the long run, than thought or cunning, as they are finer, and truer, and nobler, and higher. And yet, many reject this higher wisdom. They do not believe in it. They laugh it to scorn in the street, over the counter, in the caucus, in the legislative hall, and on field of political strife. "All things are lawful," men say, "in business, in war and in politics." The amount of it is, they think all things are lawful everywhere. They think a man has a right to scramble, and to go by slippery ways, or any kind of ways, in order to succeed. It is supposed that however low the aim or ambition, it is lawful for a man to use every part of himself, without any other limitation than the average public sentiment requires in the community in which he lives. But I aver that a man can succeed in the great courses of life if he be strong enough, and patient enough, and willing to wait long enough. If a man will act from the wisdom of purity, and the wisdom of grace in his soul, he will be a better manager of business or pleasure, he will be a better economist or householder, and he will be a better civilian or politician, than if he goes by the suggestions of worldly experience and worldly wisdom.

This thought might be run out in many details.

There are those who think that religion denies pleasure to men. No. The condemnation of pleasure is, that men select so poor an article. God made men to live upon pleasurable excitement. Every faculty has this quality as a result of its divine origin. There is not a faculty in the human soul that is not made to have the inspiration of pleasure in it. And you cannot act in any sphere of life, from the lowest to the highest, without it.

But the quality of pleasure goes up; and as man rises toward his true spiritual manhood, pleasures, although they may not be so impetuous, are not so harsh, are not so intense, are of a finer quality, are of longer duration, and are more harmonizing. They admit of fellowship one with another, so that the average of pleasures in the higher life is far greater than in the intermediate or the lower and animal life. Does any person suppose that one man reaps as much satisfaction from a wild night of debauch and wassail, however exhilarating it may be, as another man does from the indulgence of his pure and virtuous social affections? He thinks for the hour that he does; but as he looks back, and compares it with higher experiences, and interprets the one

and the other, he knows that the higher affections really beget in him more of pleasure. When men look back on their life they are more likely to form right judgments than when they look forward to their future experiences.

When, therefore, men are dissuaded from pleasure, it is lower pleasure that is meant. We are supposed, in this world, to be happy; but we are to take our happiness from growth into a higher manhood, and from the normal use of the moral elements that are in us. And he that aims at lower pleasure forfeits true pleasure. He would save his pleasure, and he loses it.

That which is true of pleasure, is true of praise. All men love praise—or ought to. It is wholesome. Bad as it is in ordinary life, it was meant to serve an admirable purpose. There is no criminality in seeking praise; but there is great criminality in seeking such praise as good men ought not to want. That praise which comes from the exhibition of lower traits; that praise which springs from the unknowing and from those that praise from their lower nature, is not to be sought. If one has a large conception of manhood, of what he ought to be, and then is praised by those who understand what that is, he has a right to enjoy praise. But praise for his lower faculties, or praise for his animal life, or praise for things which he does not possess, but only pretends to have—how wretched is that! He that will have a vulgar and uneducated love of praise will not have the other. But he that despises anything like incense to his ignorance, or incense to his pretenses, or incense to his position in society; he that has a moral element which scorns the untruth and the baseness of such praise, and aims at something higher than man's applause, and loves the praise of God more than the praise of men—he may lose praise at present, but he will gain it hereafter. The higher will, in the long run, rule the lower.

That which is true of praise is true of power. The desire to accomplish in life is a normal desire. It is a noble ambition. I am not one that ever preaches against ambition. I preach against corrupt, false, base and low ambition. I would to God that men had more, a good deal more, ambition, if it were only aimed in the right direction, and sought the right things. It is the want of an ideal of something better and greater that keeps men so low; that holds them down to such vulgarity; that destroys so many men in the making. If a man desires power without any regard to its moral quality, and without any regard to what it costs; if a man seeks the lowest and the commonest power, and gives up everything for it that is demanded—gives up his conscience; gives up his principle; gives up his time; gives up his delicate feelings; gives up domestic life—he will have power. Low,

dirty-handed power will he have. But he will lose true power. He buys corrupt, low and mean power at the price of sacrificing that which is really permanent and thoroughly moral.

With these illustrations and openings, I trust that I have sufficiently given you an insight into the truth and teaching of our Master, to justify the applications that I shall make.

1. Self-denial, and the seeming deprivation which men make in being good in this life, are only investments which come back to them, by-and-by, with interest. And here let me say, in the first place, that when we preach religion to men; when we say to men, "If you are to become Christians you must give up this and that, you must not meddle with such and such things," there is a vague impression that religion imposes certain arbitrary conditions upon a man, and that he who goes into the communion of the Christian church is to be shut off from pleasures and licenses and indulgences. They do not know why. They merely know this: If you believe, you shall be saved; if you do not, you shall be damned. And in order not to be damned, they are willing to be saved. And if that is the price that they must pay for salvation, they will pay it, though they wish it was not required. They would like to enjoy all the pleasures which are within their reach, and they would like to do those things which are calculated to contribute to their present enjoyment.

Now, there is nothing arbitrary about it. Whatever experience has shown to be in the way of true moral education, we forbid men; but whatever thing in this world God made to be good, is good to the Christian, provided he can hold it in consistence with the development of true character.

I am a teacher, and in my school I have twenty-five pupils. I allow them to play until nine o'clock, when my school comes in; but I insist upon it that they shall not play a moment after that time. I say to them, "You must leave off your play and come in at nine o'clock." But is it because I do not like play, or because I think it is bad? Is it anything more than this: that I am satisfied that by study they will lay up a stock of future enjoyment which they cannot get by play? If the child is taught to derive pleasure from higher sources, he will have in store ten times as much as he would if I suffered him to play all the time.

And when religion comes to men, does it come draping them in gloom, and making every one of them a monk, and forbidding the pleasures of this life as though they were in themselves wrong? Does religion teach us to hate the body as though it were hateful? Nothing of the kind. Religion merely says, "Develop the highest manhood, and keep everything else in subordination; but sacrifice nothing. Only

keep the whole household and the economy of your manhood in such an order that the highest things shall be highest, and the intermediate things intermediate, and the lowest things lowest, and let that principle of arrangement and subordination be maintained. And whatever a man has to give up, it is nothing but a lower faculty giving up to a higher one. It is nothing but a lower good being supplanted by a higher. Whenever a man begins to live a Christian life, what is called self-denial is simply listening to the inspiration of a niger truth or a higher motive, and suppressing the inspiration of a contrary lower motive, and holding it down for the sake of something that is higher.

A man puts weights into one scale and commodities into the other. If one scale goes down, the other goes up. And so in weighing things in life the mind is a balance. You cannot have everything at the same time. Especially you cannot have contraries at the same time. Therefore you choose between the one and the other. You reject some things, not because they are absolutely evil, but because they are not so good as other things, and you cannot have both.

“Be angry and sin not.” It is a duty to be angry; but then, a man must be angry in such a way and at such times that he shall have serve a generous purpose. It is a shame for a man to get angry selfishly; and it is a shame for a man not to become gloriously, magnanimously angry. If a man does you a wrong, and calls you names, do not get angry. You ought to live so high that no man can throw dirt up to where you are. No man can in any way insult you, if you live as you ought to live. Do not get angry at what anybody says to you. But if some poor unbefriended person is being abused to his damage, and is suffering, and you stand by and know it, get angry not for your own sake, but for his. Get angry for a principle. Get angry for generosity. Get angry for your conscience—no, there is too much anger for men’s consciences already in the world; but get angry for love. “Be angry and sin not;” and then you will hardly need to have the other part of the text quoted—“let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”

And in the matter of forbearance, there is this same element to be kept in mind. If you forbear, it is for the sake of something nobler and higher. And all self-denial is in the nature of seeking something better and nobler.

Here are two men. They are heirs each to ten thousand dollars—just enough to ruin a man: not enough to make him careful, but enough to tempt him to stop industry. One says, “I will make the most of my money.” And he buys his fast horses, and buys his fast dogs, and buys his fast friends; and his friends and dogs and horses are of about the same value! And he rides and plays and stuffs, and stuffs

and plays and rides ; and there is not a single nerve in his body that is not kept red-hot. And it takes but about ten or twelve months to run through ten thousand dollars, provided a man is going to be "happy," and happy all the time. And after the ten thousand dollars are gone, and he is out of pocket, out of clothes, out of character, out of friends, out of horses, out of dogs, out of every thing, there he stands, poor, miserable, spoiled—utterly spoiled.

The other man takes his ten thousand dollars, and, when this young gay son of pleasure is blossoming on the road, the observed of all fool-observers, says, "I cannot afford these things." "Why?" it is said to him, "you have ten thousand dollars." "I know I have," he says, "but I am going to invest it where it will come back to me doubled and quadrupled. I am young, and I have health, and I do not need so much excitement or prodigality. Now, while I am strong and vigorous, I am able to forego these stimulations ; to live without them. And by the time I am in the middle of life, and going down on the other side, I am determined to have enough to keep me comfortably. I am going to deny myself in the present for the sake of the future ; and therefore I cannot afford horses and hounds and companions and salacious pleasures." What is he doing? He is denying himself in order to lay up his money so that he shall have it when he needs it more than he does at present. It is not so much a denial as it is an investment which he can avail himself of in mid-life. Then he shall have all that pleasure which the other man pines after and longs for, but has squandered, and shall not find again.

And when we urge men to virtue and heroism, and say to them, "Bear the yoke ; carry the cross ; deny yourselves," what do we mean? Looking at the lower faculties, and seeing that they are trying to make you live for the lower life, for the *now*, for the things that perish in the using, we say, No, no, do not live that life. Do not give your youth, your vigor, to that which perishes. Direct your ambition to something nobler ; something larger ; something richer ; something more lasting ; something that God shall like when he looks upon it, and of which he shall say, "It shall be immortal."

2. Men who do live in the spirit of Christ's philosophy must throw themselves wholly into such a life as this. It is one of those things that cannot be done by halves. Nor can it be done by feeble and weak ways. It is by going with enthusiasm into the higher life that men reap its benefits, and escape the thrall of the lower one. If one wishes the comfort of truth he must not be, every day, debating with himself, "Shall I or shall I not prevaricate?" A man that is all the time studying the casuistry of telling the truth, and the casuistry of honor, cannot be true, and cannot be honorable. Can virtue afford casuistry?

Can the sanctity of chastity afford philosophizing casuistries? *It can not.* There are many things which a pure nature cannot suffer even to be suggested or raised as questions. It is so with truth-speaking. "Shall I profitably lie?" The very suggestion is treason. A man that means to be an honorable man must go over soul and body to the truth in such a way that the thought never comes up whether he shall or shall not. There cannot be two sides to things of this sort.

That which is true in these familiar illustrations of higher life, is more and more true the higher you ascend. If you mean to live for your true manhood, and for your immortality, it will not do for you to live by half measures. You must give your whole soul to the great and sublime end of living with God forever and forever. You must rank everything as relative to that end. It is worth every man's endeavor, and it must have every man's endeavor.

If self-denial, therefore, in you, is earnest, *if it is bold, if it is almost unthinking;* if men go into the work of religion, the work of right-living, the work of manhood, as a warrior goes into battle, then it becomes easy. Then the conflict which the apostle likens to that physical warfare in which the excitement and wild exhilaration are such that the soldier does not feel his wounds, nor notice his fatigue, nor mind his circumstances—that conflict becomes easy. That which we know to be the case in the lower life in this respect, is still more so in the higher life, where a man gives himself to it wholly, with all his heart and mind and soul and strength. A man that means to live religiously, and puts his whole power into it, *lives easily,* and no other man can live easily except the man who gets momentum in a moral life.

3. Men are to be measured, not by the scale of folly, as folly measures in this world, but by God's everlasting scale of manhood; and we cannot tell who are prosperous and who are not prosperous in this world by the worldly measure. Who are the prosperous men in this world? Are they the men who are the biggest, and weigh the most in the scales? Are they the men that have the most power in their muscles, whose bones are as flint, and whose muscles are as steel, and who have all skill? Do you suppose there are any pugilists in New York, or anywhere else, that enjoy as much in a whole year as I enjoy in a day? I laugh them to scorn. I squander more joy than they have, in mere wanton mirthfulness. What is there in the pugilist? A few coarse, brawling passions. Out of them, wholly, he obtains his enjoyment. What has he? What a harp has which has one bass-string left, and nothing more. From that frog-croaking string he draws all his music. But I have forty strings, from every one of which proceeds a separate tone. And all this enjoyment that I have is infinitely

more than his mere animal enjoyment. Large as he is, and easily as he could thrash me, I thrash him every moment. I live in my reason, my taste, my imagination, and my moral nature. And I crow over him; I triumph over him. Everything that is in me triumphs over him. A big man, large, free, with the spirit of God in him—what is he like? And the poor, vulgar, base man—what is he like? The animal man is like a frog that sits on the edge of a morass, and croaks one note, one note, one note, and whose life consists in plumping into the mud, and getting out again, and croaking, croaking.

And what is true of a man, opened up all the way through, clear to the highest spiritual realms? Broad as the creation is he, and his faculties are like birds that sit in the tops of trees, and, when the morning comes and wakes them, sing, each one in its own way, thousands of them filling the air above and all the earth, and making the very dew wink brighter, and look sweeter. Such is a large man, full of joy from top to bottom.

It is said, "Christians are happy. God makes them happy." God makes every man happy who knows how to play on himself. Every man is full of music; but it is not every man that knows how to bring it out. I might live in the house with this organ all my life; but if I did not understand music, and did not know how to play, being where the organ was would do me no good. Most men are magnificent organs, but they do not know how to play, and they amuse themselves by whistling through the pipes that are in them; and instead of developing the true nature that God put in them, and developing the true purposes which God had in their creation, they spoil themselves for this life because they are unmindful of the other true and higher life.

Nay, who are the prosperous men in this world? Are they the men who have the most worldly *eclat*? No. A man's enjoyment in this world does not lie in your eyes, nor in my eyes. It is not what we think that makes a man happy.

I have in thought a man that holds in his hands almost the ways of life, and the thoroughfares of the nation. He is not bad, as the world goes. He is well nigh unlimited in his control of funds. With two or three others he could almost buy the continent. And men think he is a wonderful man. Yes, in many respects he is. But the question is as to his prosperity. Let us open him up, and see what wonderful thing is in him. Have you the key to this man? Yes, I have the golden key. I go into one chamber. It is called *taste*. There is not a window in it. Neither is there a carpet, nor a picture, nor an instrument of music in it. Shut up the door of that room. I go into another room, called *honor*. It is a cold, dreary, stone-wall passage, dripping with moisture. Shut up the door of that room. It is not

tenanted. I go on and open the door of *conscience*, as it is called. What is that down there? Why, it is a wretch lying on a heap of rotten straw, all but dead. It raises its head, and says, "I *was* conscience; what is left of it I am." Shut up the door of this sad room. I look into another chamber—that of *faith*. Well, this was an apartment. It is spacious and lofty; it is domed, and has a large, long opening to the sky. It is constructed as if some instruments were to have been here. Behold, here is astronomical machinery, designed to sweep the heavens. But nobody is here to use it. The room is desolate. There is no faith here. Shut it up. And so I go on from place to place, and through chamber after chamber; and every one of them is unfurnished, dreary, full of unpleasant sights and sounds.

Let us go down to where the man lives. Let us go down where selfishness and avarice dwell. Now we begin to find that the apartments are occupied. They are large, and in them are vaults filled full of unused gains. Yes, selfishness is strong, and pride is strong, and the animal life is strong. And all that is social, all that is sweet, all that is generous, and all that is divine, is utterly lacking, and utterly gone.

There is that prosperous man. Now come with me. Here is old Janet. She had a love affair, the boys say, when she was about seventeen years old, and somehow got jilted. And she never was quite the same afterwards. She always refused company. Well, what has she been doing since that time? Oh! she was kind of studying till her sister was married; and then she went to live with her, and has lived with her ever since. And what has she been doing? Well, she has been taking care of her sister's children. A dependent, is she? Yes, she is to a certain extent dependent on her sister. And she is bringing up the youngsters? Yes, she devotes herself to the care of her sister's children.

Let us go through her heart—for I have the key to that, also. The first apartment is *sweet contentment*. Everything in it is tranquil. There is a low sound, as of music. You know not whence it comes. We pass through chamber after chamber. At last we enter the chamber of love. Oh! how radiant everything is! What pictures there are hanging upon the walls! How many there are that resemble the portraiture of friends! And some there are that seem to look back to friends that are gone. We step out from the room of love into the room of faith. These rooms are adjoining, and the door between them is never closed. They throw light into each other. And how bright are these upper chambers of the soul! Perpetual joy reigns there, morning, noon, and night. Come near, and you will find that this woman's heart is full of peace and gladness.

What is she doing? She is living for others. She is raising up

these little children. She is like the fabled eagle that is said to have plucked the feathers from its own breast to shield its young. She, as it were, takes her own heart and soul out to make a nest for these fledglings. And though they are not her own, she loves them better, and suffers more for them, and prays for them more, than the mother. Outwardly she seems to live solitary; but God, and the angel band that watch over her, see that she lives inwardly full of the sweetest content, and the most blessed and joyful hope.

Now, I put this old Janet over against the millionaire, and ask you which is the most prosperous. One has all the body and all the pelf, and the other all the soul and all the heaven. Which would you rather be? As long as you are here in the church you would rather be Janet, but as quick as you get out of the door there you would rather be this man.

Who are the prosperous men? The men that enjoy the most. The men that enjoy all through. Who are they that enjoy all through? The men that take God's sunlight on top, and make their life radiant from the top to the bottom. The men that have the indwelling of God's spirit; the men that are sanctified, and that, from their topmost feelings to their lower ones are at rest—they are the men that are capable of enjoying most. He is the prince, not who wears the crown outside, but who wears the crown inside. And he is the rich man, not who carries money, but who carries that which buys what money cannot. He is the man that has the fullest life who seems outwardly to have the worst of life, to those that are not instructed to look at him. Let him, therefore, that would have life, aim high, and he shall have it. But if he aims low he shall lose it.

4. This leads me to speak of the hollow and rotten success of the generation of men who have crept into high places of the state and the nation, who dazzle the eyes of men, who heap up riches, who are more or less powerful, who walk in a vain show, and who are deluding the minds of men, and making young men think that there is no use in moral principle, and no use in scruples—that it is only the bold hand and unscrupulous heart that succeed in this world. There is a state of abounding wickedness which is alarming.

Among the bad effects of our civil war, which in the name of God we will resist and slay, (though it also brought about many good effects, that are going to do much toward the regeneration of this nation,) is that most unbounded ambition for money which is breaking out on every side, so that it would seem as though there were almost no barriers; as though nothing could withstand its touch. And old honesty, and old trust, and old scruples, and old-fashioned honor, seem likely to go down. Upright and honorable men are driven into obscurity, and the high

places are held, and the laws are made and administered, by men who pervert official trusts in such a way as to put virtue to shame, and make vice triumphant. The condition of our cities is very rotten; and the worst of it is, that when there is exposure of corruption in officials and courts and legislatures, the moral and Christian sentiment of the community is scarcely shocked, and does not rebound; and still the same men go back again by the votes of those very men who are said to be the conservators of the community. And this state of things has been induced very largely by that "love of money" which "is the root of all evil."

Now, I have no uncertainty about this. It is not going to continue. These men are rotten; and they are not going to prosper. Do you want to hear their portraits described? Why, there is a picture-gallery here that has more portraits in it than you ever dreamed of. See if you cannot recognize some men that do not live a thousand miles from you!

"I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked."

If he had lived with us, he would have had lots of sights on that subject.

"For there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men."

Oh! it is such a plague to be virtuous! It is an annoyance to a great many people.

"Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish. They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression; they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth. Therefore his people return hither; and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them. And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?"

Atheism and corruption go hand in hand.

"Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning."

Now comes the rebound.

"If I say, I will speak thus: behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedest them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image."

Wickedness is not the normal condition of the earth. Righteousness is God's law; and the law of rectitude is as absolute and as imperative as any material and physical law. And men that expect to prosper, and to maintain prosperity at the expense of moral laws, are

just as foolish as men who expect to violate the laws of the brain and the lungs and the stomach, and still be healthy. It is but for a day. It is a vain show. And let no man be deluded into supposing that it makes no difference how he lives. If that is life, lose it. If you are obliged to lose your life in order to maintain your manhood, lose the life and save the manhood; and in the long run you will find that the manhood to preserve which seems to require the casting away of every thing, will bring back more of the world than you could get otherwise. You will have the life which now is, as well as that which is to come.

5. All that are seeking good by worldly ways; all that are seeking their whole good in the world; all that are employing this scene of time, this experiment of probationary mortal life, in such a way that they shall have the labor, the toil, and not the remuneration nor the result, are included under this general truth of which I have been speaking. There are multitudes of men that do not live wisely even for this world. They use up everything in childhood which should have been distributed along the whole of their life. But there are some who use their childhood and youth wisely, and lay up for manhood; and so they save the whole of their life now, by that very economic experience which has led you to economize the forces of early life, and middle life, for the sake of the whole of life, that you may lift your average condition higher.

I condemn those, therefore, in regard to these matters, who are living in such ways that at the best they shall reap this world and lose the other. And it is to such that the Master addresses the solemn words, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" I do not blame you because you love your friends; but I do blame you because you love them in such a way that you will waste your love upon them. I do not blame you for building your houses and making them beautiful; but I do blame you that you know enough to do that, and yet do not build that other house, and make it still more beautiful. I do not blame you for sagacity and foresight and wisdom in business; but that wisdom which teaches you economy in the lower life ought to teach you still more forcibly in regard to the higher life. I do not blame any man because he thinks it wise to insure his property against fire or destruction by accident; but I do blame a man if he knows enough to insure his houses and horses and dogs, and leaves his soul all uninsured, and to the chances and accidents of the unknown and invisible world. I bring up the wisdom with which you conduct your lower life, to sit in judgement upon the folly with which you squander your higher life. You are living for the flesh. You are living for the things which are this side of the horizon of death. You are living for time; and yet eternity is im-

pending. It would seem as though all the past were but the thought and the hint of the existence of that eternity; and yet, you are squandering before you reach it what you will need there. You are losing the other life because you are determined to have this life. You want this world, and you are paying the whole of the other world for it.

May God grant that wisdom to you by which you shall understand that he who lives rightly for heaven inherits the earth; while he who inherits the earth first forfeits heaven. "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, thou hast made the way to thy feet plain and pleasant to us. We once sought thee as strangers, seeking a strange place in a strange far country; but now we are children of our home, and have been made so well acquainted with thee, that it is as drawing near to our Father's house. And as there were around about our home in childhood a thousand associations which cannot die out, and after which we go back, now renewing pleasure at every step, so, besides what we get of thee from day to day in asking, there are all the sweet memories of the past; all the times of sorrow in which we came trooping to thee, and went away walking erect as the sons of God; all the days in which we went to thee full of uncertainty and doubt, and went away seeing and most happy. We have been to thee with heavy burdens; and though sometimes the burdens were taken away, oftener thou hast given us strength to bear them. We have been to thee in times of remorse and shame; and so gracious wert thou that we forgot to be ashamed, and only admired and adored the greatness and goodness of thy soul. And now we have learned to think of thee as ineffable in love. Un-speakably kind art thou. Our thoughts praise thee better than our lips can. Silently we are more to thee than we can be in open petition. And thou lookest upon our souls, O blessed Father, and dost accept the incense of praise and gratitude, the thoughts of love, and the joys that sing to thee silently.

We rejoice that thou art such an One, and that there is such affluence of understanding between thee and us. Looking out of thy greatness as from a palace, thou dost behold us, though we are poor, and draw near to thee in all our insignificance. But we are to be like thee. This is thy work—to draw us up out of these beginnings, that seem so far away and so poor, to a glorious ending. As from seeds that are most insignificant, we behold the vines and blossoms that come in all their glory, when the sun hath wrought long enough at them; so thou dost, out of this miserable beginning of human life, work up finally the glory of immortality. And thou dost bring forth out of homeliness rare beauty; and out of hated things, things most sweet and beautiful. We bless thee, that thou art working in us, and rejoice that it is God that worketh in us to will and to do. For who could possibly find his way to manhood, who could withstand all the

temptations and wiles which beset us, without thy help? It is because we are guided and guarded and evermore inspired, that we have hope that we shall persevere unto the end, and finally be saved; and that we shall be exalted into glory and honor and immortality; and that beauty shall descend upon us to depart no more; and that all those things which cause us, here on earth, weakness, and pain, and shame, shall pass away and return no more forever.

And now, O Lord our God! we thank thee for all thy faithfulness. We beseech of thee that we may not provoke it by our continuous pride; by our hardness of heart; by our indocility. We do not know, as thou dost, how poor and needy we are; and yet we know and feel that we are needy every day. And to-day we come to be filled with generous affections. We desire, to-day, to have our faith made more comprehensive, and bolder. To-day we desire, by hope, to take possession of the things that are ours. Come hither, as we have, from every source and every quarter of life; come hither, as many of us have, in troubles, under burdens, and with crosses and yokes to bear; come hither, as many of us have, from poverty, and anxiety, and distress, and bereavements, and anguish of soul, our wants are plain to thee, thou Bounty-giver. And for every one thou hast a message of duty to-day. And as, in the garden, thou didst call Mary by name, and she knew thee, so silently call by name every one in thy presence to-day, that each one may know that it is *the* Saviour, and *their* Saviour, drawing near for mercy; knowing them altogether—a High priest that can be touched with the feeling of infirmities, and has been tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin, and is able to succor those that come boldly now to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and help in time of need. Oh! look upon all whose need is great at this time. Look upon all that need thee, and know it; and upon all those, more wretched, who need thee, and know it not.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that we may be awakened to things beyond our senses, and beyond the range of this earthly life. Grant that we may come into the full faith and rejoicing of our whole manhood, as we stand in Christ Jesus. And we pray that thou wilt fill the hearts of all that come hither to-day with thy mercies, as they severally need. Strengthen the weak. Inspire hope in the desponding. Give consolation to those that are afflicted. Teach wisdom to those that lack it, and ask thee. And grant, we pray thee, that there may be an inspiration that shall lead aright those that look to thee for direction in perplexing circumstances in life. Be all things to all, this morning. Make every one to feel how gracious and how condescending and how abounding is his God.

We beseech of thee, O Lord! that thou wilt look upon all those that are gathered this day to worship thee, strangers in a strange land; and grant that they may find here their mother, their father, and their brethren, in their Father's house. And look upon their heart-yearnings. Look upon all their ways and desires. And grant that they may be surprised by God's great goodness this day. Crown them abundantly with thy blessings.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt look upon all those, this day, that are coming to thee and asking for righteousness, and hungering and thirsting for higher disclosures of thy nature, and for higher ways of life. May they, O Lord! be filled—for thou has promised it.

Draw near to those that to-day would see thee, the Chief among ten thousand, altogether lovely. Reveal thyself unto them as thou dost not unto the world. Be near to all those, we beseech of thee, who are here to-day, looking wistfully upon the face of things, and yet knowing that they are not thine, and their life is not according to truth, nor according to the word of the Lord. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt inspire them with a nobler purpose, with a more generous determination. May they be able to contradict and throw away their old life. May they be able to take on a new life in Christ Jesus. May they be able to take a higher measure, and to live hereafter by a nobler ideal. And we beseech of thee that thy kingdom may come, and that thy will may be done, in hearts that are now rebellious.

Among the outcast and the needy, O Lord, our God, be thou found; and raise up many that shall go forth out of a living experience, to teach a new Gospel—the old Gospel made new by the experience of the heart that teaches it.

And we pray that love may prevail everywhere. We long for a time when the passions shall not be in ascendancy; when faith and righteousness and true holiness shall rule in all the earth; when our laws shall be made in the spirit of justice, and executed impartially; and when all our officers shall be men of righteousness, seeking God's favor and the welfare of man. When shall the day come, that the earth shall be no more ravaged? How long is it needful to wait? O thou that dwellest in clouds and darkness! O thou that seemest to be slumbering through ages, but that never slumberest nor sleepest! when wilt thou come forth? When shall this guilty term end? When shall men awake and come forth from all their degradations? When shall wars cease, and superstitions, with all their cruelties, pass away? When shall knowledge shine brightly, bringing men to love and to God? Hasten that day, O Lord, we beseech thee, when nations shall learn war no more; when justice shall be the stability of the times; when righteousness shall prevail; when nations shall seek each other's good; when the spirit of the beast shall pass from out of the earth, and the spirit of men in Christ shall come to take its place. For thou hast promised that the whole earth shall see thy glory. Let it dawn. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly; for the whole earth doth wait for thee, and in thine absence is dark and sad and sorrowful.

And we beseech of thee that this day thou wilt strengthen the hands of all those that are setting forth the kingdom of our dear Saviour. Be with those that are in destitute places, far remote from civilization. Remember those that are in sickness and under discouragements, seeking in new states to lay the foundations for future generations. Comfort them. Give them holier thoughts than other men have for the vicissitudes of their life. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt raise up more and more to teach everywhere the poor and the ignorant. And grant that men may be inspired by thy example, and by the example of holy men in every age, to go forth, doing good to their fellows, seeking not their own, but others' welfare.

And so let thy kingdom be advanced, let thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven, and all the world filled with thy glory.

Which we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Command thy blessing, Our Father, to rest upon the word which we have spoken. Grant that we may arouse ourselves as becomes men, and look at truth as becomes the sons of God. May we never forget our birth, our lineage, our destiny. May we hear in ourselves the calls from the heavenly land. All those monitions, all those fugitive inspirations, all those yearnings, and hungerings, and unsatisfied appetites, which the soul knows, may we understand to be thy call. Send forth from the land beyond, O our Father! those messengers that shall hail us, and lead us, and guide us to thy heavenly estate. Let us not be content to build three tabernacles here, though it be even on the mount of transfiguration. May we be strangers and pilgrims on earth, seeking another and a better country, even an heavenly one. Bring us there that we may see each other. Grant that there we may see all that we have known and loved on earth. Grant that, beholding the light of thy countenance, and loving thee supremely, we may be strengthened to a grander love than we have known upon earth. And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

IX.

LAW OF HEREDITARY INFLUENCE.

LAW OF HEREDITARY INFLUENCE.

“Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.”—Exod. xxxiv. 7.

This is the abrupt close of perhaps the most remarkable passage in the whole Scripture. We are accustomed to think that the knowledge of God’s character, like all other human knowledges, has been subject to an unfolding process; that it dawned little by little upon the world; that at first God was taught as the Source of power, the Author of all phenomena; that he was monarchic and governmental; and that in the amelioration of manners, and in the growth of civility and of affection, there was a preparation made to teach larger and more interior views of God; namely, what may be called the domesticity of the divine nature—his private and personal sympathies and affections.

And so, when we have arranged this theory of the gradual opening of the divine character upon the world according to the most approved modern notions of science, suddenly there blazes up on the far horizon of time the most perfect description of God that yet exists; and not only the most perfect, but the earliest. There it stands, the fullest and sweetest and most perfect description of divine mercy and love. Listen to this description, which was given thousands of years ago :

“The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.”

And then, abruptly, we fall on that passage which we have selected for our text—the doctrine of hereditary influence :

“Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.”

As it surprises us to find antedating our philosophy this moral character of God, so one may be surprised, also, to see, long before the era of science, this clear disclosure of that great principle which pervades human life, and which modern science is now beginning to formulate, and to teach as a principle—the transmission of hereditary influences, good and bad.

Some have thought that men existed before they lived in this world. It is a pleasing dream. It can claim to be nothing more than that. But admitting it to be so, they certainly were not consulted as respects their introduction into this life. It is not given to any of us to say when, nor where, nor of whom, we shall be born, nor what circumstances shall surround us. We are born into life finding nature already completed. Her works are infrangible, inevitable. We are placed within the circuit of a system the minutest part of which has been determined ; and we are not at liberty to overleap that circuit. Neither can we creep under it, nor in any way turn aside from it. We are born into a world where the whole economy of things was arranged before we came hither ; and we are obliged to take things as we find them. And the circuit within which we have any power to form or change issues is very narrow. There is a circuit of liberty ; but it is a very narrow circuit, within wide bounds of arbitrary and absolute enforcement.

Among the things which we find fixed inevitably in this life, is the circumstance, the necessity, of exerting influence and receiving influence. There is no evidence that this economy pervades the vegetable world. We see no proof that one plant acts directly upon others. It is true that a tree affects the things that grow near it ; but the tree does not act directly on those things. It prevents a certain influence from being exerted upon them by interposing itself between the sun and them. But men cannot stand alone in juxtaposition without more than simply affecting each other in this way. Men are made curiously, marvelously, both to exert and to receive influence ; and it is difficult to determine which tendency is the strongest. They are equipollent, probably. In some, perhaps, they may not be exactly balanced ; but the average is about the same.

The mind of man is unlike the attributes of the lower and nascent races. The nature of the human mind is such that a man must take on influence from all that are around about him, and must give out influence upon all that are around about him. We have no choice in the matter. Except by self-immuring, or absolute seclusion, we cannot break the force of this law. We do not alone influence men when we purpose to do it. When we bring the enginery of thought and emotion to bear, and determine voluntarily to produce effects upon men, then, to be sure, we influence them ; but more often we influence them when we do not think of it even. We cannot help ourselves.

It is impossible for a stove in an apartment, being filled with fuel, and the fuel being set on fire, to retain its heat. It has to throw it out. And it is impossible for a man, living under the stimulus of power and emotion, to retain his influence. He must throw it out upon men that are round about him.

We are born into a life where we cannot determine the nature of the influences which we exert. We can repress some, modify others, and develop still others; but we cannot determine the effect, nor change it. A certain influence we must exert one upon another.

First, we will mention *voluntary* influence, or the capacity which we have gained of influencing our fellow men by bringing power, or the causes of power, to bear upon them on purpose. This is the more familiar form of influence; and it needs, therefore, the less exposition. It is the foundation of all instruction. The parent influences the child on purpose. The teacher purposely influences all the minds that are brought under his care. Friends influence friends. We draw men to our way of thinking, and to our way of acting. We persuade; we dissuade; we urge; we enforce our urgency; and in a thousand ways we voluntarily draw men to and fro. This is the secret of poetry; it is the secret of oratory; it is the secret of power in life, man with man.

How wide the scope, how vast the sum of it is, in any man's individual life, no one can tell. All the things that you do to-day or to-morrow, all the things from which your motives spring—the basilar influences, the intermediate influences, the coronal or moral influences, the various elements that you develop directly in men—these things, going on in an endless series, through forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty years—who can estimate them? Who can form a conception of all the power that one thus exerts through so long a period of time? Who can measure it? Who can gather up in any computation the volume of light and heat that has been cast out from the solar orb through centuries? Who can tell what the stars have emitted of their own or reflected light? Who can form any idea of the amount of light and heat which the sun has given forth?

Now, take that more fugitive and less computable element, the direct influence which the positive exertion of thought, and emotion, and sentiment and passion, has produced upon our fellow men.

Then, besides all this, besides what we do on purpose, besides what we set out to do, there is the other element of unconscious influence which men exert—that which our nature throws out without our volition. For I hold that it is with us as it is with the sun. I do not suppose that the sun ever thinks of raising the thermometer; but it does raise it. Wherever the sun shines warmly, the mercury goes up, although the sun and the instrument are both unconscious. And we are incessantly emitting influences, good, bad or negative. We are perpetually, by the force of life, throwing out from ourselves imperceptible influences. And yet, the sum of these influences is of the utmost weight and importance in life.

A single word spoken, you know not what it falls upon. You know not on what soul it rests. In some moods, words fall off from us, and are of no account. But there are other moods in which a word of hope, a word of cheer, a word of sympathy, is as balm. It changes the sequence of thought, and the whole order and direction of the mind. A single word is often like a switch on a railroad, which, although it is a point almost too fine to be seen, yet is sufficient, when turned, to change the course of the train from one track to another, and perhaps from one road to another. Single words have often switched men off from bad courses, or off from good ones, as the case may be. Many and many a man, by a simple action which was born of virtue, and which passed by him unconsciously, has determined the fate of those who were looking up to him. A good man stands in the community as a tree stands on a lawn in summer, full of blossoms, of which it is unconscious, but which every one who goes past the lawn sees, and blesses the tree for. The sweet odor of the apple-tree is wafted in every direction, and myriads are participators of its life and efflorescence, or of its after-fruit. And so a great nature stands forth in bud, and in blossom, and in after maturation, and there go out from him in every direction influences for instruction, confirmation, inspiration. A thousand things which the man never thought to do, he does. More are the things which you do, not meaning to do them, than are the things which you do, intending to do them.

It is the simple weight of being, it is the inevitable radiation of thought and emotion, which produces a disturbance in other men's minds, and in the processes of their thought. A single example, silent, unspeaking by vocalization, but characterized by purity, by simplicity, crystalline and heavenly, has sweetened whole neighborhoods. And as the wax-taper burns in the temple by night, unconscious both of its own substance and of the light which it emits, so there be many persons who, in their humility, count themselves to be doing nothing in life, but who are diffusing the divinest influences in every direction. Fidelity, disinterestedness in love, pure peacefulness, love of God, and faith in invisible things, cannot exist in a man without having their effect upon his fellow men. It is impossible that one should stand up in the midst of a community and simply be good, and not diffuse the influence of that goodness on every side.

And the reach is incalculable. I have heard persons say that they seemed to themselves to be doing nothing in life. No man and no woman that is faithfully following the Lord Jesus Christ can be said to be doing nothing. It is not the eloquent tongue that speaks the most. It is not the heroic action which men sound forth that is, after all, the most potential in the affairs of men. The symmetrical example of holy

souls has a voice which sounds out further, and reaches forth a hand that is felt further, than more positive and more declarative influences.

That which is true of goodness is true, also, of evil. Men who are under the influence of the malign passions are sowing the seeds of these passions. Sparks fly out from them as from the chimney of a forge. Men there are who go driving through life under the stimulus of intense wicked feelings, as trains drive through the night, sending out a stream of sparks behind them which, lighting upon any inflammable thing along the road, leave a conflagration in the rear. The train thunders on; but the fire stays behind, to burn whatever is within its reach. Thousands and thousands of men there are who never intended to destroy anybody, but who have murdered scores and hundreds of men. Thousands and thousands there are who never meant to make anybody unhappy, but who have waked the fires of hell in many and many a heart. There are thousands and thousands of men who, if you should question them, would lift up their hand before God, and say, "I have never smitten my brother; I have never destroyed a soul;" and yet, in the last great day it will appear that these men, by their unconscious influence, have set on fire trains of thought and imagination in men which in the end utterly destroyed them.

Who, having the small-pox, or the plague, and making a journey withal, having gone, with the pest upon him, through car after car, through village after village, and along the whole line of the road, can, at the end of the route, sit down and count up what he has done? How does he know what germs of that dreadful disease he has sown wherever he has been? How does he know how those germs will fester here and there? And how does he know what widening circles of contagion, having their origin with him, will sweep through the country, carrying death and destruction every whither?

And where a man's heart is set on fire of hell, and he has spread his baleful influence unconsciously among the mercurial, the imaginative, the over-sensitive, and the receptive natures that are around about him, who can measure how much mischief he has done?

Born with divine intelligence, born with moral sentiments that ally them to God, born with instincts that should have led them upward, how many men have gone through life, distributing only those influences that animalize life, lower the tone of conscience, take away sensibility, destroy faith in goodness, and, finding men around about them all ready, like the open furrow, for seeds of immortality, sow therein the seeds of utter destruction! How many men there are that, without attempting it purposely, have slain many souls with dishonesty! How many there are that never conjured with men's truth, and yet left them liars! How many there are that never set out to make

infidels of men, and yet by their prosperity in awful courses have broken the faith of thousands and thousands in the existence of a principle of justice in this world, or in the belief that there is a divine moral government which discriminates between right and wrong!

It is not needful that a man should set out to do wrong. If you are bad, you cannot help doing wrong. And if you are good, you cannot help spreading goodness. A man will distribute that which is the inherent quality of his character. He that is clothed with virtue, or filled with the inspirations of a true piety—let him stand where he may, and he shines, and scatters around him the light of God. And he that is filled with wickedness—let him go where he may, and behind him, however many precautions he may take, that wickedness will spread. It is the inherent necessity of wickedness to breed wickedness and distribute it.

A man is responsible, not only for what he does on purpose, but for what he unconsciously does. And the load of responsibility grows as you take in these widening circles. More than this, the greater the nature, and the more ample the endowment, the more influence does a man exert both for good and for evil—reversing, precisely, the vagrant and corrupt impression of men, that a great nature is to have great liberty.

The moral tone of our literature in this respect is exceedingly bad. There is almost a maxim that genius has a right to be lawless as to its method of doing right things. But genius has no right to be lawless as to whether the things that it does shall be right or wrong. It may change language if it please; it may fashion art as it chooses; but as between virtue and vice, as between self-indulgence and temperance, as between purity and sensuality, piety and bestiality, genius has no rights. Every man is responsible for duty; and duty, and responsibility for it, augment in the proportion of being. If a man has but one talent, but one talent is required of him; but if he has ten talents, then ten talents are required of him. And so, if a man have wit and genius and knowledge, instead of having a right to be lewd and intemperate and full of all license of tongue, he, above all others, is bound to be strict, and sweet, and true, and pure. The greatest offenders that have ever lived on the face of the earth, have not been cruel robbers, vulgar thieves, or men wallowing in bestiality. The children of light, the fallen stars of genius—these are the men on whom God will lay the line, and whom he will measure with terrible severity.

It is not a small thing for a man to be organized and sent into this world a power-breeder. When a man has great fertility of thought and great play of imagination, it is not for him, like Swinburne, to set on fire all the low and base passions of human nature, and leave on

record a literature that Venus would blush to read. It is not a small thing for a man endowed with the gift of song to clothe the appetites in glowing stanzas that make drunkenness almost celestial and divine. It is abominable that persons on whom God has showered the richest blessings of nature, should wreath the beast that is in men with flowers and with laurels, and so win those who are already over-addicted to things low and sensuous by still more potent fascinations and charms and immoralities. Until within a comparatively recent period the sons of genius have wrought for Satan, and not for God.

But one step further. Our influence is not merely voluntary, or involuntary and unconscious, but it becomes complex, because it is compounded with the lives and the added influence of others. We are social. We come into relations with men. Our freedom touches theirs. We inspire them. But we do not change their nature. We, as it were, sow germs in their soil. These germs go on and become forces in their hands. So that that which we do to single ones, they propagate. We lose sight of the fulness and the scope of the things that we do, and they go on in widening circles through society. Long have we forgotten, if we ever knew them, things that we set in motion, the influence of which was good or bad, but the outwork of which we shall yet know.

When, under a divine inspiration second only to that of the sweet singer of Israel, Isaac Watts wrote his hymns, do you suppose he formed the remotest estimate of how those hymns, setting like an organist at the keys of the human soul, would go on playing the divinist melodies out of holy hearts through thousands and thousands of years? When the rapt and celestial Charles Wesley wrote those hymns of inspiration of his, and when the melancholy Cowper wrote his sweet hymns, do you suppose they dreamed how those soldiers of light, armed in full panoply, would go marching on, slaying doubt and unbelief, and making battle for Christ to the end of time? And when those masters of iniquity, the poets that have sung for Belial's lewd pleasure, wrote the vile things that, in euphony, and with all the grace and movement of music, go on chanting their bad errands and inspirations, do you suppose they dreamed of the causes they were setting in operation?

Books preserve the good and the bad. The thoughts which men embalm in literature live on long and long after their bones have crumbled back to dust again. And who can measure the power and the might of the good that a man can do? Or, who can measure the power and the might of the bad that a man can do? I would rather slay with my red hand, in rage, a thousand men, and murder them, expiating my crime (or rather, receiving an honorable acquittal at the

hands of the courts, and be praised by the whole community for being a murderer!) than to pollute any of the great sentiments of humanity with a work of genius so beautiful that it could not die, but would go on corrupting and corrupting generations of men, and so be the murderer of men's consciences and spiritual natures.

And yet, how little is this accounted of! How are men still putting laurels on satanic principles! How still are men looked up to, and their influence descanted on, whose whole power is to wake up the devil that is in men! How are these men that walk in places of honor and places of trust still unscorned and unslain! How do men whose whole work in society is to sour life, to wake up malignant passions, to stab men with jealousies, to perpetuate feuds, to create new quarrels, and to drag out whatever there is verminous and mischievous and belluine in human nature, still retain enough respectability to give currency to the evil that they do—doing it deftly, and seeking, by skill, and literature, and science, and genius itself, to make the devil deified!

Can any man be more a culprit, can any man be more surely under the impending wrath of God, that shall by-and-by fall heavily and rest forever, than such an one? Oh! how miserable will be the best estate of such men, though their names be bruited about, and though they walk in places of power!

But men's influence is not limited to their voluntary action, nor to the complex social relations which they sustain, and by which their influence is propagated indirectly. In some respects men hold in their hands the history of the future. The very solemn declaration of our text—"Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation"—this is the mystery of ages. If it were but on the one side; if men, having the power of beneficence, had the power to perpetuate it, we should admire that; but if it is a fact that men have the power of transmitting corruption, and so of influencing after times, who can fail to marvel at that? If that is a law, men may well stand appalled in the presence of such results as must fall out under it. And it is a law; it is a fact.

Men are empowered to transmit bodily ailments on the one hand; and, on the other hand, they are empowered to transmit bodily strength, symmetry and power. I do not believe in the conversion of the world simply by the preaching of the Gospel—that is to say, by the mere influence of moral truth. We must learn this great hereditary law; and we must include in our purposes of benevolence the wise selection, the perpetuity and the improvement of the race, by the observance of this great law of hereditary transmission. As long as men either know nothing or care nothing about this law; as long as they go on trans-

mitting, constantly, and haphazard, the traits, good or bad, that they have in them—so long it will require all the power of the preached Gospel to make up for the irregularities that fall out under the ignorance or neglect of natural law. We are perpetually bringing moral law to bear to correct evils that result from violations of natural law. And it is a solemn thing, that a man crippled by a life-long disease, of liver, or stomach, or brain, is left free to transmit to his children—four, six, eight of them—the same hereditary tendencies; and that they in their turn, spreading and multiplying, are left free to transmit those tendencies to their children; and that they again are left free to transmit them to the third and fourth generation, until some new strain of blood comes in to correct the old and corrupt tendencies. What a branching misery is within the reach of every man! And how does the physician, how does the physiologist, studying life as it is, see that this great law is perpetually developing itself, and shedding its fruits; and that men have the power, not simply of exerting influence by their mentality, but of transmitting causes, good or evil, by this hereditary law.

Men transmit not simply their constitutional peculiarities, but their acquired qualities. It is so in the animal kingdom, and still more forcefully so in the human race. Animals that have been instructed and made intelligent by drill, will have a posterity that will take on instruction much more facilely than they did. This tendency will not increase beyond certain limits, and these limits are comparatively narrow; but it is a tendency that is observed. We certainly see it in society.

Savage natures cannot take on civilization, until, by a process of repetition, the hereditary law has had time to work out. One generation moderately civilized, leaves another one that takes on civilization faster; and that one leaves another that takes on civilization still faster; and so on, until a generation is reached that is thorough-bred, and facile to take on education.

The children of educated parents are, generally speaking, easily educated. The children of dull and uneducated parents are not facile of education. They are slow to learn, and slow to retain or use what they learn.

Not only is this so in respect to intelligence, but it is so with regard to goodness. There seem to be exceptional laws; but I think they are scarcely to be explained. Men think that the children of the good are seldom as good as their parents, and that the children of the great are seldom as great. That depends upon *their* parents again. Any faculty in the parent that is used, tends to reproduce itself in the posterity, if it be a passion; or tends to exhaust itself, if it be a sentiment, and does not reappear in the posterity.

So that excessively nervous conscientious persons are very likely to have children that are without conscience. They use up all the conscience they have in themselves, they burn it out, so that there is none to transmit. It is the lower animal nature that seems to have a superfluity of power by which passions, set on fire, can transmit themselves. But the higher nature, exiguous, as it were, lacking stimulus and power, easily becomes exhausted, and is not easily transmissible.

And so it is with religious or spiritual-minded persons. If they become excessively spiritual-minded, or if they are over-educated religiously, then the moral side of their nature is exhausted, and they have no capacity to transmit the higher qualities, and their children come out with a dent where they had a prominence.

But the great law stands, nevertheless, that persons living with a wise regard to the law that touches every part of their nature—living virtuously and Christianly—tend to transmit virtuous inclinations, and tend to transmit a susceptibility that with more ease becomes truly Christian in their posterity. The children of intelligent and Christian parents are more likely to become Christians than the children of ignorant and wicked parents.

Men transmit, likewise, their acquired tendencies of thought. Lying men tend to have lying children. Dishonest men tend to have dishonest children. Thieves tend to breed thieves; murderers, murderers; drunkards, drunkards; insane men, insanity. These great facts are indisputable. They may not often be heard in the sanctuary; though it would be wiser if they were heard there oftener.

Not to follow the line of illustration further, I remark, first, that the power of a good life, both directly and indirectly or remotely, is, luckily, incalculable. One of the most potential motives of true holiness is the unconscious benefit which it distributes on every side—the far-reaching transmission of an eminent moral nature—the blessing that comes down, according to the word of God, from *the fathers upon the children, to the third and the fourth generation.*

There have been notable names in our own American history of men of holiness, and men of prayer, who died generations back, and whose posterity are carrying down with them to this day precisely the same traits that they possessed. From men and households that landed in the earliest days in the colonies, there has come down an unbroken succession of just such dispositions and tendencies. And every man that is laying the foundations of true manhood in himself; every man that is building himself up spiritually and Christianly—every such man, besides what he reaps himself, besides the bounty and benefit which his own household receives, besides the remote and direct influences which he will distribute all the way down through life, has the

promise and moral certainty of transmitting those same qualities which are in him, to unborn generations, so that when he is dead his influence will still walk and speak and transmit itself with growing power and in multiplying circles, to remote periods—to the third and the fourth generation.

Therefore, the sweetness and the blessedness which there is in the Christian life is not measurable by any of the ordinary standards. It is susceptible of an illustration far transcending any that has ever been given of it.

The malignity of sin is a terrible malignity, as it is revealed by this great law of the transmission of influence to posterity, either directly and voluntarily, or indirectly and unconsciously. There are multitudes of men that are careless of themselves. They are said to be their own worst enemies. They are men that are free and easy; that squander their money; that pervert their disposition; that corrupt the sources of taste and sensibility; that degrade their persons; that utterly ignore holiness of body; and that live all the way through life kind, it may be, but kind because they happen to be good-natured. And because they are good-natured and genial, people say of them, "They are clever fellows; they are kind men; they do no harm; at any rate they are their own worst enemies."

Now, a man that is spending his whole life to destroy himself, cannot stop with himself. No man ever destroyed himself alone, no man ever perverted the sources of his life in this way without at the same time influencing more than he knew or dreamed of. And the better fellow he is, the more likely is he to exert an influence.

More than that, it is not himself alone that is destroyed. The babe in the cradle is cursed. The daughter unborn is cursed. The heir and sequent children are cursed. And he scorns reproof, and will not be persuaded for his own sake, nor believe that he is in danger. And as one stands in a window when the street is crowded, and sows fire, casting it down not knowing whom it may smite, or between whose raiment and skin it may come, blistering and burning; so men stand transmitting influences that go down from generation to generation corrupting and corrupting human life. It is a terrible thing for a man to be a vicious man, and the father of vicious men; to be a drunkard, and the father of drunkards; to be a culprit, and the father of culprits.

It is difficult to speak with sufficient delicacy of some shades of sin—the sin of lewdness, for instance; and unless one be courageous, he can scarcely perform this duty. Yet, no other duty is more necessary. The raging and destroying sin of such great cities as this; the sin that lurks and corrupts unseen, and whose wide devastation is so much shielded by a false delicacy, or by circumstances which make

men shrink as conscious that they lack skill delicately and knowledge wisely to touch the most immedicable of evils—this ought certainly not to be omitted from a category of transmissible sins. And men that sin against their own bodies and against their own purity, set in motion a line of causes which go on working down through generations. For their own guilty, selfish transgression, their own delusive and short-lived delirium of pleasure, they curse, with a bane and a blast immeasurable, generations yet to come.

It is the statement of many statisticians, that the tendencies to disease which are hereditarily transmissible, lower the tone of life in whole kingdoms in Europe. Whole armies become centres of transmitted influences that break out in various forms of disease, weakness and corruption. The constitution is lowered in tone; and life, in whole generations, in certain nations and societies, is corrupted. And all this mischief springs from that one source.

Let those who yet are safe, but who feel the whirl and temptation on the perilous edge, turn to the word of God, and read those terrific passages which occur in the Proverbs of Solomon. Let them, as they draw near to the house of death, shudder. In the chill, and in the dark shadow, let them gain wisdom and turn back, and learn that in the way of temperance, and in the way of chastity, and in the way of absolute virtue of thought and imagination, there is not only plenary happiness to them, but increasing influences for good, and sweet and divine blessings, rolling over and over to their posterity.

I will add but a single consideration more; and that is a caution and a warning to all those who are consciously bearing in themselves the seeds of transmissible disease. I think there is no crime and no misdemeanor, to those that are instructed, greater than that of forming marriage connections under such circumstances. There are men who are born to celibacy. There are men and women that ought to have sense of duty and heroism enough to say, "It is not wise for me to put in peril posterity. I am marked of God. I bear in myself transmissible qualities of mischief and evil. I will not shed them abroad. I will stand alone; and with me shall end one series of sorrows." But there are many who, for want of instruction, go on transmitting disease to future generations. And we see persons coming together both of whom are marked for early death, scrofulous and consumptive; and out blossoms the bright bud of promise and of hope; and ere long the minister is summoned to sympathize with them for one babe gone. A second comes and goes. The house is full of mourning. The third, alas! does not go, but lives on, with shattered constitution, with battered powers, and comes down into life carrying pain, pain, pain, and suffering in increasing waves, we know not how long nor how far.

It ought not to be a difficult thing for any Christianly bred man or woman to say, "It is not for me to be a sower of mischief in the future." There is many and many a man that should say, "By the help of God I will live and die single."

This is a thing which ministers ought to preach about. This is a thing which doctors ought to give their attention to. A doctor ought not to follow disease, but go ahead of it, as far as may be, and prevent it. He ought to teach the community the laws of health. And on no point is there more need of knowledge than on this.

It may be asked, "If we believe this to be the terrible constitution of things under which we are brought into this life, how can we help living in a state of perpetual anxiety? Must not a man watch the glance of his eye, the turn of his hand, his every step, even? Who can but ponder and brood upon the mischiefs which he may be unconsciously propagating? If besides what we mean to do, there is that other wide and fruitful influence which is unconscious, what peace and rest can there be to a man?"

If you have built your character on truth, justice, purity and piety, you need not be afraid. Just give yourself liberty. Do not ponder nor turn back. Do not fritter away your life by these unprofitable introversions and analytical processes of mind by which you attempt to detect the nature of your thoughts and feelings. Be sure of one thing—that a round, robust, moral manhood is safe. Trust it. Give it power. Let it run. No man that is doing wickedly ought to be other than anxious; but any man that is conscious that he has a judgment that is directed toward virtue, and piety, and God, and the welfare of his fellow men, need not be watching himself. The only man that is free, the only man that may do what he wants to, is the man who wants to do only what is good. The only man that is free from anxieties and forebodings, is the man who has the testimony of God in his soul that he is virtuous. He stands strong. He is full of joy now, and is full of anticipations of joy in days to come, and of certainties of joy when the sun and moon shall have passed away.

Blessed are they that have trusted in the Lord. They shall stand firmer than the mountains. Far above the disturbing influences that annoy the feeble, the weak, the guilty, and the fear-driven, they bathe their head in the upper sky. On them rests earliest, and latest, and longest, the benignant rays of the sun. Afar off they are seen in all colors and all forms of beauty. They shall be as Mount Zion, which God loveth.

Let these words sink deep into your hearts—especially into the hearts of those that are beginning life. Make right choices. Choose for God. Choose for virtue. Choose for kindness, for purity, and for

truth. Live for the highest things. Put your ambition not lower than the sun, but far above it. *Set your affections on things above, at the right hand of God, where Christ sitteth.* So live, and you shall rise to immortality. And then you shall behold how, through countless ages, the benefit and the blessing of your life still streams on, and how, being dead, you yet speak.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, this evening, our Father, rejoicing in thy mercy. Thou hast made our hearts glad all the day long. We have dwelt in thy presence all the day long. Thy smile has rested upon us. Not on the earth art thou now shining more graciously, bringing forth bud and flower, than upon our hearts. We rejoice that we are the children of God, and are beloved. We rejoice, though our sins are many and aggravated, that thou hast forgiven them, and wilt forgive. Thou art full of mercy. Thou art perpetual in thy tenderness. None can throw themselves away from thee except their hearts are set to do iniquity. We rejoice, O Lord our God, for all the hope which we have that when this short life is passed we shall reach a better land where temptations cease; where all influences descending from thee, unbroken we shall stand as the children of the Lord, in full power of holiness, and in all graciousness and beauty. We aspire to that land. From amidst tears, and cares, and sorrows, and sighing, we look to that land of rest where no storm blows, where no bolts descend, where are no winter blasts, and where no summer languisheth, but where there is rest for the weary, and perfectness to those that have been striving, where all are at home, and thou art the Father, and we are gathered as thy children, rejoicing in thee supremely, and in the reflected love of thy soul taught to love one another.

Help us, O Lord our God, while we make toward that blessed port across the stormy sea. Though delayed, baffled, driven out of our course, amidst perils be thou still our pilot. Guide us more safely, and bring us safely, every one of us, into that blessed harbor of God. Help us to be jealous of every evil in ourselves; to fear and to dread sin; to cast it out, and to purify ourselves wholly from it. And grant that we may know what is sinful. Thou Holy Spirit by which the heart shall be searched, search thou us. O God! try us, and see if there be any evil way in us. May we not be content with our own thought from day-to-day. May we open our souls to the secret nature of our God.

And we pray that thou wilt make us more and more sensitive to things that are wrong. Give more and more sensibility to our conscience—the discerning power in spiritual things. Grant that we may so live that by our experiences, by our life, by our aspiration, by our labor and sacrifice, one for another, we may interpret more of the divine nature. And so, learning more of thee, may we come back to human life with better knowledge of it, and thus gain both ways. And so we beseech of thee that we may go from glory to glory.

Bless, we beseech of thee, all the members of this congregation now assembled in thy divine presence. We pray that thou wilt cheer those that are in despondency, and give light to those that are in darkness and perplexity, and confirmation to all those that waver. Grant that those that are heavy-hearted may be comforted by the divine Consoler. Bless those that are bereaved, and sanctify their sorrows. Strengthen all that are burdened with care and trouble. And we pray that thou wilt grant that this whole people may to-night experience in thy presence such a blessing as shall make them feel their nearness to thee. And give them faith of thy government and of thy power upon men on earth.

We beseech of thee, O Lord, our God! that thou wilt remember any that are absent from us—all those whose hearts turn hitherward. And may thy truth and thy Spirit which makes us rich be their portion forever.

And now we commit ourselves to thy fatherly guidance. We need but thee. All the blessings of life are doubled and grow more fruitful in thy smile. Make our affections sweeter by loving us. Teach us divine love. Make our mercies and our sorrows more beneficent. And guide us safely through unto the last. And then, in dying to this world, may we begin

to live to the other, and beholding thee, and the glory of the moral state, may we rise to blessedness, and through infinite gradations, forever and forever, ascend in happiness.

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



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt add thy blessing to the words spoken. May we understand the mystery of living. May we understand the mystery of thy providence in life. May we take from thy word the solution of many of those obscure and troublous questions which fall upon our thoughts. May we know that thou hast built us up like thyself. We are surrounded by vital influences on every side. Nor can we repress them. May we only seek so to purify our hearts, so to fill ourselves with gracious intents, so to come into sympathy with thy divine and spiritual nature, that all things which proceed from us shall be as of God.

Bless us, we pray thee, now, at the close of this Sabbath day. We thank thee for the day—for its morning, its noon, and its evening. Give us strength out of the bosom of this Sabbath to go down into the great week before us, to stand, to labor, and to suffer. Grant, we pray thee, that we may be men enduring hardship as good soldiers. And bring us finally, above all further suffering, beyond care and trouble, into thy heavenly kingdom, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

THE TRUE RELIGION.

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”—MATT. XXII. 36-40.

Our Master was in Jerusalem, and was sitting in the temple, as was his custom, receiving questions and giving answers; and almost all the points of interest that at that time were agitating the minds of men, were brought up in turn before him. By-and-by a scribe—or, as he is called in this passage, *a lawyer*, which was the same thing—asked him a question. The Jewish law was the Old Testament—the five books of Moses and the prophets, particularly. The lawyers, therefore, were the commentators as well as the interpreters of the Old Testament. They were accustomed to look a little further along than the simple ingenuities which other men indulged in. The question which was asked by this scribe, or lawyer, might be called a constitutional question. He said,

“Master, which is the greatest commandment in the law?”

He went to ~~the~~ marrow of the matter. He asked for the starting-point, the foundation idea, of the law of religion. And this is the answer:

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

As a clear, explicit, and unrevoked statement by our Lord, of what constitutes true piety, this takes precedence of all others. It never was modified. It was repeated in various forms. The apostles understood it as we understand it. “Love,” says the chief apostle, “is the fulfilling of the law.” John’s epistles are nothing but the application of this same thought to the interior consciousness of men in distinction from their exterior conduct. That immortal chant, the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians, is but an unfolding of the same idea—the dominancy of love to God and man.

And when Paul, in his old age, was about to lay down his ministry, and wrote to Timothy, whom he called his son, he gave him precisely the same views of the question.

“Now, the end of the commandment [the scope and purpose of it] is, charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.”

And all the specific directions—what may be called the ethical instruction of the New Testament—comport with this ruling conception of true piety. There is not a single instance in which duty is so instructed that it would traverse this conception of beneficence.

1. We have, then, an explicit revelation of the true nature of religion, about which the whole world has been in so much dispute. The essence of religion is *love to God and love to man*. It is toward God a whole and continuous sympathy and love. It is toward man a uniform and dominating disposition of benevolence. It is love, not as a passion, but as a sentiment. Toward God, the admiring, confiding, trusting, reverential love that children have for their parents, is the love that is commanded. There is in it just that touch of fear which produces reverence; which makes modesty in the child; which keeps him from forwardness and impertinent familiarity—no other fear. And we have no need to stumble. Every true household is God’s interpreter—not in respect to the perfectness of the disclosure of life, but in respect to the kind of exercise required of God toward him. It is just the kind which the loving child exercises toward a beneficent parent. Toward men, it is benevolence; a feeling of kindness; a heart that loves happiness; that finds itself more happy in making others happy than in anything else; that sees no better use to make of the whole force of life than as an instrument for making men happier. And as goodness and happiness are correlatives, men are made happier by being made better.

You will observe the intenseness of the repetitions according to the Hebrew method.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself.”

That is strong enough. This love is to comprehend every part of the mind, and all the time. The expression *love* is equivalent to our idea of dominance. It does not mean that we are to be thinking about God all the time. Nobody thinks of any one thing all the time, nor can. To do that would be insanity. Not the mother, nor the lover, newest and least expert, does it. It is contrary to our organization. For the mind is not a monochord. It is a complex instrument, and must alternate its states and experiences.

Nor does this expression teach that there is to be no other activity,

no other product of the mind—for instance, no worship, no veneration, no reason, no conscience, no indignation, no strife, but simply this: that the whole soul in free play, whatever part of itself it exerts, must be active in the spirit of benevolence—of love toward God, and of a true well-wishing toward men.

This we may easily understand by familiar parallels. We say of persons who are cultivated, that their whole manhood is cultivated. We do not mean that there is a thing called *cultivation* which they have in exercise, and nothing besides. We simply mean that there is a given mode of activity; that the reason and the affections act in a certain fine way; that they act with a particular quality which we call *cultivation*. When we speak of a man as well-bred and refined, we do not mean that his taste is the only active part of his nature, but this: that whatever other faculties are acting, they all take on the quality of taste, so that they are of the nature of this predominant influence.

Just the same is true of conscience. A man is said to be a conscientious man when conscience rules him. When we speak of a man as conscientious, we do not mean that conscience is the only feeling that rises up and acts, but that it so distributes itself through the mind that every other feeling which comes in acts conscientiously. And when we are commanded to *love God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves*, it is not meant that a man should sit down and love, love, love, love, with a repetition that is just like the ticking of a clock, which repeats the same tick over, and over, and over, and over again. It is not meant that we are to compress all the parts of our life into any such unity, or any such singleness, that they shall all be included in one thing, that one thing being love to God and love to man. It is meant that a strong predominant love to God and man shall so pervade the soul, that there cannot be in all the action of the mind one feeling that will go contrary to that spirit. The reason must be a reason acting in the spirit of love; the conscience must be a conscience acting in the atmosphere of love; the taste must be a taste acting in the atmosphere and spirit of love—love to God and love to man. The appetites and passions, and every other faculty of the mind, in all their power or variety or versatility, may act; but they will act as steeds that feel the one rein, which goes back to the hands of the one driver, whose name is Love.

So that there is to be a spirit of unity—a regent, dominant spirit which gives color, influence and character to every other activity of the whole soul; and this is to be true love toward God, and true love toward man—not love as a passion of elective affinity, but love as an expression of happiness—wishing, well-wishing, benevolence.

Now, our Master declares that the typical Christian man is he whose whole activity, reason, will, affections, sentiments, are pervaded with this spirit of charity; this love of others; this instinct of kindness; this benevolence; this well-wishing. This it is to be Christ-like. This it is to be Christian. This it is to be pious, or religious.

2. We have here, then, the physiological idea of the Bible in regard to the perfect man. In which direction does perfection tend? What is the ideal of perfectness in man? There have been a great many ideals on this subject. The Greek ideal was beauty, unfolding around about the intellect. In other words, intellectual activity, combined with taste, constituted the Greek conception of true manhood. There was with this, of course, a lower inflection of enjoyment. But the ideal of man to the Greeks was a thinker, and an elegant thinker. He that had intellectual power largest, most various, finest, and most fruitful, embodied, to their conception, the perfect man. The Greeks considered themselves as cultivated; and all the rest of the world were barbarians to their thought. The Greek divided the world into two classes—the Greeks and the barbarians. Whoever was not Greek was barbarian, according to his classification. This is just the same thing that has been going on ever since. The Englishman and the non-Englishman constitute the two great classes in London. In this country it is the American and the non-American. And it is so all the world over. Self first; and then all the rest—the unfortunate, the secondary. The Greek felt that he was the lord of creation, easily—not by purity; not by spiritual insight; not by largeness and perfectness of development, all around; but simply by the force of a philosophical exercise of the reason, and by the force of idealized taste. And that strain comes down to our day. We have Greeks, and have had from the time of Pericles to the present hour. There has been a line of philosophers coming down through Germany, and France, and England; and now in our day there are philosophers such as Buckle, who do not admit that the world has grown from moral causes at all, but affirm that it has made all its progress by the unfolding force of the understanding or the intellect.

The Roman conception of man was, not that he was a philosopher, but that he was a warrior, a ruler. Power, therefore, was inherent—not fineness of thought, not intellectual elegance and comprehensiveness, but the power to govern, the power to combine, the power to overthrow and crush resistance, the power to organize law and maintain obedient order.

In modern times, outside of the Christian circle, there seems to be another ideal. He is the great man who has the qualities of a statesman; who has the capacity to organize financial and political forces;

who can manage; who sits high in the seat of power; who has genius to understand and control men.

But Christ's ideal is neither philosophy, nor war, nor statecraft, but love—love to God, and love to man. When that spirit predominates in the soul, you have struck the key-note; you have got hold of the radical principle; you have touched the line of direction. And all unfolding, all growth, that is true and perfect, in time, is to take that direction. And when the perfect man shall appear on the earth—the *coming man* that we hear so much about, and that is so slow a traveler—it will be found that he is a man who has perfectly entered into this divine conception of love, reaching upward toward all things high and pure and noble, and reaching outward toward all sentient beings. And the capacity to create happiness will be the true ideal of man.

We do not mean that there will be nothing else but this simple sentiment or sentimentality of well-wishing, but that this is to be the critical test. All activities must be found to be under the influence of this one particular feeling. All things liked or disliked must be liked or disliked according to this central spirit. This must be the one atmosphere that pervades, overhangs, surrounds, interpenetrates the whole activity of the thought, of the imagination, of the sentiments, of the affections; so that they are all of them moving consentaneously, with a new inspiration and for the earnest of a true benevolence. Then we shall have the God-man—the perfect man in Christ Jesus.

3. If this be so, we have now the only true test of personal religion. And to all stages of progress, from the remotest step toward religion up to its highest ecstasies, we have an interpreting key.

There are many who do not believe that there is any such experience as that which is called *conviction of sin*. They do not believe that men, after all, are sinners—certainly not such dreadful sinners as to be subjected to proxysms of terror and of darkness. They think that this idea of conviction of sin is fictitious, and that men's imaginations are played upon by it. They think that men are deluded in regard to it. They think that conviction of sin is, compared to the truth, very much what phantasmagoria, or pictures produced by the magic lantern, are in the child's imagination, compared to realities, or daylight pictures or scenes. They do not feel that there is any ground or reason for any such experience as that. I cannot undertake to speak for others; but one thing I know—that if it be true that by the power of the Holy Ghost a man may come to the full consciousness that his whole being has been set to the wrong key; that he is living selfishly; that the law of God, the law of the universe, the law of his own happiness, the law of unfolding in God's providence, is beneficence, but that he has taken the wrong track; that he has applied the wrong principle; that he has

unfolded in controvention of this law; that within, and without, though there may be in his nature gleams of kindness and amiableness, yet the whole force, the direction and the organizing influence of his life, are all of them selfish, and not beneficent—if it be true that a man may wake up to find that he is on a mighty stream which is carrying him away from light, from goodness, from divinity—then I do not wonder that a man should be struck through and through with conviction, and that conviction should be of the most poignant kind, and that it should be searching, painful and unappeasable, just in the ratio of the sensibility and eminent excellence of the man's nature. If a man finds himself, all parts of his development and life, at variance with the law of God, is not the discovery of this monstrous condition anything?

A man thinks himself the owner of a hundred houses. A large estate has come down to him. Street after street was carved out of this estate, and building after building went up on it. He considers himself, and is considered by others, to be a millionaire. And he rests in a feeling of security, till some day there comes to him a searching lawyer, who says, "I have, in searching, found, back at the beginning, a flaw that vitiates every title that you have. You do not own, in justice, sir, one single piece of property. Not the value of one penny in this whole estate is yours." Would it be thought a very surprising thing if that man should start up and say, as soon as he could sufficiently recover from the shock, "I, that supposed I was a millionaire, am a pauper! I do not own a penny on earth." And yet, what is the discovery that a man has lost his property—so that he has kept his manhood—compared with the revelation, the vivid sense, that a man has lost all that happiness and all that immortality which every man, in his reason, and in proportion to his reason, anticipates in the future?

Conviction of sin does not require that a man should charge himself with murders and robberies and debaucheries; it does not require that he should believe himself guilty of all manner of vulgarities and vices and crimes. It is quite enough that, whereas the law of the development of true manhood is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," he finds out that his whole being has been flowing in another direction. To find that out, is ground and reason enough for distress—and for change, too.

Men have wondered whether there was any such thing as *conversion*. They have thought it to be some influence wrought by the coruscation of the spirit. They need not be in doubt on this subject. It is simple, and very easy to be understood, if these words of our

Master be taken as a test. When a man, from a life of self-seeking, and of indifference to his fellows and to God, changes the supreme end of his life, and becomes an earnest, full-purposed man of beneficence, and says, "My intellect shall think, my imagination shall invent, my sentiments shall work, my affections shall burn, for this one influence; hereafter I dedicate my being and all its forces to the service of God and the welfare of men," when a man takes this view of religion—that it is a coming into the spirit of love; that it is a translation out of the darkness of selfishness and self-seeking into the higher realm of true beneficence; when a man has come up into this state of being, is that not a translation which may well be called *being born again*? Some folks think that it must mean ecstasy, that it must mean a sense of reconciliation, that it must mean this, that or the other, because these are frequently incidents to that state.

I am not saying that when a man is born again, and brought into sympathy with the divine Heart, he does not experience reverence and rapture, and that some natures do not have convictions come through such feelings. I do not undertake to say that prayers under such circumstances are not spontaneous, and that songs of praise do not burst out spontaneously. I merely say that all these are incidental, and not characteristic, and that a man may have every one of them and not be a Christian. But no man can have what is the cause of them—if it be a cause; no man can have that intense disposition which fixes him forever on the side of God as a God of love, and fixes him forever, intelligently and purposely, on the side of happiness-making, so that he feels, "My property, my personal influence, my thought-power, my genius (if I have it), my skill, whatever capacity I have, shall make the world happier and better: I do not hold these things for myself; I hold them to make music with, for the enjoyment of others, as well as for my own enjoying; I am God's son, and God is my Father, and all men are my brethren; and there is not a better thing, nor a nobler thing, nor a more dutiful thing, than for me to spend the rest of my life in seeking to make men better and happier, and God happier, in my love,"—no man can have that and not be converted. Conversion is rising out of the spirit of self-seeking selfishness into the spirit of true love and true beneficence. And it is a noble experience.

If you thought there was such a thing as that, do you not think you would want to be converted? You do not believe in creeds, many of you, and you do not believe in liturgies, and you do not believe much in long faces and long prayers, and you do not believe in ostentatious charity—there are a hundred things that you do not believe in. Most men's creeds consist in what they do not believe, and not in what they do believe. And they are very fruitful creeds. And while there

are a thousand instruments of religion, and incidents of religion, and concomitants of religion, and collaterals, about which men have disputed, I put this question to you: If there be such a thing as, by the Holy Spirit of God, being brought out of a dominant self-seeking, into a spirit in which, morning, noon and night, the soul tends towards the promotion of the welfare of others, and the production of happiness in others, is not that something worth being converted into? Is it not something worth seeking for among men? And if that should take place in a man, would it not ordinarily make such a revolution in his disposition that one might well say of him, "He is as one raised from the dead. He is indeed born again"? Go home and have a little inquiry-meeting among yourselves, and it will not be long before you will be able to give affirmative answers to these questions.

Take the servant that has been hard to manage; that has been sly, and has secreted things; that has been fractious, and answered back again, and given you a world of torment. If that servant should become so purely simple and truly kind that from day-to-day you should find her not seeking her own, not answering back again, not *purloining*, according to the words of the apostle, polite, kind, seeking your welfare, and the welfare of everybody in the family, would not you, and everybody in the family, say, "Why, what has come over Betsy? Something has happened to her. She does not seem like herself. This cannot last long. It is too good for every day." And if that continued for some weeks, would not you say, "She is not the same creature. I never should know her. She is totally changed"? It is simply this: that before, she sought selfish ends through malign ways; she served with eye-service; but now she has come to a conscientious plane, where she is seeking to do her duty. And her kindness to you is unusual. She looks into your face with unwonted frankness. She does a thousand things that are not called for. Her acts of kindness are so abundant and so spontaneous that you cannot but feel that there is a new life awakened in her.

Suppose you should talk with her (for we hardly ever hear more than half the story in respect to household matters), and she should say, "I had been waked at untimely hours in the morning, and used to be kept up till everybody else had gone to bed—till eleven, or twelve, or sometimes, one o'clock, and nobody cared whether the washing was big or little; and I was scolded all the time; I was a mere servant; and nobody seemed to care for me. But my mistress has been going to meetings lately; and I have a great curiosity to go and see what it does to her, she is so changed. Now she is very gentle toward me; she is afraid I will work too much; she asks after my health; she comes into the kitchen sometimes, to try and help me;

and really, if I were her own daughter she could not treat me better than she has for the last few days. If it goes on so, I do not know what will come of it?" And suppose after weeks or months have passed by you should question Betsy, and say, "How about your mistress now?" and she should say, "Oh! she is a perfect angel. I never saw anything like it," you would say that *she* was born again, would you not?

When one has been running through the checkered experience of selfishness, nothing less than the inspiration of the Holy Ghost can inspire him and lift him up into a pure, consistent, uniform beneficence, that flows out, whether they think, or act, or will, or work. And everybody would say of him, "He is a new creature, born again."

Conversion and regeneration are not only really possible, but they are indispensable; and no man can enter the kingdom of God, which is a kingdom of love and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost, unless he is born again. Selfishness shall not enter into the kingdom of God. Holiness means the purity with which comes a true benevolence. Without this there can be no life of bliss here or hereafter.

4. This is the true gauge by which to measure the spread, the progress, of religion in the soul. We are apt to confound the question of growth in grace with the Greek idea of acquisition, self-culture. But nothing is more stimulating to culture than a true religion. And the gauge of religion is the intensity and the productiveness of the love principle. He is the greatest, and is growing most into the likeness of Christ, not that has the most scope intellectually, not that is the most fertile in his moral nature, not that is the most rapturous in his emotions, not that sings with the most spirit and understanding, not that prays with the most devotion, but that has the strongest and finest current of disinterested benevolence. And this is the spirit of Christ's declaration, "Who-soever would be chief among you, let him be your servant." Love goes to the bottom—never to the top. Love serves, and cannot help it. A person that truly loves another always longs for something to do for that other; and the harder it is, the better. The more unexpected and the more uncalled for the service, the more declarative is that which love always wants to make an exhibition of—its intensity. Love is self-sacrifice. It is service.

And he who grows in grace is not the man who is the strictest. A man may be so strict that he shall keep the Sabbath day like a Pharisee and a Puritan (and those two would keep it so tight as to crack every cord that you put around it); a man may pray so that there shall not be an unperfumed hour through the day; a man may keep angels busy carrying up his prayers; a man may be so zealous and so active that there shall not be a neglected street that his enterprise shall not rake

and search ; and yet he may not be a growing Christian. I must read this passage :

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

Men think that all they need is the power to speak fluently and eloquently. A great many say to themselves, “If I was only Demosthenian, or Ciceronian ; if I could only get up in meetings before my brethren, and tell them what I feel ; if I could only pour out my emotions in beautiful strains, with the air of such and such an eminent Christian ; if I could only sing as the angels sing, I should be a good Christian.” But the apostle says, “No ; if you speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, it will not make you a Christian.” And how he derides it !

Did you ever see anything that was, on the whole, so absolutely empty as cymbals—those great plates of brass which they carry around with big bands to make a crushing noise with ; tambourines—those great rattling humbugs that are used to make music in pantomime ; castanets—those rude instruments made on purpose to merely mark time or cover up the discords of other instruments ? These unctuous men ; these round, hollow speakers, who tell what the Lord has done for their souls, who pour out such streams of exhortation as make men’s hair stand on end, and make every young neophyte feel, “Oh ! that I was such a Christian !”—what says Paul about them ? That they are as “sounding brass.” That there is *brass* we know ; and that they are *sounding* we know. “Tinkling cymbals they are,” says the apostle, “mere nothings, of no account, without love.” Ah ! if there was only love there, then their speaking would be like the chants of those who sang together when all the sons of the morning shouted for joy ; but without love it is to be considered of no account, as having no validity. A proud man that speaks beautifully, a selfish man that prays splendidly, a worldly minded man that is full of exhortation and spiritual knowledge, is, Paul says, of no account at all.

“Though I have the gift of prophecy [of instruction], and understand all mysteries and all knowledge ; and though I have faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.”

Here is a prudent man. He is a grave man, and a sound, sound man. You cannot catch him anywhere. He can interpret every verse of the Bible. He has read the Bible through twice a year ever since he was a child. He can quote the whole of it, pretty much. There is not a single difficult passage that he cannot give a solution of. He is a perfect encyclopædia. He never did anything for anybody, nor cared for anybody ; but he feels that he knows about everything, and is proud to think that he knows so much, and that people look up to him and idolize him. He knows how idols feel when fools worship them ! And

the apostle says of this man, "Though he have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though he have faith, so that he could remove mountains, and have not love, he is nothing at all. He is a humbug—an empty show—a pretence."

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

What! can a man give his goods to feed the poor on any other ground than that of charity, or love? O yes, on a great many other grounds. It is very probable that the apostle had in his mind the donations that the imperial Cæsars were accustomed to give in Rome, where they spent millions of pounds sterling to furnish plays and theatrical shows, and distributed gifts among the people in order to secure their votes. They stole the revenues of the State in order to bribe the citizens of the State—a thing which is not strange even to modern times!

Paul says that such giving is not generosity. A man may give all his goods to feed the poor for partisan purposes, or from partisan zeal. A man may even give his body to be burned, to show how earnest and sincere he is in the cause which he has espoused, from other motives than love. And if a man has not love, all these things *profit him nothing*. Love is the only coin that passes current at the gate of heaven. All God's angels are enjoined to take taxes in nothing but that currency. You may carry up your gold, and silver, and copper, and iron, and lead; but they are good for nothing there.

He that has entered into the true spirit of love, and lives in it, and speaks of it, and sings in it, and works in it, is a Christian; but he that works, and sings, and speaks, and lives in any other spirit except that of love, is not a Christian. He has not reached the typical character which belongs to Christ's disciples. And just in proportion as this spirit grows in a man, he is growing in Christ. He is the truest Christian that is becoming the sweetest, the mildest, the easiest to be entreated, the gentlest. He that is overcoming the obliquities of his natural temper; he that is working out, one after another, every part and element of his nature, so that he lives habitually in a Christlike disposition, in a spirit of love, is the one that is growing in grace.

If then, you want to know whether you are growing in grace or not, do not ask yourself, Do you love to pray? Hundreds of men have gone to hell that loved to pray. Do you like to read your Bible? Thousands of persons have liked to read their Bible who were not Christians. Do you enjoy meetings? There are many things in meetings that people who are not Christians like to hear. A well-conducted religious meeting often presents the highest type of thought to the understanding and to the taste, in modern society. A properly served

platform leaves no part of the human mind unfed. And, therefore, for academic reasons, men may enjoy the ministrations of the sanctuary on the Sabbath, or on week-days. So that these things are not tests.

The true test question in regard to a man's growing in grace, is not whether he likes or does not like the instruments and accessories of religion, but whether or not he likes religion itself, with all its gentleness, all its self-denial, and all its fruits.

Child, do your father and mother say of you, "That child is sweeter than ever before?" If they do, you are giving evidence that you are growing in grace. Young man, do your companions say of you, "He never before was half so good a fellow as he has been since he went into the church. He has certain notions of right and wrong which he cannot be severed from, and his ideas of rectitude are rather strict; but he is always trying to keep us out of mischief, and to make us better. Wherever he goes he is cheerful, gentle, kind, beneficent, benevolent, full of goodness?" I like to hear such things said of a young man, because they are to me evidence that he is growing in grace.

If you should come to me and say, "Mr. Beecher, I do not think enough about religion: can you tell me how I can form the habit of thinking more on that subject?" I would say, "Do not trouble yourself too much about this matter. The power of meditation is one of the ripe fruits of the understanding, which comes later. Do not be discouraged if you have the main thing. A heart that breathes kindness and love—that is the main thing. Love God with all your heart, and your fellow men as yourself, and then you will grow in grace; and your growth in grace will be just in proportion to the growth of the instinct of love.

It is the true gauge, also, by which to measure the spread of the Gospel in this world. Of course, it is necessary to the spread of the Gospel that there shall be some external instruments. I do not mean that the Gospel can spread merely by the diffusion of sentiments. According to the word of the apostle:

"How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

The spread of the Gospel, of course, implies the spread of knowledge—the knowledge of Christ—the knowledge of true religion in Christ Jesus; but when these things have been spread, only the external instruments of religion have been spread. The spread of kindness and good-will, rather than of avarice, or greediness, or oppression, or wrong-doing—that is the spread of religion.

We are spreading religion by sending ship-loads and ship-loads of religion to China and to India, in the shape of Bibles and tracts—and

that is all very well. We are sending missionaries to those that do not know how to use a knowledge of the Gospel, and we are staying at home and praying for the success of these missionaries, who are working against caste, and sympathizing with the people. In a variety of ways we are sending the Gospel abroad all over the world. And that is right. But it is only the letter, the outward Gospel, that we are sending. And our missionary spirit is in the ratio of that benevolence which wishes well to every human being, and which will manifest itself most toward those that want most, and toward those that are out of the way.

In order to ascertain what your missionary spirit is, I need only to find out how you treat those that are around about you—your servants, your subordinates, your adversaries, those that are poor and unpopular and despised in the community. The man that does not dare to stand up for a *bad cause*, as he calls it—that is, an unpopular cause; the man that is afraid to be associated with any new movement which is inaugurated for the welfare of mankind; the man who is afraid to take hold of the foundations of things, because these foundations lie in the mud, and he does not want to dirty his white hands, or does not want to lose his position, that man has not the missionary spirit. He does not spread the Gospel who merely spreads Bibles. The Gospel goes on wings of love; and only he who knows how to send out a self-sacrificing heart, knows how to send out the knowledge of Christ. For the knowledge of Christ cannot be interpreted by the letter. You may send abroad thousands of Bibles; but not more than one in a million can learn the knowledge of Christ by the letter. There is needed, in addition to the letter, the presence and example of the living minister, who, carrying the letter, shall, by his labors for those who cannot pay him again, by the manifestation of disinterested love toward them, show them, through long probation and trial, what religion is in its real practical form. That is the fundamental idea of the Christian minister, and of all who labor in the cause of the Gospel—not that they are men who can utter fine sentences; not that they are expositors of philosophy; not that they are interpreters of enigmas; not that they are expounders of the law; but that they are men who have themselves been made men in that very spirit of God into which they would lead others. And they will be influential in proportion as they exemplify that which they at the same time teach the philosophy of.

When, therefore, I look out on the world, and ask what has been the measure of Christianity among men, I say, There has been a great advance; very much has been done; but I do not think the millennium is going to come in your day nor in mine. When I consider that of the twelve hundred millions or more of inhabitants of the globe,

there are not, probably, five hundred millions that have ever been reached with even the reflected light of the Gospel, and that all the rest are living in barbarity, in a savage state, in heathenism, I see that though a great deal has been accomplished, a great deal more remains to be accomplished.

Look at the nations of the earth. Look at the policies which exist in society. Look at the existing state of government. Look at the laws which prevail. Look at the customs that are extant. Are these customs beneficent? Many of them are. But is beneficence the general type of the customs that prevail on the globe? Is not selfishness national, as between man and man?

Look at the maxims and proverbs of the world. More than half of them are of the devil's coinage; and they express the wisdom of the malign feelings—the wisdom of selfishness.

Look at the laws of the globe. They carry a great deal of justice with them, and serve an important end, imperfect as they are; but how unjust is justice in this world! How rude an instrument, yet, is civil society! How clumsy are the machineries and appliances of government! And how are men made more to suffer than to enjoy by the operation of national government! There is only one thing that I think is worse. Anarchy is so bad that I think that it is better to have government; but government is the next worse thing. The grossest, the cruelest, the most selfish, the most easily pervertible and perverted thing in this world, is government. The history of government through the ages that are passed is a history red—nay, *lurid*. The history of law is the history of crushing.

Look at the progress of order. The world has been bedewed with tears by the struggles of what is called *order*. The spirit of national life and organized society is coarse, rude, barbaric, hard.

What is the spirit of Christian nations to-day? What is our position as a boasted Christian nation? Let a man search into our civil policy; into the spirit of our jurisprudence; into the spirit of our statesmanship; into the spirit of our commerce; into our administrations in every direction, and he will find that they are sadly wanting in this foundation element of love.

Whatever may be true of individual households, of churches here and there, and of single creeds, can you say that the community has become Christianized so that it is characterized by the spirit of purity and true love? Is not self-seeking yet the law of national life here? And we boast of being in advance of all other nations in justice and equity and righteous dealing. If any other nation boasted half as much as the Americans do, they would be called conceited and vain. It is only because we are so smart that it is not conceit in us! We are

the Christians *par excellence* on the globe. And not only does our Christianity take the precedence of that of all other nations, but everything we have is superior to anything that belongs to others. We have a better country, and a better government, and better laws, and better usages, and better scenery, and better trees, and better rocks, and better water, and a better summer, and a better winter, and a better everything, than anybody else has. We are brought up to admire everything that is American, and to hate the haughty British, the frog-eating French, and everything that is foreign. O! We are the people, and wisdom shall die with us! And yet, when you come to look at the great features of life in this country, at the actual display of this spirit of good-will, and kindness, and true love, how barbaric we are still!

Look across the sea, and behold those nations that are armed to the very teeth. Nations are to-day just what, in the old feudal times, barons' castles were—private dwellings armed against invasion day and night, and all the time. Look at the hundreds of thousands of men of France, that are kept in camps; and look at the almost millions of idle men that are supported by those that labor; look at those that are operating against industry in both ways—by making other men's work in a measure unproductive, and by eating up what they produce to support them in the maintenance of brute armed force. Look at the condition of Germany, associated with the Prussian Empire, armed, and waiting for conflict. Look at Austria, that is recuperating, that is like the lion wounded but getting well, and will soon be ready to strike again with his crippled but now well-nigh recovered paw. Look at the Russian Empire, in which there are signs that betoken war. Listen to the sounds that are in the earth. What are they? They are the sounds of the ponderous trip-hammer running night and day in the shop where deadly weapons are made. They are the sounds of the gurgling red-hot iron in the foundry where cannon and other munitions of war are cast. They are the sounds that come up from the yards where night and day men are at work building ships for warlike purposes. All over the world the ingenuity of mechanics is exercised for the production of more efficient means of inflicting brute violence. And has Christianity spread?

We are going to have, in September, the meeting of a Christian alliance representing the Christian nations of the globe. They are coming together to rejoice and triumph over, and to seek to promote, the spread of the Gospel in the world. A kind of Protestant Oecumenical Council, it is to be; and we are going to see if we cannot make the Lord Jesus Christ Pope infallible! And yet, what a sad thing it will be for them to tell what is the condition of things in all the globe! What a sad thing it will be for them to tell how the world is yet

ruled by Satan, with a triple crown of selfishness on his head; and how lust, license and avarice are supreme!

Ah! my brethren, there is a work to be done yet on earth. "The kingdoms of this world are not yet the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And when he comes to reign, it must be after centuries of summers have ripened the human heart, and brought forth other fruit than this acerb and bitter fruit of hating and of fighting.

5. We are able, in the light of this test of true religion, to form some judgment respecting the religious sects, and the different churches that are swarming upon the earth, in altercation and in strife, either holy or unholy. The earth is filled with different denominations, and they are fighting each other, in apostolicity, in authority, and in orthodoxy, or purity of doctrine.

Now, let me not be thought to deery organization, nor apostolicity, whatever that may be—I hope it is something good! All churches ought to be apostolic, and all churches ought to be invested with authority, and all churches ought to be orthodox, and all churches claim that they are; and they are rivals of each other. What I wish to do, is not to decide between them, but to ask you whether in the history of Christianity it has been a fact that the emphasis of the church has all been put on this—that true religion is *loving*. One man says that you are in the true church when you are in the church that has been regularly handed down from bishop to bishop from the very apostle's touch, and when you have been duly confirmed by its ordinances. Another man thinks that that is the true church which conforms exactly to "the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

A farmer shears his sheep, and has a huge heap of wool. The scourer scours it, and the carder cards it, and the spinner spins it, and the weaver weaves it, and the tailor cuts it out, and makes it into the soldier's dress, and the yeoman's dress, and the child's dress; and here stands the man pointing to the sheep, and saying, "Look at this vast wardrobe. This is *the wool that was once delivered from the sheep*." After it has gone through the hands of the scourer, and the carder, and the spinner, and the weaver, and the tailor, and has been made into every fantastic shape, they say it is *the wool that was once delivered to them*.

The apostles gave to the world a few elementary truths, and men have taken them, and scoured them, and carded them, and spun them, and woven them, and cut them up, and put them into priests' garments, and elders' garments, and deacons' garments, and all sorts of garments; and now they are quarrelling over the "faith which was once delivered to the saints." As if the doctrines which they hold would be recognized by those to whom they are ascribed! There is

X.

THE TRUE RELIGION.

INVOCATION.

May 15, 1870.

LOOK upon us, our Father, graciously. Thou hast not forgotten to awake the earth, and send, therefore, its blessings. Neither hast thou forgotten us in the watches of the night. We remember that thou hast overhung our spirits through the morning. And not clearer and brighter is the sun in the outward heaven than is the sun of love, that Light of the soul which thou hast shed abroad, whose power we have felt, and whose invitation has brought us hither. Come, then, we beseech of thee, that we may more especially know and feel thy presence and thy power in the sanctuary. And bless past blessings. And by sacred memories may the house of God again become sacred—dearer to us than any other place. Here wilt thou comfort, lighten, strengthen and inspire. Here wilt thou help us in fellowship one with another to sing thy praises. Here may we listen to thee. Here may we find our happiness in devotions to thee. And may the services of the sanctuary, and all the joy and occupation of this live-long day, be such as shall honor thy name. Which we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

many a doctrine that is called Pauline theology, of which Paul, if it were presented to him, would say, "What stuff is this?" And I think there are very few churches on earth at present that Christ could be made a member of. The qualifications of most of them are, I think, such as would exclude him from membership in them. And men differ and are contending, and are filled with violence and temper, on account of the various claims which they have set up. And they go so far that they have not a spirit of true Christian charity. Having received the benediction of the Holy Ghost, and having proved themselves to be lineal successors of the apostles who were appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and were his representatives, they have shown this spirit of love by burning men up, by throwing them into prisons, and by making them wear chains all their lives. I believe that, much as has been the joy that has been made in this world, more has been the misery that has been made by men who represented religion and called the church the *Church of God*. The tears have been ocean-deep, and the anguish has been heaven-high; and no historian's pen can ever compass that story of divine anguish. One single monarch—Philip II. of Spain—slew in one nation more than eighty thousand men, and went avowedly to cut off every man, woman and child in the Netherlands. For the sake of his faith he would not have hesitated to devastate the globe. While the Mahomedans were thundering at the gates of Eastern European Capitals to propagate their faith, we were thundering back from the West to propagate our faith. The cannon, the spear and the dungeon have for hundreds of years, been occupying a very large portion of the time of those that called themselves the descendants of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, we have been engaged in this kind of persecution. If a man does not believe just as we do, how sweet soever his life may be, however pure and gentle and large he may be, however much his conduct may be characterized by the spirit of love, if we know that he sets aside the articles of the church, and does not believe in them, that ends it. We put doctrine against love. Though a man has all love, if he has not doctrine, we reject him. Whereas, if there is one thing that is unquestionable, it is that the only thing that doctrine is good for, is to make the life what it should be.

And yet, the vast system of man-made doctrines, and the vast retinue of services, and the vast organizations of the church, have not tended, in the main, to produce gentleness, and peace, and love, and beneficence. On the contrary, they have tended to produce envies, and jealousies, and conflicts, and cruelties unutterable. And the practice of the Church of Christ on earth for a thousand years has been simply infernal. I know what I say. I speak no hasty words. I declare

that through long periods the characteristic actions of the organized external churches of the Lord Jesus Christ have better befitted the administrations of devils than of men. This externality, with all its pretense of authenticity, apostolicality and traditional regularity, is continually vaunted and held up. And when men say what I have said, and what I say again, and what I will testify to so long as the breath of life is in me, that the spirit of Christ is love; and that he who truly loves God and men is a Christian, no matter in what church he is found, nor in what circumstances he is placed, men say, "You are knocking the foundation out from under things." In other words, the world has taken up the instruments of religion and put them against religion itself, and preferred the instruments.

Now, I take religion; and if I am let alone I will not deny its instruments. I believe in instruments; I believe in doctrine; I believe in church organization; I believe in the utility of wisely administered ordinances. These things are important. But I say that wherever the two come in conflict, I must take religion. No casket is ever so precious as the jewel that the casket carries. Religion is the jewel, and the church is the casket which is carrying it; and we must learn that the spirit of the Lord, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, humility and gentleness and meekness in Christ Jesus are the signs and tests of Christ present in anybody's heart. And where these are found in a man, do not stop to ask what name he is called by, but take him, for Christ is in him. They are Christ's, not who are in the regular church, but who are in the regular heart, in the regular spirit.

Sometimes people think that this is undervaluing ordinances. No, it is not. It is laying a law upon them. It is laying a law upon preaching that will be most wholesome to it. When men cease to worship outward form; when they come to see the interior of things; when they come to see the actual condition of things, and to act accordingly, the world will be better, the church will be purer, men will be truer Christians, and the cause of God will advance faster upon the earth, and all mankind will sooner behold the salvation of our God.

When you look over the condition of society, nothing but the most abject self-complacency can lead men to say, "The world is pretty well off. What is the use of disturbing things any more? What is the use, just as soon as you have got through with one revolution, as soon as one war is finished, of going into some new-fangled notion, some new progress, some new cause?"

Do you, then, think that the world is ripe in love? Do you really think that men, as you know them, are good enough? Do you think that the spirit of true Christian love dwells in them? Do you think that the relations of all classes in society to each other are equitable,

and in accordance with a true spiritual beneficence? Do you think that the men who groan at the bottom of society are there rightfully? Do you think that the laws of labor have all been explored, and settled on the basis of true Christian beneficence? Do you think that the relation of the sexes is all settled, once for all, and that the whole form and structure of the household, and all the elements of wise and virtuous living are found out, and that the law of purity and love is already exemplified, and that the world is so nearly perfect that it only needs a little rubbing and polishing before it will do?

Every thirty years a generation die. And what a host of men do pour into the eternal world in that period! Do they go infernal or angelic? What is the condition of those multitudes that we are continually sending to the other world?

Oh my soul! when I think what man is, and is to be, then it is that infidelity tempts me most. Then it is that I most have to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." If God is Father, and he feels as I feel as father, then why has he lingered so long? Does God never weep when *the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now*? Does God sit happy? Is there peace in heaven? Why is darkness yet upon the globe? Why are men so coarse? Why are they slow to understand even what religion is? Why do we idolize everything but love, and then tread that so ruthlessly under foot? Yet, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and that this divine spirit of love never came of man's invention, nor from any physical source, but from God. It is the inbreathing of the other life. And I do know that there is a spirit at work which, though it lingers, will at last bring in summer, and that the whole earth shall see the salvation of the Lord, and that gentleness, and mercy, and goodness, shall, with justice and truth and righteousness, rule the earth. Even so, Lord Jesus! come quickly.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

O Lord our God! the whole earth doth wait for thy coming. Through ages thy servants have been praying, Let thy kingdom come. Why doth it tarry? Why is it yet delaying? Knowledge is running to and fro. Men in every part of the earth are awaking. And why is there not sent abroad the spirit of love, and concord, and kindness? Thou, the merciful, the forgiving, the soul-rejoicing Saviour, where art thou? There is power in the earth, and men and nations are dashed one against another; but where art thou, the Merciful? There is wisdom in the earth, and men are building up the outward face of things; they are covering the sea and land with the trophies of their skill and power; they are developing nations in refinement; and they are multiplying conveniences around about them—they are living as better animals than ever; but where is thy Spirit? Where is that unity of kindness that makes one love another as himself? Where art thou, O loving Saviour? who, rather than give suffering, didst suffer; who, rather than smite unto death, didst thyself die; who didst give thy own loving life, and lay it down, and take it again, and dost wear it, now, forever, for beneficence in sympathy and love? We beseech of thee that we may see the signs of this thy second coming. Having come once to reveal, to teach, to inspire, come now to victory, we beseech of thee. Let thy heart-beat be stronger than all the forces of this world; and let thy blood become the blood of kindred shed for the sins of the world. At last may it bring into blood-kinship all the nations of the globe, by a living blood, an atonement of love, an unquenchable power, that shall consume selfishness, and teach men to live by their higher nature. Lord, when wilt thou come to deliver the captives? They are many. There are many that groan beneath thrones, and under chains, and in dungeons; but more are there that groan beneath the weight of that sin and that captivity of the flesh which prevail so widely in all the earth. When wilt thou rescue man, and give him birth out of the flesh and into the spirit? Grant, we beseech of thee, that that sacred, secret, all-cleansing fire may come forth from thee, and that that we may behold men, indeed new creatures in Christ Jesus, walking forth in the fragrance of divine love, and full of the beauty of thine own heavenly nature, carrying not alone the letter, but the spirit of the Gospel, every whither.

We beseech thee to forgive our sins of selfishness, and self-seeking, and self-indulgence, and heedlessness. Forgive us all that has made us unlike thee. And we pray that thou wilt inspire us truly with more than pentecostal favor, that we may go forth bearing the sacred message, and the sacred spirit of the Master, everywhere. We pray for all classes and conditions of men. We pray that all the sufferings and self-denials, that all the turmoil and care of life, may work for the spiritual emancipation of those who are exercised thereby. We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant more and more that every one may live, not by the sight nor for the senses, but by faith and for the Spirit.

We pray that thou wilt comfort all those that are gathered together this morning, mourners in the midst of this joyful assembly, with sad memories going back evermore to their trouble and sorrow. May they see through their tears, as Mary did. May they understand thee, speaking to them and comforting them.

And grant to be near to all that have come up this morning conscious of weakness, and seeking to be strengthened to-day in the inner man. Grant that their faith and hope may be revived, and that they may feel, in the presence of their God, that they have been crowned to-day. And may they go forth bearing a sceptre of power before which temptations shall yield and depart.

Bless all those who are strangers in our midst. And if they are lonely, and seem solitary in the midst of multitudes, and almost desponding in the

errands of life, still grant that they may look to their Father's God, and pluck up courage and patience to await the opening of thine opportunity. And may none find their faith failing them. May those that watch, and those that wait, and those that weep, and those that pant beneath burdens, and those that cry out and have no answer, and those that in darkness lift up hands unto thee, and do not feel thy touch—may all of them, still have faith to wait. For thou shalt appear unto every one that waits patiently for thee.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that thou wilt bless the labors of this congregation. May the truth be a living truth, here, cleansing not only but comforting, enlightening, rejoicing. And we pray thy blessing to rest upon the officers and teachers of our Sunday-schools, and upon all the classes. May the young be brought up in the fear of God, and early enter into the sacred life of Christian love. And we pray that those who go out every Sabbath day into the streets, into the highways, into the jails and hospitals, to preach the Gospel, to comfort those that are sick, to cheer and encourage reformation in those that are out of the way, may themselves have the spirit of the living God, and be clothed with the power which is from on high.

We beseech of thee that we may not be made indifferent by our blessings sitting together in heavenly places, and rejoicing in all the privileges of the sons of God. May we not forget, nor be slow to succor, those that are without these privileges, or that care for none of them. May our hearts be merciful in proportion as we are blessed of God.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt sanctify us by the experience of life. Grant thy divine Spirit, that shall not only guide, but cheer and sanctify. And grant that so long as we live we may walk in fellowship of the saints, in the communion of the Spirit, and in the hope of everlasting life.

Look upon all the earth. Behold the nations that sit desolate and in darkness. Behold all that are struggling and seeking to emancipate themselves from despotism. Behold all those nations that are jealously guarding the privileges of the few, and treading upon the rights of the many. Lord, we beseech of thee that thou wilt appear the Vindicator, not in wrath, not in fear, not in blood. Come with persuasion. Come with the transforming summer of love. Come and bring men together in the bonds of sacred fellowship. Teach men to overcome evil with good. By the might of thine heart, and not by the terror of thine hand, rule over all the earth, as thou dost rule in heaven. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit.—*Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank thee for the manifestation of thy Son. In the dark night, how sweet and fair shines that Star of Bethlehem through the troubled cloudy sky, breaking apart, at times, to let its light over the sea, storm-tossed. How bright is the truth of loving which thou hast made possible to our understanding! We have felt some breaths of the same spirit, and there are days and hours in which we rise up into the tranquility and peacefulness of that utter love to God and to men, and in darkness and under the domination of evil feelings we fall away, and forget everything but to doubt. O Lord! we are as thy servant of old, that would walk with thee upon the sea, but sank at each step. Pluck us by the hand. Bring us into the ship indeed.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may live more and more in the spirit of sonship. More and more may we, by the power of true love, labor for the upbuilding of thy cause, and rejoice everywhere to see men happier. And

with every word, and every look, and every self-denial, may we seek to increase the sum of joy in the world. Oh! how many are making misery, and making men cry! May we be among those who shall make them smile. May we seek to make the heart happier. May we seek to rub away the crease that sorrow and care have put upon the brow. Grant that we may make the heart rich. And so may we live and labor, until thou hast need of us above. And then solve all mysteries. Then, in the one dying, give us knowledge and life, and bring us where all shall know even as we are known. And to the Father, the Son, and the spirit, shall be praises everlasting.—
Amen.

XI.

THE IDEAL OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

INVOCATION.

May 22, 1870.

WILT thou look upon us graciously, our Father, and pour in upon our waiting souls the consciousness of thy presence. Reveal thyself as thou hast promised that thou wilt unto thy people; and grant, if we may not have the full disclosure and the glory of thy face, that we may, according to the grace in which we are enlightened and developed, have some intimation that shall give us the thought of thee, and the belief that thou art thinking of us, that we may be delivered from all doubt, that we may be able to turn away from all things that hinder or soil the joy and the purity of this our worship. Reveal thy word, and all its hidden truths; and lift us by the power of thine own grace, and by thine own love, up into that blessedness of communion in which the heart shall spontaneously call thee *Father*, and receive thy welcome. And so may the service of the morning, and of the evening, and of all the hours of the day, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord our strength and our Redeemer! *Amen.*

IL

THE IDEAL

OF

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

“Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”—*JNO. XIV. 22, 23.*

No susceptible nature ever reads these marvelous chapters containing Christ's love-talk, in the seclusion of home, and in the last hours that he was spending peacefully with his disciples, without feeling that they are full of meanings which ordinary life furnishes no clue for. Baren or shallow natures are apt to feel that they are extravagant; that they are a kind of spiritual sentimentalism. Venerating natures, that yet do not reach up to the level of these discourses, are wont to think that they are mystical and marvelous. But great hearts have always felt that they were the unfolding of a life of which they had had glimpses, and toward which they were striving, but which had no perfect realization in their experience, and probably none in the experience of any except the Master himself.

In the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and perhaps seventeenth chapters of John, there is a more perfect dwelling upon the ideal Christian character and life than in any equal compass in the New Testament. And according to the teaching of our Master, here and elsewhere, the perfect Christian life has the following great constituent elements.

1. It is a life of vital unity with God. It may or may not be consciously in unity with him; but the teaching is, that, as the body derives its stimulation, its food and force, from its contact with the material globe, and from its obedience to physical laws, so that which Christianity includes derives its vitality from its connection with the invisible God. Its force and its food are from no lower source.

In our text Christ promises, not obscurely, to his disciples, that if

they love him, and if they will but open the door through which alone God can enter into the human soul, the great golden gate of love, he will come in, and the Father with him, and that there shall be a love-life begun.

2. It is declared, as an element of the typical Christian experience, that it shall be a life of perfect peace.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

And again, elsewhere, we find the apostles interpreting this:

“The peace of God, which passeth all understanding [or analysis], shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Here is what the apostles spoke out of their own experience—an experimental interpretation of this promise of the Master. The “fruit of the Spirit” is said to be “love, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost.”

Here, then, are two great elements—first, a unity with God through love; and second, the effect, which is a dominating peace.

3. This state is declared to be one which delivers the soul from the power and the domination of sin. When the soul has risen into this state of communion with God, and has entered upon this deep spiritual tranquility, it is declared to be sinless—a matter which has perplexed, and annoyed beyond measure, interpreters and experimental Christians. Such language as this, in the fifth chapter of the first epistle of John, has been very much a matter of debate:

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.”

This is another peculiarity of the Christian state, *par excellence*, that it is sinless; that men have ministered to them, not simply “joy in the Holy Ghost,” not simply Christ’s “peace which passeth all understanding,” but the power to “overcome the world.”

4. It is taught us, unequivocally, that in the typical Christian state of mind, there are forces developed of which, in our lower natural state, we have no hint, no warning; forces that are not ordinarily developed, and that cannot be developed by any secular and purely wordly education; forces which we are accustomed to call miraculous.

If you will turn to Matthew’s Gospel, you will find Christ enunciating this in the most distinct manner, in the seventeenth chapter. The disciples had asked him why they could not cast out these evil spirits.

“And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief.”

It was because they were living on a lower plane where the power to do such things was not known.

“For verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you.”

Lest it may be thought that this was a transient and metaphorical teaching, listen again to a declaration in the same book, and the twenty-first chapter, where the fig-tree was cursed, and it withered away, and the disciples, remarking it, were astonished.

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

Now, that this was not understood by the apostles themselves as being a mere metaphorical or figurative promise, is shown in the directions which are given by them for the healing of sickness, by prayer of faith and by their own power of working miraculous cures, which they held in reliance upon, or in explicit faith of, this declaration of the Master.

Here, then, are the four great elements which constitute Christian experience. It is a life of unity with God, developing the supreme power of love in the soul. It is a life in which there is such an influence exerted upon the mind that all the soul is perfectly harmonized, and yet perfectly alive, so that it rises into a “peace which passeth all understanding.” It is a state in which such is the power of this divine influence of joy and peace in love that the man has control over himself and over his circumstances, and sins not. It is a life and experience which goes still further than this. When a man has been lifted up into this state of feeling, he is existing upon a plane in which the relation of his mind to matter itself is changed, and new forces and new possibilities are involved. And that which a man cannot be and cannot do when he is living on the lower plane, he finds, strangely, that he is able to be and to do when he has risen into this higher spiritual condition. He has power over natural law. We have power now over natural law; but it is in a lower way. It is because I have power over natural law that I am a husbandman, and that you are a mechanic. It is the knowledge of natural law, and the knowledge of how to use it, that means skill and ability among men.

The Christian development, the typical Christian experience, it is declared, carries this power over nature still higher. And there are forces in the human soul that are developed at last which give a man a more permanent control over nature than is possible to the common state.

Here, then, Christian experience has the divine presence and a joyful companionship. It lifts up the soul above the agitations of human life and heart-experience; it frees it from the power of all ordinary temptations that assail it; and it develops a simple force which gives law and knowledge and power over the physical world, to an extent

which is not vouchsafed to ordinary conditions of life. Such is the Christianity of the New Testament.

I remark, in view of the forgoing exposition,

First, that this Christianity, or this development of Christian experience, is but the unfolding of the elements which belong to every man's nature. It is the unfolding of latent forces that belong by constitution to the nature of the human mind. Every human soul has this latent power.

It is not, then, a special superaddition in the form of a technical result in Christianity. Christ, who was the sublimest interpreter, the grandest natural philosopher, that ever lived, unfolded to us the knowledge of this hidden life of the soul, and taught the method of disclosure, and that it is the birthright of man to come to this higher range of development, of power and of experience.

It is by spiritual agencies, and not by physical appliances, that it is to be achieved. It is by love, and not by the passions and appetites; it is by the exercise of the supersensuous faculties, and not the physical senses; it is not by science, but by faith, that we are to come into this higher state. But all men have in them the roots of that which may be, by the divine Spirit, developed into this higher fruit of Christian experience.

Now, of this view, which I have not attempted to modify, but which I have made strong on purpose, that it may strike you as something quite transcendental—as something far above the ordinary actual experiences of human life—of this view, you will say, “Does it not rule out the experience of Christendom, generically considered? If that which you have declared to be the true Christian experience, *is* the true Christian experience, are there any Christians? Are there churches full of them? Are there houses full of them? And does it not strike despair to souls that are conscious of their inability to reach any such view, and to make any such attainment as this?”

Those are fair questions, and I will answer them fairly. The answer depends upon whether this Christian character which I have presented to you as the true experience of Christian life is the average experience, and the condition of all hope and all acceptance with God; or whether it is the typical, the ideal character, or pictorial view of that which is possible, and to which the Master is bringing his disciples. It will depend upon whether it is understood that, in practice, this is an experience that is reached gradually, by gradations, or whether it is understood to be something which every man has when he is converted. It depends upon whether it is regarded as a state which men come into at once, or whether it is that teleologic or final condition toward

which every man is aiming, and which he hopes to reach either here or hereafter.

This can be settled, I think, in no way so safely as by watching Christ's own practice in gathering his followers. He certainly taught in such glowing words, and repeated his teaching in such a variety of ways, that no man can avoid comprehending it without doing violence to the spirit and letter of the New Testament.

He taught the reality and the possibility of this high state of soul which I have been delineating to you; and he taught that this was preëminently the Christian state—the ultimate object of aspiration among men. To be in communion with God; to be perfected in love; to be in so high a range of being, in consequence, as to have absolute self-harmony and tranquility and perfect peace; to be by this exaltation lifted above the ordinary annoyances and temptations and sins of humanity; to have the power of thinking things, knowing things, and doing things which do not belong to lower states of experience—this, if anything, was taught in the New Testament, by our Lord Jesus Christ.

But then, we find that he did not make it the test of discipleship that men should be in that state. While he taught it, and while he held it up as a picture, he did not say that no one was a Christian artist who could not paint in himself just such a picture. He, on the other hand, showed that there were gradations allowed, practically, in admitting men to the fellowship and life of the Christian.

For, there were some that would have said to him then, as there are multitudes that would say to him now, "We cannot rise to this conscious personal communion. We earnestly desire to love God, but at best the conception of God is very vague and fugitive, and we cannot love God as we do father and mother." And, out of condescension to that, Christ says,

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."

It is as if he had said, "Can you not yet rise into that emotive and conscious glow of love toward the unseen and invisible Father? Very well, then, take the next step to it. Here are his commandments. Put yourself in the line of the divine love, and keep these commandments, and we will accept that." And so he went down to their infirmity in that direction.

But there were a great many who could not even live a life of obedience, in distinction from a life of emotion. That was too hard for the poor and the miserable. And he says to them, "Well, then, follow me, and learn what you can. Become scholars of mine, and I will teach you, from day to day, what to do. If you are able, love and triumph. Or, if you cannot do that, obey and grow. Or, if you can-

not even comprehend the precepts, then follow me, and I will day by day teach them to you." In other words, "I will accept a desire to learn, a willingness to be taught, and compliance as fast as possible with what you are taught."

But there were some, apparently, even lower than that. One of the most marvelous passages in this regard, in the New Testament, is that which is contained in the tenth chapter of Matthew, where Christ says,

"He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple"—

What! if he does not understand anything about decrees, fore-ordination, election or reprobation; if he does not understand anything about the Trinity; if he does not understand anything about the atonement, or the ground and reasons of it; if he does not understand anything about the church, or about holy days and holy practices? Yes; here it stands, without a single mitigation.

"Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

We find, then, on the one side, the wonderful disclosure of the possible experience of the soul. And our Master says, "This is that to which you are to come." And we find, on the other side, the same Master saying to men, "If, practically, you cannot do any more in this direction than to have good wishes toward those who are living a Christian life, and you will help them, if it be but to give them a cup of cold water, you shall not lose your reward."

The ideal is exalted, and immense; but the practical administration under that ideal is full of gradations—for I have not given you half, or one in twenty, of the gradations that fall out in the actual administration of this ideal in the Lord Jesus Christ himself, going down almost to zero, and amounting to this: "If there is in mankind one person who is willing to follow me, and learn, and learn how to practice what he learns, that willingness shall be sufficient. He shall be called one of mine. He shall be a disciple." Christ did not demand the full type of Christian experience as a condition of acceptance. He set the ideal before men; and then he accepted, or promised to accept, every one who would sincerely strive after that ideal, no matter at what point he stood, from the highest endowment of genius down to the very child himself. Every man who, looking toward this ideal of purity and peace and divinity in his soul, says, "I will follow after it;" every man who, pointing toward this ideal, says, "I accept this life, and I will try to realize it"—every such man, no matter how slowly he advances, no matter how imperfectly he lives, has the sympathy of Christ. Of all strivers in that direction, he says, "They

shall be mine." He calls them his *scholars*. And those that go to school, or are willing to go to school to Christ, to learn by what steps they may be good; those that are willing to go to this university of experience; those that are seeking for this graduating power of Christianity, however limited may be their attainments, their knowledge, their victories, are pupils. If a man has gone into that school sincerely to learn, and is willing to practice what he learns, he is accepted of God.

Let me now make the applications.

In the first place, to go back to a figure that I have already introduced, Christ opens a school. He marks out the grades. He pictures the highest results that are attainable in a Christian—though they are not given in full disclosure. He also shows that while this is the ideal after which all scholars are to strive, the lowest form, in his view, is as really in the school as the highest form.

When a young person begins a course of liberal education, he says to himself, "I propose to be admitted." He is to become, it may be, an artist; or, it may be, an engineer; or, it may be, a lawyer; or, it may be, a preacher; but he says, "My first step is to learn to read."

Some strong-brained boy, born in the woods out West, and brought up without the slightest learning; some Abraham Lincoln of a boy, lies on his belly by a pine knot, marking from a book, with a rude stick, letters in the sand, and saying, "I *will* learn;" and there goes by a Yale or Cambridge student that has just graduated, and is fuller of knowledge than he ever will be again; and people say to him, "What are you?" "A scholar, sir," he replies. "Oh, yes," they say; "and we have scholars here, too." And they open a door and point to that boy of the blacksmith's forge, who has raked the embers together to study by; or to the boy of the cabin, who is lying by a pine knot, uncouth, awkward, rude in his dress, but with a much-fingered book, studying the profound mystery of addition or subtraction, or trying to spell letters into a word,—and say, "There is a scholar." "You call that a scholar, do you?" "We do. Do not you call him one?"

When I see old *Cœur de Lion* in the picture of a battle, when I see the gigantic form that is shown in athletes among men, how strange it seems to me to be carried into a nursery and have the blanket thrown off from the cradle, and see lying there a little six-months-old boy, that cries for milk, and that only, and cannot help himself—and then to hear such a helpless, diminutive creature called a man! And compared with this giant in the field, it is a pretty poor beginning for a man. But it is the Lord's ordinance that the higher any creature goes in this world, the further he has to run before he makes a jump. Flies, that are very low, are born perfect flies to start with, and

have the full use of themselves from the moment that they are out of the egg. And as you rise in the animal kingdom, the longer the life, the more important the functions, the higher the scale of being, the longer the period of development. And as man is the head of creation, the furthest is he from himself at the start, and the longest has he to wait before he comes to himself.

It is true, therefore, that in that cradle lies a man. But it is all folded up in its case. There are the rudiments which are to be developed into a man. The proudest artist, the noblest orator, the most brilliant warrior, the grandest statesman, was no bigger than that child once, nor different from it. And it is in the power of that child to rise, circumstances favoring. And it is perfectly proper to say that he is in the line of manhood.

Here are the disclosures of Christ as to what is possible in the human soul. He declares what religion is to do for men. What is it to do for them? Is it to give them a few better clothes? Is it to keep them from eating and drinking too much? Is it to improve their morals? Is it to make good bankers and merchants and nice citizens of them? Yes; but these things are only buttons, the trimmings, as it were. They are mere incidental things. The great work of religion is soul-building. That which is meant is the divine power which descends on the soul, unfolding its secret, latent capacities, until it rises into possible communion with God, face to face; until it has transcendent harmony and absolute peace which passes understanding; until it is able to tread under foot all ordinary sins; until it is able to speak even as God speaks, as a creator, being a son of God, and the heir of heaven. That which is meant is such an unfolding, such a translation, such a spiritual education, such a scope or sphere or power as this. And that it is which is held up in the New Testament.

But Christ says, "I do not demand that every man who comes into my church shall be all this at once, any more than I demand that a man shall be a man before he has been a babe. Almost as far back as you have a mind to, only say that you put yourself in the line of growth, only say that you take these great blessings, and are traveling, and learning, and going on toward perfection, and I will take you in." This is the spirit of the New Testament, and this is the doctrine of the ideal and the real, and of the relation of the practical in a struggling Christian life to the realization of this blessed ideal.

Here, too, you see what has been the confusion in men's minds. There are many persons who have supposed that they could assume this ultimate condition, this final state, which men come to through the ages sometimes, in rare cases, from individual development and disclosure of being. Fanatical natures have supposed that this could be

assumed as the gift of God immediately upon their conversion, and have gone off into fantastic experiences, into strange nervous developments, which they supposed to belong to this mystic disclosure of Christ in the soul.

It does not invalidate these declarations, that there are so many counterfeits and so many mistakes in respect to them. This is that condition toward which we are to be brought. It is the condition toward which we are walking and striving. But no man comes into it at first and at once. We *grow* into it. We *unfold* into it.

So there is hope for every earnest, sincere soul that wants to be one with God. For any man that is in doubt doctrinally; for any man that from the force of education finds himself unable to accept this or that particular category of doctrine, or this or that mode of stating a particular doctrine, there is great consolation. People say to me, "Can a man be a Christian and not believe in this, that and the other thing?" It is very difficult to say what a man may not lack and yet be a Christian. When a man is in the perfected state, he will doubtless be "armed and equipped as the law directs;" but while he is on the way to it, and striving after it, it does not follow that he must be right ecclesiastically, dogmatically, or even practically, in any one of a hundred things. He may be as full of imperfections as a boy that is beginning to write is full of bad spelling and awkward letters. He may become a prince in literature, he may be even an editor, some day; and yet judging from what his beginnings are, you would say, "It is impossible for him to become anything?" All these imperfections are to be corrected. They will correct themselves. Bad writing corrects itself, and bad spelling corrects itself. Men get used to good spelling. They never learn it, exactly. It is an art, rather than an attainment. And so it is in respect to spiritual things. I do not care what point you start from—whether from the naturalism of Persia, or from the starting-point of truth and lies among the Brahmins, or from among the naturalists of scientific times, or from the outer circle of the Christian sects—from among those that are remotely orthodox, or almost orthodox, or quite orthodox, or more than orthodox, or super-hyper-orthodox; no matter where you start, the fact is just this: You have human nature in you; and that human nature has the seeds of this grand Christian development. And you may start where you will, so that you *start*, so that you put yourself under the drill of the divine spirit of love and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and so that you work having that ultimate object in view, with all your heart and mind and soul and strength. These other things are not without their validity and value and effects: but there are none of them that are vital. So far as they are not hindrances,

but helps, they come through this power of God which is unfolding us, and bringing us to that perfect manhood which God thought of when he made man, and which is the typical idea in his creation.

We see, secondly, the popular fallacy in respect to Christians and Christian life. Men suppose that when we are born again by the Spirit of God, we are brought into a perfected state—a state so much more eminent than that out of which we came, that it may be called a *miraculous translation*; and that instead of looking for sin and weakness and imperfection in himself, the Christian ought never to do anything wrong. A Christian is one, certainly, that sets out heartily to do what is right, and means to persevere in doing what is right; but I pray you, if I start from here to go across the continent by the northern route to California or the Columbia river, am I not a pilgrim, a traveler, bound to see the Pacific ocean, though I do not travel in a direct course? Does it follow that I shall take a short cut? Does it follow that I shall go forward every day? Does it follow that I may not sometimes sicken by the way, and wait for weeks? Does it follow that I may not mistake my path and take circuitous courses? Does it follow that I shall not be beguiled into a hunting or botanizing expedition? Does it follow that I shall not be charmed with some settlement, and persuaded to remain there for months? All these things may take place, and yet I may not give up my purpose of crossing the continent and seeing the Pacific shore. I may have all these aberrations and delays, and yet they may not change the grand fact that I am on my way to yonder distant coast.

A child means to be educated; and that purpose is not to be invalidated by the fact that his mother keeps him at home very often to do house-work, or that she permits him to go a visiting or playing, or that he plays truant (for some children—not good children, not nice Sunday-school-book children, of course, but some children—do play truant), and forgets his books, and looks after flies, and butterflies, and what not, and is full of whims and caprices; full of spirit to-day, and all deliquescence to-morrow; full of all manner of infirmities. He is a scholar, and is getting his education, notwithstanding all these hindrances.

And so a Christian is Christ's scholar, and is in Christ's school, and his heart is set on education, and his purpose is to learn; but oh! with what lingerings! with what accidents! with what diversions to the right and to the left! And yet, taking it year by year, his eye is on the one object which he has set out to attain, and he means that more than anything else, and is following on after it.

Suppose a person says to me, "Is X. C. a member of your church?" and I, having a great opinion of him, joyfully say, "Yes sir—yes."

“Well, I thought so. He cheated me yesterday.” And my reply, naturally, to him, is, “Only once?” I would be glad to compromise at that. When I put the spiritual law of God on the interpretation of a man’s thoughts, what is murder? How many murders there are committed by good men! When I judge a man by the law, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” how much crime there is that goes on under forms of law! How much there is of selfishness that goes on under the name of benevolence! How little there is of essentially disinterested love, even in good men!

But do you expect that men who are going to school will never make the blunders which belong to education? This world is God’s school-house, and I am trying, as his teacher, to set before you prescribed courses which you ought to follow; and you are mainly seeking to follow them; but not without blunderings and stumblings. You are not saints, nor anywhere near saints. Nobody is a saint till he is dead; and it is not safe to call anybody one till then. In this life—especially while in the midst of its struggles and strifes—how few men there are who can draw a straight line to the ideal, and then keep on that line?

“We have not a high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

Men are like the vessels in a fleet that seek, with currents and winds, to make a given point or rendezvous. Some move forward in a direct line, some are driven far in one direction, and some are driven far in another; but at last they all cast anchor in the one harbor. And so, while sailing across the sea of life, some men keep their course, some are drifted in one way, and some are drifted in another way; but we trust that they will all make the harbor at last, and cast anchor, and be saved.

Nor are men to be supposed to be saved because they have put themselves in the right career ecclesiastically. Many persons blame men, as I have intimated, because they are so erratic and imperfect in their Christian lives. My reply is, that this is a matter which belongs to the human condition under which our great strife is taking place. But there are a great many others who say that when once a man is in the right church, and is properly ticketed and labeled, he is like an express package, that will either go through or else be settled for by the company. There is a great deal of anxiety as to which is the true church, and there is a world of investigation and study on that very point. If men would study half as much, and strive half as hard, to do the thing which the New Testament really requires—to love justice and mercy; to fear God and serve him; to follow on and know the Lord in the way of love, and peace, and purity of mind; if men would

spend their time in doing that half as long or half as actively as they labor in ascertaining about the apostolicity of the Church, the canonicity of rules and regulations, the orthodoxy of creeds, and the whole complicated, ponderous machinery of ecclesiastical school-houses, there would be more saints and more nascent saints than there are now. The fact is, that ministers make themselves ecclesiastical engineers, and are so busy running the machinery of the church that they have no leisure left for anything else. And there are a great many laymen who are so busy studying the enginery by which the church operates, that they take no comfort of the voyage. They are mere engineers' pupils.

✓ I do not undertake to say that churches are of no use. They are of a great deal of use. They are means of conveyance to heaven. They are instruments of education. But they are not divine, in any other sense than that in which things that are man-made are divine. Not a church on earth—not the Greek Church, nor the Roman Church, nor any one of the Protestant Churches—is any more divine than civil governments are. God has not anywhere written down what he wants, and called it *republicanism*, or *monarchy*, or *aristocracy*. He made men so that they must live together in society; and that necessity involves the growing out of it of some sort of government. And we have at last come to a knowledge of the fact that what the form of that government shall be is a matter of experiment. And we scoff at the idea of a *jure divino* government. Whether it be a government with a crown or a ballot-box, we say that it is a human device just as much as husbandry is, and just as much as the mechanic arts are, which have their foundation and necessity in nature, and are unfolded by the ordinary processes of investigation and thought. And so it is with the church, and all the ordinances of the church. There is not an ordinance that a man may not neglect, and yet go to heaven; and there is not an ordinance that a man may not observe, and yet, in spite of it, fail to get to heaven. A man may be a Catholic, and kiss the Pope's toe from the day of his birth to the day of his death, and not go to heaven. A man may be a Friend Quaker, and eschew all external forms and ceremonies, and yet be a good Christian, and get to heaven. Our salvation does not stand in the kind of school-house that we are in.

I went to a school (heaven help the mark!) in a little brown school-house, that smelled of wasps and boys, and I sat there through the weary day, and did not learn much; but there were other scholars that did. That school-house was nothing to me; but shall I take my individual experience and rail at the common-school which some profited by, though I did not?

All churches are good churches to those to whom they are good, and all churches are poor churches to those to whom they are poor. Turn your ox into a clover-field, and will it not get food? Turn your canary-bird into the same clover-field, and will he get food? Different kinds of creatures require different kinds of feeding. There is truth in the saying that "what is one man's food is another man's poison." Emotive and poetic natures require one sort of organization. Orderly and methodical natures require another sort of organization. Some men that are freer and wilder than others, will not take on a restraining organization. Let every man have that liberty which belongs to him. Only, here is the ideal of Christian development; and whether you get it in the church, or over the church, or under the church, or out of the church, get it. If the church can help you, take it; and if it cannot help you, do not take it. And do not sit down and grumble, but find some other way. If the church is the best aid, take that, not because it is perfect, but because it is better than anything else; but if there is anything better than the church, take that. Avail yourself of whatever will best promote the development of your soul into love and peace and power through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Men who are seeking this ideal development of Christian character by morality, by general good works, by a daily faithful use of the knowledge which they have, may be Christians, although they are not the highest style of Christians. They may be Christians, although they come far short of this ideal Christian character which is laid down as the mark and as the criterion in the New Testament. Men are not so much to distress themselves about whether they are Christians or not, as simply to ask themselves, "At what point in the progress am I? How far have I got along?" The New Testament recognizes the fact that there is a wide diversity in the phenomena of individual Christian life. The apostle declared that all were not able to receive the truth. And Christ said to his disciples, "I have many things to tell you, but you are not able to receive them." I perceive many doctrines which are called orthodox, and which in a measure or in a manner are rejected of men whom I believe to be Christians. The nature of these men's minds is such that they are not able to receive those doctrines. The mode of statement is not yet sufficiently generic to take in all forms of truth. The same truth can take on a multitude of different forms.

Take any one great truth; as, for instance, the truth of the natural character of man, as low and sinful. The commanding fact is this: that every living being on earth is sinful to such a degree that he needs the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost; that he needs the divine touch and stimulating influence from the beginning to the end of his

life, to bring him up to true manhood. No man reaches his final disclosure by any power that is in himself, or any power that is in the natural world, or any power of education, or the power of any social influence of society. Every man must come to his true and higher manhood by the power of God in the soul. And every man is depraved to the degree in which he needs that power.

Men may receive in one age one philosophy, or one exposition of the truth, in another age another exposition of truth, and in another another; but the essential point of unity is there, though the man may be so rude or cynical that the regenerating power of the spirit of God never can come to his true nature. And men may vary endlessly and infinitely in their exposition of the truth, or in their power of accepting this or that way of presenting the truth, and yet be Christians. And so I think that many persons in churches who are called heretical are Christians. Though they cannot accept doctrinal statements of Christian truth, they do in the main accept that grand ideal of which Christ was the only embodiment, and which he more perfectly presents than it was ever presented before. And they are following after Christ. And it is doing that which constitutes them Christians—not Christians on the best model, it may be; but Christians that are on their way toward perfection. They are of those of whom the apostle says, "They shall be saved so as by fire." Nevertheless, they are in the train, and are on the road, and by the grace of God shall yet see eternal life.

The Christian attainment in this life will vary in one and another. Some seem to grow but little, and some seem to grow very much. There are infinite degrees of variation in the actual attainments of men in this world, partly from the forces which they inherit, partly from the education which they receive, and partly from circumstances which help one and hinder another. A hundred things there are which vary the successful application of man's purposes to the great end of spiritual life. But every man that knows in his own soul that the thing which he wants and is aiming at and seeking is a perfect manhood in Christ Jesus—him I call a Christian—a follower of Christ.

We must, therefore, make our definitions larger and more charitable. We must make our terms of admission to Christian communion larger and more charitable. We must, above all things, explode, first or last, the idea that man-made institutions can be so constructed, justly and rightfully, in the sight of God, as to exclude those whom Christ himself personally receives, and whose life gives evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. No church on earth can stand when God looks upon it and sees that there are many that are not permitted to come into it, not because they are not followers of Christ, but because they do not know how to accept the interpretations and con-

structions which some men put upon the great problems of divine truth.

A man need not, therefore, despair because he is not orthodox. A man need not despair because he is not a Christian as he sees that other people are Christians. I would preach a catholicity as broad as the heart of my Master. I hold up this great conception of divine life in the soul—this fact that, by the power of God, it is possible for us to have a spiritual life that shall lift us easily into the precinct and presence and communion of God; so that the influence which comes upon our soul, from day to day, reflected from the sky, reflected from the earth, reflected from living things, reflected from business and society, shall still be the influence of the divine power.

I believe that under that soul-guidance and inspiration, if we will only yield to it and be led by it, there is, connected with this royalty of love-life with God the profoundest harmony and peace in our own selves. The torment of the battle between the upper and the lower life in man ceases or may cease. Of all battles, there are none like the unrecorded battles of the soul. Without banners spread or trumpets sounded, with no visible conflict and clash of arms, God and angels know that the fiercest battles and bitterest strifes of the universe are those which are waged in the secret places of men's souls, where the earthly, sensual and beastly elements of human nature are in conflict with that which is pure and sweet and spiritual in them. These are the battles that God registers, which are going on in men, and which, blessed be God, issue, or may issue, in the "peace which passeth all understanding," in that land where love, and conscience, and faith and hope appear, chanting the song of victory, and wearing upon their heads the laurel wreath, and where selfishness and pride and passion are humbled to become the servants of the soul, and no longer to be its despots and masters.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be." You and I probably shall not reach this attainment in the present life. But there are some, I think, who come very near to it. When I read the lives of saints in the old Roman church; when I read the life of Eugénie de Guérin; when I read of the Madam Guyons; when I read of one and another in the Protestant Saints' Calendar, that seem to have lifted themselves up, or to have been lifted up, above the perturbations of this lower atmosphere, and to have lived in perpetual joy, I do not feel inclined to doubt that there are some who do reach that state. I am disposed to think that it is not simply a final condition into which we are to come at last, but that it is a normal condition, and one into which we may come, and in which we may abide, in this life. So that when I see in a soul great goodness, and great benignity, and great peace, and great joy, and a state of forelooking toward its heritage, I do not say within

myself, "This is something unnatural." I do not say, "His appetites and passions have burned out and left only his higher manhood." I do not say, "This is the quiet of autumnal decadence in him." No, that is the direction of true human growth, toward joy, and peace and power.

I go further, and say that I do not doubt that there was revealed in the apostles a miraculous power. Nor do I doubt that there have been ages since the time of the apostles in which there have been here and there single natures that were ordained nobly, and, by education, or in the divine providence, brought into such conditions that they reached the altitudes of this higher disclosure, and had power such as does not belong to ordinary mortals. I do not doubt that there may be some persons who are able to break through into that power yet. And I believe the time may come in which the race will have reached that stage of development in which it will be found that there is power in the soul of a man to use natural laws in ways that are now misunderstood, and that we call miraculous. I believe that this is among the ultimate disclosures of Christianity in the individual soul.

But it is not for you nor for me, probably. I am one of the lingerers. I reach so far up that I can begin to see what they are doing above me. You reach in the same direction. And yet, though I have some faint conception of the reality of that state, it doth not yet appear to me what I shall be. But I know that when he shall appear I shall be like him. For I shall see him as he is. This I know: that my life is hid, now, with Christ in God; and that when he shall appear, I shall also appear with him. I shall never know myself, I shall never make my true appearance, until I stand enfranchised and rejoice in the glory of God in the other world. Then I shall reach all that I have dreamed of, and aspired to, and striven after, and fought for—and not till then.

Between this and that, battle, night and day, turbulent elements, unbalanced forces; but then, my own better self, my educated self, all that in me which is unfolded and brought into symmetry—the qualities which have been developed under the training of the schoolmaster Jesus, who has shone out upon me and made me what I am—these are tending to draw me upward and onward toward my heavenly home.

In Jesus, the First and the Last; the Alpha and Omega; the soul's Nurse; the soul's Mother; the soul's Saviour; the Providence and the Grace; the all in this world that we can know of God—in him the Father dwells, and he in the Father; so that they who have seen Jesus have seen the Father also. Him I shall see in the magnitude and in the glory of the then revealed beauty of the Godhead. And I shall be like him, as the miniature is like the full size; and I shall be satisfied.

When the tide has been coming in, I have often seen how it chafed and fretted, running into some narrow-mouthed bay, filling it, swirling round, and lapping up on the shores, till by-and-by, still flowing, and flowing, and flowing, it filled the bay full,—the tide had spent itself, there ran a smoothing ripple all over the surface, and the whole bay at last was at rest. And so the soul, while yet it is being filled, is disturbed by ripples and eddies; but by-and-by, when it shall have been filled full of the power and presence of God, it will be satisfied, and will be perfectly at peace, and will be full of joy; and singing forever and forever shall be its sweet employment in heaven. Sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and the old dark, mourning world we shall remember as children in manhood remember the moment's shower of their youth that broke up their pleasure-party. All the sufferings that we have experienced while getting our education, will, when we shall once have come to our perfect manhood in Christ Jesus, seem to us only as dreams. And the price that we shall have paid will seem as nothing, and less than nothing, in comparison with the exceeding glory of that which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived.

Go on, dear brethren. Many of you are nearer home than you think. A step more, and you shall rest. Many of you, though far away yet, are under a safe convoy. Press forward. Let nothing discourage you. Though your attainments may be small, and though your sins may be many, remember that you are Christ's, not because you are good, but because you are to be developed into goodness by him. Trust him, follow him, that by-and-by you may live with him.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We acknowledge thee, our Father and our Saviour, as the source of life. We draw from thee both light and knowledge and comfort. All sustenance of the soul is of thee. And that which we seem to borrow of one another is but reflected light. We rejoice that thou, the Supreme and the all-filling, art all-satisfying. There is no want that is in us which thou canst not supply. We rejoice that thou hast made us, even in this life, so rich, so strong, lifting us up above all the animal race, and giving to us degrees of power eminent above all these other influences underneath authority. And we rejoice that we have not reached nor attained to the end of being; that above us are ranks and degrees infinite; yea, and that we, too, are rising to take hold of higher attainments; and that, in nobler circumstances, and in perfected being, we are to be sons of God. What that is does not yet appear. We know that it is glorious. We know that it shall fill us with satisfaction. In the midst of toils, under burdens, with darkness hanging about our path, we look, though we know not their full meaning, to these precious promises which make the future so bright, which destroy the fear of dying, and which take sadness away from decay and decline in years. We believe that we were old when we were born, as they that are farthest from their true life; and that we are growing young as we grow old, as those that draw near to themselves indeed. For then alone shall we be what we are to be when we shall have reached thy presence in the heavenly land.

And now we rejoice that years are bringing, with the waste of worldly things, the creation, the revelation, and the full joy and foretaste of those better possessions, those nobler experiences, from reformed, and purified, and exalted faculties, which thou shalt give to all that are with thee in the heavenly land. Fill us with this sacred thought, and the intimations of our coming state, so that we may, even in this world, learn, under burdens and under discouragements, yet to be cheerful, yet to maintain our faith and our hold upon duty, and not to count meanly of ourselves, nor throw away our chances of immortality. And grant, we pray thee, that all those who are in twilight seeking dimly to live aright, may have a clearer understanding of the divine plan in human life.

We pray that all those who are waging battle against their own passions and easily besetting sins may have thy presence, and the inspiration of thy Spirit; that they may never lay down their arms till they are victorious over every thought and feeling, and have brought every one into subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that thou wilt make us hate selfishness in all its forms. Grant that more and more we may see what beauty there is in kindness and love, both toward God and toward men. And may that be the kingdom where we shall desire to reign, and in which we shall strive to attain degrees of excellence and of honor. And, while other men rage and contest for the things which perish in the using, may we seek to lay up treasure in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. We pray that thou wilt look upon all those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, to whom thou hast made the gracious promise that they shall be filled. Grant that they may have soul-satisfaction, perfect rest, in thee. Thou hast promised peace, not as the world gives, but divine and celestial peace. Grant that there may be many to whom this promise shall be fulfilled. Great peace may they have that love thy law, and that love thee and thy cause. And we pray that thou wilt fill thy people with holy zeal, not alone for themselves, but for the up-building of thine outward kingdom in this world. May the number of those that live by faith be multiplied. May the number of those whose power is in love be increased. May all who love thee sincerely learn to love one another. And we pray that there may grow up this heart-unity by which,

little by little, outward dissensions shall be absorbed, and things needful shall be made harmless.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt bless thy cause under every form. May justice prevail. May truth assert its right. May men yield allegiance to thee under all forms of goodness. May they see the God that incarnates himself in the ways of men, and follow after every step of rectitude, and righteousness, and purity and gentleness, and mercy and love.

And we pray that thou wilt be near to all that are in trouble, and succor them, or teach them the mystery of suffering, and all its benefit. Grant that any who are sorrowing under bereavements, while they acknowledge thine hand reverently, may partake somewhat of the joy that yet shall be revealed in them when suffering shall have had its perfect work. And be near to give light to any that are in darkness and perplexity; to any that are in doubts and fears at every step; to any that are under the bondage of conscience. May their tyrant relax his hold, and give them that peace which love brings, and conscience cannot.

And we pray thee, O Lord, our God! that thou wilt draw near to all that are in poverty, and are struggling therewith. May they have the power given them by which they shall see above the visible and the present, and live more and more in the glories of thy coming deliverance.

We beseech of thee that all classes and conditions of men may come up before thee, and may receive thy divine benediction.

Bless the churches that are gathered together in these great cities, and all thy servants that to-day shall preach the Gospel. And may they be able to preach with power from on high. And may they see the word prospering in their hands, and the cause of God growing.

We pray that wars may cease, and that the occasions of war may perish. And we beseech of thee that ignorance may flee away, and superstition therewith; and that all the earth may see the salvation of our God.

We ask these things for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant the light of consolation, and joy, and comfort, to all those thy followers that are seeking, through the twilight and through the darkness, to find thee. How great is that darkness to some! How many are there that say, "All thy waves have gone over me. All my passions sweep headlong, terrific, uncontrolled and uncontrollable. My God! my God! dost thou care for me?" Thou dost care for the poor and struggling soul. Thou dost understand how hard the conflict is with those that are under the dominion of passion; that have been perverted by bad education; that are biased and drawn away by sympathies of evil people round about them; that are, by sickness and poverty, and ten thousand grating influences of life, made wretched. Thou art sorry for them; and though sin is in them, and thou canst not bear that they should be sinners, yet thou dost love them; and thou art waiting for them; and thou art patient; and thou art sending them sweet angelic influences; and if they will, thou wilt bring them out of bondage, and thou wilt carry them through the desert, and they shall even see the promised land. Great is the power of thy grace over against our weakness and want.

We beseech of thee, if there are those in thy presence who desire to live aright, but stand still thinking that they will wait till they know better what to do, that they may hear thy voice saying to them, If any man will do my will, he shall know of the doctrine which I preach.

Grant, O Lord, that every one may be active in the cause of God, casting off evil, reaching out to perfect communion with thee, to the joy of a controlling love, and to that peace which passeth all understanding.

Grant that every one may live, not for time, not for money, not for pleasure, not for ambition, not even for friendship, but for self in God. And may every one see in God the grand aim of his life, and feel the drawing of thine heart. May we be everlastingly homesick till we get home. And we beseech of thee that we may be near to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who are seeking every day to fulfill thy will, and yet are conscious that they walk in shaded places, and for whose feet there are no mountain tops, nor land of Beulah, nor out-look of blissful foresight. Grant that still they may labor in the appointed places, and according to the divine will, and wait for the revelation of Jesus Christ in them in the world to come.

It is not long. They are seeds yet, but are soon to sprout and grow, and shall grow in a fairer clime and a better soil. And grant, we pray thee, that those who stand very near to thee may listen if peradventure they yet may bear the harp and the sound of the heavenly band.

Oh! how many are there there whom we would hear again! Our arms reach out that have been emptied. Our heart longs to feel again the head that once covered it. We wait for those that are dear to us as our life. They are gone, and the places that knew them shall know them no more forever. Blessed spirits! we are coming to thee, and are not far away. Come to the battlement, and cry out to us. Come, come that the Spirit and the Bride in your voices may invite us thither. Lord Jesus we are coming to thee, poor, spent, discouraged, sinful, to be born again, and again, and again, until we may grow up into thee in all things. Do not despise us. Be very gentle to us. Put thine arms about us, that we may be carried in the bosom of thy love into our Father's kingdom. And there will we praise the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, forever more. *Amen.*

XII.

OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY.

INVOCATION.

May 29, 1870.

WE have heard thy voice, our Father; and we run to meet thee, and to rejoice as we stand around about thee; and looking up, we ask the blessing of love and the joy of thy Spirit, that ours may come into communion with thine. And though we are so far away, and so uninstructed that thou must teach, and the work must be thine; yet in thine infinite greatness of love, in thy sympathy and mercy, thou dost delight to pour forth thine intelligence upon ours; and this day we come not as beggars, and scarcely as suppliants. We come as children come home. We come, feeling sure that we are welcome. We come, and lay aside at the threshold our care and our troubles, that the light of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ may become our delight, and that we may have the liberty of the word in thy presence to-day. Sanctify us, then, by the Holy Spirit; that we may read thy word with an understanding heart; that we may commune in prayer with thee, led, guided by thee; that we may be able, in fellowship and gladness, to sing the sacred songs of Zion together; that we may love one another, and perfect and purify our friendships, as we are standing together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that we may this day humble our ambition; that we may this day get food by which to live above the world while we are living in it. And so in all our joy and in all our duty may we have thy presence and thy help and divine approbation. And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be praises forever. *Amen.*

OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY.

“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”—ISA., LVIII., 13, 14.

Every house of any consideration has in it a best room. It is usually the largest in the house, and the most comely. It usually is furnished with the choicest things which the owner can afford, and represents the best outward estate of his household. Here is the best carpet. Here are the best colors. Here is the best furniture. Here are hung the best pictures. Here are the chairs burnished and covered. And here, it may be, is the sofa, luxurious with extra springs. The few choice treasures are put upon the mantel-piece, or on some corner shelf. Whatever there is that stands apart from common uses by being a little better, the parlor receives. And this room is scrupulously kept—too scrupulously, often. All festive occasions are celebrated in it. It is the room of honor. It is here that we devote ourselves to our company when we would show them hospitality. It stands in the house as a perpetual reminder of beauty—what little beauty we can command; of hospitality—so much as we are able to exercise of it; of superiority. A best room is not simply an emblem of vanity, as cynics would say. To have a room which has in it choice things, is rather the unconscious inspiration of ideality; it is a desire to maintain it in the household; and it is a silent but real influence for refinement and for higher living.

It is a sad thing to see a person or a family that makes one day just like another; that does not care to make one day better than any of the others; that regards all things as good enough. On a low level, it is a moral influence that leads one to desire to dress better on some occasions than on others, and to spread a better table on some occasions than on others. Although I should not dignify such efforts as these by calling them *religious*, I do say that they are minor forms of the in-

spiration of moral feeling, and indicate the disposition that is so necessary to humanity—the disposition to go up; to leave lower forms in favor of higher developments, both in material things, in social elements, in intellectual progress, and in moral estate. It is aspiration in one of its lower forms.

Now, what the parlor is to the house, the Jewish Sabbath and its substitute, the Christian's Lord's Day, were meant to be to the week. The week is a house, and Sunday is the best room in it, and it ought to have the best things put into it, and it ought to be kept religiously; and it is to exercise upon all our time just the same unconscious influence, or conscious influence, as the case may be, which a well-prepared and well-kept parlor does invariably exercise upon all the occupants of the house. Every week was to have its parlor-day. It was to be a day that should be looked up to by the young and by the old as the best day of the week. In other words, it was to be a delight. It was to be honorable; and so, memorable. In the passage which I have read to you, Isaiah declares that if men, in their observance of the Lord's Day, will lay aside their common doings, and their lower pleasures and worldly occupations, and so give themselves to the Sabbath as to make it a delight and most honorable, God will not fail to bless them, and their posterity, and their nation.

The Lord's Day is an established thing; and I do not propose, this morning, to examine its history, nor its transmutations, nor the grounds of its authority. I propose simply to illustrate and enforce some points in the matter of its right observance.

What are we to aim to secure on that day? All that part of our life which is exercised through the six days of the week, and taxed by strife, is to have rest on Sunday. Our strife of soul and strife of body, our working thoughts and our working members, are all of them to have that rest which comes from no longer working. This is the lower form of its benefit. We are, on that day, by giving this rest to the lower nature, to give enjoyment and inspiration, and a chance for development, to that part of our nature which is usually overborne during the week by secular affairs, and which ought to have some special time to itself for culture and development. The object of Sunday is to say to that in men which is secular and animal, "Rest;" and to that which is intellectual and moral and social, "Grow." It is a day for the better part of our manhood to thrive in. It is not by implication said that the other part ought not to thrive. It is simply implied that the higher as well as the lower part of our being should be developed. We say that the bone and the muscle must toil; we say that a man must plan and labor and persevere in outward things; but we say, also, that while we strive for the necessities of existence in this life,

during six days in the week, it is proper that during the seven days there should be one that should be schoolmaster to the higher nature of man; that should have something to say to his intellect, independent of its relations to thrift and secularity; that should remind him that he is not to live in this world alone, and should lift him up to a higher plane; and that should shed abroad on him such influences as would make him happier in his higher manhood than he ordinarily is in his lower and secular manhood. The Lord's day is a day for social, moral and intellectual development toward a nobler manhood than the world can inspire during the other six days of the week.

How are we, then, to observe the Sabbath so as to gain these advantages? It should be so done that the result should be enjoyable, and that the day should be regarded as a friendly day. I know it is impossible for one who is wholly vulgar, selfish, unspiritual, to begin to observe the Sabbath and find it other than irksome. In other words, *the natural man understands not the things of the spirit*. A vulgar man cannot be pleased with refinement. A bad man is not happy among good men. Nevertheless, the general effect of the Sabbath Day is not to be burdensome. It is not to be a restricted day. It is not to be a day of seclusion. It is not to be a day in which a man is to afflict his soul. It is to be a day whose impression, on the whole, whose average and general effect (whatever special exceptions may be made temporarily in the progress of education from a lower form to a higher) shall be such on every man that he shall feel that it is a delight, that it is honorable, and that it is memorable. This Sabbath is not that conventional Sabbath, that sectarian Sabbath, that drudging Sunday, which is wearisome; which leaves a man less of himself than he had before; which puts him under yoke and in chains; and which makes him sigh when he wakes up, and say, "Oh! it is Sunday morning, as sure as I live,"—and the pleasantest feature of which is the going down of the sun. That way of observing Sunday is not divine; is not Christian; is not scriptural; is not religious.

We are to bear this in mind as the characteristic circumstance, that whatever you do, and whatever you avoid, in your observance of the Sabbath (or the *Lord's Day*, which is the more appropriate term. Neither *Sunday* nor *Sabbath* is as good as *Lord's Day* for our use—though you may use either or all of them without any superstition, or any fear but that the Lord will know what you mean, if you know)—whatever you do, and whatever you avoid, in your observance of this day, it is to be characterized by pleasantness. It is to be made pleasant, not by low pleasures, not by carnal pleasures, not by self-indulgence, not by gluttony, not by the lower forms of conviviality, but by the development of superior manhood, and of Christian joys. And

when I say *Christian joys*, I mean manhood joys. For Christ is the one great typical Man; and all high manhood necessarily conforms to Christ.

This day, then, is to be the one day of the week which is to act upon our higher nature exclusively, and which is to make us men. It is the Lord's Day; but it is no more his day than it is *Manhood's* day. It should therefore carry in its habits, in its demands, in its fulfillments, in its associations, this feeling of joyfulness in a redeemed and a higher way of living. And if a man once gets the idea in his mind that the Sabbath is a day to let forth the better part of his nature, and that his higher feelings are to be so excited and brought out that the day, on the whole, shall become more and more a delightful and happy day to him; then he has a principle in his nature that is better than any special rules. He has a principle that will determine what he may do or what he may not do. The whole observance of the Sabbath Day is but a practical and experimental method of carrying out this principle. It is so employing the day that one's higher manhood shall pronounce it a joyful day—a day delightful and honorable.

As a workman would refuse to carry any part of his shop into the parlor where company was invited; as, when that sanctuary of the house was opened, the wife would rebuke the stupid shoemaker who should bring in the shoe that he was making, and his last, and his hammer, and his awls, and his waxed-ends, when company was there, and would bundle him out into his shop, if he must needs do such work; as the cooper would never entertain company while working at his barrel, behind the door, or in the corner; as the carpenter would not permit himself to bring his planks, and planes, and saws, and shavings and litter into the parlor; as the parlor in the family is kept for higher uses, and these lower uses are kept out of it; so it is to be with the Sabbath Day. It is to be so respected and esteemed that all common occupations shall be kept out of it. Keep your secular work and tools and dirt and manufacturing industries out of Sunday. It is the company-day. It is the Lord's Day. It is our higher manhood's day. And let us forget on that day those necessary uses to which we are subject during the other six days of the week, that we may give a chance to that most difficult part of ourselves to cultivate, that which lives by feeding on the invisible kingdom of God. It is not, then, to be a working day.

I am not superstitious on this subject. If a man is walking in his garden on Sunday morning, and sees a weed or two that had before escaped his notice, and he stoops down and plucks those weeds up, I do not think he need turn around to see if anybody is looking at him. I do not think a man will be condemned for a thing like that. I am

not so superstitious as to think that a man commits a heinous offence if he works a bit on Sunday. It would have been regarded so in the old Jewish times, because cessation from work was a distinctive peculiarity among the Jews. With them the Sabbath was not a religious day. It was not a day for public worship. Even in the earlier periods of the Jewish economy it was absolutely and simply a day in which they should not work. They might talk, and laugh, and feast, and assemble for social festivity, but they must not work, on that day. It is not so with the Lord's day. And yet, that is not a working day, and ought not to be a working day. You destroy the very characteristic of it if you make it a working day. It is meant to be the one day in which a man shall feel, "I am not a toiler; I am not a worker; I am not an underling; I am not an apprentice, nor a journeyman; I am not a man on wages; I am not a hired man; I am a *man*. And this day is my own day. I have no taskmaster or overseer to-day. I am my own. I belong to my wife, to my children, and to my neighbors, in my high and generous nature. We are all each other's. This is God's day, and therefore it is mine. And my head goes up as high as it can reach. I am not to crouch to-day. I am to walk as free as the freest. I am to be as independent as the most independent." For the hand of the Lord has once in every seven days marked out a place, twenty-four hours across from one side to the other, in which every man stands like every other man. All distinctions are gone on that day, and every man stands simply in his manhood, and is as good as other people—if he *is* as good; not otherwise.

Therefore, when I say that Sunday ought not to be a working day, I say it, not because I feel that we are to be superstitious in respect to single acts of labor on that day, a little more or a little less, but because I perceive that if we undertake to drag work into it, we cannot set it apart from all other days distinctively, and make it that honorable day, with badges of freedom on it, which it was designed to be. As the parlor is degraded if you drag stable-work or shop-work into it, so the Lord's Day is degraded if you make it a day of toil.

The Lord is not profited by it, one way or the other. The angels are in no way profited by it. They do not care, so far as they themselves are concerned. It is your day, or anybody else's day who is interested in it. And who should not be interested in it? Who is so much interested in taking care of a house, to see that the chimney does not smoke, that the roof does not leak, that the windows are not broken, that the partitions are sound, and that the house is full of comfort, as the man that lives in it, and owns it? Now, the Sabbath is your day. It is every man's day—especially every man's who wants to be stronger, higher, purer, nobler than he has been, or is. It is a day

made on purpose to elevate men. It is not a day designed to enable the church to get a hitch on folks. It is not a day on which ecclesiastical authorities are to watch men with jealousy. It is the common people's great liberty-day; and they are bound to see to it that work does not come into it. Not because work is dishonorable, nor because there is a special stigma to be attached to working on Sunday, but because they cannot make it what it ought to be for them if they do suffer work to come into it. Work is to be kept out of Sunday because it does not belong there.

There is no better rule on this subject, I think, than the old one, that works of necessity and mercy are permissible on the Sabbath, and no others; that whatever work is necessary for the real comfort and sustenance of the household, and for the relief of persons that are really suffering, may be performed on Sunday, and that all other work is out of place on that day.

I shall not go into a hundred questions which will arise—particularly such as those which relate to times of war, or sudden emergencies of industry. Now and then in war, the Sabbath has to give way for the time being; but the exigency must be special and temporary to justify it. Everybody ought to feel interested in not finding occasions to work on Sunday. Everybody should feel about Sunday as he feels about his parlor. A man does not go round with a pitchfork full of hay or manure, and look wistfully through the window of his parlor, and say, "Why cannot I just throw it in there for a little while?" He does not want to throw it in there. He is proud of his parlor, and does not want to desecrate it. And working men ought not to go round saying, "Cannot I have a little time for work on Sunday morning? Cannot I pinch off a half hour for work on Sunday night? May I not get in that hay that is out, and is liable to get wet?" I have noticed that when farmers had made up their mind that it was right to get in a crop on Sunday if it was likely to suffer, they would always manage to have crops out on Saturday; and I have noticed that when a man says, "I will suffer my whole harvest to perish before I will put one single head of wheat in on Sunday," he never leaves anything out on Saturday that would be damaged if it should rain on Sunday. And it is every man's interest, as I shall show before I get through—and the working-man's interest, more than anybody's else—not only to make this day a day of lordly, noble rest, instead of finding every possible excuse for cheating it, but to keep it clear of toil and work. Every man not only ought to make the Sabbath a day of rest, but he ought to arrange his affairs during the week so that there shall seldom, if ever, be any necessity for work on that day. And thus the influence of Sunday should be to cultivate habits of prudence and self-denial.

By the same rule, the Sabbath is not to be a day of locomotion and travel—certainly not in the way of pleasure. I do not think the Lord's Day is broken in spirit, or that anything is given up, by a man who travels on the Sabbath day, if he has good and sufficient reasons for it; but that absurd maxim, "The better the day the better the deed," applied as it is by many persons, who start on a journey on Saturday in order to gain one day, or by many persons who, when away from home, manage to start so as to be on the road on Sunday in order to save a day, cannot be too strongly condemned. All these little devices by which men rob themselves of Sunday are most unwise.

If Sunday were a day to be dreaded, if it were a prison that you wanted to escape from, and you could, by some device of this sort, get clear of it, you might resort to such expedients with propriety; but what kind of a Sunday have you had, that you want to get out of it? What associations have you had with the Lord's Day, that it should seem desirable to you to go where there is no bell that calls you; where there is no assembly that draws you; where there is no household? How is it that to you the Lord's Day is not more radiant than any other day of the week? What kind of a home has Christianity built for you, if on Sunday you want to be away from it? It ought to be a day when every child is homesick for home. It ought to be a day on which, of all others, men shall say, "Oh, wretched me! that there should be such a misarrangement of things that I must be on the sea on the Lord's day, when I fain would be in the Lord's house." Sunday should be filled with such sweet occupations, and there should be in it so much liberty and joy, shaken down from the tree of life, that all through one's experience he should feel, "Of all the days of the week, Sunday for me!"

I shall have occasion to criticise the ways in which Christian parents bring up their children in this matter, a little further on.

I am not superstitious in regard to traveling on Sunday, any more than I am in regard to working on Sunday. I do not think that God will strike a man with lightning because he travels two or three hours Sunday morning. Above all, I ridicule, as being more pharisaic than they were who lived two thousand years ago, that man who travels till twelve o'clock on Saturday night, but not one minute longer, because that would be breaking the Sabbath. Are we under principles, or are we under rules? Are we men, or are we children yet? I say, If in the exigencies of providence, a man is forced to do some traveling on the Sabbath Day, let him hold his head up, and not go around through some lane or back road. Let him go straight along the thoroughfare, and act as though he knew the day, and loved it as much as anybody

else. And yet, it is every man's interest that there shall be as little rumbling of carriages, and as little of the thunder of cars, on the Sabbath, as possible; and that men shall, as far as possible, arrange their affairs so as not to be caught traveling on that day. Why should you want to make your parlor a highway? Would you like to have a stage driven through your house? Would you like to have a procession sweep through your choicest apartment? Sunday is your rest-room, your guest-chamber, your sweet and blessed sanctuary; and why should you want to break it up, or unfit it for its legitimate use? It ought to be a delight, and not a thoroughfare or barn for horses to tramp in.

It is not, either, to be a visiting day, in any such sense as shall identify it with other days. For you will observe that all the way through I am trying to carry out this idea that Sunday is to be a day set apart from all others, so that people shall feel that it is better, higher and nobler than ordinary days. Now, visiting is right on Sunday. There may be circumstances in which that is the best use to make of the day. But I put it to your conscience—for there are no rules that men cannot go around, or yet get through, just as there are no fences that unruly cattle cannot jump over or break down. And if you want to spoil your Sunday, if you are bound to make an unprofitable day of it, you need not take much pains. You can do it, in spite of all the preaching or other moral influences that can be brought to bear to make it what it should be. And if you want to make it a beautiful day, you can do that. So that, in the matter of visiting, the question is not, "May I, or may I not, visit on Sunday?" The question is, "What sort of visiting will make this day elect and precious? What kind of communion with my fellows will make this day most pleasant and profitable?" We should avoid such visiting as will take away sanctity and beauty from the Sabbath. And yet there is Sunday visiting which is not improper. For instance, it is often the case that we may open our house as a sanctuary, especially in circumstances where persons come to the house of God and need hospitality. Such visiting is not sinful, either on the part of the one who extends the hospitality, or on the part of the one that accepts it. It is to make one's house indeed a true sanctuary. The Lord's Day is just the day for such uses. To the aged, the weary, the friendless, and those from distant places who seek profit in the sanctuary of the Lord, it is eminently proper for us to extend hospitality on the Sabbath. I have known a minister to go and preach on Sunday in some new and distant parish, where there was such delicacy of conscience and such scrupulosity about visiting, or inviting visitors, that he saw every man, woman, and child pass out at the door, and repair to their various

homes, and leave him to go without any dinner. Nobody so much as asked him to go in and break bread. This is being over-scrupulous on the subject of visiting. I think that where men need hospitality, Sunday is the day for it, above all others.

It is also a good day for coming home. It is a good day for children to return to their father's house. Or, if they are so far away that they cannot go home, it is a good day for them to write their letters home. I was not allowed to do it when I was a boy, so strict were the notions of that time; but I bring my children up to do it—and on the ground that home is church. It is God's church. Father and mother are priests before all other priests on this earth. And that which will make my children think of me, and mother, and home, and make them long for home, and make them sweetly homesick, is a means of grace to them, and will do them good. If our children are so near that they can come home, let them come; but if they are so far off that they cannot come home, let them send their love and yearning, and tell us how it fares with them. Make Sunday a home-day. Make it such a day that when your children are at home they would rather be in their father's house than anywhere else, and that when they are away from home they are homesick. Blessed are the homesick! It is a good testimony to father and mother that their children are homesick. You need not be afraid of a child's desecrating the Sabbath when it lifts itself up in his love and memory all his life long. "Ah! that was a precious day when I could get back to the city, and hear my mother read stories out of the Old Testament, and hear my father and my old uncle discuss matters of religion. What a good time I had when I went home on Sunday!" I like to hear children bear this testimony—and all the more because I cannot.

There were too many of us in my father's family. There were eleven children, and the father and mother could not take care of us all. And of course it was the younger ones that had the authority without the communion. The older children, I have no doubt, in this commeree of thought and feeling, had a happy time. My happy time was very much marred by Catechism. There was that sandbar right across the mouth of the family, and I ran upon it every Sunday; and there I stuck! Nobody, I suppose, had the idea that every person in the family ought to be made happy on Sunday. Yes, old Aunt Chandler had. She used to tuck me up in her great lap (she had a lap big enough for a city to couch down on,) and wrap me in her apron, and pat me, and talk to me, in her great round, mellow, good voice, when I had lost my supper because I did not know my Catechism. The fact is, I have never known it from that day to this!

So there is an element of bondage, or restraint, in my memory of

the family. And yet, in spite of all this, that Sunday of my childhood; the marvelous stillness of that day over all Litchfield town hill; that wondrous ringing of the bell; that strange interpretation that my young imagination gave to the crowing of the cock, and to the singing of the birds; that wondering look which I used to have into things; that strange lifting half way up into inspiration, as it were; that sense of the joyful influence that sometimes brooded down like a stormy day, and sometimes opened up like a gala day in summer, on me, made Sunday a more effectually marked day than any other of all my youthful life; and it stands out as clear as crystal until this hour. It might have been made happier and better if there had been a little more adaptation to my disposition and my wants; but, with all its limitations, I would rather have the other six days of the week weeded out of my memory, than the Sabbath of my childhood. And this is right. Every child ought to be so brought up in the family that when he thinks of home, the first spot on which his thought rests shall be Sunday, as the culminating joy of the household.

While, then, I would not lay down any rigorous rule, nor attempt to hold you to any mechanical notions in the matter of visiting, I would say, The Sabbath Day is to be made special, and separate from all other days; and you are to determine what is best in the matter of visitation on Sunday by a consideration of what will make this day most eminent in its influence upon you and your children, by way of refining you, and lifting you up above the vulgarities of life. If visiting will do it, you have a right to visit. If not, you have no right to visit. For your business is to build up a Sunday, and a good one—one full of sunlight and air, and not full of sordidness and common pleasures and vulgar passions.

It is in the light of this attempt to make the Lord's Day a special day of beauty, and joy, and honor, and delight, that we can perhaps discuss the question that is so much mooted as to walking out, and going on excursions, and seeking amusement on the Sabbath. I am decidedly in favor of walking out on the Lord's Day, with moderation, for a hundred reasons. First, because health seems to require that one should have some exercise in the fresh air; and second, because if one is trained aright, nature is itself a means of grace. The influences of the garden, the orchard and the field, may cooperate with the direct moral instruction which children receive in the household, and powerfully corroborate it. But this is to be guarded. It is not to be a source of temptation. The children are not to be sent by themselves to the fields where they will be tempted more than they are able to bear. If this is done, it is to be done with discretion, and on principle. It is to be done with the idea that every child is, in its own way, not to pull

down Sunday, but to try to lift it up. Children are to understand that whatever they do is to make that day noble, beautiful, salient.

So far as the working classes are concerned, it may be occasionally true that the Lord's Day should be a day to take them out from the murky neighborhood where they live; from the filth, and unventilation, and inconvenience of their surroundings; from the shop, the attic, the cellar. It has been strongly urged that it is wise that there should be excursions down the bay, and up the river; that there should be extra railroad trains; that the lower population of the city should once a week be emptied into the country; that it is a great deal better that they should seek recreation out of the city than that they should stay at home, on Sunday. And if that were the only alternative, I should say so too. But it is not the only alternative. When men say that these excursions are a substitute for religious instruction, I deny it. When it is said that occasionally they may alternate with, or co-operate with, other social means of enjoying the Sabbath Day, I do not feel so much set against them as many are. I do so love the open air; I do so love the country; I see so much of God in it; I have been so much blessed myself by it, that I find it hard to say to any poor working man, "You shall never breathe the mountain-air, nor see the stream, nor hear the singing of birds uncaged and flying free and wide abroad." I, that am put above necessities and wants; I, that can control my time; I, that can go out on Monday and hear all that God says, and see all that God does in the field—have I a right to turn to my brother, who is less fortunate than I am, and use my liberty as a despotism, and say to him, "You shall not hear and see those things." If he says, "I am not my own on Monday, nor Tuesday, nor Wednesday, nor Thursday, nor Friday, nor Saturday; my time is bought and paid for; I am under wage; Sunday is the only day which I have to myself; and if I may not on that day go to the country and breathe the fresh air, and hear the birds, I never can," then I have nothing to say. I take the workingman's side, to a certain extent. But then, stop! Seeing the country and hearing birds is very well; but a man must learn *how* to see and hear them. And that he does not learn by going out with a hundred others, who are rough, uncouth, uninstructed. I take comfort in these things, because I have a Sabbath, a sanctuary, and a closet for prayer. It is the spiritual element that has taught me to see nature in such a way that it is a pleasure and benefit to me. But little enjoyment do they have in taste who have not been educated in their moral sentiments. What they need is more, not less, open air in the country; but first they need the means of interpreting what they see there. And although their attics are bad, and their cellars are dark and unwholesome, you can do the laboring classes no other service half

so great as when, on Sunday, you inspire them with more desire to learn; with more manliness; with more spirituality.

I would rather, a thousand times, see rightly guarded and rightly placed reading-rooms established for working men, where, on Sunday, they would be brought into commerce with books and papers, and with people who could give them instruction, than to send them by cars into the country on Sunday, good as that may be in many respects. What they need, first of all things, is spiritual religious instruction. Manliness, founded on the control of the passions and appetites; morality; virtue; true piety—that is the making of any man. That is the making of communities. Let men have that. Do not sacrifice that for the sake of giving them fresh air in the country. If the two could be blended—if they could have the opportunity of the day in the sanctuary and the opportunity of the day in the country—I think it would be better; though I do not know as that would be practicable.

I am very much opposed, however, to the attempt to maintain Sunday as against the poor. I set my face against the attempt to maintain it for rich folks, and make it a bondage for poor folks. When they wanted to run the cars on Sunday in the city, I would not sign a petition against it. It was urged as a reason why they should not run, that so many men—conductors and drivers—were kept working. That might be regulated better. With some more instruction and some more impulse in the direction of humanity, the managers of our roads could probably so order the time that every man should at least have every other Sunday, and a part of each Sunday. And so a remedy could be largely effected.

But would you sign a petition that no man should ride to church in his coach? How many of you would sign such a petition? I have no doubt that I could take a petition that the running of the cars on Sunday should be stopped, and get many of you to sign it; but if I were to take another petition that no man should ride to church in his coach, I do not believe I could get a man here to sign it—unless he was a very poor man. The poor might sign against the rich man's coach, and the rich, not thinking, perhaps, would sign against the only coach that the poor man can ride in. A man wants to come to Plymouth Church (a good place to come to) from out of town; but he has no way to come except to ride in the common people's coach. Another man wants to go out into the country to attend service at some village church, or to visit his father and mother, or uncle or aunt. I do not say that it is the best thing that could happen; but with the fear of the Lord Jesus Christ before me, I never would put my pen on paper to restrict the privileges of the poor laboring classes while I did not place any restriction upon the privileges of rich folks. When a man drives

a car on Sunday, he, for the sake of accommodating perhaps a hundred or two hundred other persons, loses half a day. When a man drives a coach, he loses half a day for the sake of accommodating five. And nobody seems to think there is any hardship in the latter case, though a great many think there is great hardship in the former case. If a man is so rich that he has horses and a coach, and a driver to bring him to church, people think it all right; but the moment a man is so poor that he cannot come to church unless he rides on a car where a driver and a conductor carry two hundred people, they think it is a desecration of the Sabbath. They urge that it is the Lord's Day, and ought not to be broken. I take the poor man's side, and say that Sunday was not meant to be an oppressive day. It was not meant to be a yoke. It was meant to make the poor man freer. And it is to be so zealously hedged in and kept, that, of all the days of the week it shall be a humane, free day. While I take sides with the poor, and while I seem to many to be lax, I appeal to every working man who hears me, whether Sunday is not needed. It is his necessity. It is not mine, particularly. I can take care of myself, and other men that are prospered in life can take care of themselves. All days of the week, to them, are more or less days of leisure, and are Sundays in some sense. But the working people have no leisure day except Sunday; and they are the ones that must not put their foot upon it to destroy it. They are the ones that must not let it run to carnal pleasure. They are the ones that must not let travel break over it needlessly. They must not, for the sake of a misunderstood liberty, pull it down. It is a bulwark between them and oppression; and oftentimes a bulwark between them and the church.

We fail to keep the Lord's Day when it is not generous enough to take in all the conditions of rich and poor, old and young, refined and coarse, religious and worldly. The Lord's Day is a day of mercy. It is more broken by rigor without sympathy, than it is by mercy with laxity. And it was here that Christ had his conflict. Many have supposed that Christ set his face against Sunday. He did not. He set his face against a perverse use of it. There was a man who had a withered hand, and the Pharisees watched Jesus to see whether he would heal it on the Sabbath day; and no sooner did he see that, than he said to the man, "Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth. And it was restored whole like as the other." Then the Pharisees went out and held a council against him, and said, "He cannot be of God, for he has broken the Sabbath day." And our Master said to them, "Which of you, having an ox, doth not loose him and lead him away to water? Or who is there among you that, having a sheep that has fallen into a ditch, will not straightway take hold of it and get it

out?" He took them on their own permissions, and said, "You show humanity to a beast; is not a man more than a beast?" He said that to heal a man on Sunday was not to break that day. He declared explicitly—and it is a *Magna Charta*—"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Sunday is not something in and of itself so beautiful and sacred that men must be sacrificed for the sake of keeping it. No; manhood is the highest thing in this world. No government is equal in value to manhood. No law is of any value compared with manhood. No custom is of any worth compared with manhood. No institution, no prayer, no song, no sermon, no service, no Sabbath, no anything, can be compared with it for value. Where men are brought up side by side with the institutions and usages which educate them, and one or the other must be sacrificed, save the man and sacrifice the usage, no matter what it is. And so, where a man was to be healed on the Sabbath day, and it would break Sunday according to men's ideas, Christ broke it, not because he thought it a bad day, nor because he thought all days ought to be alike, as some have misreasoned, but because he wanted to teach that Sunday was best kept when it was used to make men better, happier, nobler, freer. The very thing for which Sunday was made was to serve men.

In all our legislation, in all our debates, it is not enough for us to take an old word, a historical term, an ancient argument. We are to look at the way in which men are living to-day. We must take account of what their trials and exigencies are. And in our observance of the Sabbath day we are to bring it into sympathy with all classes and conditions of men. If there is any place where the Sabbath is to be loosened, it is not at the top, but at the bottom. It is not where men are prosperous. It is not where families are largely built. It is not where the household is already like a palace. The Sabbath must be so arranged and kept that the poor, the needy, the scattered, the outlying, the most necessitous, shall have its mercy and compassion. It must be a light shining on their darkness, and a help to save them, or else it is not rightly kept.

A negative observance of the Sabbath is as imperfect a keeping of it as there can well be. And this is a household matter largely. Men and women having children growing up around them want to keep Sunday in the family, but they do not know exactly how to go about it. They simply feel that there are a great many things that they must not do. The prevalent idea of keeping the Sabbath is that it is a day on which certain things must not be done. There are about twenty must-not-do-somethings. It is *not, not, not*, all the way through. To the majority of people Sunday is a day full of *nets*.

I very well remember my own childhood. I saw something funny,

and burst out laughing. "Henry, you must not laugh." "Why must I not laugh?" "Because it is Sunday." I started to run. "Henry, you must not run; it is Sunday." Something attracted my attention, and, following a natural impulse, I pointed my finger toward it. "Henry, you must not look at such things; it is Sunday." There were a few books in the house that I might read. The Bible was one, the Catechism was another, and there were several other Sunday books. But if I picked up Robinson Crusoe, it was, "Henry, Henry, you must not read that to-day." That eternal *must not, must not, must not*, followed me everywhere. I was jubilant, emotive, high-spirited; and I was perpetually being pruned. I was cut down here and there. This branch was cut off, and that blossom was cut off. They cut off my head, my feet and my hands. And I would fly sometimes like an insect, without legs or wings; and then I would wonder why they did not do something else to me! Sunday was a day of restriction to me. I was tied up. Now, I do not say that children ought not to be restrained. They ought to be. But where you are restraining children, you must look out that you do not lose the thing in them for which you are restraining them. You must see to it that they do not lose respect for the Sabbath through the feeling that it is a prison-house instead of a delight.

"Take care, my child; grandpa will be disturbed." "Be careful, my son; you know auntie cannot bear a noise." The child is all the time sacrificed for everybody else. He is sacrificed for 'pa', for 'ma', for 'grandpa', and for the aunt that has a nervous headache. He is cuffed here and there, and told that he must not do this and that. He cannot go where he wants to go; he cannot do what he wants to do; he cannot see what he wants to see. He is like a punctuation point in a printer's case. He is merely put in to keep sentences and parts of sentences apart. He is neither a sentence, nor a word, nor a letter. He is nothing for himself, in all the early part of his life. And he grows up with a dislike for the Sabbath. He is so peppered and salted with the feeling that it is a day of bondage, that he wishes it would not come more than once a month, and that it would skip at that.

I remember being with my brother Charles by the window in the great west sitting room, one Sunday afternoon. We sat watching the sun. There was a hazy horizon so that we could look right at the great round, good-natured face of the sun. We could see it steadily going down; and I could not restrain my exultation; and I said, "Oh, Charles! it is most down!" Mother (good woman as ever lived) sat by us, and said, "Boys! boys! you ought not to be glad that Sunday is over." I knew I ought not, and my conscience began to condemn me. "You ought to wish that the Sunday might be longer." "Yes, ma'am."

And yet, if ever a boy was glad, I was when the sun did get down. I would say, "Yes, ma'a'm" in the right spot, and "No, ma'a'm," but, after all, there was my boy nature. The Sunday had not made me in love with it. Could it be made attractive to me? Yes, very easily. When dear old Aunt Esther had charge of the house, she used to say, in the morning, "Now, boys, if you will keep quiet all this morning, and will do such and such things, as quick as we get back from church I will read to you, and I will read to you all the afternoon, out of the Bible." "Will you read the *Ten Plagues*?" "Yes, the Ten Plagues, and everything else you want to hear." On that promise all day went right. And no sooner were we gathered in the nursery than she sat us about her on our little footstools, and put on her spectacles, and took the Bible; and we heard her read "Joseph" and the "Ten Plagues," and the beautiful story of Ruth. And a Sunday spent in this way was never lonesome. Old Aunt Esther knew how to check and how to humor us; she knew when to let us out, and when to harness us; she was sympathetic and kind; and she made the Sabbath a beautiful day to us. And really, I felt like being a little boy of a Christian on Sunday when I used to be under Aunt Esther's discipline.

Every father and mother that is ordained as the priest of God's church in the household, is not simply bound to see that the children do not play on Sunday. Your duty only begins at that point. Your business is to build up a Sunday that shall be a delight to your children. And I put it to you, my friend—deacon, class-leader, Christian of forty years standing—do your children like Sunday? If not, what a testimony is it! If on the contrary you have brought up your family so that they like Sunday; if you have said to your wife and them, "How shall we make this day honorable in the sight of God?" and you have made it thus honorable, and a pleasure and a benefit to yourselves; then what a different testimony is that! Have you brought up your family so that they enjoy the Sabbath day? What do your children say about it? Would you like to have me question them on the subject? If you have not so used Sunday, then you have broken it.

We ought also to remember that on the Lord's Day, so far as the services of the community are concerned, they are to be conducted with reference to the average wants of the people in that community, and are not to be oppressive to them.

And there should be the largest liberty in things right and proper. I have no sympathy with the idea that persons must not talk when going to and from church. I say to people, Talk with each other when you are coming to church. Show that you are not ice nor lead. Be men. Do not be afraid to ask after each other's welfare, and after the

welfare of each other's households. Do not talk business; and yet, do not be ashamed to say, "How are you progressing in the world?" You are God's freemen, and not the church's bondmen. It is a thousand times better for you to show feelings of sympathy and humanity and real interest for each other in these ways, than not to show any such feelings. And when you get to the door of the church, do not stop as though you were going into a sepulcher, and take off your hat, and come in with a long sigh; but, with a cheerful face, walk up the aisle and take your place. Ah! if your God is a crowned despot, you may well be terrified in his presence; but my dear God is my Father, my Lover, my Friend. He is the most familiar, the most sympathetic, the most genial, the most joyous of all Beings. What there is of lightness and of sweetness in the sunrise; what there is of sympathy and gladness in the heaven and on the earth, is the outflow of his great nature. He is the God of all joy and of all consolation. What he wants, I know by the way he has made my father and mother, and my brothers and sisters. I take counsel of that which is best of what he has put into me. I come into the house of God to rejoice. David could have taught us many better things in the lore of the sanctuary than we have learned where asceticism is made law, and where men go into church stiff and solemn, and set themselves down in their sepulchral pews, and do not look about them, nor speak to any one. I say, Talk, remembering that your conversation is to be the chastened and noble conversation of men who are together striving to make this one day higher, better, brighter, sweeter, nobler, than all the other days of the week. And when the services of the house of God are over, and the congregation are dismissed, I would not have you go still out into the street and back to your houses. I like to see men get up in church and shake hands over the back of the pew, and speak to each other in the aisles. Let your feelings manifest themselves through lip and eye and hand. This, while it is a more joyful, is not a less elevated observance of the Sabbath Day. And it will be far more likely to be observed by the common people, and especially by the poor and needy, if we make it a delight, than if we make it a day that is stiff to ourselves and stupid to them.

I may just say, in passing, that they likewise fail to keep the Lord's Day who tax themselves excessively in works of kindness. I mean superintendents and teachers of Sunday-schools, and teachers of Bible classes, and many others who serve in religious things on Sunday. If the work of the Church could be properly distributed, there would be only a little for each one to do; but usually the majority do nothing, and those who are willing to work do more than they ought to. I have known persons who arose early in the morning, and went to Sabbath-

school in the forenoon, and then went to church, and then went to another Sabbath-school in the afternoon, and then went to a prayer-meeting after that, and went to evening services after that, and then went to bed. And that is breaking Sunday, I do not care who does it. It is making it, instead of a day of rest, the day of the severest labor of the whole week. And as a general thing persons are not justified in over-taxing themselves in such ways. I think that ministers break the Sabbath and impair their usefulness by over-exerting themselves. There may be emergencies in which a man is called to preach three or four times on a Sunday. Many would suppose that one was peculiarly apostolic who did so; but, ordinarily speaking, emergencies out of the way, a minister should not preach more than twice in a single day—and I am inclined to think that once would be better yet. As it is, he has no Sunday to himself. The Lord's Day is a day of bondage to him. It is to him a day of the hardest tasks, when it should be a day of freedom and happiness and joy to him.

It may be asked, "Is it not better that every day should be a Sunday. Why attempt to set a special day apart from all the rest? Would it not be better if all days were alike, and all days were high and noble?" That is not the question. The question is this: Is it possible for you to lift all the days of the week up so that they shall average as high as one day which is set apart for special observance? I can understand how persons of culture, of leisure, and training, may come into such a state of mind that all the days of the week shall be supremely blessed to them; but I know that most men are so circumstanced that it is simply impossible for them to do it. And to undertake to obliterate the Sabbath day by making all days Sundays, is to substitute despotism for the few privileges that are secured to men through that day. You take away all the Sunday which men can observe, if you give them only a distributive Sunday running through the whole week.

Nay, all days cannot be made alike—can they? Yes, they can to me, if I am in the receipt of an independent income, and I can command my time, and I can take part of each day for meditation, and I can go where I please on any day, and stay as long as I please; but how about the apprentice boy who is waked up at five, or four, or three o'clock in the morning, and goes to work, and has not a moment that he can call his own until eight o'clock at night, when he tumbles into bed, and sleeps till the next morning, when he again goes through the same experience, which is his experience the whole week? Go and talk to him about making every day a Sunday. It is these well-to-do, plump, round-faced, smiling people who talk about making every day a Sunday. But the great mass of people—the poorer orders of society—those who are under the control of others, and on whom the hard tasks of life fall—they cannot afford to have all days made alike. Sunday is

the poor man's tower. It is the refuge of the man that is tasked and taxed by his employers. And it behooves him not to tread it under foot and destroy it, but to lift it up and preserve it, that at least on one day of the week he may be God's free man.

Brethren, friends, fellow citizens, there is nothing that I have more at heart than to rescue the observance of the Lord's Day. It lies very near to me, and is very dear to me. But I do not believe you can rescue it by law. The Sabbath day, to be rightly maintained, must be made honorable. It must be made a delight. It must be so kept, and such views must be inculcated in respect to it, that men shall look upon it as a day of release from bondage and toil, and that it shall suggest to them something higher than mere animal pleasure. The German Sundays, in which men gather together in beer gardens to drink, are sinks in which men drain their passions; and their influence is not refining. There may be a little of the social element connected with them; but they do not promote thought-power, nor moral culture, nor refinement. They tend only to hilarity, and to the gratification of the lower nature. They lead to more indulgence where men need less, and to no development where men need development most.

It is your interest and mine, not so much to discuss this question as a historical question, not so much to fight and quarrel about the obligations, and the grounds of the obligations, which are imposed upon us by this day, as to avail ourselves of the great privileges which it secures to us. We are all in the same boat, and are making for one port. We are seeking to so develop ourselves that we may be translated into the kingdom of God's glory hereafter. Here is a day that has come down to us by association through four thousand years—a day of mercy, of rest, of affection, of joy, of education, and culture, in the highest sense of the terms. Let us maintain this day. Let us so administer it, and so in all our houses organize it, and so everywhere keep it, that it shall be in the sight of all men not a yoke, not a restriction, not a denial of the liberty of their rights, but a delight in the Lord, honorable, full of joy, and full of good fruits. Make Sunday sweet, and then men will take it. Be happier yourself; be kinder yourself; be more social yourself; be more a man yourself; let God's love flame out of your heart, as it never has before, rub away animosities; give the unwelcome hand so long kept back by anger; make your heart burn toward the hearts of your fellow men, and let men see that Sunday is the altar at which you kindle your fire, and they will come to long for it, and believe in it.

A community or nation, if kept at all in safety, will be kept by those that keep Sunday; but no community and no nation will long be kept in safety in which Sunday is not kept.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we delight to draw near to thee, and to make known to thee all our wants. Thou dost not fail us. Thou art ever more willing to give than we are to receive. Yea, before we know our own wants, while arising afar off, they are discerned of thee, and thy ministers are appointed, and they are satisfied. So that we are nourished and unconsciously fed by the hand of God. All our life is a marvel of thy care, and of thy goodness; and we have learned to rejoice in it, and to esteem things better than they are in themselves from the source whence we obtain them. All the gifts of life are perfumed with thy touch. It is because thou hast thought of us that they are more than meat and drink to us. Our own thoughts by which we plan, and our own skill by which we achieve, are more to us than the pleasure of pride. For thou hast sustained this life which works; and all success is first of thee, and then through us. So that in all things we touch thee, and are touched of thee. In thee we live, and move, and have our being. And the amplitude of life, its variety, its riches, is in that which brings thee near, and makes us most conscious that we are not of the earth, nor of the brute creation, though we so nearly touch them on the one side, but that we are of God, and are his sons, and are to escape the touch of matter, and all the brutality of the lower life, and are to rise to become as the angels of God, when cleansed from sin and imperfection and the imprisonment of this bondage world.

And now, O Lord, we pray that the light of these truths may shine so clearly, that not care, nor dust, nor din, nor any other thing shall hide or drown them. We pray that we may live to see Him who is invisible. May we live by our inward sight, and not by the fleshly eye nor by the outward senses. Grant unto us that surpassing faith, that all-creating power, by which we shall behold the truth, and the principles of thy government, and the joys of our superior life by which we shall come into communion with things not tangible, lifted up above us, and yet not far from us, and by which we may live with the sound of the other life in our ears evermore. Oh! that we may aspire to that higher manhood, that nobler purity, that strength which is of God. And we pray that while we have the wisdom of serpents, we may have the harmlessness of the dove. May we live wise in our day and generation—wise for things secular; wise for the state in which we live, and for the household, and for all that are dependent upon us. But also may we have that wisdom which cometh down from above, which is pure and peaceable, and full of the good fruit of love.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt forgive us our selfishness, and our pride, and our sordidness, and our abandonment of things spiritual, and our inordinate attachment to things carnal and temporal. Forgive, we beseech of thee, our unkindness one to another. Forgive us that in honor we have sought our own selves first, and not others; that we have not borne one another's burdens, and fulfilled the law of God. Forgive us that we have made ourselves unlovely by our evil carriage. Forgive us that we have failed to discharge those obligations of love and gratitude which thy sufferings and thy death and thy resurrection have laid every one of us under.

And we beseech of thee not only that thou wilt pardon the past, but that thou wilt not be weary of thy task of pity. Yet open the way of the future for us, that we may walk without stumbling; that we may live with a higher purpose and better accomplishment; that we may not only be forgiven for past sin, but be cured of sin, and of those infirmities out of which so many transgressions spring. And we pray that thou wilt fill us with the mind and will of God. And may we know his truth, in so far as knowing it may lead to our perfection. And may we study to approve ourselves before men and, above all, before God, before whom we must come, and to whom we must give an account of every deed done in the body. Prepare us for that great account. Prepare us for the issues of that tremendous day

which awaits us. And we pray that we may so live here, that then we may have on our side, cheering and strengthening and lifting us up, the light and the power of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Bless this congregation, and all the families that are represented in it. Be in every household. Bring peace where there is trouble, and joy where there is sorrow. Sanctify thy dispensation to every one. If there be those that are suffering bereavment, wilt thou comfort them. If there be those that are in disappointment and overthrow, lift them graciously up. *Cast down, but not destroyed*—may that evermore be our triumph in adversity.

And we pray that thou wilt grant that all may have their temporal prosperity blessed to their spiritual good. May it not make them more worldly and more selfish, dragging them down. May it inspire them with heroic benevolence and divine wisdom, with true gratitude and true fellowship with men. And we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all that are strangers in our midst. Separated from those they love, may they find here, in thine house, and among thine own people, a new brotherhood, and a new home. Here, to-day, feed them, and comfort them. Speed them in the errands of thy providence to which thou hast called them. May neither their faith, nor their hope, nor their courage fail. And though men may seem to have fallen away from them, may they believe that God doth not forget them, and that he will never leave them nor forsake them. Their father's God, who bore them onward to the end, will bear their sons. And we pray that all of us may more and more put our trust, not in the failing, visible things of life, not in the towers that men have built, and the engines of our own strength, but in the presence of our God. May we keep fast hold of thee, so that we may be neither shaken nor uprooted by the storm.

And grant thy blessing to rest upon all thy Churches. We thank thee that thou art bringing together more and more of thy people, and that the prayers of those who have long striven before thee are beginning to be heard, and that men are thinking of things in which they agree, and are being drawn by confidence and sympathy, and that the one love in Jesus Christ is uniting his followers on earth. Even so, speed thy good work, until all thy people everywhere shall see eye to eye, and join hand in hand, and thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Which we ask for Christ Jesus sake. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Lord God of our fathers, bless their posterity. Bless us, and bless our children, and our childrens, children. Unite us in fellowship and love. Teach us how to use our privileges without by their use oppressing others. May we, loving thee, love one another, seeking not the things that perish in the using, but things that feed once and forever. The bread unperishing, and the water unwasting, and the life that never dies—may these be ours.

We pray, O Lord! that thou wilt bless our land. Look at the myriads that are toiling for leave to be. How narrowly they live! How poor they are! How little they have of God! and how much of the world! How men snarl and snap at each other, and seek to oppress each other, and seek by their arrogant power to tread down others that they themselves may rise! Lord God, teach men how to love one another, and how to help one another; and may the day of the Son of Man be a precious day in our midst. And as thou didst come to open the prison doors, and bring light into dark-

ness, and release and relief to the captive, so may the day called by thy name be a day of remembrance; a day of kindness; a day of gladness; a day of the Holy Ghost; a day of justice; a day of God among men. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

XIII.

SYMPATHY OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT

INVOCATION.

June 5, 1870.

WE rejoice that already thou hast called us, our Father, and that our hearts have heard thee. We are drawn hither this morning by thy Spirit, which often before has led us into the bright and joyous way. And we come to make known to thee, not our own want, but our thanksgiving, for the supply of our want; not to tell thee of our necessity; not to plead as with one who is unwilling; but as children come to pour out their hearts before their parents whom they dearly love, so we desire to draw near to thee, our Father which art in Heaven. We rejoice in thy greatness, in thy power, in thy truth, in thy justice, and in thy love. And now we pray that we may this day, in the communion of the Spirit, be led into all truth, and receive such divine inspirations as shall help us all in the week that is before us, and in all our lives, to live more holy, more justly and unblameably. Accept the song of thanksgiving which we shall utter. Accept all the services of devotion. Assist us in every effort at instruction. Bless the whole day at our homes, in our hours of retirement and meditation or of social enjoyment. And may the blessing of the Lord make this day bright above all others. Which we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

SYMPATHY OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT.

“Always the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”—ROM. VIII., 26.

It is not to be supposed that the Divine Spirit is here said to utter audible outcry in the presence of God; nor are we necessarily to understand that the groanings, the sighs, which men under profound religious aspirations make, are directly the influence of the Divine Spirit—that is, that men are merely, as it were, the pipe through which the sound is produced; but rather, that all those high experiences of men's souls who hunger and thirst after righteousness, by which they long and sigh and groan, are in them the result and work of that Divine Spirit. It is the interpretation that is given to invisible truth by the Spirit of God that leads men to these yearnings and desires. These higher forms of Christian experience are therefore wrought in men, and they are signs of the work of God that is going on in the human soul.

A soul that is born into the kingdom of divine love is like an infant that has come into the human family. It has life; but it has everything to learn about life. It is helpless, ignorant, inexperienced; but the whole household, on the human plane, is organized to meet the exigency of infant life, by surrounding it with an atmosphere of love and of pity. The wealth of its parents has provided a protection from the seasons. The roof and the walls defend it, and not the less because they do it silently and unobtrusively. They are no less the work of the parents' love, because the child becomes used to them, and sees them, year by year, all the way up from childhood to manhood. The house is as the natural world. In the parallel and analogy, natural laws, like the roof and the walls, are not the less expressions of the divine provident care because we have become used to them.

The whole order of the household—its interior economy—is determined with reference to the best welfare of the children. The love of the parent's heart furnishes to the child the care and the tenderness which it needs. And the parent's experience and worldly wisdom and

provident skill mark out the beginning of the child's life, and weigh and plan a business for the child. So that from the moment of its helpless birth up through the unfolding series of its years, it is surrounded, quite without its own cognizance, and without much of its own help, with a training-school where health and wisdom and experience are providing for its whole welfare, until it is able to take care of itself.

Now, the whole scheme of this world is like that. The natural globe, natural laws, the divinely-arranged economy of human society, are all of them but ministrants in the household which God has made, and into which men are born helpless; and all of them are under the supervision of parental divine love, working for the young immortal.

Let me read the whole passage:

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know all things work together for good to them that love God—to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

It is quite possible for one to assume not only a monarchical standpoint, but the standpoint of a monarch who is using the great and unconscious forces of nature, to interpret this passage so as to make it not lovely—not attractive—certainly not true. For if we undertake to say that God, by special act and attribute of foreknowledge, saw all things from the beginning to the end, and that, seeing all things, he tied things where they were to be, and, as it were, put engines of irresistible force all the way along down through life, so that when men came to the different points in their career they could not help themselves, but went to the right or the left because the reversible switch had been turned, and they had to go where the track was; if we believe that God predestinates men to this and that and the other thing, and that when they have once come into the charmed circle of divine fate they cannot help themselves, and are to be glorified or damned, as the case may be; if we give that governmental and monarchical interpretation to it, you will set every thinking man, almost, kicking against the pricks, and you will be launched on that voyage of infinite argument and infinite confusion which has grown up since man had an existence, and will find yourself vainly endeavoring to solve those doctrines of free-will, fate, predestination, fore-ordination, election, effectual calling, irresisti-

ble decrees, and all those great questions which no man ever yet was able to manage—except while he was yet speaking. For when *his neighbor came and searched him* he had to speak again. This passage, if you take it on the ground of a governmental and monarchical administration, is a declaration of one of those great outlying views which defies inquisition, and is far beyond the reach of the unaided understanding. But if you take this passage to be paternal, in the line of the figure which I have opened, somewhat, there is no difficulty in it.

Every father and mother, when the helpless child is born into the household, rejoice and give thanks to God. They rejoice and give thanks, not because of what it is now, but because of what it may become. The mother gives to it her nights and days. The father gives to it all his leisure and all his occupation. And what is it that strikes joy down through the burdened and oppressed soul of many a mechanic, many a merchant, many a banker, many a literary man, in the intervals of leisure, but the thought of that light which is burning at home—the blessedness of the cradle? The mother broods over it, and the father broods over it; and they say, “That child shall be brought up to honor, and truth, and virtue, and usefulness.” The father lays his own life along the road, and takes sight across it, and in the light of his experience he marks out what he means that the child shall be; and the mother takes sight along the level of love, and determines what the child shall be. The father and mother work and co-work, determining what, if their efforts are successful and their hopes are realized, that child shall be. They foresee and predestinate, and call effectually, and work together to bring that child up good and true and prosperous.

We are taught to say, “Our Father who art in heaven.” We are taught that when men are born into this world, God looks, in a sympathetic paternal way, along down the path of life, and says, “All the power, and all the sympathy, and all the coöperative influences of the world, and all nature itself, are to serve this young, trusting, loving, immortal spirit.” *To those that love God all things shall work together for good.* The moment a man puts himself into sympathetic communication with God, nature and time and all the forces thereof assume new relations to him. The moment a soul binds itself trustingly to the bosom of its loving God by love, nature has God’s command to take care of him, and providence has God’s command to take care of him, and God’s wakeful Spirit forever broods over him and works in him.

This doctrine of the divine sympathy has here a specialty. While the general doctrine which I have unfolded is unquestionably true, here is a special application of it. And the general doctrine is made more affecting and more desirable by this specialty which is given to it. I

refer to the declaration in our text, that "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities."

Everybody, I do not care how dull he is, loves to see a great nature that devotes itself, not to those who are on a level with him, but to those who are beneath him. We expect that those who are drawn together by affinity will be devoted to each other. We should expect that if one Lord Bacon were in conference with another Lord Bacon, they would sit together and commune all through the livelong night. But to see a man whose head is a vital encyclopedia, who knows all things, as it were, go past his equals, and go down below those that are able to understand the main part of him, and devote himself to children in the family; nay, more than that, to see him take care of little children in that spot where they break out in things that are bad; to see him take care, not of children that reward his pains by a quick understanding of what he says, but of children that are dullards; to see this man of learning, this president of some college, this mighty professorial, encyclopediac man, take the unpromising child of the family where he is spending the summer, or where he is an occasional visitor, on his knee, and try to beat into its thick head one idea after another; to see him pay no special attention to the other children of the family who are bright and intelligent, and manifest no particular sympathy for those with whom he would be supposed naturally to fraternize; to see him patiently continuing this labor of love from day to day and from week to week, working the child along, working him along, and working him along, until he succeeds in getting something into him, and bringing him up so that the neighbors say, "Well this child, after all, may turn out to be something; there seems to be a mine in him which, if worked, will yield some return; that man has quarried till he has struck gold in him"—to see such a man denying himself of those things which his education and culture eminently fit him to enjoy, that he may inspire in the dullest child a desire for knowledge, and develop in that child those elements which it most lacks—is there any human being worthy of the name, who would not admire it as noble and almost divine? "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our"—what? Our aspiration towards things high and beautiful? Oh, yes. Our noblest dreams? Yes, doubtless. Our grandest purposes? Oh yes, the Spirit helpeth them. Our relative excellences? Yes; undoubtedly. Our generosity and magnanimity? Without a doubt the Spirit helps them. All the moods of nobility into which we come? To be sure, the Spirit helps them. But that is not it. "The Spirit likewise also helpeth our *infirmities*." The teaching of Scripture is that God, instead of standing over us with a rod of justice, with a sword, to chastise us for our faults, stands by our side to help our failings.

Listen to the way in which it is more largely wrought out in the fourth chapter of Hebrews :

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have no high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

What, then, do we understand by *infirmity*? It is, in general, feebleness, weakness; but, in the spiritual application which it has in the New Testament, it indicates a weakness of a peculiar kind—namely, *moral* weakness. Feebleness of conception and knowledge in religious things is infirmity of knowledge—a lack of it; poverty of it. Feebleness of the will-power by which we resist evil—that is an infirmity. There are thousands of men who do wrong because they have very feeble resisting power. There are multitudes of persons who fall into wrong courses on account of the feebleness of their power of self-restraint, which is only a variation of the will-power. There are many who find it extremely hard to lay a hold-back hand on the impetuosity of their passions. Great feebleness in the presence of evil, with a peculiar susceptibility to temptation, will be apt to be carried away by it.

This is hinted at where, in another place, it is said that God *will not suffer you to be tempted more than you are able to bear*—indicating that there are some who, the pressure being brought upon them, can bear it, and that there are others who, the pressure being brought upon them, cannot bear it.

In a conflict of knights some will rush together with poised spears, which, striking each other's shields in a given way, will both be shivered to the handle. The knights, under such circumstances, *having done all, stand*. Others, paralyzed by weakness, rush against their antagonists, and being unable to resist the shock, are hurled to the dust, and vanquished. Their overthrow is the result of infirmity, or weakness—not weakness that amounts to spiritual imperfection, but weakness in the sense of feebleness. Feebleness of the whole economy by which we are to come into knowledge, and through knowledge into virtue, and through virtue into vital godliness in the soul—this is the general meaning of infirmity. In short, it implies a nature that means to do right, that wants to do right, but that feels itself met by influences that are stronger, more cunning, and more seductive than it has skill to resist. This explains the majority of those transgressions over which men mourn. Nine parts in ten of those sins which men confess and mourn over, are sins which they did not set out to commit, which they did not want to commit, which they are sorry they have committed, but which they committed through weakness—weakness in

the power of understanding and interpreting facts; weakness in that general knowledge of cause and effect which might have saved them from wrong-doing. Half of our sins are violations of natural law—if there is any distinction between natural laws and moral laws. The greater proportion of men's sins are those which they commit through infirmity.

The attempt to maintain a spiritual life in this world is an attempt against great adversarial powers. It is no small thing for a man born into a fleshly body, connected with the material world, and beat in upon by ten thousand biasing and sympathizing influences which come from the body of human society, to lift himself out from all that is low and carnal into an atmosphere where he can see clearly, and understand, and maintain vigilance, persevering unto the end. And God is not indifferent to the task and tax which one undertakes when, with so many obstacles to contend against, he endeavors to live a life of obedience. God looks upon it as a thing most difficult. He knows it is a thing hard in itself. He knows, too, that the majority of men are weak, so that it is extremely difficult for them to do right things and avoid wrong things. God does not stand like a burning furnace of rage and wrath to consume a sinner because he sins. He pities a sinner. He sympathizes with the poor and the feeble. Probably he is more lenient toward the sinner than toward any other creature in the universe. Though he sees that his sin is sin; though he sees how devastating its tendencies are; though he sees how full it is of pain that may go on breeding pain forever and forever; though he has all knowledge of what is the exceeding sinfulness of sin, there is no being that looks upon it with more pity, more compassion, more sympathetic helpfulness, than that same God.

Let us specialize some of the spheres of sympathy in which the Spirit of God acts with reference to us. I shall but glance at the most of them, in order that I may spend more time on the last one, which is less frequently a matter of consideration.

All the difficulties which lie in our life in the material body; all our physical wants; all our bodily weaknesses and sicknesses, and the infelicities that arise from them—these things men who are in health are very hard and uncharitable about. Many a person with whom you have to do disappoints you—does not fulfill your expectation. Many a person lets fly casual words which irritate you. But if you knew out of what utter weakness, if you knew out of what a sense of almost deathly feebleness, these things often come, methinks it would excite in you, as doubtless it does in God, a spirit of pity and compassion, rather than of blame for their wrong-doing. There needs to be pity for the sinning, although their sins are to be repressed. God has sympathy

and compassion for those who have temptations that are preying upon them, and who are weakened by over-exertion, or who suffer in body from hunger and thirst and cold and various wants, or who are in discouragement and despondency of mind, so that they are led to do things which are wrong. Society may disregard them (as it mostly does; for men are very cruel to wrong-doers on the lower plane of life); but there is one Heart that never forgets them, nor ceases to compassionate them. There is one summery place for people who are sinning or doing evil things. It is the heart of the Divine Spirit.

What appetites and passions inhere in the body, and are its engineers, and minister to its existence, and feed and strengthen it, and overact, or act in disparity, and lead to partialisms, governing the whole economy of life in men! There are men who sin on account of these lordly elements, which dominate over the other parts of their nature. And yet, God, though he is not indulgent toward their sin, sympathizes with men who are pressed out of all measure by these internal forces. It is not any less wrong for a man to be ugly because he has a fountain of ugliness in him, or because he has a belluine nature to contend with. This cruel and wicked disposition is to be repressed. But there never was a man whose stomach and liver, whose bodily organs, and whose mental forces, combined to keep him in a suffering and exaggerated condition out of which come the most intolerable manifestations of temper, that God did not feel pity for him. When you see such a man, you call him a hateful old curmudgeon; and he comes to despise himself; and he gets to be ugly; and he becomes desperate, and does things that are wrong, and even commits crimes. But there is a Being who looks on these things, and knows what the man suffers, and what the infirmities are out of which they spring. There is many a man that is disagreeable in a neighborhood, that you do not like to have much to do with, that mixes bitterness in the cup of life for his own lips and the lips of others, and is a disturber of his own household, and, in a moment of passion, commits the fatal deed which shall carry him to the gallows. And he says, "There is no use now. I shall die, and I shall be damned when I die; and I may as well take it as I find it." But still God broods over him, and pities him, and would help him. And if there could be developed in every such man a belief that there is a Spirit that pities his infirmities, while he reprehends and punishes his actual transgressions; if every sinning man could be made to feel that God is sorry for him, and that he has a nature which would lead him to do by the sinner as a father or mother would do by an erring child, training him out of his childish faults and into manly virtues; if every man that has fallen into evil ways could have that knowl-

edge, how many men might be transformed, and made better, if not perfect, in manhood.

In all the cares or burdens or trials which arise from our condition of temporal life, we have also the thought and compassion and sympathy of the Spirit of God. Men feel that when they go into business they go away from religion, and that secular cares and burdens and trials are, as it were, counterparts to virtues and religious experiences. But if there be anything susceptible of demonstration, it is that the decree of God made the secular experiences of life a means of grace. The necessities to which we are subject in life are normal. It was on purpose that God made us merchants, and mechanics, and toilers in every way. To *work* is not the curse. To *drudge* is. To *work* is a part of the blessing of our organization, and of that whole organization of society by which all men are necessitated to occupy morning and noon and night in tasking and taxing their physical powers or their understanding. It is a part of the vast economy of education. Intellectual, social and moral education inheres in that. And our religion is to go with it. It is to be a part of our experience, as our experience is a part of our moral and religious life. And so, all the cares, and all the burdens, and all the trials, and all the mingled matters of experience which make men so tired of life—these are infirmities. They are a part of that constitution of things and of nature which God recognizes, and which draws the heart of God continually toward men in all helpfulness. He does not say that sinning is not sinful, but he recognizes the liability to sin. And as the parent in the family, recognizing the child's liability to sin, overhangs the child, and seeks to lead him away from wrongs that come out of its weaknesses, so the heart of God overhangs with sympathy and perpetual help those that love him, and are willing to receive the blessings that he would confer upon them.

God also sympathizes with us in all our domestic infirmities—in the carriage of ourselves one towards another. I have noticed in concerts that if two violinists play together, although, before they came upon the platform they tuned their instruments, no sooner do they get ready to strike off than they try their instruments again. And by the time they have played one or two pieces, there is such divergence between the instruments that they require to be again tuned. But the violin of the musician has not one fifth as many strings as the human violin has, and it is not half as sensitive to the changes of the weather, and does not need to be screwed up or down half so often. And you cannot keep this little mechanical instrument in tune except with great pains. The least jar, or the least atmospheric change, produces an aberration this way or that. And do you suppose you can take two instruments, each having fifty strings, more susceptible even

than those of a violin, and have them in tune one with another, in the midst of the many and powerful influences which are constantly tending to produce discord between them?

A man that knows how to take his mind, with all its sensibilities, and bring it into tune with divine love, and who knows how to carry it harmoniously through all the hours of the day, so that it shall all the time be in tune with other minds, has very little to learn before it goes to heaven.

Now, our business in life is to try to keep this fiddle of ours so that it shall be at peace, first with its own self, and then with others. But we cannot keep at peace with ourselves so long as one side is blaming the other side; so long as the lower feelings are rasping the higher feelings; so long as combativeness is howling at the moral sentiments; so long as the appetites and passions are uproarious, and are carrying on all sorts of mischief. It is a hard thing for a man to take such an instrument as the human mind, and keep it in tune with itself, and also keep it in accord with this that and the other mind, with their different temperaments, and in all their varying moods, and under all their trials and swayings and warpings and biasings. I tell you, when a man says that he is perfect already, I feel that there is only one of two places for him, and that is heaven or the lunatic asylum. Not that I do not believe in perfection. I do believe in it. I believe it is *possible* in this world. But I never have seen the accomplishment of it. And the specimens that are generally sent out as samples have not induced me to buy. I believe that ideally there is provision for men to be perfect. And I believe there are a great many that are perfect in a certain way. That is to say, there is no difficulty in a man being perfect if you make the standard low enough. If one comply with certain metaphysical conditions of perfectness, I do not know why he may not be metaphysically perfect, though at the same time he is personally and dispositionally imperfect. But when you consider what it is to be absolutely perfect; when you consider what perfection requires; when you consider what wide-reaching comprehension, what exquisite planning, what peace within, what harmony with other men, what accomplishing power in things right and true, and what a realization not only of the objects of this life but of the fruitions of the life which is to come, are required in those that are perfect, you do not hope to see many perfect people on earth. There is nothing so grand as the kingdom of the human soul, with its wide-reaching results, its deep penetrating roots, and its magnificent blossoms and fruit, where perfection reigns; but we are not apt to come across men in this world to whom we can point and say, "They are perfect." Angels laugh at the idea of men becoming perfect in the

ways which they think will lead to perfection ; and we might as well wipe out the fantasy which prevails on this subject.

The hardest thing for us to do is first to live right within ourselves, and then to live right with each other. There must be justice not only in the speech of our lips, but in our thoughts. I hold that a true man no more indulges in evil thoughts than in evil expressions. One who has real nobility of soul does not even allow himself to think uncharitable things of men, but is purer toward them in his inward life than in any outward development.

Now, in this great conflict, where there is so much turmoil and rasping and irritation, where there is so much of sadness, where there are so many hearts broken, where there are so many men that carry burdens, it is a comfort to me to hear God say, by his brooding Spirit, "I help, in those respects, your infirmities." It comforts me to hear it said, "Ye have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of your infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as ye are, yet without sin."

Lastly, the sympathy of God is with the hidden and superior trials of the nobler parts of our souls—with those troubles which spring from the exercise of the higher traits, as well as with those which I have specified.

In the first place, there are a great many poetic natures who are subject to extreme variations ; who are all flush and hopeful in one hour, and all drooping and empty in another ; who are subject both to the intensities of belief, and to the intensities of unbelief ; who at times, hardly understanding the constitution from which these things spring, are perplexed and annoyed ; but who, at other times, discerning the forces that are at work in and around them, are cheered and encouraged. "All things are open and naked unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do ;" and God sympathizes with our moods, with the ever-shifting shades of transient and poetic feeling,—which are said to be "imaginary," as if the imagination were not a fact as much as any other fact in life.

Then there are those who are living in a perpetual discontent of this life. They cannot cease to take an interest in it. Nature provides that they shall not let go even if they wish to. But there are times when there comes to them such a sense of the littleness of life, its evanescence, and its valuelessness, that they seem to themselves to be as so many ants or worms. The whole economy of life oftentimes seems to be one of such vanity and vexation of spirit that a man is almost willing to lay down his burden, even if he does it by his own volition, and go out of life, saying to himself, "Better is the day of one's death than the day of one's birth." One is tempted, under such circumstances, to

doubt himself; to doubt his friends; to doubt everybody; to doubt everything. All the weaknesses of men, all their short-comings, all their petty treacheries and insincerities, all their lies, all their snatches of ambition, all their fever-heats, all the elements that go to constitute the imperfection of a nascent and growing creature, come up before one's mind, and he is very strongly tempted to scoff and sneer at them. And where this feeling of contempt for one's fellow men is accompanied by a sense of one's own worthlessness, the whole world is good for nothing in his view. In such moods a man is ashamed of himself, and he hates himself for falling into such philanthropic states of mind. Nevertheless, there is a *Spirit that helps our infirmity*; that knows how we are tried; that understands our nature; that teaches and succors and cures men; and that by love brings them back to reason, and to charity, and to peace.

Then, there are moods in which annihilation reigns. The eye sees not, and the ear hears not, and the understanding understands not, and the heart feels not. One is dead, seemingly. There are times when men of a sensitive nature seem to themselves to lose their hold on life. They fall off from the interest of the human race, and from everything. And these arid, desert experiences God understands. He knows what they come from. He knows how many transgressions spring out of them. And he pities and helps them.

Then there are those moments of intense yearning which turn all common feelings pale. There are those fears lest truth shall have been a fable, after all. There are those hours of unspeakable anguish which men pass through where they seem to themselves to be letting go of all that is most sacred in the past; where all the thoughts that are perfumed with the associations of home-life are taking flight; and where the tree of religious life that once was full of birds, and full of blossoms and leaves for the healing of want, is bare and desolate. In this mood the Bible seems to them but a congeries of chance things. And there are times when the soul throws up its hands in despair, and gives up everything.

I do not blame these states. I feel sorry for them. And among those that experience them there are, not unfrequently, great and reverent natures—men who are making a transition from the old to the new; that is, making the new newer than it was before. There must needs be some that shall go through such passages of feeling. They are afraid to express their doubts, because there is nothing less sympathized with than doubt and unbelief. To say that a man is an infidel, is to put him out of the pale of sympathy, almost. And yet, a man may be an infidel, and be a better man than you are. A man may not reverence the sanctuary, and worship the Book, and give his

adhesion to creeds, as you do; but he may be in a state in which God is preparing him, by suffering, to lead men out of their troubles. The very sufferings from fear and doubt and apprehension through which a man is going may be fitting him for the work which God has for him to do. And though a man may be enveloped in the darkness of unbelief, and though he may be fractious and wayward, and refuse to have God to rule over him, he may not be so bad as many who do believe, and do not live up to the light which they have. An unbelief that springs from real honest investigation and aspiration for higher truth or for a better expression of universal truth than they have ever had, is an experience which few have sympathy for in this world. But the heart of God will take care of those that turn to him with filial love, and will bring them through all these moods.

If there are any in this congregation who are unsettled, sometimes thinking one thing, and sometimes another, now going into churches that have the most outward forms and visible worship, and where the senses have rest, and now breaking away and going into churches where services appeal more to the higher reason and the moral sentiments, you may seem to yourself an Ishmaelite, a vagabond, an unworthy wretch; and yet, you have not gone out of the charmed circle of God's thought and sympathy and love. He broods over you still. And though you let go of everything else, do not let go of faith and trust. Keep the avenue open between you and God. Keep the door of your heart open so that there shall be that intercourse between your soul and the Divine Spirit by which he shall bring you safely to a glorious issue.

In view of the truths thus opened, I remark, first, that the administrative power of the moral world is love—not power, and not penalty. Penalty is a part of justice, and a part of the organization of nature. We do not need to undertake to prove that sin brings pain, and that pain is the penalty of the transgression of law, and that it is a part of the original economy of God's universe that sin and suffering should be indissolubly connected. The whole creation is a witness of that. All the tears that have been shed are so many showers of the testimony of the anguish of the world. All its discord, all its immeasurable depths of suffering, are so many memorials, of this original and organic and invisible constitution of justice. That which we needed was not a revelation to tell us that God was just, and that law was sovereign, and that disobedience had penalty, and that penalty would smite and work, and smite and work, and smite and work. That did not need to be revealed. The eye saw it; the ear heard it; every sense experienced it. Our whole life has been but one voluminous history of this original economy of the globe, for purposes of truth, and obedience,

and of justice followed by penalty. What we needed to know, was, that this was not the only nor the dominant influence, but that there was over all this a power which was something better than this to our apprehension. The power of love, and the power of sympathy, and the power of succor through sympathy and love—that is the revelation of the Bible. That is the New Testament doctrine. It is that while we are living in a world which expresses God's organic purpose of justice and penalty, we are also living in a world which is overarched by a domestic economy, by a celestial economy, by a providence and a grace, which work by the power of sympathy and love. So that while nature teaches the justice of God, and the punishment of sin, the Gospel teaches the recuperative power of divine sympathy and divine love.

Wherefore, it is to me an unspeakable comfort that the tendency of the historic influence of the past, the great growth of the future, and the wondrous and distinctive peculiarity of the day in which we live, is to work away from materialism and sin and penalty, toward spirituality and obedience and love. Justice, like a comet, sweeps away from the sun; but love, like that comet reclaimed and turned, shoots right toward it. And we are on the way toward it; only when we reach it, we shall never turn and fly away from it again.

Therefore, in time and history we have seen the worst. Individuals will be as bad as they have been, single organizations will be as bad, nations will be as bad; but, taking the world as a whole, it is rising, and is to rise. *No weapon formed against God shall prosper.* Let men seek to fill the earth with doubt and unbelief: there will be a light put through that. Let men seek to make governments throughout the world more monarchical: their efforts will be neutralized by the march of the principle of universal Liberty. God's power will break through and shatter all combinations that undertake to hinder the onward progress of the race. Mankind are yet to be enfranchised. Intelligence, virtue and moral inspiration, joined to the spirit of God, are going to prevail. God is abroad on that work, and is working wondrously, and working comprehensively far beyond our perception; and he is working in the line of love; and he will work until he has repaired all the mischief that has been done by sin and imperfection.

I remark, secondly, that cases of the longest delayed repentance are not without hope. The man that has been the worst in life; the man whose case is most difficult of management; the man that has the most to overcome and the least to show of good living, has encouragement to repent and turn to God.

There are a great many men who are reckless, and who say, "There is no use in your troubling yourself about me. Go for others. I am a castaway, and am spoiled. Do not waste your time and strength in trying to do anything for me."

It is very true that an old tree can never be made to be like a young one. You cannot train it. But you may take a tree that is a hundred years old, and that is dead with the exception of one or two branches, and take away the spent earth from about its roots, and put fresh soil in its place, and prune off all but the living branches, and give it a chance to sprout again, and it will thrive and become a fruit-growing tree once more; though it will never be such a tree as it would have been if it had been trained right from the start.

A man may be dead on one side, and dead on another side; he may be full of evil on this side and on that side; he may be quite beyond his own power of recuperation; but if he can be brought under the vivifying influence of the spirit of God, and if he give himself up to the direction of the divine power, it is possible for him, though he be one of the worst of men, to be reformed. The lyingest man may become a truth speaker; the hardest drinking man may become sober; the most lecherous man may become pure; the most deceitful man may become upright; the most dishonest man may become honest; the most vindictive man may be made peaceable and mild. The eagle may change his nature and the leopard his spots, in this new economy of divine grace, and there is no man in my hearing to whom I may not most freely say, "The Spirit understands your sins; he knows the causes from which they spring; he loves you; he is the best friend you have in the universe; and if God be for you who can be against you?" Not your sins, not the devil, no tempting influences, can lead you to destruction if once you commit yourselves to the hands of the living God, and keep near to him. God can save you, and nothing else can.

I remark, once more, that this sympathy of God is not given as a reward of man's own well-doing or of his victory in the struggles which he has been called to wage. I say this to meet an almost universal feeling, rather than conviction, that if a man becomes a Christian, and lives aright, he shall have God's favor and love. Children feel so, and young people feel so, and grown people feel so. Men are apt to say, "If I were to avoid all vices, and leave off all faults, and read the Bible, and say my prayers every day, and go to church like a good Christian, and keep Sunday, and watch my conduct in every way, so that God should see that I was in earnest, I believe that he would give me the joy of his salvation." In other words, men have the notion that God holds divine help as a premium, and says, "Now study and work; and if you will come up to such a point I will give it to you. Otherwise you cannot have it." That is as if a physician should stand before a man who was suffering from excruciating cramps, and should hold out tempting fruits and solacing, refreshing and remedial drinks,

and offer to give them to him if he would stop the cramps and get up and come to him. If unaided he could have stopped his cramps and walked, he would not have sent for the doctor, and would not have thanked anybody to help him. What he wants is some one to come to his side and minister to him remedies that shall relieve his sufferings and restore his health and strength.

There is an impression that Christ is a premium-giver, and that he says, "If you will work and acquire a capital, then I will help you." No; there is given you a capital to begin with. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." You have the divine help to start on.

Before any daisy or violet, before any blossom, is seen in the field, the sun lies with its bosom to the ground, crying to the flower, and saying, "Why tarriest thou so long?" And day after day the sun comes, and pours its maternal warmth upon the earth, and coaxes the plant to grow and bloom. And when days and weeks have passed, the root obeys the call, and sends out its germ, from which comes the flower. And it was the sun that brooded it into life. Had it not been for the sun's warmth and light, the flower could never have come to itself.

So the Eternal Spirit of God rests on the human soul, warming it, quickening it, calling it, and saying, "Oh, my son! where art thou?" And at last it is this divine sympathy and brooding influence that brings men to God, and leads them to say, "Am I not sinful?" and to yearn for something higher and purer and holier. It was God's work. He long ago was *working in you, to will and to do of his own good pleasure.*

Therefore let me say to any man that wants to be a Christian, You need not feel that you must wait a week or a month before you can begin. God has been pleading with you already. It is he that gave you the thought of becoming a Christian; it is he that gave you the impulse to try to become one; it is he that gave you the first slight yearning warmth of soul which you experienced. He is beforehand with you. And he will not wait till you have achieved before he will achieve for you, by you, and in you. He is doing exceeding abundantly more for you than you can ask or think.

To the guidance of that good God let every soul commit itself. Feeble in knowledge; ignorant of the way in which we are walking, and of many things that hinder our progress; blinded as to truth, and moral truth; knowing less about those things which we most need to know than we think we do; constantly subject to oscillation and variation—to moods that go up, and moods that go down; proud, and selfish, and

hating and hateful; frequently cruel to each other, and more cruel to ourselves, deceiving others, and striving to deceive God; full of bitterness; of the earth, earthy—oh! what shall we do with such natures as ours, if there be no sweetening influence, no divine Leader, no spiritual Instructor?

To that dear Spirit of all light, and all knowledge, and all comfort, I commit you. Put your heart in the summer of divine love, and remember that “all things work together for good to them that love God.”



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we draw near to thee not to behold darkness nor to hear thunders; for thou art the God of truth and justice; and thine administration is love. That our souls know right well. We have met together by thy power. We have been kept, if not unto salvation, yet in the way, and with the hope, with the anticipation, and with many of the joys and foretastes thereof. And we rejoice, O Lord, our God! that that work which thou hast begun in time, and which has been kept back and hindered by drought, by frost, and by ill-timed seasons, shall yet know a fairer summer, and shall spring up into blossom and into fruit, by the side of the river of the water of life. It is in this hope that we comfort ourselves all the way, in all the infelicities of the way—in all our sorrows; in all our infirmities; and in all those sins which cause us pain. We look forward from out of these things, and live by faith of the better land, and of the better life, and of that better self which shall be ours when we shall be where thou art—when we shall be transformed. For now are we what yet the drops are that hang dark in the heaven, unsunned and full of storm; and then shall we be as the drops are when the sun shines upon them, as they hang upon the grass or the flower, full of glory and beauty, the storm having gone by. Now we are hanging in trouble, in fear, and in pangs of pain; now we are driven about by mighty winds hither and thither; but then we shall be as the angels of heaven. Then, standing before thee in the light of knowledge, and in the purity of sympathy, and in the joy of full fruition, all thine excellence shall work upon us, and we shall be satisfied. Then we shall see thee as thou art. Thee, whom we have fondly longed for, we shall see more beautiful than our fancy had created thee; more august, more generous, more tender and loving, more full of beauty and grandeur, than we have been able to think thee. Not anything shall be taken away from thee; but that obstruction which mars our apprehension of thee, through the imperfectness of our understanding, shall be removed. As they who look out upon a garden of wondrous beauty, filled with rare plants and flowers, through windows full of wrinkles and contortions, behold these things, but see them unnaturally reflected; and as, when the light comes to them without interruption of glass, they behold the same things, and they appear sweet and perfect; so we, seeing through a glass darkly, distort thee with lines of our own thought, and of our own prejudice, and with the sharp points of our sins; but we shall behold thee without any medium between. We shall see thee as thou art. We shall see thee face to face. We shall be like thee, so that we can see thee out of our own experience. We shall interpret thee. And we shall

then be satisfied—yea glorified, filled and overflowing with rapture begun. And that experience shall have no decadence, no pause, no end.

Now, O Lord! we pray that this high hope may never die out of our heaven, nor suffer eclipse. May it be the one point toward which we shall push with all the force of our life. May we consider everything else as something aside, as by the way. May this one hope of our redemption, immortality, and glory, in the heavenly land through the Lord Jesus Christ, hang over us, as a guiding star. May it be to us as the gate of heaven. And though at times it may be hid for a little while, ere long may it break through every cloud and storm, to cheer and comfort us. And in all the strife which we make to live worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, be thou on our side. How many and how mighty are our adversaries! How much we contest the visible by things invisible! May we believe that thou art not far from any one of us, and that thou art carrying our armor for us, and inspiring our courage, and aiding the stroke of our hands, so that we shall be conquerors and more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

May we not desire to separate ourselves from the sympathy of the Lord Jesus Christ—no, not for one moment. May we be able to do those things that please thee, so that, standing by our side, we shall see thy face smiling upon us. May we avoid everything of which we cannot speak to thee, and on which we cannot ask thy blessing. Help us to overcome our sin and our inward badness, and what remains of earthiness in us. And may we seek more and more to fill our life and nature with those holy passions which shall bring us into sympathy and accord with thee and thy heavenly host. Bless this assembly that are gathered together here this morning. Hear their confession of their sins. Hear the silent confessions of waiting hearts, and hearts weighed down with imperfection and weakness. And we pray that thou wilt inspire hope in all those that desire to forsake evil. May they see that the way to virtue is straight and narrow; and that God stands therein to help them; and that he will never leave them nor forsake them; and that he will love them with more than a father's love, and strengthen them with the might of the everlasting God. And may none be afraid to turn from evil unto the pure way. May all feel that in turning toward thee, they turn toward power, and wisdom, and sympathy, and all gathering goodness.

And we pray, O Lord! if there be those in thy presence who are in sorrow or bereavement, who are in manifold affliction, that they may find the communion of the Spirit refreshing and comforting to their souls. For thou art the Consoler. Thou art the Comforter. Ten thousand hast thou comforted in prison, on the scaffold, in the wilderness, on beds of sickness, in solitary places. Thou hast comforted the home-sick and the heart-broken. O, Lord, the Comforter! how great has been thy work upon the earth! How full has the world been of thee! How wondrous has been the administration of thy grace! What dear and beautiful hours have descended into dark days! What angelic experiences have come to men in prisons! And how hast thou taught men the blessings of suffering and sorrow, and made them strong in weakness! May they be rich in poverty, and may they have joy in sorrow. Thou hast not forgotten the sacred lesson. Thou art the Comforter still. Not as one man is comforter to another art thou; but thy comforting influence is spread all abroad through the heaven and the earth, among all the sorrowing. Thou dost love with divine and sacred energy, and dost grant consolation to all that are in trouble. And if there are any to-day who are in bereavement or sorrow, and all of whose memory when they turn to the past is dark, O Lord! give them release; or, give them thy presence, if it be better that they should yet endure chastisement.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless those who are tried by their cares and perplexities. May they still have strength valiantly to do the work

which is appointed in thy providence for them, and to persevere unto the end.

We pray that there may be many and many of us who shall be builders in the day in which we dwell, establishing blessed institutions in society upon foundations which shall go on generations after they are gathered to their fathers, working for the amelioration of men.

We pray that thou wilt bless all those who are laboring in the Sunday-school and in the Bible-classes. Bless the labors of those who are going from house to house, or into the highways, to minister to those that are not gathered into the sanctuary. And grant that they may have the Sacred Spirit and inspiration of God upon them. Teach them both to love and teach. Bless all the Churches that are gathered together this day in this city, and in the great city near us, and throughout all our land. We pray that thy servants may be prepared to preach the Gospel with more understanding and sympathy and power. May revivals of religion break out on every side, and spread through all our land, and stay the mighty evils and the mighty temptations to unbelief and doubt which are setting in. Grant that there may come this twilight of faith; and more and more may the heart prove mightier to reason than the head, so that all men may receive the truth unto salvation.

Bless we pray thee, the government of these United States. Bless the President, and all who are in authority with him. Bless the Congress assembled, and the Legislatures of the various States. May they devise things wise and honest. And grant, we beseech of thee, that our magistrates everywhere may be God-fearing men, who shall administer the trusts reposed in them with love toward their fellow men, and with sacred fidelity. May this nation grow purer with age, and with strength more humane. May it not tread down the weak and helpless, but be the benefactor of nations. And may its example kindle hope in other lands. Lead men step by step through virtue to true piety, And at last may thy word, long delayed, be fulfilled, and the earth see thy salvation.

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



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thy blessing may rest upon the word spoken. Grant that there may be some souls drawn to make experience of thy love and thoughtful care. In thee we live. We have our being in thee. We desire to rejoice in the Lord. We desire to be strong in thee. We desire to walk in thy strength. And when, at last, through thine unspeakable favor we shall have accomplished the duty of our life, and passed by its wide and dreary reachings, grant that we may be admitted into thine heavenly kingdom, to dwell forever with the Lord.

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

XIV.

CONFLICTS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

INVOCATION.

June 12, 1870.

LIFT upon us this morning the light of thy countenance, and out of all our darkness and doubt bring us into the brightness of the light of thy love and favor. Thou that dost dispel the storm, and out of clouds and darkness bring forth the sweet cheer of the new made day, bring to us again the light, the joy, and the peace of thy salvation. May wanderers this morning come home. May dispersed children find their Father's house. May all that are drooping in sorrow lift up their head. For, behold their morning hath come. And may this sanctuary be filled with thy presence. And may thy power be mightily displayed here. Bless us in our songs of rejoicing. Bless us in the communion of prayer. Bless us in reading thy word, and in meditations thereupon, and in the offices of instruction derived from it. Bless us as we go forth again and find our several homes. And whether in the sanctuary or in our own places, grant that we may have the spirit of liberty, of joy, and of hope. And to thy name shall be the praise. *Amen.*

CONFLICTS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

“Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 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 PET. I. 6, 7.

It is here recognized that though a Christian has manifold joys and exhilarations in his career, he is subject to occasional “heaviness,” or heart-sadness, “through manifold temptations.” But it is recognized that such experiences belong to the very idea of piety, which is a process by which the spiritual in man gains a complete ascendancy over the physical. And as the gold that is in the rock is subjected, first to severe blows, by which it is comminuted, and then to the action of various agents, and to the flame, in order that it may be extracted from its gross accompaniments, and become pure; so there is in man true spiritual gold, a spiritual element, a spiritual nature, that is to be separated from the lower and grosser elements of his being. And there is, in the providence of God, and in the scheme of grace, an economy by which this work is accomplished. It is clearly taught that there is, throughout the Christian life, the element of conflict, the element of trial,—the elements of temptation and suffering; and that these are not accidental; that they are not simply incidental to certain circumstances; that they inhere in the innermost nature of the work that is to be done; that they so much belong to it, that they who have none of these conflicts have no right to suppose that they are Christians. They are not sons unless God deals with them as he deals with all whom he is purifying and preparing for glory.

This experience may be gradual, diffusive, resulting at length in certain growths and ripenings and attainments. Or, it may be critical, peremptory. Usually it is both. We are carried through a series of trainings which are at work upon us all the time—minute influences; a thousand attritions of care; a thousand little events of sorrow; a thousand disappointments, each of which in itself is trifling, but the aggregate of which is most important in its result upon our normal de-

velopment—evolving, unfolding, and confirming the inherent strength of character.

But then, besides the strong natures, there are natures that are disproportionately formed and unbalanced, natures that in their early experience were brought up unfortunately, that go through more critical experiences still. Every single element in them, first or last, has to undergo a severe trial to see whether it shall be subdued, and lose the rankness and coarseness and harshness of its natural flavor, and become perfectly sweetened by the Christ-element that is to be in every one.

This element of conflict is therefore universal, in that it belongs to all. It is universal, also, in that it belongs to every part of our nature—though it is not the same in degree at all times, nor to all persons.

Such spiritual conflicts exist, I have said, in a general and continuous way; but, as in our text, it is recognized that there are special trials, and special times of trial. There are periods when out of joy men come into great “heaviness” and sadness. The whole color of a man’s life is frequently determined by some special trial or conflict which he goes through, for days, and for weeks, and for months, and sometimes even for years. And the critical passages of a man’s history are not the outward happenings, but the inward, invisible, unjournalized, unspoken, and almost unknown experiences through which the heart passes.

When men are called into the Christian life, they do not come in as experts and veterans. They come in as recruits, to be drilled. And all their campaign lies before them. The victory of our faith is gained step by step; and the great personal epochs in our history are those in which the good principle, after severe conflict, gains ascendancy over the evil that is in us.

In order that we may look the more fully into this general truth, I will specialize, and show, not by any means all the conflicts through which men go, but some of the special ones.

1. Men often pass through scenes which thoroughly awaken them to the higher spiritual life. For many persons glide into a religious life, I had almost said, unconsciously. I do not mean that there is not a point of time when men choose, and determine; but the choice is so feeble in some natures, and the gradations are so small, that while they are consciously religious—that is, purposed to live according to the rules of Christ—yet their life is not fairly stirred up. They are like men who, being awaked in the morning before they have finished their sleep, though they are awake and dressed, and though they move about, move as sleep-walkers. And frequently it is the case that there happen to such persons experiences in any of a hundred ways—to some experiences of joy, and to others experiences of sorrow; to some crushing

afflictions, and to others stimulating afflictions; or, not afflictions, but strifes; vehement pressures on the one side and on the other; the introduction of elements that wake up a depressed life in the soul, and bring men out finally into a higher, clearer, stronger light—so that though they could not say that they were not Christians before, they are conscious that they have now come to a level and to a height of spiritual realization which they did not reach in the earlier periods of their lives. And those who have been brought as children, quite young, and without adequate instruction, into the communion of the church; those who have, by the exterior elements and appliances of the church, been held to an outward conformity with the Christian life, frequently come to a period in which their souls are put through a furnace of trial. Sometimes it seems as though they never before had been convinced of sin; as though they had never before really had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And they wake up into a positiveness and clearness of faith. And there frequently is a richness of experience which leads them to say that they were deceived before. But they were not necessarily deceived. For this is the peculiar method by which men are brought to the full disclosures of a Christian life. And though it is the peculiar method, it is more universal, in this respect, than the regular and normal method.

Men frequently progress in religious life as travelers used to on old canals. They ran along upon a lower level, seeing only the valley through which they were passing, and thus came to some lock, in which they rose, step by step, and thus came to a higher level, with a larger outlook, a wider prospect. Along this level they ran for a time until they came to another lock; and in that rose up to the summit level, where they could look over all the country round about, which they had never seen before. At first, though they were advancing, it was upon a low line of progress; but at last they were brought up where they had more extended ranges of vision.

There are experiences which befall men, sometimes by grief and sometimes by moral strifes and struggles, through which they rise from a lower spiritual state to a very much higher, more appreciative and more intense spiritual condition.

2. Men frequently pass through crises in which they are at war with some special element in themselves. There are certain faculties, different in different men, that stand in the way of the development of the Christ-like life. In some it is temper, quick, violent, imperious, cruel, plunging them sometimes into great trouble, and sometimes into an anguish which stands right in the way of a consistent Christian life. There are many who make but very little headway in this conflict, until, sometimes by one method, sometimes by another, and sometimes,

perhaps, as a sequence of the very temper itself, they are brought to a sense of their weakness in this respect, and to pain and suffering in consequence of the violations of that unreclaimed and unsubdued passion. And they are not merely in "heaviness," but in bondage and in torment.

The hindering affliction may arise from loss of property, or loss of friends, or loss of respect. It may be some great and trying affliction that men are drawn into by passion. It may come in a hundred forms. But the root of it, and the work that goes on in connection with it, is one which makes sinful or evil a man's imperious and wicked disposition.

There is many and many a man who rages like the demoniac in Gaddara, who dwelt among the tombs, and who, when bound with cords and chains, snapped the one and broke the other, and who day and night cried out exceedingly, and cut himself with stones, till he met the exorcising Christ; and then cried out with yet wilder exclamations, until finally he was subdued, and the evil spirit was cast out of him, and he was clothed, and was found sitting in his right mind at the feet of Jesus.

All this process is often blind to those experiencing it. And to other men it seems a great evil. But in the midst of the darkness and swirl of these inward experiences, one of the greatest battles of the soul is being carried on, varying, fluctuating, now gaining ground, and now losing ground, so that at times there is great doubt as to its issue. Yet it is a memorable battle for life and for immortality. There is great "heaviness" and great anguish, for a time, to the sufferers; but this is a trial of their "faith which is more precious than gold." And it is a trial which, if they understand that they are workers together with God, will be a crisis giving them a truer life and a nobler liberty. And though they seem to be broken, they are only broken as flax is broken, that it may become the linen thread, to be wrought into the white raiment of the saints.

3. So, too, for persons who sin by the tongue, there are crises in Christian experience which gather around about that member. For the tongue, though it is the instrument from which come words of prudence and kindness and benevolence, is also an organ that ministers to frivolity and vanity. It is the creature of lies; it is the perpetrator of slanders; it is the propagator of wicked stories; it gives currency to seductive imaginations, whisperings, backbitings, revelings, oaths, and bad influences of every kind. The evil tongue, we are told, is an organ which, like the wild beast, can scarcely be reclaimed or tamed. It is a member which, when it has its freedom, often gives itself to the ministration of lusts and passions. It is the chimney of the soul, and of the lower nature, and is full of soot and blackness.

Now, if men are addicted to the evil of the tongue; if there is a tendency in them to break out and give articulate form to all that is mischievous in their nature, then there must be some way or other of meeting this evil. They are not Christians; or, if they are, there must be a fight. Their victory may be little by little helped by age; it may be helped by one and another modifying influence and circumstance; but more frequently it will go on by a series of conflicts. And oftentimes there is a conflict which is the critical passage of one's whole life; and the temper is trained; and the disposition seems largely to be changed; and the whole of the man's nature seems to have been transformed.

How many men there are whose mouths were once fountains of bitterness, but which after having gone through seasons of great trial and affliction were fountains of sweet waters, and waters of life! How many men there are whose mouths were as the abyss of hell, or as the craters of volcanoes which belch forth lava, but whose tongues afterwards became ministers only of love, and things pure, and true, and gentle, and instructive, as the fruit of a great struggle, and of a great victory!

4. At the same time, and in the same way, every man who is in bondage to selfishness and avarice will, if he be a child of God, get out of that captivity. If he be a child of God, and he will suffer himself to be led gently by the progress, as it were, of the summer of the soul, the word of instruction, in his daily ministration of thought and feeling to himself, will be sufficient. If a man has this avarice, this greed, this selfishness, that shuts him up from his fellows, and leads him to use all the power that inheres in wealth and its relations for his own good, and he be a child of God, there must come a time when it shall be declared whether the Lord reigns, or Mammon. And it must be declared on this very ground, where the man finds it hardest. If it may be treated more mildly, and the work may be completed by the gradual and ordinary process of a divine grace, well and good; but either a man is not a child of God, or there must be afflictions, and there must be a fight on this ground, until every thought and feeling is subdued to Christ. There can be no part of our nature left without its appropriate battle.

How many times do I see this conflict going on in men! And how many know not what God is doing for them and in them! Sometimes God sends his ministrations to us angelically. As Peter was led out of prison by an angel, the doors opening before them, and letting them free into the street, so sometimes God delivers men from bondage by sending to them a messenger of gentleness, of mercy and of love. And as at other times apostles were brought forth in the market-place,

and were mobbed, and scourged, and reviled and threatened, so we are brought forth in our bondage, and are, by the various trials of life, and by the ministration of divine providence, taxed severely, and punished, it seems to us more than we deserve. Oh no; there must be some conflict, and that conflict will have its root, its centre, and its whole life in the purpose of deliverance from our bondage. And although men are frequently desolated as in a moment, and all their life's ambition is smitten, they are infinite gainers.

There is many a man who inordinately seeks prosperity for himself, and whose avarice and selfishness are irreclaimable until, in God's mercy, his prosperity is smitten, and his means are scattered, and he is as other men, and hope departs from him, and he says, at last, in himself, "I give up the idea of being what I always meant to be." Bitter is the struggle, bitter is the humiliation to his pride, bitter is the outcry which his feelings make within him; but after all, the crisis has come. God has humbled him, and he has said within himself, "I give up the ambition; I yield the purpose; I will be content, now, to live and fulfill my duty to my household, and do what good I can to my fellow men, and save my soul."

People say, "Oh! his spirit is broken." Yes, blessed be God, the *evil* spirit in him is broken. His ambition is broken. He is no longer the same fierce man that he was; he is no longer the same restless man; he is no longer the same scheming, calculating man; he is no longer a man that puts such inordinate stress on property and means in this world. He has yielded these. And it is the great victory of his life. It is a victory out of which comes peace and joy in this life, and in the life to come glory and honor and endless happiness.

In great "heaviness" may one well be, if God is trying his faith; if God is, by leading him through conflicts, developing in him a religious life such as is disclosed by the Lord Jesus Christ. And when he has gone through sufferings and trials and crushings, the victory which he has gained is worth more than all this life put together.

5. There is, first or last, also, in every child of God, a conflict of the affections. For our affections are not God-ward, usually. They spread themselves as vines that creep upon the ground. They have to be taught to climb. They are idolatrous. They almost make us worshippers of one thing. They need to be spiritualized. We need to lift up our hearts till they become fixed, not simply on the life that now is, but on the life that is to come. In other words, our affections, bright, sweet, pure, gracious, as they are, even in the natural state, are yet untrained and unchristianized. And though a man, when he is brought into a Christian life, purposes to live for Christ, yet each part of him must go through a discipline to enable him to do it. The dis-

cipline of the affections seems the strongest and the most wonderful ; yet there is no discipline that is more essential or more merciful. It is not for the present joyous, but grievous ; it seems hard ; and yet it is necessary and beneficent.

When birds have hatched their young, the nest is not large enough for them ; and they must needs learn to fly. It seems hard for the old bird to shoulder them out, and let them, if they cannot catch upon some branch, fall to the ground ; but it is a part of the parental instinct of kindness in the old bird to teach the young bird how to use its wings. The young bird is well fed and cared for, but it is not allowed to remain long in the nest. The nest is good as a place to be born in, but beyond that it is of very little worth. What kind of a bird would that be which never got out of its nest, and never tasted the upper air, and never sung in the forest-top, and never felt the liberty and power of swinging at its own will through the air ?

The human heart, made to be larger than this life, needs to be taught how to regard the other life as the real one ; and must be taught, in loving, to love in such a way that there shall be immortality and spirituality in its affection ; in such a way that its loving shall be not for time, but for eternity. For we tend to love so that the affections do not reach beyond death ; so that the grave seems like a pit of despair. Whereas, true love points upward. It gives us, as this world and the present life grow less and less, a larger and larger comprehension of spiritual being and eternity. So that when we have been living for ourselves and for our household, thanking God, to be sure, for our children, and trying to rear them, as best we may, for honor or immortality, and yet after all, loving them as idols, God descends in great mercy, though robed in darkness, and he smites down the pride of the household ; he takes the beloved of the cradle ; he desolates us. And then is the question between the heart and God ; then is the crying ; then is the anguish ; then are the resistances ; then is the darkness ; then is the half-resignation ; then is the pleading ; till by-and-by there comes an hour in which the affections say, "Even so, Lord Jesus, reign over us." And through the crisis the heart comes out on the other side, not with less love, but chastened, regulated, spiritualized, subdued to Christ. And when one has come to this experience in his affections, the blessedness of it, the wealth of it here, the promise of it in the life that is to come, is worth every single pang, every single tear and every single groan that it has cost. It is good to be afflicted.

6. Then there are men of dominant pride and of concomitant vanity, who, at some time or other, have to go through a crisis. If the gradual influences and ameliorations of religion do not transform them, then there must come a time when they are to go into conflict. And

this may take place in a thousand ways. God is never at a loss for means. Men go through great and humbling mistakes, and even sins. David did. Solomon did. The prophets did. The apostles themselves were not unimpeachable men. They were frequently left to fall into mistakes. They had imperfections as well as other men; and they had to go through a process of discipline before they were rid of those imperfections. God in his providence brings men into circumstances where they lose their reputation; where they seem to themselves to be cast down from eminence, and to be outcasts; where they are restrained; where their sphere is circumscribed; and where all that has been bright and cheerful to them, is dark and gloomy. Men oftentimes find that all the paths and courses which they have marked out for themselves are closed to them. One finds himself crippled in his ambition. He had marked out for himself the acquisition of means. He had intended to be prospered, it may be, through wealth; but his prospects for wealth are destroyed. Another man meant to be active and efficient in a certain sphere of life; but his health is broken down, or the stroke of maiming and crippling has fallen upon him. Or, one may become blind. There are a thousand ways in which one may be subdued by the providence of God, so that whereas he was filled with strength, and ambition, and boundless purposes of self-aggrandizement, now, as a consequence of circumstances which have befallen him, he finds himself shut up to deprivation and suffering; and the strongest part of his nature seems to be the very one on which the hand of the Lord is laid. And he goes through a great and fiery trial, and a trial sometimes terrific, according to the stubbornness of his disposition. And finally he ceases to resist the divine will.

There is many a man that at last yields his pride to the Lord; yields himself to the providence of God; follows the guidance of the divine hand. And out of this whole conflict comes the purification of his faith, which is more precious than the purification of gold itself.

7. God teaches us what all need, but what so few gain by their own voluntary purpose—long-suffering patience, gentleness, meekness. How many, so long as they are surrounded by prosperity, live with an unsubdued nature, although they are in many things Christian! For Christians are very much like farms. Usually, at first, settlers clear up and cultivate about ten acres of ground, just around the house. Of the whole hundred and sixty acres, only about ten or twenty acres are redeemed from the wilderness during the first year or two. After that it is customary to cut away five acres or so a year. And gradually the farm becomes subdued. But it is seldom that a farm is redeemed and cultivated alike in all its parts.

So God deals with us. Little by little, and through many degrees,

he clears up the various parts of our nature, and subdues them from the wilderness, and brings them into a cultivated state. But there are unsubdued parts of our nature. And they are to be taught patience, meekness, humility, disinterestedness, kindness and love. And many men that have gone through great trials, wondering what God meant, have, by-and-by, come to a disclosure of the divine intention in that quietness and joyfulness of spirit which is wrought out in them. Men do not at first recognize the benefit which is being conferred upon them by the discipline to which they are subjected in the divine providence. God generally measures his kindness to men, not by what they want, but by what they need; and therefore it is not appreciated by them. If he would give them houses, and lands, and ships, and bonds, and stocks, and money, and other things which they desire, they would say, "Oh! how good God is!" If he would feed their senses, they would feel that he was the most worshipful of Beings. But when he feeds their spirit, and sacrifices their senses thereby, and tries them, and disciplines them, chastening them with stripe upon stripe, taking away the foundation on which they stand, hedging them in on every side, bringing upon them sickness and poverty, casting them out, and making them exiles and strangers, they are apt to say, "It was not always so with me; I have seen better days," and to mourn over their hard lot. How little do men understand those things which have been done in them and upon them in the providence of God to break up the hardness of their nature, and make the soil of the soul mellow—especially where the body is brought under great suffering and affliction, that the spirit may have some chance of life.

These and such like examples are but specimens to show that while there is a general and gradual course of instruction and amelioration, it is a part of the divine plan, as revealed in God's providence, to make onsets on particular parts of men's nature. In view of this disclosure, I would, by way of application, remark, first, that while men are apt to look upon their trials in external relations, God is wont to look upon the inward fruit. We look in one way, and in the lower way of our senses, according to the fashion of this world. God looks with divine understanding from the standpoint of the heavenly land. God, who knows the reality of the internal and invisible; God, who knows what is the value of the soul itself, as separable from the body and its conditions—he loves that in man which is best; and for its sake he chastises him, saying,

"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 not cruelty; it is kindness. It is not hardness; it is mercy.

I remark, secondly, that no man should fail, in every trouble which comes upon him, to recognize the errand to which God sent it. He sends trouble as a messenger to some, saying, "Humble your pride." If they will not heed the message, he sends other and worse troubles. If you disregard the gentler persuasions of God, you may expect that he will resort to severer measures to secure submission on your part to his will. He says to our absorbed and idolatrous hearts, "That love is too small and too earthy. It has not enough courage in it, nor enough faith in it, nor enough breadth and comprehension in it." If we will listen, we may love on; but if not, often, and often and often the idol is taken away.

Ah! how many men have found heaven by following their children there! How often it is that a man, wretchedly following after his companion, has found heaven by standing on the threshold of it and looking in upon the loved one that he has lost! The brute creation can be toled and allured by taking their young ones and carrying them on before them. And where a heart loves idolatrously, and is to be trained for heaven, and the object loved is taken to heaven, how often does it follow, crying as it goes, as a bird cries out while it follows the boy that has the nest in his hand! How often have men learned at the cradle, what they would not learn at the altar; and at the grave, what they would not in the sanctuary. Take care, when God sends trouble upon you, that you instantly say to yourself, "What means it? What does God seek to accomplish by it? How shall I fall in with this message of my Lord, and become a better man, in consequence of this trouble?"

I remark again, that no man ought to be discouraged because he is in trouble. No man ought to be depressed at the dealing of God with him. In the fourth chapter of the first Epistle of Peter, and the twelfth verse, it is said,

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

There are a great many who are discouraged when they begin a Christian life, because they find so much that is bad in them; so much of retrospect; so many times when they seem to be backsliding; so many times when a spiritual coldness overshadows them; so many times when their religious sensibility declines, and when they are brought into states of darkness and of trouble. They feel that they have been deceived, that they have mistaken their own evidences, and that they supposed themselves to be Christians when they were not. My dearly beloved brethren, *whom the Lord loves he*

chastens. If you are brought into trouble and grief, and there is a humbling of your pride and vanity, and a circumscription of your natural appetites; if you find that the world is not so bright to you as it was before, it is God's invitation to you to take the higher life. God is dealing with you, not in punishment, but in great mercy. Beware of suffering that does not bring forth "the peaceable fruit of righteousness." Do not say, "How long shall I suffer?" That is not the question. Do not say, "How much ought I to suffer?" That is nothing to you. All that concerns you, is, that suffering shall bring forth the appropriate fruit of spiritual purity, and so of spiritual peace.

When birds are flying over, and the fowler lies in wait for them, if they fly low, at every discharge of the fowler's gun, some fall, some are wounded, and some, swerving sideways, plunge into the thicket and hide themselves. But you will find that immediately after the first discharge of the gun, the flock rise and fly higher; and at the next discharge they rise again, and fly still higher. And not many times has the plunging shot thinned their number, before they take so high a level that it is in vain that the fowler aims at them, because they are above the reach of his shot.

When troubles come upon you, fly higher. And if they still strike you, fly still higher. And by and-by you will rise so high in the spiritual life, and your affections will be set on things so entirely above, that these troubles shall not be able to touch you. So long as the shot strike you, so long hear the word of God saying to you, "Rise higher."

No man can determine for himself either what afflictions he needs, or what degrees of affliction are best for him. Leave that to the hand of the Lord. Say to him, "Thy will be done—not mine, but thine." Say to the Lord, "May the trial of my faith be to me, as it is to thee, more precious than gold." Lay your heart open, and say with the Psalmist of old, "Search me, try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me."

This is the life for that work. Not that we are to walk in darkness; not that we are to be overburdened here; not that there is in this world only gloom and discouragement. There is much for enjoyment, much for courage, much for instruction; but there are also the appropriate influences by which the rebellious parts of our nature are subdued; by which the things that are unfruitful are made to bear fruit. God deals with us as with children, when he chastises as much as when he caresses. The hand that bears the rod, and inflicts wounds upon us, and causes us suffering, is the hand that also cares for us and blesses us. If we are to be partakers of the divine inheritance, we must come to it by the way of the Saviour; by the

way of the cross; by dying in the natural man, that we may live in the spiritual man.

Who, then, among us, desire to be saved? Who, that hear me, have been to Christ, saying, "Lord, grant that we may sit on thy right hand and on thy left hand?" Who of you have been aspiring and longing that God would clothe you royally with Christian experiences? If when you prayed that God would do such and such things for you, you meant that some royal sermon should open some royal vision, and that then you might, in the effulgence of joy, rise up and pluck down all the stars of life, how sadly will you be disappointed! Christ asks every one who desires eminence in the Christian life, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized withal?"

Are you so alive to immortality and glory, are you so in earnest for the salvation of your better self, that you can say to the Lord, knowing that he punishes and that he afflicts, "Smite. Thy will be done. Let me lose, let me suffer, and let thy burden come never so heavily upon me; only let these afflictions be for my purification, setting free all my hidden life, that I may be a man in Christ Jesus?"

Blessed are they who know how to take pains and burdens and crosses, and who see in every single event of life the overruling hand of a Father, and who, in the midst of innumerable afflictions can still look up and say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Thou eternal God! we desire to draw near to thee this morning, and ask thy help, that by thy Spirit our understandings may be cleansed, and our imaginations inspired; that we may be lifted up above the passions of men; and that we may not liken thee unto ourselves; but that we may find thee in thy purity, in thy truth, in thy justice, and in thy holiness; and that we may come into thy very temple. Though we cannot see thee as thou art, thou canst show us somewhat of thy glory, and manifest thyself to us as thou dost not unto the world. We pray that thou wilt have compassion, this morning, upon our weakness and ignorance, and that thou wilt lift us graciously up into thy presence. As we take our little children, and hold them in our arms, so we beseech of thee that thou wilt do unto our souls this morning, that we may come home and find that God is our Father who art in heaven. Far above earthly dreams, purer, more noble, more full of power and helpfulness therein, more glorious, may we rejoice that the God of all the spheres and all ages is our God and our Father.

We bless thee for the revelation of thyself, through Jesus Christ our Lord. We bless thee for that Spirit which was promised, and which has been sent to thy people to enlighten them; and we pray that all the offices of God toward us in mercy and instruction may be fulfilled this day. Grant us a saving sense of thy presence, and the joy of thy salvation; and may everything that is in us rise up to acclaim thee our God. We confess our unworthiness. We confess our manifold sins, continued through every year of our lives. We confess our proneness thereto. And we pray not only that we may have forgiveness of sins that are past, but that we may be cleansed so that in time to come we may sin no more. We beseech of thee that thou wilt help us to watch against temptation; and may we in the hour of assault be strong, that we may overcome it. We pray that thou wilt deliver every one of us from doubt, from fear, and from uncertainty of mind. Draw near, this morning, to confirm their hope who trust in thee. Inspire those with confidence who are discouraged, and are looking back. We pray that thou wilt strengthen all who are feeble. Comfort all who are sorrowful. Enlighten all who are dim-eyed. Grant that there may be an abundance of thy spirit given to every needy soul this morning. Thou knowest the troubles and trials of each one, and thou hast succor for each one. And we pray that each one may seek for salvation, and learn the way of salvation. Even in the hour of darkness may every one know the way, and find victory in thee.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon those that are prospered, and that come hither this morning with the memory of thy goodness to them. And may their gratitude ascend as incense. And wilt thou accept the offerings which they make.

Grant, we pray thee, that all those who have trouble in their households may be remembered to-day. May the God of all grace comfort them.

We pray for those who are in trials and troubles in the midst of their affairs, that they may so carry themselves that their tribulations shall work patience, not only, but virtue and likeness to Christ. We pray for all who are in bereavement; and for all who walk among the sick; and for all who are themselves sick; and for all who are burdened with any manner of trouble.

Thou, O God! art the Saviour. Redeem every one of thy people out of all afflictions. And we pray that we may learn the sacred lesson by which sorrow shall change to joy, and by which loss shall become gain, and by which weakness shall wax strong and be victorious. And out of thy providence minister to our spiritual good, so that we may be equipped and prepared for that life which waits for us just beyond. Grant that we may not

put too high an estimate upon earthly things; that we may not over value them. May we use the world as not abusing it. Strangers and pilgrims we are. We are as they who stop to take flowers and fruits by the wayside, and then rise speedily to travel on their appointed journey. And grant that at last we may have an exceeding abundant entrance ministered to us, when all thy work shall have been fulfilled, into the kingdom of thy glory.

Look with great compassion, this morning, upon thy servants of every name who worship thee. Grant prosperity to all thy Churches. May all thy ministering servants know how to divide the word rightly. May they see their work prospering in the Lord.

We thank thee for all those signs of unity and sympathy among the people which foretold the latter day glory. We pray that thy people may be guarded as a flock, and that more and more their hearts may find each other, and that thy servants of every name may work together for the suppression of evil, and for the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Pity, we beseech of thee, the nations of the earth. See how many of them are despoiled. Behold the darkness that rests as night upon so many. And take sides for those that struggle for manhood and liberty, and for those that are seeking to dispel their superstition, and to throw off their ignorance. May a great light arise upon them. And wilt thou fulfill thy promises that respect this world. Overturn and overturn, till He whose right it is shall come and reign.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that you wilt teach us, and lead us according to thy love and thy wisdom. And as we overrule the desires of our children for their good; as we circumscribe their freedom; as we teach them by refusing them what they ought not to want, as well as by gratifying them in the things which it is proper for them to want, so do thou with us; and teach us, in all the manifold experiences of life, from day to day, to see the mystery of that which thou art doing. Grant that we may have intimations of the spirit-life and the spirit-land. May there be wafted to us something of the heavenly estate, so that we may see whereunto we are tending; that we may feel the growth in us of that which belongs to the other world; that our life may be hid with Christ in God; that when He who is our Life shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory.

Sanctify to thy servants all thy dealings with them. Draw near to those who have secret affliction which they can speak to none. May they speak it in thine heart. Wilt thou grant that their trials may result in a purification of their faith. Draw near to all who have household afflictions. Be a Counselor and Guide to them in their great trouble. Be near to those who are pressed hard by outward troubles. May they not be unwilling to submit themselves to the hand of the Lord. My they neither lose courage, nor faith, nor enterprise. May they still persevere in things that are right. May they understand why it is that thou hast hedged them up to better manhood. And if they are tempted to sin by sacrificing that which is right, by yielding up their consciences, and by going in the way of the wicked, may

they see their danger obviously before them, and flee for succor to thy higher wisdom and thy higher power.

Deliver all those who stand in youth and in the midst of life and strength, and all who are in old age, according to their several circumstances. As thou art dealing with them, so interpret thy providence and grace unto them, that they may find in thee their life, their joy and their strength; and that living or dying, they may be the Lord's.

And when we shall have passed through this scene of trouble, and shall have shed all the tears which have been appointed for us, and shall have washed our raiment white in blood, then may we appear with thy sons, clothed in white; then may every tear, wiped from our eyes and left behind, be forgotten; and then may joys innocuous spring up, forever blooming, and forever in fruit. And then, in the land of the redeemed, with all our ransomed power, we will give the praise of our salvation to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

XV.

EARTHLY IMMORTALITY.

INVOCATION.

June 19, 1870.

WE draw near to thee with gladness, this morning, sure of a welcome, O our Father! whose lips have never spoken aught but peace to us, and whose hands have never been unladen of blessings. Forever giving, they are forever full. And we are recipients of mercies more than we can remember. We dwell in the stream of thy continued thoughts of mercy and of kindness, and in overmeasure are we blessed of thee. We thank thee, and rejoice in thee, and praise thee. And now, dwelling apart from life a little time, in this thine house, we desire that help by which we shall rise to the full communion, and to the understanding of faith, and to the rejoicing of the fellowship of love with one another and with thee. Help us to sing thy praises. Help us to commune by prayer, with thee. Bless our offices of instruction and meditation. Bless the duties of the day, and its enjoyments, and its rest. And may this Sabbath be a delight, honorable unto God, and before men. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

EARTHLY IMMORTALITY.

“And by it, he being dead, yet speaketh.”—HEB. XI. 4.

Very little is known of Abel, of whom this is spoken, except that he represented before God the spiritual element, while his brother represented the carnal and the secular. He must have been a man whose moral nature was impressive, mild, gentle. Yet he produced an effect, not only upon his own time, but upon after times. Being dead, he continued to live and speak as though he were present.

This living after a man is gone, may almost be said to be a universal aspiration. Almost all men, when they rise out of the savage state, begin to come under the influence of this ambition.

We are not content, either, with our individual sphere. We desire to be known and felt outside of ourselves, outside of our household, outside of our neighborhood. And our satisfaction grows if we find that our life affects the life of larger communities, and goes out through the nation and through the world. And it is but an extension of the same feeling that leads men to rejoice in the prospect of their being felt, known, spoken of, in after times, and of their influence being experienced even as in their own day.

To a highly poetic nature, it seems as though it were a kind of earthly immortality. One looks forward to it as if he already realized that he should still be alive, and enjoy all that should take place through him, after him, if it might be that he when dead should yet speak. And there are aspects in which this is honorable.

As you go toward animal life, you come to a narrower and narrower sphere, and to an unconsciousness, and to a want of aspiration. The ox, for instance, never seems to desire to be more than an ox. And as you go down, insect life has that kind of base content. It wants to be nothing better and nothing more. But as you rise even among the higher forms of animals, you begin to see the rudiments, as in the dog and in the horse, of a kind of feeling which afterwards, in a man, becomes aspiration. Though we can scarcely say that it is in the brute, yet the sense of ambition, the sense of praise, we seem to

discern in higher kinds of animals. And in men this element begins where it leaves off in the highest part of the animal kingdom. Then it goes on and purifies itself from lower forms of development, and takes on higher elements, and becomes, finally, one of the noblest inspirations and sentiments of human life. A man who is content to live simply in himself, and for himself, and just through his allotted years, must be considered to be as vulgar as the clod which he treads upon.

The revelation of a future and a more glorious life meets one part of this desire which we have for the extension of our being. We are to live afterwards. Over the bright bridge of Christ's words we walk, now sure that we shall not plunge into a gulf of darkness and forgetfulness at death, but that we shall live again, and live forever.

One naturally clings to the places, the objects, the persons or the race among which he has expended himself. It is not an unnatural thing, nor a thing to be despised, when one lingers where his life has been developed upon earth, with fond longings, and that he distinctly experiences a wish to be felt and known there long after his natural life has ceased. One cannot well bear to think that among his companions, as soon as the services at his funeral are done, he shall be done, and that his name shall not be mentioned again by them. The father and the mother could not well bear to think of dying from the midst of their children, and have those children think nothing of them and care nothing for them. One wants to be felt after he is gone who has been felt during his life.

There is, however, a great difference in men's ambitions for such prolonged life. There is a great difference in the moral values of this longing for extended being and influence. If it be the ambition of vanity; if men desire, while alive, to be felt, in order that they may be praised; if their thought of other persons is simply how to draw from them revenue for themselves, or how they can make themselves idols, and make men believe that they are gods—if it be this, then it is a base and perverted form of that which is a very good thing in its nobler and higher form. And such men are very poor indeed, and contemptible, after death. It is as much as men can do to flatter those who make it their interest to flatter them, while they are alive. After they are gone, men kick over their idols. The world has too much to do to think about fools; and therefore men who spend their lives in imposing themselves on their fellow men, without any real worth, in flattering shams; who live so as to augment themselves by constantly appealing to the self-interests of their fellows—such men, when they die, die thoroughly, die all through, and are forgotten. The world has enough to do to carry on its business, and it cannot carry old rubbish along with it.

This desire to be remembered and loved and felt, is the natural inflection of domestic feeling; and in this sphere it is worthy of more consideration. One may fitly desire to be remembered by those who love him, and whose life has cheered his life. One may very properly desire to be felt long after he is gone, among those to whom he has given his thought, and his experience, and his time, and his property, to make them wiser and better. Love acts at short distances. It is the strongest but the shortest of all levers. Benevolence, though it acts more feebly at near approaches, acts longest. And though the love which we have to our families and to our intimate personal friends is more intense than our general benevolent desire to serve them after they are gone, it is that which we have done for their good—that is, it is our benevolent work and manifestation for them—that will continue to make us precious to them in their memory. We do not so much remember the caress as we do the benefit. We do not so much remember the authority, or the power, or the intensity, as we do that transforming influence which has made us better as well as happier.

The desire to be felt as an *influence* is the only true and noble ambition for this world. It is the desire of genius and enterprise, and it may develop itself in every phase of life—in things physical, social, intellectual, and moral. And its worth is in that order.

Dismissing, then, the vain ambition of distinction, let us consider the power which a man has of prolonging his good influence, and the various channels through which he can do it.

Selfishness, by its own law, not only moves in simple circles, but is short-lived. What men do for themselves is soon expended, and is soon forgotten. Even the monuments which men ostentatiously build for themselves, refuse long to carry their names, and often subject them to contempt, rather than to praise or to memory. Only that part of a man's life which includes other men's good, and especially the public good, is likely to be felt long after he himself is dead.

The physical industries of this world have two relations in them—one to the actor and one to the public. Honest business is more really a contribution to the public than it is to the manager of the business himself. Although it seems to the man, and generally to the community, that the active business man is a self-seeker, and although his motive may be self-aggrandizement, yet, in point of fact, no man ever manages a legitimate business in this life, that he is not doing a thousand fold more for other men than he is trying to do even for himself. For, in the economy of God's providence, every right and well-organized business is a beneficence and not a selfishness. And not less is it so because the merchant, the mechanic, the publisher, the artist, think merely of their own profit. They are in fact working more for others than they are for themselves.

When one so far recognizes this as to walk in a large and generous spirit in the administration of his thousand industries, he in fact is organizing economies which are to go on working long after he has died. That which his business accomplishes, that which his energy has set on foot, will go on working. And the thought—that is, the brain-power—which he has put into his business, does not die when the brain that originated that thought dies. It incarnates itself in the affairs of human life; and the man sends down much of his personality, shrewdness, frugality, economy, wisdom of combination, and fruitfulness of result, in the business which he has established and organized and carried wisely forward.

Who built that mill which clatters night and day under the willows in the valley-road just outside of the village, where on moonlight nights the maid and the youth whisper, and where through the Saturday afternoons the children frolic and play, and where artists go to sketch the scene? Who built that old mill which has ground the bread of two generations? Men do not know. His name may be on some mouldering stone in the graveyard. But it is the man who built it that is working in it still. It was his skill and engineering industry that put it up. And though the hands that made it shall make nothing more, since they have mouldered in the dust, yet the mill which they built has been working for the men of that village ever since its erection.

You may say that building it was a job. Yes, it was a job. You may say that the man who built it got his pay. Yes, he got his pay. You may say that he has had a *quid pro quo*, and has nothing more to do with it. I beg your pardon; no man sets on foot anything that goes on perpetually working for the welfare of the community, that he has not a right in his generous nature to feel that he is identified with them as long as he lives. And whoever builds a good factory or a good shop, whoever puts in motion a clattering town-mill in the midst of a community, is not done with it when he leaves it to do his work. Although he is not an intellectual laborer, although his is not by any means the highest range of activity, although he is a worker in the humbler ranks of life, yet he is working after he is dead in the things in which he has helped society. For although he helped himself a little, he helped society ten thousand times more. And I pity business men who do not recognize the fact that the largest side of their secular business is benevolence. I marvel that men do not sympathize with that side more than they do.

The builders of stores, and warehouses, and shops, and dwellings, are not building them for wages merely. They build them upon contract, to be sure; but their interest in them does not expire with the

fulfillment of that contract. It is not how much these things have done for them that limits their interest in them, but how much they were able, through these things, to make the brain work in the future, and so to incorporate their usefulness into the lower ranges and economies of human life.

Ah! how wisely might men walk through the streets, and say, "I have no eloquence and no poetry; I have been obliged to be a humble worker; I am becoming old; these hands refuse the plane and the saw, and this head the planning and the architectural supervision; but I have not lived in vain. There are in this town five hundred houses where scores and scores of virtuous and happy families dwell; and it was my faithfulness that threw those roofs over their heads, and built those walls, and stored those houses with conveniences. I am not known; my name is not whispered; the owners thank nobody but themselves; yet I know that I built those houses, and I know that they will rear virtuous families. I know that as my work has begun, so it will go on, in the blessed service of fostering the institution of the household down through many generations."

And those men who put on shameful roofs, and built tumble-down walls, and covered up bad work with putty and paint, ought to follow these faithful workers, and say, "I have been a tormenter of life; I have cheated all the way through; I have built houses that will go on from generation to generation vexing and harrassing those who occupy them."

And then the contractor ought to condemn himself, who, from extravagance, or for the sake of making a little profit, crowded these builders of poor houses into such a corner that they had to be dishonest and cheat.

But any man who has helped to beautify the city; any man who has helped to make the warehouses noble, the wharves and piers serviceable, and the dwellings enduring and comfortable, has reason to look back with satisfaction on what he has done. He has not written a book; his usefulness is of a lower form: but it is a form in which he may well take pleasure. Any man who has spent an honest life in rearing up the physical economy of society, by which he is to promote the happiness of households, and the industries and frugalities, and so the welfare, of his fellow men, has lived to a good purpose. For the man who is a carpenter, or builder, or architect, or engineer, does not work merely for present remuneration. He puts that in his work which will remunerate him. And I think many a man has looked back from heaven and thanked God that he had a chance to bless mankind by building good houses. And some men have, perhaps, looked back, not from heaven, with remorse, that they built houses that were a curse to mankind.

He whose enterprise develops new sources of wealth in the community ; he who gives to the community mines or manufacturing products ; he who starts occupations for supplying men's necessities not before known, becomes a lasting benefactor ; and he has a right in his own spirit to thank God for permitting him to be a benefactor through these material instruments.

So, not alone are those men benefactors who are warriors, and statesmen, and scholars, and poets. These other men, too, in a humbler way, but really, ought to have a share of our thought and credit. They who promote industry, and make it more prolific of profit, are benefactors.

So inventors, preëminently, are benefactors, if they but knew it, and would take a benevolent view of their occupations. They are benefactors who by machinery abbreviate labor, and bring years into days, making hours do what months were required to do, and who not only augment the comfort of men, rendering cheap goods accessible to the poor and needy, but who add to men's power. A tool is but the extension of a man's hand ; and a machine is but a complex tool. And he that invents a machine augments the power of a man. And men are as much mightier to-day than they were five hundred years ago, as all the machines of the world make them to be. For the machinery of the globe, after all, is but the manhood of the globe, and represents human power as it has been organized. And he who increases this power by inventing a machine or tool, although he walks frequently unrecognized except as a mere commercialist, although he is called a mechanic, yet, if he be wise, he is a benefactor, and has a right to think so.

Take the sewing-machine. There is many and many a man who has died leaving millions and millions of money, but who has not conferred upon society one tithe of the blessing which has been conferred upon it by Howe. And there will come a day when such men as Watt, and Fulton, and Jacquard, and Stephenson and Ericsson (not born among us, but gladly ours) will be regarded as benefactors. These men will have around about their names more glory than that which mere money could purchase. They will be recognized as having wrought for society ; as having used their inventive genius so as to make men stronger, and society more capable, and the ages fuller of profit. These men extended themselves ; and being dead, they live. Fulton lives in every boat that by night or by day goes up the North River ; in every boat that ploughs the Sound or crosses the sea ; in all the steamers that go hither and thither on oceans and lakes and rivers, carrying the commerce of continents. These men who have filled the world with abbreviated industries, and multiplied the wealth and

resources of civilization for the welfare of mankind, are mighty men. Being dead, they speak, in every clattering loom or in every crank that is plied by the machinery which they invented. Where iron is, where wood is, and where all fabrics are—there are they at work.

The old mythologies of Vulcan are outdone, and we have men that are more nearly gods than ever was the vulgar Vulcan.

The man who builds a road through the wilderness, is an unknown benefactor. He is "somebody;" and it is a pity that the name of that somebody was not put where it should be known. It would be a glorious thing to see on a man's tombstone the inscription, "An honest man, who built the road between such and such points." The man who builds a bridge over a stream so that it shall last for generations; the man who shall build the bridge across this great river* on our right hand, is not a worker for himself. He works for every little foot that goes safely over it. He works for every mother that hurries home to her darling children. He works for every poor man who is inconvenienced by it. Such men work for their own pittance of wages, and they work for the time in which they live; but dying, they shall go on speaking for the benefit of their fellow men.

Oh! that men might know how much benefit there is in mechanical occupations, and in benevolent art! Oh! that men might take comfort in knowing that when they are dead they shall yet speak!

Experience shows that these advances in physical things are more beneficently felt by the poor than by others. They are felt by the rich; but everything that contributes to the convenience and prosperity of the community, and so raises it in the scale, is, first or last, a greater benefit to the poor than to any others.

It is not the selfish or personal element that prolongs one's life. A man that is dead is not to be remembered simply because he invented something. He is to be remembered because that which he invented goes on working benefit after he is dead. And as long as it is doing good to men, so long he is to be remembered. It is that which we do for the public good that makes our physical industries virtuous and beneficent.

Next, men who organize their money into public uses, live as long as the benefaction itself serves the public.

Can you tell me who were the rich men in the time of Queen Elizabeth? Cannot? They puffed themselves up, and walked down the streets, rotund and vain, and were as gods; and there was not a lackey in all London that could not have told you who they were. What has become of those rich men? They are dead and forgotten. But cannot gold embalm a man? Oh no, it cannot do any such thing.

* The East River.

Men can be embalmed; but the trouble is that then they are mummies, and nobody knows or cares who they were. They are good for something. We can use them to boil our teakettle with. The gum and the myrrh and the what not that are used to preserve a mummy, are good to boil our modern teakettle with. But we do not care for those defunct creatures who have gone and left nothing but themselves.

Can you tell me who were the rich men a hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago in New York? What! not any of them? Yes, there were Watts, Leake, and some other names, that I might call, if I had time to search for them. There were a few rich men whose names have come down to us, written on the institutions that they founded. But what about all the rest? What has become of those men that owned the most ships in Boston, in New York, and in Philadelphia? They are gone; and they make just as good dust as poor men do. Their names are like the bubbles which children blow of soapsuds from pipes in summer. All are gone except the men who knew how to organize their wealth into public uses. You shall find here and there a business man, a great saver, a man that had the genius of making and keeping money, and that became over-swollen in wealth, who luckily said, "I will give some millions of this money to the orphans." And so Girard slipped through into immortality, and will be remembered because he took money out of his own pocket and put it into the public veins. He that works for God's great scheme of benevolence shall not be forgotten, and Girard has hitched himself to the work of benefitting mankind, and he cannot be disconnected from it. As long as time shall endure his is a name that men will be interested in. And yet, it was only that lucky final stroke of beneficence that saved him. Had it not been for that, he would now have been ocean-deep in forgetfulness. There have lived multitudes of men that were nearly as rich as he was, but are forgotten. There are multitudes of enormously rich nothings living now in New York, who soon will be pricked by death; and then in a moment they will be gone. When the proper tears have been shed, and the proper services have been hurried over, and the proper pulling and hauling has been gone through with, and the moneys have been distributed, nobody will care for them. What does a thirsty man care for the cloud that brought the water which he drinks? He has got what he wants, and the cloud is gone, and is forgotten. And heirs forget the man by whom money is handed down to them; or they only remember him to curse him for living so long, and worrying out their patience as he did. A man that is a mere muck-rake has nothing in him that men want to remember. I like a fire; but I never thought of praising the coalscuttle in which the

coal was brought to make it. Men like money; but they do not care for those who scrape it together.

If, however, a man organizes his money so that when he is gone that money keeps at work for the best side of human nature, and for the best side of human society, then that man, being dead, though he was rich, yet speaketh.

There is many a man who, having money, says to his right hand, to which the Lord denied the sculptor's art, "Thou shalt carve a statue;" and he takes some poor unfriended artist from the village, and endows him, and sends him to Rome, and brings him back, and puts him into life. Powers and Jackson carve beauteous figures to last for generations; and it is the rich man who patronized them who is working through the men that he fashioned and formed.

There is many a man who says, "Oh tongue! thou art dumb; but thou shalt have tongues that shall speak." And he searches out from among the poor those that are ambitious to learn, and that are likely to become scholars, and puts them forward, and sees that they are educated. And thereafter this worthy minister, this true statesman, that wise and upright lawyer, and this unimpeachable judge, become, as it were, an extension of his own self. There is no way in which a man can use a little capital to a better advantage than in the education of young men and young women. When a man fashions a good school-mistress or a good nurse; when a man prepares one to be a good almoner and helper of the poor; when a man takes one who is endowed with signal gifts, and gives him a chance to act in life, they, as it were, take something of his individuality. On their way down through life and to immortality they carry him with them. And so the man who would have died if he had only been rich, lives in other men, and has an immortality which distributes itself through the race.

A man has the gift of wealth-amassing; and he says to himself, "Selfish gains will die with me, and be buried with me so far as I am concerned." And he thinks of the village where as a boy he played, and remembers its barrenness from want of taste and from poverty, and says, "I will go back there, and that village shall be made beautiful." And not only does he build there, within moderation, and with taste and beauty, a dwelling; but his house becomes the measure and the mark of all the houses in the neighborhood. It is his fence that set all the people in the village putting their fences right. Before, they did not care how their fences looked; but since this comely fence has been built and kept in good taste, the children every time they come home, say to the old curmudgeon, their father, "How our fence does look!" And they worry him; and the wife teases him; and by and by they get him to put up a pretty fence. And more generous ideas in regard

to houses and grounds are instilled into the minds of the young. And the young men and maidens, when they get married, and settle down in life, exercise better taste in fitting up their homes. Their houses, though small and plain, are more tastefully planned; and there are more trees about their grounds, and more flowers in their gardens. There springs up on every side an imitation of that rich man's example. And in the course of twenty or twenty-five years he will have regenerated the taste of the community.

Or, he goes beyond that. He inspires in all the neighborhood a disposition for beauty by planting trees along the highway. He says, "There lies between me and the next village a long stretch where the wind blows remorselessly in winter, and where the sun pours down its heat on the weary, over-spent traveler in summer; I will line those five miles of road with generous elms, and will pay the expense." And he lives to see the time when, reaching across the road, these elms meet at the top. And he rides many times through the long, green colonade which he himself has made. And when he shall have been dead a hundred years, he will be remembered as the man who made that long walk of beauty.

Oh! that I could remember and write the names of the men that planted the old elms in Hadley, and Hatfield, and Springfield, in Massachusetts, and in all the Connecticut river towns, where so much beauty was so cheaply purchased for generations and generations! I am amazed to see how men live—men that have power to open the cornucopia, as it were, and pour down abundance on the times to come, at almost no expense, and that yet live twenty or thirty years in a town, and leave it at the end of that time as ragged and squalid as it was at first.

I rode from Warwick to Kenilworth Castle—a long distance—under columnar trees; and I looked up and blessed God for those ancestors who planted this magnificent drive. And I have wished that all men, not only in New England, but in America, might know what beauty, what refreshment, what refinement and gladness there is in this most simple method of decorating one's village and one's neighborhood, or the roads from village to village. For they who bless their fellow men by such benefactions, become almoners of taste and distributors of comfort. And *being dead they yet speak*. It may be that they do not speak their own names; but they speak happiness and satisfaction. And there is not a man so poor that he cannot set out a tree.

There are young men here who never heard such things put into a sermon before; but you will never forget that you heard them to-day. There are young men here who are going to be rich; and let me tell

you—and you will never forget this—that you must not be rich for yourselves alone, but that you must organize your riches so as to make other folks happy if you want to be remembered. Do this, and as long as the world stands you will never be forgotten. And if you want to know what to do, let me tell you to commence doing something to-morrow. A man that is going to do good with his money when he shall have got a great deal of it, makes a bargain with the devil; and the devil outwits him. Where men are going to use their money so that it will do good when they get through with it, the Lord is apt to get through with them before they think of being through with their money. If you want to be benevolent by and by, be benevolent now. Form the habit of being benevolent by giving at least a little of your means for benevolent purposes as you go along. It is not a bad rule to lay down, for every man to say to himself, “I will spend for other people one-tenth of the clear income that I receive.” It is not a mere professional saying. I tell you, if you give away a portion of the profits of your business for the benefit of others, it will sanctify the rest. It will bring a moral element into your life. Say to yourself, “I will give one-tenth part of my receipts, whether those receipts are large or small; and it shall go for the good of others, and not of myself.” Wherever you are, and whatever circumstances you are in, do something that shall go on benefitting men after you are dead, if it is only to plant a tree or a bush to beautify a house or enhance the comfort of travelers. Do not be contented with simply helping your own self.

How much more is this true of those who lay out parks for the masses, and provide such magnificent breathing places for our cities! I cannot enough express my gratitude for the men who laid out what will be the two most splendid parks, I think, that will exist on earth, when they are completed, and when they shall have grown to their full proportions—the Central Park in New York, and the Prospect Park in Brooklyn. Mr. Olmsted might very well rest with this epitaph: “He was the Superintendent of the two great parks.” For it is not simply what they are that is to measure his usefulness, but what they will do in leading to the laying out of other parks in cities that are ambitious of distinction. No Boston, no Philadelphia, no Cincinnati, no Chicago, no city of importance, can afford to have a park less excellent than those of New York and Brooklyn. And blessed are the men who have labored to put forward these great benefactions of the public, which hold up to the eyes of the poor and needy so much beauty, and bring them into such sweet commerce with God in nature, and give them such resting places and such bounties for their leisure days. And cursed be they whose base selfishness hinders the plentitude of this bounty.

Not only may wealth be organized into institutions of secular pleasure and comfort and beauty, but it may be organized still more potently into institutions of mercy—into houses of refuge; into retreats for the unfortunate; into hospitals for the sick; into orphan asylums; into houses of industry and of employment. These forms of mercy, these eleemosynary organizations, follow society. As the Commissions followed the army, and picked up the wounded and the dying and the overspent, and ministered to them, so these great public charities follow in the wake of human life, and pick up those that are weak and wounded and perishing. And their mercy can scarcely be estimated. There ought to be, not fewer, but more of them. They do not attain to the first rank; but attempting to bind up the wounds that are made, is second only to preventing the making of wounds. No man in his life-time, and no man in his individual experience, can feel or do what he can organize his money to feel or do. If you had countless wealth, and all the poor in Brooklyn should make procession by your house, and you should give them bountifully of your store, you could not do by your alms anything like the good that you would if you should build a hospital or some other charitable institution which would go on benefitting the poor long after you were dead. You will die in a score of years, perhaps; but not a score of centuries need slay the institution which you have reared. Your personal sympathy will reach but a little way; but here is the sympathy of this organized wealth which will go on dealing with generations, and generations, and generations; and it will be just as fresh a thousand years hence, unwearied and unspent, as it was the hour when it was established.

Oh! what a benefaction for any man that has money, and has faith to see how it can work after he is gone, and a heart to set it to work! Being dead, he speaks, and speaks chorally.

But even more important are those institutions which go before society, march ahead, as it were, and, by distributing intelligence and promoting virtue, prevent suffering. The institution which prevents crime and vice and suffering, is more beneficent than that which attempts to remedy them after they have happened. Therefore all those institutions which stimulate and develop important truths for the world cannot be over-estimated. There are a great many of them. In this class are the premiums, endowments, prizes. Take, for instance, that single foundation, the Bampton Lectures. A New England man, dying, left a fund the income of which every year was to be devoted to paying for a course of lectures which were to vindicate the authenticity of the Scriptures, and the divinity of our Lord, and the evangelical religion. From that fund there has sprung a line of lectures that constitutes one of the most noble monuments of learning and piety

that has been known in any language on the globe. Could money be made to work such important results in any other way? A man that shall endow a prize in any line of science, in any line of invention, in any line of the vindication of truths, puts his money where it will work as a perpetual lever and stimulus; and no man can estimate the power and the value of it.

Then there are those institutions which diffuse knowledge, such as libraries and reading-rooms. And yet, brethren, I think these are in their infancy. We have but the germ of what I hope will ere long exist. We must have these institutions removed from places of dissipation and temptation, and must endow them amply, and must take the stiffness from them, so that they shall be homes useable and familiar. Look at the Free Reading Room of the city of Boston. I mention it because it is connected with one of the noblest libraries in one of the most magnificent buildings in any city, and because it is sumptuously provided, and is open freely to every man, no matter how poor, who chooses to avail himself of its privileges, either of reading books there, or taking them to his house to read. It is a free-will offering, and is welcome to the poorest of the poor, clear down to the bottom of society, as well as to the rich.

Now, when Christianity makes a gift to the poor, it cannot afford to pick off the meanest products of the tree, and say to them, "You are poor, and you can eat this worm-eaten fruit." When Christianity gives to the poor, it is bound to give them the best it has. Therefore, when you build missions for the poor, build them better than your own churches. When you open reading-rooms for the poor, make them more sumptuous than the reading-rooms which you open for yourselves and your children. Be more generous to the poor than you are to yourselves. That is the spirit of Christianity. Be more kind to them than you are to yourselves. That is the true inspiration of Christianity. And when men shall understand this, and begin to endow missions and reading-rooms for the poor—magnificently endow them, so that they will go on working hundreds and hundreds of years—they can afford to rest from their labor and go to heaven; for being dead they shall speak in the things they have done, and carry comfort and encouragement and relaxation and knowledge to those who most need them. A man might well place before him in life this single ambition, "I will make myself so well off that I shall have enough to build a kind of home for the poor, so that when my family shall be scattered, there shall be gathered a larger family whom I have blessed." Oh! how poor the vision of a life of pleasure seems in comparison and contrast with these munificent and noble ways of life!

So, men that establish academies, and colleges, and universities, live-

forever, and live, too, in a way that an angel might be proud to live. They that established Harvard—who, even with heavenly arithmetic, can compute what their money has done since they have gone home? Is not the name of Yale familiar to every intelligent man on the continent because he endowed the College at New Haven? And men will yet carry down to thousands of years hence that great name. And Cornell's name is rescued already, as, also, is Vassar's, and Drew's, and Astor's, that would not have sounded far down in the future if they had not had an inspiration which taught them to found seminaries for the discovery and propagation of knowledge among the masses of men.

These endowments have in them immortality on earth. This is the reason why I say that men ought not to be poor if they can be rich. There is a power in wealth, when it is guarded by benevolence, which no man has a right to despise. Having such a sword as that with which to slay ignorance, no man ought to refuse to draw it from its sheath. Gain wealth, and then endow institutions. That is the way to use wealth to a good purpose.

We may rise to a higher grade, and to a more familiar ground therefore, since it is more frequently inculcated in the pulpit. As virtue and spirituality are higher than physical qualities; as the wealth of society lies more in the goodness of Christian institutions and Christian men than in ease, or abundance, or pleasure; so he most wisely prolongs his life to after-days who so lives as to give form and perpetuity to spiritual influences. Whoever makes the simple virtues more honorable and attractive among men, prolongs his own life.

The evil of untruth I need not expound to you. He who makes truth beautiful to men in his day; he who makes men want to be true, and seek after truth, and believe in it, becomes a benefactor. So that I think one single character in Walter Scott's novels is worth more than all the characters put together of many more fashionable novels. For, after all is said and done, if all the novels of the globe were burned but that, I think we should have enough yet. There is Jeanie Deans, who, standing in court, had it in her power, apparently, to clear her sister of disgrace and death by simple vacillation; by simple prevarication; by giving up the truth; and not even the love of her father, who seemed about to die before her eyes, nor the love of the sister of her bosom, could make her swerve. She must tell the truth, though it slew her and every other one. And I think there is more heroic power in that simple character in "The Heart of Mid-Lothian," than in many a moral treatise, and many a system of moral philosophy. She, to the end of the world, will make telling the truth seem more noble and heroic, and so will make men nobler and more heroic. He who stands in the midst of dangers with every temptation to be a coward, but who is so

true that calmly he sacrifices his life to fidelity, makes the simple virtue of fidelity so beautiful and heroic that he lives still in the vitality which he has given to that moral element.

I would that the heroic deeds of noble black men were recorded. How many dusky faces went down in our war without a name! When, in the extreme South, a boat containing a party of our men, had stuck on the shoals, and they were obliged to lie down to escape the showers of balls that were flying in every direction, a stout black man said, "Somebody must be hit to get dis yer boat out of danger," and sprung overboard, and put his shoulder to the gunnel, and shoved her off; and while the party escaped, he, pierced, fell into the stream, and died. He knew what he risked; but he said, in his soul, "Here are these my friends. They must all perish, or some one must take the risk. I take it." Such a name ought not to perish. Such an example ought not to be forgotten—and all the more because it is the example of a man in lowly circumstances. It lifts up the heroism of self-sacrifice, and makes it better worth one's while to be a man, and makes life more noble and more radiant, and corrects that unbelief in moral qualities which is the bane and curse of the world.

Whoever suffers for a truth, whoever endures heroically for a virtue, not only saves his own name, but gives a force and a perpetuity to humble virtues that will open men's hearts to them, and will make their empire beautiful and potential.

All who have opened the divine nature to men; all who have developed to men higher moral truths, and made them like their daily bread; all who have lifted the life of the world up into a higher sphere—they, although dead, yet speak. They may not be spoken of; but, what is more to the point, they themselves speak, and speak the same language; and all the better, because when a man is dead the prejudices and the imperfections that lingered about him are dead, too. And then his voice becomes clearer, and his testimony is more widely received. Men will listen to the truth that dead men speak who would not listen to the same truth spoken by them when they were alive. Speak on, then. And if, in the midst of reproach and contumely, you are bearing witness to nobler truths, and the men that you live among will not hear you, take courage from the assurance that there will come a time when men will open their ears to you. And if you give your life to the generation in which you live, all the more powerful will be your testimony; and being dead you will preach and teach yet.

Lastly, those who have the gift of embodying moral truths and noble experiences (which are the best truths that ever dawn on the world) in verse; those who have the power to give their higher thoughts and feelings the wings of poetry—they, being dead, speak

far back. We hear Homer chanting yet, and chanting the best things that men knew in his day. And the world is still willing to listen to the oldest poet. Going further down, in the majestic numbers of the Hebrew Testament we find the most sublime truths of God and of destiny in poetic forms; and the world is never weary of listening to them. They reappear in every form of translation. They are as fresh to-day as they were on the day they were uttered. And since that time, in every nation, bards have sprung up. And there have been singers for the devil as well as for God; the name of the wicked shall rot; and the fame of wicked men, that has for a little time had its bad currency, sinks more and more away, and becomes the slime and the sediment of the ever-rolling stream of life. But the voice of men who speak for love and purity and immortality, grows sweeter and clearer with time. And he who has had permission to write one genuine hymn, to send forth one noble sonnet, to sing one stately epic, may well fold his wings and his hands, and say, "Now let thy servant depart in peace."

What are you doing, my brother? What are you doing, my sister? Young man, what do you propose? Will you build pyramids of stone, or will you build pyramids of thought? Will you live to make yourself a little happier for a few years than otherwise you would have been; or, will you forget yourself, remembering the sublime meaning of the Master's words, *He that will save his life shall lose it?* He that seeks present ease, present power and present wealth, without regard to the welfare of men, shall lose everything that he strives for, and his own name shall be forgotten. *He that will lose his life for my sake shall find it.* He that puts his life into doing good; he that would purify men; he that would suffer for the sake of suffering men; he that puts the enginery of feeling and the power of business into the work of beneficence in this world, though he may be subject to obloquy, though he may be under a cloud, though he may lose himself, will be remembered when he is dead. The time will come when his name will shine out brighter than the morning star.

May God give you wisdom, not vainly to sit and wish that you might be known in after times, but to understand that he who makes his life an instrument for promoting the happiness of others, being dead, shall yet speak. He shall rise to immortality, and to the society of just men made perfect, and of God, the Judge of all. And there, through an endless life, he shall yet speak joy, and shout praise, and be as the angels of God forevermore.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We adore and bless thee, our Father. Far above us art thou. Thou art beyond our comprehension. Thy nature transcends all that we know, or can know, in goodness, in wisdom, and in power. Nor can we understand the conditions of thy being, since we cannot go beyond our own. But we rejoice that thou art more, so that when we see thee as thou art, face to face, we shall not be disappointed, but shall be satisfied. Filled with the utmost imagination of excellence, and beauty and majesty, thou art still more sublime than all our thought of thee, or than any thing that we can think. We rejoice that we shall find thee more full of graciousness, and more wonderful in love, and in that sphere of perfected life which shall work that which it is not given in the winter of this life to do. In all plentitude and power, it shall become then the law, and the fruit thereof shall be a blessedness which it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive. We desire to walk by faith of that blessed land, and of that glorious and final vision of God. We desire to live as seeing him who is invisible. We desire to live though our senses do not help us. We desire to take the inspirations of our heart, the intuitions of our moral nature; and we desire by thee to be led far above ourselves, or above men, or above anything we can know of thee. And though by searching we can not find thee out unto perfection, we can find out enough for love, and joy, and trust, and hope, and gratitude.

And now, we beseech of thee, O Lord our God, pour thyself in upon thy children to-day. There are those here who know themselves to be thine. Their hearts cry out for God. Their spontaneous nature unuttered, is, Our Father. By this token they know of their adoption. And we beseech of thee that they may have the witness of the Spirit in them to-day, and that they may rejoice in this heirship. All things are theirs. Thou art theirs. And with thee they are heirs to an eternal inheritance. Thy providence, thy grace, thy wisdom, and thy goodness, surround them here. Thou dost guide them. Thou dost succor them in temptation. Thou dost comfort them in sorrow. Thou art tender and gracious to them in infirmities. And even their sins are not set down against them. Thou dost forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin. And we thank thee that thus they are walled about by thy goodness. They are borne as in the Lord's chariot of love. And they shall finally be saved. For thou hast overcome death and Satan. And the power of darkness and the power of light shall not be able to prevail against thee and thine own.

And now, Lord, we pray that this may be a day of joy among thy people. May they confess their sins, knowing that thou art willing to forgive him that confesses thy mercies to him, and rejoice with thanksgiving and gratitude. We pray that their hearts may be ready to-day to call up from the past the memories of all thy mercies, long extended. How many hast thou spared in hours of critical danger! How many have seemed to themselves under the impending cloud whose bolt was about to descend upon their head! and thou didst cause the storm to pass by; and they were rescued, and did not fall down under the blasting stroke. How many have been sick, and have been rescued from the grave! How many little prayers and importunities are answered! How often has the goodness of God been vindicated in the exigencies of past experience! Who of us has not cause to recognize thy sovereign mercy? May thy people to-day, with humility and with thanksgiving, be grateful to thee, and pour out their hearts before thee. We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the families that are represented in this congregation. Help thy servants to minister in holy things in their households, to walk before their children blameless, and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We pray that

thy kingdom may come, and thy will be done everywhere, in the households of our congregation.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that thou wilt strengthen thy servants, and prepare them for thy will and for thy work. And we pray that thou wilt bless those who go forth to teach; and may they themselves be qualified by thy Spirit for blessed teaching.

Bless thy cause in every form, and in all places. Bless assemblies of thy people of every name. Wilt thou unite thy Churches more cordially in sympathy and in love. While men differ in things remote and outward, may they more and more be joined in inward experiences—in faith, and love, and holy hope, of the Gospel of Christ.

We pray that thou wilt bless the nations of the earth. Bless our own nation. Purge it from iniquity. Deliver it from evil laws and evil rulers. Destroy selfishness. Prevent avarice from breaking over all bounds. Grant that thy kingdom may come in the hearts of this great people; that they may serve the Lord, and love their fellow men, and purify themselves from evil works, and be an acceptable people unto God. And may all the nations that in their weakness are struggling for their birthright be helped of thee. May darkness flee away; may superstition cease; may wisdom prevail; may liberty, and purity, and true Christian manliness everywhere abound; and may thy kingdom come and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Which we ask for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless us with the light of the truth, and with the knowledge of thy word. And grant, we pray thee, that they may temper our desires, and restrain our selfish passions, and inspire our generous sentiments. Lead us to plan, in this life, not for ourselves, but through ourselves for others; so that we may have a larger life—a life which death cannot touch; which age cannot impair; on which weakness shall have no power; which clouds cannot conceal nor storms blight. So may we learn the great art of building that we shall build beyond the reach and touch of time; that we shall build for immortality. And then, where neither death nor weakness shall come any more, in thine own heavenly kingdom, may we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

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

XVI.

MERCHANT-CLERKS OF OUR CITIES.

MERCHANT-CLERKS OF OUR CITIES.

“Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thy heart in the way. Be not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh; for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags. Harken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old. Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding”.—PROV. XXIII. 19-23.

That human nature is substantially the same in every age and in every nation, might be inferred from what we know of the human mind itself; for the variations are only in details. The real forms of passion and appetite and affection and sentiment are the same everywhere, with or without culture.

It is, however, still more strikingly shown in that the descriptions of temptation were given thousands and thousands of years ago; and the warnings which were uttered against special and peculiar dangers, are just as well fitted to our age as they were to the age in which they were uttered.

The peculiar sins to which commercial communities are liable, are just as real in New York, and in the great cities of our land, as they were in the trading communities on the borders of the Mediterranean Sea, in the days of King Solomon. The warnings that were given, three thousand years ago in Jerusalem, to young men, have just as much freshness and applicability now, in American States, on a continent which was not then dreamed of. Human nature is substantially the same in all ages, as regards its temptations, its perils and its rescue.

Great cities are peculiarly thronged with the young. They abound in solicitations to evil. They have also many privileges and advantages for good. They have a strong social impulse in them to which the young are peculiarly susceptible. They provide a certain secrecy, too, which is congenial to erring courses—especially in their beginnings. At home, in one-streeted villages, where every house is glass, as it were, and every neighbor knows altogether too much of every other neighbor, it is difficult for men to go in by and forbidden paths without observation; but a great city is at once a great garden of poisonous as well as wholesome fruit. It is, also, by its very multitudinousness, by the vast numbers of separated circles, and by the impos-

sibility of men's taking cognizance of their fellow men, a kind of shield which men put between them and observation. And so, men are shielded, in great communities, from the self-condemnation which they would experience if they were in solitary places, or in smaller communities, inasmuch as they find class-surroundings. There is a certain public sentiment in every line of good conduct, and in every line of bad. Whatever men do that is perverse, they need but little time to find out that there are other men doing the same thing. The greatness of the population enables each particular class to gather to itself its own elect. And aside from the stimulus which they give directly to each other, by community of evil, there is this incidental influence derived from it, that it shields men from the condemnation of their own moral sense, and in some sort makes apologies and excuses respectable, or semi-respectable.

I might speak of the influences which conspire, in these cities, to undermine the virtue of the young—especially their truth and honesty. I might speak of the influences which tend to pervert the normal forces of industry, and which teach men to seek success and prosperity by crooked, abbreviated, gambling ways. These are dangers instant, pressing, vehement. They are connected, also, more or less intimately, with the prime danger of which I shall speak in a moment. But they require, each of them, severally, a sermon. I shall, therefore, confine myself, to-night, to the single theme of convivial pleasures and their dangers.

As we are not, naturally, a nation of gluttons; as gluttony is but an occasional or accidental evil, I shall confine myself mainly to the dangers that betide young business men in this great city (for I regard Brooklyn and New York as substantially one) from strong drink. I wish, to-night, to speak to the clerks of this city, on the prevailing drinking usages, and the dangers which threaten them from strong drink.

It is perilous to leave home at just the time when a great majority of young men do. They come down to New York to seek their fortune. It is just at that time when a transition has been made, but has scarcely become confirmed, from youth to early manhood. They are in the strength and exhilaration of hopefulness. They are full of eager ambition. They are impelled by the full force of their ripening passions. It is a time which is full of amiableness, full of beauty, full of courage, full of trust in honor, full of endeavor, and full of other tendencies by which these nobler traits may be easily perverted. It is a time when one needs not so much the hand of obvious authority, which the young are apt to rebel against, as that invisible and more kindly restraint which comes from influence; from social surroundings; from

that most wholesome of influences, home-influence. But the young are early sent abroad, if they are prospered in life—at fifteen, if not earlier; or are sent into commercial life, if they are in limited circumstances. Young men come to New York to commence business when they are but fourteen or fifteen years of age. At just the time when they need both father and mother, they lose them both. At just the time when they need kindly influence exerted upon them from day to day, they find themselves their own masters, without any one to whom they can go for advice. In ten thousand instances they are surrounded by those who prefer to give them bad advice. They are left to themselves in the most perilous circumstances; under the most pernicious temptations; amidst wiles, and seductions, and blandishments, and blinding influences. You can scarcely place a young man in a situation more perilous, at fifteen, than that in which he is placed in the city of New York, where he has none that care for him; where he has no refuge; where he has no supply for the natural and normal developments of his affections and taste.

This leads me to speak, next, of the surroundings of the young who come hither. They live in a state which is peculiarly unfavorable to self-restraint. The conformation of the city of New York is adverse to virtue, I think. A round city may so mingle homes and stores that business men can more easily step to their own houses for their meals than elsewhere; but in a long and straggling city like New York, where men live three and five miles from their business, so that a journey must be performed every time they go home, it is indispensable that they should take their meals in whole or in part at eating-houses. And, as if to make it completely bad, thousands and thousands sleep in the shop and in the store, out of all the warm and fresh and genial influences of home. During the most susceptible period of youth, they find themselves sleeping on the counter at night, without a virtuous friend near them, or with only their young associates. And the table at which they eat might as well be spread in Broadway, so far as privacy or any resemblance to their home-table, is concerned.

I do not say that the young ought not to brace up, and that it is not becoming in them, and to be expected of them, that they shall adapt themselves to their circumstances, and prove their manhood and integrity in the midst of adverse influences; but in every score of men there are nine or ten who are weak, who need to be helped, whose life will fail if it is not crutched up, and who are largely dependent upon their social surroundings for what they are.

Thus the young, in coming to New York, find themselves not only homeless, but placed in social circumstances which peculiarly tend to demoralize them, in the incipient stages of demoralization.

They are soon brought to the question of company. It is desolate, after the labor of the day, for a man to have nowhere to go; especially a young man that is homesick—and I hope that every young man is. I do not like to hear a man say that he never has been homesick. It indicates a kind of hardness which I do not envy, and would not cherish. Where a young man is tired, and has nothing to do, and has no pleasant bed-room even, and no society, and is alone in a store that has become, after weeks and months, odious to him, how natural it is that he should seek company! And if he can find it nowhere else, he will seek it on the street, or in places of amusement. And what such society is, I need not tell you. I blame it, and I pity it.

It may be well, and it may be a duty, for us to rebuke all such misconduct as springs from these sources; but not without letting it be understood that we appreciate the weakness of men, and that we see that there is great stress brought to bear upon them. And how heavy, under such circumstances, hangs Sunday! What is Sunday here to those who have been accustomed to go to church in the country, where they knew everybody, and where they were known by everybody, and were greeted on going in, and greeted on coming out? By way of experiment they set out, of a Sunday morning, for church, not knowing where they will go. They follow the bulk of the people, and go into a stately edifice, where there is worship, but no fellowship. The next Sunday, they go into another church, where there is instruction, but no atmosphere of love. The next Sunday, they go into still another church, where there is an abundant provision of seats, but a slender occupancy of them, and where all is cold and empty. So they try one Sunday here, and another there. And this wandering about on Sundays from church to church is about as poor a business as a man can go into, so far as profit is concerned. A blacksmith might as well take his iron to one forge, and let it heat five minutes, and then take it to another forge, and let it heat about the same length of time, and then take it to another. He would be as likely to get his iron hot as a man would, by going on such voyages of curiosity, to raise his spiritual fervor, or to begin a life that would have continuity in religious impulse and religious knowledge. But the necessity of their circumstances drives them to this. And they wander up and down. Now they go to the Roman Church, to see the unaccustomed "pomp," as it is called—the gewgaw ceremony. Now they go to the ritualistic church. The papers are full of comments concerning that church, and they go to see. Now they go to the Presbyterian Church, to which they are drawn, it may be, by a thousand joyful associations; but the man in the pulpit is strange, and the people are strange. And the "respectable" habits of our "respectable" churches do not win the young, unfortunately. A man

may go into many and many a church door and stand wistful, and no man will care for his soul. No devout sexton is there to say to him, "Sit here or stand there till the pew-holders are served, and then you shall be provided for." No hospitable mother, no wistful father, who has a son in some distant city, looks out, and, seeing the young waiting, calls them in, and, with paternal benediction and kindness, cherishes them, and makes them feel at home. In many a church one might walk up and down all the aisles on the ground floor, and make the circuit of the gallery, and go forth, and excite no other thought or feeling than the wish that such noisy young men would stay at home. Our cities are good for many things, and in many respects they answer the purpose for which they were established; but unquestionably there is a want of warmth in them. There is a want of welcome for the stranger. There is a want of fellowship to make them feel at home when they come hither.

So our young man, sleeping on the counter in the corner of his store, or at his boarding house, is cut off from healthful social intercourse, and from wholesome religious associations. All is very well at his boarding house, it may be. He is fed. Why yes; and so are his father's pigs. So are his father's calves. So is the stalled ox. So is the horse that cracks his corn and chews his oats. At boarding houses young men are fed; but, too often, they are fed as though they were but so many cranching animals. And after their meals they go to their rooms, and are alone; and there is nobody to care for them.

Oh! the desolateness of a man's heart in a great city, where he knows nobody, and nobody knows him! I know what it is. Old as I was, settled as my principles and character were, the oppression of London, when I walked the streets a stranger there, and the oppression of the continental cities, was almost more than I could bear. And it did me good; for I said to myself, "I never will be so careless again, when I return home, in regard to strangers in a strange place, now that I know what is in their hearts."

I do not withhold blame from the young, but I pity them, where they are thrown out of the warm bosom of home into the cold and cheerless life of a city; where there are none to care for them; none to associate with them; none to quicken their virtue; none to fill them, every day, with new aspiration; none to draw them, by genial influences, to refinement and love.

Very soon, under such circumstances, young men are brought to the question of pleasureable indulgence. This is, as I have said, at the transition period of their life, which is always a dangerous period, but which, under the artificial conditions of such a life, is peculiarly trying.

Multitudes have virtues, or principles, or habits, which shield them.

Some are so fortunate as to live with relations, or to fall into pleasant families. And let me say that sometimes there are mothers in boarding houses. I mean that sometimes there are persons in them who take care of those who belong to their households. I have known widowed women (to their honor be it spoken) who were as much concerned for the young men under their care as if they had been their own sons, and who watched over them, and counseled them, and sought to take the place of a mother to them. They are worthy of all praise. And I am far from wishing indiscriminately to blame those who keep boarding houses. I desire, rather, to recognize and appreciate the services of those among them who render valuable service to virtue and manhood. And I do not doubt that in the last day, among the band of faithful mothers and friends, there will not be a few of those who stand in the humble relation of mere providers and mere economists in social life, whose heads will blossom with the glow of love and kindness.

A yet larger number than are shielded by homes or some kindly fortune in the city, are left to themselves; and all the solicitations of pleasure come upon them. All the wiles, all the seductions, and all the enervating influences of social life befall them.

See, now, how all these things bear on the drinking habits of the young—particularly upon young men in commercial life. Desolateness and loneliness tend to drinking. Men who have nothing to do, and nowhere to go, always, for some strange reason, want to drink. And the tendency of drinking is to blunt a man's nerves; to subdue the exquisite sensibility of his nature; to take off the edge of his spirits. There may be a raising of the animal tone of his system; but the effect is to make him less sensitive to circumstances that otherwise would acuminate him. They that are alone, and feel their loneliness, are tempted to resort to drinking. And all the more because drinking-saloons are as wise as churches ought to be. They make no provision for the higher nature, to be sure; but they provide for the lower nature with a wisdom which is worthy of a better cause. These places are easy of access, and brilliantly lighted. The instruments of destruction which they contain are hidden by the judicious screen at the window and at the door. There is chamber within chamber, into which the unwary victim is drawn, step by step. There are all manner of familiar decorations which take the gauntness and barrenness from the eye. And there is plenty of company. The lower nature is thus provided for with great skill. And here young men who find themselves in their bedroom or store alone and lonesome, over-spent and fainting, cannot resist the temptation, notwithstanding the protest of conscience, which says, "What would your mother say, and what would your pious sister say, if they knew where you are to night?" They turn off

these warnings of the monitor within, by saying, "Hang it! I don't care. I am having a good time; and it is the first good time I have ever had since I came to New York. It is ever so much better than last Sunday night. Then I went to church, and almost froze to death. To-night I went to a cheerful drinking-saloon, and thawed out; and I feel a great deal more a man; and I do not believe that such places are as bad as folks say they are." There is in lonesomeness great temptation to drink. There is in solitariness great temptation to seek society in dangerous places. And the remedy for lonesomeness and isolation is not *bad* company, but *good* company. If a man has a purpose to break out, and break through, and find some heart that shall warm his, and some society that shall beguile his leisure, he can find it; and they who are careless and heedless take the first that comes, whether it be good or bad.

One is tempted, also, to be ashamed of morality and of rigid temperance, at this period of life, and especially under the circumstances by which he finds himself surrounded. For there are not a few who make haste to show him that he has become a man, and is to put away childish things; that he must not be over-scrupulous about truth and honesty; that he must not have too rigid notions of honor; that there are certain permissions and self-indulgences which belong to city life. He finds himself surrounded by an atmosphere which rather chills his heroic notions of morality. He discovers that self-restraint and temperance are not fashionable. He is very soon made to feel that he must stand upon his guard if he would maintain his ground. He sees that those who hold views such as he has been accustomed to hold are considered as fanatical, straight-laced. He sees that if the standard of morals to which they have adhered is correct, the example which he sees around about him is pernicious and relaxing to the integrity of his nature. And yet, he is liable to be carried away by that example.

We are creatures of example, not only in the sense that we are imitators, but in the sense that the tendency to imitate is the result of a latent feeling of aspiration or shame. It shows itself as much, and frequently more, in lower ways of life than in higher.

A young man in business in New York has risen until he has a salary of a thousand, or fifteen hundred, or two thousand dollars, and he can take his dinner at Delmonico's, or some other first-class restaurant; and he feels his self-respect rising when he finds that his employer dines there too. And it warms his heart to have this great man speak to him, and say, "How is it with you, my dear fellow?" Nothing does him so much good as the touch of that man's hand. But his employer drinks wine, and he does not.

I once saw at table two members of a great firm, both of whom

were Christian men, nominally, and I hope really, notwithstanding appearances; and with them sat two clergymen—one of the Episcopal Church, and one of the Methodist Church—one then, though not now, the editor of a prominent religious church journal, and the other a preacher in full orders. And I counted five kinds of wine that they had before them. Here were four Christian gentlemen—two clergymen and two members of an eminent firm, enjoying a most admirable dinner, which was well washed down, I assure you! And there were young men that sat looking at them and envying them. Young men envy those who drink wine, though they think they do not. It is probable that not one young man in a hundred likes the taste of wine. I think it is an affectation for men to say that it tastes good. They tell you it does, but the face that they make when they drink it gives the lie to their profession. Have you never seen men drink brandy, scowling as they drank it, not because they relished it, but because others drank?

This young man, eating his plain, frugal dinner, has human nature in him; and as he dines on his mutton-chop, with his tumbler of water, and sees this successful business man and that rich hardware merchant, this dry-goods prince and that eminent book publisher, this renowned broker and that great railroad manager, have their different kinds of wine, and perhaps something stronger to prevent the wine from souring on their stomach, it has its influence on him—and all the more when he finds that his companions, one, two and three, who are above him, are following the example of these men, and say, "Of course, a man ought to have self-control, and not be a guzzler, a wine-bibber; but a man who pledges himself not to drink has no credit for not drinking. A man who drinks moderately is not intemperate. Besides we ought to use the things which God has given us."

If you will show me one drop of wine which God made, I will drink it, and will recommend you to drink it. Wine, as God makes it, is in the form of grapes, and is harmless. But the young man says to himself, "This wine which these men take must be a good thing; and why should not I take it?" And he makes up his mind that to-morrow he will order a pint of claret. And, sure enough, when he takes his dinner the next day, against his habits and his taste, he orders his pint of claret. He never drank a pint of claret in his life before, and he is ashamed to put in the cork and have a part of it kept for his next meal; and he does not like to pay for it and not drink it. So, on the principle that a man is bound to eat everything that is on his plate, he takes it all down. And the following day he orders another pint of claret. And at last he gets so that he can drink a pint of claret without any great difficulty; and then he looks around the restaurant with

an air of triumph, feeling that he has taken a step that is conformable to his condition and circumstances and means. At first, when he drank his claret, he felt a strange swimming in his head. You that are older may not remember, but a pint of claret is a good deal for a man who is unaccustomed to drinking wine to take without feeling dizzy. And he went back to his store—what? a drunkard? Oh no. A ruined man? No; not that, at all. He simply had taken the step that separated him from a clearly defined, sure position, to take his chances in the realm of uncertainty. He had gone off from a firm rock on to shifting sand. And very likely he may escape, and become a sound man—particularly if he is not genial; particularly if he is selfish; particularly if he has a temperament that is a little cold and phlegmatic. Cold temperaments are less disorganized and less injured by drinking than mercurial, genial, sympathetic temperaments. He that is most susceptible to the influences about him, and that is quickest to form attachments, and that has the most elements in him which make other men love him—he it is that is most readily destroyed by drink. Intoxicating liquors are most apt to take hold of those who are most precious, and to let alone those who are least so. It assails those who are warmest and most loveable in their natures, and passes by those that are cold and heartless. It kills those that we desire to have live, and lets live those that we wish would die. Those that we can afford to spare do not go, and those that we cannot afford to spare go quick.

Then, there are other influences which conspire to make young men drink. There is the fascination which literature has thrown around drink. It has come to be the impression that drinking is the almost indispensable means of a certain kind of hilarity and social enjoyment. It is supposed that men who drink are always social; but it is not so.

I was very much struck with the drinking habits of Scotland. I came, one night, at about eleven o'clock, to a hotel in the town of Ayr. There are no parlors in the hotels there, and the guests sit in what is called the *commercial* room, which is the same as the dining room in this country. In that room sat twelve or fifteen men. I saw a waiter bring in what was apparently the customary service of the evening. I do not mean the Bible and a hymn book; but a decanter of whiskey, and a pitcher of hot water, and what I should say was a cream-ladle, and some glasses. Several gentlemen, I noticed, had cut up a *London Times* and divided it between them, as though it were a loaf of bread—for papers are so dear there that a man cannot afford a whole one, as he can here in America, where papers are cheap. They poured the whiskey and the hot water into a big tumbler, and mixed them, and then took the ladle and dipped the mixture into glasses. And the men each took a glass and commenced sipping. But not a man said a word.

Nobody looked at me. There was perfect stillness. They sat sipping, sipping, sipping, till they had drunk all their whiskey and hot water. Then each one got up and went to bed by himself. I saw that men could drink and not be social. Nevertheless, we all know that when men set out to be social, drink is one of the things which they mean to use as fuel to kindle the spirits and get up hilarity upon.

And then, there are drinking songs, intemperance songs, discoursing of the delights of wine. There are two or three temperance songs; but my impression is that we had better let these alone. There have been various attempts to put the praises of cold water into literature; but cold water is ten thousand times better and more sparkling than any poetry that was ever written concerning it. Literature, however, is full of drinking songs, with wit and mirth and conviviality in them. There have been four thousand years of invention in this kind of literature. These songs fascinate the imagination of young men. I never read of the old falernian wines that I do not wish that I could see them. I never read of the rare wines of Italy, or any other country, that I am not conscious of a sort of longing to know more about them. They do not touch our pragmatistical men perhaps; but there is not a man who is genial and imaginative, who has a smack of sentiment, and who has a literary turn, that these things do not affect him, and tend to bring his higher feelings to the side of drinking. And they act a great deal more upon the young than we are accustomed to estimate.

Then social customs come in. When young men that are rising in the world are brought along about so far, they are invited to the houses of their employers, and to the houses of their companions' employers. And far be it from me to throw contempt upon this. If there is a necessity that respectable parents should fish for their daughters, there is an apparent propriety in their inviting to their houses proper company for those daughters, that they may be enabled to make the most judicious selections in their behalf. Therefore, when the rich banker is to give his monthly or quarterly convivial entertainment, he invites (without any ulterior design, but with a religious trust in Providence!) his promising confidential clerk. And one and another of the good-looking, and well-organized, and more fortunate, and more prosperous of the young men that have come under his notice, are invited. And they have no pride that resents it. On the contrary, they cannot repress the pleasure which they feel. It runs out of their eyes and overflows their face—especially when they are telling you that they do not care anything about it. They are invited there, and it does flatter them. They have no words that are adequate to express the delight which it affords them.

And then comes the stress of temptation; for they have not the

what to wear. Alas! for that manhood which is more concerned about external appearance than internal worth! A young man that is honest and steady and self-respecting begins to be conscious that he has in him executive power, and that he ought not to be beholden to any one; that he ought in his pride to be beholden only to himself. And remember that it is in no man's power to honor you. You yourself are the only one by whom you can be honored. If you have the substantial qualities of a man, you have no need that anybody should make you a man. Those who are made men by other people's invitations, are rather homunculi than men. Still, human nature is human nature, and we must take it as we find it.

The young man provides himself with clothes, such as he thinks the occasion demands, but which he can ill afford; and on the appointed night he goes to his employer's. And he is treated with more than fatherly kindness by the host, who takes him by the hand, and says, "I am exceedingly happy to see you at my house, and shall be happy to see you here at any time."

He does not dare to set his young face against the habits of this man's household; he cannot think of doing anything which shall be a rebuke to others present; and when the festivities come round, and the supper is served, and wine is offered to him, he dares not refuse, but drinks, and drinks again. And having drunk once, it is easier for him to be persuaded to drink again. So he drinks at other social festivities. And before the year rolls around, all idea of restraint has passed from his mind. Thus one barrier after another is broken down, until all barriers are gone.

There are many who are not the recipients of such invitations; but other influences are brought to bear upon them which produce the same result. For there are a few who have no companionship; who are not members of clubs; who are not invited to balls or dinners; who do not go on excursions; who are not placed where they are expected to be men among men, and do as others do.

Then there is a pernicious practice which I am not familiar with, and therefore do not know how to describe, but which I am told is increasing in New York—the practice among business men of treating each other in connection with their bargain-making. I am assured that if the business men of Broadway and Wall Street would simply set their faces against drinking, or asking men to drink, in business hours, it would be effectually done away. I am advised by parents of young business men, that one of the severest ordeals through which they are passing is the constant solicitation to drink during the hours of business. And it is not surprising that young men who have gone through a career such as that of which I have been speaking, should fall into the custom of drinking at such times.

Then comes the next step of attempting to rally and recuperate, after excessive labor and exhaustion, by the power of drink. When young men have been in business all day, and have been up all night, and have repeated it twice in forty-eight hours, usually they feel a *goneness*, as though there was nothing left in them; and as their duties remain, as their business has to be carried on, as they must be in their places and perform their labor as usual, they betake themselves to strong drink, or to mixtures of it, to reinvigorate their strength; and they say that they cannot get along without it. I have only this to say: If a man will not sleep nights, and performs excessive office-work during the day, he will bring his nervous system to a point where it cannot rally without stimulants. But the mischief lies in the dissipation. The mischief lies in the intemperance in the use of his hours.

Sleep nights! Make it a matter of life and death with yourself, that no twenty-four hours shall go over your head without having its full compliment of seven or eight hours of fair and square sleep. There is many a cup that would stand undrained if men would fill themselves up with good, honest sleep. If men would not do more than belongs, in ordinary circumstances, to a reasonable use of themselves during the hours of business, the temptations to rally their flagging powers by means of stimulants would be very few.

There is one special evil of which I wish to speak, and that is where men begin their work by the use of stimulants. If there is anything which marks the ends of the preparatory career, if there is any point at which you may say that a man is a drunkard, it is where he is obliged to study under the influence of stimulants; it is where he needs brandy when he is going to make a speech; it is where he wants a glass of liquor when he goes to his business in the morning; it is where he works on the steam which is raised by intoxicating drinks. When a man has come to that point, and indulgence is regular with him, he is a drunkard, though he never staggered in his life. He is a drunkard who depends on intoxicating drinks for the means of rallying or building up the strength which he needs for the carrying on of his daily avocations. And there are multitudes that do this.

When men have come to this point, some of them may be reclaimed. Here and there is one that fortunately may change his residence and his circumstances, and come into more wholesome relations. Some may wake up to a consciousness of their danger; but I fear that of every ten that have come to this condition eight will go on and die of drunkenness, or of those diseases which will at the same time cut short both drinking and life.

Now, under all these manifold temptations of the young, ought not every young man who hears me to ask himself, if he has begun to touch

and tamper with intoxicating drinks, "Am I safe?" I know that many young men, when warned on this subject, say, "Others may have perished from an excessive indulgence in stimulating drinks; but then, I am not such a fool as they were." No man has any guarantee of safety who has once taken the first step in the path of intemperance. It is not probable that any of the young men who have stumbled with fatal downfall believed that they were going to stumble. The probability is that every one of them said to himself, if not to others, that though drinking might be dangerous for some men it was safe for him. But it is safe for no one. The voice of Prudence says, "Pass by it; touch it not; taste it not; handle it not." One thing is certain—you are not safe if you begin the habit of taking it. You are perfectly safe if you do not touch it.

I do not say that every man who drinks is going to become a drunkard. I do not say that the man who takes wine every day with his dinner is going to die a drunkard. But I do say that, taking the young men in New York as they go, the whole mighty swarm of them, intemperate habits are fraught with so many dangers that we are perfectly sure that there will be a decimation of them from this cause. Probably one out of every ten (there may be more than that, but I do not wish to exaggerate in my statements) will be destroyed. It is unquestionably the case that of those who begin life with dissipation, a large proportion will be seriously injured, and a certain number will be utterly ruined, while all are in great peril.

Now, there is no need of any such sacrifice of young men. There is no use of their placing themselves in such imminent danger. There is a course that is free from peril. There is no hazard in a way of absolute temperance. He who does not touch nor taste nor handle intoxicating drinks, certainly will not die a drunkard. But he who does touch, taste and handle spirituous liquors, and who becomes familiar with them, and begins to make them work night and day for him, though he may not become a drunkard, is on the downward road where drunkards have traveled in countless armies; and there is reason enough why we should warn him.

The most ambitious and excitable of men in the community are those who come down to do business in New York. It is not the sluggard or the dullard of the family that is sent out to seek his fortune. It is the young man who shows himself, in his native village, a little quicker and a little more sagacious than his companions, and who begins to feel that he wants a larger sphere than that of the village store in which to exercise his powers. They are the picked young men that come to New York. They are the most promising young men.

Therefore the loss of these young men is more or less a loss to the

country. There could be nothing more important to the welfare of the country than a statistical tabulation of the young men who have come to the city during the last ten years, and have been employed in stores and shops and offices, giving a history of their career, and especially recording the prodigious number of those who have been destroyed by dissipation. It would be a sermon of warning that would save multitudes of young men.

But this work of destruction is going on silently. Many young men, when they come into the poison air of these cities, come to die. They are struck with death almost as soon as they breathe it.

Many a young man finds his way to the house of the strange woman, which is way of death, and a way from which few if any return. One man after another fails in health, and goes into the country, where he can be under cheerful and invigorating influences, and he grows feebler and feebler, and finally dies in some remote hamlet. Few know the nature of his disease; but the physician's prescriptions show what it was. "Stabbed dead by the deceptive, assassinating hand of pleasure in the city of New York," should be put on his tombstone. "Drunk-
enness slew him," should be the record.

Thousands, every year, are perishing. You know them. Where is the young man that was in the store next to yours? Where is the young man that was turned out of your store? What has become of the young men that you have known during the last five or ten years in business? Call them to mind. How many have failed in health? How many have died from diseases contracted in the city? How many have found it prudent to go to sea? Ask yourself the reason of such a fearful decimation of the young men of your acquaintance. I tell you, that in nine cases out of ten, dishonesty and intemperance and illicit pleasure have destroyed them. They have been debauched and ruined by permissible indulgences. And yet, there is not a human life that we can afford to lose. We cannot afford to lose the life of any young man on this continent.

If the Capitol had taken fire and burned down, the whole nation would feel that it was a great loss. If the Astor Library should take fire, and all the books should be burned, it would be considered a public calamity. If the *Louvre* in Paris, containing all those rich specimens, which represent the various schools of art there, all those magnificent works of the best masters of ancient and modern time, were to perish, the whole world would feel that it was a most unfortunate occurrence. But I tell you, there is more to be deplored in the perishing of one single soul than in the perishing of all the pictures, and all the books, and all the buildings on the globe. A building you can rebuild, but a man that is lost you cannot restore. Being once lost, he is lost forever.

While, then, I give this solemn charge to all those who are directly or indirectly under my care, I also urge you who are yourselves concerned in business, to take care of the young men within your reach. I do not ask you to put over them a rigid censorship; I do not ask you to become spies; but I do say that a common view even of Christianity should make us more solicitous for the young men that come down to New York, and that are in our business houses, than we are accustomed to be. You may say, "I cannot be responsible for the hundred, or fifty, or twenty young clerks in my house." I do not put it on that ground. I only say, You have a hundred, fifty, twenty, ten, or five young men in your employ, who once lay in their mothers' arms, as you once lay in the arms of your mother; they were baptized in the sanctuary, as you were; they are beloved; they are the centre of pride and ambition; they have in them hope for the future; and God puts them, like a little congregation, under your charge; and you are their chief; and they look up to you. And I do say that you cannot answer at the bar of God who have the care of young men, if you have no sympathy for them, and never ask what are their habits, and never seek to ameliorate their condition, by diminishing their temptations, and directing their tendencies to virtue and to piety. We cannot wash our hands of this responsibility. And though every young man should take care of himself, yet every Christian and every citizen should take care of every young man.

One of the most touching incidents that ever came under my notice was one that occurred here in Brooklyn during the war. I was called to visit a young man who was sick. He had been in the army, and had been sent North to a hospital; but he had been taken into one of our respectable and well-to-do families. They desired me to go and pray with him and console him; and I did. He died in their house, and was buried from it. He was, as I learned, no relation of theirs. "How came you," I asked them, "to be interested in him?" "We found him," they replied, "in a hospital in Brooklyn." What led you to take him to your house? "Well," said the mother, "our only boy went into the war in Missouri, and was wounded; and some Christian family in St. Louis took him home with them, and cared for him, and he died in their house; and when I went into the hospital, this young man looked like my boy, and I remembered what they had done for my boy, and I took him, and I brought him to my house, and have taken care of him." She did it because others had taken care of her boy in a distant city.

Ah! are there any of you whose children have been struck by the destroyer? and will not you rescue other men's children when you think of the anguish of your own soul? Have you had sons that have gone

out into the world, and that you have followed with unutterable longings and yearnings? and will you forget that there is a father's and a mother's heart that longs and yearns for every young man in your employ?

Is there anything that God will so thank you for as saving his little ones? Is there anything in this world that will make it so terrible to meet the eye of your Judge, as, rising, to see those who were under your charge, and who perished through your neglect, and who shall be witnesses of your unfaithfulness in the day of judgment?

I charge you, citizens of New York and Brooklyn, take care of the young. Shield them from those temptations which are mightier than their inexperience. And I say to every young man, Listen to the word of God:

“Now, my son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he hath said of thee. Only the Lord give to thee wisdom and understanding.”



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We desire to return our thanks to thee, our Heavenly Father, for the mercies of this day—for its rest; for its seclusion; for its sanctuary; for the light, the knowledge, and the joy which have brightened it. We rejoice in the communion of the saints, and in a holy fellowship one with another. And while our lives mingle together in earthly joys, we rejoice that there are higher joys aspiring, pointing heavenward; and that we are joined not alone in toil, and care, and earthly fellowship, but in faith, and hope, and the sure joy and fruition of thy spiritual kingdom.

Grant unto us, this evening, that we may draw near to thee with apprehension, with clear discernment, and with hearts of gratitude, to confess our sins. May we not be unwilling to make mention of thy goodness. May we feel ourselves moved to rejoice, and to seek thy presence, and to make known all our wants for the future, not as though thou wert ignorant, but because thou hast made it pleasant to plead with thee. Grant that we may have a spirit of prayer, and a spirit of holy confidence. May we trust in our God. And we pray that thou wilt buoy us up by this trust, so that we may go through the allotted experiences of life, able to baffle and overthrow our adversaries; able to resist and overcome temptations; able to discern and avoid all snares that are set for our feet; able to do battle valiantly for the Lord our God.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all that are in thy presence, according to all their varied circumstances. Their inward and outward wants are before thee, most merciful and most gracious God. Forgive unto every one his transgressions. Help each one to restore his soul, and to come back from the things in which he has wandered to the straight and narrow path. Grant unto every one that strength by which he may be able to bear the duty of each day. May none yield themselves to fear, or to discouragement, or to despair. May all be strong in the Lord.

May the sense of thy gracious providence surround each one. May all each day feel that there are others thinking of them besides themselves. May they know that there is a guiding Hand; that when darkness comes, still within that darkness is thy love and thy provident care. And we beseech of thee that sorrows, and chastisements, and crosses, and burdens, may be to every one of us messengers of the Lord.

And we pray that thou wilt grant that thy servants may be able to discharge their duties faithfully, bear the burden and heat of the day, and be good soldiers equipped for the service of their Lord and Master. And may we not be slothful nor sleep. May we be watchful, waiting for the coming of the Lord, knowing not in what hour he may come. May we have our loins girt about, and our lamps always trimmed and burning; for it will not be long for many of us. We are all coming near to the hour of our departure. One and another go, and we are made to see how uncertain life is.

O Lord our God! grant that we may be prepared in life, by the duties of it, so that when death shall come to us, it may not be unwelcome, nor even a surprise, but a joy and a gladness.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all classes and conditions of men. We pray for the poor, for the outcast; for the neglected; for those that dwell in unillumined ignorance; for those for whom there is no sanctuary; for those who are trained in evil, and whose surroundings tend toward wickedness.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt remember those who are seeking to carry out the Gospel into the highways and byways. May they be more and more filled with the Spirit of the Master; and more and more may they see the labor of the Lord prospering in their hand.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt remember all for whom our prayers are desired. Succor those who are in peril. Draw near to all that are in trouble. Grant that the sick may be restored, or prepared for their change. Grant that all who need thee may feel thee moving toward them, and quickening them by thy Spirit, and comforting them by thy Grace. We are all traveling homeward. May we have every day the comfort of knowing that we are one day nearer to our rest. And grant, we pray thee, that when we have fulfilled our journey, strangers and pilgrims as we are, and when we draw near to the celestial city, we may find that we are known there, that we are waited for, that our names are recorded, and that there are messengers sent forth to bring us home.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, wilt thou bless us in the word spoken. Grant that it may be a warning, an incitement to rectitude, and a dissuasion from vices and temptations. We pray that thou wilt take care of the young, unsheathed as they are; swept upon by so many storms; so watched for by insidious and cunning men; so sought with blandishments and snares by wicked women. Grant, O Lord! that they may have raised up around about them those that shall be friends indeed to them, that shall hold up their fainting faith in virtue, and shall save them in the hour of temptation.

Grant, we pray thee, that those who have stepped aside from the path of rectitude may not be discouraged nor ashamed to return. May all those who have had the beginnings of wrong in them, now arise and shake off the evil. And with all hope, and faith, and courage, and with prayer to the

God of their father and mother, may they begin over again. And counting the past as indeed gone, may they begin life anew. And may none be discouraged because the way back is a hard way. How much harder must the way become as time goes on! O Lord! succor all those who fain would hold fast their integrity, and stand steadfast unto the end.

And we pray, O God! that thou wilt bless all associations of young men for young men, and all those who are seeking to shield the virtue of society, and all that labor for the reformation of morals. Grant, we pray thee, that thy kingdom may come, and that thy will may be done, and the whole earth be filled with thy glory. Which we ask for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

XVII.

THE MORAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

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“For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another.”—ROM. II. 13-15.

The question which the apostle was obliged to argue in the opening of this epistle, was largely the condition of the Gentile or the heathen world. He argues both sides of it. He argues, as you will find in the first chapter, that they were to be condemned on substantially moral grounds; and he also argues that they may yet, nevertheless, be condemned in much less measure than the Jews—a peculiarly offensive turn to the argument; because the Jew held that he had a right to superiority, to prominence, before God, on account of the essential relationship of God to him, and to all that concerned him, no matter how he lived. The fact that men were not Jews settled the matter. They might be just, they might be virtuous, they might be devout; but they were not Jews. They did not believe in Jewish creeds nor worship in the Jewish circle; and that was enough.

The apostle, therefore, is obliged often and most offensively, to go against this bitter, this stupid bigotry of the Jews, which has not died out with the Jews' authority. And here he is arguing that the Gentile nation may, after all, stand better before God than the Jews do. “It is not they that *hear* the law that are the safest,” he says, “but they that *do* the law.” “Ah!” it is said, “the Gentiles never had it, and of course they did not do it.” “But,” he says to his objector, “nevertheless, if they do those things under the light of nature which the law commands you to do; if they, by the light that they have, reach the same virtues, the same moralities, the same devout tendencies, which you reach through the law, they shall, under the law that God has revealed in the heart, have some sense of what is right and what is wrong. If they keep that unwritten law; if they serve according to the light which they have, that shall suffice. If you, with

the law, sin, and they sin without it, they will stand, for that very reason, higher than you do. And if you, with the law, disobey it, and they, without the law, obey it, they will stand better in the divine favor than you."

This question, historically considered, was local. It was not without its interest to the Jew, and to every thoughtful mind that was then present. But the apostle settles it upon a ground which makes it universal. It draws very deep in matters of moral government and of character. For, you will observe that the apostle here takes ground with the moral constitution of man as a thing of nature created in him; that man has in himself, not as a full revelation, but in a rudimentary and organic form, an interpreting nature, by which he knows what is right and what is wrong; by which he accuses or excuses his conduct, as he goes to the right or to the left in any line. He declares the fact, with authority, that men receive a revelation, not for the sake of creating in them a moral sense, but simply for the sake of guiding a moral sense that is already created. He declares, substantially, not that religion is a thing superinduced upon the constitution of man, but that it is the right unfolding of that constitution. A revelation is made in part of things not known before; but, for the most part, it is the expounding, it is the commentary, which God makes on the elements which were in man's nature when he was created. There is a moral constitution of souls. There is a right and there is a wrong; and aside from the determination of them which we get from authoritative Scripture, they may be determined by reason of the harmony of the soul's powers, by the law of development, and by the relative precedence which that law, unfolding, establishes.

Let us, then, follow this line out, and look at some of the truths which belong to it, and see if they are not important, and deep, and very solemn.

1. The essential truths of religion (and none more than those of the Gospel—of Christianity) are natural, constitutional, organic. They have their elements in man's own nature. They were not first created when they were declared by inspired men to the world. Inspired men, declaring the truth of God, simply expounded and interpreted that which had already been made known in the very creation of man—in his very nature. A mental philosophy does not create mind. Mind was created before you could make a mental philosophy. The law of conscience did not create conscience. Conscience was created before there could be a law of conscience. A revealed law only brings out into words and into clear declarations that which lay hidden in the nature of conscience. The whole moral constitution is not a thing which is imposed on us by commands *ab extra*. It inheres in man.

It *is* man. It is the fundamental nature of the human soul.

Any great fundamental truth which you find in the Bible, if you take it by analysis, and carry it back, you will find grounds itself, at last, on natural law. It may not be so of many of the incidental and instrumental explanations of the Bible; for the Bible carries something more than mere fundamental truths. The ordinances and forms of worship may not be traced back to nature; but all those great truths which involve the nature of right and wrong, of inferiority and superiority, of submission, of obligation—all that goes to constitute what we call *moral sense*—every truth which partakes of that nature, has, you will find, a foundation in the nature of things.

Moral consciousness, and all that belongs to moral consciousness, is a part of science. Men oftentimes speak about a revealed truth; and there is much that has been made known which would not have been known if it had not been revealed; but, after all, the fundamental elements of truth, in so far as they relate to man's nature and obligation, are not revealed except in the sense that creation is a revelation. They are provided in man's nature. And if he only had the wisdom to know what he was; if he only had the scientific knowledge to know how to unfold his moral constitution, every man would work from his own moral consciousness to substantially the same ground which is open to him in Scripture. So that, when I preach the Gospel, particularly in its relations to duty and obligation, I feel strong, not only because I believe him that bore witness—because I believe the word of God—but because, tracing the word back, I find it written again in you. I find it to be true when I take either direction. Going out and looking into life, and seeing what men are, what they do, what they suffer, what they want and what is possible, I come to precisely the same results as when I look into the sacred record. Studying man as I do, and studying the word of God, I find the two are respectively witnesses of each other, and both together are stronger than either alone. And all the way through, you shall find the word of God appealing to this consciousness of men, appealing to their reason, appealing to their judgment, appealing to their feelings, to bear witness to the essential truth of that which is stated in the word of God.

Even, then, if men doubt the Church, or creeds, they will not get rid of that which all churches mean and preach, or should endeavor to mean and preach, and which all creeds should endeavor to include. No man has got rid of religion, because he has got rid of the popular expositions of religion, or because he has got rid of the written Book. For religion did not begin in the Book. The Bible is, as it were, the geography of religion, the grammar of religion, the guide-book of religion, and not the source of it, nor the authority for it.

2. On the other hand, a right minded man, if he had no revelation, but had power to keep his mind clear and sensitive, and his conduct in harmony with his higher nature (I am making a supposition, and not declaring a fact), would go up on to the plane of the Gospel. If a man were capable of reading the law of his own being, understanding his own organs and the functions of them, and then following out the indications that exist in himself, he would be brought up to the substantial ground of the Christian religion—that of reading the law which is written in himself. The two are one. Whichever way you start, going from the one in one way, and from the other in another way, the roads meet, and have a common testimony.

Hence, the Gospel is not a super-addition to nature. It is the opening of nature. It is the development of nature. It is the blossom of that which all men alike possess, and which belongs to the race.

You should bear in mind that, unfortunately, the term *nature* is used in two senses. It is used by theologians mostly to signify man's corrupt state. I use it, however, to signify, for the most part, that condition which God first intended. Not that which man has come to by perversion, and use, and habit, and character, but that line of development which was marked out in the decree and plan of God, is what I consider to be *nature*. And if every man had followed out that nature, he would have been brought substantially from his own moral consciousness and experience up to the grounds of the Gospel of Christ.

3. From this fundamental view, it will appear that right and wrong in human conduct, in the main, are not conventional; that they are not things of mere custom; that they are not on the same ground that manners and ordinary social customs are. There are a thousand things in life which may be changed. They are different in different nations. What is valid in one, is not always valid in another. What is regarded as just in one, is sometimes not regarded as equitable in another. Obligations change, and modes of government change; but fundamental principles do not change. The great fundamental principles of right and wrong, as they are interpreted of God—truth, justice, purity, and love; or in other words, comprehensively, holiness—these are the same in every age. It makes no difference how much men may philosophize about them. There is an inherent nature of the soul, and it is the parallel of the body itself. For, though there are a thousand medical systems, or laws of the body and laws of health, sickness and recovery remain just what they are, as facts, no matter what men's theories are. A man may have any theory he pleases of digestion, but digestion has a theory of its own, and does what it pleases. A man may speculate as much as he pleases about his head;

he may believe that there is a brain in it, or that there is nothing in it; but his belief makes no difference with the facts. They remain as they are. If one should say, "A man could live just as well without eating as with,"—could he? If one should say, "That man has been led by the nose by these superstitious doctors who say that he must sleep five or six hours a day; but I tell you that if he would assert his independence he would not need to sleep at all, and he might just as well as not have the whole twenty-four hours to himself,"—could he? Is sleep a part of the doctor's getting up? Are eating and drinking a part of the doctor's superstition? If a man, talking of bones, says, "A man's bones are whalebones, and, if he only would, he might use them as such,"—could he? Try it. Dash your foot against a stone, and see. If a man says, "If you only thought so, it makes no difference about your conduct," well, think so, and put your hand on a fire-log, and see whether it makes no difference. The great facts of the body—the brain, the chest, the trunk, the limbs, the bones, the ligaments, the nerves, the blood, every part—these do not stand in men's notions; they stand in God Almighty's decrees; and they are what they are in spite of you; and they will laugh you to scorn if you attempt to modify them, or traverse them.

Now, the soul has a definite moral constitution, and the faculties of the human mind are clearly coördinated to work well in some directions, and to work ill in other directions; and men may say, "Among so many sects, among so many ministers, and among so many doctrines, nobody can tell what to believe; all is superstition; and I am going to do just what I please." Well, do as you please; but reason has its own law, conscience has its own law, and all the affections have their own laws; and if you use yourself in one way, you will experience more and more joy and peace and communion with God; whereas, if you use yourself in another way, your experience will be that of growing darkness, of growing discontent, and multiplying conflicts; and your whole soul will be turned into a criminal court, and every faculty will be arraigned as a culprit, and brought up for judgment and condemned; and you will be of all men most miserable. You have a law in your moral nature just as much as in your physical nature; and a man's believing or disbelieving has nothing to do with the facts. The consequences are determined from that original creative act which made you organically, and in God's decree, what you are in your intellectual and moral state.

As, then, a man must observe what he is, and must obey the laws of nature, if he would be healthy and strong and happy in bodily things; so it is with religious things. You cannot set aside religion because you do not like it. It does not come by the priests, although

they meddle with it, and sometimes mar it. Nor does it come by the church. The church does not create it. Nor does it come by the Bible. The Bible followed after the moral constitution of man, instead of preceding it.

4. Men are not released from obligations to virtue and religion simply by keeping away from the church, and from preaching, and from the various vexatious intrusions of other men's consciences. There are many who think that if they shut out disturbing truths they will have rest. No, there will be no rest for them. The word of God comes as your friend, to help you, by giving you the state of facts; but if you throw the facts away, you simply throw the help away.

A man lies sick, and sends for his physician. On talking with the patient, and forming his judgment of his case, the physician prescribes such and such remedies to be taken, and forbids him to use such and such articles of food, and obliges him to remain in the house, and perhaps in his room, and possibly on his bed. But after the physician has gone, the man says to his attendant, "Go tell him not to come again; to keep his advice and his medicines away." And then he says, "There! I have dismissed my doctor." If you could only dismiss your disease as easily as you can your doctor, it would be all very well; but to dismiss your doctor and keep your disease, is not wise. The ache stays whether you take the potion or whether you do not take it. The fever beats, whether you believe in this or that or the other thing. The fever is a fact. These things do not depend on quarreling schools of medicine.

A man says, "The High Church are for flummery, and the Low Church are for fanaticism. One church is for sensuous worship, and another church is for no outward worship. One is for doctrines, and another is for no doctrines. One is very rigid in its notions, and another is lax and loose in its notions. They are all by the ears. And I am going to take my own way. I will manage my case myself." You may in that way get rid of churches, and of a thousand disagreeable circumstances; but will any man get rid of that nature in which the law is written, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself?" Here is the law that determines selfishness. The marrow of the moral nature of man is the necessity of habitual, constitutional, continuous, characteristic benevolence.

Go out, now, into the world. Go out greedily to get gain. Go out and try to be happy. Wind yourself up with the key of selfishness. Try to make your own powers serve you faithfully in harmony with each other. They are at a jangle with themselves. And you are not any better off because you have put away from you the church and ec-

clesiastical things. For the obligations rest not on the church, but on you.

Not they alone who have made a profession of religion are bound by the duties of religion. Every man that lives is bound by them as much as church members. A man does not see any better for being in an oculist's establishment. The necessity of his seeing, or the desirableness of it, does not arise from the fact that he is in an oculist's establishment. It arises from the nature of things. And if a man has ophthalmia, the necessities of his eye, and the laws of sight, are just the same as though he were under medical treatment and care. And yet, there are a great many people who seem to think that of course a man ought to do certain things because he is a member of the Church. They seem to think that being a member of the Church imposes obligations on a man. No, the obligations came long before the Church could have imposed them upon him. You say, "I am not a member of the Church, and you ought not to expect that of me." But are you not born? Have you not a temperament? Have you not that law of God written in you which makes it necessary that you should come to the help of the Church? I preach right, purity, holiness, to you, not because you are baptized, not because you are included in the covenants of the Church, but because you are men. If you had never heard a Sabbath bell, nor seen a Bible, these great obligations would have rested down on you, just as they do now, by the very primal conditions of your creation. They are as universal as man; and you are inexcusable, whoever you are, if you set aside the duties of religion because the Church ministers them. The Church does not create them.

5. There is an impression among many that there is a freedom and a largeness gained by going out of the sphere of religious teaching into doubt, into skepticism, into infidelity. There is much that men call infidelity which is not infidelity. A man may rise to a higher truth, and he may drop a lower one in doing so. A man, in a corrupt age, and in an ignorant church or sect, may, like Luther, rise to a higher ground. And calling him an infidel does not make him one. Whatever truth makes you more faithful, more just, more pure, more loving, more intimate in your relations to God, and more confident of the reality of invisible things; whatever view releases you from the thrall of biting, bitter, heated prejudices, is not infidelity. It is revelation. And embracing such a truth or view is rising to a higher form of religious belief. But there are many who do take on infidelity in its relaxing forms—that infidelity which denies, negates, everything; that is, which takes away the stress of their consciences. And they laugh, and say, "I used to feel guilty if I broke the Sabbath; but I do not now. I used to think that I ought to read the Bible every day; but now I do

not read it once a year. I am freer than I was. I used to think that I ought to pray; but prayer is a superstition." And so men go on setting aside one, and another, and another point of fundamental religious belief; and they think they are becoming more and more free; and they ridicule Christians, whom they think to be bound hand and foot.

Now, I do not mean to say, as against infidelity, that the Christian Churches have the perfect view of religion. It is not my purpose to say that the theology of the times is more or less perfect or imperfect, or more or less crooked or straight. But I do affirm that the faith which is held by all sects of Christians is in the main a guide and a light. It might be a better light, but it is *a* light.

You and another man are walking in a troublous path. There are precipices on the right, precipices on the left, and deep morasses below, from which, if a man be mired in them, it is almost impossible that he should be extricated. Your companion is walking with a little lantern, containing only a tallow candle. You are walking without anything by which to guide your steps. He, with his tallow candle, in a little lantern, carries his dim light before him, and, taking one step at a time, manages to pick his way, though with some difficulty. You, who are so bold as to venture without any light, say to him, "Your tallow candle makes a miserable pretence of giving light: of all absurd things, the greatest is the attempt to make one's way through the world with such a light as that;" and you knock it into the mud. And it is pitch dark.

It may be that the lantern could have been improved; but is it improved by darkness? Now the man has nothing to guide himself with. That was the only light he had. It was a feeble, glimmering light, to be sure; but it was enough, though he was obliged to walk slowly and cautiously, to guide him safely. But you have knocked it out of his hand. And he makes a misstep, and plunges headlong down the precipice, and perishes.

Suppose all is true that you say of sectarianism and superstition: suppose all is true that you say of churches:—after all, are they not better than nothing? Is there not much help in them? Is there not much guidance in them? Do not they attempt to take hold of those fundamental instincts which belong to men, and which must be cared for and satisfied? And do they not go a certain way toward satisfying them? And does not infidelity bring men into bondage and darkness, instead of into liberty and light?

6. By throwing off religious faith, and the restraint of the Church, men do not escape conviction of sin, nor a sense of guilt, nor fear, nor unhappiness. The apostle, in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans, speaks upon this point:

"That which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath

showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse."

If there were not a church on the globe; if there were not a Bible in the world; if there were not a teaching minister on the earth; if there were nothing but the sun by day, and the stars by night, and the rolling seasons; and if there were but a single man living, and he had the faculties that we have now, after all, he would be without excuse. For God has made the heavens, and the glimmering light of nature; and these are enough to hold a man responsible for his character and conduct.

And then, in the second chapter of the same epistle, the apostle says,

"When the gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having no law, are a law unto themselves. Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another."

There is no man of any considerable degree of reflectiveness, or of any considerable degree of Christian sensibility, who is not made unhappy in himself by the way in which he is living. In the excitement of a career of business, in the intoxication of pleasure, men drown their unhappiness; but the moment there comes a leisure moment, there comes a time for thought. Reason rises up in every man's heart, under such circumstances. There is not a man here, I do not care how careless he is, who has not hours in which he sits in judgment on himself. He measures sometimes by one rule, and sometimes by another. A man's reason looks over his life, and he says, "I have toiled fifty years, and I have built my house, I have reared my dwelling strong, and filled it with articles of use and ornament, and I have a place among men; but, after all, what am I profited? Is life worth what I have spent for it? Am I happy? If I might live again, would I live right over the same life? Have I satisfied my early aspiration? Have I realized my own ideal?" Or, if he looks more closely at himself, in his habit of analysis, he says, "Am I selfish, or am I not? I have learned to wield the pen; I know how to paint the picture; I can carve the statue; I am able to build a house or a ship; I can guide the machine; I have the skill to invent curious help for domestic industry; I can handle the sword; I have power to manage anything in this world, almost; but myself I cannot manage. I do not know how to take care of my temper. My conscience is all the time jangling with my better feelings. On the one side is reason, and on the other side is passion. I am often carried away by temptation. Everything is wrong. I understand how to control money, but my own self I do not understand how to control. My being is an enigma to me. I am not acquainted

with its laws. I am ignorant of the nature of my soul. And there is nothing on the globe that I make such poor business in dealing with, as myself."

A man reads this, not out of the Bible, but out of his own soul. There is a law of God. There is a way in which the mind was made to act. And if a man's faculties do not live in harmony (as nobody's do), then his own thoughts accuse him, and his judgment judges him, and his moral sense brings him under condemnation.

It is in such cases that the Gospel is lifted up, and that a way is shown to men; and though they may set aside the overtures of Jesus Christ, the revelation of mercy, they cannot set aside this judgment that is perpetually going on in their consciences.

7. The gradation in condemnation is a matter that ought to excite a passing thought in our minds. Those who have been taught the truth, and who believe it, and who then sin, are condemned in the greatest measure. Their guilt is according to the light they have had. But let no man say, "I was born of ignorant parents, I was born remote from instruction, and I cannot be condemned." Yes, according to your measure you will be condemned. You may not be condemned as others are; but the lowest grade of condemnation will be more than you can bear.

No one can afford to be sick in this world, in his body. All the contrivances and all the adaptations of nature have never made anybody attempt to be sick. You never can change the body in this respect. You can make the body love odious things—tobacco, and what not; you can very much modify the digestive powers; but no modification, no sort of treatment, ever made sickness an agreeable thing. It goes against the grain altogether.

And by no means can a soul that is sick, that is out of order, be at peace with itself, or be happy. There is a condemnation that rests upon it just so long as it is in that state. And now comes the declaration of the Gospel,

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

It rests not alone upon those that have been instructed, but upon everybody. Everybody that carries a disordered imagination, a darkened understanding, or an undeveloped or perverted conscience; every man who is living by the power of pride, or by the pioneering of selfishness; everybody that has substituted lust for sentiment; everybody that takes counsel of his animal nature, and not of his spiritual nature; everybody that is a man of the senses and of the flesh, must be born again. And though he may not be condemned as they are who have sinned against greater light, after all he will be condemned, and his condemnation will be as great as he can bear.

8. This moral constitution is not a mere thing of time. It is not an arrangement for a special occasion, nor for a transitory scene. I understand it to be the testimony of the Saviour, and of the New Testament all through, that right and wrong are eternal; that they are not local, nor secular, nor transient; that pain follows disobedience; that he who does wrong suffers, and will suffer as long as he does wrong; that the moral constitution which divides men in this world, divides them in the other; and that he who by the help of God obeys the divine will, rises to higher and higher degrees of happiness. As on the one hand, he that in this world loves that which is right, and seeks that which is right, and, so far as in him lies, does what is right, goes on forever and forever with increasing joy and blessedness; so, on the other hand, he who, in this world, perverts his body and soul, grows worse and worse. And the evil effects of his misspent life do not drop off from him when he dies, but go on with him. There is some system of moral discriminations, of rewards and punishments, that goes on forever. It is Christ's testimony, it belongs to universal being, it is characteristic of God's moral government, that right and wrong are discriminable qualities, and that pain goes with one and pleasure with the other—and not just now, as belonging to the developing period, but in all time. The teaching is, that to all eternity these qualities go on, and that if a man continues sinful forever and forever, he will suffer forever and forever, while if he is holy forever and forever, he will be happy forever and forever.

You are not sinful, then, because you have been preached to; you are not sinful because the Bible says so and so; you are sinful on account of the perversion of that nature which God gave you, partly through ignorance, and partly through the willful blinding of your eyes. For a thousand reasons you have gone wrong. But when an offer is made to you of pardon for the past and of help to set the broken bone, or to readjust the dislocated joint; when God in his infinite mercy through Jesus Christ gives you a remedy for your mistakes and sins thus far if you will forsake that which is evil in the future, you turn away from him, and reject the proffered help, and will keep the terrible disease. Having the remedy within your reach, you are destroyed.

Men are very much like lunatics in hospitals. All their wants are provided for; everything is done, that can be done, for their comfort and welfare; they have kind and benevolent physicians and attendants; and yet, they set fire to the institution and burn it up. They are not made well by this deed. It is simply a part of their insanity to do it. And many men who are not supposed to be lunatics are doing the same thing. They are attempting to destroy the very institutions which

were erected for their benefit. They are resisting, rejecting, setting aside, all those curative influences by which God would bring them out of the state into which they have come through the perversion of their nature, back into that state which he designed for men.

It now only remains for me, having laid these brief facts before you, to say, that this is *your* business, not mine. In so far as you are concerned, I have the sympathies which properly exist between man and man, and which I borrow from my God; and yet, after all, *to his own Master every man stands or falls*. This matter concerns you first, and it concerns you most. *My* duty is completed in presenting the subject to you. *Your* business is to profit by the instruction you have received.

By the continuous importunity of the pulpit men come at last to have a kind of hidden feeling that they confer a favor on the church when they repent and come into the church. They seem to feel that God himself is laid under obligation to them. They seem to think that they have done a good thing in consenting to repent and go over to the side of religion.

This is a living and dying matter. It is a question like that of a mortal disease which has taken hold of you. When you take the doctor's medicine, you do not confer a favor on him so much as you do on yourself. And if you refuse salvation, if you reject the Lord Jesus Christ, it is you that lose, not I. Though every man on the street where I live were unvirtuous, virtue would be just as right, just as good, and just as profitable to me. Though every man in New York but you were a spendthrift and a vagabond, economy, frugality and a wise financial management, would be just as good for you. Every man stands for himself, on his own feet; and in nothing so much as in the concerns of his own soul.

You have your own nature, and the law of God is written on that nature. You have that in you which will always interpret right and wrong. If you go wrong, you entail on yourselves sorrows so long as you go wrong. And I bring to you the tidings of health—of a Physician who can cure the soul, fill it with light, fill it with joy, and lift it above itself, and finally restore all wastes, and correct all dislocations, and cure all morbid conditions, so that you shall shine out as the stars in the heavens. If you take this blessed Friend and skillful Physician, tidings of whom I bring to you to night, joy forever and forever be on your head! If you reject him, *you alone shall bear it*.

When the hour of death comes, no man can have companionship in dying. No two or more persons can die together so as to hold each other up. Every man dies alone, dies for himself, and goes before God on his own behalf. "Every one of us shall give account of *himself* to

God." Even if the whole heaven is filled with thronging multitudes, you will seem to yourself to stand as though there were not another person in existence besides you. And all the weight of God's law and of God's authority will centre and rest full on you.

It is your interest to repent and to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And while it is a day of mercy; while God is near to you; and while by your conscience, by your hopes, and by your fears, you are being drawn to him, it behooves every man of you to take hold in earnest, so that it shall be not a mere experiment, but a blessed success and victory.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We bless thee, our Father, for that knowledge which is given us, through Jesus Christ our Lord, of thy being, and of thy heart. We are no more strangers or foreigners. We are now of the household of faith. We are brought near. All our fears are driven away. Our hope grows apace, even unto salvation. By faith working through love, we discern thee. By faith we dwell in thee. We appropriate thy righteousness to ourselves, and enter into all the covenants of love with thee, and are made one—one with God, and one with Christ Jesus, and one with the indwelling Spirit. And so our life is comprehended in thine. So all our ways follow thy ways.

We rejoice in the blessedness of this communion: in all the peace which we have had; in all the joy which it has inspired; in all the promises which it holds out for the future, and which are Yea and Amen. Not one of thy promises shall fail. We may put our foot upon every one of them, and they shall not give way beneath us.

Thou, O God, dost love us better than we love ourselves. Thou art more gracious unto us than we know how to be unto ourselves. And therefore the more is the guilt of our destruction, and the more wicked is our breaking away from thee and turning to ourselves, and hewing out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

We rejoice, O Lord! in thy recovering grace; in thy patience which works in these obdurate hearts; in that fatherly kindness which thou hast shown, and art showing. And we pray that thou wilt not weary of the work of subduing that fractiousness of our dispositions which provokes thee.

Be pleased, O God! to spare us. Look upon the face of thine anointed. Behold us in Christ Jesus. And we pray that we may be, by thy care and culture, transformed into his image. And if we shall yet stand confirmed in virtue, and strong in all that is good, and fruitful in love, holy and beautiful, it will be by the grace of God. Not unto us, but unto thy name, shall be the praise. For, thou shalt work in us, and fashion all our goodness for us, working in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure.

Now, we beseech of thee, accept our thanksgiving for the blessings of the day. It has been a day of rest. It has been a day of knowledge. It has been a day of incitement. Thou hast made the sanctuary pleasant unto us; and thou hast made our homes as another sanctuary. And we thank thee for all these relationships, and all the enjoyments which flow from them.

And we pray to night, in the hour that is set apart, walled in by darkness and by storms, that we may find that peace of God which passeth all understanding. May we rejoice in the sanctuary again, and take new courage, with new confession, and new hope and faith, for the life which is to come. And we pray thee, when we shall go down into the morrow, that it may be with our loins girt about, with a clearer sense of duty, with more manliness, and with more Christian fidelity. And may we thus live from Sabbath to Sabbath, until all our days on earth are over. Then throw wide open the gate. Then stand thou therein to receive thy prodigals home. Then put thine arms about our neck, and clothe us, and put the ring upon our hand, and bring us with joy and rejoicing into our Father's house.

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



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word which has been spoken, of caution, and interpretation, and warning. May we find in it reasons for more vigilance. May we be more earnest, and take heed to the things which are within us, as well as to the things which are without. Reveal to us the relations of the life to come. Make us to feel that we are casting ourselves away. The most precious of all things to ourselves, we are selling for dross. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

O Lord, our God! we beseech of thee that thou wilt, by thy Spirit, bring men to thoughtfulness, and to a better purpose. May there be many that shall be gathered, by the power of thy Spirit, into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And to thy name shall be the praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

XVAIL.

FOLLOW TENDU ME.

INVOCATION.

July 10, 1870.

OUR FATHER, wilt thou be pleased to draw near to us this morning. May we know thy coming, and thy presence, and with our heart cry out for thee, that the yearnings, and the desires of holy things may be witnesses and testimonies of thy power and indwelling presence. Grant that thy heart may seem to us, not as the dead letter. Forth from it, as though from the sepulchre, may the Spirit of truth come; and to day may it be life to us. Accept the services of devotion—our praise, our affections, our offerings of consecration. Bless our fellowship one with another. Grant that all the offices of instruction or of worship may be divinely guided; and be profitable to us, and glorify thy name. In the name of Christ *Amen.*

FOLLOW THOU ME.

“Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; (which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?) Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.”—Jno. XXI, 20-22.

It is evident that the first writing of the Gospel of John terminated at the last clause of the 20th Chapter. It has been thought, by many, on that account, and from the nature of the 21st Chapter, that it was added by another hand; but the ripest opinions, I think, agree, now, that this was a supplementary chapter added by John himself at a later period. Of the four Gospels, the first that was written was that of Matthew; and it is probable that it was written a few years after our Master's decease. Then came the Gospel of Mark; and then, that of Luke, at variable periods, with several years between.

The old tradition is, that on a certain occasion some holy men, elders of the church, came to John, then extremely old—somewhere between ninety and a hundred years of age, probably—and, showing him these three Gospels, asked him to add anything to them which, in his judgment, would make them more complete. And that he thereupon drew up his own Gospel, as adding to the others that which he thought they lacked. Very certain it is that the Gospel of John has more matter which the others have not, than it has of matter which is common to the four. However that may be, his is the last Gospel that was written, and this twenty-first chapter is the last part of the last Gospel. So that when he had read the other Gospels attentively; when he had drawn up his own; and afterwards, while recalling, by memory, the various scenes of his Master's life, having expended the whole force of his narrative upon that part which was enacted around about Jerusalem, the other Evangelists mainly concerning themselves with the Galilean life, John added much which refers to Christ's life in Galilee, and this one incident besides.

Jesus had been declaring to Peter, prophetically, the manner of his death. He was to die a death of violence; and Christ had predicted

it. Peter, seeing John following, says to the Master, with that intrusive curiosity, almost meddlesomeness, which belonged to Peter's character, "What shall this man do? I am to be slain; but what is to be the history of this man?" And Jesus said,

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me."

John adds,

"Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die."

Misinterpreting the phrase, "If I will that he tarry till I come," men got the notion that John should not die. And he quotes the incident to correct that saying. He declares that the Master did not say that he should not die, but only this:

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

He does not expound the meaning of the passage. He uses it simply to refute that rumor, which was founded upon mistake. That there was meaning in it far beyond that which he developed on this occasion, there can be no doubt.

Peter's intrusive boldness seemed, at this time, as usual, to exercise itself in putting every man in his right place. He was unconsciously attempting to govern others, or to find out about others. He did not reflect that it was opposed to the Christ spirit. He did not reflect that personal consecration was the first thing in every man's life, and continuously the most important thing; but he was busy in respect to the probable history and condition of those around about him. As if the external history of any of them was a thing to be compared, for one single moment, with their adhesion to Christ; with the relationship of their spiritual union with their Master and Head!

Or, if Peter's motive were different from this meddlesomeness; if it were an anxiety to know what God provided for his people, and what was to be the providential dealing with his brethren, and particularly with John the beloved, even then it was carrying the matter beyond wisdom, in the presence of Christ, and in the nearness of his parting from them.

In either case, the reply was pertinent—namely, "What is that to thee? Your history is important to you; but what concern is it of yours that another man's history is to be this, or that, or another thing? *Your* history is in me. Follow thou me." And to each man, Christ says, "Follow *thou* me—never mind others."

The emphasis of this cannot be estimated unless we consider that Peter was an apostle, that it was to be his mission to make known the Lord Jesus Christ to men, and that he was about to be sent out to bring in disciples, to found churches, to institute a polity whose main principles should operate to the end of time.

All the more, therefore, it was requisite that he himself should follow Christ, and be filled with his Spirit, not making his mission, nor his external duty, nor his work in time, the main and chief part of his concern, but founding all this work upon a personal, interior experience of the love of God in Christ Jesus as the one thing needful to his immortality.

And we may fairly deduce from this instance several points, such as these:

1. Following Christ is a personal work preceding all official work, underlying it, as the soil out of which all official work is to spring. To follow Christ is to reproduce in ourselves his dispositions, to accept his ideas of life and of duty, to fulfill his commands, and to be in union with him by love and sympathy.

The servant of Christ has all the instruments belonging to the work of education which philosophy has, and has, over and above all others, his own personal experience, by reason of the intimate communion of his soul with the Lord Jesus Christ. The power by which we are to instruct men is not simply the ordinary didactic power. The power by which we are to teach and preach is not simply the expository power which any man may have. It is not that which secular education may give. It is that which has been wrought in us, distinctively and peculiarly and personally. It is that which makes us individual, and our experience individual. It is that which constitutes the personality of every man's ministry in this world. And although the resources of learning are to be availed of, although all ordinary causes are to be employed for ordinary effects, we are never to forget that the distinctive and peculiar power of the Christian teacher or the Christian worker, lies in that which has happened between his soul and God, and which is original, native to him, and distinctive above that of every other. For as no two persons are alike, so the work of grace in no two hearts is alike. And every man has a teaching and a power distinct from that of any other man.

Following Christ, then, is the main preparation, though it is not the only one. It does not disdain any other preparations; but it is that foundation on which all other preparations are to be built. It is that spirit which is to quicken all other influences and instruments. It is that which God hath taught us by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, filling our conscience, and giving intuition to our whole moral sense, so that every part of us has been inspired—not authoritatively inspired, but inspired in other respects just as much, and just as really, as the apostles and holy men of old themselves were inspired when they taught sacred things.

2. One is in danger of losing his personal relations with Christ

through a spirit of curiosity and a spirit of anxiety about the cause of Christ in the world—about the cause of events. One may, by a curious studying of the probable line of divine providence, be so absorbed as to lose his own personal identity, I had almost said, as a follower of Christ. This spirit of anxious forelooking is as mischievous in spiritual life as that anxious forethought which Christ dissuades us from is in secular things. And yet, in times of disturbance, in times when it is doubtful which way things are moving, when beliefs are broken up, when new policies invade old ones, when convulsions take place, the heart of many a man broods; and many a Christian man says, "The old paths are better; but the flood is setting in, and the landmarks are being removed, and the deluge of unbelief and uncertainty is coming." And men in thus brooding on the probable history of the church, almost forget that Christ says, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

Your personal life in Jesus Christ, which is first, and is higher and better than everything else, being secured, you need not be without curiosity, and you are not forbidden to forelook, and to imagine; but, after all, it is from your personal connection with the Lord Jesus Christ that your faith is to come. There is to be your life, and not in what you foresee, nor in what you hope, nor in what you desire, of the outward history of the cause of God in this world.

3. Every man's personal history and duties are so separate, so individual, so private, that he must follow Christ, not in company necessarily, nor as a member of a body, but for himself. Whatever Christian families are in this world—whether they are living according to the world or not; whether they tolerate unlawful pleasures or not; whether they are remiss or not; whether they are ordained according to the mind and will of the Spirit that governs in the spiritual realm, or according to the mind and will of the spirit that governs in this world—this does not concern you half so much as that you follow Christ. Your father and your mother may seem to you to be going wrong; but you are not their judge, except so far as to determine what your duty is. Your brothers and sisters may seem to you to be taking undue liberties; nevertheless the word of the Lord to you, and to each one of you, is, "What is that to thee? Your salvation does not stand in another person's fidelity. That other person may be all right, and you may be all wrong; or he may be all wrong, and you may be all right. Follow thou me, and I will take care of him." We very often are so prone to anxiety through our affections that we often unconsciously assume the attitude of dictation, and carry all the burden that we should carry if men were dependent on us for their salvation, and not upon God.

Whatever churches are—whether they are departing from the faith of the fathers or not; whether they are mixing a vain philosophy with the truth or not; whether they are opening the doors too wide to the world or not; whether they are throwing out ordinances that should be retained, or taking in ordinances that are the work of men's hands; whether they are going up or down—whatever may be their condition, it is not for you to carry their burdens. You are not appointed the bishop of the churches, nor is any man. And the word of the Lord to every man is this: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." Not that you have not a right to form judgments; not that you have not a right to have an affectionate solicitude for the welfare of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ on the earth; but you have no right to form judgments and to have solicitude to any such extent as to disturb your peace—certainly not to any such extent as that you shall carry any additional burdens. And yet there are men in the world who imagine themselves to be set apart and foreordained to murmur and repine. And forever they see the dark side of all movements. And they pray against the defections of the churches. They talk about the defections of the churches. They are full of murmurings and repinings about the defections of the churches. They are so full of other men's misdeeds and supposed faults, that they have little spirit left, and little time left, for their own personal edification in the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Lord says to these heresy-hunting grumblers, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me, and I will take care of heretics."

Whatever the community is; whatever may be the fate of nations; whether wars are coming or revolutions are impending; whether the cause of the common people seems to be in darkness and to be growing worse, as in the great reaction of 1848; or whether all combinations seem to point forward to the history of the laboring men, and of the common people, and the mass of mankind are prosperous in the prospect—whatever may be the condition of the community, your prior duty is to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. And if you give yourself to these other things, not ordained to be a prophet, not called to be a leader, Christ says to you, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

In the midst of all convulsions, in the midst of all uncertainties, how many times men think that there is almost no use in trying to be good! "Who knows," say they, "which way to go? Ministers are disputing; churches are worldly-minded; the foundations are broken up; and who cares for holy things? A man might as well cast his lot in with them, and take things as he finds them." Thousands and thousands of men have been almost tempted to give up serving religion, and have said, "Things are mixed and uncertain; so

they have been since the world began ; and so they will be until the world ends ; and I will take them just as I find them, and enjoy myself." In other words, in the baldest form, it is saying, "O Soul ! eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow thou diest." There are a great many persons who are discouraged, and who feel that self-denial, and humility, and painstaking, and real personal discipline, are of no use ; and say, "When nobody else tries to live so, why should I so live?" But Christ says to every man, "Follow thou me." Let the pope go ; let the bishop go ; let the priest go ; let the minister go ; let the church go. To each man for himself, and to every man on the globe, the Lord says, "Be faithful personally to me."

But this subject may be brought home even more closely than in these general ways. There are those who are obscured and perplexed in the disputes that obtain in respect to ordinances and doctrines and orders within the church. They are the prey of men who desire to make proselytes. They are pulled hither and thither. They are exhorted by this one or that one. They defer the work of personal holiness until they shall have settled these absolutely unshakable questions in respect to the authority, the organization, the order, of the instruments of religion—namely, the outward churches.

There be many persons who will tell you that their faith has almost failed them. They have heard so much and seen so much of disagreement, and the whole question of the authority of the church, and of its various impositions and duties, is in such a condition in their mind, that they are almost tempted to give up the whole matter in disgust. Of those who, in the providence of God, are surrounded by influences which stir up men's attention to external order, there are many who are caught in these infinitesimal disputes about infinitesimal things—about colors ; about the cut and form of garments ; about the order of coming in or going out ; about the points of the compass (for it is immensely important in the salvation of a man's soul that he should read with his face toward the right point of the compass). They are so disturbed as to whether the right hand was put on the right head, and whether this right head put its right hand on somebody else's right head ; they are so disturbed as to the whole outward circumstances which relate to religion, that they are in danger of quite forgetting the Lord that bought them. Oh ! what matters it whether your mother's name was Gates, or Bates, or Page, or Smith ? What matters it whether she was nearly related to such and such an one or not ? What matters it whether you know who she was or not ? She is your mother, and that is enough. The main thing is that the heart and the love which you bear to her tell you everything. Strip off the whole history ; let what will happen externally, it will be all as nothing. It

will not move nor disturb the central impulse of your life. A child loves its mother, not because she was of this or that family, or of this or that connection, but simply from what she is to the child.

Let those settle these questions who may or must, who will or can; but let every man who stands in this great flurry of ecclesiology, let every man who stands perplexed in bat-like twilight, seeking to fly, remember that the main thing, after all, is that the heart shall be inflamed with love toward the Lord Jesus Christ, so that, as the child follows the mother, every one shall follow him, and be perfectly certain that in the last day, when we rise, in the forefront of the universe he will stand; and let us remember that if we have followed him, and our hearts have felt his heart all through life, no matter what priests say about us, no matter what churches say about us, the words will come to us from him, "Well done; well done."

And in respect to these disturbing influences where the providence of God has cast you, I do not say, "Go out of that church and go into a more simple one." *Let every man abide in the calling wherein he was called.* As respects all these external things, do not busy yourself about them; do not listen to them; do not care for them. "Follow me," says the Lord Jesus Christ. You are to make it the business of your life to follow Christ and to love him.

Parents often stand in the light of their own good, and even weaken their moral power, by an undue and improper anxiety for their own children. There may be an anxiety for one's children which shall leave the impression on the child's mind that you have no faith in God. Else why such anxiety? Parents may be so anxious for the welfare of their children that they have very little peace, very little joy, very little trust in God. In order that our hearts may ring out to our children in the sweet music of true religion, those hearts must not be touched. If you lay your hand upon a bell when you strike it, it is muffled, and the sound does not come forth. 'Take off' your hand, and everything, and let the bell sound out sweet and clear. The heart must not be muffled by these anxieties and fears and torments.

"To be sure," it is said, "the parent who loves the child must be anxious that it shall do well." Yes; but hope is a better counsellor than fear, for parents. It is just as easy for your mother to say, "The God that has taken care of me will take care of my children. I will trust him who has never left me nor forsaken me, and who has given me the right to cast my care on him because he careth for me. Not my vigilance, not my skill, not my wisdom, will I trust. I acknowledge that I do not know how to take care of these my little ones; but God knows, and I will leave them in his hands." My dear friends, wonderful is the way of God with children. How many children there

are that come up in spite of their parents! How many parents there are who do enough to destroy, it would seem, the very possibility of their children ever coming to manliness and integrity, but whose children escape in spite of parental perversion, and come up to honorable and useful manhood! And how many children are surrounded by parents who, though they are exemplary, are overborne by anxiety, and who are afraid, not only of the devil in general, but of everything in particular—afraid of the least thing; afraid of the shaking of the leaf; afraid of exposing their children to the slightest temptation; and who bring up those children in such a way as to produce the impression on the child's mind that the parent is burdened and untrusting, and has but little help from above. That the parent expects that there is going to be some comfort hereafter, the child is led to believe; but there is no impression made upon the child's mind that there is any expectation on the part of the parent of immediate relief. And to-day the Lord Jesus Christ stands in every nursery, and by the side of the cradle of every loving mother, and of every Christian father, and says, "What is that to thee? follow thou me." And if you follow Christ, the fruits of that following—sweet peace, and rich content, and unbounded trust in God—will be the very elements, without any wisdom or management on your part, by which your children will be brought out right. Do not, therefore, let your children disturb your settled peace. Do not let your trust be sacrificed through an unwise anxiety about those who are under your charge. Understand that the love of Christ in your soul is the best means of bringing your children in the way they should go; let them see the evidences and results of true holiness in you. Your gentleness, your forgiveness, your patience, your faith in the invisible, your trust in an unknown and unseen God, will be more preaching to them than all the didactic instruction which you can give them—though this should not be omitted.

So it is with teachers of all kinds, with preachers pre-eminently, who are the teachers of the Lord, and with all who labor for men's religious education. They are in danger of emphasizing extrinsic things, and forgetting the true interior and spiritual elements. In all such instruction, personal piety is the power of teaching. It is that which a man is between his soul and God that gives him cogency, and, under the divine providence, brings forth fruit in others. It is quite possible for men to be busy with the outwardness of their work, for them to be given to a secular administration of it, and yet be conscientious, painstaking, faithful persons. But they will have very little comfort in it. And Christ would warn every such one, saying, of all

this outward history, "What is that to thee? This is thy business—follow thou me."

It would be a word of caution, too, for busybodies in spiritual things—for there are busybodies in spiritual things as really as in things social and temporal. There are men who have adopted the cant words of the day, and who are all the time talking about *saving men's souls*. The moment they are converted, they think that means that they are to be *saving souls*. And they pray about *saving souls*. And they exhort to the *salvation of souls*. They are constantly running around and trying to *save men's souls*. Christ would say to them, "Save your own souls first." To do that, needs a great deal of care. It is far more important that a man should be built up in a holy and devout and deeply spiritual life, than that he should be running round for volunteers long before he himself understands the spiritual drill. And when men have been consecrated to the work of doing good, it is far more important that they, having begun a Christian life, should be built up, than that there should be gathered in raw recruits who know nothing. There be those who are overloading the church with crude material; and the church, like an overloaded wain, groans with this crude material, which is in danger of spoiling in keeping. There be those who seem to think that the great work of the ministry is to be the alarming and converting of men, and the saving of their souls.

Now, the way of salvation is through sanctification, and he who would have the cure of souls should understand that to make men holy who have begun to be Christians, is, among other things, the most providential way of saving those who are not professors of religion. While I would not do anything which would take from you enterprise; while, within due bounds, and at discretion, it is the duty of every Christian man, as God gives him opportunity, to save men, snatching them as brands from the burning, if they are in extreme peril, and by kind words, at proper times, win them to religious things; and while I would not lighten the motives to this, I would caution you against making your religion to stand in this running about to *save men's souls*. Christ would say to you, under such circumstances, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." Practice for a little while before you begin to preach to others.

That which is true in all the instances which I have stated, is still more signally true in relation to Christian sects into which the church of Christ is divided. I have never been of those who thought sects were, in and of themselves, evil. Where they have been exploded and formed by explosion; where they have, by misdirected assault, been rendered bitter; where they have been selfish and exclusive, there has

been great mischief in connection with this subdivision of the great body of men in Christian life. But it has been because the sects have allowed themselves to use the malign elements as instruments in their Christian warfare. The mere fact of the subdivision of the multitude of men into different organizations, with different politics and governments, and even different modes of administration, is not in itself singular. It is inevitable. You can no more make them alike than you can make any two towns alike in their modes of governing, or any two families alike in their methods of administration. For, as the families in a neighborhood are held to great generic rules—those, for instance, of truth, and honor, and industry, and personal purity, but, within these generics vary infinitely in their modes of administering the economies of the household; so in the families that spring up under the Lord Jesus Christ in this world, there will be infinite diversities. And where the populations are large, there is no reason why those who are of one mind—that is, those who are in elective affinity—and who are thrown together, should not cooperate with each other in the administration of the affairs of the church, as seems wise to them. Sects are not in themselves, but only in the unwise modes of their administration, mischievous, and evil, and to be deplored.

You will never have one church in the sense in which men are looking for it. Blessed be God for that. One church such as men are looking for would be a very stupid thing. It would be the extinction of that individual, sharp personality out of which comes variety. And the riches of mankind are in variations. All growths tend to diversity. All development is in the direction of complexity. And persons who are capable of being reduced to absolute unity are personally very low in the scale—very near to zero. Otherwise they could not coalesce, and come into perfect unity. And all those great sects that suppose themselves to be units, are not. There are materials for diversity within them. They are full of unexplored and unexpressed forces. They are full of undelivered or undeveloped variations of belief. They are held in reserve, and kept down. They are either like winter, when all seeds and roots are waiting to grow by-and-by, but are not growing; or, they are like magazines that are stored full of mischievous missiles that by-and-by will be touched off. There is no such thing as unity, there never was, and there never will be.

The word of the Lord, therefore, to those who are with sects that are seeking to destroy themselves and build up the one spirit of this, that or the other organization, is, "What is that to thee?" If men like to be baptized by immersion, let them. If men like to be baptized by sprinkling, let them. If men like to have preachers ordained by bishops, in the name of the Lord, let them. And if men like to have

preachers that never had a bishop's hand on them, let them. "Follow thou me," says Christ. Let every sect, instead of attempting to bring itself nearer to God, and making itself more acceptable to the Lord Jesus Christ by absurd historical arguments, do what every horticulturalist is obliged to do. It is quite in vain for him to boast of the superiority of his fruits and flowers, or to assert that his orchard or garden is better than anybody else's. He must bring forward flowers and fruits that the judges will say are better than those of others. And then it does not matter what name you put on them, or whether you put any name on them at all. "By their fruits ye shall know them," says every horticultural committee; and so said Christ.

Now, if it is understood that that is the best sect which makes the best men; if we are at liberty to call on the different sects to show the highest results of their training, then I am satisfied. Let them be judged according to their merits. And if the Roman Catholics can prove that they make better men than we Protestants do, that ends the argument with me. I am going in for the sect that makes the greatest number of men of the best sort. Bring in your Calvinists; and if they make magnificent, strong men, but make only a few of them, and crush all the weak for the sake of making these few almost supernaturally strong men, it is not my ideal of a church. But show me the sect that makes the largest number of men high and noble, and I am for that. If it be Calvinism, with its "five points" accuminated, and sharper than the "pricks" against which Paul kicked, I will take it. Or, if it be Arminianism I will take it. I do not care for arguments. Go away with your texts. Show me the men that you have made. Some of you drill by Upton's tactics, and some of you by the French tactics; some of you employ one system, and some another; but I do not care whose tactics you drill by, let me see your men fight; and after the campaign I will tell you which turns out the best soldiers. I will admit that drill has something to do with these things; but I declare that that army which wins victories oftenest, and on the broadest scale, is composed of the best material. And though I believe that some sects are far better than others, and that some views of doctrine are far more likely to produce good results than others; and though in laying the foundations of a sect I should be very careful in making selections of men and measures and views of truth; yet, after all, the true test as to the value of the different sects, as they exist, is that which determines which has produced the best results. Those sects which produce the greatest number of eminent Christian men, those sects which fill the garden of the Lord most abundantly with the best fruits, are the wisest and most efficient in their administration.

If that responsibility were brought to bear on the sects, how great

a change there would be! How we should cease boasting! How we should cease arraying ourselves, with external arguments, one against another! How we should feel that the Lord had said to every man, whether he be layman or minister, "Follow thou me!"

Following Christ personally, individually, as well as collectively, is our great business—not following him in a certain way; not following him by given services and ordinances and ceremonies; not following him in externals; but following him in trust, in joy, in peace, in hope, in love, in faith in the invisible. And they are the best Christians who, following Christ thus, follow him the most closely.

This is a severe test; it is a different test from that by which men usually measure themselves; and it is a test which, if strictly applied, would destroy sectarians, mostly.

May God grant that we may have this test by which to measure ourselves. We are not what we are by reason of our knowledge, nor by reason of our will-power, but by the degree in which we represent and reflect the mind and will of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian brethren, you are not safe because you are in this or that fold. You are not safe because of any covenants or promises. You are not safe because of the fulfillment of any duties in this or that direction. Your whole hope, your whole safety, lies in this, that you are following Christ, and that his spirit and your spirit are in such sympathy with each other that he lives in you, and you live in him.

And in this spirit of following Christ, let us gather together, this morning, as we propose to do for the last time this summer as a church, and as Christian brethren of every name, to accept Christ as our Master, our Guide, our Joy, and our everlasting Reward. I affectionately invite all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, and who put their whole hope of salvation in the faith of his love to their souls, to tarry with us, if it be convenient for them, and partake with us of the emblems of his dying love.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We acknowledge thee, Almighty God, to be our Governor. Thou art our Teacher, and thee we would obey and follow. We confess that we have not followed thee even according to our knowledge; that we have turned aside, and that we do every day turn aside, from the right way. Our own conscience condemns us; and thou art greater than our conscience. Even by the feeble light of our own knowledge, we see the better way, while we are pursuing the worse. But, how much higher than ours is thy conception of that which is just, and pure, and true, and righteous. If thou wert to measure us by that same law by which thou dost measure thyself; if thou shouldst account with us, as with thine own angels in heaven, who of us could stand? We are as little children in the presence of those who are grown in knowledge and experience. We know not anything, and are filled with mistakes, and easily run into transgressions and into conscious and purposed errors. And we need every day thy forbearing love. We need thy patience and thy forgiveness in which hath been, in every age, the hope of the world. Thou dost not delight to destroy. Thou dost delight to save, to make alive, those that are dead; to cleanse those that are impure; to make whole the wounded; to go after the lost; to reclaim them; to seek and rescue them. And we rejoice that thy work has not expended itself, and that it is not a power unused; and that thy truth, and all the means by which it is surrounded, are yet living instruments, and that thou dost own them, and bless them. And we behold thy churches built up, and multitudes reclaimed from evil, and the ways of the Lord thronged. And we rejoice to believe that thou wilt never leave thyself without a seed to serve thee.

We beseech of thee, this morning, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the service of the sanctuary, in thine own midst. Hear the voices of all that are supplicating thee this morning in their own behalf, or in the behalf of those who are near and dear to them. Accept the thanksgivings of those who offer thanks. Grant, we pray thee, that there may be a willing heart to make confession, on the part of all burdened consciences. May that distance which care and worldliness puts between our thoughts and thee this day, be quite dissipated; and may all of us be able to draw very near to thee.

And we pray, O Lord, that we may have some sense of the great and wondrous love wherewith thou hast loved us, and with which thou dost love us. May we feel that we are dwelling in the midst of thy divine thoughts of mercy, that we are nourished by thee, and that the whole life which we have, and all its power, of pleasure and of joy, is of thee, and is daily sustained by thee. And may it be but a little thing for us to serve thee, that art serving us continually.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all the families that are represented in this congregation. If there be any absent from us to day, wilt thou fill them with thoughts of mercy. And as their hearts turn again to this place, and to all the remembrances of scenes gone by in days past, we pray that the Spirit of the sanctuary may be wafted to them, and that they may partake of the blessings which we have in coming here. Bless, we pray thee, wanderers who are upon the sea or upon the land, near or far, and preserve them in thy good providence. Speed them in their errands, and bring them back again to the hearts that love them.

We pray for all that are strangers to day in our midst, in strange places, with new associations. Grant that there may be the old love, the blessed spirit of God, that long hath known them. May they find thee the same here to day. May their prayers arise with acceptance before thee. May they rejoice in the sacred songs of thy sanctuary, and find this the house of God, and therefore a home for their hearts. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless

all our citizens of every name, that worship thee this day. Grant that all those who are in error may more and more see the truth.

Bless this nation. Bless all the states and their governments. Bless the government of the United States. Grant that thy servant, the President, may walk in the spirit of wisdom. May he fear God, and do justly. We pray that thou wilt bless all who are associated with him in counsel. Bless the legislature of the nation. Grant, we pray thee, that fidelity, and equity, and purity may be the stability of our times.

We pray that thou wilt bless the nations of the earth, and gather them, according to thy promises, at last, into a great realm of peace, from which are banished ignorance, and superstition, and all wrong. Grant that at last the birthright of the world may come, and Christ descend to reign for a thousand years.

And to thy name shall be the praise for ever and for ever. *Amen.*

XIX.

WAR.

INVOCATION.

July 17, 1870.

LOOK forth from thine high and holy place, our Father, not to overwhelm us with thy brightness, nor with the glory of thy power, but to lend to us something of thy strength, and of thy goodness, and of thy purity, that we may come up into all the blessedness of sonship ; and that, fear departing, we may have courage to say, in sincerity and in truth, Our Father which art in heaven. Though though art in heaven, thou art everywhere ; and around us is thine arm of providence ; and before us thine eye of omniscience. Thy power is oyer all, and under all, and before and behind, a guard and a defence. We rejoice that we may live in thee. And so help us this morning to recognize our relations to thee that we shall have gladness of heart and bring our reverential offering with cheerfulness and with all the confidence of love and its sweet formalities. And bless us, we pray thee, in every service of devotion and exercise of instruction, that all things may be done decently and in order, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

WAR.

“From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, and yet ye have not, because ye ask not.”—JAMES IV. 1, 2.

This is a description of the turbulence of man, regarded simply as an animal. There is a latent implication here, also, of man as a spiritual being. As an animal, he is restless, avaricious, dishonest, plundering, murdering, forever desiring, and yet unsatisfied in his desires, because his lower nature never can be at rest, but, like the troubled sea, *casts up mire and dirt*. “Because ye ask not.” Because the spiritual side of man, which derives its being from God, and all the plentitude of its enjoyment from spiritual things, through prayer and faith, does not come into activity, men are unhappy.

This is James’ philosophical analysis of the source of war. Violence and physical force in the management of men arise from their excessive animal conditions.

It is true, as a matter of history, that wars have mainly sprung from the passions. Only now and then, and less and less frequently as we go backward on the path of time, have wars represented principles; and even the principles that they have represented are the lowest, and the nearest to that which is carnal, of any.

The necessity of force in this world is in the ratio of the strength of men’s lower nature. That part which is animal and physical must, at last, for government, go back to force.

Man is a compound. Reason and moral sense are, as it were, set upon another organization—an animal and physical one. So the apostle Paul, by a figure of speech, represents man as being dual; as being two men in one; as being a carnal man and a spiritual man. The spiritual man is superimposed upon the basilar or carnal man.

Man is a rational being, and he is also an irrational animal; and it is quite possible for him to act in either of these characters as separated from the other. It is quite possible for a man to act as an animal with almost no guidance from his moral sense, or from his reason. It is also

possible for a man to supercede the instincts of his lower nature, and act entirely from rational and moral considerations.

In the one character, men will govern themselves by reason and the moral sentiments—by the higher motives. If this is not possible, then they must fall down, for government, to that range, or to that plane, where they can be reached. It is far better to govern men by the voluntary instincts of their moral nature; but if that cannot be, it is far better than that they should go ungoverned, that they should be governed by their intellectual forces; by reasons and persuasions addressed to their higher feelings. But if they are not susceptible in either their moral or their intellectual nature, it is far better then that they should be ungoverned, that they should be governed by appeals to their selfishness. But if they cannot be reached by such appeals, rather than that they should not be governed, it is better that they should be governed by direct appeals to the flesh by pain—by the actual compression of force. That is the lowest and meanest way to govern men. It is only better than no government at all.

But men must take their choice. For government is of God. Not by decree is it made obligatory, but it is organically necessary. That is, the structure of the globe is such that without government it could not cohere, and order could not exist. Government there must be; but what kind of government it is to be, will depend entirely upon the susceptibility of men in any age and nation to the different motives which may be addressed to them. Those who are so far civilized and Christianized that they are susceptible to higher motives, will be furthest removed from the law of force; but if men are so animal and bestial in their inclinations, and in their whole state, that they are susceptible to no other influence but that of force, then force must be employed. And it is just as rational, just as normal, as it is necessary and indispensable. And all the sentimentality about not using force, where force is the only thing that can be used, is surplusage and waste. I do not believe in using force if you can help it; but I do believe in using it when you cannot help it.

Lately, there is much said against using the rod in the family and in schools; and it is only an extension of that to find fault about the police in cities, and to teach that a higher view of man should lead us to withdraw all force from our cities. A pretty time we should have in New York without our police. A pretty time we have with them; and how much more we should have pretty time without them! And the same thing is extended to the nation. Armies are said to be cruel. Yes, they *are* cruel. The only crueler thing than an army, is a nation that has no army, and is uncivilized, bestly and savage. The law of force is the bottom necessity, and men can take their choice as to

whether they will come within the reach of it or not. If they do not like it, then let them go up. Or, if they will not go up, let them not complain that there is that omnipotent decree at the bottom which holds men by governing and coercing them.

Force is therefore to be used until you can do better.

But the law of Christian philosophy in regard to the use of force is not the ultimate discipline, but simply a preparatory one. Use it until you can develop instincts higher than that reaches. Then, as soon as possible, dispense with it. But until you can get some other motive-power, force is legitimate and wholesome—most wholesome—in this world, to those who least want it and most need it.

Whether that time has come in the history of the world in which force can be laid aside, as some poetic men, some sentimentalists, some philanthropists think, is a simple question of speculation. I do not think that time has come—not by generations yet. The law of force, whether as applied in the household, in the school, in the municipal police, or in the police of nations—which is the army—I do not think can yet be laid aside. I do not think the time has come by some hundred years when we can lay aside the power to use force in the government of individuals, of communities, of nations, or of correlated nations—the globe.

It is true that men have risen as individuals, and in numbers greater, probably, than ever before in the history of the world, into that state in which they are governed wholly by motives addressed to their reason, to their moral sense, to their affections, and to their interests. There are thousands of men living here to whom law has no relevancy. They have gone so far above the law that they do spontaneously the things which it requires. The law says, "Thou shalt not steal." That law does not apply to you, because, seeing the moral beauty of honesty, you are honest. I do not steal, not because there is a law that forbids stealing, but because I have no inclination to steal. The law says, "Thou shalt not murder;" but my neighbors are safe from my hand, not because there is a law against murder, but because I have another law written in myself that protects them. There is a law that men shall support the State; but I support the State by my taxes, not because the law says I must, but because I love my country, and because when I have reasonable ground for believing that one-tenth part of my taxes go to serve the country, I am glad to pay them. I do it of my own volition, and not because the law tells me to. The law simply tells me how much I shall pay; and I am willing to pay it if I know that the country gets one-tenth part, though the other nine parts are lost on scoundrels, for the sake of serving my day and generation—though you are not all of the same opinion.

In many individuals a growth has taken place, so that they are no longer amenable to the law of selfishness, and are wholly free from the law of force, and do the things which they ought to do from considerations, not of necessity, but of choice.

In certain communities, also, far more than in others, this civilization has taken place. There are some nations that are far nearer than others to that time in which they will be able either to sheath the sword, or lay it aside wholly. There are small communities which are situated so that temptations to violence are removed from them, and so that the inducements to peace are numerous and strong. And so, there are limited classes in all nations, I suppose, that are prepared to be governed by moral suasion. In France, in Russia, in Spain, in Italy, yea, even in Turkey, I suppose there are classes of men who already are so civilized, and so developed morally, that it is possible to govern them by the moral law, and not by the law of force. But when men are regarded in a mass; when the world's population is considered; or when the population of Christendom is looked upon comprehensively, we are not to determine what is proper and what is possible by the consideration of the condition of individual instances, or of single classes, but we must take into consideration the condition of the whole of the populations. What their civilization is, and what the law is to which they are susceptible, must be determined before we can ascertain whether they must be governed by force, or whether they can be governed by moral suasion.

There are isothermal lines, or lines of equal heat, extending across the continent, which show where, in different longitudes, are the points which are of an average temperature through the year. There are also isobarometric lines, which indicate, at any given time, where there is an equality of atmospheric pressure. Now, there is in the moral globe what I might call isodynamic lines, showing where there is an equal moral pressure. And until these isodynamic lines have risen above the selfish instincts and into the sentiments—the affections and the moral sense—it is not possible to have peace, simply because it is not possible to dispossess the law of force. As soon as a nation is so far civilized that it averages in its population a susceptibility to moral motives higher than the line of selfishness in its character, then in that nation the time has come in which you can lay aside force, with exceptional instances, and can hope to govern by reason and conscience and enlightened interest. But in all nations where that line comes below, and yet rests in the animal region, the law of force is the salutary, the wholesome, as well as the indispensable law.

Men can therefore determine what they will be governed by, by determining what their character shall be; and nations will be governed,

in the long run, not so much by any external adjudication, as by the outworkings of the state of mind in which they are living, and by which they are acting.

It had been hoped and believed, and twenty years ago I believed, that the era of wars was about to close in civilized nations, and that war would leave the realm of Christendom, and retreat to brutal, savage nations. There were many things which justified this anticipation.

The great increase of popular intelligence led men to think that wars could not much longer stand the scrutiny of enlightened reason. The doctrine of human rights, also, was emancipating and bringing up a larger section to a direct or indirect influence in the administration of civil affairs. The progress of popular industry, giving men something to do, and attractions that would naturally keep them at home, rather than leave vast herds to be enlisted or turned hither and thither at the will of any despot, it was supposed would also have an ameliorating effect—as it did. And public sentiment had begun to cry out. Much was written, and preached, and lectured, and said in conversation, of the atrociousness and unchristianness of war. There were discussions of plans for a national arbitration of differences. It was thought, at that time, that we were on the eve of a Congress of Nations, in which questions of international disagreement or interest might be debated, and whose decisions would be a final settlement.

Then, there were beginning to be nations that set the example of disarming, or, if not of disarming, at any rate of not using their military and naval force. England was one of the first of them. But though it is true that England learned peace, she learned it from commerce, rather than from religion. It was with her as it was with all other nations—religion made her combative.

“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.”

Thus said the prophet Jesus. He came to divide houses against themselves; children against their parents; parents against their children; one against another, all the way through. And every word of this prophecy has been fulfilled. For wherever the Christian religion has been, there has been bitterness, and hatred, and persecutions, and wars. And the cruellest things that were ever done on the face of the earth, have been done in the name of religion, and by men who were acting under a malignant conscience. And England did not learn peace from love. Her looms taught her the benefit of peace. It was when she desired the world to be her customer that, as a matter of

political economy, she judged that peace was best. It was best, in her estimation, for the same reason that one kind of cotton was better to be bought than another, because it made up better, and sold better, and yielded more benefits to her.

So England learned peace—England, one of the staunchest of fighters, and one whose flag is all red, as if it had been baptized in nothing but wars from the beginning, and has on it the cross, to show that there was a touch of religion in her war—for wherever the devil is, he wants some hint of religion to commend him; and a cross on a blood-red flag is a good thing! And war is symbolized, not only on the flag of England, but on our flag as well. We that have the stars of heaven on our flag, have also the eagle, with its talon and its beak, both bloody. At any rate, however Great Britain learned peace, she learned it; and for the last twenty-five or thirty years she has been as studious for peace, as before she was studious for war. There was not a nation on the continent of Europe that had not heard the tread of her soldiers. And the worst of it was, that, for fifty years, during the great struggle from the time of Napoleon's outbreak until the advent of the great peace that followed, England went to war and spent thousands of millions, billions upon billions, of dollars. And although she, the most democratic of European nations, has lavishly poured her money into the hands of despots, to establish crowns and sceptres, on the Spanish peninsula, in the outlying German provinces, in the struggle of the Austrians against Napoleon, and in that Russian war in which the whole map of Europe was changed; although she, with her money and influence, has been fighting for dynastic reasons and popular reasons, nevertheless she learned peace. And England to-day is at peace.

But let no one ridicule England as though she had lost her power. Let it not be supposed that she has forgotten to be courageous. There is not a more courageous people on the face of the earth than the people of Great Britain. Woe be to him that wakes up the old lion, on the supposition that he has turned to a lamb! There may be a lamb in the neighborhood, but the lion yet remains. Woe be to him that rouses up the dormant strength and energy of that most wonderful nation! We ought to speak well of the people of England, because we are of their blood and bone. We came forth from their loins, as they came from the Germanic stock on the continent; and we and they are of the same race, bearing the same great race-marks.

But then, the history of Great Britain kindled the expectation, certainly among the sanguine, that the era of peace was dawning. In 1850 I went abroad for the first time in my life. Dr. Chapin crossed the sea with me (wretched, like myself, all the way over), bound for the World's Peace Convention on the Rhine. We were full of in

spirations of universal peace. And at that time I think that perhaps I prophesied, here or somewhere else, that we should "hang the trumpet in the hall," and that nations should "study war no more." I believed that that joyful day had come. But since that time there have been five great terrific wars, such as never had their parallel or equal—a commentary on prophecy!

In 1856 there was the Crimean war, with Russia on the one side, and France and England and Lombardy and Turkey on the other. The whole world stood in suspense at its magnitude. It was a dynastic war. In 1859 the war of liberation in Italy took place. This was one of the few wars for a principle, however unprincipled the actors may have been. The next was the great American civil war, in 1861, which never had any equal, or anything that compared with it, either in magnitude, or in the character of the men of whom its armies were composed, or in the importance of the principles which it involved, or in the stupendous results which were evolved from it. Then, in 1866, was the Prussian and Austrian War, which was settled at Sadowa. And now comes the French and Prussian War of 1870.

It was the millenium of peace in 1850; and between that time and the present—1870—there have been five terrific wars, one of which is just now about to commence, and in which two nations are standing, like a park of artillery, loaded to the muzzle, and awaiting the word to be discharged. Two of these five great conflicts were waged for a principle, and the rest of them for balance of power.

Yet we must not be discouraged. The day of peace is coming. And none the less is it near at hand because there is so much war. It is true that the wealth of the world is, in mines, and foundries, and forges, and shops, manufacturing destructive weapons. It is true that skill and inventive genius were never so alert and busy as to-day in manufacturing instruments of mortal pain. It is true that capital was never so largely employed in the production of munitions of war, that military men were never so much in vogue, and that nations were never so apt to plunge into conflicts, as just at that time when the downfall of Satan's kingdom is the surest.

At the advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ demoniac possessions were the most common in the world. And when our Master met a man who was possessed with devils, never were the fiends so violent and outrageous as at that point in which he said to them, "I tell you, come out of him." Then they rent the victim, and cast him on the ground; but it was the final struggle. And so we may hope that though wars may rage and thunder, and send up their lurid colors on the dark sky; that though hell seems well nigh to have broken through the crust of the earth, and to have poured forth its red streams,

during the last score of years, nevertheless, I think we are nearer than ever before to the great time of peace, and that these are the gigantic but expiring efforts of the era of war.

For, to some extent there is a progress of civilization and of Christianity which, though it is yet in transition, indicates that it is rapidly coming to a period of potency. It acts as all moral forces do in nascent periods—it provokes and annoys; but it is very soon to pass the state of provocation and annoyance, and to come to a state of dominance in which it will control.

In view of this hope and these prospects, there are influences for which men should strive, and there are certain elements which might be discontinued and discountenanced to some extent. An exposition of the evils of war, of its cruelties, of its cost, of its effects upon industry, and of its effects upon the common people, may be hoped to avail, and to create a judgment in the minds of men against this great scourge—though not to any such extent as has been supposed. I anticipate the incoming of the time of peace, not so much through the reason as through the lower instincts of men.

The education of the whole common people until the isodynamic lines shall rise higher than the passions, is one of the first practical steps toward peace. We never shall have peace with an ignorant, impoverished population at the bottom—never! As long as men of education make a class of themselves, and separate themselves from their lower and less fortunate fellows; as long as society is divided as milk is, the cream being at the top and the skim-milk at the bottom, just so long you will find society unbalanced, unequal, and liable to be thrown into convulsions out of which will spring wars. You cannot develop until you learn to take the whole mass of society along together; until the working men are relieved from a sense of injustice; until they are delivered from the irritation, the grinding, and the attrition of wrongs; until they are taught to be more than animals, and are treated as if they were more than animals; until they begin to feel the dignity of manhood. You cannot hope for peace when one-half or two-thirds of your great nation are basilar. And the idea that men can be directed by dynasties, by the leading minds or ruling spirits of any form of government, or any civil polity, without restraint, is the height of infatuation and folly. If you are going to have peace, it must be proclaimed by the common people. We shall not have peace till they understand that it is their interest as well as duty. When that time comes, we shall have peace guaranteed so that no tyrant can move it.

Whatever, then, tends to the education of the whole people, must necessarily tend to the diminution of the chances of war. War is not

an acute disease which can be cured by special remedies. It is a constitutional disorder. It belongs to human nature. It is the remnant in man of that old fighting animal from which Mr. Darwin says we sprang. One might find some presumption in favor of his theory, from the fact that there is so much of the animal left in us yet. It has been supposed that we sprang from monkees; and there has been an inquisition to see if there has not been a caudal appendage rubbed off. Nations have been explored to find a man who had a tail, as a monkey has, or some traces of one. You are looking in the wrong place. Look inside, and you will find resemblances to the monkey, the lion, the tiger, the bear, and the hog, all of them. Human nature is full of the animal. Unfortunately, his outside is better than his inside; and so he is not detected and exposed. And this disposition to assert our rights is the heritage which we have derived from our animal descent. And until we have taught the nations of the earth to live, not by the body, but by the head, we shall have continuous infractions of peace, and continuous incursions of war.

Hence, common schools and newspapers are all of them peace forces. They are not arguments on peace, but they are causes of peace. Arguments frequently fail when causes succeed. Industrial associations, which bring men together in common interests, and teach them ideas of brotherhood; guilds; unions; whatever gives the working-classes *esprit de corps*; any organizations by which men seek to restrain their lower nature, or to improve their own and each other's condition—these are moral means; and though in the first sphere and operation they may be selfishly employed, they are giving an incidental and secondary education which is tending to make more of these men, and elevate them, and prepare them for a higher plane of life by-and-by.

The admission of all classes to the administration of national affairs; the educating effect of giving suffrage to all the people, and of making the polity of their day dependent in some measure upon their thought and volition—these things are preparing the common people to be peaceful. That is, it is teaching them to use the coronal faculties, and not the basilar.

The effect of community of industrial interests on the world is not to be lost sight of. The workmen in the nations are beginning to feel in work a common bond. And commerce is but the more declarative form or development of the same thing. The interests of the world, always represented in commerce, work for peace. Commerce does not love war anywhere. Commerce that is stationary in ports; manufacturing commerce; transporting commerce, that is making exchanges throughout the globe; all industrial occupations, long for peace. And

they are so far educators of the people. And although this may be an indirect and remote education, yet it is one of those indirect and remote educations by a good many of which we hope to bring men up to a larger stature, and a millennial condition.

There is no possible cure for war, then, that leaves important classes of men under great wrongs. Reformation is the proper first step. But if you refuse reformation, you may resort to the next step, which is revolution. Next to that is war. You must have one of these. Choose from among them. For man is moving. ' God moves the earth, and he moves populations. And all wiseacres, all conservatives, all men that are satisfied with their present condition, cannot stop the progress of things.

And things that in a lower stage were not wrongs, and were not felt to be wrong, became so by the development of men. It is quite folly to reason back five or three thousand years ago, and say, "These things existed then, and were not condemned." A thing that five hundred years ago, or one hundred years ago, was a matter of indifference, has come to be a matter of wrong, simply because men have changed their relations to it.

Slavery was once a benevolent institution. In that era when men bought and sold their wives and children, and when in war all captives were put to the sword, then to buy them and ransom them, or to take them slaves, was the next thing to adopting them into national and family life. It was a gradation so easy and natural that there was not a handbreadth between a man's slave and his own child. Under such conditions slavery was humane. But when nations had gone on growing so, and different classes and different interests had separated so, that to be a slave was to be removed five hundred degrees from the top section of society, then slavery became a monstrous wrong that could not be measured nor gauged.

There are two classes of men in our day, who, it seems to me, are promoting war. First, there are the *peace men*; men who insist upon peace at all hazards, without conditions; who will have peace anyhow; who are opposed to war under any circumstances. Their doctrine is a premium on tyranny. It is an endorsement of despots. Let it once go out that there shall not be any war anyhow, and wicked men and nations will be guaranteed against harm, and will commit atrocities with impunity. Let England and France say, "We will never go into war," and they invite attack from every side. And a man who says, "Peace at any price; peace at all hazards; peace anyhow," does that which in the most effectual way encourages men to disturb the peace. Such persons are producers of war.

You never can have peace, until you love justice so much that you

insist upon it that there shall be justice. Then you will have peace. But men who see nations ground into the dust, and do not feel that; men who see servile classes whose very nature is almost wiped out, and do not feel enough about that to be disturbed; men who see human nature prostituted, abused, and tyrants wiping their feet on God's precious souls, and do not think it is wrong, but think that peace is far more precious than human nature, human life and human growth—these are the very men who make war. Palliatives to tyranny are provocatives to war. And he is recreant who says "Peace," so long as there are these great fundamental, organic evils unrectified, for which there is no peace. God will not give peace where there is not purity. Therefore let those who want peace preach for it, and labor for it, and hope for it, as an indispensable means to it. Let them begin to rectify abuses. Let them take sides with the weak, and see to it that justice prevails among men who are deprived of their rights. Give no peace to the earth till righteousness prevails, and then you will take the shortest cut to universal peace. Wars are blisters on the body politic, to draw the inflammation out. When a patient is going to die of pneumonia, the doctor puts a blister over the affected part. It is bad to excoriate the skin, but it is worse to have inflammation of the lungs, and die from not having it drawn off. Wars are cauteries; wars are God's amputations of offending members; and they are very great evils; but those are greater evils which they are employed to cure. The surgeon's knife is a great evil, but gangrene and death are greater evils. Wars are hideous, infernal medicines.

Then there are the conservative men; men of indifference and selfishness; fastidious and refined men. There are some men who, in life, are very much like what thistle-downs are in summer. God has at work under ground vast engines, great coarse, black roots, which crawl through the soil, and, by their hidden power, pump up large quantities of fluid into grass, and flower, and plant, and shrub, and tree. The great expansive force, the mighty suction, the terrific power of this tremendous enginery, is felt in everything that has vegetable life. It is the omnipotence of Almighty God distributing itself through nature. A thistle-down is chased through the air by a butterfly, on a bright summer day, and they hold counsel together about *the vulgar violence of Nature*. They are wafted along by zephyrs. And they say, "See how we live!" Says the thistle-down, "I never was born. I was just lifted up one day; and I have floated in this way ever since. I have all the comfort that I could desire. I do not work like that old oak tree. There is no sap pumped into me. I just float and enjoy myself." And the butterfly says, "See how beautiful, how exquisite, I am! Heaven and Summer bathe me with beauty

And I am full of sweetness. If I touch the earth, it is but just to suck honey from this flower or that, and fly on." But in the midst of their conversation there comes a thunder-crack; and immediately the rain pours down in torrents; and after the shower, where are the thistle-down and the butterfly? Gone down to the earth from whence they sprang, and annihilated, are they; while Nature pumps on, and sends through the mighty enginery of creation the elements of life and strength.

There are vast forces operating in the world. Some of them are good, and some are bad. And we shall find in society the dilettante—the kid-gloved, delicate-fingered man, that happens to have been born in wealth. He has a little brain, and God made up the equilibrium by what he put on the outside. And he talks of *keeping things as they are*. "What is the use," he says, "of these rude convulsions, these excitements; these attritions; these agitations? How ridiculous these men are that go about stirring up the world! Why do not men preach the mild and lovely Jesus, and do as I do?" And these butterflies, these thistle-downs; these worthless seeds of a noxious weed—what are they doing amidst those forces which are really regenerating the world, and lifting up the foundations of things, and beating out and sowing seeds to bear fruit in millennial times? These are the men who are provoking their fellow men into war, and refusing to recognize the grandeur or to sympathize with the results of those mighty orgasms and labor-throes by which generations grow and are born into higher states. These are the men that talk peace and make war.

In regard to the great conflict on whose dark and windy edge we stand, it is not my purpose to speak—more than a word. It is not a war for a principle. It is one of the worst kind of wars that can in modern days be fought. In neither case is it a war of self-defence. It is not a war for the liberation of any class, like the Italian war. It is purely a dynastic war. And although the common people in both nations seem to be utterly inflamed by a spirit of patriotism, and those of each nation cluster about a crown that has no vital connection with their interests; and though it is in this sense their war; yet, it is not, in the higher and better sense, a common people's war. It is a king's war.

Uninformed as we are of the distinct steps which led to this war, we cannot form a judgment except with the consciousness that it is to be re-formed; but so far as our knowledge goes, it seems to me that there is no whit of difference between the blame of the one and the blame of the other. France and Prussia both seem to have been arming for some years past, expecting that the time of conflict would come when they should prove which was the stronger military force in Europe.

And they have been ready for it. And the King of Prussia was arrogant, and the Emperor of France was impertinent. And so, between arrogance and impertinence, here comes this war, that will deluge the continent in blood. Oh! if they that bring on this mischief might suffer!—but no, it is the innocent. How many thousands will fall before another Sunday comes, our imagination may depict, but we cannot tell. How many thousands, lusty in youth, full of hope and promise, the sons of widows cherished, on whom rests the family, as the house stands upon its corner—how many of these will have perished, or will be maimed, we cannot tell. If they could only think, “The flag will fly washed of its stain,” they might have some consolation in dying. When our boys died at Chickamauga and at Gettysburg, they died thinking, “I leave behind for my life a country free from slavery; I leave an unvexed posterity; I leave a united patrimony;” and they could well afford to die. But what can the gasping Prussian or the gasping Frenchman think? He dies, and there is no principle settled in the one way or the other. The question is simply, Which nation has the strongest army and the expertest generals? No moral principle is brightened. No great end of nations is gained.

There are incidental things that make us interested in the Protestant nation; but this is not a war for Protestantism. There are reasons why we should feel a natural drawing towards the Germanic nation, which tends more to democratic ideas, and from which we derived our notions of liberty; but it is not for democracy or liberty that this war is waged. I feel a stronger sympathy for the German people than for the French; but I do not see that any of these questions on which they are in advance of the French are involved in this war. I look upon this conflict as a needless fight, with gigantic cruelty and hideous power; and I feel as if there had never been a guiltier war. Woe! woe! be to that crowned head in Prussia; woe! be to that crowned head in France, that so ruthlessly and so needlessly has whelmed this day and generation into measureless suffering.

And it is for us to stand, as a nation, sorry—sorry by all the lessons which we have learned in our own chastisements; sorry, because the wounds are unhealed yet in a thousand households; sorry because the tears have not forgotten to flow over our own dead; sorry because we know what war is, even at the best, when it is waged for the loftiest purposes, and in the name of the Lord, for the sake of the whole common people. We ought to be sorry for wars that are so much worse, and that must be so bootless, as they are ruthless.

I have heard men say, “If there be war, grain will rise. Commerce will revive on our side. It is an ill wind that blows no good to anybody.” If my neighbor’s house were on fire, I should as soon think

of rushing in to plunder, and say, "I will divide and partition his goods—it is an ill wind that blows no good to anybody," as I should think of looking on the convulsions of Europe, and counting up the benefits that will come from them to us, by sea or by land. I am ashamed of it!

The sources of our strength are in our nerve, in our intelligence, and in our industry. We do not need the casualties of other nations to build us up. We ought to be lifted above any such feeling or thought as that. I know you may make it a matter of political calculation and political economy without being in sympathy with the distress of foreign nations; but take care that you let no miscreant selfishness mingle with your surmises and prognostications. It is for us, viewing the hideousness of these wars on other shores, to form in our minds a loftier ambition, and a clearer conception of what should be the ambition of every true statesman in America.

Has not the world seen enough of the war of violence? Has not God kept back this continent and settled it with a homogenous population, under common laws and a common constitution, and given it to us from shore to shore, and from the North to the South, with no neighboring nations that can interfere with or in any way change the tendency of things in our time, in order that we might build here a great nation for the liberty of the common people, on Christian foundations, and then give to the world an example of civic power with civic morality? If that is to be the duty of a republic, I am glad that New York is not a specimen of civic power, and that we are to look abroad upon the face of the whole nation, rather than upon any local sores—sores largely made by the drifting in of the detritus of foreign depravities.

But it is for us to desire for our own country, not magnitude, but *majesty*; not power, but *influence*. It is for us not to ask wealth, but to ask that a people, inevitably rich, multitudinous as the sands of the sea, organized by freedom so loosely that foreign dynasties do not believe there is any law or government here at all, should rise up in their unshackled freedom and present to the world a nation more happy, more pure, socially and politically, than any other nation on the globe. And then, in the might and majesty of our unmeasured power, having given token to the world of what terrible force there is, too, in our military power, let this nation stand and preach peace, that all the nations of the earth may see that real liberty among an intelligent and educated common people, leads not to lust and to greed, and to avarice of neighboring territories, and to despotism, but to humanity, to milder manners, to beneficent institutions, and to beneficence.

I plead, not that God would preserve this nation, for that is an answered prayer; I plead not that God would lay deep the keel and build

strong the ribs of this ship of state, for the Rocky Mountains and the Alleghanies are already his answer to that petition; I plead not that God would pile up riches in this land, for wealth has dropped down in our midst in floods, and is to come in yet greater streams; but I pray that there may be such a spirit of Christianity among the people, that, great as it is, vast as its power is, it may stand and look abroad, Christ-like, upon the nations, winning them to civilization; winning them to amenity of manners; winning them to true piety; winning them to that which shall redeem their homes from barbarism, that shall redeem the common people from oppression, and that shall make them strong in the Lord, until that bright and blessed day shall come, when we shall have no occasion to say to any man, "Know ye the Lord," but when *all shall know him from the least to the greatest*. God speed that day.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We desire to adore thee, our Heavenly Father, for thy justice, for thy truth, for thy love and mercy, and for all that we have known of them in our own experiences, and for all that which men have testified to, so that we know that thy government is, over all the earth, a government of goodness and mercy, and that the power which rules above is not tyrannical. We are not in the hands of a despot. Thou art our Father; and to all who will draw near to thee in love thou art ineffable in mercy and in goodness. Thou wilt bear with their weakness. Thou wilt show them the way. Though they stumble therein a thousand times, thou wilt lift them up. Thou wilt be patient with their wanderings, and bring them back again, so that they do not let thee go, but seek to serve thee with all their heart. Thou wilt forgive all their transgressions, and all their infirmities thou wilt help and succor with more than parental tenderness. Art not thou the God that we need, long suffering, and filled with goodness? Art not thou the God whom sinners need, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and yet that will by no means clear the guilty? We rejoice in thee. We rejoice that all the foundations of truth, and honor, and justice, are guaranteed by thee. Nor shall man's delinquency, nor any power infernal, overthrow the established order of virtue and rectitude. Forever and forever guarded and guided of God, they shall go on throughout the world, governing and to govern, until their mission is fulfilled, and justice shall have brought forth love, and all the universe shall be at peace and in joy.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to us more and more perfect disclosures of this thy royal nature, that thy sovereignty may not seem something pressing upon us, something overwhelming our freedom; that we may behold in it all the guarantees of our liberty; that we may see that it is full of all love, and that it moves and administers for the purposes thereof.

And we pray that we may be won from selfishness; from pride; from every passion; from the lusts of the flesh; from all vanities and pomps that war against the soul; from everything that tarnishes the purity and lustre of thy nature in ours.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt teach us how more and more to

refine our life and power; how to make it more spiritual; how to seal it with all the signets of immortality. We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that we may live more and more for the life to come; that our heart may be there, our treasure being there; that our affections may be set upon things above, and not upon things on the earth.

Forgive us all our sins, and teach us to forgive one another. By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, may we learn to be meek and gentle and forbearing to one another, and to be forgiving to one another, if we have offences one against another.

We beseech of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing, this morning, to all that are in thy presence. To all that sit in darkness, bring light. To all that are in despondency or despair, bring hope. To all that are in bereavements, bring strength and encouragement and comfort. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that none of us may repine when the hand of the Lord is laid in chastisement upon us. May we remember that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. And may we be prepared by chastisements so to grow in spiritual things, that, at last, when life itself shall depart, and all its visions and dreams give way, the glorious realities of thy kingdom shall come, where, because we have suffered with thee, we shall reign with thee.

And now we beseech thee to look upon thy cause everywhere. Have compassion, we pray thee, upon all those who are laboring in thy cause in destitute places, amidst discouragements and trials of their faith. May feeble churches be strengthened. May thy ministering servants, in the midst of sickness, and disappointments, and all manner of trials, still be girded with the strength of Almighty God. We pray that intelligence may prevail; that schools and colleges may come up in remembrance before thee; and that they may become sanctified fountains not only of learning but of grace.

We pray for the nations of the earth. Teach them to make war no more on one another. Bring in that day of purity and justice and truth when there shall be no use for war; when men shall learn the things that make for peace, and make for the welfare of one another.

Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done in all the earth.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word spoken, and grant that it may do us good. May we ponder the way of thy providence, and the permissions thereof. May we look upon the distress of all nations; and may we pray and long that out of it shall come some knowledge that shall do other times good. If it be in accordance with thy wisdom, stay the hand of violence; but if the vials must be poured out, O Lord! let it be a short day. Let the thunder sound and cease. May thy lightning come, and return again to its sheath. And grant that the day may speedily come when men shall be lifted so far above selfishness and passion that there shall be no need of force, no need of chastisements, and no need of war.

And to thy name shall be the praise, forever and forever. *Amen.*

XX.

PATIENCE.

INVOCATION.


July 24, 1870.

WE pray for the blessing to rest upon us, our Father, that we may not feel alone in thy presence, unknowing, unperceiving, unthinking. Teach us with that spirit of love which shall bring us into communion with thee ; and reveal to us the truth of unseen things. Prepare our souls for the truth, and our hearts for thine indwelling. And may the services of this day and its devotion be profitable to us, and be pleasing to thee. We ask it in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

PATIENCE.



“For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.”—HEB. X. 36.



The implication is, that many of those to whom the apostle wrote, consciously having performed their duty in the Lord, had not received any token or evidence of the fruit of the performance of duty, and were discouraged, and thought it perhaps a vain thing to attempt a religious life—reasoning in this way: “If we attempt any secular improvement we see that the work which we are performing grows under our hands. If I be a husbandman, I perceive, on sowing the seed, that there is use in it; for it springs up, and I have my harvests. If I am a vintner, I perceive, in my vines, and in the fruitage, that for which I labor. And even when I do not perceive at once the full fruit, I see the tokens of its coming, and all the steps by which it comes.”

“Now,” says the apostle, “ye that are spiritual husbandmen, as it were, have need of patience, after ye have done the will of God and nothing comes, until you receive the promise.” It is recognized that there is a long space between the doing and the fulfilling, as there often is, and that that is the point where men specially need patience, and patience for the purpose of keeping up their faith in the reality of personal religion. For the context is this:

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”

Patience is not one of those stupid experiences which have been sometimes in vogue. It is not the grace of indifference or of laziness. Neither is it a kind of dogged obstinacy under difficulties. It is the sequence of enterprise and of endeavor, and is an act of self-control. It is the control of one's desires, either when he longs for gratification and has it not, or when he is under the pressure of suffering. It is the power of holding one's self calmly and contentedly under deprivations or under difficulties.

It is another name, then, for self-control, and self-control under circumstances of suffering.

In the text, the teacher points to a very common experience—namely, impatience because labor does not bring forth its results immediately. Divine providence is conducting a double system in this world, or rather a single system with two developments. Constantly these two elements in it are clashing, by reason of men's misunderstandings; but they are coöperative and harmonious in the plan of God. There is a physical life in this world. We are grounded in that. We begin in that. It is the root of all our life. But out of that is to spring a still higher life; and the problem of living in this world is the development of that other and higher manhood out of that lower or physical manhood.

While this development is going on, we are the subjects of material laws. We are living in societies, under occupations, under governments; and we are obliged to carry ourselves with a wisdom which is adapted to the physical senses. Yet while we are doing this (we learn this first, and it is very apt to be the strongest impulse in us)—while we are doing this, there is, at the same time, to be carried on another development to which this is auxiliary, and for which this has been originally constituted—the unfolding of the higher spiritual life, which is so different from this lower one, that it is called a “new life” created by the spirit of God in man.

And although he that is living in the highest development of his spiritual life is living in a way which harmonizes him with all physical influences; on the other hand, a man may live so as to be in harmony with all physical laws, and yet not be developing his true spiritual life.

These two elements, which are going on together, induce a conflict and a misapprehension and a jar; and men are sacrificing their higher life for the sake of gaining this lower and physical life.

Thus we have this duality recognized all the way through—the life of the body and the life of the soul.

Now, our Father is conducting a providence which recognizes both of them, but subordinates them, keeping the lower low, and the higher supreme. He administers all the time among the infinite choices that are to be made in adapting his providence to his subjects. He is perpetually administering his government as we that are wise parents administer ours in the family. We take care of our children's bodies; of their food; of their dress; of their physical comfort. At the same time it is with reference to an ulterior manhood. And in every instance, if there is a choice in reference to truth-telling, purity, delicacy of mind and generosity of love, we teach the child to sacrifice the lower for the sake of keeping the higher. We are in our households carrying

on a duplex education, which is at its base physical and in its higher developments moral and social. And that which we are doing in the small, God is doing in the large sphere. And the human race are being developed at the bottom physically, and at the top spiritually.

We find a recognition of this matter in the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians, by a relative valuation of the two systems :

“We look not at the things which are seen [not at the sense-life], but at the things which are not seen [at the invisible, spiritual, immortal life]: For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

In other words, the apostle weighs the one world over against the other, and says the real and the most abiding is not that which is regarded by men as on the whole an imaginary and simply conceptional world. Most men, if they talk about substantial things, mean things that can be put into the scales and weighed. “It is bone, and blood, and flesh, and body, and matter, that is real,” they say; “and the other things—the poetic and imaginary, the picturings, the beautiful things—well, yes, they are real in a sense.” But the apostle says, “The foundations are in the invisible; and they are eternal. This is the transient state; this is that which comes and goes, and is forever in mutation. He who once reaches this sphere, as from organized matter, becomes an intelligent being. He has risen, as from the clod; but as compared with the ultimate development, he has hardly begun to rise. For there is the manhood, there is the reality, there is the Saviour, and there is the eternity, out of sight—invisible.”

There is, however, one element which runs through both parts of this providence; viz., the time element. In general, the time legitimately required for the accomplishment of an end, or the production of an effect, measures the value of that effect. Or, in other words, the things that you can do very quickly are usually of the least value; and the things which legitimately require the longest time in the doing, are the things that are of the most value. The presumptions, therefore, are that things which come quick are of small worth, and that all things that require a great deal of time, a history, involve in themselves elements of a greater value.

Physical qualities and physical objects are very near at hand. A man clears up a forest, and lays down his farm, and sees, from day-to-day, what he is doing. The spot where the sun goldens the ground grows larger from day-to-day. As he hews, and the chips fly at every stroke, and the log shapes itself at every blow, and the house goes up, timber by timber, or brick by brick, he sees, every night, what has been accomplished since morning. We raise our harvests in the same way. In the Spring, after a few days, we see the sprouting grass, as it were; and then, after a little, the growth and the development.

Much that we sow early in the Spring we reap again before the Spring is gone; much in early Summer; most in Autumn. The distance between the establishment of the cause and the reaping of the effect is very short in physical things; and we can see, from hour to hour, from week to week, from month to month, or from year to year, the results of our work. The lowest sphere is the place where we can quickest realize the fruits of our labor. This is the place where the least time is required for effects to show themselves. It is here that the thing sought follows most immediately on volition. It is here that cause and effect stand most closely together. As when you touch powder to fire, there is an instantaneous explosion, so there is the greatest instantaneity between cause and effect the lower down you go toward base matter. And the higher you go above base matter, the wider is the interval between cause and effect.

Next above the physical department of life is the intellectual. This is far higher. I will not show the intermediate steps between the two. The training, for instance, of our reasoning faculties, and the product in the use of them, require a much longer period of time than the drilling of the hand or of the foot. A man can learn to use a tool far sooner than he can learn to invent a tool. A man can learn to use his body in a day or two; or in a few weeks; or in a few months; and, in complex trades, in a few years; but a man does not learn how to make use of his intellectual faculties in that length of time. And we call it the education, the drawing out, the developing of our faculties, and the teaching them comprehensive philosophy—the knowledge of how to use themselves so that they shall control the natural globe. This is a slower work. While the education of the body speeds very rapidly, the education of the mind takes long, long years. And the intellect is certainly very much higher than the muscle, or the bone. And so you see that this time-element increases in proportion to the value of the thing developed. Longer waiting there is to be between effect and cause as you rise in the scale.

If we regard the perception of the beautiful, the fine, and the harmonious, as a higher development of the intellectual, or as dependent on a yet higher class of faculties, we shall find that this test which I have employed is still true; viz., that no man can produce the beautiful (the beautiful in truth, I mean) half as fast as he can the lower elements. In other words, truth, in its higher and finer elements, is a product that requires more time for development than truth in its lower forms. The æsthetic is higher than the simply intellectual; and no man works in the sphere of the æsthetic without being obliged to work with long waiting. The space is wider between the seed-sowing and the harvest-reaping. The effects are more difficult to be produced,

and the number that can with any facility produce them is fewer, than in the foregoing departments. Indeed, in some of the highest developments of the æsthetic element, only an elect few are found who have any power of development. And the interval between what is conceived and the effect, is longer than in the intellectual realm.

But moral qualities stand higher than even the intellectual and artistic in their higher forms. Love (not that instinct which comes to all, but spiritual love, comprehensive, discriminating, fine), joy (not that giggling joy of the senses, but the inspiration of the spirit, joy in the Holy Ghost, that high and blessed enjoyment which comes with faith and with hope)—love; joy; peace; faith; gentleness; goodness; truthfulness—how few there are that possess these! How rare is it to see men who are fully armed with them! And where they *are* possessed, how long a discipline it was that produced them! The few great men who have been so marked by the power of the higher moral qualities that they have left an impression on the world, are men who went through long periods of scourgings, persecutions, sufferings, all manner of disciplines, before they rose to any dynamic form or condition of these higher moral qualities. A man can teach himself to think; but how many men can teach themselves to be at peace. A man's will may coëree his industry; but how many men have had the power of will to coëree their joy? A man can make himself mighty where might means muscle, or perseverance, or temper, or aggressive force in any form; but how many men can by any volition clothe themselves with spiritual might, so that they shall be spiritually powerful among their fellow men? It is a long trial that makes strong, impetuous, rude, harsh, cruel men gentle—sweetly gentle—voluntarily gentle.

How long it takes to subdue power to humility! How long it takes to turn a man's self-esteem into a patronizing magnanimity! How long it takes to transform man's native conception that he is born and built for his own using, into the conception that he is born and built to use himself for others, *in honor preferring others, and pleasing others to their edification!*

As you go higher, the work is more difficult. It is larger, it is finer, and the period of time between the starting and the ending is longer. The journey between a man's volition and his higher moral traits, is a very long one, ordinarily speaking.

If it is right to distinguish a state still higher on the scale than this of moral quality, and call it the *spiritual state*, as contrasted with the moral and ethical (and I think there is such a higher degree), that will be found to be the quality the period between whose cause and effect will be the longest—and indeed generally so long that the rising of the star

thereof may be seen, but not the setting. The causes, for the most part, operate in this life, and the effects, for the most part, are delayed until the life which is to come. So that the highest class of effects which we seek, we seek patiently all through this world; but we never see more than intimations of the fulfillment that is to come ripely, richly, after we enter a better clime.

Here, then, is a brief delineation of this spiritual law of growth and labor. I will make some applications of it.

1. In a new religious life, all reformations which are physical in their nature should be speedy. A great many persons, because they hear men declaring, in describing Christian influence, that growth in grace is a gradual process, say, "Well, it is. Lying and stealing and drunkenness are to be gradually put down. Although I am a Christian, I admit that I do steal a little yet; but then, my minister tells me that progress in the new life is slow; that there is a great journey between the cause and the effect." But we ought not to reason thus. Reformation has relation to the lowest sphere in which a man acts—to animal, bodily things; to all those things which relate to the flesh. In these things there is but a short space between cause and effect, and all reformations that involve the body, or the bodily appetites, are to be immediately wrought. Evils in this sphere are to be cured at once. Absolute and total discontinuance is the law for the flesh. There is to be no wide space here between the beginning and the ending. Where the nature of the quality is of the earth earthy, where it is a reformation of morals, the effects produced are to be immediate, instantaneous; results are to be arrived at and reached without delay. Not that the tendency to evil will be obliterated at once, but the yielding to that tendency must not be continued. "Let him that stole, steal no more"—not once—not a single time. Let him that lied, lie no more. Let him that drank, drink no more. Let him that lusted, lust no more. Whatever may be the heaving of the ground as with eternal volcanic forces, let there be no eruptions—no disclosures. A man who begins a Christian life must recollect that, so far as the body is concerned, the law is, that there is but a very short space between cause and effect in the lower elements of it.

2. But the strictly religious elements go on. These are the elements of negation—those which involve leaving off and not doing. The moment you enter upon the sphere of the higher elements of religious experience, which is the sphere of change or development, the results cannot be immediate. The term between cause and effect will vary in duration with the peculiar advantages which different persons have; with the peculiar susceptibilities of different persons; with the intensity of inspiration which is brought to bear upon them, and

under which they are called to act; yet growth in grace is, in the nature of things, a gradual growth. Every single step upward implies and requires the harmonization of all the elements below in a man's nature, and in his surroundings; and that often is comprehensive and very difficult. Not only is all growth in grace gradual which implies development of the higher nature, but you must make up your mind that you will oftentimes set in operation courses which will finally fulfill themselves and disclose beneficial effects. You will set them in operation; and then you will have to wait a great while before you come to the result. And you are not to be discouraged because in laboring for spiritual qualities you do not find them as soon as you could wish.

You say to yourself, "When I began a Christian life, I seemed to grow very fast. It seemed to me that every day I could see some improvement. But I have gone on four or five years, and it seems to me that I have come to a stop. I do not see that I make any improvement at all, now." Well, you do not recognize the fact that when you began, the steps which you had to make were for the most part physical steps, and that the law of disclosure in the physical realm is rapid; and that when you have passed from that realm and come to the higher elements in the realm of larger Christian development, you have come into a sphere where the law is, that there must be a wider space between cause and effect; that there is more time required to ripen the fruit; that a longer summer is necessary for the various stages of development?

And so a man ought not to be discouraged. I do not mean that a man in his dissipation may not pervert this truth; but those who are conscientious and earnest about a Christian life, need not be discouraged because they do not get along as fast as they did in the beginning, provided the qualities which they are attempting to take on are the higher qualities. For these qualities require long drill; and he who attains to them must go through a great deal of practice. A man cannot say to his temper what he can say to his body. A shrew, being converted, can hold her hand so as not to beat the child. And a little later she can control her tongue, so as not to scold the servant, perhaps. And by-and-by she can manage her temper; but that takes much longer. And at last she develops a spontaneous emotion of kindness where before there was temper; and that takes longer yet. But still, there is a regular progress all the way up. And although there seems to be but little progress made, many persons actually cover a sphere so much wider, and there is so much contained in the little which they do, that they really, in the sight of God, are lifted far higher than they are in their own sight, because they are always looking to see physical re-

sults—results that the eye can measure, or that the outward senses can recognize, instead of the hidden elements of moral excellence.

Many of the experiences of human life—its sorrows, its aspirations, its self-denials, its severe tasks—are ripening elements in us that will not appear in any individuality and distinctness at first, or until late in life. Many persons go under the cloud, and think that they shall come out all right on the other side. As a man, going into a bath, soiled and heated, comes out from the reflux wave cleansed and cool; so men think they shall go through troubles and trials, which are God's great baths for the soul, and that they shall come out speedily on the other side, and that they shall recognize that they have been improved. But where God is dealing with our higher nature, we are assured by the Apostle Paul, he is *dealing with us as with sons*. "Now are we the sons of God," says the Apostle John. And if we are the sons of God, Paul declares, reasoning on this very same theme, God will deal with us by chastisements. And he tells us that our faith is not to fail because, when we have taken such and such steps, and fulfilled the will of God, the answer does not come. We have need of patience, after we have done the will of God, before we reach the results. God is dealing with men by difficulties, by tasks, by bereavements, by sorrows, by trials, to prove the higher part of their nature.

Give me, now, a bit of wax, and see how soon I will take it in my hand and mould it into any form that I want. Give me a bit of alabaster, and I cannot work that as I can the wax, because it is harder. Give me a bit of marble and that must be cut more slowly. But give me a diamond, rough and rude, and tell me to cut the faces on that, by which it shall reflect all the rays of light and show its hidden powers of beauty, and it is a long task. Yet though it is a long task to cut a diamond, when it is once cut it is worth all the labor that it has cost. Wax is quickly done, but it is of very little use after it is done. A diamond, on the other hand, is long in doing, and once done it lasts forever.

Now, the lower developments that men gain in this world—industry and frugality and skill of hand—are gained comparatively soon, and they are comparatively in the lower range; but those higher elements, where men really touch God, and where their morality begins to blossom, and where they begin to find the first intimations of their own true manhood, and where they begin to know the life that is to have no death, and no intermediate sleep, but is to flame and glow in the presence of God—those elements God works out slowly. They come under a law which requires a long period of time for their development.

We are not, therefore, to suppose that God is angry with us be-

cause we have blow upon blow, and grinding upon grinding, and stroke upon stroke, day after day. He *deals with us as with sons*.

How little we know about this! How little we know what is being done to us! How little we know concerning ourselves at any rate! How one day it is all clear inside! and how the next day it is like a stormy sky outside, all clouds, all doubts, all uncertainty. "Now," says the apostle, "are we the sons of God"—he was sure of that—"and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." We do not know what *being the sons of God* means. We do not know how that is going to open up; we do not know what the disclosures are going to be; we do not know the glory, the beauty, the joy, the fullness and the power of it. It is station, rank, dignity, connection; but we do not know what any of those things are. We only know that when we see Him as He is, we shall be satisfied. It will be enough. We do not know what God is bringing us to. We do not understand the pattern and shape in which we are being fashioned. All we know is, that God is bringing us through trouble, and, if we bear it bravely and patiently, we know that He is dealing with us as with sons, and that we are going on to the mysterious grandeur and character of divinity. We know that we were born out of the dust; and that we are rearing an imperfect manhood; and that we are carrying it on through the economy of grace and providence in this world; and that at last death shall cut us away from the stalk where we have ripened the seed and the cluster; and that we shall go on, freed from the passions and the animal economy, and from that which becomes in the higher state a limitation and obstruction of the spiritual nature. But we know very little of all that. There is a great part of God's providence that must always be mysterious to us—for that is the term by which we speak of ignorance.

In laboring for others, therefore, we ought to bear in mind this principle, that perpetually we are to carry along together both the physical and the moral development of the world; and that he who lays out his work so as to see the result as he goes along, must, of necessity, be a low worker. Nobody sees the results of what he is doing unless he is working very low down. He that sees at the end of the day all that he has done during the day, has done very little. He that is a true worker is always throwing effects over beyond himself to which he will not come for months, or for years, it may be. A man who plants lettuce may plant it to-day, and, if it be rainy and warm, he may perhaps to-morrow see that it has sprouted; and he may in two or three weeks eat it. But it is only lettuce. A man who plants acorns does not run out the next morning to see what they have done. He does not expect to see any signs of their growth until

weeks and months have passed. It is not until they have lain under ground all winter long, and been mellowed by the frosts, that they begin to sprout. And if the next summer they grow six inches high they do well. And after twenty years they will not be much higher than your head. And after fifty years they will only be small trees. But after a hundred years have gone by, they will be fit for ships, and will stand for centuries. It takes time for oak trees to grow; but it does not take very much time for mushrooms to grow. And yet, there are many who measure what they are doing by what they can report. They go out with garrulity in the morning, and come back with statistics at night. You can tell exactly where such folks work, and how they work. But he who has faith and insight, and on whom the power of God rests, and who is working, not for the low and material, but for the spiritual and everlasting, very soon finds out that he puts forth an amount of strength altogether disproportioned to the results which he beholds. There is a desire, there is a thought, there is a will-power, there is a labor, that has no sort of return in proportion to what it has done; and he grows discouraged, and thinks he has thrown his efforts away. But no, he is working in directions which, according to the everlasting law of God, require time. And he is a true worker who, after he has done the will of God, has patience till he receives the promised reward—the legitimate effect.

This comes home to parents. There are parents who say, "How much I have labored with that child! and with what discouraging results! There are my neighbors—they have no trouble at all with their children; but my children, it seems to me, are bound to the gallows or the jail." Now, you take a child that is knit from single threads; take a child that has no particular force, and that is reasonably well balanced, and it is not hard to bring him up; for a little effort here and there is sufficient to turn him. A man can put his hand at the spout of a watering-pot and turn the stream here, or there, or anywhere; but let a man turn Niagara with his hand if he can.

Here is a child that has intensity in him. He has big basilar, big intermediate and coronal forces; and all these forces are undeveloped; and the parent does not understand the child. He is like one that is throwing missiles over into a garden whose walls are so high that he cannot see what they hit. The instruction that the parent throws into the child sometimes has the desired effect, and sometimes does not. And after a few years it seems to the parent as though he never could do anything with the child, he is so wayward and inconstant. He is not a Sunday-school boy at all. He is not fit to have his life written and put into a library. But he is just as nimble as a grasshopper. He runs and jumps first, and then considers where he lands.

He fills the house full of misrule and disturbance. And the most amusing thing of the whole is, to see the mother moaning and grieving and worrying about the child. The child would do very well if the mother would let it alone. Let her wait. It takes a great while to unfold a nature, if it be a large nature. Have patience. Believe and understand that the lower things can be speedily done; but that the intermediate affections require a long time for their development; and that the higher moral nature requires a still longer time. Have faith in God. Work, work, and wait! Do not remit any work; but the worry—remit that.

And in laboring for classes, and individuals belonging to classes, in parishes and communities, we are to remember that while we can do a great deal, the results of which will appear at once, yet there is a great deal that we can do without seeing any immediate results. We can get up schools, and build exterior churches, and organize benevolent societies, and do a thousand other physical things, and measure the progress of our work as we go along; but the moment we attempt to take a whole community, with their mixed dispositions, and peculiar educations, and in the midst of all the diverse influences that are playing upon them, for one, and against another, and lift them up to a higher level, we find, especially if they have been abused, maltreated and wrongly educated, that they are knotted and tied up in different ways.

A man may think that if he lives to the age of Methuselah, and labors for the reformation of the community in which he lives, he ought to see it thoroughly changed. If he thoroughly changes the community in which he lives, even by living to so great an age as that, he does a quick work. Pyramids may be built and forgotten before you can build up a community into the higher forms of spiritual wisdom and purity. Only once or twice in the whole history of the world have there been conjunctions even in which single sections lived in such a way as to rise to a high degree of moral and spiritual perfection. And men who labor for the elevation of the masses are apt to become discouraged. They sow seed, and then look for the result, and do not see the fruit which they expected. They sow expecting to reap angels, and look, and do not see them. And then they are discouraged. They think that the Lord has not called them, and that it is of no use for them to work.

Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the reward; and the better your work is, the more surely will it bring forth fruit.

Do not take what I have been saying, for your comfort, old lazy hunks, stupid, indolent waiter on God, who do nothing, and say that

you are waiting for the final results. Not for you am I preaching this discourse. But all ye that labor; all ye that have soul-throes; all ye that tarry at prayer for those whom you love; all ye that have laid on you the burden of the Lord, and go, as Paul did, in travail until men are born again in Christ, take this comfort to yourselves, that the work which you are doing is a work which cannot in the nature of things be done in a hurry. And when you die you will find that your work will follow you. That which you have begun will not be completed for generations. If I have been a good workman, my work will go on fulfilling itself, and my part of it will not be completed in a hundred years. And if I stand in heaven, in the infinite love and mercy of my Saviour, I shall see coming up, in long sequence, the results of things which I began—the fruits of the seeds which I sowed. Their blossoms shall be sweet and fragrant centuries hereafter in the heavenly land. He who has faith to work for the invisible, shall, when he draws near to the other life, and more and more as he comes into the influence of that higher sphere (for, as we work, if we do nothing else, we reproduce in ourselves, more or less, the very qualities which we are seeking to infix in others) gain an insight into, a perception of, this blessed truth.

And so, hard-working brethren—ye that have borne the burden and heat of the day—when the word comes, “Cast aside, now, your workmen’s garments, change your implements, come up hither,” you will have been prepared, by working, to do better work. And in the higher sphere, when you rise and come into the presence of God, and see what manhood means, all your discouragements will pass away.

I think there will be some laughing in heaven. Unless there is, there is no use of laughing. I think men will laugh when they look back and see how many things that they thought were troubles, were not troubles. I think men will laugh when they look back and see what things seemed to them cares and burdens. I think men will laugh when they look back and see what things scared them.

I remember, once, when I was threading a Western forest, that as, at twilight, I came toward a little opening, I saw a man lurking on the edge of the forest, with a rifle drawn at me. Although I was a really brave man, my blood ran cold. There I was, sitting up on the horse, a fair mark for a man that was standing and taking deadly aim at me; and I was at a great disadvantage. I did not laugh, for I had not got over my shock, when I came up to the spot and found, instead of a man with a rifle, only a tree with a branch pointing toward me; but afterwards I laughed, to think what I had been so frightened at, and what a shock it sent through me.

When men get to heaven, and find what many of those things were which stood aiming at them in this life; when they find what sort

of make-believe dangers those were which threatened them, I think they will laugh. There will be a revelation and a revolution there, when we shall no longer see men as trees walking, but when we shall be as God, and see him as he is—not through a glass, darkly, but face to face. How then, will all things be changed! And we shall look back on the vision of life, and all its fantastic imaginings, with wonder and gladness—with sorrow for ourselves, but with joy and gratitude to God, who brought us through the dangers of the way, and finally saved us.

Brethren, be patient. Do the will of God, aim high, work hard; and then have patience. By-and-by the reward will come. Wait. If you have to wait till you get it in heaven, it will be there. No man shall do anything in this world and lose his reward. First or last it shall come to harvest.



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We acknowledge thee to be our God, O thou most High! Our Father and our God, thou hast redeemed us from sin, and art redeeming us from the love of it. Thou hast awakened in us a new life which is reaching up toward thine; and we are becoming new creatures in Christ Jesus. And though the work be long we discern not its progress, nor its symmetry, nor its harmony, nor its fruit, but only its promise. And we wait with patience to discern by-and-by, and in a fairer clime, what that seed shall bring forth which thou hast planted in our hearts. Yet, on the way we rejoice. We discern enough to fill us with hope. We reach forward, content and patient, believing that thou wilt reveal, in thine own time, the fullness of thy work, and that in heaven it shall appear what we shall be, though not here. Now we see through a glass, darkly. Then we shall see face to face. It is mysterious here. We are ignorant, and thou hast not taught us. We know not the meaning of much that happens. Our own sufferings fill us with surprise; and we do not know how to direct them so that they shall be profitable to us. And we find ourselves striving, often vainly, with elements that have not sprung from our will. We meet strange providences. We behold, as it were, mighty influences at work, and crossing our path—sometimes dark, and sometimes light; and we are afraid of them. And we are as little children set adrift upon a sea whose currents they do not understand, and cannot control, and swept hither and thither, not according to their wish, but according to the will of the immediate influences round about them. And yet, there is a guiding Hand. There is an Eye that slumbers not, nor sleeps. And though on the sea of life we are drifted, so far as we are concerned, by irresistible influences, all things are possible to thee, and thou art guiding us, and thou art overcoming the evil tendencies for us, and shaping us, and all our voyage, to the final estate of blessedness.

We desire, O Lord our God, to trust thee. We desire not to judge thee by our lower reason, which cannot reach up unto thine. We see the ends of thy ways, as if they were let down to us; and looking up we behold but the lower link of the chain. Above, up to thine hand, is all hidden.

We rejoice that thou art supreme, and that in thee is our hope. Because

thou livest, we shall live also. And in this hope we are patient in tribulation, and we bear our labor, and endure our care, and go on, waiting contentedly until the word shall come, and we shall be permitted to go home. Grant that we may have this saving sense of thy presence with us all the way. May we have this fruition. If we cannot come to feel a perfect manhood in Christ Jesus toward which we are tending, may we at least have the shadow of that manhood resting upon us. May we discern thee every day, and always, and rejoice in thee when we cannot rejoice in ourselves. Bless us in our service to-day together; in our fellowship one with another; in our affections. Sanctify our joys at home. Sanctify to us all our experiences. May we bear whatever thou in thy providence seest fit to put upon us, with equanimity and with patience. And grant that we may go on thus to the end of life, proving ourselves indeed thy children.

Bless all congregations that are assembled to-day. May thy servants who preach the Gospel be clothed with power from on high, and be enabled to preach with sincerity and with truth.

We pray that thou will grant that the truth may be spread abroad throughout our land, and throughout the world. When shall the day come when slavery shall cease everywhere! When shall the day come when ignorance and superstition and irreligion shall pass away? Hasten the day when men shall be cruel to men no longer; when wars shall no longer desolate; when all the earth shall be ripened into true holiness.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word spoken; and grant that we may have courage to go on again for ourselves, in our own dispositions; in our households, for our children; in our schools and classes, for those committed to our charge; in the world at large. May we not doubt nor measure dangers or successes by the lower rules of life. May we live by faith. May we have thy higher and nobler judgment. Being near thee, may we borrow something of thy wisdom, to illuminate the doubtful path of experience, until the shadows depart, and thou dost become our Teacher in the heavenly land; where we will praise thee, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

XXI.

“MY YOKE IS EASY.”

“MY YOKE IS EASY.”

“And his commandments are not grievous.”—1 JNO., V. 3.

The whole passage is this :

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.”

This is contrary to the popular impression. If by *keeping his commandments* is meant the leading of a religious life, then it countervails a very widely prevalent feeling, that though a religious life may be more honorable, and more safe, and ultimately more profitable, and by-and-by, in its own way, more joyful, yet, in its inception, for the most part, in this world, it is grievous, and that it is fitly said to be a yoke, to be a restraint of liberty. And as “religion” means binding, restraining, tying up, so men are apt to feel, not perhaps with any etymological information on that subject, but from other sources which I shall mention, that a religious life is not an easy one, and is not, on the whole, to be compared, for freedom or joyousness, with a natural life, provided that that natural life is pleasurable, and is conducted with a reasonable degree of consideration and moderation.

But here we have an appeal substantially made to our reason, in this matter. The declaration that the commandments of God on which we are to stand are not grievous, is substantially an argument propounded; and we are at liberty to reason it.

I remark, then, in the first place, that a religious life—by which we mean a life based upon the supreme commands of God, as they are revealed in Scripture—is not grievous, in that it does not require of man artificial duties, but is, in the highest and best sense of the term, the requirement of that which is natural.

We are not required either to do or to forbear things which are not in accordance with our organization—our physical, social and moral organization. We are not put to do things which are difficult as requiring us to turn aside any of our faculties, or to task them unduly, according to their nature.

On the other hand, we are not required to fulfill artificial obligations and duties. This was not always so. It could scarcely have

been said under the Mosaic economy, "His commandments are not grievous,"—are not burdensome; because the worship which was ordained by Moses for the people of Israel was a burdensome worship. Experience shows that in time it became too burdensome; and not only that, but that it could not be carried on without so distracting men from the natural to the artificial that they would go to the artificial in distinction from the natural—the *true* natural.

Now, as interpreted by Christ, religion does not stand in any forms whatever, nor in any special philosophical faiths. It certainly requires our belief in the existence of a God. It requires that we should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. It requires faith and trust and obedience. But it does not require that we should believe in one church or another church. It does not require that we should believe in the creed of one church as distinguished from the creed of another church. And still less does it impose upon us onerous fasts. Nor does it require of us the observance of multiplied days. It has absolutely nothing to do with methods. It leaves those to a man's own discrimination. Religion requires simply this: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul, strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.* Devout love and disinterested benevolence—these are what religion requires of every man. And how he shall come to these; how each man in his particular circumstances shall practice them—that is left for the co-ordinated wisdom of men to find out.

The command is not grievous in this, that it says, "So many days; so many readings of the Bible; so many prayers; so many fasts; so many confessions; so many duties of this or that kind, either of avoidance or performance." There is nothing of that. All artificial elements are swept out of the Word of God; and the command stands simply in respect to the great essential naturals. We are to have a "conscience void of offence." We are to have a reason that shall be parallel with the great truths which God has revealed in his Word, and is revealing in his providence. We are to have a heart that shall be sensitive. We are to live with a love that shall be supreme toward God, and unselfish toward men.

These are the commands of God, and these are commands of things that are natural, and not artificial. The external forms of religion may have an importance; but still they are not of such importance that if one take them or reject them it will make any difference in the sight of God.

A man may sit with the quiet Quaker, and absolutely refuse all physical exposition and form; or he may sit with the sonorous Methodist, and demand that there shall be the utmost latitude of expression, but of nothing more; or he may sit with the High Churchman, and re-

quire that every single thing in religion shall have a symbolism, and that men shall go through processions, and observe days, and wear garments, and have all manner of liturgical forms. That is your liberty—not your necessity. Any man can do it that wants to, and that profits by it; and no man need do it who does not want to. That will make no difference, so that a man shall land in Jerusalem. He may go to it from the north, or he may go to it from Joppa, on the west, or he may go to it from Syria, on the east. He may take whatever road he pleases. Some roads are much more pleasant than others; but he may go over the mountain, or through the gorge; he may go upon the traveled way or across the wilderness; he may act his own pleasure about how he goes; only let his feet at last stand in Zion, and before God.

The commands of God are, not that we shall do so many things, and do them so often, and observe such days, and have such a form of belief, and such church ordinances. A great many men think so. A great many men think that when they are attempting to be religious there is but one way, and that that way is to join the church, and ask the church what it says; and they think that the church stands in the place of God, and that they are to listen to its voice, and that they are religious when they obey it. No; the commandments respect the great fundamental original faculties of our nature; and we are commanded simply to carry them up and out in obedience to God. That is our duty. How we are to fulfill these commandments is a matter of indifference, so that we come to the right results—the fruits of love.

Now, it is not grievous to ask men to conform to their own nature. It is not grievous—it is rational; it is right—to demand that an eagle shall fulfill the duties of the organization which God gave it. It is right that the dove should be a dove, and come up to its nature. It is right that the ox should fulfill the ox's nature. It is right that the little singing bird should fulfill its nature. It is right that men should fill out and have the full exercise of their nature. This is the characteristic element of manhood. The moral development of man is manhood; and all below that is animalhood, which we have in common with the brute creation.

All our duties, then, are in accordance with our nature. They are in accordance, not, perhaps, with what men have been accustomed to call *nature*; because mostly men have given that name to their lower or passional nature. We therefore are said to have a lost or fallen nature—a corrupt nature; and we are cautioned against trusting it. And in that sense this artificial nature—that which has come to be our nature more properly—we ought not to esteem. We ought not to trust it. Our character is deplorable as measured by the divine law.

But our natural endowments—that is to say, those more elemental faculties which God gave us—stand. And the duty of religion is simply that we shall find out what faculties these are, and go back to them, and live in accordance with the original indications of the divine law in the creation of man. And no man can, on philosophical grounds, say that it is a grievous command that a man should be true to himself, true to the best part of himself—in other words, that he should subordinate his lowest self to his higher and nobler self.

Nor are we put under any commandments for the sake of another's benefit, but really and truly for our own. It is true that we owe obligation to God. It is true that we are in that sense indebted. It is true that we, as his creatures, and tied to him by innumerable benefits, ought, for His sake, to love and to obey. Yet it is really for our own sakes that He commands love and obedience. "All things," says the apostle, "are for your sakes." And God commands us to love one another for our own sakes. There are many governments that are very hard to bear, that are operose and burdensome, partly because they command things which are for the benefit of the government, but not for the benefit of the governed. The Turkish government over its subjected Greek provinces is a most burdensome government. The Roman government was a most exacting and a most hard-hearted and hard-handed government. The old Roman spirit was not simply bellicose, but it was despotic in all the after administrations in its provinces. And men were required to do things, not that would make themselves richer and happier and better. The idea of making a State strong by making each individual citizen more prosperous, had not then entered into the conception of legislators, or of governors themselves. The idea was to make the governing hand omnipotent; to make the imperial government rich and strong. It was to give the ruling authority absolute control over all provinces. Therefore taxes were levied, services were required, punishments were threatened and executed, lawless administrations were established throughout all the Roman dynasty, that were not for the benefit of the governed, but were only for the benefit of the governors.

There is absolutely nothing of this in the divine administration. That is paternal. Neither is there in it any of that lingering selfishness which belongs to all earthly paternal government. It is disinterested, it is more than disinterested, it is self-sacrificing paternity. For God is He who so loved the world, gross, sunk in sin and in barbarity, that He gave His own second self—His own Son—to die for us, while yet we were his enemies.

It is not therefore the requisition of an exacting paternity; it is the government of love—of household love—of love whose central philos-

ophy is the philosophy of domesticity. It is that government which is imposed upon us for our sakes, to make us wiser, and nobler, and freer, and stronger. And we shall find almost transports of exclamation in various parts of the apostolic teaching, particularly of Paul's.

✓ I do not wonder when I consider what the Pharisee had to go through, how he was tied up, what notions he had of the narrow bounds that he walked in, that when those bounds were enlarged his religion was not destroyed, but he had more a God than he had before, and a more impressive sense of obligation than he had before, and such a freedom as he had never had before, and such joyousness and enthusiasm as he never had before, as was the case with Paul when he was converted—I do not wonder, when I consider these things, that the apostle spoke of himself as having come out of bondage into liberty. I do not wonder that he triumphed, in writing to the Galatians, saying that they had become free men. I marvel not at these things, because there is nothing in the world so free as love. That levels all distinctions. That makes all duties choices. That makes bitter things sweet, and turns all juices to sugar. That takes all heat from the sun in overmeasure. That makes all ways flowery ways. Love enough, and there springs summer out of the very bosom of winter. Love enough, and all things become easy.

Now, the divine government is this: “Thou shalt love.” If there is anything more, it is, “Thou shalt love with all thy heart.” If there is anything more, it is, “Thou shalt love with all thy mind and strength.” First, and second and third, and last, it is, “Thou shalt love.” And of all experiences, none is more blessed, none is freer, none is more exhilarating, than this divinest experience of love.

And if it be so when the taper is lit in the lower affections, and as between unworthy natures, so little susceptible of creating any deep affection or any great admiration one for the other, what should be the magic throb of that love kindled in our bosom, when it is the mighty God that stands over against us, and offers himself with impunity, and is our very Saviour, giving his power of heart to the wilderness and barrenness of our hearts! I marvel not that He says, “Thou shalt love me with all thy heart, and soul, and mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.” And such a commandment is not grievous: it is very joyous.

These commandments, I remark once more, are the only roads to full, comprehensive and enduring happiness. We have wandered out of the way. We have, in ignorance partly, and in wilfulness partly, formed habits of living contrary to our best nature. And every man feels the discord. For though men may dispute about theology, they seldom dispute about experience. If you ask

them, "Is there never a turbulent irruption of your passions into your affections? Do they never soil you? Is there never rebellion in your case, so that your reason stands on one side, and your disobedient affections and passions on the other? Are not all your expectations of what is right and good one way, and your will the other? Is not your life spent mostly in breaking what you know to be right commandments, and the little that remains of it in a pitiful sorrowing which does not work repentance, nor much change? Are you not yourself satisfied that you are perpetually violating your best ideals of life and of duty?" It will not do for a man to look at himself too much. A journalizing of every man's experience from day-to-day, and a contrasting it with the true ideal of a manly life, would strike despair through any soul. It is only by hiding and forgetting it that men can rise above despondency into true enjoyment.

Men are living so as to abate happiness. Not that sinful men may not be happy. That I do not doubt. Not that there is not enjoyment in things that are wrong. There is enjoyment in things that are wrong. Not that sin does not pay. It does pay. But it is a poor price that it pays, and a price that is delusive at last. It pays wages that are very quickly squandered. It pays, to be sure; but it wears out the man who takes the pay. The wages of sin are death, in the end. In the first place, the wages of sin are what buds are, that promise blossoms. They delight for the instant by their sweetness. They are like the book that the Revelator saw, which was sweet in his mouth, and bitter in his belly. Sin is sweet in the mouth, and bitter in digestion. It lies hard on the stomach. Sin has present remuneration. And nothing can be more foolish than to tell children and men that there is no pleasure in sin. Do you suppose that the world would ever have gone agog after sinful things if there had been no pleasure in them. There is pleasure in them.

The thief has a pleasure of excitement in stealing. Even the robber has some sort of pleasure in striking down his victim. The miser has his curmudgeonish pleasure. There is pleasure in the cup, in the song, and in the dance. All these things have their pleasure; but they are consuming the susceptibility of pleasure from other sources, by their concentration of intense excitements. Coarse pleasures have a brief period, and then they leave the soul in a wilderness. There is nothing remaining to it.

A great place, the soul is. Ample provision is made in it for enjoyment. But he who lives for the senses takes only one single kind of enjoyment, and so employs that that it destroys all the rest.

Now the duty imposed upon us by God, is, that we shall use ourselves according to our nature, and according to God's command-

ments, which are based on his own everlasting, immutable nature, so that every part of us shall be concordant with itself, concordant with natural law, and concordant with moral law. And so every part of the soul becomes vocal with joy. And it is a joy that has this peculiarity, that it is lowest and least in the beginning; that it quietly increases in volume; that it is more and more vocal at times when all ordinary joys begin to shrink and are silent; that it waxes amain when other powers and faculties cease to go; that it triumphs in that hour when heart and flesh fail; and that when death annihilates the common joys of men, it is but an emancipator of the joys which we have when we serve God according to his commandments.

Why, then, is it, that men think that religion is a grievous thing; that it is gloomy and hard? If, in this brief exposition of the essential nature of religion, we see that it conforms to our organization, conforms to the world in which we dwell, conforms to our present needs, and augments as we go on in life, preparing us for the life which is to come, why should men have derived so very different an idea of it? Because men have very largely had presented to them the machinery of religion, instead of religion. It has been as if a farmer should present to you plows, crowbars, harrows, carts, wagons, spades, shovels, rakes, all manner of utensils, and they should produce the impression on you that those were the only apples and pears that there were on the farm. Men look at Sunday. That is a tool or instrument. They look at the church. That is nothing but a machine-shop. The church is a mere mechanical arrangement by which men may be educated in knowledge, and receive an impulse in the right direction. But it is not religion.

Why, is the old mill, that goes clattering night and day on the stream, bread? Would you gnaw a millstone? or, would you marvel, if you did, that you still hungered? Men have had presented Sundays, and churches, and all manner of church economies, which I honor, and some parts of which I observe, and which I certainly do not dissuade you from observing; but I want you to understand that they are all of them man-made, and all of them mere conveniences, simple methods by which we help ourselves to get that which is behind them, and is different from them, and is not produced by them—namely, the religious element.

But where men have heard churches disputing—this church up, and that down; this church broad, and that narrow; this church high, and that low; where men have gone about and seen churches, some with steeples towering above others; some with this church economy, and some with that; some with this platform, and some with that, they have become bewildered, and have said, “If that is religion, I do not know

but I am about as well off without it as I would be with it, ordinarily." And when men look at the church, and see what they do see; when they see the disagreement which there is between the members of churches themselves; when they see all sorts of worldlings and disreputable men calling themselves Christians, they get a very vague idea of what religion really is. And looking at the mass of those who pass as religious, it is not marvellous to me that men should say, "This is grievous business. I may come to it yet; I do not want to be lost; I will take any medicine rather than be lost; but it is a hard dose." I should feel very much as they do under the same circumstances. If religion were presented to me as that mere externality which many men are impressed that it is; if those things which are called religion were presented to me, and I were told that they were all that there was of religion, I would reject them. I would not take them. They are not soul-feeding. And I do not wonder that people think that religion is grievous—and all the more because with this an ascetic element has been introduced—by good men, too.

Where men lived in times that were exceedingly lax; where they saw all the power of the land arrayed on the side of license and licentiousness; where they saw wealth devoted to the lowest uses; where they saw pleasure made only a snare and a delusion; where they saw all forms of conviviality still leading men down, down, I do not wonder that large numbers of them sprung up with such zeal for purity and integrity as carried them to the opposite extreme, and led them to reject flowers and music, and to become ascetics. Ascetics are the products of ages of utter and abandoned license.

But though the age and the necessity are gone, there are men who are still ascetic hereditarily. They have ceased to discriminate. They feel that if you are going to be religious, you must make up your mind to give up almost everything in this world.

When I preach that a true Christian has all the good that there is in the world, as well as the promise of after life, men say, "What do you make out of the example of Christ?" Well, I make out of Christ's example, this: that for about thirty years he lived at home, and worked at his trade, a simple peasant and carpenter, like any other mechanic. There was nothing special about him—nothing that attracted the least attention. He was not distinguished from any citizen. And when he began his ministration he was not ascetic. While John was thundering as an ascetic reformer in the lower parts of Palestine, Jesus was at Cana of Galilee, for seven days, at a marriage feast, and created not less than from fifty to a hundred gallons of wine, according to the Gospel, that he might assist in the festivities, with a decorous sobriety sympathizing with them. Jesus was a most loveable man; he was

a most genial man; he was a most conversable man. He went to the feasts of rich men, and sat at their tables. Some of his most striking discourses were those which he delivered at feasts in the houses of rich men. He sat with the poor man, with the lawyer, with the publican, with the soldier. Wherever a man met him, there was that genial sympathy manifested toward him. I can take no other instance more forcible than that of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, to show that religion should make a man cheerful, genial, conversable, enjoying and enjoyable. That was his example. And though at the end of his life, when he laid it down as a sacrifice for the world, he was a sufferer; yet that was but a single phase, a solitary aspect, of his history; and the ministerial life, as well as that life which anteceded it, of the Lord Jesus Christ, was full of society, full of enjoyment, full of pleasure.

Therefore, when men say, “What do you do with the life of Christ?” I take it up, and say, Live just as purely, and with such a noble, genial, cheerful life, as he did. He never girded himself with sackcloth. And when they reproached him because he would not fast, he said, “The days will come when my disciples will fast; but not now. I am with them”—as much as to say, “So long as I am with them they cannot help being happy.” They could not be made to fast while he was with them.

Now, where a rigorous view of religion is presented; where men are told that no matter what one is doing, the instant the clock strikes twelve, the needle must be dropped, there comes that intolerable superstitious notion that there is such a thing as holy time. Why, do you suppose that we are living in the time of Moses? Are days consecrated? Is the ground consecrated? Is there consecration in a stone or in a brick? Is there consecration in one chronological period in contrast within another?

“What do you mean”? it is asked, “That we shall not observe the Sabbath”? I mean that you *shall* observe it; but that you shall observe it as free men, and not as men in bondage; not as under taskmasters, but with a rational perception that there is benefit in it; of your own sweet willingness, and not because you are afraid that God stands with a whip which he will bring down on your back, or with a pencil with which he will mark down your delinquencies against your name. And yet men will draw the belt up until there is no breath left in the body. And people living on this rigor of religious life say, “It is said not to be grievous; but I think it *is* grievous.”

Then there is another reason why people think it is grievous. As a general thing, men who profess to be Christians, and who are in a measure leavened with Christianity, are so far from having developed

the true Christian type of character, that they present rather the appearance of men under great difficulties than the appearance of very lovely men having had conquests. If the fruit of the spirit is love, joy in the Holy Ghost, peace, faith, patience, temperance, and such qualities as these, why, then, all I have to say, is, that the fruit does not get ripe on most boughs. Men see what are called Christians, and they see what are called Christian experiences, and they reach up and take one, and bite it, and it is not to be desired again.

Are Christians of such a disposition that you mark them sure? I never make a mistake in judging of flowers. I never smell of a nettle or a thistle thinking it is a honeysuckle. My honeysuckle tells me by night and by day when it blossoms. I never go astray in autumn in regard to my grape vine. I know where the grapes are both by the smell, and by the touch, and by sight. I cannot make any mistake here.

But if we bring forth Christian fruit that hangs on our boughs—joy, peace, faith, gentleness, humility, holiness, long suffering, hope—so that the whole tree-top of our life is full of these in abundant clusters, and so that the fragrance of them is all about us, do you suppose that any one would need an argument in favor of Christianity, an apology for it, or a defence of its doctrine? I will venture to say that if such a life as this existed in the Church, if that church was an orchard, and every tree was hanging to the ground with such fruit on its boughs, it would make almost no difference in the world what the creed was. Men would swallow any creed for the sake of going into a church where the members brought forth such fruits as these. And one reason why men do not believe that there is much in religion, is, that there is not much in it as they see it exemplified.

Yet, I would say, on the other side, in the case of many of those men who are derided and set aside, and said to be insincere, that the work has just begun, and only just begun; that it is convalescence, but not health. Men have started, and taken a few steps; but they have not developed largely the truth of Christ in them. And so, when to rigorous machinery, and to a very severe presentation of doctrines, you add a comparatively unlovely Christian life,—as the life of men in hospitals,—or the life of men who have been grievously perverted, but who are striving to get back again to their normal condition, then all these elements, all these things which men see, fail to make a favorable impression upon those who look upon them.

On the other hand, wherever there is a true Christian, there you are sure to find men won toward religion. If there is in any neighborhood a person whose influence is always sought; who is always considerate of others; who is always full of sympathy; if there is any one in a

neighborhood, when a man is in trouble, whom all think of at once as that man or woman counsellor, faithful, full of kindness, who, day and night, would, if an opportunity were presented, serve disinterestedly their necessity, point out that person and ask, "Is religion a grievous thing?" Everybody—the rudest, the coarsest, the most belluine nature—bows down before that example, and feels that it is a beautiful thing.

There is something awful in true holiness. There is something impressive, even to the rudest natures, where they actually see the beauty and the power of the Christian disposition under wise control, until they learn to trust it, knowing that it is not a vain show, nor a pretence, nor a counterfeit; where they see that it is real, and that it preaches to them "the beauty of holiness." And in "the beauty of holiness" they believe that religion is not grievous. The commandments of God, if so exemplified, become most beautiful. They are holy, and just, and good as well.

But there is another reason why men feel that religion is grievous. It is because of their own experience. It is because they have attempted to live a religious life, and have never given their whole will and their whole heart to it. Men want to build themselves as carpenters build bureaus, using pine for the whole substance of it, and a little thin veneering for a finish, to make it look beautiful. Men want to build themselves up in all manner of gross, worldly forces, and have a thin veneering of righteousness or religion over that, just to cover down these other things, and make them beautiful, and make them sell well. And where men just surface themselves with religion, where men just polish off with religion, it is simply an irritant. It acts simply as a provocative. It keeps up before them a rule, or a conception, or an ideal, which they do not at all either accomplish or strive to accomplish. Half-way measures that are allowed to men are always disturbances to them. A man who is half-way between being sick and being well is never a very happy man, and is never a very profitable man to look at. A man who is half sea-sick does not enjoy voyages. A man who has had his leg broken and half cured, is not in a particularly comfortable condition. And just like these men are they who are attempting to be religious. They are just far enough advanced from their worldly courses to be all the time vexing and harassing themselves with these moral obligations, which sometimes they meet and obey, and which sometimes they evade. All manner of irregularities, resistances and abnormal feelings spring up. And men are not happy under such circumstances. He is happy who gives himself up unreservedly to any course of religious life, and makes everything else consistent with that. Some become much happier than others, according to the system which they follow; but there is a cer-

tain sort of harmony which brings peace where a man surrenders himself wholly; where a man gives himself entirely to Christ. As soon as the battle is fought in a man, and all the great central impulses of his being are brought under the supreme control of the Divine Spirit, he finds satisfaction. But how few there are of such! How many men there are who are just a little religious—who have become a little healed, but who are for the most part afflicted with murmuring and complaining sickness.

As for those who have not begun a religious life, oftentimes they make essays, tentative endeavors; and they may be said to have approached it. Men have sometimes, as it were, *tried on* religion. They are most apt to do this when they have gone wrong. There is nothing which makes a man so quake as to have gone wrong, and to be afraid of detection. Oh! how he fears and sweats and wants to get back to something that shall reconcile him to himself, and make him happier! I have known men, under such circumstances, to go to church, oh! how fierce! and say prayers, oh! how regularly! and read the longest and toughest chapters, oh! with what pertinacity! and do a great many things,—until the scare had a little worn off, they gradually got over it, and, as it were, got out again, and fell once more into their old ways. And then, if you talk with them, they say, "I know about religion now. I have tried it. Why, I have been religious for a week together. I tell you it may be necessary, by-and-by; but it is a hard road to travel."

What would you think of a man, city-bred, lily-fingered, soft-jointed, and soft-muscled, who should say, "They tell me that there is great pleasure in living in the saddle, but I believe it is a lie; for I tried it one morning. I got a hard trotting horse, and rode several hours; and I was sore for days afterwards. I do not believe a word of what they say of horse-back riding."

And yet here are men who put themselves on the most unaccustomed exercises, and in their most external form and lowest ways; and they are so conceited as to suppose that they have had a taste, an experience, of religion. And when you talk to such men, what is their idea of religion? It is this: "I must leave off my old companions. I must go in among the old owls. When I get up Sunday morning, I cannot ride out; I cannot write letters; I cannot have a good time; I cannot meet my drinking companions and tell stories." They have lots of stories that must go on the shelf. There are ever so many things that they cannot do. And their idea of religion is, simply that it is a state in which they cannot do what they have been doing. There is no positiveness, no upward springing, no new life, no new power, in their impression concerning it. To their thought it is merely breaking off

from sin. And to such men religion must have a very gloomy aspect.

Ah! how different it is in reality! How hard it is for a man to drop off all his old relishes! While yet they are strong in him, and he has no other relishes, how he clings to them! A man who by famine has been driven to a mouldy loaf of bread, munches it in his hovel with avidity; and there comes a friend to him, and says, “Let me take you out of your misery. Throw away your loaf, and come with me.” “Throw away my loaf?” says he. “I cannot spare this.” But once set before him a wheaten loaf; once bring in the food smoking from the range, and set it before him, and how quick will he throw away his garbage!

Once bring the true relishes of holiness into a man’s soul; once let the real life of Christ spring up in him; once let a man know what joy there is in disinterested kindness; once let a man follow Christ in suffering for another; let a man deny himself; let him and his wife and children—his whole household—deprive themselves of real comforts of life, in order to carry light and balm into a distressed household over the way; and let them talk it over together at night, and speak of the gratitude of those who have been relieved, and of the wondrous thanks of the little children—and how much nobler they feel! What a dignity they have! What a sense of manhood and womanhood they have! Instead of gobbling up their beneficence, and giving nothing to other people, they take their abundance, and share it with that household. And if need be, they take upon themselves more work, heavier tasks, that they may thus serve others. And they are amply repaid by the gratitude which is called forth by their benefactions, to say nothing of the consciousness which they have of acting from their higher impulses.

When a man gets a taste of self-denial, of disinterested kindness for others, the Gospel is preached to him. He receives tidings, good news, which he never could have had except by practical works of benevolence. Once let a man have a taste for true religion; once let a man feel the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and experience the aspiration of the soul for purity; once let a man have a sense of the divine love and real hungering and thirsting after righteousness—once let a man begin to taste these verities, and all other pleasures, in comparison with them, pale and lose their power.

No man is fit to judge of what religion is—as to whether it is beautiful and joyous, and free, and most to be desired—until he has had some actual experience of it. And then, when one has once tasted it, he will say, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.” This is the testimony of an over-crowning and all-conquering love. Though there be angels and

arch-angels in heaven; though all one's children have gone before him, and are there; though the dearest companion of his early affections, and the mother that bore him, are there; though sainted names in multitudes are there, the heart once taught to love, looking up, always says, "There is but one thing in the world, and that is what we love most and strongest. Whom have I in heaven but thee? Heaven would be empty if thou wert not there; and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

To those that are called of God, and that have a willing soul, the way to Christ is a very easy way. It is the way toward yourself, too. It is the way in which, when once you begin fairly to walk in it, you shall have the advantage of your reason, of your restored moral powers, and of all your affections, in their best estate. You shall have every advantage that can come from your harmonization with the great laws outside of you—the best laws of nature. You shall have all the help which comes from the Spirit of the living God, who watches, and in all the earth sees nothing that draws his heart quicker than a soul that desires to repent and return from the evil way. Oh! how God longs to have souls come to him!

A child, disobedient, has gone out, as it was forbidden to do; and has wandered from the house into the thicket; and from the thicket into the forest; and, bewildered and lost and scared, it rushes hither and thither, until night descends, and darkness wraps it in, and it lays itself down under some sheltering rock, or by the side of some huge log, sobbing itself to sleep; and, between dreams and wakings, both hideous, moans, and calls for father and mother, and more than all for *mother*, and thinks that there is no heart that is so saving as the heart of mother. But what does that child suffer compared with the distracted mother, who, missing it, calls out; who, receiving no answer, runs out after it, and searches right and left, in fearful places—down in the well and in the cistern; who looks every whither, thinking of Gipsies, and wild beasts, and a hundred other things; who alarms the neighborhood, and sends out men searching in the fields and woods, and filling the air all night with racket and outcry, none calling more than herself; and who, when the grey dawn comes, and the men, wearied, go home, will not go, but still holds on, until, by-and-by, in her almost distraction, her ear, sharpened beyond the ear of any other, hears some sound, and stands still as silence itself, and hears it again—the moan of a child—and, quicker than ever eagle sped for its prey, urged by love, speeds to it, and finds her lost darling. And tell me, as she takes that spent child up into her bosom, is there any other rapture like that of a mother? Oh yes. God says, "A mother may forget her sucking child; yet will not I forget thee."

God's love for those who are scattered and lost is intenser and deeper than the love even of a mother; and if there be in this congregation any one who is conscious of guilt, and who wants to come back to innocency; if there be one who is lost in the woods, and does not know how to find his way out, God longs to bring you home more than you long to get there. He has been calling, calling, calling, and listening for your answer. And when you are found, and you lay your head on the bosom of Jesus, and you are at rest, you will not be so glad as He will be who declared that, like a shepherd, he had *joy over one sinner that repented more than over ninety and nine just persons that needed no repentance.*

And so, I call you to yourselves. I call you back to your own nature. I call you to your better selves. I call to that God from whom you sprang, and to whom you go again. I call you to the life of duty, the life of liberty, the life of purity, the life of joy, and the life of immortality.



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice, our Father, that thou hast made it possible for us to commune with thee; that thou dost reach down thy thoughts unto ours, which could not rise unto thee. Thou art so much above us, thou art so lifted up into an air where we cannot dwell except when thou dost give us thine own life, and quicken ours, that we never should find our way home, and never should know our Father, and never should have that great love by which we shall overcome life and death, and conquer immortality, but for the graciousness of thy condescension. We thank thee that thou hast permitted us so many times to come, and made the way now a way of flowers. We have gone through the wilderness to thee; but coming back it was a paradise. We have gone bearing burdens, and knew not what became of them. Thy very look had turned them all to lightness. We have gone with disappointments, only to have them interpreted into mercies. We have gone with sorrow and confusion; but behold, while yet we were confessing, the greatness of thy forgiving love broke out upon us, as the sun breaks through the storm-clouds, and all the terror was gone. We have come to thee often and often, weary and heavy-laden, and we have taken thy yoke, and it was no yoke; and thy burden, and it was not burdensome. O Lord our God, we thank thee for the past experience, and that out of it we derive all argument of hope. Not because of what thy word hath said, but because of what thou hast said in us, and a hundred times fulfilled, we believe in thee. And we rejoice that we may thus increase our faith from day to day. And as we go onward; as we draw near to thee; as we become riper for the heavenly land; as we have the intimations of truth; as we work out the spirit of love more and more perfectly, we hope yet to be in that state by which it will be possible for us to discern the invisible, and to live as seeing Him who is invisible.

We pray that thou wilt, to-night, forgive us our sins. Wash out, we beseech of thee, every stain and spot, that we may be white as snow. Not only

grant to us the forgiveness of our sins, but heal us in those fountains which sin brings. Purify our motives, and search our hiddenmost life. By thy Spirit, as with a glowing light, illumine, and, as with a living fire cleanse us, that all dross may be taken away. And we pray that thou wilt prepare us for all the duties of life. Prepare us for its disappointments; for its sorrows; for whatever is in reserve for us. And may we not shrink who are the followers of the Sufferer. Grant that we may be willing to bear our cross, as thou didst bear thine. We that are sin-laden—should we not suffer, when thou the sinless One made an offering for our sins? May we not count ourselves better than the Master; and may we rejoice from day-to-day that we are permitted to suffer for Christ's sake, and be only anxious that suffering shall do its perfect work, and make us patient and gentle, and make us more and more reverential, and truthful, and hopeful, that the work of God may be perfectly done in us. And as we do not doubt our friends who are kind to us, so may we never doubt thee, the best of all friends. Grant that our trust in thee may be more confiding, and that it may have more comfort in it. And in dark hours, and days of discouragement, whatever else fails us, oh! let not the sweet face of Jesus, looking upon us, full of forgiveness, and love, and mercy, fail us. And may thy countenance, by night and by day, at home and abroad, and everywhere, be our Comfort and our Guiding Star.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon us now assembled, pastor and people, for the last time for the space of weeks—it may be for the last time. Grant, we pray thee, that we may separate, commending each other to God. Grant that in a holy hope, and in the firm faith of thy truth, we may go on our several ways. In trouble, when anxious with forebodings, grant that we may leave everything in thine hands. Thou wilt do better for us than we can do for ourselves. Living or dying may we be the Lord's. And whether or not we see each other again in the flesh, grant that we may have the hope burning brighter as the days grow darker, that we shall meet in heaven. We pray that none of us may be wrecked by the way; that all of us may be saved, and that we may all meet together a rejoicing household to be forever in the presence of our Father.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word of truth spoken, and grant that it may do good to every one. May it remove impressions and mistakes that are hindering any. May it quicken some that need quickening. May it encourage some who are on the way toward thee. Stretch out thine hands again to those who have refused thy message to come. Call again to those who have refused to hear. O Lord Jesus! bring back the wandering, and forgive them all their sins, and all their mistakes. Overlook them, and sanctify them, and save them with an everlasting salvation.

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

XXII.

FIERY DARTS.

INVOCATION

July 31, 1870.

BE gracious unto us, our Father, according to the measure of thine own mercy. Look not upon our desert, nor upon our power of reciprocating or even understanding thy mercy; but do unto us according to thy divine love and magnanimity. And as thou art infinite, and dost pour forth from thy nature infinite stores, not waiting to see whether thy creatures can receive more; so we stand in an atmosphere of mercy. As all the world can breathe of thine outward blessings, so grant unto us thy spiritual affluence without measure, that we may rejoice in thee; that we may seem to ourselves as much shined upon by the sun of Righteousness, as the world is by the outward sun; that we may have in it light, and warmth, and summer and fruit, as a paradise for rejoicing. We pray that thou wilt accept the thanksgiving which we offer, and help us, this morning, in thy presence, to be glad. Help us to praise thee, and bring forth from our memory arguments of praise. How much has every one of us to thank God for! We look back upon the way in which we have been led; we look back upon the knowledge which thou hast imprinted upon our souls; and we thank thee for all thy dealings with us. We pray that thou wilt bless the singing of thy praises, the prayers which we shall offer, the reading of the word, the speaking from it, our meditation upon it, and the services of the day, whether here or in our homes. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

FIERY DARTS.

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”—EPIH., VI., 16.

Instead of “above all,” it would be better if it were rendered *over all*; for the figure is one drawn from the great Roman shield—not from a buckler, but from the great shield by which the whole person was protected. This is a part of a beautiful military figure. It is drawn with singular skill through almost all parts of the armor known and used in the old Roman warfare. The apostle’s eye was caught, evidently, with the military organization of the Romans. The Jews were essentially a brave and military people. We have, therefore, in the writings of the apostle, frequent references to military affairs.

He also employs illustrations drawn from architecture; but always in reference to its uses, and never in reference to its beauty. Although Grecian literature and the Grecian language at this time predominated throughout the East, and although this was the spoken language, probably—at any rate by the commerce of Palestine, and mostly by the educated classes in the cities of Palestine; and although Palestine itself was filled—particularly in the North, and over the Jordan on the other side—with villages and with cities which were built by Greek architects; and although the Grecians had then the same relation to commerce which now the Jews themselves have, in all the world, and the Greek was the merchant of the world; yet, Paul never seems to have caught one single ray of the light of art. Nor do I recollect a solitary instance in which picture, or statue, or temple, was used by him on account of its beauty. Nor do I recollect one single passage in the New Testament which distinctively recognizes what we should call the æsthetic, or the science of beauty, which constituted not only a large part, but which, in connection with philosophy, was the characteristic element of the civilization of the Grecian world—which world had overspread Palestine. And it seems very strange that the Jews should have caught so little of the spirit of the Greeks. It is a testimony to what you might call *thorough-breeding*. For, in order to maintain spirituality, the Jew was forbidden utterly to make

any image of God out of anything above, or out of anything below, or out of anything upon the earth, or to liken God to anything, and was to maintain inviolate an ideal and spiritual conception of Jehovah. This primary, and always observed command, wrought in the nation an indisposition to represent anything.. They never became artists, and never studied human life, nor the human form, with reference to art. So that side of the nature of man was never developed among them. And for thousands of years, even after they came under the influence of such elements, in their most imposing forms, they still resisted and threw off the æsthetic element.

But the moment the Jew was brought into the neighborhood of commerce, he showed aptitudes. The moment architecture, in its industrial and economic relations, was brought before the apostle's mind, he saw the elements of it. The moment the courts, or the administration of Roman government in the shape of a military force, the moment camps and armed soldiers were brought before him, he saw illustrations and analogies enough that might be drawn from them. And this is the most masterly of them:

“Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day [that is, in the great battle-day], and having done all [or rather having *overcome* all] to stand”—as Grant did in the Wilderness, and as other generals did not, who always hauled off to repair after a battle, and so never gained anything. The apostle says, “Fight your battle through, and hold your ground after you have fought it. Make use of your victory.” There are a great many who fight a battle, and then run, and lose the advantage. “Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”

Not to pursue the figure further, as this is the theme which I shall discuss, I will speak upon it.

What are these “fiery darts”? Was it the glitter of the arrow that he had in his imagination, as it flies through the air? In the first place, it is very doubtful if one sees the glitter of arrows under such circumstances, unless we believe in enormous deliveries. The ancients had what might be called *the bombs of the bow*. As we, with artillery, throw explosive shot that not only destroy by their fragments, but set on fire and burn; so the prototypes of these were arrows, the ends of which were bound up with inflammable material; this was ignited, and the arrows were delivered into the face of the enemy, or into his ships; or, if it was a siege, into the midst of his city. These flaming darts, these missiles that carried fire in every direction,

are "the fiery darts" of which the apostle speaks. And they are likened to temptations. That is, there are temptations which are like these fire-carrying arrows. Inflammatory temptations there are, which, as it were, set men on fire.

There are a great many temptations that men experience which are slow. They are comparatively imperceptible. Their access is not discerned. Their process of working is not at the time understood. We rather see them in their effects than in their actual presence.

There are many temptations which are derived from selfishness; that are insidious; that are so closely allied to duty that we do not distinguish the one from the other.

There are many temptations which spring from pride; which are cold; which incline us to wrong by negative elements, rather than by positive. There are many temptations which come from conservative elements in the soul. All that great round and realm of wrong which consists in not doing, is silent, unconscious, slow, and oftentimes even frigid.

Besides these, there are temptations which rush, and which make themselves apparent in the beginning, and all the way through. And a very large class there is of them. The genus is large; the species are many. They may, in some sense, be said always to agitate, and often to inflame, and actually set on fire the soul. And it is temptations of this kind that the apostle represents as being thrown by the great adversary, the general of evil, the devil, who lays siege to man as to a city; or makes war upon him as one warrior makes war upon another; and assaults him in one way and another, but, especially by the use of these fiery arrows; or, in other words, by assaults which raise up those great, powerful basilar passions which are so indispensable to the mechanism of life, but which are by irregularity and misuse rendered so full of mischief, and the causes of such immense and desolating sins.

Of these temptations I shall speak more in the sequel. I only mention them now for the sake of clearing and setting before you precisely the subject of the text, and dwelling upon them thus far.

Now, against all these temptations which come to our lower nature, and which are in their character inflammatory; or which, if we may change the figure, act like a ferment; or which, changing the figure again, are like a smouldering fire, which sometimes breaks out in blisters, and sometimes burns silently, like a fire in a partition, without air, and will not come out—against all these temptations the apostle does not say, "Oppose the sword or the spear"—they can not be fought with good chances of success. You are not to use the sandals to get out of the way with,—they are not to be run away from. You are to oppose to these "darts" the great "shield of faith."

Well, that, to most of you, is saying that you are to oppose nothing to temptations; because *faith* really means about nothing to you. It is a word that means so much; it is a word that has so many definitions that it is difficult to tell just what it does mean. One thinks it means this; another thinks it means that. And confusion has been so badly confounded in the matter, that for the most part I think people do not know what it means. Therefore, to tell them, "Against such temptations as these you must oppose faith," is to tell them, "You must get rid of these temptations in the best way you can."

Is there any clear understanding of what faith is? Without going into theological niceties at all, I propose, first, to take the simple Scripture statement of what *faith* is, and then give an analysis or expression of it in our modern tongue, and according to our modern habits of philosophy. It seems to me that the matter may be so disabused that every man may see exactly what is meant by *faith*, in general; and what will be specific acts of faith.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews the writer, whoever he was, (it is in doubt who wrote it), declares, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Language could not be more precise. As I think you will see when we carry the matter out to the full, language could not be found which would more exactly and more clearly comprehend the whole subject than that. "Faith is"—what? The substance of things? Exactly not. If it were anything that existed, and had a form, and was measurable, ponderable, estimable, then it could not be faith. It would be sensuousness. "Faith is the substance of things *hoped for*." It is something that is imagined. It is not something that exists; or rather, it is something that exists in imagination. It is that which men hope for. It lies beyond, out of reach and out of sight.

That that is the meaning which is intended, the next clause indicates, viz., "the evidence of things not seen." It is that which man realizes without the use of his eyes or senses.

Well, is there anything that men know without using their senses? We know what the sphere of the senses is. By touch, by sight, by taste, by smell, by hearing, we recognize the existence of a world not to be undervalued. The great substratum on which another life is built, is this material, physical world; and all that belongs to it we recognize by our senses, one or other of them separately, or several of them conjointly.

But the apostle says, 'There is something more. There is another range. There is truth beyond that which the ear hears, or the eye sees, or the hand handles, or the nose smells, or the tongue tastes.' 'There is a world which science, as the minister of knowledge to the

lower senses, does not reach. Can science teach *honor*, describe it, weigh it, divide it, in any way that you know of? And yet, is there not such a thing as honor? And can science, or any of the senses, in any way teach a single one of those conceptions to which we come by education and by refinement? Does not the development of the human mind by education lift a man at once into a higher sphere? It does not lift him above his senses; but through his senses, primarily, does it not develop a higher range of faculties which discern truths innumerable and transcendently important—so important as to constitute the difference between civilization and savageism; or as to constitute the difference between genius and mere drudge-labor? Does there not spring out of the higher development of the mind the capacity to recognize things which never present themselves to the eye, nor to any of the senses? And are not these things unseen? Are they not things, when men contemplate them, to be “hoped for”—that is to say, to be *looked for*—in a future and higher sphere?—not to be looked for, however, as we look for crystals, or ores, or fruit; as we look for substances that are produced, or that grow out of the ground.

Well, if this be a fact, as I have no doubt it is, there comes, then, next, the question, “What is the adaptation of the mind for this?” If you take mental philosophy, as founded at all on physiology (for without physiology mental philosophy is fog, is a *mirage*; and a man might just as well attempt to plow the soil, or sail the ship, that he sees by *mirage* in the sky, as to attempt to use a mental philosophy which does not base itself upon physiology)—if you look at the human mind in this direction, you perceive that there are two classes of faculties given to man. First, there are those which are called *the basilar faculties*. You may look, perhaps, in vain, in the books, for these faculties; but you will not have to look far if you look into yourself, to find them. They are those faculties of the mind which act through the body, and upon those physical conditions on which the body itself depends; through the propagating instincts; through the defensory instincts; through the force-giving instincts; through that enginery of the mind by which man is enabled to deal with the physical globe, and with those creatures that populate it, and which adapts him to the circumstances in which he was born.

Besides this perceptive lower nature, there is the receptive reason. This begins to work with the higher nature. Then there are the higher realms where are found the noble sentiments of truth; of justice; of love; of mercy. There are intuitions in these things. There are higher elements of mind by which men grow above the sordid and the sensuous, the low and the secular; by which men more and more live.

Society at large naturally divides itself in this way; and we speak

of those persons as refined who are not only educated to the senses, but are educated to the higher forms or methods of thinking or acting.

What the apostle all the way through means, generally, by *faith*, is, that it is that action of the mind which essentially consists in the employment of these super-sensuous faculties, or that part of the mind which works, not with matter, and on matter, but on qualities; on invisible truths; on things that are, but that give no forms which the mind recognizes through the body—sentiments and great spiritual truths which man is endowed with the capacity to appreciate and to believe in, and which never reduce themselves to the measurement of the senses.

He is in the flesh who lives by the use of the mere fleshly instincts or organs; and he is in the spirit, as Paul reasons in Romans, who lives by the spirit—still keeping this same generic division; namely, that he who lives by the use of the higher faculties of his nature is living in a state of spirituality, in a state of faith; and he that lives by his sight, by his senses, is living in the flesh. He is carnal; he is secular. This great division of men, they that live by the body and they that live by the mind, is recognized by society and by philosophy. And when you come to look at it, you see it in the Bible as well as anywhere else. There are two sorts of people living. There is one class that are living by the use of the bodily senses in material things. They are in the flesh; and they cannot please God. And there is another class who are living by the use of the reason and the moral sentiments. They discern qualities, and values in qualities.

Ask an old miserable miser, "What are honesty and honor worth?" and he will say to you, "Nothing, unless they give a man a little more credit on the exchange." He does not recognize anything except a material quality. If it can be made to turn into silver and gold, honor is something; and if not, it is nothing. And his idea of character is simply a little drop of water that will turn the mill-wheel of his purposes better—that is all. But go to a plenary *man*—a man full of living, gushing instincts of mercy and goodness; full of manliness—and ask him, "What is honor? Is it merely a name to cover expediency?" and how like a hemisphere honor glows before his mind, full of radiancy and of stars! Describe it he cannot. Measure it he cannot. It is illimitable. If I say to him, "Bring it down so that I can understand it," he turns to me and says, "If you do not know what it is by feeling it, I cannot tell you what it is." It is something beyond the ear, the eye, the hand, the tongue, or the organ of smelling. And yet, it is real. Ten thousand men would die to-morrow, quicker than to give up that which has no physical expression, and no marketable value, but which is to them a vital, absolute and glowing reality.

Nothing is real to them, if that is not. And yet, the senses cannot recognize it at all.

This honor often moves in a low sphere, being merely the low fragment of a higher thing. It is, as it were, the mere skirt of the garment which the true angel of honor, flying through the air, lets down to men. There is a military honor; there is a social honor; there is honor in business; there are various kinds of honor; honor puts different measurements and permissions on itself; but it is in every case the measurement of something that has no sensuous existence, which has no existence except as it dwells in men's thoughts absolutely; and which they believe in and recognize as being greater than things that are; than things that can be seen and measured. And these are what the apostle means when he speaks of *things which are not, bringing to naught things that are*. This power of sentiment, of truth, of beauty, of love, and of honor, brings to naught the maxims, the policies,—ten thousand things of this mortal life.

He, then, who lives in this higher realm, who dwells in the upper part of his nature, who is allied to God in the Spiritual world, is in a generic state of faith. That is, *faith* is living so that you have before your mind "The substance of things hoped for." Faith is the "Evidence of things not seen." It is the recognition of those truths which live in the great invisible.

This is the generic definition of faith. It will have specifics. That is to say, for instance, there will be a faith of fear: in other words, a man will oftentimes refuse invisible truths under the inspiration of fear. A recognition of things unseen is faith; but a specific of this faith is fear. Then there is a "faith that works by love," we are told. That is to say, faith is a sense of the invisible; but a specific of it is such a sense working through the love element. So there is a "faith that sanctifies the soul"; but it is a specific under this great generic. The ruling idea of faith is the recognition and experience of the power of those great truths which are not sensuous, nor secular, nor carnal, but which exist only in the contemplation of a man's higher reason and higher moral endowments; the special practical applications of this recognition will be found in its working with specific sentiments of the soul.

Now, the Apostle Paul says, "When these fiery darts of temptation, these arrows with burning tips, come flying toward you, put before you the armor which shall cover your whole self—the shield of faith." It is as if he had said, "The grand resource of men against their passions, is, to live in the higher moral sentiments; to abide in them; to dwell there; to experience these elements, and have the habit of using them."

I have taken a great many words to explain this, because it lies a little out of the track of what is the supposed teaching of the apostle; but I trust it is plain to you, what is his substantial teaching in this direction. The dwelling habitually in this higher region; the living by faith; the abiding,—not in any metaphysical, or theological, or mystical, or specially administered state, which some men have by the grace of God, and other men have not,—but in the higher range of every man's soul, and in commerce with God and holy things—that, in the first place, redeems a man from temptation.

It is very easy to shoot arrows down; and they accelerate in speed at every single foot, because to the strength of the bow is added the attraction of gravitation. And upon the heads of those who live low the bolts, the arrows of temptation which the devil throws down, fall with double force. But the men who live high have this advantage, that when the devil shoots up at them, against the force of the bow which drives the missile upward is the power of the big globe, which claims tribute of everything that flies in the air, and pulls it back again. And so, every foot the arrows go up, they go slower and slower. And if stronger bows are brought into requisition, and the arrows are thrown a little further and a little further, you must go higher and higher, until with the best bows they cannot reach you. One reason why some men are tempted more than others, is that the altitude at which they live is not so high.

An old gentleman who used to live in Indianapolis, built his house in a dry ravine, and when the river bank gave way, in an extraordinary freshet, he had the full benefit of the flood. The water swept round and round his house. But his neighbors, who were almost within hand's reach of him, were high and dry. They were safe, because they built on higher ground than he did.

If you travel in Europe, you will be struck with two things—that in olden times they used to build their towers and castles on the tops of the most inaccessible rocks, so that there were perpendicular precipices, sometimes hundreds of feet, below, and only a narrow way to go up there; and that there was not a window or door nearer than twenty-five or thirty feet to the ground, so that they had to be hoisted up to the second story before they could enter. Not only was it difficult for the enemy to get up there, but when they got up there, the lower story being massive and unopen, they found it hard to get in. But if they had built their houses on the level ground, and had doors and windows near the ground, how much easier it would have been for an armed force to take possession of them!

Men who live low down in their nature are within the reach of temptations that spring from the fiery passions; but men who live far

up in their nature; men who think just things; men who never permit their imagination to go out foraging, are beyond the reach of such temptations.

Sometimes men go over a battle-field when the battle is raging, "to see;" and get their pay for it; and men sometimes go out when the battles of life are being waged, and come back shot. Frequently men go over the land prospecting—and that is not so bad; but in moral things the less men know about wickedness the better for them. The imagination is accustomed to sail over forbidden things. It is accustomed to play vulture. The vulture, hovering high, but with eyes prone, looks over the landscape at—what? The lambs that frisk and frolic in the meadows? Oh no. At the gay flowers in the fields? Oh no. At the vineyards with luscious fruit upon the purpled boughs of autumn? Oh no—he looks at carrion. Not the live sheep, but the dead one; not fragrant flowers, but stinking carrion—that is what the vulture sees, and seeing, plunges down to feed upon. Of all the things which the sun makes, not one attracts his eye. He only cares for the things which death preys upon.

There be men who sail, in imagination, over the spheres of life, and see nothing but that which comes from the basilar faculties; from the lower life; from the baser nature. Wherever there is brutal force; wherever there is cunning, and its various games; wherever there is the ever-bubbling toil; wherever there is the conflict of the passions; wherever there is the strife of death, there their eye fastens itself on things that are feculent, foul, death-struck, and death-breeding.

There are men who do not mean to be dishonest, who do not mean to steal, but who say, "How easy I could put this so, and put that so, and make a very handsome pile! And nobody would find it out. But of course I would not do it. I want to be honest."

Now, no man can afford even to *think* dishonesty. No man can afford to think murder or cruelty. No man, according to the testimony of Jesus, can look upon a woman to lust after her without committing adultery in his heart. And so it is with the permissions of the passions. It is not safe for a man to dwell down in the great basilar realm. It is not even safe to look into it any more than you have to. If you would be free from temptation, you must live above it; you must not have commerce with it. You must from day to day fly higher, and abide higher. The great invisible realm; the realm which is ministered to you through your higher reason, and your moral instincts, by the Holy Ghost—that is the realm where your thoughts must live, abide, dwell, from day-to-day. And men who do live there are comparatively free from these temptations, these arrows, these "fiery darts." It is here that "the shield of faith" protects them. If

a man is divinely constituted, if he is strongly fortified, if he has the armor of faith, and carries it with him from day-to-day, into his business, and everywhere he goes, then when he comes into the conflicts of temptation he is safe. If a man is a man of war, and he has to go into danger, let him put on his armor, and be prepared for whatever may befall him, by habitually dwelling in this higher realm, and learning how to control all its resources of power.

I proceed, now, to a few points of application.

The inflammation of the human passions, in the first place, deserves special consideration. Observation shows that our lower feelings are generally subject to a kind of fermentation or inflammation. I mean this a little differently from the line of thought in which I have already indulged. Those who have had the bringing up of the young are sometimes astonished at the tenacity with which they seem to go wrong. The young themselves are sometimes astonished at it. I remember, in my own case, how soon, ideas once getting entrance into my mind, I seemed to be utterly powerless to throw them off, until after they had had a certain course. They ran like a fever.

Take curiosity, as it is allied with the lower passions of human nature. I may say, generically, that in all robust natures, largely organized, supplied with a great reservoir of power, there is, in early life, a principle of curiosity which attaches itself to that part of their nature which is most quick and earnest—the lowest part usually. And this curiosity has an inflammatory action. And when it is once set in operation, it is not put out by a word, nor by a resolution. It works by night and by day. It forsakes a man when he drops to sleep, but it meets him the first thing when he wakes again.

This will explain the excessive curiosity that the young have for things which, if we be pure-minded and pure-mouthed, seem to us disgusting, revolting.

There is a curiosity in the young to know what intoxication means. It is a morbid, unhealthy, intense feeling. I recollect very well that I had an impression that if I should once take a mouthful of wine, I should see visions and dream dreams. I supposed that I should be lifted above all ordinary conceptions of flavors and of exquisite excitements. I had read some little of the poets; I had read some of the drinking songs—for the lyrics of the world have been largely used by the devil for the celebration of spirits, and of the faculties which most naturally work with them. And so I knew something about these things; and I longed to drink wine. I remember the first time I ever tasted it. It was at my father's table, on Thanksgiving day. Father poured out a little Madeira glass (some of you will know what that is) full of wine, and that was passed among eight children of us; and there

was considerable left when it got round! When it came to me, it seemed as though I had drunk a very small quantity of liquid fire. My young mouth had not been tanned; and of all burning, disagreeable flavors, this was the worst that I could form any conception of. I think I never tasted anything so horrid as that seemed then. I would have flown to a cup of rhubarb rather than to have tasted it again. And yet, that curiosity was not sated. I was sure that it was not *wine* that I had tasted. And George Woodruff and I determined that we would have a drink of real wine. He was to get it, and I was to meet him at a certain field, at a given time. I was bound to know what wine was—and I did. I had a taste of it then; and I was going to say that it was the last taste I ever did have of wine. For forty years afterwards I do not suppose I took what would amount to a wine-glass full, aside from communion wine—and that never put me in love with wine. I remember how, on that fated day, I lay in the field, waiting for George. I recollect, now, watching the shadow of a daisy as it danced over the ground. I remember how sweet the vernal grass smelled. And I remember the sensations which I had when I thought how, when George came, we should both take out our cups and drink. And I remember how I felt when we did drink—taking only one bitter swallow, which I spit out instantly. That was enough for me. I could not be persuaded to drink any more. But up to that time the desire, the longing, which I experienced, to try it, was intense. And I feel great compassion for persons who are tormented with a morbid curiosity to try things which are not worthy of them. Remembering how it worked with me, I can understand how it works with others—particularly with persons of an imaginative nature. And all things work with persons of an imaginative nature on a higher scale than with others.

We perceive the excessive desire of the young to use tobacco. They have a morbid curiosity about it. It touches their vanity. As old people desire above everything else to seem young, so young people desire above everything else to seem old. And as the "oldest" thing which the young see, or notice, usually, is smoking or chewing, so they long to smoke or chew. And yet, it would seem as though the angel that sat in the gate with a sword had been transferred from paradise to the field of tobacco, and sat waving his weapon, and forbidding men to touch it. If anything can be created so that no man could learn to love it, it seems to me that tobacco has been so created. And yet, boys that could hardly be persuaded to get well of a fever by taking pargoric, or an emetic, or any loathsome medicine, will pull at the hideous "long-nine," and run through the streets, and air themselves,

and try it again, and keep trying for days, and weeks, and months, in order to get rid of nausea, and learn to smoke.

It is not merely vanity, but a prurient curiosity. There is this fermentation; there is this inflammation; there are these "fiery darts;" there is an actual process going on in the lower nature, in the passions and appetites, of men, which creates a longing for pleasures; for founts of pleasure; for going out "to see." They wonder what they shall see. They are restless and impatient "to know life," as it said.

Although, fortunately, my feet were removed from the paths of temptation betimes, and I never fell into the snare, I recollect the beginnings and goings on in me of longings to see what life was. And here let me say that many of these longings might, by humanity on the part of parents, be removed, or modified, or overruled. I recollect very well (I was a carefully brought up boy, as you would know!) that I was not allowed, at certain periods of my life, to go out of my father's dooryard. I *did* though! I recollect that I was never allowed to go down town on public days, when I was small. It was all meant for my good; but it was hard for me to bear. I did not much care as long as it was a mere election crowd, or something of that sort; but when it was general-training day (I speak to those who were brought up in Connecticut) and I stood in the corner of the yard, and I heard the far boom of that "kettle drum," as we called it, and saw the red uniforms in the distance (they dressed in red then) I was set all wild with excitement, and I wept because I could not go down and see what was going on. There was Ed Carrington, and there was Si Carrington, and there were the other boys, no better than I (poor miserable minister's son that I was), going down the street, probably with six cents apiece in their pockets; and there I was, shut up in father's dooryard! And I stood looking, and listening, and longing, and crying; and I cannot tell you how much I suffered.

I was a little roguish boy, as you would be apt to say; but that was not all. I had an imagination that filled the heavens with spectres. I saw the whole green full of volunteers. More than that, I saw things in exaggerated forms, and in undue proportions. My imagination gave rise to grotesque visions. I fancied a thousand things which had no reality. And if my father had taken me down town, and let me see things as they were, it would have satisfied my curiosity, and given me a correct view of things—on the same principle that if, when a timid horse is afraid of any object, you bring him up to it, and let him look at it, and smell of it, he will no longer be afraid of it. This would have been a great deal better for me. Although I admit that there are a great many things against even the sight of which the young should be guarded; yet, there are many other things which it is better

for the parent, in bringing up the child, to let him see. And the parent, by acting upon that hint, while exercising a judicious censorship over the child, can cure this morbid, desperate, most intolerable curiosity, which sets on fire the imaginations of children, and makes them long for things which, if they are restrained from, they will be apt to find out in surreptitious modes, thus adding deceit to their curiosity, and rendering them liable to perversion in other ways.

Remember, in dealing with your children, that a simple unallowable desire, which ought not to be indulged, ought not, on the other hand, to be snubbed, or rudely treated. It is a fiery temptation, it is a smouldering fire, it is a raked-up fire, it is a morbid disease for the time being; and it ought to be treated accordingly. Not that every case can be treated in the way which I have mentioned; but the knowledge that there are cases which can be so treated will give every discerning parent some practical conception in respect to the treatment of children.

Trusting children is as good as trusting men. Children cannot govern themselves unless you give them a chance; and if you are forever governing them they will never have a chance. What sort of letting my child drive would that be where he rode with me, and I held the reins myself? Children, for the most part, go with their parents, and are directed by their parents; but if you would make the child self-reliant, you must let him form his own judgment. He will make mistakes; but that is to be expected. If a child is going to be self-governing he must be allowed to govern himself.

There is also an inflammation which comes on in the form of envyings and jealousies in life. These are fevers. They seldom come suddenly. They seldom come without a certain incipency which men can discern when once they have set in. Are there not witnesses here who can bear testimony, "I cannot resist this kind of temptation, or that kind of temptation?" Are there not persons here who say, "I cannot help being jealous?" Some people there are, who fall back on their nature, and excuse their jealousy by saying, "I am made so." There are others who are envious, and who excuse themselves on the same plea. He is a very bold man who can say that he has not a particle of envy in him. He is a rare man who, being looked at all round, is found not to be susceptible to envy, or a sense of pain on account of some other person's superior fortune, position or circumstances. It is a devilish experience, and none the less so because it is common.

These feelings are to be treated as we treat inflammations. They are not shocks. They do not come and go with a blow and an explosion. They are not like powder whose whole mischief is done in an instant, or not at all. They are fires which burn. And the general

remedy for them is, being lifted above their realm. If a man who is attacked by them still continues to live down in the material region where they are, he will continue to suffer from them. Not until he goes to a greater height where they are feebler, and takes "the shield of faith," can he get rid of them. The only remedy for them is to live in the higher nature, and in commerce with God and heaven, setting his affections on things above, and taking a nobler conception of the value of that from which envy springs.

The point that I wish you to notice, is, that these are lingering inflammations in the minds of men, and that they are not to be cured by resolutions, but by what is called *constitutional treatment*; by going into a higher range of faculties, and *living* in them.

The inflammation of love is one of the most noble, one of the most universal, and, strangely, one of the most ridiculous, of these inflammations. It seems to me very singular that the world should select the very highest and divinest of all men's faculties as the one on which to explode its jests and its merriment. It is not the less singular because I myself feel an irresistible temptation to do it. I hardly think anybody ever saw young love born, that he did not at once experience a sense of the ludicrous. Love is the most beautiful thing in the world. There is not a flower that blooms in the garden of the soul that is so beautiful as the budding of love. There is no commerce this side of the gate of heaven that is comparable to it. There is no joy like that which the tree of love bears upon its bough, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. I not only would not discourage true love, romantic love, strong love, all-engrossing love, but I think that without it there is no true manhood, and no true womanhood. Yet, it is that which makes you smile, and makes me smile, and makes everyone smile, when we see it spring out fresh. The only time when you do not smile at it, is when you feel it yourself. It is a reality to the actors. To everybody else, the world over, there is an element of beauty, and also an element of the ludicrous, in it. And in dealing with those who are under our care—guardians with their wards, teachers with their pupils, parents with their children, and pastors with their people—this is to be taken into consideration, that the outbreaking of affection is an inflammation which is in part made up of the higher and more perfect elements of the mind. And love is good in proportion as it includes in itself the action of every single faculty of your mind. It must be comprehensive and voluminous in order to be divine. Where it has mingled with it the lower elements of the soul, it is almost invariably of a lingering and inflammatory character. You cannot stop it by saying, "You shall stop." You cannot stop it by commands of any sort. Neither can you stop it by good advice. You

can only stop it by some alterative; and the upper part of a man's mind is the natural alterative of the lower part. If you can in any way develop the reason, and the moral sense, and the taste, and higher relishes that shall be stronger than this lower development of passion, you can overrule it or change it; but never by saying that it is your duty to change it. Effects do not take place without causes. You might as well think of drawing out the inflammation from a diseased part without resorting to any procuring causes—to blisters, to rubefacients, to some kind of active treatment; you might as well command the inflammation to leave the rheumatic limb, expecting it to obey, as to think of removing this inflammation of the mind without building up the child, or the grown person, on the side of the nobler feelings.

I believe that there is a kind of incipient insanity in temptation to cruelty. Men tell us that after they had once made up their mind to rob a house they tried to resist it, they tried to throw it off, they tried to get rid of it by turning to work or amusement; but that it followed them in spite of all their endeavors. Men say that from the moment they had made up their mind to murder a man for his money, the devil seemed to urge them on, and never left them for an instant, but rode them day and night, and that they saw blood all the time. I do not doubt that they described experiences truly. These strong biases of the lower appetites and passions are strong and positive inflammations. I believe that the causes of them, and the elements which they involve, are physical, as well as social and moral, and that when they attack the mind they take hold of it strongly, and are slow to let go.

Let it be understood, then, by all parents, or teachers, or rectors, or guardians, or guides of men, that there is a principle of slow combustion—or, if I might change the figure, a principle of fermentation—going on in the minds of those under their care, and that if you can keep them from dwelling in their thoughts upon things that are abnormal and unhealthful, by keeping them interested in things that are normal and healthful, you will see them gradually come into a state of mind in which they will not be harassed and injured by wrong desires. The way to prevent those evils which proceed from the inordinate action of the lower nature, is to have such a disciplined use of the higher reason, the better affections, and the nobler sentiments, that they can be kept in the ascendancy. There is no temptation where the upper part of the mind has supreme control.

I am never tempted to steal. I think you might leave your watch or your pocket-book in my house and not miss it a great while. I think it would be safe in my hands. And after I had restored it to

you, I should not flatter myself that I had given proof of eminent honesty, and should not make an entry in my journal—(if I kept one, which I don't: I consider a journal the fool's mirror)—I should not write there that Deacon A. called upon me, and, in absent-mindedness took out his wallet to give me some money for charitable purposes, or in absent-mindedness left it (you can take it either way), and that after pondering for some time the question as to what it was my duty to do, I finally said to myself, "You are a Christian, and must not steal," and took the wallet, and ran as hard as I could, and gave it to him. I should not describe my action that way. And yet, that might describe the action of a man who was living in the lower faculties, and was tempted to steal. You and I have been so effectually trained the other way that we never think of stealing, and never could be induced to do it, and never give ourselves any credit for not doing it. I know my thoughts dwell in such a realm, that it is not possible for them to be reached by these lower influences. How it might be if I were an officer of the Sub-Treasury or a director of a railroad, I do not know. I cannot tell what I might come to by drill. But as it is, there is not the remotest possibility of it.

Now, in regard to all these lower developments, in regard to all these evil tendencies which you meet with in the family, in the school, in the shop, of which life is full, and by which parents are troubled and school-masters and school-mistresses are vexed, and people generally are annoyed—in regard to them all, remember that while there may be specific treatment (which I cannot pause to dilate upon), the general treatment is this: Take "the shield of faith." Learn so to live in the higher realm of reason, and moral sentiment, and honor, and duty, and purity, and love, and justice, and fidelity, and courage, and cheer, and wholesomeness of soul, that when these temptations are sent by the devil's bow, they will fall quenched from "the shield of faith." And teach this life to those in your care.

This Faith is the all-extinguishing element by which we control our lower nature. It is God's provision for man. It is the balance which he has given to the soul. It was meant to prevent men from dwelling too exclusively in the realm of the physical and material, as distinguished from the sphere of the spiritual and invisible.

Men say of the higher sentiments, "Oh! of course these things are very good; men ought to have the higher sentiments; but when one is among Romans he must do as Romans do." And so they accustom themselves, and encourage each other, in the market, on the street, and in places of pleasure, to act by the lower instincts and faculties, instead of the higher elements of the soul, which, when quickened by the divine Spirit, enable us to see God; which, when touched

by the Holy Ghost, leap up and mingle their forces with those of the intelligences above. Those sentiments are like angelic experiences. They bring the choral voices of heaven into the soul, and make men live as seeing Him who is invisible. So lived Moses, the old prophet and law-giver of the desert, whose name is honored among Jews and Christians alike—not by commerce with things which can be discerned by the senses, or explained by science, but by the intuitions of the spiritual life, which are able to quench all the temptations which come from the lower, basilar, fiery, flaming nature of man.

God grant that we may so live that at last, when the call comes for us to go hence, our passage from this life to the other shall be but a step from glory to glory.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We thank thee, our Father, that thou hast taught us our way out from this lower life, beyond the senses; beyond the sentient; beyond reason even, to where faith guides; so that we stand in the invisible, and behold things that are not; so that we know things which lie beyond the sight, and live in things that are unknown in life. We thank thee for the sacred mystery of truth, and for those experiences which we know to be real, but which the eye cannot see, nor the hand handle, nor the tongue utter. That wondrous work which thou dost perform in the soul by the Holy Spirit, we discern, we experience, we rejoice in, at times, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And we pray that if we are thy children, we may not seem to be always strangers. If we are the King's children, sometimes may we know how to bear the part of princes. Grant that we may walk with faces upward; that we may take thereon the light which shines out from our heavenly abode, and our home. And when our hearts are heavy, and we know not what ails them; when we have grasped and taken in what the earth can give, and all that is but food to suggestion, and that raises our ideal of joy, and of love, and of power therein, higher and higher, till we look away from this life, and hope for the fulfillment of that of which the shadow only is given here, then we rejoice, O Lord! that thou dost bring thyself near, and bring us into reciprocal nearness, so that we may know thee as we are known of thee; so that though we do not see as we are seen, nor know as we are known, wholly, yet we are in the precincts of fulfillment, and are surrounded by great joy, and filled with great peace. And the memory of these days of transfiguration—how as a rudder it guides us in the perplexity of after times! And, though we travel forlorn, in desolate ways, in winter, and in the midst of chilling winds, we cheer ourselves by the memory of a thousand comforts lost or parted from; by the memory of days and of experiences that were, we comfort ourselves in drooping days, and days of darkness, when things are gone that were present to the sight, and experiences are dissolved, like the bubbles that are blown in summer, and like the bright pictures that were spanned upon them. And we believe that nothing comes without a cause; that there is no suggestion of a higher life, and no realization of anything above our senses, which is not inspired by the heart of God in the soul.

We thank thee for all these working things. And though sometimes, doubting and complaining, we wonder why, since thou art God, and we are so needy, thou dost not do more, and work us habitually into a spiritual frame of mind; yet at times, when we realize what we are, we marvel that thou dost work so much, and that we have no perception of those things which are so far above the flesh, and which require sensibilities so different. We admire and wonder, and praise thy name for our experience.

And now, we beseech of thee that thou wilt accept the desire (for what else can we offer?) which we have to be better, and purer, and truer, and to be lifted above the things which are passing. Accept our desire for a truer sentiment of things just, and generous, and pure, and holy. Accept the desire which we have to live near to God, and that without separating ourselves from men—nay, cleaving all the more to them by this divine power. Accept our desire to be cleansed utterly. Thou, O living Saviour! must cleanse us. It is the power of love only that can save us. And by love we shall be saved. Thy word is pledged. Thou wilt receive every one that comes to thee. None shall come in vain. And coming, none shall be cast out. For, although the largest entertainment may still be straitened among men, and the house be so full that even love can give no more room, there are many mansions in our Father's house—too many for the world ever to fill; and none shall be excluded or turned away. There is room for all. And, Lord, thou hast no conditions but that they need, and that they will accept.

Blessed be thy name for this fullness and freeness of invitation. Blessed be thy name for this largeness of mercy, which, beginning here in time, runs on down through ages uncountable, forever more fruitful, the fruit being more and more blessed. We rejoice in all these things. And yet, while we think of them, and compass them with great feeling thoughts, our imagination, overlapping them, still goes further, until the inconceivable rises as the cloud in the far distance, infinite still in the midst of all this expectation.

Thou art the God that dost exceeding abundantly more than we can ask or think. How great will be the triumph of thy grace, and the marvelous celebration of thy mercy to us, when we shall meet in Zion and before God! May none of us fail by the way, by quick flying temptations. May none of us be struck down unprepared. May none of us go steadily astray. May we cleave to the Lover of our souls. May we rejoice in the Lord, and be strong in the Lord, and in the Lord stand continually, and having done all, and overcome all, stand faithful and steadfast unto the end.

Bless those who are gathered together this morning. Comfort those who are drinking the bitter cup of affliction. And may they remember that the Lord drank before them, and, touching his lip to the cup, made it sacred; and as he would not put it from him, may none of them put it from them until his will shall be done.

And we pray that thou wilt give comfort and strength, in thine own time and way, to those who are weak; and direction to those who are in perplexity; and consolation to those who are disconsolate; and help to those that are in care and trouble in this world, that they may bear manfully their share of the world's burden, and do their duty wherever the Lord has appointed their way, more anxious to please thee in the place where they are, than to change it and find some fairer sphere.

We pray that thou wilt bless all the churches that are gathered together to-day. May thy servants preach the Gospel in simplicity and power from on high. And may thy people worship thee acceptably, and with great joy to their souls. We pray for the spread of the truth. We pray that throughout our land justice and righteousness, and purity may prevail. May we be saved from avarice, and greediness therein; and from pride of power. May we be saved from irreligion, and from outbreaking vices and crimes.

And we pray that thou wilt sanctify the power and strength of this nation, and make it not selfish, nor grasping, nor cruel, but full of manhood, and full of protection to the weak, and full of blessings to all.

Pity the nations of the earth. Behold how they are driven, as in the night, upon the ocean, fierce winds drive fierce waves. Behold how the nations lift themselves up, and toss themselves in their fury before thee. O Lord! hast thou power to control the fury of the people? Hold back the guilty arms of the oppressors, and purge the minds of the nations from their guilty insanities. We beseech of thee that thou wilt stop the prevalence of war. And grant that these great evils which have made it needful, and which still require this medicine of God—the overflowing cup of fire itself,—may be purged away, and that justice and humanity may take the place of avarice and ambition. We pray that the time may speedily come when nations shall be permitted to be at peace, and when all shall know their true manhood in Christ Jesus, when men shall be self-governed, and shall no longer need the iron scepter. And grant that the nations of the earth, thus rising into their true stature before God, may inherit this promise, long made, long delayed, long lingering and still to linger. Lord Jesus! make haste, for the whole earth doth wait for thee, and groans yet, and travails in pain. We beseech of thee, overturn and overturn, until He whose right it is shall come and reign.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray for thy blessing to rest upon the word spoken. Teach us all how to teach others. May our life itself be a teaching. Grant that we may so live as to be full of the fruit of the Spirit; that we may overflow in joy and peace; that we may have enough for ourselves and for others; that our hearts may be fountains at which the weary may drink. And grant that we may be more and more rich-hearted: that we may be saved from all those evolutions and oscillations, and incidental sins which come while striving to enlarge our nature God-ward. Yet grant that our faults, if we needs must carry them, as the weeds and tokens of the earthly state, may be faults on our heavenward side. And so may we live, never unconcious of our need of Christ; never unconcious that we are saved, not by right or merit of our own. So may we live that when we shall behold Jesus, we shall see in him all our victory, and recognize, in that glorious vision and moment, that power of thought and ideal by which we have been incited and carried on through life. And when we behold thee as thou art, and the mystery of our life is explained in thy look and in thy words, at thy feet, O Jesus! we will cast our crowns, saying, Not unto us, but unto thy dear name, be the praise of our salvation forever and forever. *Amen.*

XXIII.

TESTIMONY AGAINST EVIL.

TESTIMONY AGAINST EVIL.

“Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”—ROM. XII., 9.

There is a coördination here. We are neither to be satisfied with hating evil, nor with loving that which is good. We are to do both. They stand in this intimate relation with each other, and are tests each of the other's genuineness, in that each begets the other. If a man hates evil, and it is a genuine moral revulsion, it will show itself to be genuine, among other ways, by this, that it will be accompanied by, or will have as its alternative, a strong attraction toward that which is good. On the other hand, if a man supposes that he loves that which is good, and springs to it with appetite and desire, he may test the reality and genuineness of that loving by the corresponding emotion—the abhorrence of its opposite.

It seems impossible that the soul should not act in this way. If it love concord, it must revolt at discord. So that these two phases are counterparts. One is the fulfillment of the other. A man who loves the truth must hate lies. A man who is sensitive to honor, must have great revulsion from everything that is dishonorable. A man that really loves purity, must really abhor impurity. If a man's heart goes out toward fidelity, he must have a great hatred of treachery. It seems impossible that the mind should act in any other way.

This is very strong language. *Abhor*—there is no stronger word than that in our tongue; and it does not strain the original at all. It is justified. And, on the other hand, *cleave* is an equally strong word. As a mother puts her arms around about the child in the moment of love, in the gush of affection, and holds it fast, so that nothing can get it away, and her clasp is a clasp of retention, so when we are commanded to “cleave to that which is good,” it is as if it were said, “Love that which is good; hold it fast in your arms; do not let it be taken away from you.” Both of these are pretty strong expressions, because the things that they mean are pretty strong, too: for intensiveness is the typical idea of Christian experience. Because there are in the New Testament such words as *mildness*, and *gentle-*

ness, and meekness, a great many persons think that Christian character means a sort of pale, pulseless state of mind—a transparent nothingness—a bland emotion—a state that is like glass, which has no particular quality of its own—something that you can look through. But no; the typical idea of Christian experience is that of depth of power, preëminently. We are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and our neighbor,—not with a little gentle well-wishing, not with a little superfluous generosity after we have taken care of ourselves,—but *as* ourselves. It is a Lordly conception that comes into the idea of duty in the Christian life—something of largeness, and of power; so that when we love that which is good, we love it with vigor; and when we hate that which is evil, we hate it with thunder and lightning!

To be sure, we make allowance for men who cannot rise up to that; but we do not take them for our models. A man may be a Christian without any great power of hating; without any great power of loving; without any great power in his being, at any rate. But he is a babe; he is a child; and that is not the typical idea. We take the Bible notion of Christians. It is a thing of proportion. As we have power of excitability, and power of intense emotions, one way or another; as we have fervidness, or the power of burning, in our feelings, we are thereby brought into line with the typical Christian. So that we are to have the most vigorous likes and dislikes. *Likes* are not strong enough. We are to have the most vigorous *loves* and *hatreds* for things moral or immoral, as the case may be.

We are not, though, to suppose that this exhortation gives us the liberty to hate evil men. We are to hate *evil*. We are to abhor it. We read in the Scriptures, *Ye that love the Lord hate evil*; but nowhere, from the beginning to the end of the Bible is there an exhortation to hate wicked men. On the other hand, God, that is of *purser eyes than to behold iniquity*; whose fury against wickedness *burns to the lowest hell*, so far from hating men, loves them with an unutterable love—loves them with a love which could have been signified by nothing less than the death of Christ—the most stupendous exhibition of sacrifice and witness of affection that could be raised up in the circle of human experience and knowledge. And we are not to suppose, because we are commanded to abhor evil, that therefore we have a right to curse and swear at all wicked men, and hurl our denunciations at them. Far from it. Hate evil; but it is quite possible for a man at the same time to be full of sympathy and yearning toward men who are committing evil. There are none who know how to hate evil so much as those who love good. The largest love takes everything unto itself; it has pride in the object loved, and is made happy by

seeing the object of love beautiful, noble, excellent; and it is wounded by seeing the opposite qualities. There is nothing so sensitive to blemish, to disfigurement, to unsymmetry, as the truest love. A mother who loves the child may mask his faults, and may soften them, from the very pain that the recognition of them gives; but when she does discern a sin, a wasting and withering wickedness in the child, there is no one who abhors that evil so much as she. A mother's abhorrence of evil in her child is in the proportion of her love for that child.

Do you suppose there is any human being who hates drunkenness as much as the wife does, who cannot give up the husband of her youth. All her being is centered in him. All her early hope, all her love, went out unto him. She holds him with cords that neither life nor death can break. And yet, he is a drunkard. And if there is anything in this world that typifies hell, it is a pure and noble woman sleeping in the arms of a drunken husband. Is there anyone who does so abhor the passion and the evil as she who would lay her life down, if she could redeem him from it?

We are not, therefore, to suppose that because we are commanded to abhor evil, we are commanded to hate bad men, or to abhor them.

Men should have a clear and positive revulsion from evil for their own protection. It is not safe, considering what the nature of evil is, how it is graded, how it springs out of things that are not evil, or how it becomes so by circumstances, to look upon it with allowance. The power that evil has of masking itself, the power that it has of becoming beautiful, renders it the more dangerous. The fact that much in this life is an amalgam, made up of gold and base metal together; that good and evil are twined and plied together so that we are constantly in danger of taking the one for the sake of the other—these things require that a man who means to live a truly manly Christian life—a life of manhood in Christ Jesus being the highest type or conception of manhood—must train himself to abhor what is evil, or he will, in the adulterations of things, find himself drawn insensibly along, little by little, little by little. Plausible lies, and oblique deceits, and reflected dishonesties, and semi-transparent wickednesses—the thousand gradations on the scale—will lead him step by step, so that, if he have not a sovereign revulsion from wickedness, before he is aware he will have become an apologist for it, if not a partaker of it.

Such is the nature of the stomach that whatever things are revolting to it, it rejects. It throws them off spontaneously, and so saves itself. Yet it is quite possible for one, by minute tastes, to accustom himself to take arsenic, tartar-emetic, things the most destructive to the animal tissue and to all the functions of the prime organs; it is

quite possible for one, little by little, to keep on in such a course until he has medicated himself into a certain tolerance of things that are fundamentally injurious to his health and to his life. And as it is in physical things, so is it in moral. One may, by gradations of wickedness, by not looking at it with horror in its initial forms, in its slightest developments, as it were tone down his conscience, and bring it more and more to the level of wickedness, until it shall lose its sensibility and its power of discerning.

A great many men are wicked because they have not the sensibility that interprets to them what is the better; and a great many men are untrue and false because they have a blunt conscience, that does not discern that which is bad.

That power by which we quickly scent wickedness; by which we reject it, and lift ourselves above all its entanglements, and its fine threads, is this hating it—this abhorrence of it.

A good practical musician may stand in the midst of five hundred singers, and if there is one false voice in the whole five hundred, his ear hates discord so that he knows it. There may not be anyone else in the house who knows that there is a single voice below the pitch, or above the pitch, and he, perhaps, cannot tell where the trouble is, or just what it is; but he feels it.

It might be so with a man's conscience. He ought, as it were, to feel a discord in the chorus, a lowering of the tone, somewhere, which shall indicate at once that there is something wrong, even when it requires thought and analysis to detect what the wrong is. This refinement ought a Christian to reach for his own sake. Still more ought he to do it for the sake of the witness which every one owes to goodness, and against evil. For, we are "the light of the world" in proportion as we are enlightened by Christ. Good men are "the salt of the earth." Society defends itself by its hating power; and society is to be taught how discreetly to hate evil by the witness and testimony of Christian men.

There is a public sentiment in ordinary communities which sends crimes and vices into the shadow, so that wickedness of certain grades has to skulk. It is a sorrowful thing when crimes become tolerable, and when vices become respectable. The average conscience of any community must be deteriorated very much before men who are notorious for their various wickednesses can walk in the high places, and can be regarded as "hail fellows well met," and be permitted to hold the principal offices of trust and profit, and be honored and smiled upon, and everywhere greeted and recognized. A scoundrel, if he be clothed with king's robes, ought to be treated by every good man as if he were a scoundrel, so far as that is his typical character, and so far

as he puts that character out. You may pity him ; you may labor for his reclamation ; but if he is placed in such circumstances that he is represented by wicked conduct or by wicked actions, somewhere there must be a testimony of such horror and hatred of his wickedness that he shall be made to feel how hateful wickedness is. And the public sentiment of society ought to be made to feel how hateful wickedness is. If there is no reprobation of counterfeiting ; if honest men, who never would counterfeit, still are charitable to take counterfeit money ; if though they think it bad, and say that they would not take it if they could very well help it, they yet, when they have it in their hands will pass it along—then it will be sure to thrive. If men who are known to be genial, good fellows, and who are respected in the community, should say of counterfeiting, "It is bad, but there are worse things than that in society," what would become of our trust and security in regard to any circulating medium ? But honest men hate counterfeiting. They frown upon all the spurious money which comes under their notice ; and the result is that it has to sneak and go through society in the lowest channels, and the best way it can. But if there were no public sentiment, if there were no indignation of honesty, if there were no real honor that met this thing and frowned upon it, it would rise up at once. Wickedness in society is all the time seeking to gain ascendancy ; and there is nothing to keep it down but that hatred of it which the educated conscience of society gives. How far up the common sewers of society shall rise, and how fast they shall send out their miasma, depends upon the education of the conscience of the Christian community. And a community that has been brought up to be tolerant of wickedness, or to find excuses for it, or to be indifferent to it, or to be good-natured over it, becomes a patron of wickedness, and demoralizes and weighs down that which God sent the Church and the Christian community to enlighten and to lift up.

I say that we are to abhor, and that our abhorrence is to be a very strong feeling. Some may be led to infer from this that when a man abhors evil he is to be harsh with it ; that he is to talk loud against it ; that he is to use violent language toward it ; that he is to be intensely severe and unmeasured in dealing with it ; that he is to tread it down ruthlessly. But that does not follow. A man may abhor evil and be very mild. A man may abhor evil and be silent. A man may abhor evil and be perfectly self-possessed and serene.

The single look of grief and surprise with which a pure and noble woman meets some unexpected trait of wickedness in her husband, is to him like Mount Sinai, and all its thunders. It is often said that the woman is the man's conscience. A great nature is often the conscience of a smaller nature. Where two natures are at all equally mated and

paired, they are a conscience to each other, reciprocal and intersphering. But how often has a man in the presence of a virtuous wife or of a pure and noble mother, been struck through with a sense of wickedness by a single expression from her in respect to certain unlawful courses of his! There is nothing which makes wickedness seem so wicked as to bring it into the presence of its opposite, as embodied in a great nature. A person may abhor wickedness, and be very gentle, very mild, very sweet-spoken. One may have an abhorrence of wickedness that shall be like a spear perpetually, and yet be full of love, full of sympathy, full of goodness. It is not so much the rash, harsh, violent expression, that is called for, as it is that deep loathing, that settled aversion of the soul to all that is known and recognized to be evil. What is wanted, therefore, is positiveness of the whole strength of feeling—not violence of expression.

In this way, by the expression of its hatred, of its abhorrence, the Christian Church educates the community, cleanses its opinions, elevates its judgments, and redeems it from the perils which always are burrowing at the bottom of human life. But in order to do this, one must have a discriminating judgment and an educated conscience.

If a man should carry this *idea* of abhorring evil into all the little mistakes in life, he could commit no greater error. One of the great mistakes of Christendom is that it recognizes so many sins that are purely artificial, conventional, such as a man may commit without affecting his spiritual nature; and that it prescribes so many observances which, so far as a man's spiritual nature is concerned, it makes no difference whether he keeps or not. As matters of agreement between man and man, they may have some value; but further than that they are not essential. And yet, there are some persons who will visit with frowns and indignations a man who breaks a saint's day; while if he equivocates, as society allows persons to equivocate, dextrously and adroitly, they do not so much as rebuke him. We all of us think that a ragged beggar's lie is a grossly wicked lie; but a lie clothed in king's garments, a lie that shines, a lie that is witty, a lie that sparkles with intellection, men do not think is so very bad. They would burn a man who did not keep Sunday, and yet, they will not touch a man when he tells a smart lie. But the truth, which is the basis of confidence and trust between man and man, should be as pure as crystal. A man may be given over to his passions and appetites, he may be avaricious, he may be selfish, he may have the cruelty of pride, and still not be severely judged by his fellows. Men seldom visit things with the same condemnation that they do the violation of the conventional laws and rules and regulations of society—which are not without their value, which I do not deprecate nor depreciate, but which are not essential.

Now, I say, that if we are going to abhor evil, we must separate evil from mere conventional sins, and discriminate between them. Those things must be looked upon and treated as evil which the universal conscience recognizes as being wicked. On them must be put the signet of reprobation. While we are not blind to all milder evils, we cannot afford to lose the emphasis of our abhorrence by distributing it to everything alike. As if a man that has a dirty collar must be treated as if he had a dirty character! As if a man whose hands are unclean, and whose nails are unshorn, must be treated as if his heart were black with lecherous thoughts! As if a man that is coarse in his manners, must be treated as if he were coarse in his morals! It is the beast that is in men; it is the belluine appetites; it is the passions which are destructive to peace and happiness—it is these that we must intensify our abhorrence of. We cannot, therefore, afford to spread out our horror over all the little peccadillos and infirmities and nibbles and bites which come up in ecclesiastical orderings. It is the antagonist of love—it is selfishness, in all its moods and broods—that we must abhor.

There are certain things in which this may receive a closer application, and in which an application is very much needed.

In the first place, Christians—Christian men and Christian women; young men and maidens; all—ought to feel that they are called to witness their abhorrence in all the evil processes of society. There is a great deal that is allowed in society, that is tolerated there, although everybody admits that it is wicked. Society is full of permissions. It nests and burrows envies, and jealousies, and hatreds, and slanders. Malignant, various and most execrating vices of the passions, there are in society. And it is the duty of every man and every woman to set their faces against these things, wherever they happen to be—no matter if they *are* in respectable circles. You are a servant of the Lord, and you are all to be tuned by His grace, and not by the tuning-fork of custom or fashion. Wherever you go, whatever thing is to your judgment and conscience abhorrent, you are to frown upon. I do not say that at all times and under all circumstances you are to speak of all the evil that you see; but you are never to allow yourself for one single moment to be on its side. Somehow or other every person in life ought to make his mark so that everybody shall know where he stands on the subject of tattling; of backbiting; of slandering; of tale-bearing; of eating and drinking his fellow-men. Society is full of cruelty. Dore's hideous pictures from Dante in which men are represented as gnawing skull bones in the infernal regions; in which men are represented as feeding off from their victims—these are enough to shock us, and drive us from all pictorial illustrations of that kind; but, after

all, we see these things in life. There is cannibalism around about us all the time and everywhere. Not a bird's leg is taken up and counted a more delicious morsel, and is more deliberately picked and chewed and relished in all its juices, than a person's reputation is taken up, and cut, and bitten, and sucked dry, and cast out. It is wicked; it is damnable; it is treason to man and treason to God; and yet such things are common. Why! men will not carry vermin on their heads nor on their bodies. Perfumed society—it would reject a poor miserable wretch that came into it! Yet men carry vermin in their souls, crawling and creeping all over them. But because they wear fine clothes and are very wealthy, or are in official positions, they are tolerated. And it is high time that men should learn to discriminate and hate these feculent vices of detraction, and bitterness, and envy, and jealousy—all those elements which spring from the lower regions, and which are of the evil spirit, and are made sacred in your eyes by the fact that they are permitted. But God ought to be greater than man; and the absolute truth of God ought to be more than the permissions of human society or the legislation of public sentiment.

That which is true in society ought also to be true in pleasure. What we need now in life, above everything else, is Christian men who take the lead in manly pleasures, and make them honorable and noble. Pleasure is of God. So is suffering. Joy and sorrow are both of them born of God. There is a manly way of enjoying one's self which is not only permissible, but most wholesome, and, in moral things, most beneficial. Let men be free to take all rational amusement, free to take joy, and that abundantly; and yet the moment pleasure, and its permissions, become soiled or even sullied, let men turn away from them, and scorn them, and loathe them, so that the world, looking on them, shall see that they are "men of pleasure," not in the sense that they are men of no conscience, but in the sense that they are men of eminent conscience.

All through society, the moment anything becomes pleasant, wicked men seem to gain ascendancy in it. Is it a joyous thing for men to sail their yachts? Speedily yachting falls into the hands of men who make it a round of dissipation. A yacht life is a life of Sodom, often. And it is a shame! Are athletic and exciting games wholesome and enjoyable? Speedily they fall into the hands of men who make them instruments of betting and cheating and stealing—for men that bet and cheat are gamblers, for the most part; and a gambler will steal if he has a chance, the world over, if you give him impunity and temptation enough. And so they are to be disallowed. Ten-pins and billiards—athletic games full of stimulus, and pleasure, and health—how quick they slip out of the hands of pure men into the hands of men that are

corrupt! What we need in society is men who shall assert the importance of exercise, and the law of manly pleasure—men that shall be free and bold, and that shall at the same time have eyes of flame, and hearts of purity, and shall drive away from the realm of pleasure all that is unmanly and unclean, and keep it away.

We need, also, in business, men of the same stamp; for business, while it is essentially founded on equity, while nothing is more equitable than its law of commerce or exchange, has in its actual conduct ten thousand pressures and influences which are evil in their tendency. Business is full of allowed wickedness. And there be many weak souls that, coming down into business, first stand silent, and then gradually lose susceptibility to things that are wrong, and finally begin to indulge in them a little in a cowardly way, and at last lose all conscience, and all faith in goodness in those directions, and plunge in boldly. And one upright, sagacious, successful man, that is all the time bearing witness to truth, to fidelity, to honor; one man standing up immaculate in the midst of men all around about him, and representing the superiority of virtue over vice, is a missionary. I think there are single men in Wall-street who do a thousand times more to create an abhorrence of evil than a hundred pulpits. And wherever a man feels himself to be a Christian, it is his business to carry this sense of honor—this discrimination between things right and wrong—and be ready to refuse peremptorily whatever violates his principles, and stand up for that which is true and right and pure, though he stands alone. And he need not blush because he is in the minority; for God stands behind any man who is standing up for a principle, or for a truth.

We need also to have testimony more and more as against gilded wickedness. And here I can give no better illustrations than those found in the realm of literature; although, in saloons, and in the various circles of higher life, there is much of wickedness gilded by genius. There is a popular impression that if a man has genius, it sanctifies anything that he may do—that is to say, if God gives a man ten talents, though he violate every one of them, he is not thought to be so wicked a man as a man who, having but one, violates that. Public sentiment exactly reverses the law of accountability as laid down in the New Testament. I hold that the man who is the most highly endowed has the most responsibility. God demands more, and society ought to demand more of him than of persons who are less highly endowed. Higher standards of conduct should be set up, and a purer life required, in proportion as men go up. There are no criminals like the unvulgar. There are no criminals like the men who think the furthest and the most brilliantly. And those men whom God has endowed with genius,

and who fill literature with salacious images and with music, so that the corruptest sentiments take on the choicest language and move in the most beauteous numbers, are satanic men, who put wreaths about their head; but every leaf will distil damnation, when God shall call them into judgment. There is no wickedness like that which is committed by genius, and committed in such a way that men are caught through their taste, through their intellect, through their appetites, through their nobler sentiments, and carried down to degradation, and to lust, and to destruction.

That is the peculiar trouble with the whole French school of reformatory novels. I am sorry to see, in places where I should not have expected to find it, approbation of George Sand's works, and a beginning to publish them in our language. Here is a woman of genius ridiculing in her works the sacredness of the marriage relation, in favor of a sort of ideal marriage relation which she thinks is still higher. Endowed with a marvelous power in literature, her whole temper and personal magnetism is in favor of unvirtue. But we do not need French morality in Anglo Saxon communities. It may be good reformation in Paris, but it is poor reformation here. There is Eugene Sue, and Dumas, and Victor Hugo, and a host of names with which, fortunately, I am not enough familiar to call off at hap-hazard, whose works, it seems to me, can only be read by morbid anatomists of literature. They are bad for the young, and there ought to be an emphasis against them in society, and in Christian families. Christian writers and teachers ought to denounce them, and bear testimony against them, such as to prevent their currency. It is said, "It will make people read them more." Yes; but it will make them read as criminals, and not as respectable men. The moment a man puts a book in his pocket, and reads it by stealth, it has gone out of the range in which it is liable to do much harm. The moment a book is made disreputable, so that persons who read it have to do it by stealth in order to keep respectable, it has lost much of its power for evil. Common literature is becoming more mighty than any other; more mighty than the sword or the purse; and the world is coming more and more under the dominion of it. And there need to be Christian legislation, a Christian public sentiment, and Christian canons of judgment; and nowhere more than just there is it necessary that men should be trained to abhor evil, no matter how gilded or beautiful, or musical. It is all the worse if it is beautiful. Poison disguised is no less poison, but it is more likely to be taken.

And lastly, men must bear a testimony, in such a nation as this, that shall be felt perpetually on the subject of political wickedness. Men who are in high places form a kind of public sentiment; they

separate themselves from the mass of men for the time being, and so, too often, they lose sensibility to the general public sentiment. We do wrong to ourselves, to our children, and to the commonwealth, when we permit wickedness in high places to go unrebuked. It ought to be rebuked in the pulpit, in the street, on the exchange, everywhere. When men have done wickedly; when they have done those things which touch the foundation of morality, unless they repent and turn away from their wrong courses, they ought not to be encouraged by even your social recognition. I know of men that I would not accept an introduction to. I could not consent to put myself on terms of equality with them. I would go to them as I would go to a man under sentence of death, to win him to repentance; I would go to them as a minister, and a missionary; I would go to them, if peradventure I might pluck them *as brands from the burning*; but where it is a question of social equality, I could not consent to stand side by side with them, and have it supposed that I regarded them on a level with a Christian man and gentleman. Such things are guarded in some nations where there are ranks and orders of nobility, but there is no such thing as that with us. There is in a democracy but one thing that can save us, and that is the aristocracy of Christian virtue. And the light of the heart of Jesus shining on things permitted, and on things not permitted, is to be our guide. And the business of the Church is to raise up a testimony that shall make itself felt, and that shall keep up the distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, selfishness and benevolence, so that no man can go to the one side or to the other without knowing it. That is what is meant by being "the light of the world." It is not that we are to preach doctrine—though that comes in incidentally; but that we are to make the lines and land-marks so clear that they cannot be removed by mistake, but only by malice pre-pense. So the Church will become more and more an ensample and witness, and more and more an encourager. And it will require some courage, especially for the young, and, for that matter, for the old; it will require some courage for men who have not been very positive and decided, and for men whose interests frequently lead them to wink at things which are wrong—it will require some courage for them to become witnesses against evil. But what is your faith in Christ worth, what is your hope in Jesus worth, what is your belief in the life everlasting worth, what is your confidence in purity and in the sweetness of the heart of Christ borne into your heart worth, if they do not strengthen you to bear testimony to the right and against the wrong wherever you go. Wherever there is wickedness, somebody must abhor it: not clamorously; not vindictively; not harshly; but firmly. You must set over against the wickedness of this world its opposite—

purity and virtue; and with such emphasis that men sh: lovely the one is, and how hateful the other is.

So, then, without urging you to become malignant reformers, or, still less, denouncers and destroyers, I would say, *Abhor, in all things, that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.* And the harvest and fruitfulness and beauty of that good to which you cleave, and which you caress—that it is which shall make your testimony against evil medicinal, remedial, not poisonous.

May God grant that in that great conflict, whether silent or clamorous, which is going on between the power of light and the power of darkness, between purity and impurity, between selfishness and unselfishness, between divine virtue and infernal malignity, every one of us may bear the name of Christ, and may be found on the side of truth and of virtue and of piety, *abhorring that which is evil, and cleaving to that which is good.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Heavenly Father, led by thy hand; for Jesus is our Elder Brother. We know him; and in him we know thee. Yet, not as a stranger do we draw near to thee. We have come so often, thou hast made thyself through infinite condescension so gentle unto us, and so familiar, that we are as children coming home. We have brought so many wants in time of trouble; we have come weighed down with so many burdens, pierced with so many experiences, and tried by so many temptations, that we come with confidence. We have put thee to proof, and found thee doing exceeding abundantly more than we asked or thought; so that we come familiarly, most boldly, to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and help in time of need.

We thank thee that thou hast made this way so glorious to us that not men who love most, nor those who are strongest, are so much to us as thou art, that dwellest in silence. There is a strength of succor above the sight, and beyond our reach. All things and all men that work for us in this sphere below are influenced by thy gracious Spirit to do it. Thou art the Fountain and the source of all help. Our life is in thee. We live upon thy laws. We live in the secret searching providence which constantly liminates evil, and brings in good. We live by those powers in ourselves which burn only as thou pourest fuel upon them. All that we have had, we have had from thee. All that by which we are sustained is of thee. All the ends towards which we are pressing forward are marked out by thee. And we rejoice that when we sin, and fall into suffering, and into disgrace, it is of thee that we are restored. It is not what thou hast done, but what thou art, that gives us hope. For thou hast disclosed the ineffable love of thy paternal heart to us. It is thy nature to forgive. It is thy heart's desire to cleanse. It is the peculiarity of thy holiness to nurse and patiently bring up holiness in others. And thou hast made it manifest in thy Son, and in his sacrifice, that sin is pardonable. And in him we have confidence as interpreting to us the whole glorious nature of a God who is willing to suffer rather than that we should suffer; of a God who would rather restore than punish; of a God who desires a remedy for sin, more than to crush it and make it final.

Thou, O Lord our God! dost behold the ineffable sinfulness of sin; and we are glad that it does not drive forth from thy heart flames that shall consume and devour the sinner; but that from thy heart come forth all the remedial tides of mercy and of love, that men may live, and be restored, and become trophies of thy redeeming grace.

And grant that our hearts may become like thine, that we too, may have great hatred for things unquietous; that we may abhor evil; that we may cleave to that which is good; and that we may be able to redeem men from evil, and, in a spirit of kindness, restore such as have gone astray.

And we pray thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are laboring for the reclamation of men from evil; for the restoration of society to virtue and to purity; for the establishment of good morals; and for the inculcation of true piety. May they never grow weary or faint. Multiply the number of those that shall go forth as heralds of Christ to preach the Gospel, and the unsearchable riches thereof. We pray that thy kingdom may come everywhere, and that wickedness may flee away; and that all darkness, and selfishness, and cruelty, and ignorance, and superstition, and tyranny, may henceforth be cleansed, and that that joyful day of deliverance may come which is shouted alike by angels in heaven and saints upon earth.

And to thy name shall be the glory of this triumph, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wouldst bless the word of admonition. Grant that by the light of the Holy Spirit it may take possession of our understandings; and not only of our understandings, but of our will; and that it may come down into our life. So sanctify us and fill us with all goodness, that everywhere we go, even by our silent example, we shall be witnesses against evil. We pray for more and more power on the side of goodness. Behold thy cause. How it struggles, often overborne! How yet the prince of the power of the air carries with him fashion, and beauty, and all things that fascinate the fancy and the imagination. Lord God, we pray for the purification of life. We pray for the ennobling of men. We pray for the weakening of those that destroy, and for the strengthening of those that would build up. Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on the earth as it is in heaven. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

XXIV.

THE DANGER OF TAMPERING WITH SIN.

THE DANGER

OF

TAMPERING WITH SIN.

I shall call your attention to the history which is contained in the 8th chapter of 2nd Kings, from the 7th verse to the 15th inclusive.

“And Elisha came to Damascus.”

Elisha and Elijah were two eminent prophets. Elijah had, not a great while before, disappeared. He was an extraordinary man, stern, imperious, dramatic to the last degree. Elisha was a milder, a far more gentle man; and in his life you will find less rebuke of wrong, less war against evil, and more works and miracles of mercy and of kindness. Nevertheless, a venerable figure he was, standing out and apart upon the background of that dark day in an eminent manner. These old prophets had no prescribed bounds. They roamed to and fro as the spirit carried them. They appeared sometimes in one part of the kingdom and sometimes in another. Occasionally, they had their regular circuits. Samuel did; but he combined with the functions of the prophet's office the judicial functions. Elijah did not. He sometimes watched the imperial power, to judge and to condemn and to execute. Elisha seems almost never to have gone to any such extremes as that; but he had rather a wandering nature—a habit of life impossible to such a state of society as ours, but peculiarly congenial to the condition of things in that nation, and in Oriental nations generally. And at that time he had, for some reason (it is not stated what), gone to Damascus, which lies at the northeast of Palestine.

While there, one day it was told him that the whole street was filling up; that there was a great company of men and a great company of camels. Some one counted the camels. There were forty of them. And the attendants were numerous. They wore the king's livery. And there were distinguished officers among them.

“Benhadad, the King of Syria, was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God has come hither.”

A most excellent name for an old public servant to honor. Pro-

phets did sometimes honor it. But there have been public servants who have lived long lives, and whom nobody thought of calling *men of God*. But this man, who had been, it might almost be said, in supreme influence, during his time, in his nation, was known even in foreign courts as "the Man of God."

The officer was brought into the prophet's presence. His name was Hazael. He came from the king; and this is the reason of his coming:

"The king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him and said, Thy son, Benhadad, King of Syria, hath sent to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?"

When kings, when great men are well and are in their royal clothes, they are a great deal better than common folks—at any rate they think so. And common folks are apt to think so too. There is a great deal of worshipping of great men; but there are no men so great that when they are sick they are not just as childish, and just as weak and feeble as anybody else. When a fever takes hold of a man, it never asks "Who is he?" And when a man lies unnerved, unstrung, with all the world apparently passing away from him, his head racked with shooting and fiery pains, and every bone in his body as it were disjointing itself; when a man lies thus a prey to sickness, what is his crown to him? What is his sceptre to him then? What are his treasures to him then? What to him, then, are all the things which he has done in the past? When men lie sick, there is no difference between one and another. And this old Oriental king, who, when he was well, was so proud and haughty, when he was sick sent his chief servant Hazael to "a man of God," saying, "Shall I recover of this disease?" For, as the sequel shows, he was very weak indeed—so weak that he could not lift a cloth. The prophet answers:

"Go say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover; howbeit, the Lord hath showed me that he shall surely die" [that is to say, there is nothing in his disease to carry him off; and yet he is going to die.]

And then, as the man stood before him, the prophet, lowering his face, gazed full into his eye. He spoke nothing, but looked him through and through, till Hazael could not stand the gaze any longer. He was utterly confused by it. This is the language:

"He settled his countenance steadfastly, until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept."

In other words, he brought his face down, and looked steadily and sternly into Hazael's face, and Hazael was ashamed. He was confused, and he lost countenance before the prophet; and at that the prophet burst into tears.

“And Hazael said, Why weepeth my Lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children and rip up their women with child.”

This declaration shot unaffected horror through the mind of Hazael. He was not a man prepared for the allegation of such cruelties. I have no doubt that his horror was genuine; that it was not dramatic nor excusatory, but real.

“And Hazael said, But what! is thy servant a dog that he should this great [this abominable] thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord has showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.”

From that moment, the idea began to take on an active form in his mind-work. And he went back and began his career by telling an out and out lie.

“What said Elisha to thee? [said Benhadad] and he answered, He told me that thou shouldst surely recover. And it came to pass on the morrow that he took a thick cloth and dipped it in water and spread it on his face, so that he died. And Hazael reigned in his stead.”

A man extremely reduced by sickness and enfeebled, with a thick cloth thus laid and held over his face, would suffocate speedily; and Hazael took this method, doubtless, that there might be no inquiry; that it might seem that the king had died a natural death. Having put all the men out of the palace, as we may suppose he did, he resorted to this cunning expedient. It may be that he would have experienced a horror at the idea of spilling blood; but then, to take a man's breath away by a clean method, in a skillful manner, was very different, he reasoned, from spilling his blood. He would not do such a thing as shed a man's blood; but he would take a cloth and spread it over his face. And he did not kill the king. It was not he! But the king was dead. And so, as the next step, the army being in his hands already and there being no contestant, he took the crown and sceptre, and was on the throne.

Now the first question which arises here is, was it right for the prophet to put this thing in Hazael's mind? Ought the prophet to have stirred up in him this ambition? Was it right for him to give him encouragement, or even suggestion of the possibility of his reigning in the stead of Benhadad? There is no evidence that the prophet did first put it into his mind, and much evidence that he did not. It is very certain that he did not put into his mind any suggestion of the steps by which he was to become king. It might have been by succession; it might have been years afterwards and in some regular order. There is not a word in the prophet's history which shows that he suggested to Hazael the road by which he was to come to this power, or the method by which he was to attain it. That was Hazael's own work. All he could say was, “The prophet has shown me that

at some time and in some way, I am to be king;" and he found out the time and the way himself.

It is evident, too, that it was only a spark that fell on tinder that was already there. No man can be tempted suddenly to great crime. It is contrary to the nature of the soul. There is to be a preparation for all great wrongs in the foregoing tendencies of the person that commits them. No man becomes a tyrant in a day. No man becomes a miser in a day. No man becomes a drunkard in a day. No person becomes a termagant in a day. No person falls into any great extreme suddenly, as down a precipice. Men come to these things little by little. And if Hazael deliberately committed murder, he had thought about murder before. One man might kill another in a passion without having pondered the matter; but no man ever deliberately killed another man who had not thought about it before. No man ever committed an illustrious wickedness without having pondered, if not the thing itself, yet the possibilities of it. Men think, oftentimes, "I would not kill that man—of course I would not; but then, what if he were killed? What would happen?" And then they detail to themselves all the blessings which would come from it. "With this obstacle out of my path," they say, "there would be this benefit to me; this augmentation of my estate; this increase of my power." And so men build castles in the air, and brood upon wrong and crime, and prepare themselves, by brooding, for giving away under temptation.

Now, do you suppose Hazael had never had in his mind the thought, "Why should not I be king?" He had administered the king's whole power. He had tasted the sweets of power. He had known all the machinery of government. And he had said often to himself, "The sword fits my hand, as well as my organization; and why would not the sceptre too?" He had pondered this question; and doubtless he meant at some time or other to take advantage of his position and sit upon the throne. And when the prophet said to him, "God has revealed to me that thou shalt be king," it did not teach him anything that he had not thought of before. It was just what he had thought about. And he turned his face and said, "Is it not time for me to be king? And what is in the way? What is easier than to put this old sick, weak king out of the way? I will do it." And he did do it. And it was his fault.

Then what of that exclamation of horror—"Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" This was not uttered in reference to the fact that he was to be king, but in reference to the declaration that when king he would be a cruel king, and that he would seek the destruction of Israel, and murder women and children, and

exercise power in the most tyrannical and oppressive manner. It was at this that Hazael revolted. And yet, it came to pass that he reigned for about forty years in Damascus; and during that time he wrested away from Israel all their possessions east of the river Jordan (they were extensive and valuable possessions) and drove them through the land even into Philistia. And he laid siege to Jerusalem. And after destroying the land, he was bribed from taking the city of Jerusalem only by receiving all the treasures of the temple. And in his military career he did inflict all the miseries that had been foreshadowed by the prophet, and more.

From this history some points of instruction may be derived.

1) You cannot predict, from a man's early natural disposition, what he will be capable of. There is a gradual unfolding which takes place both in good and in bad. And though it is true that a naturally good disposition is a very great advantage, and creates some presumptions in favor of a man, yet natural dispositions are not enough. Men need something more than that which simply makes them appear amiable and lovely in the beginning. For, if a man has ever so amiable and kind a disposition, it is possible for him to lapse from one step to another, and from that to another, and from that to yet another, until by-and-by he is far down below that disposition. Nothing can save a man but firm habits, steadfast principles, and the grace of God in confirmation of them. No natural endowment of amiableness can keep a man from being spoiled; for although a man may not, with such a disposition as this, rush into every sin, yet every man will be tempted according to the disposition that is in him. And though he may not be accessible to all kinds of sin and temptation, yet there is some one line in which he is accessible. Every man may be so tempted that, although in his youth everything was fair, in his old age everything turns out blighted.

If you could, by some power from on high, go back and read the early history of men who have made shipwreck of life; if you could look upon the faces which they bore when they were beautiful, amiable, sweet children, beloved of father and mother, and around whom all hopes clustered; and if you could see how promising was their early manhood; and then contrast this with their old age, when they are blighted, scarred with passions, disgraced by crime, utterly wrecked morally, you would be amazed at their rapid and complete deterioration. There has been many a man who has swung on the gallows, and many another who ought to; there has been many a man who has lain in prison, and many another who ought to have been his companion; there has been many a man who has been marked by public reprobation; there has been many a man that has been swept by

bankruptcy and disgrace, who in the beginning of life had just the same chance of being honored and beloved while living, and lamented when dead, which those men had who have reached saintship. You cannot tell by the way a man feels to-day how he will feel a year hence, or six years hence.

It is not enough, then, that a man should have simply good dispositions or good intents. When Hazael received the declaration that he should become a monster of cruelty there can be no question but that it affected him with horror. He did not believe it then. And yet, the seed and root were in him, and it required but the appropriate circumstances and temptations to bring them out.

2. This leads me to say that men are capable of a course at which their whole nature revolts. But it must be through a gradual reduction to a lower condition. Each step toward it will be slight. There will be few plunges in the early periods of decadence. Men do at first things that are right in themselves. Then they go still further along through things that are not wrong in themselves. Then they go still further along in things that, if they are equivocal, can scarcely be called positively pernicious. I think that men in evil courses are like persons who go down winding stairs. The upper stairs hide the lower ones, so that they can see only three or four steps before them. Men go down courses of pleasure and vice and crime, seeing only one or two steps in a whole career. And so each step is a slight one. Although the whole of their career may be monstrous, there is no one single point of it, clear down to its very last stages, that taxes very much their fear or their conscience. Men seldom, until they become hardened, do wholesale wickedness. That is the last part. That takes place when men are given once to do iniquity. But in all the early stages, in all those periods in which men think they are perfectly safe, the peculiarity is that they take short steps, and but few of them, adding a little more to-day, and a little more to-morrow, and a little more next week, and a little more next month, and a little more next year, and a little from year to year. And so they are gradually demoralized and carried down, until at last they are destroyed. That which there was no power to do suddenly, in time they have done themselves. There are persons, some forty-five and some fifty years old, some younger and some older, of whom people, looking on them, would say, "What monster is that?" And yet they are persons who came to their degradation without a shock, little by little, little by little.

3 This is the reason and philosophy of keeping aloof from courses which lower the moral tone of the mind. There are very many courses in life which are wrong, not because the things themselves are wrong, not because the immediate consequences are mischievous, but because

they have an effect upon the mind to lower its moral tone. A man, for instance, may begin in things that at first do not particularly violate honor. He may be sensitive and high-minded. And yet these things may have a tendency to depress the tone of honor. And they may be repeated until by-and-by that man's feeling on the subject of honor and his power of resistance to dishonor, is so dull and feeble that when there comes, at length, after this discipline and gradual change, the appropriate temptation, he will do that which is dishonorable and scarcely feel it. It is the early steps that lead a man to wrong under such circumstances. They gradually bring him into a condition in which he is predisposed to wrong.

Men are seldom stricken down with malaria when they first go into malarial regions. Frequently the disease does not show itself until the second or third year. And persons living in new countries often rejoice in their immunity. I have lived where chills and fever was prevalent, and heard a great deal about it, and seen other people have it; and I noticed that often they escaped until the second year; but during the first year they were breathing the malarial atmosphere, and a gradual process of poisoning was going on in them which had not disclosed itself. But the moment it did disclose itself they broke down under the disease. I feared that I should have it; but I was not susceptible to such things. I seemed to have a peculiar temperament in that respect. The facts, therefore, showed that a man in one state being attacked by disease would take it, whereas a man in another state would not. If a man has vigor and resiliency of nerve; if there is that in him which, when he comes into the atmosphere of contagious diseases fights them and throws them off, then he can walk in the midst of dangers and be safe. But if there is a certain lack of tone and resisting power in his system, he breaks down.

It is precisely that state which is the most dangerous in the early life of young men and maidens. It is that moral condition in which there is a want of tone and resisting power, so that when sudden temptation comes upon them their system breaks down under it. It is not alone necessary that a man should not do technically wrong. You are not safe when you simply keep your feet from known sins. No man is safe who does not keep his heart as in the fear of God. A man must *abhor* wickedness. He must *love* that which is right. In this temperament, if I may so say, of the soul there is safety; but there are ten thousand flitting pleasures, ten thousand associations, ten thousand acts in the life of young men and maidens, which, though they are not wrong in themselves, have a tendency to drag men down lower and lower, and more and more weaken their resisting power and prepare them for the attack of evil when it comes by-and-by. And one

reason why so many fall so quickly and so completely when the stress of temptation overtakes them, is that they have been gradually and imperceptibly brought into a condition in which they were predisposed to corruption under evil influences. Their final destruction is the legitimate result of the way in which they have been tampering with themselves.

People say, "Is it wrong for a man to read any books he chooses, if he never allows himself to go wrong? There are books, of course, that I should not want to read in my family, nor in the presence of ladies; but they are extremely entertaining and I read them; and I do not think that there is any danger in it for me. Why not read all books and see all sorts of pictures and places?" Because no man can render himself familiar with such things, even out of curiosity, without marring his purity, without dulling his sensibility, without lowering the tone of his resisting power, in which is his safety. I do not care who you are, if you acquaint yourself with evil from no other motive than curiosity, you are not safe. A man who, as a teacher, or a censor in literature, has the unpleasant duty imposed upon him of probing and exposing wickedness, may fulfill that duty and not be harmed, for the reason that he is acting with his mind under the predominant influence of benevolence and obligation; but when a man, merely for the sake of gratifying his curiosity, goes into the midst of things that are perverting in their tendency, he is taking out of his nerve that which gives his nerve the whole of its preservative power. I regard, therefore, as most pernicious, the familiarity which men have with bad men; with vulgar courses; with low conversation; with obscene wit and stories. Men who call themselves respectable are accustomed to listen to operas and plays that are inherently bad, as portraying the most loathsome crimes and vices. There is many an opera in New York whose central element is reeking lust of the most detestable and hideous character. Nothing can be worse. But then they take a silk string and wind about it; they cover it up with exquisite little airs and melodies and scenes, and men go to enjoy themselves; and more and more they become fascinated, and gradually they lose their manliness. If you say anything to them on the subject, they say, "Why, I do not care for those things." Ah! can a person let those outrageous abominations be dressed up so exquisitely and dance so gaily before their eyes that they do not think they are wicked, and be unharmed? I do not believe in that purity or that integrity which can become so accustomed to prurient sins in life that they gently pass before them without a revolt. I believe that as a true ear is actually pained by hideous discords, not because the books or the philosophy of music proclaims that they are disagreeable, but because they stab the ear; so a pure

nature hates all that is salacious, not because custom or religion says it is bad, but because all the power of the soul feels that it is positively abominable. And if to any persons they are not abominable, it is because they have lost their sensibility. There are a thousand things which men do, and which are permitted to be done in society, which wear away the enamel, rub off the bloom, destroy the freshness of the sensibility, but their ultimate tendency is not taken into account and men think they are not dangerous. There are a thousand liberties that men take in the various relations of life which are full of peril. Little things they are; but the very grounds on which we stand in maintaining decorous observances in the family and in the community, are the grounds on which we are to stand in condemning these little levities. They gradually lower the tone of the moral feelings, till by-and-by all resisting power is gone, so that when temptation comes all is destroyed.

Children should be taught that the customs and observances of society which have relation to propriety of conduct, are not founded on simple prejudice but are the results of wise legislation and experience, and that they stand between a man and corruption.

I have given a direction in respect to the passions; but the same is true in respect to all the other great master influences. A child is brought up wholesomely, and the law of the household is that a man ought never to praise himself and seek flattery, or anything of the kind. At length he goes into society, where compliments and flatteries are exchanged, and where everybody is fishing for compliments and flatteries. "Have you one for me? I have one for you." This is everywhere going on. And the child at first is shocked. But after a time his sense of propriety becomes accustomed to it. And by-and-by he is just as big a peacock as anybody. And every single step from beginning to end of this change is a step of decadence and decline.

The same is true of pride. And the same is true, also, of avarice. A man may begin very generously; and by almost imperceptibly minute steps he may become a hard-handed curmudgeon.

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the ends thereof are death."

There are very few people who, if they saw the ends of wrong courses, would venture upon them. There are very few people who, if they traced the results of evil-doing to the end of life would indulge in it.

There are thousands of persons whose lives were nobler in the family than they are in the world. There are thousands of men who had more honor and principle and generosity and moral purity, when they left their father's house, than they have ever had since. Honor

that man who has gone through life without loss in real manliness, and increasing in moral vigor and purity all the way down. Happy is that man who grows better as he grows older. But how many are there of such? Have you grown better from your childhood up? Do you think you are cleaner-minded than you ever were before? Do you think you have a truer conscience, a more sensitive honor and a greater abhorrence of all that is mean and wicked? Do you feel that you have become attuned and chorded in integrity by the whole effect of life upon you?

Irreverence is permitted in the same way. There is every temptation in society to irreverence. Sacred things are handled familiarly by men. There is such a disposition to boldness, and rank, intemperate familiarity which grows up with democratic institutions, that neither the Church, nor any sacred book, nor usage, nor thing, nor even the name of God has any considerable respect among men.

Men ask me, "What is the harm of profanity? When a man says '*Damn*,' he does not mean *Damn*. When a man says '*Curse it*,' of course he does not mean *Curse it*. And when he uses great oaths, he does not really mean anything bad. There is no great harm in that, is there?" Is there no harm in a man's pursuing a course which steadily wears out the whole sentiment? Is there no harm in reading books that lower your faith or belief in truth? Is there no harm in talking with men who destroy your confidence in things spiritual? Is there no harm in indulging in expressions with regard to things sacred, that are like rasps, wearing down the very surface and taking off the very skin? There is harm in all the various modes of destroying sentiment and the root of veneration and reverence.

Now in all these things I go back again to the thought that in the beginning men do not mean wrong.

When fishermen are on the shore looking for bass and bullfish, they are accustomed to chop up a great deal of bait when the tide is right, and let it float out as a kind of lure. And the fish, that have a kind of telegraphic communication of their own, pass the word round, "There is something to eat;" and they come flocking up in shoals; and one seizes one morsel, and another another morsel, and another another; till by-and-by the cunning fisherman puts a morsel on a hook and throws it out. And soon some unsuspecting fish comes up and takes it, hook and all, and presently he is flopping on the shore!

It is just so that the devil fishes for men. There is this morsel here, and that morsel there, which men take with impunity; and they think there is no danger and wax bold; and by-and-by they get hold of a morsel with a hook in it. It is not wise for men to feed where there are fishermen about, fishing for their souls that they may destroy

them. Ten thousand things there are which are "innocent in themselves," as men say, but which are thrown out as lures, and by which multitudes are drawn into things which are not innocent. Hence it is that men are not to consider themselves safe when they simply watch against specific evils. We are to watch against particular temptations; but we are also to watch our inward dispositions. A man is to watch the whole temper of his mind and soul. When he does this, and only then, he is safe.

It is declared in the passage which I read in the opening service,

"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

There is a period in the future, there is a coming time, when the thing which at first seemed so harmless shall be grown, and shall bring forth its fruit, and shall prove to be a monster, and turn and devour you. Therefore you are to take care of the foregoing dispositions and early states and stages of your experience.

I would to God that some prophet could come with authority, and stand in my place, and lower his face, and look fixedly upon the young that are here. I wish that at that young person, cheerful, gay, sweet-minded, apparently amiable and gentle, but with a rotten point of self-indulgence in him, which leads him to live from day-to-day for the present sensation, for the pleasure of the present hour, without regard to the benefit of to-morrow or the next hour—I wish that at that young person the prophet could stand and look, prophesying, and showing what that self-indulgence will lead him to far down in his career, and how it makes him accessible to all those who can tickle his vanity, and renders him a prey to every seduction, and will leave him, by-and-by, a child of damnation. Oh! thou round of cheek, smooth of brow, and serene of eye, thou wilt die in a brothel! "What," you say, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" Oh no, not now—not until you have forgotten much of home; not until you have had wound around you the fascinations of flattering society; not until a thousand influences have dazed your mind; not until the day appointed comes. But then, "*when lust hath conceived, it will bring forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, will bring forth death.*"

Is it cruel to say so? But oh! is it not a greater cruelty that it should be true? My heart is pained when I know what is going on in life. Hideous stories come down to us of monsters of mythology that claimed some virgin at every festival to be given to its maw; but we sacrifice, not single ones, but hecatombs. And how cool is the public pulse! how little indignation there is! How many there have been, born and built with angelic mould, full of thought that might have made them majestic as kings and transcendent in loveliness, whose

early steps were such as to lower their moral tone, and who kept sliding down and down until they were destroyed, utterly and without remedy.

“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.”

I would that the prophet could lay his eye upon some young men that I see, who are healthy and strong and noble in their purposes, but who say that they are going to be free and independent, that they are not going to be bound by superstitious precedents. Wine bad? Not to them. Tippling bad? “Yes, to fools, but not to young men of my spirit.” Drinking in a social way bad? They scorn the idea that they need to bind themselves with a pledge, or to turn out of their way to insure them against becoming drunkards. Oh Prophet! where art thou? Look upon these young men, and say to them, “I see you early overthrown; I see you early death-struck; I see you dying in disgrace; I see you lying in a drunkard’s grave.” They would say, “Is thy servant a dog, that these things should be true of him?” Yes, you are a dog, of whom just these things are true. If you are not afraid; if your hand is reached out for the cup when it is red and you have no concern; if you scorn the warning which is afforded by ten thousand instances of men who are just as good as you, and just as strong as you are, but who tampered with the cup and were destroyed, it requires no prophet to foretell the issue. I can myself tell what the end shall be. Here are thousands and thousands, and some that I know, who are dying now from this very cause. Their life looked as fair as yours; their hopes were as bright as yours; they were as certain of their power to retrace their steps in time to save themselves as you are; and yet they have fallen and are perishing. Oh! that men would ponder these things.

I behold men of generous impulses starting in life on certain courses; and I know what the end will be. I see men sacrificing themselves for gain. I see men giving their time for mere money. They do not care for the welfare of the community. They are not interested in charitable enterprises. They have no sympathy for the unfortunate classes. And yet they are men who, before they were attacked by the delirium of avarice, had generous and noble natures. I know what will become of them. They grow up more and more avaricious and less and less manly. As their riches increase, their manhood dies out. And I see them forsaking, one after another, their old companions that are not profitable. I see that as they pile up treasure, their generosity diminishes. There is a fever of gain which a man who is inspired to watch can discern. And I see them at last, lying back in their pondering moments, and turning over and over their money. Night and day they live for money. And every other thing is destroyed in them

except the love of gain. They are utterly carried away by avarice. If I had told them when they began, that they were coming to this, they would have said, "Is thy servant a dog?" And yet, those very steps which they were then taking were steps by which they would inevitably become misers.

And so of every other wrong course—for time fails me, and I can not carry out in detail any further, the thoughts which are suggested by this general history.

We are all of us either advancing from strength to strength to appear before God, or we are, consciously or unconsciously, drifting further and further from the early period of innocence; from the early honor; from the early faith. We are drawing near to the heavenly land; but oh! with what freight do we go? What have we in the world? What has been our life? We had a fair start, most of us; how have we improved our opportunities? There are some who had not a fair start. There are some who had drunken parents. I have in my mind now two men who were the children of worthless parents, but who worked upon the farm to support themselves and earned their way through college; and now both stand high in the Christian ministry. And I know men who were born of Christian parents, who were the children of Christian ministers, and who had everything to help them, both in regard to organization and precept, during their childhood, but who have worked their way straight down, until they are miserable wrecks and outcasts. But, thank God! if there are persons that go away from the Christian instruction of their childhood, there are also persons who do not. I have known many persons who, though they came out of the battle scarred, nevertheless grew better as they grew older. Are you growing better as you grow older?

Fellow citizens, men, brethren, is not this practical business? The year is drawing to an end. You are going fast to your account. I see in many of you the signs of decay. I bear them myself. I am no longer a young man; and you, many of you, have passed your youth. Do you ever take an account, an inventory with yourself? Do you ever say, "What am I? How do I compare with what I used to be? Am I harder, or more generous? Am I truer, or am I less scrupulous? Have I divine wisdom, or have I sneering, worldly wisdom?" Are you nearer to the spirit of Christ than you used to be? Are you nearer to the spirit of God? Are you better prepared for the society of angels than you were half a score of years ago? Does the world hold you less tenaciously than it did? Do you feel prepared to let go, if it be the will of God, this year? Can you say, when you meet your God, not, "I am spotless"—oh, no; but, "I love, I honor, I adore Thee above all, as the Chief among ten thousand and the one altogether

lovely?" Is the language of reverence and love possible to your life? How have you been living? How are you living? Will you not take this home to yourself to-night, and make inquisition into yourself? You know better than anybody else what secret thoughts and feelings you have cherished, and what secret sins you have committed. You know what your actions have been, and what the motives of those actions have been; and you can take a general account of your life. And why not be faithful to yourselves? Is there any use of cheating yourselves? I can understand how a bad accountant might make up a false account to cheat his employers; but I cannot understand how a merchant could make up a false account to cheat himself. And will you make up your moral account so as to blind your eyes and hoodwink yourselves, and stagger on for years, and at last plunge into the other world all unprepared to meet your Judge and the judgment?

It is not enough to say, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do these things?" Ah! many and many a man has done everything that he abhorred in the beginning. Many and many a man has fallen upon every evil that he dreaded in the beginning. Many and many a man has made shipwreck of faith, though at first he started for the other thing. I beseech of you take heed. Read the lessons that are around about you. Watch men and see what their lives are. Listen to the testimony of God's word. Call God to your side, and yield yourself to his will. By prayer, and by faith, and by reliance upon the power of the Holy Ghost, live so that at whatever hour the Son of Man may come, he shall find you right and willing to depart and be with Christ, which is better than life.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We humble ourselves before thee, our Father. We draw near to thee in the spirit of children: and yet of children that have gone wrong. We are conscious of our sins. We are conscious that we have sinned against our own light and knowledge. Thou hast had occasion to be offended with us. Thou mightest long ago have been discouraged and cast us off. It is the nature of thy love to endure. Thou art long-suffering, patient, slow to anger, quick to relent. Thy nature is healing to sin, and none shall open their hearts to let in thine influence and go uncleansed. The fire of thy Spirit shall burn up the dross. The purity of thy soul shall cleanse the impurity of ours. The truth of thy thought shall straighten out the crookedness, the lies, the falsity, in us. Thou wilt pour through the soul those tides of the divine Spirit that shall cleanse it; and by thy power we shall be regenerated, ennobled, lifted up into the likeness of God. And into our souls breathe the filial spirit, so that we shall call out in every hour, in every spontaneous moment, "Our Father which art in heaven."

We thank thee for all thy bounty which there is in the fatherhood of God. Oh! what comfort we have plucked from it already! It has reached above our heads as a vine that grew by diminution; for all we have taken of thine over-arching care has but caused it to put forth new clusters. Thou art giving without diminishing the supply. Oh! what consolation have we had when we fled from the terror of thy law; when we fled from the relentless aspects of nature, and found the warmth and sympathy of thy paternal heart! Thou art good. Thou art not only good but thou art merciful. How gentle are thy ways towards us! Grant that thy goodness and thy gentleness may win us more than terror and more than necessity. Grant that our hearts, moved by honor and by duty and by love, may turn unto thee and to thy ways. May we desire thy favor more than all other things. Thou knowest the battle of every one. Thou knowest the temptation that to every one is most potent. Thou knowest where are our weaknesses and what are our infirmities. Thou dost behold the doubtful conflict. Thou hast watched over us with more true tender watching and care than ever a mother watched over a child. We need not tell thee who we are. We need not tell thee what we are.

Lord Jesus! but for thy grace, we should have perished; and by thy grace we are what we are in good. Yet continue thy good to us. Inspire us and strengthen us and lift us up as things that are mighty to the destruction of pride and selfishness and appetite and every evil way. Turn us to thyself. Be school-master to us in love. Discipline us. Instruct us. Guide us to the knowledge of all that is good; and may our inclination follow our knowledge. May we have the way of righteousness. And, we beseech of thee, be near to those who are yet too weak to walk, and to all that are cast down and cannot rise up, and to all that are taken captive by sin and cannot release themselves, and to all that are snared, and to all that are slumbering, being stupefied by sin. O thou Healer! draw near. Thou Deliverer! appear for the rescue of souls that are in peril. There are many who make feeble cry to thee, not because they deserve aught, but because it is thy heart's delight to do good, that they have faith in thee. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt help those who seek to help others. Give them wisdom. Inspire them with prudence. Give them might and power upon the hearts of their fellows. May all that seek to lead men in Godly ways be themselves led by God. May those who seek to injure men, to carry them down, and to make mischief of happiness, be met with rebuke, and overthrown by the breath of thy mouth and the brightness of thy coming.

Oh! hasten that day when all men shall learn the lore of love. Hasten that day when thy Spirit shall be breathed into all thy churches, and through thy churches into all the community; when laws and government, shall be

founded and administered in righteousness; when all the institutions of society shall be filled with the spirit of heaven. Grant that that blessed day of prediction may come when sorrow and sighing shall flee away, when cruelty shall cease, when superstition and ignorance shall depart, and when the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters fill the sea. Oh! hasten that long-delaying day. Grant that those who labor for it and die without the sight, giving place to other generations that labor and die again without the sight, and all of us may behold it, if not upon these shores, yet in our Father's kingdom. For this world is thine own. Oh Jesus! thou hast redeemed it by thy precious blood. Thou shalt win it through the dark ages. Thou art the Traveler unknown, seeking it. Thou shalt find it. Thou shalt cleanse it. Thou shalt ordain purity and justice and truth and love. And all the world shall see thy salvation.

Make haste, then. Consummate thy promises. Fulfill the blessedness of thine intent. Bring in on this earth all thy mighty power.

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



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word of instruction which we have endeavored to give. May all those who are in the morning of life take heed to their courses. May all those upon whom thou hast placed the burden and heat of the day watch warily, knowing whose adversaries abound on every side. May those who have passed the years of their lives, and are standing in their autumn days, more than ever see that they are prepared to meet their God. May there be no more delay. May there be no more excuses. May men no more deny their duty, or turn away from their Saviour. Lift up thy cross, and make it glow before the eyes of every one. And may there be many who shall be won to it, and subdued by it, to the honor of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. *Amen.*

XXV.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE A NEW LIFE.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE A NEW LIFE.

I have selected for the theme of discourse, this evening, the passage of Scripture which I read in the opening service, and which is contained in the forepart of the third chapter of John's Gospel. It is the account of the interview of Nicodemus with our Saviour. I select it because, while it has been ten thousand times discoursed upon, and in ways most edifying, there are certain tendencies existing in our time, and developing themselves in the most interesting manner, which can be made in no way so beneficially effective, I apprehend, as by holding up the truth which was made known by our Saviour to Nicodemus in this passage.

The whole interview and the whole thought of the Saviour become very interesting when they are looked at in connection with the character of this man.

The Pharisees were not very good; but they were the best men to be found at that time. They were the most patriotic of the Jews. They were the most learned and intellectual class. They were the most religious. And it does not alter the fact of their endeavoring to do well, that they had fallen upon a wrong method, and that it was a method which exhausted itself in benefit, and then led them into positive mischief.

After the Jews had been carried to Babylon and scattered, their services were discontinued, and their law was forgotten, and intermarriages were gradually being formed; and the bad example working, little by little, little by little, it became evident to the heads of the nation that unless something were done they would perish, and the Jews that were remaining from Judea would be, as the ten tribes had been, mixed and lost among the nations of the earth. Therefore it was that a class of men sprang up among them who undertook to keep the Jews to their national faith, to keep the children in memory of their history, to stir up, by every means in their power, the remembrance of the land from which they had been exported, and to keep alive all those historic circumstances which should make them proud of their history, and proud of themselves, and, more than that, prevent their forgetting the peculiar economy under which they had been reared.

These men undertook to bring out, and to expound, the whole Mosaic ritual. And, as times had changed, and their condition was very different from what it had been in their own land, there sprang up innumerable questions which were not provided for in the text—questions of casuistry; questions relating to adjustments of duty; a thousand nice questions. These questions were answered according to the best light of these men. And the Pharisee was the man who undertook to maintain, among the Jews, in their dispersion and captivity, the spirit of Judaism, and the spirit of the Jewish religion. And when the Jews came back again to Jerusalem, that which had been so useful abroad was still continued at home. The Pharisees, although never separated as a sect, and organized as our sects are in the Christian religion (the term *Pharisee* being rather the name of a school of thought, or of a certain class of men with peculiar tendencies), went on with this same work. They were men who undertook to live a righteous life according to the best light they could obtain from their own scriptures, together with the coördinate reasoning of all the learned men of their nation. They were extremely scrupulous, therefore, in all those points of morality which were pointed out in their Scripture. But as pride, and vanity, and self-seeking, and various other moral evils, had no special prominence in the Mosaic institutes; so they had very little notice at the hand of the Pharisee. While he was rigorously pure, according to the Mosaic law of purity; while he neglected no known duty; while he followed the way of righteousness according to the best interpretation that he had; he was yet spiritually blind; and he became proud, and vain, and hard, and unsympathetic, and unloving, rigorous for duty, and without mercy. And it was against these elements that our Master inveighed most severely. But it cannot be denied that among the Pharisees were specimens of the best natures and the best characters that were found in the Saviour's time.

So, then, if you can select from them one of the best of the Pharisees, who represents the highest estate to which the moral nature had risen among the Jews (and the Jews were preëminently higher than any other nation on the globe, morally,) and then listen to the instruction which Christ gives him, you will be able to come nearer to the ideal of your Master than in any other way. This we have in the case of Nicodemus.

He was a Pharisee; and the whole history shows that he was one of the noblest of the Pharisees; that he had a hunger of soul; that he was not satisfied with the external righteousness which he had attained. The teachings of Christ had touched a secret feeling in him, and opened a desire for something more.

He came to Christ by night—it has been supposed from cowardice.

I think not. I regard Nicodemus as one of those men who are timid from excessive conscientiousness; who are not demonstrative; who are very thoughtful and quiet; who are very desirous to know what is right, and to do what is right, but who are distrustful of themselves, and therefore are mild, moderate, secluded, even. He came by night, not because he was afraid, but because it comported with that kind of inquisitive, conscientious, mild nature of his. Afterwards, circumstances showed that he was far from cowardly. When he sat in the council, and they were to condemn Christ, he spoke out before the others, and said, "Doth our law condemn any man before he be heard?" And afterwards, when, to everybody else, the whole mission of Christ seemed to have been exploded, and Christ had been crucified, and there was no friend to stand near him; when John was not there, and bold Peter had fled, and every one of the disciples that were nourished in Christ's bosom had gone—then this man it was, whom men are pleased to call "timid," and to accuse of sneaking to Christ by night to avoid responsibility—he it was, that, with Joseph of Arimathea, dared to go before the Government, and risk everything, for a cause that had failed, and gone out of sight, and demand the body of the Saviour, and give it an honorable burial. It is a shame to asperse the name of Nicodemus with the charge of moral cowardice. No, he went to Christ by night because he was a ruler, and he did not wish all the men in the body to which he belonged to be picking at him. He was not yet prepared to take a stand. He wanted a conference with Christ; he wanted instruction; he wanted to go to him when he was not thronged—when he was at leisure; he wanted few or no spectators; and he did just what you or I would have done. He went by night to the Saviour, in order to have a long communion with him.

Now John, and perhaps one or two disciples besides, were present whilst this conversation between Christ and Nicodemus was going on; and we should have expected that our Saviour would say to him, "You are on the right path; and you are among the few that I have met of the Jews who have a spiritual insight. You have moral earnestness. Go on. Develop. Bring forth to the higher form that which is already in you." But no; singling out this best one of all the men of that time, Christ, in this conference, without any preface, without any qualification, said:

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

And when Nicodemus could not understand it, Christ went further, and told him that it was not the birth of the flesh, or physical birth, that he was speaking of. Said he:

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

All real people have Christ in them

dead, nor the Pharisees either. All these classes of men we have, to help us study the histories.

Now, if Nicodemus had been one of the Sadducees, our Master's exhortation would not have seemed so remarkable; but to take a Pharisee, who was rigorous in every external duty—that is, in what we should call *moralities*; to take one out of the Pharisees who was so much more honorable than the mere specialists; to take a man who was as strict as Nicodemus was, and to say to him, "You must be born again"—this was indeed surprising. Christ virtually says of the virtues of Nicodemus, that all this is not good for nothing, but is only the foregoing steps, the preparation, of that to which God's spirit would lead him. The true ideal is that to which you are to come, not by keeping the law, not by the force of your own will, not by the meliorating influence of all the social sympathies which surround you, but by the power of the Holy Ghost. That which, when your soul is inspired and lifted into the sympathy and presence of the divine Heart itself, is produced in you—that is the manhood, that is the nature, which you are to seek. For,

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Consider, in this light, the question of *moralities*—a question very much debated. Are we to teach that a man is to substitute this, if I may so say, *second nature*, which is born in him by the Holy Ghost, for ordinary morality? Oh no; no man ever can become spiritual who is immoral, or unmoral. That which is born in us by the power of the Holy Ghost presupposes the fulfillment of all natural laws. It presupposes obedience to all those things which belong to the order of society, and to the lower constitution which men are in, so far as it goes. These moralities are not only not despicable, but indispensable. They bear the same relation to the after life which the basilar leaves of a plant bear to its blossoming. We do not say, before the lily throws out its blossoming stalk, that the leaves of the lily are good for nothing; and yet, who would be put off with the blades of a lily and not with the blossom? Who would be put off with the ground leaves of a ranunculus, and not with the cluster of flowers which is the ultimate, highest form to which it can be brought by the finer forces of light and heat?

And so in human life, all the great duties which belong to the constitution of its family and of the state are prerequisites. They come along in the same operation. They do not, however, reach to that condition which we call *piety*, or to that condition which Christ would bring us to by the new birth.

What is it worth, then? Well, it is worth just what it is worth—no more, and no less. The Indian, in his wigwam, knows a great

many things; but he is not a civilized man. And suppose you should put this question, "What is all that I do know worth, if this is not civilization? If I am brought out of this state, am I to leave all these things, and count them as nothing?" Certainly he is not. Relative to his condition they are unspeakably important; but as compared with a higher development they are of very little value. That is to say, if he should become refined and noble in civilized life, he would look back with pity upon the condition that he was in when these were the best things he had, not because they were in and of themselves bad, but because he was so far from having attained, by growth and development, that which was possible to him.

When a man begins to write, his letters are crooked enough. His sentences run up hill and down hill at a great rate. His writing is a hideous scrawl. But then, shall we say to the child, "It is good for nothing?" No. It is good to begin with; and it is good to leave behind just as quick as he can go on unto perfection. You must creep before you can walk. You must go through the lower forms before you can come to the higher forms. Moralities belong to the lower life, and are important; but they are not to be confounded with the higher developments of life. Although they may stand in the order of time, and in the order of Divine Providence, and in the order of grace, as intimately connected with them, as pre-requisite to them, and as, in some sense, ministering to them; yet, after all, they are not the thing that the soul needs.

From the urgency with which we preach the necessity of a distinctively Christian disposition, the new life, and the new birth, men get the impression that we undervalue truth, and honor, and justice, and godliness, and fidelity. No, we do not; you *over*-value them. We believe them to be worth just as much as you do. Nay, we believe them to be worth more than you do. The only difference is, that we look at them from a point of view which you do not. We believe them to be worth teaching, and worth exhorting to, and worth believing. And I say to you, "If you can have nothing else, have them;" as I would say to men, "If you can have nothing better, have copper; if you can rise to silver, take silver; but if you can get gold, do not stop on copper, nor on silver. Take the highest." And I think you would take it.

Now, in regard to these moral matters, these lower forms of religious development, these rude elements of wisdom and goodness in life, we say, "Take them, at least. Restrain your appetites and passions. Develop kindly sympathies. Live to do good among your fellow-men. But do not think, for one single moment, that that is the sum total of manhood." It is the mere brush that grows at the

bottom of the trunk. It is not the broad tree. It is not the magnificent blossom of the magnolia. The pure, white blossom of spiritual life is high above this, in a better air, and under a stronger sun.

And yet (and it is just this point that induces me to discourse on this subject to-night) there are a great many who say, "What does all this talk about following Christ amount to? There are men who certainly are better Christians than those who are in the Church, that do not even believe in the divinity of Christ. They are upright, public-spirited men, and so most valuable citizens. Nobody contributes to all worthy enterprises so willingly as they. They are temperance men, and are active in endeavors to save from intemperance those around about them. They are seeking, by their example, to impress the community with ideas of generosity and integrity. In many respects they are self-sacrificing. And although they may not technically be followers of Christ, are they not really followers of Christ? And are we to say of them that they are not in the new life?" I say, unhesitatingly, that they are not in the new life. There are many men who seem to be only moralists, but who I admit are in the germinant state of Christianity. There are those who are familiar with the truth of Christ, and are excellent in the lower forms of morals, and of whom a great many men say, "They are followers of Christ, though they do not know it, and though they reject His name." But I say, No. They are very good men in a lower sphere, but that which is the distinctive characteristic of Christianity or of manhood as interpreted by Christ—the new conception of human nature, the new conception of human life and human development, given us by the Lord Jesus Christ—requires, not that men should do certain just things, and merciful things, and pure things, but that they should have raised themselves above the animal condition of life, and come, by the touch of God's creative spirit, into the supersensuous state, prepared to rise out of this natural sphere into the sphere above, and become members of the great assembly, where are spirits of just men made perfect. And while I do not rail at these lower elements, I say, So many Christian churches, so many professors of religion, are sordid; so many profess to be Christians, and so few give evidence of it, that I am not surprised that there should be constitutionally just and upright men who put them all to shame.

Now, I do not regard a man as a Christian simply because he is in the Church. Neither do I regard a man as a Christian simply because he is just and upright. A man may be better than members of the Church, and yet not be a Christian. That is not the point of comparison. We cannot afford, unfortunately, to make Church membership the standard of Christianity. We are to measure all men by

nothing else than the ideal of Christ himself; viz., *that faith which works by love*. It is by that opening development, that newly created element, in the human soul, by which it takes hold of the great invisible realm of God, and the master truths of that invisible realm; it is by the power of all-pervading love in the human soul, that men are to be saved. And nothing could be worse for this world than to lower the conception of what Christianity requires.

In the first presentation of this view, it seems as though it were illiberal. It seems, for instance, as if those men who are honest and good ought to be reckoned as Christians. It seems as though those who do not call them Christians were illiberal. It seems, on the other hand, as though a man who maintains the integrity of a higher ideal, and holds men to it, were an illiberal man. But it is not so.

Here are two teachers. One of them is thought to be liberal. He lets the boys do about as they please. They nuzzle in the mud. They run to all manner of license and self-indulgence. And he flatters them. In that way he works them along as best he can. And on the whole they are pretty good boys. But he turns them out into life uneducated, undrilled, unself-denying, and without the power of self-restraint. And he is called a good man. He is *goody*, but not good.

The other man knows what life means; he knows what manhood requires; and he holds his school strictly and sternly to the line of duty. He will not permit delinquency. He scourges and drives up, by every stimulus possible, his boys to higher honor, to greater industry, to nobler aspirations, to larger and larger acquisitions.

The so-called liberal man is the man who permits men to run riot, and waste their powers, and under-build, and under-plan, and under-act, and under-live. Is that liberalism? It is liberalism down-hill. They are the truest liberals who lift the ideal of character, the standard of ambition, higher and higher, and hold men to it.

When, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ says that moralities are not sufficient (for that is substantially his declaration to Nicodemus); when he says that the ideal character is one that is born of God, and that it is by the power of the Divine Spirit that we are to come to it, and that we cannot come to it by any other instrumentality, he is the truest friend of man. And among men, he is the most generous and kind who maintains that ideal, and shows his fellow-men, not that the things which belong to the body are worthless, but that true manhood is far higher than the body can reach, and far higher than the ordinary reason can reach—so high that it can only be reached by the power of God in the soul.

“To them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”

I shall not undertake to answer the question which we hear propounded, and which branches off to an entirely different subject; viz., what becomes of those who reach so high on the plane of morality, but do not touch the yet higher plane of spirituality? You might just as well ask me what becomes of a marksman who almost hits the mark, but does not hit it. You might just as well ask me what becomes of an anchor that is let out of a ship, and reaches almost to the bottom, but stops short without touching it. You might as well ask me what becomes of a portrait which is splendidly painted, and is almost like the man that it is designed to represent, and yet is not like him. You might as well ask me what becomes of medical treatment that comes very near curing a man, and yet lets him die. The question as to what becomes of these developments of morality I leave to the future, and I leave to the Master. "Eye hath not seen." I know not. But one thing I know, that whatever may become of those who have had but little chance; whatever may become of those who have not been instructed, there scarcely can be room for doubt as to what will become of those who have had an open eye directed to the clearest truth, who have had it urged upon them again and again, who have been convicted by it, and whose souls have been stimulated and electrified by the power of this truth as it is in Jesus Christ. When men, under such circumstances, deliberately put the truth aside, and crucify, so far as in them lies, the Lord of Glory afresh, and tread under foot the blood of atonement, and call it an unholy thing, it can scarcely be doubted what will become of them. If we are to accept the revelation of Scripture at all, we must take this part of it.

That there are many persons who have this new life in the very lowest form, I do firmly believe; and that all who have the germ principle of it in them will be saved, I verily believe. It is not that we have developed very much, it is that we have a point of development established in us, that determines our safety and salvability. It is that the Spirit of God has gained a lodgment in the soul, that the leaven is there, that the root is thrown down and the germ is pointed up, that gives us ground for hope. That being secured, there is an infinite space of time for men to develop in.

But of those who are without the germ-form, of those upon whose view there is no light of the word of God thrown, and who have no hope, there is not much that we can say. What are we, that we should speak with authority where God himself is silent, and where the all-merciful Saviour is silent, or speaks only in words of warning, and of solemn dissuasion?

And so let me say to you, that, whatever may seem to be the plausibleness of modern reasonings, in respect to character, whatever

may seem to be the real excellence of the lower sphere of human attainments, no man shall see the Lord except he be a participator of His holiness. No man is in the kingdom of God unless he has developed all those higher spiritual forces, and come into this ideal state of manhood, by the regenerating power of God.

This is the truth that I have for you to-night. Men may be very good men in their way, and do many things that are amiable and exalted, and yet,

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Children of Christian parents, to you is my appeal to-night. Men and brethren, I am not here the advocate of a sect; I am not here calling for volunteers; I am not here to build up a party; I am simply a man standing among men to speak to you of those truths of my Master and your Master which bid you hope for a nobler manhood than it is given to nature to unvail or to conceive of. You are not forever necessitated to move in the body, nor with the animals that dwell upon the earth. Neither are the lower faculties your only inheritance. They were given you for a purpose; you are permitted to use them; but there is the new and living way of Jesus Christ by which you may go, step by step, higher, to a sphere where you will be removed from these material laws, in the presence of God.

To you I bring this higher life, this nobler education, this privilege and prerogative, the sonship of God. Will you accept it, and become sons of God?

Ah! blessed are the crowned with invisible crowns, whose hands may toil with poverty, but whose souls handle the eternal riches of God. Blessed are they who droop in earthly sorrow, and mourn: they shall be comforted; for all the heaven drops down compassion and mercy for them. Blessed are they who suffer here that they may reign there. Blessed are they who, when Christ comes to them, know their Master, and accept from him that power by which they become sons of God, and heirs, joint heirs, with Christ to an eternal inheritance.

May this wisdom be yours; and may you have the fruition of this spiritual life, and this immortality, and this glory, through Christ our Redeemer. *Amen.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Heavenly Father, encouraged by the memory of all thy past goodness to us. Thou hast taken away the terror from our thought of thee. We no longer behold thee as interpreted by fear, nor through lurid guilt. We no longer behold thee sitting in judgment, terrible, full of all threat, administering the law and its condign penalty. Thou art the Helpful One to us. Thy heart beats for us and for all. And from thy brow is cleared all scowling threat. And thine eyes are full of compassion. And thy lips speak mercy and love. And thy pierced hands are spread—hands that bear empire, and draw men to thee, that they may become thine; that they may enter into a secret life; that they may be translated from the power of the flesh into the realm of the spirit, and live as unto God. And we rejoice that thou hast made so many witnesses of this thy power. For thou hast begun in them this life, which, although it languishes, and is obstructed, is not destroyed. As our days in summer are overhung with clouds, so thy face, by tempests of our troublous passions, is obscured. Yet, the day is begun, and the light is shining, and shall ere long triumph over every difficulty and every hindrance, shining clear to the end. We rejoice that thou hast granted unto us no mean measure; that we are set forth to become the sons of God; that we are not to live, as do the beasts, for the pleasure of the hour, for sense and then perish; that it is ours to be translated into thy kingdom, to be enrolled, when this flesh shall fall and rise to immortality and glory.

Grant, we pray thee, that we may foresee the blessedness of this estate; that we may by faith apprehend thee clearly, and eagerly embrace it, and be satisfied with nothing less than this. And whatever perishes, let not our crown perish. And whatever we may fear in this world, let us not fear exclusion, in the world to come, from thy presence. We pray that thou wilt deal with us with rigor, if it be needful. In love chastise us, that we may follow our Father's hand, and know that he will not permit us to err unto our own destruction.

We pray that thou wilt grant that many may be aroused to a sense of their necessities. May they behold the uselessness of their self-indulgent lives. May they turn away from the vanity of the world, and from the lusts of the flesh. May they seek the things that are pure, and true, and just, and noble. May they rise above the thoughts and feelings of these earthly days and nations, and enter into the republic above, and have such a commerce with thee and with the spirits of just men made perfect, that they shall be already in fellowship, where soon they shall be in full citizenship.

Grant, we pray thee, that thy kingdom may be advanced everywhere. May thy servants who preach righteousness be armed by the Lord, and not be daunted nor turned back.

And now, with so many insidious errors coming in—now, that so many things would blur and hide the light of true piety, grant that there may be faithful witnesses found, and that they may bear such testimony that the Lord shall yet be made known and honored everywhere.

We pray for the elevation of the nations of the earth; for the spirit of civilization and of knowledge, and of liberality; for the cessation of war. We pray for the fellowship of nations; for peace and amity; for helpfulness and not hindrance. We pray that all forms of evil may cease. And grant that thy kingdom may come, and thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

We ask it in the adorable name of Jesus, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Grant, our Heavenly Father, that the word of truth spoken may sink into good and honest hearts, and bring forth fruit unto eternal life. May we not be seduced, by men's reasonings, from the simplicity of thy word. May we hear the voice of Christ speaking of our noble manhood, and not the voice of men flattering each other. May we be discontented with ourselves. May we evermore have that glorious discontent which shall lift us, not in mutterings and repinings, but in aspirations and yearnings for things noble and pure in thy higher sphere. We pray that thou wilt open the eyes of those who are blind, and unstop the ears of those who are deaf, and soften the hearts of those who are hard-hearted. Grant that there may be many that shall hear in truth thy word, and receive, and have wrought in them that which comes from the working power of God. Which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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XXVI.

CONCEIT.

CONCEIT.

“Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.”—PROV. XXVI., 12.

There is very little hope of a fool, and if a man who is conceited is worse off than that, he is badly off indeed.

The opinion of Solomon is not shared by men very generally. Conceit is very much in repute, and very widely prevalent; and people who are conceited by no means think that they are fools. They think that Solomon was one.

What is this conceit? Men are thought to be conceited who are positive; but that is by no means what is meant by conceit. A man of an intense nature, and a clear-cut understanding, sees precisely, when he sees at all, and he *knows* what he knows, and seems, oftentimes, to be opinionated and conceited. He may be opinionated, but that is not necessarily being conceited. Nor are we to suppose that every man who is over-confident is conceited. That may spring from hopefulness. A man's buoyant temperament, a man's sanguine disposition, leads him oftentimes into conceit, and, as a general thing, there is very little in his experience to correct it. There are some men who, if you throw them down and leave them, get up again. They are like an india-rubber ball, which, no matter how much you compress it, resumes the same shape and elasticity still. There are some men who, no matter what happens to them, retain their original characteristics. And ordinarily an over-sanguine man, who is hopeful to his damage, remains so; and his life is a series of ups and downs, of successes and disasters, closely connected.

If it were not for these men, society would be very apt to stand still. They are pioneers. They go before. And their disasters and successes are so many lessons to those who come after them. The bankruptcy and failure of sanguine men has, in thousands of instances, pointed out to successors the right way to go. As in a narrow channel, one ship, going before, and running aground, becomes a warning to other ships that run into the same channel; so many men, going before in life, and making mistakes, become warnings to those who follow behind them.

Again, there are persons who have the appearance of being conceited, on account of simple courage and an energetic temperament. They affirm and they feel with an immense deal more pressure of blood to the square inch, if I may so say, than their fellows do; and it gives them something of a towering and dictatorial way, and men say that they are conceited.

A man is conceited who has an opinion of himself, of his abilities, and of his deeds, which is quite disproportionate to any fair measurement or judgment of him. There are a great many conceited persons who are the subjects of much wit and *badinage* behind their back, and who are very harmlessly conceited. There are a great many persons who have an overweening estimate of themselves. Everything in the world is thought of by them in relation to themselves. You may start any subject you please; and in less than a minute they will get off from that subject and commence talking about themselves. All creation runs to a center; and they are the center. They love to talk about themselves, and they love to hear other people talk about them. The one thermometric test of everything, is, *how it affects hem*. And you will frequently see such persons, in all their intercourse with their fellow-men, have an innocent, a sometimes unconscious, and a sometimes conscious conceit. They move about, and people, smiling, look after them, and say all manner of uncomplimentary things of them, sometimes bitterly, and sometimes amiably.

Although this conceit is really a great weakness, yet it is not that kind of damaging conceit which Scripture speaks of, and of which I shall speak to-night.

It is a great weakness for a man to have this constitutional vanity, this overweening, intense estimate of himself; but still, if he conforms to the great laws of life, if he conforms to the great moral and intellectual laws of his being, he will go successfully and safely on through life, although with some abatement to dignity, and some abatement to reputation. For, when everybody sees that a man is taking care of his own reputation, and of himself, there is no sympathy with him. Men let him take care of his reputation and of himself, and do not help him to do it, under such circumstances.

The first form of conceit of which I shall speak, and which comes under the condemnatory passage I have read, is that which usually breaks out at the point of transition, where the young are just passing from subordination in youth to self-government in manhood. This mischievous conceit is that which leads men to set aside established formulæ, to override experience, and substantially to be skeptical of the great laws of cause and effect as they stand related to moral and intellectual development in life. In many a

generous nature—indeed, perhaps, in most—the transition from subordination and family discipline to independency, is made through a period of conceit, in which the young man and maiden no longer tolerate government. It irks them to be reprov'd or commanded. They will not have advice. They grow sulky and ugly, and are a torment to themselves and everybody that loves them. They know more—they are sure they do—than the other folks that live in the house. They know more than their father and their mother do. They admit that the old folks did very well for old times; but then they live in new times, and, being young folks, they catch the rising spirit of the coming day; and they do not think it fair that they should be held to conformity to the old ways. And so very excellent young men continue to make themselves intolerable for a short period. It seems as though young people have to go through this period, just as children have to go through chicken-pox, and measles, and rash, and all other little diseases of that kind which break out once, and then are over with.

If this matter stops early, if a change takes place with some of the first experiences of practical life, it is well. If not, the beginnings of the end are frequently found. At just this point there are many who make fatal steps, and begin with a downfall from which they never recover themselves. In innumerable persons this rash of conceit breaks out at the very threshold of their manhood. But in many natures it is very much like the prancing and frisking of an untamed colt; and the harness and the road are the cure. There has been many a young man who was intolerably conceited until he was put soundly to work, and responsibilities were laid upon him, and cares began to be a part of his daily food. Then he began to feel that other men did know more than he, that there is some use in counsel, and that to have some one wiser and stronger to lean upon is indeed a great blessing and a great mercy. Now this temporary conceit of youth is comparatively a weakness, rather than a sin and a crime, as other forms of conceit are.

Another class of conceited persons are those who find themselves constrained in their country life, and feel that they have not room in which to develop all the talents which God has committed to their charge. There are a great many youth in the country, well bred at home, who would grow up to be respectable men—farmers, mechanics, or professional men—in their own region round about, but who feel the spirit of a hundred men in them, and think that the country is not large enough, and that they must emigrate to the city. The city is the place for a man to find his fortune, they think.

Far be it from me to say that every man is bound to vegetate

where the seed sprouted, and that no man may go from the country to the city, or from the city to the country. I would not be understood as saying that there shall be no circulation. I merely animadvert upon those who have this contumescient feeling that there is not room enough in the country for them to display the treasure of their talents in. They come down to the city, thousands and thousands more than the city wants. It is a pitiful thing to see the enormous pressure there is at every open door of ordinary pursuits, and the overcrowded state of the city. It would promote the morals of the nation if the city were to vomit out one-third of its young population. They are not wanted. They trample each other down in the dust in their competitions. During not more than one-third of the year can half the force be employed. During the rest of the time, Heaven knows how they get a living. Not always reputably nor honestly—certainly not in a manly spirit. And yet, more are perpetually coming from the country to the city.

If a man be tough, if a man have two men's force, he may go from the country into the city and do well; but of all places on earth for dependent men, for men of a weak nerve, for men that are not elastic and enduring, the city is the worst. It grinds up weak men as the mill grinds wheat. It is the last place that they should go to. But hither they come in countless multitudes, having the impression that in the city fortunes go around begging persons to take them; that in the city treasures hang like grapes in a vineyard over a trellis, and may be had by stretching out the hand. They come to the city feeling that nimbleness and smartness will certainly win here. How many, many there are, who come down annually to fall into the pit! The most mournful thing in city life is the continuous destruction of young men and maidens. Because it is so hidden from our eyes, because it is so gradual, that we do not perceive the stages of it, we are shocked. But if a single case should be selected, and we should see, as in a dream, the enactment which takes place, first from virtue to weakness and vice, and then on to wickedness and crime, that one instance would fill us with horror. And there are hundreds and thousands of instances which we think nothing about, simply because they are so much hidden. We know that they are taking place; we know that multitudes, green and callow, come to the cities, and in the remorseless maw of vice and crime are consumed. As the larger fishes eat up and destroy the smaller ones, so this great whale-city ingurgitates and digests multitudes and multitudes of the young men that were brought hither by conceit; by an overweening self-confidence; by an impression that they had the capacity, the power, to succeed; by an inordinate sense of their importance, and of their faculty and skill for

getting along in the world. And borne hither by this conceit, they are destroyed ere long, and their fragments are spewed out; and that is all that there is of their life.

Then there are those who perish by conceit because they assume that they can succeed in life on the principle of good luck, instead of by a recognition of and obedience to the great law of equivalents. The law of God in this world, is, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" and the apostle declares that "God is not mocked." Conceit declares that God *can* be mocked. And there are ten thousand young men in this city to-day, and in the great city adjoining, who are just as sure as can be that they are going to cheat Providence. Others fail, to be sure; but then, they were not as smart as these are. They did not know as much! They were not as cunning nor shrewd, nor deft, nor lucky! There are multitudes who believe that they can sow idleness, and reap abundance; that they can sow carelessness, and have the products of care; that they can sow self-indulgence, and get that which only comes from frugality and economy, and enterprise, and industry, the longest continued. There are multitudes of men who believe that they can squander their passions, double-handed, and throw away their life, and yet gather all, and garner all. There are multitudes of persons who come down to the city, feeling, not that they are going to make their fortune by the closest attention to business. Oh no! That is no part of their intent. They mean to do just as little as they can. They mean to elude detection just as long as they can. They believe that they can live a double life. They believe that they can live a life, capacious and deep, of licence and licentiousness, covered with a sort of cream of higher qualities. In that lower life their blood is to circulate. There all their nerves are to be played upon with infinite joys, varying from day to day, and above that they are going to have a little bit of a life of respectability and morality. They are going to show their employers, and other people, that they can live in the indulgence of their lower faculties and sensuous nature, while they keep up a better life on the surface. There are thousands of men who live for the gratification of their selfishness, their lusts and appetites, their animalism, and are conceited enough to believe that they are going to succeed in life in the wicked game that they are playing. They think they can succeed by cheating their employers, cheating the world, and cheating God. They think they can succeed though they turn their days into pleasure, and their nights into dissipation. They are going to do as little as they can; and that little they are going to do to their own advantage; and by their deftness they are going to set at naught the canons of strict honesty and honor, and are going to be glittering, and brilliant, and happy. They are not

going to read nor to study much. They are somehow going to be wise through their smartness. They are going to succeed in life by their wits. More than that, they are going to do just what their heart wants to do, and just what their flesh wants to do. And they think they are going to dodge all the nets and snares which are set to harm and destroy them. They think that somehow or other they are going to maintain the reputation of being virtuous and honorable men, at the same time that they are practicing dishonorable and unvirtuous habits. God says to them, "Thou fool!"

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him."

I see shops crowded with just such young men; I see stores crowded with them; I see offices crowded with them—young men who are trying by ignominious ways to maintain themselves. They believe that they will be able to cheat God, and that what they sow they shall not reap. They are going to sow chaff and reap wheat, in their judgment.

It is the want of manliness, it is the want of moral stamina, it is the want of a wise discrimination on the part of young men, that makes the name *clerk* so often a name of contempt. The business is right: it is the miserable conceit of the shallow-pated, and the unlearned, and the unvirtuous, that makes it disreputable.

I would that men could learn to believe a few things which all history has been busy establishing. Industry is the beginning of prosperity. Frugality is the handmaid of industry. Temperance and self-restraint are the indispensable concomitants of prosperity. He that means to prosper must pay for whatever he gets. I do not mean in money. There is another counter over which men take their goods. If a man is to have learning, he must give an equivalent of study for it. If a man is to have an experience, he must give an equivalent of application for it. If a man is going to have a character, he has got to earn or pay for that character. And no man will ever prosper in this world by luck, unless it be by the luck of getting up early, and working hard, and maintaining honor and integrity. Prosperity gained in any other way will be a delusion and a snare to every young man.

Conceit carries men far beyond these bounds which I have marked out. Although the testimony of experience is that no man can carry a coal in his bosom and not be burned, or touch pitch and not be defiled, there are multitudes (and every year the ranks are filled up as they drop off) who are conceited, and believe that they are a match for knaves and knavery; that they are a match for seduction and seducers. Multitudes tread along the path where there are skeletons innumerable of men who have been destroyed, and yet they do not believe that they are going to be destroyed. Many young men, going to the

door of the lazar-house, have seen heaped up there corpses of men that have been destroyed; and yet, vainly confident of their own safety, they have gone in, to perish likewise. If men would take warning from that which meets them at the doors of gambling saloons, and the myriad other places where thousands upon thousands are swallowed up and destroyed, instead of listening to the voice of their conceit, what multitudes would be saved who are now lost! But they are bound to try their luck. "What is the harm of an innocent game of cards?" say young men to us. No harm in and of itself; but there is harm in the associations which surround it; in the society into which it draws one; and in the desire which it excites in men for unjust and unlawful gains. For every man is a gambler who seeks to get money without giving a fair equivalent for it, whether he be gambling for stocks or anything else. And yet men think they can avoid being affected by these associations, and this society, and these provocations. Though others fail, they think they will not fail. But how many that think so do fail!

I know a man in this town who was worth seventy or eighty thousand dollars, which he had acquired by sound industry; but eighty thousand dollars was just enough to kindle in him an insatiable desire for wealth. The spirit of avarice took possession of him, and he must needs go into "the street." He entered upon a course for which he had not been trained; and when he came out, instead of having increased his eighty thousand to five hundred thousand, as he meant to do, he had lost it all, and was penniless. And then, to cover his disgrace he became a drunkard. Conceit took him in, and disaster kicked him out.

How many young men there are who, though old heads warn them, and though there are thousands that have been destroyed in the same path that they are about to enter, as they might see if they would open their eyes, yet press forward, and say, "Oh! a faint heart never won a fair lady. Nothing venture, nothing have. I will try." The feeling is just this: "Ten thousand men fail because they are not as smart as I. Now look, and see me go into the street and make money." And men do look and see them go into the street; and they see them come out of the street again crest-fallen, plucked, drooping, dishonored, discouraged, all because they made fools of themselves at the beginning, by being too conceited. They are double fools, because they not only were conceited at the beginning, but are disappointed and crushed at the end.

Not only do men gamble, but they resort to gambling houses through curiosity. There is not a young man who has not heard about the dangers of these places. All young men have heard their

parents and their neighbors talk about, and have read about in the newspapers, and known about personally, cases of young men who have gone from the country to the city, and lost their money by mock auctions, and thimble-riggers, and other swindling operations; and yet multitudes of these same young men go down to the city, and in their conceit, think they can go in the midst of things, gratify their curiosity, and escape—and are caught like so many gudgeons. They are caught and plucked, in their greenness, because they are so conceited. Men go into gambling saloons, knowing all about them, knowing well that they are traps and delusions. They know that an old trained gambler is a match for five hundred unsophisticated young men; and yet they pit themselves against him. With all his experience, with all his craft, with all his secret arrangements, with all his organized knavery, you would say that it was impossible for anybody to make head against him. A man may have some chance in a game of chance, but in gambling saloons chances are not allowed. A man who gambles for a living is nothing but an incarnate thief, a cunning thief, a perpetual thief—first, last and all the time a thief. And his business is to steal. He has made stealing a profession, and is practiced in it. He is acquainted with men's dispositions, and knows how to take them. And here comes in one of these green young men. He is exactly like a little fly exploring a big black-bellied spider's web, that says, "It does not look as though there was very much to be afraid of here; I do not see anything that I cannot manage; at any rate, I will try," and pitches in. And after he is once in, you hear one faint buzz, and that is the end of him!

There are thousands of conceited young men who come down to the city, oh! so shrewd; oh! so smart; oh! so confident of their ability to go into danger and come out without being harmed. They are eager to measure themselves with the men who go to these places. They go to the theater, and nudge their companions, and say, "What would the old man think if he saw me here? What would Aunt Sal say? Would not they think it strange?" And so they jeer and laugh. And when they come out of the theater they think they would like to have company, so they go home with company. They are so smart that they think they are not in danger! There is nobody else that is so keen as they are! They feel secure. And they go into the house of death. And there they are wrought upon by drugged wines and drugged courtesies; and the dart strikes through their liver. They were so wise that they thought they could meddle with pitch and not be defiled.

"The lips of a strange woman drop as an honey-comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell."

The house of the strange woman is a deep pit, and multitudes of these conceited young men fall into it. They think they can be wicked with impunity, and they venture, and are slain. It is a house of darkness, it is a house of perpetual death, and thousands upon thousands, in long, groaning processions, go in.

Oh! that when men come to the front door, some angel would take them to the back door, and let them see those come out who went in blossoming in the beauty of early manhood. Oh! that men could see the certain end of these ways from the beginning. Oh! that they could see the ghastly skeletons, the pallid cheeks, the leaden eyes, the rotting bones, the consuming marrow, the hideous outcome of such a life! But ten thousand men perish because they deem themselves so smart; because they are confident that, however many may have perished, they are not going to perish.

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him."

There are a great many of these conceited men listening to this sermon to-night. There are a great many that ought to listen to it. It is high time that you heard some one speak on these subjects. Your friends at home do not know what you are doing; and your friends in the city are encouraging you to go in wrong ways; and there is no faithful voice to tell you the truth to your face, and say, "Thou art the man!" I say to many that are here to-night, You have begun the career of a fool. You are attempting to play double. You are attempting to live an unvirtuous life and reap all the safety of a virtuous life. You are attempting to counteract those great laws of God, those great moral laws, which are as absolute and real as the law of gravitation and the laws of light and heat, and yet reap the blessings which can only come from obedience to those laws. You have begun to live in ways which, if you continue in them, will lead you to death; for they are ways the ends of which are death. And I beseech of you to stop while there is time to stop.

When a man has, every day, the testimony of his conscience that he has done as well as he knew, that he has avoided all known evil, and clung to that which he knew to be right, he is safe; but if a man deviates, and goes into courses that are wrong, he has to be on his guard all the time, he never knows when he is safe, he has committed himself entirely to luck and chance.

I have seen just such things as these. I have been here, now, over twenty years, and I have seen four or five generations of young men ruined. It only takes from about four to seven years to ruin a man. This is about the gradation. A young man comes down to the city, from a very good family, and from a village Sunday-school. He is an

amiable, gentle, sweet-faced, kind-hearted, well-meaning young man. That is the first picture or vision that we have.

The next vision that we have is, that the old home-made cloth is gone; that the plain, clumsy roundabout is exchanged for the nice, trig coat. And now he wears a flashing, flaming pin, and all manner of ornaments. His salary is small, but then, he must *dress*. He is a perfect Adonis. You can see by the last touches which he has put on, that he thinks himself to be a pink of perfection, and that he has made the most of himself, and the most of his time. And people say of him, "He has blossomed out."

The third vision that we have, is, a certain flush across the cheek; a certain audacious look; a fire in the eye; an intense manner; a something that suggests a man of pleasure. He is now a man that knows his "p's and q's." He knows what life is. He knows how things go in this world. He is the subject of much praise, and fools look up and envy him.

The scene shifts once more. The fourth vision which we have, is, that the man begins to find the world going against him. He has not been so fortunate latterly as he was formerly, and everybody begins to talk about him. People, now that he is going down, instead of praising him as they did when he was prosperous, turn against him, and say, "When such a man goes down, he never goes up again." The difference between a good man and a bad man, is, that when a good man falls he shall rise again from his very health and elasticity; but when a bad man falls, he is like a rotten apple, that, falling, smashes all to pieces, and cannot be put together again. A man runs through this career: first the period of blooming youth; then the period of fast degradation; then the indulgent period, and then the fourth period—that of decadence, when he begins to feel that he is sliding down. He was the confidential clerk of his employer; but he has been put down, down, and he has taken more and more to dissipation.

Then comes the fifth period. The man has the delirium tremens. And soon he comes to the end of his career. He dies a miserable wreck. He reaps the fruit of that which he has sown.

This is going on right before men's eyes; and yet, they are conceited; and they go straight on in the steps of those who have perished, and do the same things, and know it, and say, "They were not shrewd enough to avoid the dangers of the way, but I, being wiser than they, will escape harm. They were slain, but I shall not be slain."

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him."

Nowhere else is this more marked than in the security which

men fancy they can work out while in the participation of intoxicating drinks. There is no other phenomenon more striking than the enormous waste of life through intemperance, and the inconceivable conceit of men in regard to drinking. A young man can scarcely be persuaded that any of the evils which come from the use of intoxicating drinks will fall upon him. A young man begins with the wine-cup in social parties; and he will drink, not because he loves wine (it is the testimony of all who drink that in the beginning they never drink because they like spirituous liquors), but always for some other reason; and he soon acquires a taste for it; and that taste grows; and at length it becomes his master; and finally it ruins him, both body and soul—both for this world and for the world to come.

This spectral drama passes right before the eyes of young men, many, and many and many a time; and yet, they will step into the ranks, they will take the same cup, they will enter upon the same career, they will make the same excuses, they will fall into the same presumption, and they will come to the same end. And others will be found springing up to take their places. And these will follow in the same path, and contract the same habits, and make the same plea, and come to the same death. And still others will take their places, and go right through the same career.

So it goes on, not in fives and tens, but literally in hundreds and thousands; and you cannot persuade men that they run a risk in drinking. They will reason about other people's drinking, and point out the fallacy of other people's conceptions, and show where other people were too venturesome, and exhort other people to moderation; and yet they will not believe that there can be any danger in their case.

“Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.”

Men think that intoxicating drinks will do them no harm. They know that such drinks are not necessary for any man in health; they know that in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases in a thousand they are more likely to do harm than good to men in health; they know that where the use of them is beneficial it is an extreme case; and yet they will invariably say, “It will do me no harm. I would caution men not to touch it, but it will not hurt me.” More than that, they will say, “The dangers that others have fallen into can, by a discreet and right order of things, be prevented. Just as soon as I see that it is doing me any harm I can stop it.” But they do not know what they are saying when they make this assertion. I have heard men talk about leaving off bad habits. I have heard men, for instance, say that they could stop the use of tobacco—and they could till they tried it! I have

known men to try it, and, after a wretched abstinence of one, two, three, four, or five days, begin to chew again. And when I said, "Why did not you stop?" they replied, "Well, I could have stopped, but I thought I would not!" I have known cases of persons who, in order to lay aside chewing, commenced smoking—which is not supposed to be so bad; and the result was that they smoked and chewed both. And sometimes men have undertaken to leave the cigar and the quid, and wind off with snuffing, and have ended with snuffing and chewing and smoking, all three. Again, and again, and again, such men will say, "If it were necessary I could leave it off;" but when they acknowledge the necessity of leaving it off, and try, they always fail.

And that which is true of narcotic stimulants of this kind, is still more signally true of drink. When we take into consideration the fact that by drink the muscular structure is changed, and a state of things is introduced into the constitution which men have no knowledge of, and which does not leave the question to their own will whether they shall or shall not, we can understand how it is that so many fail who earnestly desire and try to abstain from indulgence in intoxicating drink. Now and then there is a strong man who is able, by the exertion of his will, to lay it aside; but those who have not the stamina which he has, are unable to do it. The majority of men have not this power; and yet, every man assures you that he has it, and that intoxicating drink acts on him in such a way that he can stop drinking whenever he pleases to. But let no one delude himself with any such idea. There may be in you a hereditary taint, that answers to powder, which, if a spark falls upon it, will instantly explode. It you keep powder from fire, it will not do any harm; and if you keep away from temptation to drink you will be safe; but if you go where you are tempted, you are in imminent danger. Many a man carries in him an organic, hereditary propensity to drink. If this propensity can be shielded from certain excitements, he will go all his life long sound and wholesome; but if it is brought into certain conditions of pressure, it will develop into an insanity for drink, into intoxication, into drunkenness. And no man who takes the cup, and begins to drink, needlessly, rashly, foolishly, can tell what sleeping devil is in him that will be awakened by this bad practice. And to say that you can stop when tens of thousands have tried it and failed, is to prove yourselves conceited.

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him."

But in another respect men are conceited. Passing from the conceit which leads men into vices and crimes, let us look at conceit in those aspects which relate to a man's conscience, faith, hope, devo-

tion. Men are conceited in regard to religious truth, and in regard to their interest in religious things. There are a great many who are believers in the Word of God, and in the essential truths which have been evoked from that word. There are a great many who go wrong, yet never lose their faith in the Scriptures; but there are multitudes of persons who have, through conceit, abandoned all faith, so that they believe in nothing. I know nothing that is more unhappy, nothing that is more fatal, nothing that is more unmanly, than the want of faith. I do not blame a man who, having been educated in one school, adopts the views of truth which are held by another school. If a man, having been born a Protestant, goes into the Catholic Church, under the conviction that that Church is right, though I do not go with him, I can understand how he can make the change, and be sincere and manly. He substitutes one set of affections for another. The main thing is that a man shall believe something which will govern his life. I can understand how a man reared in orthodox views can take on the later liberal views. I can understand how a man educated in liberal views can take on more stringent and orthodox views. It is merely changing one set of affections for another. That which I reprobate is, the sliding of men out from under all religious convictions, and their letting go everything, and for reasons so unworthy, being founded neither upon manhood, nor investigation, nor knowledge, but upon simple conceit.

How many young men do I hear say, "I do not believe a word of all the doctrines, and I do not believe the Book itself!" Did they ever read one single treatise on these doctrines? Did they ever spend an hour in a critical examination of the Bible? They know nothing about the doctrines, and they are ignorant of the contents of the Bible. They are ignorant of all the reasons which have been given for believing the Bible; and above all, they are ignorant of that which is in the Bible. They are ignorant of the essential spirit, the nature and the reality of those truths which are imperfectly embodied there. For the truths of the Bible must be experimentally learned. The teachings of the Bible are not clearly defined. The Bible is not like a philosophy or a poem, which is fully wrought out. It is to be tested just as a cook's recipe is, by *trying* it, and not simply by reading it. The Word of God is a book on which men are to build a complete life. If you build in such and such ways, you will come to happiness here and hereafter; but if you build in such and such other ways, you will come to misrule here, and destruction hereafter. A man can put the Bible to proof, not by argument, but by life. You can see what there is in truth, in purity, in love, in justice, in generosity, in magnanimity, by practising them, and not by reasoning upon them. And

yet, how many young men set the Bible aside without proving it—without putting it to trial! How many form their opinion of the Bible, or of sacred things, upon the argument, in a third or fourth rate newspaper, of an ignorant, shallow-pated scribbler! How many men cut loose from their early faith upon no other ground than that of compliance with the notions which prevail in the circle among whom they move! They talk conceitedly about ministers, and about churches; they criticise Christian people; they laugh to scorn their companions who read the Bible and endeavor to live by its precepts; they set themselves up as superior to all these things, and sometimes they go so far as to mispronounce the names of great authors, and talk about systems of philosophy, and the modern tendencies of religious ideas; and they go through life giving their encouragement to every element that makes a man contemptible, and putting obstacles in the way of every element that makes a man respectable.

There never was a Bible made, there never was a superstition started, that it was not better to believe than to believe nothing. To not believe emasculates a man, and leaves him in a condition in which he is liable to degenerate into all the vices which afflict men. There is nothing that makes a man more mushy, more feeble and worthless, than the not believing anything. That state of mind in which men are floating, in which they do not even speculate; that state of conceit and skepticism and indifference which is so prevalent, is the cause of the destruction of hundreds and thousands of young men.

And, lastly, as the grand climax of life, how conceited must that man be, who, having a price put into his hand to get wisdom; born into a world lighted by so fair a sun, hallowed by scenes that are themselves the creatures of law and the teachers of law; thrown into a society which is organized to make proof of certain great moral truths; living in the midst of influences which are perpetually showing the royalty of the things revealed in Scripture; and with the testimony of holy men innumerable of a faith which points to the other life, and saying, "As a man sows here, so shall he reap there"—how conceited must that man be, who, growing up under all these benefactions of God, can reconcile himself to rising up in the last day, in the presence of his Judge, and saying, "Here, Lord, is the talent which thou gavest me. I knew that thou wert a hard master, reaping where thou hadst not sown; and I have buried my talent in a napkin. Here is that which is thine own!" And how many men there will be that will take all the experience, and instruction, and accumulated wisdom of this life, and despise it in conceit, and make this adventure, risking everything, and rising in the last great day, with the one, or two,

or more talents that God gave them, degenerated, pierced, corrupted, destroyed! Oh! if men could in that last day, say, "Here is that thou gavest me, as thou gavest it to me; oh! if they could carry back the child's sweet simplicity, and his innocence therein, and present them before God, that would be some consolation; but that they should appear before God with their whole soul contorted,—their reason suborned and made false; their conscience perverted; their moral sense death-struck; all their best affections scarred and marred; and their whole life a stupendous folly, a grand mistake, a blunder throughout,—that is too sad to contemplate. Lower than the birds, lower than the insects, lower than the very reptiles, all of whom fulfill the duties of their spheres, lower than the lowest thing, they shall rise and stand before God; and to the demand, "Where are the powers that I entrusted to you?" they will show but the wreck and ruin of themselves. Oh! in that tremendous hour, when they shall rise to shame and everlasting contempt, then, *then*, the Voice from the dark overhanging cloud will descend upon their ear, saying,

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him."

May God give you wisdom, in all humility, to look unto Jesus, and through Jesus unto God, who giveth liberally to those that lack wisdom, and upbraideth not; who heareth them that cry to him, saying, "Thou art the God of my youth;" those who believe that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; those who believe that long life and prosperity are to be sought by earnestly seeking God and cleaving unto him.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Father, we bless thy name that thou hast made thyself known to us; that we behold thee in Jesus our Lord; that so much of thy nature is disclosed in him; that we are so brought near to thee by this, that thou hast been like unto ourselves; *in all points tempted like as we are, and yet without sin*. There is no sorrow on earth the like of which thou hast not felt. All the ways by which temptations come thou hast walked; and there is no soul on which the shadow shall fall darker than it fell on thine. There is no yoke heavier than thy neck did bear; and no spear sharper than that which pierced thy side. Having learned by tasting our lot and experience, having been made a perfect Captain of our salvation, we are encouraged to draw near to thee, in that thou canst succor, and in that thou canst sympathize. And we rejoice that thou hast a fellow feeling. For, although thou wert without sin, thou dost behold those that sin. And thou hast been so near them, and art thyself so full of love, that thou canst have compassion upon those who are out of the way. Thou dost not scorn us because of our wrong-doing. Men who are themselves sinners; men who are from time to time forgiven of God, turn with scorn from their fellow-men, and tread hard upon those who are weak and sinful; but with thee that art pure, without spot or blemish, is mercy and gentleness, and great forbearance. For thou wouldst

not that any should perish. Thou wouldst that all be brought through repentance to salvation. And thou art sparing. Thou hast spared in times past. And there are many in thy presence this evening that have provoked thee, that have withstood thee, that have disobeyed thee, that have scorned thee. There are many who have been willing to consume the mercies of God ignobly and requite nothing. They have rejoiced to see the fullness of thine open hand; but thine hand with the sceptre and with law they have despised. And yet, thou hast not forgotten to be gracious to them. Thou causest the sun to rise upon the good and upon the evil; upon the just and upon the unjust. Thou art sending thy bounties to them from day to day.

Oh Lord! we beseech of thee that thy goodness may lead men to repentance; that they may not provoke thee by turning thy goodness into an argument of presumption; that they may not harden themselves, and destroy their own souls, by the very messengers and mercies which were sent for their salvation. We pray that thou wilt give to us to-night an open ear, a softness of heart, and an alert conscience. Grant, we pray thee, that there may be some to-night who shall consider their ways and be wise. We pray that thou wilt by thy Spirit move upon the heart; and that thou wilt give the truth a lodgment therein; and that it may be as seed sown in good ground; and that it may spring up and bring forth a hundred fold.

Confirm all that are beginning to walk in the Christian life. Though they see dimly, and are as little children, may they still persevere, knowing that God will hold them up. If there are any that are surrounded with dangers and temptations more than they are able to bear, strengthen them in the hour of trial. Hold them up by thine own arm, that they may not fall.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that all those who are sitting in darkness and in trouble, and all those whose faith is failing, and who seem to themselves ready to perish without succor, may find thee a present help in time of trouble. Give sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead. Grant we beseech of thee, that thy mercies may abound, and that all through this great assembly there may be hearts responsive to thy touch, breaking forth into thanksgiving and praise for the wonderful things which the Lord shall do unto them.

We pray that thou will grant thy blessing to go forth from church to church, and strengthen the hands of thy servants who preach, and of those that gather together devoutly to serve the Lord. We pray that those may be blessed who go forth to teach others, and visit the neglected, and search out those that need succor. And may the mercy which they bear to others be visited in great abundance upon their own souls.

And we beseech of thee that thy kingdom may come, and thy will be done in all the earth, and the whole world see thy salvation.

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

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon thy word, and make it carry light and conviction to those who need it. We pray that thou wilt help all good men to warn those that are imperiled. May we not be content to carry our own light unblown-out, nor to keep our own garments from being soiled. May we seek also to serve others. May we be wise to save them, that we may shine as the stars in the firmament, having turned many to righteousness.

Wilt thou bless us now as we are dismissed. Go home with us. Bless the week. Help us to carry truth and justice into all its duties, and through every hour. And finally, through all the trials of life, bring us at last safely to our eternal home in heaven, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayer
7:16
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