THINGS NEW AND OLD

IN

DISCOURSES

OF

CHRISTIAN TRUTH AND LIFE.

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THINGS NEW AND OLD.

MATTHEW XIII: 52.

"*And he said unto them, Therefore every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.*"

This is the comment with which our Lord closes that wonderful chapter of parables, wherein He sets forth the nature of His kingdom under a variety of figures, opening wide glimpses into the spiritual realms, and showing the relation of the life that now is to the life that is to come. One truth underlies all these representations — the truth, namely, that past and present and future are all one day, known to the Lord: that as the present is the fruit of the past so it is the seed of the future; that what the world now is can never be explained but by the reverent study of the providential causes that have been at work in the past: that what the world is to be in the future can only be predicted by a reverent study of the results now reached and the causes now at work; that the kingdom of heaven is an organism steadily developing under the divine hand,

the nourishment is carried up to the top of the tree. I am not enough of a physiologist to be able to say whether or not there is any life in these outer layers; but it is agreed, I believe, that the inner part of the tree has ceased to live; and that all the active processes of growth take place in that one cambium layer that separates the bark from the wood. All that is *new* in the life of this tree is found in this thin zone outside the woody portion, and inside its covering.

The fact on which I wish to fix your attention is that the new and the old are both essential to the growth of the tree: the old supports and protects the new; the new augments and beautifies the old. The heart of the tree is not alive, — it is composed of matter formed, not forming; and that which is formed, — in which no processes of change are going on, is not alive.

Nothing is alive which has assumed a permanent form, and is undergoing no structural changes. Life and change are synonymous terms. The heart of the tree is not alive; neither is the outer portion of the bark; but these old tissues — these that are formed, and are no longer alive — have much to do with the life of the tree. The strength of the heart holds up the trunk with its crown of branches and leaves, resisting the onset of the winds, and giving the processes of life going on in the newer portions of the tree a chance to do their work. The old bark, that is no longer alive, serves as a protection for the cambium layer, in which the life-builders are driving their marvellous mechanism. Of course the life and growth of the tree depend on the work of these life-builders; but their work could not be done were it

not for the protection and support afforded them by those portions of the tree that are no longer alive. The new and the old are both essential to the processes of vegetable growth.

The same thing is true of growth in the animal kingdom. I cannot undertake to make plain to you in five minutes all that the microscope has revealed concerning the processes of life in the human body and in other sentient creatures; it is enough to say that all animal organisms are composed of minute cells, not one five-hundredth of an inch in diameter; that the work of transforming food and other nutriment into living substance goes on within these cells; that the outermost portion of these cells, within which the work is done, consists of matter which is not truly alive, old material, that now serves only as the bark of the tree serves, for an enclosure or work-shop for the little builders whose work goes on within. Through the walls of these little workshops the nutrient matter passes to the bioplasts that are busy inside, working it up, first into living matter, and then changing it into formed matter and adding it to the walls of the cells, which thus become thicker and thicker until no more nourishment can pass through them. This matter which was once alive, but has ceased to live, is gradually removed by the excretory organs. Mr. Huxley describes this process in general terms when he tells us in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Article "Biology") that "a process of waste, resulting from the decomposition of the molecules of the protoplasm, in virtue of which they break up into more highly oxidated products which cease to form any

part of the living body, is a constant concomitant of life." And in the same Encyclopedia, Professor Schaefer tells us (Article "Histology") that even in the lowest organisms, those composed of a single cell, this work of changing the living into the not living takes place,— a shell or test being produced "which subserves purely passive functions of sustentation or defence."

Animal growth is thus seen to be akin to vegetable growth. You see in the shell of an oyster precisely what you see in the bark of a tree: the outside of this shell is evidently no longer alive; the shell is growing, but its growth takes places within; part of it is forming; that part is alive; part of it is formed; it is undergoing no further structural changes; that part is not living. And although it is not possible for us to detect with the unaided senses those portions of our own bodies which are not living, we must bear in mind that our bodies are composed of myriads of minute cells, woven together into tissues; that these cells grow as the oyster grows; that the outsides of them are not really alive. And the statement is made by microscopists, that this *formed* matter, no longer living, makes up about four-fifths of our bodies. The fibrine, albumen, fatty matter, and salts of which our bodies mainly consist are substances that are not alive. The life all resides in these little nucleated specks of germinal protoplasm, within the cells. These minute particles of life are distributed through every part of the body, so that you could not find a space one five-hundredth of an inch in diameter without one or more of them; nevertheless they make only about one-fifth of the body.

It seems, then, that the existence of the human body depends on the old as well as the new. Much the largest part of the body is made up of that which decayeth and waxeth old and is ready to vanish away. Yet this old matter is necessary as the receptacle and matrix of the new life; it is this that gives strength and bulk and substance and solidity to our bodies. If everything were removed at once but that which was new and alive, not much would be left of us,—nothing, indeed, by which we could put ourselves into any relations with the world about us.

I have given you in these few words a hasty and inadequate account of the discoveries of modern biology; but enough has been said to afford another illustration of the truth, that in the natural as well as in the spiritual world, that which is old and that which is new are joined inseparably in the same organism; that in the process of making all things new, much that is not new must all the while be present; and that the old has its function not less than the new.

One other illustration that is worth careful study I can only touch. In the progress of society things new and old must be combined in the same way. Society is an organism, and the laws of its growth are closely analogous to those of other organisms.

Before there can be any progress, there must be some degree of permanence in the social order. People must stop roving and begin to live somewhere, and their life must begin to find expression in certain fixed customs that have the force of laws. So Mr. Bagehot in his essay on "Physics and Politics," has vividly shown

us. "In early times," he says, "the quantity of government is much more important than its quality. What you want is a comprehensive rule binding men together, making them do much the same things, telling them what to expect of each other—fashioning them alike and keeping them so. * * * The object of such organization is to create what may be called a cake of custom. All the actions of like are to be submitted to a single rule for a single object; that gradually creates the hereditary drill which science teaches to be essential, and which the early instinct of men saw to be essential too." It is in and upon this social order, thus imposed and maintained, that the principles of progress, the love of liberty and "the tendency in every man to ameliorate his condition" begin to operate; out of the shell of custom thus formed the bird of freedom finally breaks its way. Custom and law represent that which is fixed and unchangeable: they are the "formed matter" of civilization, just as the wall of the cell is the formed matter of the physiological builders: and they are as necessary to progress as the walls of the cells are to animal growth. They seem to be the very antithesis of progress, but they are not: they are the condition of progress. What is progress? It is the reshaping and improvement of old customs. But you must have customs before you can reshape them. You must be holding on to something or you cannot reach forth to the things that are before. The condition of walking is that one foot be planted solidly on the ground.

I have thus endeavored to bring before your thought the relation of the new to the old in all kinds of growth.

Both elements are indispensable: the new life cannot perform its functions without the presence and aid of that which has lived, but is alive no longer. The old furnishes the mold in which the new is fashioned, the support on which the new rests while it is coming into being.

Let me apply this law very briefly to the spiritual life, first on its intellectual side, and then on the side of conduct.

The old and the new must be continually held together in the forming of our creeds and theories of religious truth. To say that our religious theories must be always reshaping themselves, that the growth of knowledge must result in frequent modifications of our theological statements, is to utter a commonplace. The history of theology shows how continuous these changes have been: the least knowledge of human nature convinces us that such changes must be. A creed that is not growing steadily is a dead creed, and ought to be buried. That every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven will bring forth from his treasure *new* things, is evident enough. But it is not always so evident as it ought to be in these days that the old as well as the new is part of his treasure; that the new can only exist and develope in close relation to the old. A theology that has no old truth in it is a theology that has in it no truth at all. Do you suppose that you could get up a brand-new system of doctrine? You might just as well undertake to produce a brand-new elm tree, three feet through, that should not have a single layer of old tissue in its trunk. A sys-

tem of doctrine has got to grow, just as a tree grows; and one of the consequences of such growth will be that certain parts of it will have lost much of their vitality. This is not the ideal of progress: but this is the historical fact, the scientific fact. And even if some portions of your theology have ceased to be vital, it is not best to be in too much haste about removing them. In due time they will fall off, if left to the operation of spiritual laws; undue eagerness to strip them off may destroy the life that they now support and protect. Here is the elm tree with many a shaggy layer of dead bark outside and many a solid layer of heart wood inside. "Dead wood!" cries the radical; "let us remove it and destroy it!" So he tears off every particle of the bark, down to the very quick of the cambium layer, and he bores and burns all the heart wood out of the tree, and leaves nothing but the thin outer layers of sap-wood. "This is the only part of the tree that is really alive," he says; "this is all we want to save; the rest is a detriment and a disgrace!" But if the frosts of the first spring do not chill and paralyze the life in the tree, thus stripped of its natural covering, the March winds will surely topple it over, and the radical's triumph will be complete.

The failure to comprehend this historic law,—this fact that the new grows out of the old, and needs the old as its support and its protection—is at the bottom of the reckless radicalism of the present day. I commend to the men who are so eager to demolish every element in Christian belief that they cannot fully reconcile

with their own ideas of truth, a little careful study of the laws of growth in other departments of life.

There is a caution, however, not less needed on the other side. There is in nature ample provision for removing the formed matter when it has served its purpose, so that it shall not obstruct the growth of the organism. The bark of the tree protects the cambium layer, but is not allowed to bind the tree so tightly as to prevent the circulation of the sap. The growing tree bursts the envelope of bark, and often casts off much of it. The corrugated, shaggy surface of the oak or the maple or the hickory show how the expanding life rends this lifeless integument. It would not do to put a thrifty tree into an inelastic straight-jacket of bark. It would kill the tree.

Something like this is often attempted in behalf of religious thought by persons who suppose that in doing it they are promoting the interests of soundness. They undertake to frame regulations or enact laws providing that certain fixed phrases or formularies shall be inflexibly and unchangeably held as containing the whole of truth. A certain seminary in New England was built upon an elaborate and minute theological creed, and the founders strictly and solemnly enjoined that every article of this creed should "forever remain entirely and identically the same without the least alteration, addition, or diminuation." What a prodigious conviction of his own omniscience the man must have who could put such a provision into the charter of a theological seminary! Did these godly founders suppose that they knew all the theology that ever ought to exist and that wisdom

would die with them? What right had they to ordain that every scribe employed to teach the doctrine of the Kingdom in that seminary should forever bring forth out of his treasure everything old and nothing new?

The value of historic creeds, or confessions of faith, in guiding and steadying the movements of religious thought, no wise man will dispute: the folly of rashly casting them away has been, I trust, sufficiently demonstrated: nevertheless historic confessions must be historically interpreted; it is only by a large, free method of handling them that they are kept from being fetters to the life of faith.

Not only in the formation of our beliefs, but in the shaping of our methods of thinking this discussion ought to help us. Mankind is divided, for the most part, into two hostile camps — radicals on one side, conservatives on the other: men who despise everything that is old and men who hate everything that is new. The wise man belongs to neither of these camps; he has learned to take a broader view which unites what God has joined together, and what these contending parties are trying to put asunder. When he finds two disputants fighting over a question he always reflects that it is often possible, by the use of a little patience and comprehension, to discover a statement that shall include both the truths for which they are contending. He is not a partisan of the new nor of the old; he has been a disciple of the kingdom of heaven long enough to have in his treasure, and to be able to bring out of it, things new and old.

When we pass from the realm of opinion to the

realm of conduct, we find still other uses for our principle. In our work as citizens and as reformers of society, the new and the old must always be blended. The great elements of manhood are no novelties. Faith, hope, love, obedience, courage, patience, fidelity, these are all old fashioned virtues — old as the patriarchs — but nothing better has been invented in the most modern times. Nevertheless new occasions are always arising for the exercise of these virtues and they find new fields to till and new tongues to speak and new weapons to wield in every generation. It is for us to give new life and meaning to these old virtues.

The society about us requires the infusion of some new elements. The people among whom we live need to see new views of truth, and to be stirred to new duties and to be led into new ways; this is part of our high calling; but let us not suffer ourselves to forget how many and precious are the elements in our social life that must be sacredly and thankfully conserved. There are many changes, in these days, we say; and so there are; some for the better, and some, no doubt, for the worse; yet how many things there are that do not change, thank God! The face of the country alters somewhat, from year to year; here is a field where once was a forest; and here is a village where once was a farm; but after all the great features of the earth remain substantially the same from one generation to another;

"The hills,
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—"

stand just where they stood when the prow of the caraval of Columbus first cut the waters of our Western seas; the valleys lie in peace between and the rivers keep their courses; while over all the stars shine nightly as they shone upon Abraham when he journeyed from Haran to the far land of promise. There are great changes, you say, in the husbandry of these days; new machines, new methods, new industries, — and this is true; yet all the great facts and laws of husbandry are the same to-day that they were when Joseph filled the granaries of Pharaoh; it is the same energy of life in the seed; the same old earth that hides and feeds it; the same old sun that quickens it; the same gentle rain that waters it; the same vigilant industry that plants and tends and harvests it. So it is in the community. Some changes are constantly taking place therein, and in most communities more changes might well take place; but none of us is likely to be called to live in any neighborhood in this Christian land where the duty of guarding and cherishing that which is old will not be one of his first duties. The institutions of our free government — how old they are, and how sacred! Many persons imagine that our Revolutionary fathers invented them; but some of you know how deep their roots run down into English history. The duty of protecting these from the spoilers is part of our high calling. The Church of God — it is as old as the human race, and nothing will ever be found to take the place of its holy sacraments and its solemn services. It is a branch of God's own planting, and it shall not be plucked up. To water it with the dew of youth and

nourish it with the strength of manhood, — this, too, is part of our high calling. The family — whose nurture most of us have known, whose sacred influences have molded all our lives — the family is no nineteenth century discovery; but it is the most precious thing on the earth to-day. What infinite stores of tenderness and grace and inspiration there are abiding in the tens of thousands of American homes. A little scene that I saw in the railway car not long ago — a young mother, with her first child, coming home from the far West on a visit to her father's house; the door of the car opening at the station next before the one to which she was bound, and a man with beard sprinkled with gray entering; the young matron, flying to him, and flinging herself into his arms; and then the two coming back together; the grandfather picking up the little one — the child of his child — and searching its face with unspeakable tenderness, while the mother looked on proud and happy — who could see it and not have the thankful tears spring into his eyes because of what it told him of the strength and sacredness of the bond that binds parents and children together in the sanctuary of the household. Of this sanctuary we are called to be the guardians and defenders; against all the foes with unclean hands that now assail its foundations and spoil its peace we are called to wage a holy warfare; by all our memories of home, and the love we bear our mothers, we are prompted to honor and cherish this oldest and divinest of the gifts of God to man.

That we must be ready in all our intercourse with men to welcome new truth, to lead in new movements

for the elevation of society, to be ourselves the harbingers of new ideas and enterprises — all this scarcely needs saying. The Zeitgeist, as Mr. Arnold calls it, keeps us mindful of this duty; I only wish to show how much there is to conserve as well as to create; how the spirit of reverence must always be joined with the spirit of invention; how the new and the old must be always inseparably joined in the work of the wise social reformer.

There remains to be considered the relation of this law of growth to the formation of character. The true life healthily combines that which is new with that which is old.

That which is old in our experience is that part of our life which has become habitual. That ought to be the largest part of our moral and religious life. The formation of good habits — habits of devotion — habits of church-going, and of Bible study, and of private meditation and secret prayer; habits of just and considerate and kindly speech; habits of careful and discriminating thought; habits of activity in all good work, and of fidelity in the discharge of every obligation we assume; habits of benevolence in giving and in serving; habits of courtesy and temperance and manly dignity and womanly grace — this is a most important element in moral and religious culture. We ought to be learning to do many of these things — to illustrate many of these virtues — without effort or volition, as by second nature. Our good feelings, wishes, impulses, the good promptings of the Spirit of all grace, ought to be continually solidifying into habits. Writers on habits often confine themselves

to the danger of forming evil habits; but the importance of forming good ones needs to be enforced, not less strenuously. The best part — at any rate the largest part — of every life is habitual, and the need of getting the good thoughts and purposes and sentiments that are often fitful and desultory organized into habits is therefore urgent. The transformation of the floating capital of vtrtue into fixed capital is the condition of all highest growth.

As four-fifths of the healthy physical organism is formed matter, so I think at least four-fifths of the spiritual organism should be formed character.

Yet the character thus formed needs to be continually reformed. New light, new truths, new relations, new powers, call for new adjustments of our thought and new departures in our conduct. A religious life that is summed up in its habits; that is wholly formed and never renewed; into which no new motives, no new inspirations, no new endeavors enter, is a poor and barren life. If we have put on the new man, that is no excuse for a stereotyped experience. Paul says that the "new man" is one who is "being renewed day by day." He would not be a new man long unless this were true of him.

While therefore the Christian character needs those elements of permanence and solidity which are furnished by good habits, while these are necessary conditions of life and growth, it needs also fresh thinking, fresh resolution, fresh endeavor every day. Some measure of order and regularity it must possess; but when it degenerates into more routine — when the prayers are routine prayers, and the service is a routine service, and there are

no new visions of truth, and no new views of duty, the divine life withers and perishes in the soul of man. It thrives only upon the wise combination of things new and old. It joins the steadfastness and strength of good habits with the freshness and joy of daily inspirations.

There is but one more word, but that may be to some of you of deeper moment than anything I have said. Who is this that brings forth from his treasure things new and old? It is not the bachelor of science, it is not the student of literature, it is not the doctor of divinity, it is one who has been admitted to higher honors, who has been made a disciple of the kingdom of heaven. If you have entered upon that discipleship, if by a sincere and hearty faith you have chosen Jesus Christ to be the Lord of all your life, then, from the exhaustless treasures of his grace you may bring forth every day the wisdom that shall guide you and the strength that shall nerve you and the hope that shall hearten you in the strife before you. Under this Master, in this discipleship, you shall work out the problems of life successfully, and you cannot afford to try to work them out alone. His grace will not fail you; the power that comes from self-conquest and the peace that follows after He is waiting to give to every man who will become his disciple. May God help you to seek His friendship if you have not found it; to trust it more and more; to walk in the strength and joy of it through all your days of toil and sorrow, and to enter at last by its commanding word the gates of that city where we shall hail old friends with new faces, and speak old words with new meaning, and fill the eternal arches with our glad new song.

GOOD GIFTS TO OUR CHILDREN.

MATTHEW VII: 9-11.

"Or what man is there of you, who if his son shall ask him for a loaf will give him a stone; or if he shall ask for a fish will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children"——

It is true, then, that all parents ought to know how to give good gifts to their children. But the knowing how to which Jesus refers in the text is the *disposition* of the father, rather than his *discernment;* his willingness, more than his wisdom. "You who are parents," he says, "have the wish and the will to do your children good; you do not mean anything but kindness; and your heavenly Father's purposes toward you are certainly not less kind than yours toward your children." This is what our Lord teaches by this comparison. He certainly does not say that the judgment of parents as to what things are good for their children is always wise. No father means to give his child a stone instead of a loaf; but many a father ignorantly gives his boy a loaf with a stone in it. And the duty of knowing how to give good gifts, in a literal sense — of having not only the disposition but the

intelligence necessary for the giving of good gifts — is a duty that needs to be studied.

"But *is* this necessary?" some one is asking. "Is not love the fulfilling of the law? And if we love our children — and we certainly do love them — will not love be the surest guide in bestowing our gifts on them?" Unfortunately it will not. There are proofs enough, all about us, that the impulse of affection is not always wise. Love is the fulfilling of the law, only when there is first a law for love to fulfil. Your ideals are the product not of affection, but of intelligence. You must have some notion of what ought to be done before love can prompt you to do anything. Our wisdom and our conscience lay down the lines on which affection runs. Love fills the law, and overfills it, with its own sweet impulse; but the law must be there, or love is as likely to be a curse as a blessing. We need, therefore, not merely to cherish a fondness for our children, but also diligently to apply our minds to the problem of determining what gifts are best for them. The obligations thus laid down will give the law to love — a law that love may safely fulfil.

What, then, are the gifts we owe our children?

1. First among them is a careful training in obedience. Training in obedience, I say: not simply teaching them obedience. And what is training? To train a body of troops is not merely to give them lectures on tactics, but to put them through the manual of arms so often and so thoroughly that they shall come at length to move under the orders of the commander with promptness and precision. Training involves not merely instruction, but drill and discipline. It implies not only telling a child

what he ought to do but showing him how to do it, and making him do it over and over again, until the doing of the thing shall come to be a second nature to him.

The training of a boat's crew is not only making known to them the way to dip and to pull and to feather and to recover, but it is the exercise of the crew in these movements every day.

To train a vine is not merely to mark out on the wall or the trellis the place where you want the vine to run, but to lead it carefully along and fasten it, by proper means, in that place.

Training involves, therefore, uniformity and continuity of action. The training of a company of soldiers or a crew of oarsmen proceeds regularly, without intermission, day by day. If the troops went through the manual of arms only now and then, semi-occasionally, as it happened to suit their caprice or the convenience of the drill master, they would never be brought under thorough discipline. The oarsmen in training for a race row every day, and in the winter, when the river is frozen, they have an apparatus rigged in the gymnasium by which they secure the same kind of exercise, every day.

These illustrations show what is meant by the training of children. It is leading them to practice, steadily and regularly, day by day, the lessons of conduct that you teach them.

Probably most of us err in teaching too much, and in training too little. There is too much teaching and scolding, and too little steady enforcement of the laws laid down. Training implies government, but not violent methods. The regular performances of certain duties

must be required of the children; some of these duties will be irksome to them; their sports will call them away, and there must be authority to hold them firmly to the performance. The moral order of a household ought to be as inflexible as the order of nature, and ought to be enforced just as quietly.

And this training is itself a realized obedience. It is a drill in obedience. It couples with submission and subordination of the will an automatic tendency. Training has many uses besides securing the habit of obedience; but it secures obedience and this is the prime quality of good character. No man is good for anything who has not learned the easy, prompt, cheerful submission of his will to rightful authority. All his life he will live under the hand of rightful authority; the first condition of his peace and welfare is that he should readily submit to it. He must obey the laws of the State, or be a felon; he must obey the orders of his superiors in business, or he can never engage in business; he must obey the laws of nature, or be a helpless invalid or a crazy fool; he must obey the laws of God, or make shipwreck of his life. How necessary it is, therefore, that he learn in his childhood to submit himself to rightful authority! The child who has not been taught that lesson has been defrauded of the greatest benefit his parents could bestow upon him. I have known many whose lives were failures from this cause alone; in their childhood they never learned obedience; and the habit of insubordination made it impossible for them to work in harness; the testy temper and the unschooled will constantly ruptured their relations with men and destroyed the very conditions of success.

Whatever else you fail to give your children, fail not to train them in this one essential of the highest character.

It seems to those who have not tried it an easy matter to enforce obedience, but it is not half so easy as it seems. There are many who make much ado about it, but never secure it; there are some who seem to get it without any effort at all. I saw on a railway train, one day last autumn, a mother take a little girl of two years old — a thoroughly vital, active child — and lay her down upon the seat of the car, a little distance from herself, for her afternoon nap. It was gently, smilingly done; there was no exercise of power in the case; the child looked up sweetly in the mother's face; there was no reminiscence in the look of a former struggle, in which the stronger will had conquered; there had been no such struggle; and when the mother went away to her own seat, the child lay there, cooing and prattling to herself, now and then calling in the sweetest and happiest way, "Good-night, mamma!" By and by the mother came and bent over her; a smile was on her face all the while, and the smile was reflected from the baby's face; the mother spoke low; I could not hear what she said, but I knew that she was telling the baby that she must not talk; and when she returned to her seat the child lay there perfectly silent, looking about her in a childish way, her large eyes full of speculation, thinking over in silence her own baby thoughts which she had before been thinking aloud, until at last the eyelids drooped and she fell asleep. Now that mother had the faculty of enforcing obedience in the right way. No doubt her will was firm; there was no vacillation or uncertainty; but her ways were so gentle and wise that the child's obedience was secured

without an effort. Happy child, to be under the care of such a mother! It is a great gift; not all of us have it by nature; but it ought to be earnestly coveted and diligently cultivated by all of us.

I am convinced that the value of obedience has been greatly overlooked in our recent American life. The fierce individualism of our modern civilization has invaded the household; the Declaration of Independence seems to be taught to babes in their cradles; parents assert their authority weakly and with uncertainty; children often challenge it defiantly and successfully It is a great national misfortune. Lawlessness in the household will breed lawlessness in the state. Co-ordinated society rests back on discipline in the family. Mr. Bagehot says: "In a Roman family the boys, from the time of their birth, were bred to a domestic despotism which well prepared them for a subjection in after life to a military discipline, a military drill, and a military despotism. They were ready to obey their generals because they were compelled to obey their fathers; they conquered the world in manhood because as children they were bred in homes where the tradition of passionate valor was steadied by the habit of implacable order."

Now we want no despotism, parental nor military; but we do want order and subordination; no nation can live without them; and if we keep them in the state, we must have them first in the household. It is a patriotic duty that we owe the state as well as a sacred duty we owe our children to give them a thorough schooling in this primary virtue.

"Three roots bear up dominion: Knowledge, Will,
These two are strong, but stronger still the third,
Obedience; 'tis the great tap-root, which still,
Knit round the rock of Duty, is not stirred
Though storm and tempest spend their utmost skill."

2. Another gift that we owe our children is a careful training in the unselfish virtues. Here, again, the difference between teaching and training comes distinctly into view. It is by no means sufficient to teach our children to be unselfish, or to set them an example of unselfishness; we must give them a chance to exercise the altruistic virtues; to take pains and make sacrifices for others. Many parents, in the excess of their good nature, take upon themselves all the burdens and hardships of the family, letting the children grow up in indolence and pleasure — taking on themselves no care, helping, in no way, to bear the common load. Parents sometimes suppose that by their own self-sacrifice in behalf of their children they will teach their children self-sacrifice, but unfortunately it is not always so: the children become heartless instead of dutiful; they take as a matter of course all that is given them or done for them and are not ashamed to ask for more: they are hardened and spoiled by the indulgence. This habit of unselfishness, like the habit of obedience, must be learned by practice; and it is a great wrong to our children not to give them plenty of opportunities to practice it for the benefit of one another, and of their parents. The parents are continually denying themselves for the benefit of their children, and the children must often deny themselves for

the benefit of their parents. It is not right for the parents to go seedy that the children may be dressed in finery; it is not right for the parents to toil and moil night and day to gain money for the children to spend in idleness and pleasuring. It is not fair to the children, to let them grow up in this way. Do give your children a chance, I pray — a chance to acquire by practice in their childhood those common virtues of unselfishness, those habits of postponing their own pleasure for the good of others, without which their lives will be full of irritation and warfare.

Not only obedience but unselfishness, also, is the condition of living happily in co-ordinated society. A society in which each one is guaranteed his simple rights: in which contracts are enforced, and no man is hindered in pursuing his interests, would not be the best society. "Daily experiences prove," says Mr. Herbert Spencer, "that every one would suffer many evils and lose many goods, did none give him unpaid assistance. The life of each would be more or less damaged, had he to meet all contingencies single-handed. Further, if no one did for his fellows anything more than was required by strict performance of contract, private interests would suffer from the absence of attention to public interests." That would be a wretched state of society in which there were no unselfish and voluntary efforts to further the welfare of others, and to promote without reward the general welfare. And Mr. Spencer says, in another place, in his philosophic phrases, that "only when altruistic relations in the domestic group have reached highly developed forms, do there arise conditions making possible full

development of altruistic relations in the political group." The words are technical but the meaning is not obscure. It is a statement of the simple truth that only when children are trained at home to live for others, does society become fit to live in.

Here, too, you see how far reaching are the effects of our home training. Not only is the child who is suffered to grow up with egoistic temper and habits wholly unfitted to find any comfort and happiness for himself in life, he is also sure to be a disturbing and disorganizing force in society. If all people were like him there could be no society. How important is it, then, that you give your children careful training in the altruistic virtues! It is not enough to teach them to care for themselves; they must learn to care for others.

3. Another gift that we ought to impart to our children is a worthy and high ideal. By this I mean that we ought, in choosing for them, to choose the highest things; to set before ourselves, as the prize which we want them to win, that which is really precious, and to lead them, so far as we can, to choose that which we have chosen for them. This last is often a difficult thing to do. It is not always possible to get the growing, mercurial, boisterous boy to look upon life with his fathers' eyes; to take the same view of what is best and highest that his father takes. But it is possible for you to choose a worthy career and a noble destiny, and to keep your choice before them, assisting them, so far as you can, to comprehend its worthiness and its nobility.

What is it that you have chosen for your children?

It is well to settle it in your own minds. What are the possessions and attainments that you most covet for them? What is the kind of success that you are most anxious they should achieve? Is it material success? Is it the possession of wealth? Is it social standing? Is it political advancement for your son? Is it a marriage for your daughter with some rich man who can assure her a life of elegant leisure? Are these things, or such as these, the things that you most desire your children to obtain? Or do you most earnestly covet for them the values of character,—intelligence, purity, integrity, courage, manliness, womanliness, faith, charity? Concerning which of these classes of desirable possessions have you the most anxiety? Doubtless the financial and the social successes are desirable; you have a perfect right to wish that they may gain a fair measure of such worldly good; but on which of these kinds of good does the emphasis fall when you speak to yourselves in secret places of the future of your children? Of course you want them to be good and pure and noble, but is that what you want most?

I am afraid that this is not what all parents most desire for their children. Some pretty good people, some church members, act as though they thought these things of minor importance. It is plain that they want their children to get on in life; to have good situations; to win promotion; to make fortunate alliances; they want all these things for them, very much; but it is not *so* plain that they want them to be upright and clean and brave and faithful. Would they be willing to have their children sacrifice those material gains for these spiritual ones?

Well, it is not so clear; it looks as though they would think it too great a sacrifice.

Now the truth is that the children are sure to know what our deepest and strongest wishes are concerning them. It does not matter what we say; they know what is in our hearts. And although it may be hard to get them to choose for themselves the highest things, even if we do choose the highest things for them, they will be pretty sure not to choose the highest things if they know that we are most earnestly coveting for them things that are lower. They will not be apt to set their mark any higher than we set it for them. They may do so, but it is not probable that they will. Therefore it is of the utmost moment that our choice for them should be the highest; that our ideal of life — the ideal which the constant tenor of our conduct sets before them — be a noble ideal.

There is many a boy whose character is not yet confirmed, whose ideas vary, and whose purposes vacillate, who yet can say for himself, and does often say to himself when he has a thoughtful hour: "I know what my father and mother want me to be. They want me to be true, and honest, and manly and pure; they want me to be courteous in manners, and generous in action; they want me to be a Christian gentleman. They would like me to have a good position in society of course, and to prosper in business, and all that; but they are a thousand times more anxious that I should be good than that I should be rich or popular or powerful. It is not so much by what they say that I know it; every thing they do for me, all their own conduct, makes me sure of what their deepest wishes are." Now a boy who can say that has been made the recipient of a

good gift from his father and mother. He may not have accepted fully for himself their choice for him, but he has before his mind the right ideal of life; it must allure him sometimes; it may win him to choose it heartily for himself at last.

4. Another good gift that we may impart to our children is education. I do not use this word in a narrow, technical way. I mean to include in it all the forces that we can bring to bear that tend toward the enlargement of their intelligence and the invigoration of their character. Every opportunity, of whatever sort, that you afford a child, by means of which his knowledge is increased, his judgment trained, his moral sense purified, may be regarded as part of his education. It is not merely his schooling — that is part of it, and may be a most valuable part; it is all the expenditure that you make for the development of his power. This expenditure ought to be considered in the light of an investment.

One of the religious newspapers had an editorial last summer on Investing in a Boy. It is a good word to ponder. A boy is a good sort of security for you to invest in; and a girl is just as good. Looked at in a commercial way, they are about as good securities as any. But I am not looking at them now in a commercial way. It may be true, as Dr. Magoon once sardonically said, that many a father, after spending much money on the education of a stupid boy, might well cry out in the words of Aaron, "I cast all that gold into the fire, and lo there came out this calf!" But it would be a cynical view of life which represented this to be the rule. There are and always will be unfilial children; as there are, and always will be, parents

who never do any thing to deserve filial love and reverence; but it is a rule that what parents thoughtfully and wisely invest in their children, brings them the best returns they ever get. If it does not all come back in money, that is no sign that it is wasted. If the money that you expend on your boy's education makes a man of him; fits him to live a happy and a useful life; enlarges the horizon of his mind; opens to him the resources of nature and of literature; enables him to commune with the great minds of the race, and to think God's thoughts after him — it is money well invested, even if it does not result in making of him a Gould or a Vanderbilt. Money that you expend on clothes, and luxuries, and diversions — on giving children what are sometimes called social advantages, may not always be wisely expended; but every thing that you can do with money toward building up their manhood or their womanhood, toward enlarging their mental or their moral powers, is money well expended.

5. Finally, a good gift wherewith you may enrich your children is your confidence. You can believe in them. You can hold fast your faith in their future. And that, by the way, is a good gift that you can all bestow on children; on other people's children as well as your own; on other people's children if you have none of your own. The charity that believeth all things and hopeth all things, is worth just as much to children as to grown folks. Indeed I think it is needed by children rather more than by grown folks. And yet I am quite sure that other people's children get from us, as a general rule, much less charity than would be good for them; much less, indeed, than they deserve. It is strange to see how ready many persons are to believe

all evil of their neighbor's children; to put the worst construction upon their conduct; to refuse to see in them any redeeming qualities. Such judgments often greatly injure those who suffer them; many a child whose purpose was none too strong has been driven into evil ways by the suspicion and lack of friendliness that met him at every turn. Let us be careful how we hang this millstone round any young person's neck. A slight paraphrase of the golden rule would be well worth remembering by all of us: Whatsoever ye would that other people should do to your children, do ye even so to other people's children.

And if we ought to give to the children of our neighbors the benefit of our confidence, surely we ought not to withold it from our own. "Expectations, like prophesies," I once read somewhere, "tend to fulfil themselves." A good strong expectation on behalf of our children, a positive faith in their future, will be a comfort to us, and a blessing to them.

The very best thing about the Puritan faith was the confidence which it inspired in parents concerning the future of their children. The doctrine of the covenant, as it was always taught, gave to believers a basis of faith concerning their children on which they were led to repose with assurance. No matter what the theological origin of this faith may have been; the faith was there in the mind of the Puritan, an integral part of his religion. It was his duty to believe that the children whom God had given to him, and whom he had given back to the Lord in baptism, would be kept from falling, or would be restored if they should wander. The filling of the heart and of the home with such a confidence

as this, was the best of blessings to the child. It held him back when he was prone to wander; it called him back when he had gone astray.

It does most people good to believe in them, to have strong hopes for them, to refuse to prophesy evil concerning them. It is a sad thing for a child when his parents lose faith in his future. He is sure to find it out, and the effect upon him is depressing. Whatever we can do, therefore, to strengthen our own faith in the future of our children we ought to do; for very much according to our faith will it be, not only to us, but also to our children.

By what means, therefore, can our faith be strengthened? Often, I believe, it will be strengthened by knowing our children better; by entering more fully into their inner lives. Doubtless we shall often find, to our joy, that seeds of good which we had implanted in their natures have found lodgment there; that sound principles of conduct from which they are not likely to swerve are taking shape in their minds; that under all the ferment and the fever of youth the character is slowly clarifying. To watch for such signs, to rejoice in them when we see them, and to give our hearty commendation to every act in which they come to light — this is the habit of all wise parents.

But is there not a deeper reason for faith? Have we not the same reason that the Puritans had? If we have it not, who has taken it away from us? Are not these children of ours children of the covenant, as truly as their children were? If we are believers they surely are. All they who are of faith — sons of faith themselves — are

blessed with the faithful Abraham. If a man has no faith in God for himself, he can, of course, have no faith for his children. But whoever has given himself to God, can rest in the covenant God has made with believers, in which their children are included. This covenant gives us no right to remit our own vigilance or relax our diligence; it is forfeited by our faithlessness; but when we meet its conditions ourselves by honest, faithful, self-denying endeavors to do the best we can for our children, then it authorizes us to rely on the silent, unslumbering, all-encompassing, victorious grace of God, to go where we cannot follow, to speak when our lips are silent, to rectify our mistakes, and mend what we sometimes mar, and finally, in God's own way, to bring our children into the paths of life and peace. And I am sure that we shall discharge all our duties to them — whether in warning or reproving or commending — far more wisely and helpfully to them, if we are upborne and made strong in heart by this good confidence.

I have no more counsel for you to-night, my friends, and I am almost ready to ask your forgiveness for having volunteered so much. What right have I to instruct you? Do I not know how deep is your parental solicitude, with what earnestness you are studying these problems night and day? And why should I assume to direct you? Many of you are well able to guide me. But I have only responded to a request, several times repeated, in bringing these thoughts together; and I leave them with you, trusting that whatever truth is in them may be serviceable to you, and that your own good sense will correct any errors that I may have made. Defective we

all are in our characters, mistaken often in our judgments; yet the Omniscient knows that we want to know how to give good gifts to our children. May his unerring wisdom teach us, and his gracious care abide with us and with our children evermore!

NATURE AND SPIRIT.

ROMANS VIII: 5.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

Not only in this verse, but in all this portion of the epistle to the Romans, the apostle states and reiterates the contrast, everywhere implied in his reasoning, between the body and the mind; between the physical nature and the spiritual nature; between the realm of force and the realm of freedom.

They who are in Christ Jesus, he says, walk not after the flesh, but after or in obedience to the spirit. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death." "The minding of the flesh is death, but the minding of the spirit is life and peace."

Whatever these words may mean one thing is clear, — the apostle does teach a radical difference between the physical and the spiritual natures of man.

A theory which some philosophers in these days are trying to popularize, teaches that there is no difference between matter and mind; that the acts and operations which we call mental or spiritual, and the acts and operations which we recognize as physical, are all produced by

the same forces; that the phenomena of mind and the phenomena of matter all belong to the same substance; that physiology and psychology treat of precisely the same subject; that thought is a process of the same nature as digestion, only a little more subtle and refined. This denial of the fundamental distinction between the physical and the spiritual realms, this indentification of matter and mind, which makes thought only a chemical function, and conscience nothing but a hereditary affection of the nervous system, Paul does not justify. In his philosophy nature and spirit are radically different in substance and in operation; the law of the one is the exact antithesis of the law of the other.

This is the question that I now wish to consider. Which is nearer right, George Henry Lewes, the philosopher of Positivism, who suggests that mind and matter are only different aspects of the same thing — opposite sides, so to speak of the same curve, — or Paul the apostle, who insists that though they are brought into close relation in the human life they are totally different things? This may seem a deep and difficult question; but it is surely a question of the utmost importance to every human being; a question that must be answered before we can have any clear or consistent views of life here or hereafter. And because it is so important, I do not believe that it can be beyond the understanding of people of fair common sense. The great things of God are not hard to comprehend.

For our first witness let us summon another philosopher. I read to you the words of Mr. W. T. Harris, spoken some time ago at the school of philosophy at Concord:

"The world of nature, to which man is enslaved by his

bodily wants and necessities, is a world of selfishness and cruelty and suffering. The means of gratification for one body are obtained and used at the expense of another. The food, clothing and shelter for one body, being special individual things, cannot serve in the same time and in the same respect for another body. The law of natural things is the law of exclusiveness and selfishness; when one person gets them all others are deprived."

"The law of natural things is the law of exclusiveness"—is not that a true statement? Does not every natural thing that grows or increases, grow or increase at the expense of something else?

The rock is made of grains of sand; its bulk was formed from the sediment at the bottom of the primeval oceans. The sand of the beach is worn from the rocks of the shore by the action of the waves; it is pulverized rock, nothing else; and by and by its loose grains may again cohere in compact masses. But what the beach gains the cliffs lose; what the strata gain the sands lose; the same matter cannot belong to both at the same time.

The corn grows out of the earth, but only at the expense of the soil in which it grows. Every particle of matter that enters into its tissues it has taken from other substances. Perhaps it grows at the expense of other plants, that stand stunted and dwarfed under its shadow, and that cannot thrive because the corn has extracted the nourishing juices from the soil and absorbed the warmth of the sun; but if it does not increase by robbing other plants, it must increase by taking from the earth the nourishment of its life. The soil is impoverished that the corn may be enriched.

Just so the body of the animal lives and grows at the expense of other living things. Every particle of flesh or bone that is added to the body of the animal is taken from some plant or some other animal. By digestion and assimilation, the body takes to itself the substances of other organisms; only as other living things give up their separate being can the body live.

That part of man which is simply animal — what Paul calls the flesh — grows, of course, by this law. Concerning this there is no dispute. All the philosophers and naturalists agree that the material part of man follows the law of all physical organisms; that its life is fed by the sacrifice of other lives; that man as an animal is one of the devourers, living and increasing in stature and in strength only by consuming the fruits of the earth, or the flesh of the lower orders.

The law of natural growth is the law of all movement or manifestation of physical power. Every force that is expended is borrowed. If force is communicated from one body to another, the one from which it proceeds loses just as much as the other gains. If I drive one croquet ball against another, the force imparted to the second one is lost by the first one. The wheels of the clock move round with a certain power, but the power with which they move is imparted to them by the uncoiling spring or the descending weight, and all the force that is in the wheels comes out of the spring or the weight.

The fire burns the wood and the heat thus produced contains a certain amount of energy; but it is only as the wood gives up the heat that was latent in it that the fire burns; it is only in miracles that the burning wood is not

consumed. The oxygen of the air and the carbon of the wood unite to produce the flame; and whatever force is in the flame existed before the fire was kindled in the air and in the wood.

The great physical law which the philosophers call the law of the correlation of forces, or the conservation of energy, governs all these changes in physical objects. That law, as Professor Clerk Maxwell states it, is in these words:

"The total energy of any body or system of bodies is a quantity which can neither be increased nor diminished by any mutual action of those bodies, though it may be transformed into any one of the forms of which energy is susceptible."

Motion, for example, can be converted into heat, and heat into electricity, and electricity into chemical affinity; but the force is neither increased nor diminished in these changes. Every steam engine is an example of the conversion of heat into motion; every hot axle is an instance of the conversion of motion into heat; every machine belt from which the spark flies to the knuckle shows heat converted into electricity; every building set on fire by lightning shows electricity converted into heat. The theory is that in these changes no force is gained or lost; that what is lost by one form is gained by another; that force passes from one body to another, from one manifestation to another, but that it is only transmuted, not augmented, not annihilated. The energy that was just now exhibiting itself as motion, in mechanical work, has been converted into heat or electricity; but there is no more energy now than there was before and no less.

Whether, therefore, you consider the natural world as matter or as force, the same law holds. No new matter is created, and none is annihilated; matter keeps changing its forms; the same atoms that last year were lying as dust or mould in the lifeless soil, are this year taken up by the growing corn, and will next year be incorporated into the human body; but there are no more atoms at one time than at another; what one existence appropriates other existences must give up. Nothing in nature can increase its bulk or its dominion without encroaching upon the substance or the realm of some other existence.

So no force can be increased without the conversion of energy from some other form. You can *utilize* force by contrivances but you cannot *increase* any force without borrowing for it energy that is stored up in some other form. If you want to make your shafting move faster you must avail yourself of the energy of heat locked up for you in the coal.

I need not dwell any longer on the illustration of this law of exclusiveness, which governs physical nature. The law of the transformation of energy is the scientific statement of it, and those who have small knowledge of science are familiar enough with the fact that in nature whatever one creature gets all others are deprived of. When we are dealing with natural forces we clearly see that

"The good old rule
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
That he should get who has the power
And he should keep who can."

And between the getters and the keepers the contest is deadly, because what one gets the other cannot keep. This, as our philosopher affirms, is the law of natural things.

Now let us ask him to stand up again and state to us the law of spiritual things:

"The law of spirit is harmony and not mere contention. All spiritual struggle must have reconciliation for its object. Recognition is the highest law of spirit. The equal shall look in the face of equal, and through mutual recognition each shall reinforce the other. Thus each is doubly strong; strong in himself and strong in his friend. * * * Combination is the great principle of spirit, and its forms are numerous in the practical world, and in the theoretical world as well."

This statement will also be verified by your experience. The fact that recognition — or what I would rather call communion — is the highest law of spirit, that instead of contention and exclusiveness, we find harmony and co-operation ruling in this higher realm, is a fact that everybody understands.

You and I sit down hungry to a scanty meal. There is barely enough for one. If my needs are satisfied you get nothing; if you are filled I must go hungry; if we divide the portion between us, each has only half as much as he could have were it not for the other. By all that the one takes the other's portion is lessened. You deprive yourself of what you give to me.

But you and I sit down with eager minds to talk about some moral or spiritual truth. It is a truth known to me but unknown to you. You are the learner and I am the teacher, and in our conversation, you gain from me this truth.

Is it mine any less than it was before? Have I deprived myself of anything in imparting to you this truth? On the contrary I have gained by giving. I have a stronger hold upon the truth than I had before I imparted it to you. It is mine in a deeper sense, by a firmer tenure than it was before, and it is worth more to me than it was before.

You know that our knowledge is always confirmed, vivified, freshened, by communicating it. What we have succeeded in clearly telling, we have succeeded in comprehending. In putting it into a form in which it may gain entrance to other minds, we have put it into a form in which it will stay in our own minds. Thus the imparting of truth does not reduce but enlarges our store of truth. If I give a man my coat I have one coat the less; but if I give a man my thought, I have not divested myself of the thought; I have confirmed my possesion of it; it is less likely now that I shall part with it. Not only is the truth which I have communicated more truly mine than it was before I imparted it; it is worth more to me. I have not only a stronger hold upon it, I have a greater joy in it. You, to whom I have imparted it, rejoice in it; and your appreciation of it deepens mine. Two faggots burn more freely than one; and my enthusiasm in the pursuit and possession of this truth is rekindled when you take fire.

It is not less true, let me say in passing, that truth grows in the mind itself by communicating it. Not only do the mental powers, like the bodily powers, gain strength by exercising them; there is a kind of increase here to which the body affords no analogy. The most productive mind is the most prolific mind. Soil is impoverished by cropping it; but there is no such thing as exhausting the

mind in this way. Production fertilizes the intellect. It is when the mind is paying out its wealth most lavishly that its revenues are largest. The days when I am doing the most mental work are the days when my mind is fullest of thoughts; when there is the keenest delight in mental production; when ideas come in crowds, like doves to the windows; when subjects open on every side and invite to fuller investigation. The notion is sometimes entertained that the mind which produces freely is liable to run out of ideas; but that is a notion which no mental worker entertains. It is true that the body, with which the mind is so closely related, may be exhausted; but the mind itself enlarges its resources by expending its resources; is fertilized by its own harvests.

Other spiritual gifts besides knowledge follow in their growth the same law. Hope is increased by imparting it. If I have strong confidence in the success of any enterprise, and if I succeed in inspiring others with my confidence, it is not at any expense to my own expectation. It is not true that I become less sanguine as they become more sanguine. On the contrary the assurance that they feel reacts upon me and strengthens my assurance. Every one knows that a hopeful temper is contagious; and as other spirits catch the contagion the one from whom it goes forth does not lose heart, but feels his own confidence increasing.

The same thing is true of courage. A brave man inspires others to heroism, but his own courage is not diminished when it enters into other souls; it is stimulated and invigorated.

The same thing is true of the one central element of

the spiritual life, love — the love that is the fulfilling of the law. Your power to love is not diminished by loving, any more than your power to know is diminished by knowing. The good-will and kindness that is in you begets good will and kindness in all with whom you have to do, but your own store of affection is not lessened, it is increased when you thus dispense it. You go out in the morning, and, following the example of Him whose name is love, you endeavor throughout the day to do good to all as you have opportunity; you cheer the hopeless, you help the helpless, you feed the hungry, you bear the burdens of the sorrowful; by gracious words and considerate silence, by brave resistance of wrong in public places, and by secret ministries in which the left hand knows not the right hand's doings, you seek to serve and hearten and bless your fellow men; and when you come home at eventide it is written of you in that book where the good deeds are all recorded, that some heavy hearts are lightened; that some paths are smoother for weary feet; that some spirits encased in sullen hate and suspicion have opened just a little to let love in; that the flowers that always spring where the beautiful feet of God's messengers have fallen are blossoming along the way that you have trod; and now, having given forth so much as this of love to those who needed love, are you any poorer than you were in the morning? Is your store of affection diminished? Have you any less capacity for loving? Are your sympathies narrower or your impulses of service weaker? Oh no; this power like all the other spiritual powers is replenished not wasted by using it; this endowment of a loving nature, like every other spiritual endowment multiplies as you share it with your fellow-men.

We say sometimes in our prayers that God is not impoverished by giving nor enriched by withholding. That is true of Him because He is a Spirit, and because the law of his nature and of his action is a spiritual law. But man is a spirit also; and the saying is therefore true of man, as it is of his Maker. By giving man is not impoverished,—by giving spiritual gifts; by giving that which is the substance of his manhood. A man's temporal possessions may sometimes be diminished by bestowing them, but the man's true self is not depleted, it is enlarged by every energy that goes forth from it, by every bounty that it dispenses. "There is that scattereth and [*thus*] increaseth" is the primal law of the spiritual life.

Have we not verified the doctrine taught by the Concord philosopher? And in doing so have we not found the strongest reason for believing with Paul that there is a radical difference between the physical world and the spiritual world? Is not the law of the natural life and growth the law of exclusiveness? Is not the law of spiritual life and growth the law of recognition or communion? Is not the law of the members thus the exact antithesis of the law of the mind? Do not the body of man and the spirit of man belong to different kingdoms? Is there not a higher nature in man which is not subject to the law of the conservation of energy and of which physical science knows absolutely nothing? And is there not, therefore, reason for believing that the death of the body which is under physical law is not the death of the higher nature, which is not under physical law; that the spirit of man may continue to exist after the body has ceased to exist?

Man is not wholly mortal, but neither is he wholly

immortal. He is flesh as well as spirit. He has interests, activities, pursuits that bind him to the lower realm. He must, sometimes, mind the things of the flesh. None of us is a disembodied spirit, and it is needful for us to supply the wants of our lower natures as well as of the higher. But it is the higher nature that makes a man a man; the lower nature he shares with the other animals. And the crucial inquiry respecting every man is: In which of these realms of life does he chiefly live? Is his ruling love given to the things of the flesh or to the things of the spirit? If the former is true of him, then the law of his nature is the law of the lower realm — the law of competition and conflict, the law of exclusiveness and warfare. The things on which his heart is chiefly set are things which he can only have by depriving his fellows. By as much as he is enriched the rest of the world is impoverished. The very condition of his life is warfare, and the warfare into which his ruling choice enlists him is fierce and fatal; sooner or later the devourers themselves must be devoured. The minding of the flesh is death.

It is a sad and bitter life that any man leads who sets his chief affections on the possessions and goods of the material world; on things that can be bought with money. Because he is a spiritual being his ruling choice ought to take a higher range than this. The things that are really highest in his experience, that belong to him as a man, that distinguish him from the beasts, are the things whose law is not exclusiveness, but communion. The gains that are most precious to him are those that fall to him while he is enriching others. All the highest good of life is good for which there can be no competition; the real wealth of man

is wealth that cannot be monopolized. There never can be a corner in the market in which he gets his highest gains.

It is quite possible for man to carry this spiritual force that is in him down into the lower realm, there to subjugate the devourers. It is possible to substitute the principle of communion and combination for the principle of competition in the getting and the using of material things. That, indeed, is the very law of progress in civilization. The race goes on and up from that which is lower to that which is higher by competing less and combining more. And the thousand wars of old will never cease, and the thousand years of peace will never come, till men stop putting their trust in the methods of competition and begin to build the whole fabric of their industrial and social life on the principle of co-operation — till they walk no longer after the flesh but after the spirit.

That day is yet a long way off. It will not be hastened by disputing or by fighting, or even by legislating, any more than the growing of the grass in the spring will be hastened by firing cannon over your lawn or marching troops across it, or making speeches to it. But you and I, in our time, can have something of the light and glory of it in our homes and in our lives, if we will only treasure the truth we have found to-day. O what gains there are for us in these divine pursuits and services — gains by which no mortal loses — gains by which we may enrich instead of despoiling our fellows!

The quickening and inspiring truths that God gives us, how full of life and power they will become as we impart them unto others! The hopes that lift our hearts and spur our footsteps, how they will grow within us, as we lead

others to partake of them! The joy that brightens our lives, how much keener it will become when other faces beam with it? The love that is shed abroad in our hearts through Jesus Christ our Lord, oh, how its sacred flame will glow and mount when we see it shining out of the eyes of our fellow-men and sanctifying their lives!

"I said it in the meadow path,—
I say it on the mountain stairs;—
The best things any mortal hath
Are those which every mortal shares.

"The air we breathe, the sky, the breeze,
The light without us and within,
Life, with its unlocked treasuries—
God's riches—are for all to win.

"The grass is softer to my tread
For rest it yields unnumbered feet;
Sweeter to me the wild rose red
Because she makes the whole world sweet.

"Into your heavenly loneliness
Ye welcomed me, O solemn peaks!
And me in every guest you bless
Who reverently your mystery seeks.

"And up the radiant peopled way
That opens into worlds unknown,
It will be life's delight to say,
'Heaven is not heaven for me alone.'

"Rich through my brethren's poverty?
Such wealth were hideous! I am blest
Only in what they share with me,
In what I share with all the rest.

THE GREAT VOICE FROM HEAVEN.

REVELATIONS XI: 12.

"*And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither.*"

The fact that the Scriptures are addressed to the imagination and feeling quite as much as to the logical faculty, is a fact now beginning to be more clearly apprehended than formerly; and the discovery is the source of the most fruitful developments in religious thought. There is no need of denying that there may be exact and scientific statements of truth in both the Testaments; but it does need to be affirmed that feeling is oftener addressed than intellect; and that the terms in which truth is conveyed are more usually terms of figure or symbolism. This poetic use of language becomes more and more apparent the longer we study the sacred Word. Metaphors are discovered not only in the nouns and verbs — the substantive words of the language — but even in the particles of speech by which these more important words are bound together. Take, for an example, the preposition up contained in the text; this is a metaphor, and as such is full of rich meaning; but it has been accepted in days past as a literal expression of truth, and

has given a dogmatic direction to the theories men have believed about the heavenly world. The great voice from heaven said, "Come up hither!" And by giving to the word up its natural or physical signification, the popular idea grew that heaven was somewhere in the sky or above the sky. That conception might have answered well enough under the Ptolemaic cosmography; but when Copernicus came, it was speedily upset. As soon as it was known that the world is a sphere, and turns on its axis once a day, it became evident enough that any literal interpretation of the word would involve us in absurdity. Up is one direction now, and twelve hours from now it will be in the opposite direction. Every moment the zenith changes; and the course that is upward to us is downward to our antipodes.

Yet you know how sturdily men stood up in the early times for the literal sense of this word, and of words akin to it. When the astronomers began to teach the heliocentric doctrines, men were angry and amazed. Science was determined to overthrow the Bible, they said; if you allowed these new fangled notions of astronomy, you made nonsense of the Bible. Science was the foe of religion; the men who could teach such theories must be plotting to undermine faith; their motives could only be bad; they must be dealt with sharply, lest their infidel notions spread. All this distress arose from a failure to recognize the truth that the preposition up, and all the other words of space applied to the relation between heaven and earth are used poetically, and not scientifically; that propositions and adverbs, as well as other words, may sometimes be figures of speech.

Not a little of the fierce controversy that has wasted

tion, imaginings about it. We shall picture it to ourselves now and then; we shall take all our best ideals of beauty, and comfort and blessedness, and combine them in our thoughts to make up our ideal of heaven. The Bible piques our imagination with hints and suggestions and parables and pictures, and then leaves us, each for himself, to complete the representation. If we begin to turn our fancies into dogmas, and to call upon our neighbors to fall down and worship the images of heaven we have set up, then we do wrong; but if we hold them only as symbols, only as the dim outshining of a glory not yet revealed, only as helps in conceiving of something better than the eye has ever seen or the fancy ever painted, then they may strengthen our faith and stimulate our hope.

Holding, then, both these conceptions of heaven in our thought, let us listen to the great voice out of heaven saying unto us, "Come up hither!"

Heaven as a state is not beyond the reach of those who dwell upon the earth. Heaven came down to earth when Christ came. It had always been coming, indeed; but there was more of it here when he came than ever before. That which makes heaven — the substance of that which we hope for — is here already. The announcement of the Saviour's coming by the Forerunner — what was it? "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." So Christ himself to theological speculators and curiosity hunters gave warning: "Neither shall ye say, Lo here! or lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you!"

There is an upper and a lower realm of life here in this world. Some of us live almost wholly in the one, and some almost wholly in the other, and many vibrate between the

two. The boundary between them is a line invisible to mortal sight, but the two worlds are to the eye of God as distinct as night and day.

The Mammoth Cave in Kentucky is a little world by itself. All its phenomena, all its forms of life differ strangely from those which appear on the surface a little way above. Darkness and not light is lord of its cheerless solitudes; from the fretted arches of its roof hang weird fantastic forms of rock fashioned by the drip of centuries; no flowers bloom, no herbage rustles within its dismal grottoes, but mocking shapes of stone spring up, tree-like, in its lifeless gardens; its rivers roll with sullen flood through cavernous labyrinths, and fall with dreadful reverberation into fathomless abysses; the fish that inhabit them — the only living creatures in the cave — are eyeless monsters that have no need of the sun. Contrast with this dismal grandeur, this clammy breath, this lifeless silence, the free glad life of the fields and the forests above, lit by the sunshine, decorated by ten thousand shapes and hues of green things growing, vocal with winds and birds, and lowing kine and the sweet music of human speech, and you have some faint symbol of the difference there is between the nether life of flesh and sense, and the upper life of heavenly inspiration, both of which are open to you and me, now and here.

There is a life that springs from the earth and that clings to the earth; a life whose central motive is appetite or passion, or some form of selfishness a little more refined; a life that is ruled by material ideas and forces; a life whose maxims and methods are all earthly and sordid. To get a living; to get money; to get sensual gratification in

one form or another: to get fame and power and patronage; to get from my children or dependents the homage of a slavish fear; to get all my whims gratified, and my self-hood ministered unto by all around me; to get as much as possible for myself, and to give sparingly whether of money or favor unless I can clearly see that it is coming back to me with usury — this is the principle of the lower life. Sometimes animalism predominates in it, sometimes æstheticism, sometimes ambition, sometimes tyranny; all the same it is the exaltation of the lower parts of our nature; it is the life whose ruling motive is from below and not from above.

There is another life that has its inspiration in heaven, and that lifts us up toward heaven; a life whose central motive is love; whose source is the indwelling of God's spirit in the soul; whose streams are fed by constant communion with Him who is the light and life of men; a life that enthrones the nobler faculties and makes the grosser nature serve the higher; that holds the appetites in check, and subordinates material things to spiritual; a life whose joy is found in giving rather than in getting, in ministering rather than in being ministered unto, in serving more than in ruling: a life upon which all men enter when they are born from above — when "the power of an endless life" that made Christ the Saviour of men comes down upon them and takes possession of them.

These two realms of experience — the upper and the lower — lie close together, and both of them invite us by motives of their own. There is that in us which responds to the solicitations of the realm of sense, and there is that in us which answers to the call from the spiritual realm. Unhappily many of us, I fear, spend most of our days down

below. Our affections are set on things on the earth, rather than on the things above. Now and then we make an excursion into the heavenly realm, but we do not stay there long; the serene peace which is the portion of those who take up their abode there we do not know much about.

Yet we are perfectly certain that there is such a thing as living there. We know some who, while in this world, are plainly not of this world; whose "conversation," as Paul said, "is in heaven." The fragrance of Paradise is in their garments; the light of a new and better hope is in their eyes; their voices are musical with the accents of heavenly love. A great multitude of these saintly souls — a multitude that no man can number — have walked with God upon the earth; are walking here even now. In our streets we meet them every day; our homes are cheered by their steady patience, their unswerving fidelity, their unsparing sacrifices. Our eyes brim with grateful tears when we think of them — of the good they are doing us; of the revelation which God has made of his own love through them to us; of the call to nobler living to which their lives give voice.

Nay it is not you who profess sanctification of whom I am speaking — not you who brag of your attainments in grace, and tell us the month and the day on which you ceased from sinning; you who know that you are saints are apt to have a monopoly of that knowledge; nobody else would suspect it if you did not advertise it. It is not from your lives that this mighty influence comes that lifts us up toward the heavenly state; but from those who in humbler ways are just bearing their burdens patiently and doing their duties faithfully; leaving with meekness their sins to

the Saviour and hardly daring to claim a place among the least of his diciples. Your thoughts go at once to some whom you know, who have many misgivings as to their right to be numbered among the children of God, for whose beautiful lives their neighbors are giving thanks daily.

From the realm in which these gentle and noble souls are walking — the heaven of peace and truth and love in which they abide even here in the flesh — a great voice is heard saying, "Come up hither!" Do you never hear it? In the pauses of your daily toil, in the intervals of silence that sometimes divide the strife of tongues and the clamor of passions, does not this great voice — this commanding voice — come sounding down to you from the better world above, summoning you to a nobler life than you are living now? It is not alone to you who are outside the church that this call is spoken; it is spoken to all of us who are conscious of sordid aims and grovelling tendencies; it is spoken to every one who is conscious that the law in the members still often prevails over the law in the mind.

And what a mighty voice it is! The power and majesty of Him who said, "Let there be light;" the loving tenderness of Him who called to the tired multitudes saying, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest;" the pleading pity of Him who on the cross prayed, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" are mingled in its moving cadences. It is the voice of God, speaking in the strength and beauty of this wonderful universe, in the solemn invitations of His word, in the life and death of His Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, in the silent drawings of His spirit in

our hearts, in the faithful lives of all His true children, in all that we know or that the world has known of unselfish love, of unspotted purity, of unfailing truth, and calling us up out of the mire of earthliness and passion, out of the entanglements of frivolity, to the life of trust and peace and joy in Him! If any man hath ears to hear let him hear!

But heaven is a place, we said — more than one place, indeed. "In my Father's house are many mansions," said our Saviour. The realms of the blest are no narrow region. Bounded they are, doubtless, and must be if finite beings inhabit them, but there is room enough and range enough to satisfy the most eager and venturesome spirit. And from these many mansions of the Father's house, where the redeemed are dwelling now, a great voice is heard saying to us, "Come up hither!"

It is the voice of many waters; it is the voice of a great multitude; it is the voice of harpers harping with their harps. We do not always hear it; but, now and then, when we stand beside some open grave, or when at the Sabbath twilight hour vanished faces return, and the old loves are rekindled, and on the flowing tide of memory the old sorrows are borne in again upon our souls, the gates are set ajar for a moment, and "down heaven's stairs of stars" this melody of the heavenly host comes stealing upon our hearts with a most entracing sweetness. It is the song of a great multitude, but, blending with the chorus, there are voices that are very familiar to our ears; the low caressing tone of the mother whose lullaby was the first music we ever heard; the ringing accents of the brother who walked with us up the difficult road to manhood, and then sud-

denly was not, for God took him; the bird like notes of the little voice that hardly framed itself to human speech before it joined in the song of the angels — all these we hear — oh so clearly now and then! — all the harps of all the seraphim can never drown their melody; and all these, with the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, and the hundred and forty and four thousand, are saying to us, "Come up hither?"

Surely it cannot be that a voice like this — so full of majesty, so full of tenderness — should call us, and keep calling, and still forever call in vain!

THE CENTRAL DOCTRINE OF PROTESTANTISM.

EPHESIANS 1: 6.

"He hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

I wish to learn as much as I can about water: who will instruct me? There is no lack of instructors. At once they encompass me with their treatises — big books and little, tables, measurments, laws, pour in upon me in a flood: the hydrographers whose business it is to survey and describe all the surface waters of the globe; the physicists with their manuals of hydrostatics and hydrodynamics; the chemists with their analyses and their formulæ. And there are many curious and wonderful things in all these scientific books that treat of water. The laws of specific gravity, of pressure, of flotation, of ocean currents; the laws of evaporation and condensation, and congelation; the chemical laws by which water is formed out of its elements — all these reward with a solid satisfaction the student who masters them. But after science has told you all it knows about water, how little you have learned of the power that is in it, of the beauty that clothes it, of the ministry that employs it! Stand upon the cliff when the surf is pounding at its base, and the battle-lines of breakers

are charging upon its muniments, and something of the majesty and might of water will be revealed to you that is not told in the books that treat of hydrodynamics. The river rolling through the meadows, glassing alder-thicket and wooded bank in its perfect mirror; the lakelet, hiding in the forest, whose silvery stillness is ruffled by the wing of the screaming kingfisher, or broken into fairy rings by the leaping trout; the brook dancing down the cascade on the mountain side, or singing through the pastures; the morning dew, glittering in myriad points of light on every petiole and grass spire; the snow-flakes and the frost-traceries and the crystal architecture of the ice; the clouds, overhead, that weave for themselves out of the abounding light such robes of marvellous color — all these can show us something of the beauty that hides in forms of water.

And whenever on a sultry day of summer, or in the tossing of a fever, our thirst has been quenched by a draught of cool water, we have learned something about its value that it would be hard for any scientific man to put into a formula.

That part of the function and ministry of this great natural element which science can subject to its classifications and laws is, then, much less than the whole of it. To our sense of the beautiful and of the sublime, it speaks in most impressive language; it awakens within us deep emotions; it addresses itself also in a most direct and effective way to our personal needs. The thirsty child who drinks of it, the weary spaniel that laves his heated body in its refreshing coolness, gain a sense of the good of water that the most learned scientist could never convey.

The disparity betweeen the scientific account of a thing and the real nature and value of it is seen not only in the natural world but in the moral world as well. Many of the highest human experiences have been compelled, in the social exigencies of our present state, to submit themselves to some sort of scientific analysis and statement; and it is obvious enough that what is left out of such statements is vastly more than what is included. There are law books, for example, that undertake to tell us the laws of marriage and parentage; but how much can any one learn by reading those law books of the real bond that binds faithful hearts together; of the sacredness and sweetness of the affection that forms the foundation of the home.

Between theology and religion the same disparity exists. The theological statement of a religious truth often comes as far short of giving us the real meaning of the truth, as the law books on marriage do of giving us the real meaning of marriage, or as the scientific treatises on water do of conveying to us an adequate sense of the real beauty and value of water. Theology is a science, religion is an experience; and there are many things in our highest human experiences, especially those that grow out of our relation to God, for which it is not possible to find any adequate scientific statement. After theology has said its last and largest and strongest word about them, more is left unsaid than has been spoken.

The doctrine of justification by faith, the central doctrine of Protestantism as it is sometimes called, is, as it is often presented, a hard, dry, formal statement of a most precious and inspiring truth. The truth is in its very nature so full of tenderness, of affection, of the most sacred

and intimate experience, that it is quite impossible to put it into a formula.

Let us imagine some doctor of the law going to the home of the prodigal after the feast was over, taking the father and the son aside, and questioning them, note book in hand: "A very remarkable and beautiful reconciliation has taken place here," he says: "the rebel against parental authority is pardoned: the wanderer has returned to his home; favor and plenty and peace have been restored to one who has long been deprived of them; will you not have the goodness now to condense into a statement not more than five or six lines in length the real nature of this transaction?" The crude and stupid absurdity of such a proposition would be evident enough to all who have read the touching story. As if all the regret, the gratitude, the hopes, the fears, the doubts, the confidences, the anguish, the dread, the thankfulness, the peace of that deep human experience could be reduced to a logical definition! And yet men undertake to put into concise theological propositions the whole truth concerning the return of the sinner to the favor of God.

"What is justification?" asks the Shorter Catechism. "Justification," answers the Shorter Catechism, "is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone."

That is the scientific definition of justification by faith, perhaps as good a definition as ever was framed. And it may help us a little toward a right understanding of what justification is, just as Weisbach's great books on

hydraulics might help us a little toward understanding the ministry of water; just as Bishop's two big volumes on Marriage and Divorce may throw some light on the nature of the family relation; but he who depends on such a formulary as this for his knowledge of the way in which the sinner is restored by faith in Christ to the favor of God, must remain in profound ignorance of the whole matter.

"The righteousness of Christ imputed to us," is the key phrase of this definition. And the conception is purely legal. We are under condemnation because we have broken the law. Christ, by his sufferings, has satisfied the law. Those who accept him as their substitute are freed from the law. His sufferings are substituted for ours; his righteousness is legally reckoned as belonging to us, and thus we go free. "Justification," says Dr. Hodge, "is pronouncing one to be just, and treating him accordingly, *on the ground that the demands of the law have been satisfied concerning him.*" The acceptance of the sinner is therefore due to a legal transfer to Christ of the penalty of his sins, and a legal imputation to him of the righteousness of Christ.

This is the scientific account of what is sometimes called "the great transaction." Theological science reduces the tender history of the sinner's restoration to the favor of God to such a statement as this. It is plain that theological science, like every other sort of science, fails to include the deepest and best things in human experience.

The words of the text, which bear upon the same subject, surely have a different sound, and put our thoughts upon a different track. "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." This is not so dry a formulary; it does not sound like part of a legal writ or rescript; it opens to

us glimpses of a dearer relation than that of a bondsman in court or the endorser of a note. We will not imagine that we can compass this whole truth in any representation that we are likely to make of it; but we will try to penetrate the phrases that have been hardened by much disputation, and find our way a little nearer to the heart of this great matter.

In some way, it is clear, the New Testament represents God as accepting men through Christ. In some way Christ is regarded by the believer as his substitute. He is the Mediator between God an men. By faith in Him we are justified. These words meant something to the men who used them, and they ought to mean something to us. What is their meaning?

They cannot, of course, describe any legal transfer of moral qualities. Moral qualities cannot be legally transferred from one person to another. My demerits cannot be lawfully transferred to another, nor can the merits of another be lawfully transferred to me. My guilt is my own, and can by no possibility be imputed to another being. Can any one else in the universe be blamed for a sin of mine in which he had no part? On the other hand it is equally impossible that I should be regarded as entitled to praise for a good act performed by another person, of which I had no knowledge, and in which I had no part. "Every one of you shall give an account for himself unto God." The entire and absolute personality of moral qualities, of guilt or innocence, of praise or blame, is the fundamental truth of morality. Any legal interference with this fundamental principle would be subversive of all righteousness.

But it is said that though moral quality cannot be transferred, legal liability can be; that though Christ cannot be morally guilty on account of our sins, God regards Him as legally reponsible for them; that though His merits cannot be legally transferred to us, God does consider us as blameless before the law on His account. We are justified because we claim Him as our substitute.

Now there is under all these phrases a great truth; and although the common method of explaining it may seem to impugn the justice and even the veracity of God, and represent Him as consenting to a fictitious and evasive legal operation, yet, if we take the whole subject out of court and strip it of its legal phraseology, we shall see that there is something real and precious in this act of God's grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

Let me tell you a story that might happen, if it never did happen, in which we may get some hint of the principle here involved.

John Goodman is a citizen of noble character and of large philanthropy. He has a son whom he loves as the apple of his eye, and who is justifying his father's affection by growing up into blameless manliness. One night a young desperado, the offspring of criminals, whose life has been spent among the worst classes of our cities, breaks into John Goodman's house, with the intent of robbery, and nearly kills his son. The father comes to the rescue, captures the young burglar, binds him fast, and waits for the morning to deliver him up to justice. In the meantime the son revives, and, seeing the youth of the criminal, is touched with pity for him, a sentiment that has already begun to kindle the father's heart. Before morning father

and son have resolved to make a great venture to save this wretched boy from his life of crime and shame. They tell him that if he will turn from his evil ways, he may have a home with them, sharing their comfort and their plenty; that they will protect him, so far as they can, from the consequences of his past misdeeds; that they will guard him from bad influences, and open to him paths of integrity and honor; that he shall be recognized as an equal in the family, and shall be joint heir to the estate. All this is offered him by the father, and urged upon him, even with tears, by the son whose life he had attempted. Of course it is very difficult for the wretch to believe that these assurances are sincere. He thinks at first that they are mocking and taunting him, and his lips curl with scorn and resentment as he listens. But by and by he perceives that they are in earnest, and he is overwhelmed by their marvellous goodness. He casts himself down before them; he kisses their feet; he tells them in broken words the story of his gratitude.

And he does honestly try to live the better life toward which they seek to lead him. It is the deepest purpose of his life to be upright and faithful and pure. But, as any one might easily foretell, this is a purpose hard for such a boy to shape in act. He is indolent, and profane, and reckless by habit; hiss mind is full of gross and foul thoughts; his temper is untamed; his whole nature has been warped and corrupted by his early training. This ingrained evil finds expression in many ways. After a time the good man begins to despair of ever making anything of this unfortunate youth; he begins to regret that, instead of trying to reclaim him, he had not handed him over to

the police. But while he is thus wavering in his purpose, he chances to enter the room of his protege, and there he finds upon the table a picture of his own son, soiled with much handling, evidently left in sight by accident — and on the back of it, in the rude hand-writing and doubtful orthography of the waif, these words written: "I want to be like him. I pray God to help me to be nearer like him. I'm far enough from it now, God knows; but I watch him all the while, and try to live as good a life as he lives. God bless him for all his goodness to me!" The father's eyes fill with tears, as he reads these simple words. He discerns in them the deep purpose of the poor boy whose faulty performance has so tried him. His heart cannot but be touched by the lad's choice of a hero. He knows that the choice is a worthy one, and he knows that the lad's love for his own son will have in it a regenerating power. He has no more misgivings concerning the wisdom of his attempt to save this lost one; and always after this he couples the lad in his thoughts with his own son; and feels toward him something of the tenderness with which he regards his own son. Since the poor lad cherishes for the other this passionate friendship, since he takes the father's pride as his own ideal and pattern, how else can the father regard him? He is accepted in the beloved.

Now this story does not completely illustrate the case we are considering; no example, drawn from human relations, can perfectly set forth the relation of God to the sinner. Nevertheless this parable may help us to understand the sinner's acceptance with God through Christ. We who were aforetime disobedient, and alienated from God, enemies in our minds by evil works, are brought near

and reconciled by the great love that is shown us in Jesus Christ. But we are still far from perfect in word or thought or deed. And when we come into God's presence, with all our imperfections on our heads, how can we speak to him? what can we say to him? He looks on our lives, and sees in them innumerable faults and shortcomings; what can he find in us to approve?

Perhaps you say that even if there is nothing in us to approve God loves us, just as a mother will love her wayward and dissolute boy when there is nothing lovable about him. But the mother thinks there is something good in her boy; she finds something to admire in his character; she sees good in him, and ground of hope for something better; and it is to this that her love fastens. And I suppose that it is not possible for the best human being — nor for the divine Being, in whose image all the best human beings are made — to love any creature unless there is something in him to love. Man's love may sometimes be blind, but God's love is not, nor is it irrational; it does not delight in any soul unless there is something in that soul that is fit to be delighted in.

We say that God loves sinners, the unthankful, and the evil; that Christ came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; and all this is true: but what he loves in sinners is not their sin; and if there were nothing but sin in them, he could not love them at all. It is the possibility of something better that he sees in them on which his love lays hold.

What is it, then, my Christian brother, that God sees in you when you present yourself before him, on the ground of which he accepts you? What is it that gives you

boldness to approach him with your confessions and your petitions? It is not, I am sure, any works of righteousness that you have done. For though I would not use any exaggerated language in describing your character or your conduct, I know that you do not feel, when you present yourself before the throne of the infinite Holiness, that you have anything to boast of. You know, better than any one else knows, the deceitfulness of your own heart, the sin that mingles with your holiest endeavors.

But you know, too, that you can say this: "I have taken Jesus Christ to be my Master and my pattern. To be pure as he is pure; to be true as he is true; to be brave and patient and loving as his life in the flesh showed him to be — this is my deepest and strongest desire. God knows how far I have come from attaining unto this, but he knows also that this is what I mean to be. And I trust that he will look, not on my poor performances, but on this perfect ideal at which I am aiming, and will hear my prayer and help me, not for what I am but for what I wish and try to be.

"Because he knows that there is in my heart, not only admiration for Christ as a pattern, but some measure, at least, of love for him as a person. His boundless love for all men, and for me, has awakened in my heart a response of love to him. I love him far less than I ought to love him; but he knows that I do love him. And not only because of my desire to be like the Son of God, but also because of my gratitude to him and my affection for him, I trust that God will find in me, in spite of all my sins and shortcomings, something that he can approve and delight in. I hope that though I cannot be accepted

because of my own merit, I may be accepted in the Beloved."

Thus it is that Jesus Christ becomes the believer's substitute. He is our substitute, not judicially, but ideally; not because our guilt is by any legal fiction transferred to him, nor because his righteousness is by decree of court transferred to us; but because we take him by faith as our representative. And whoever does honestly and heartily choose Jesus Christ as representing both to God and to himself the character that he means to form, the life that he means to live, may know that God accepts him, and delights in him, and rejoices to help him. His actual performance may be very faulty; but if this is his ruling choice, he is justified before God.

In the words of another: "He who, when goodness is impressively put before him, exhibits an instinctive loyalty to it, starts forward to take its side, trusts himself to it,—such a man has faith, and the root of the matter is in such a man. He may have habits of vice, but the loyal and faithful instinct in him will place him above many that practice virtue. He may be rude in thought and character, but he will unconsciously gravitate toward what is right. * * * He who cannot know what is right can know that some one else knows; he who has no law, may still have a master; he who is incapable of justice may be capable of fidelity; he who understands little may have his sins forgiven because he loves much."

This is the principal that underlies and vitalizes that religious experience which we call justification by faith in Christ. We all allow that a man must be judged by his deepest and most dominant choices; if this deepest

choice lays hold on Jesus Christ, if we can truly express to ourselves the controlling aim of our lives by saying that we desire to be like Christ, then God, who knows what our controlling aim is, accepts us, though very imperfect in character and deed. This is what is meant by being "in Christ." We see in him the character on which our hearts are set; our hopes, our aims, our aspirations all center in what he is; our life — the very motive-power of it — the organic and formative principle of it,— is hid with Christ in God; we seek to grow up into him, in all things, which is the head, even Christ. And therefore when we stand in the presence of God, oppressed with a sense of our own shortcomings and transgressions, we can still look upon him, and say, "Behold the Man! That is the measure of the stature to which I desire to grow!" And we know that the Judge of all the earth, who knows our hearts, accepts us, because this is our profoundest wish, and forgives us graciously, and loves us freely.

But some one will ask, "What is the need of a personal representative to whom I can point as embodying my choice and purpose? Why can I not as well make known to God in my own way my desire to live a pure and true life, and why will he not accept this declaration just as readily as he accepts my choice of Christ as my representative?"

Well, my friend, the ideal that you thus form and cherish ought to be the highest and most perfect ideal — that is plain. You would not venture to ask God to accept anything short of moral perfection. And do you think you can frame a better ideal of moral perfection than that which is given you in the person of Jesus Christ? Can you

better describe the man that you want to be than by saying, "I would be like Jesus Christ?" If you cannot, then the wisest choice for you is to say just that.

There is another reason why it is far better for you to take the living Christ as the representative of your life than to set up before yourself an abstract virtue and strive to attain that. Love for a person, ardent personal affection and attachment are far better for any man's soul, than mere dry following of rules and maxims. "No heart is pure that is not passionate." No man lives well who does not love. And in the personal bond that binds you to the living Christ is the strongest of all regenerating influences. By faith in him, by fellowship with him, you become partaker of his nature.

If, now, I knew some one who by his sin had become alienated from God, who felt that he could not pray, because of the haunting consciousness of his offenses, and who wanted to be at peace with God, I would say to him: My friend, Jesus Christ is the way. Choose him for your Master and Lord. Let him be your Representative, your Mediator before God. Not by any theoretical or sentimental preference, but with all the energy of your soul, commit yourself to him. Such a resolute choice as that will banish all the cold shadows of distrust and take you into the sunshine of God's favor. You will be sure that there is no condemnation for you because you are in Christ Jesus. When you identify yourself with him, you are no more a servant but a son, and God will send the spirit of his son into your hearts crying, Abba Father. You will know that you are accepted in the beloved.

THE PARABLE OF THE CLIMBING PLANTS.

ACTS XVII: 27.

"That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he is not far from every one of us."

This is part of the speech of Paul on Mars' Hill to the Athenian philosophers. He has found among the many statues and idols with which the streets and groves are crowded an altar dedicated "To an Unknown God." This inscription he takes for his text; and he tells the Athenians that the outreaching of their faith toward a deity whom they do not know is the best part of their religion: that there is, indeed, as they have darkly guessed, a God immeasurably above all the divinities whom in their marbles and their bronzes they have tried to symbolize;—an infinite Spirit, the Father not only of the Olympians and of the Greeks, but of all peoples and nations and languages that dwell on the face of the earth. Moreover that dim, prophetic vision of him which finds voice in this inscription, is itself the response to his call, for he hath made all men "*that* they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from every one of us." This is the purpose for which he has made

them. The instinct that leads them to feel after him is an instinct with which he has endowed them, and thus this inscription to the Unknown God is itself a witness to the existence of Him to whom it points, and the fruit of a germ planted by Him in the human soul.

The phrase "to feel after," is an instructive phrase. It suggests to us, in the first place, that our approaches to God are made largely by the aid of our spiritual instincts — the involuntary movements of our thought. We are impelled to search for him by our sense of want, by our craving for something that we do not possess, yet that we dimly know must exist. By these cravings the soul feels after God.

I have lately found in President Bascom's treatise on Comparative Psychology some quotations that have greatly interested me from Mr. Darwin's volume on Climbing Plants. The book itself I have not seen; but these extracts furnish me analogies that are instructive. The fact that all life comes from one Life-giver, and that the laws of the natural world often run parallel with the laws of the spiritual world is most beautifully set forth by these studies of Mr. Darwin. Therefore I shall let him preach to you this morning; that is to say, the truth of God as revealed in nature and recorded by this naturalist shall be placed before you, that you may see in it, as in a glass, the reflection of truths that deeply relate to your own spiritual life.

The first peculiarity of the climbing plant to which the author calls our attention is "the slow revolution, in a larger or smaller circle, of the upper extremities in search of a support." Just as soon as the tender stalk of the

plant begins to lift itself up from the earth, the top of it begins to swing round, reaching out thus in all directions for something to lay hold upon and cling to. The petioles or leaf stalks, the tendrils, and even the stem of the plant itself show a wonderful sensitiveness to touch, and when in their revolutions they are brought into contact with some firm object, they immediately begin to press against it and to twine round it. The tendrils and the petioles are the most sensitive, and they lay hold upon the object that they have reached with a firm grasp, and, if the form of the object permit, carry the whole plant round it, and bind it fast.

Thus it is that the climbing plant feels after the strong support on which it must depend. The plant knows that it cannot stand alone: it knows that it must have something to cling to; and it begins to reach out after it just as soon as it begins to grow. I say the plant "knows;" and though that expression must not be taken too literally, yet there is in this instinctive search for support something so wonderfully like many of our own instinctive mental operations that we cannot help seeing that all kingdoms of life are closely allied. As President Bascom says of these phenomena, "they all show an organic mastery of external conditions approaching that which we find in a more complete form in higher life."

Do we not witness in these movements of the climbing plant something closely analogous to the outreachings of the human soul after God? The soul knows, too, that it cannot thrive alone, that it needs some Power stronger than itself to cling to; and it always begins to feel after it if haply it may find it. Blindly, in the dark, the minds of

men grope after this Object of their faith; often it is only to them the Great Unknown, —

> "That which we dare invoke to bless,
> Our dearest faith, our ghastliest doubt,
> He, They, One, All, within, without —
> The Power in darkness whom we guess."

In the jungles of Africa, in the ice fields of the North, these instincts stir in the hearts of men, and draw them toward Him in whom they live and on whom they ought to lean, and about whom the tendrils of their affections ought to cling. It is not the heathen alone who have this experience. You know what it means, my friend, no matter how irreligious your life may have been; you know that your heart is often yearning for a good you have not got; that the sense of helplessness and dependence sometimes takes strong hold of you and forces from your heart the cry: "Oh that I knew where I might find Him and lay hold upon His strength!"

"On another plant," says Mr. Darwin, "three pairs of tendrils were produced at the same time by three shoots, and all happened to be differently directed. I placed the pot in a box open only on one side and obliquely facing the light; in two days all six tendrils pointed with unerring truth to the darkest corner of the box, though to do this each had to bend in a different manner. Six turret vanes could not have more truly shown the direction of the wind than did these branched tendrils the course of the streams of light which entered the box."

The reason of this movement of the tendrils away from

the light is not at first apparent, but a little thought makes it plain. The tendril is seeking an object to cling to; in the direction from which the light comes there cannot be any object; if an object were there it would obstruct the light; the fact that the light comes freely from that side shows that no object is there, so the tendrils turn in the other direction; the shadow is the sign of the presence of an object to which the tendril may cling; support is nearest on the side where the shadow is. That seems to be the logic of this movement of the tendril. What wonderful wisdom is here!

"But the analogy"—you are thinking. "How does this prefigure our spiritual relation to God? God is light, and in him is no darkness at all; and we are saved not by turning away from him, as the tendrils turn from the light, but by turning to him." All this is true, in the sense in which it is spoken; and it may serve to remind us that analogies, like parables, cannot always be made to go upon all fours. Nevertheless there is a deeper sense in which this analogy does suggest to us that spiritual truth of which we are in search. God *is* light, in one most important view of his nature; he is the source of all truth and of all beauty, and of all goodness; but it is also true that clouds and darkness are the habitation of his throne. When it is said that in him is no darkness at all, the word darkness has a moral signification. It is meant that there is in him no deceit, no insincerity, no malignant hatred. His character is light, but there are many things about his nature that are dark to us and must be, because he is infinite and we are finite. There are depths of being in him that our thoughts can never fathom. And it is

precisely this transcendent greatness of his that our trust lays hold upon. We want a Power to cling to who is not only greater than we are, but whose greatness we cannot compass with our thought. We want a Friend who is able to do for us not only the things that we ask for and think of, but exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. A God whom we could comprehend, whose power we could measure, we could not fully trust. And so it is that our faith turns away from the garish light of human wisdom toward the unfathomed depths of Deity.

"I found Him, not in world or sun,
Or eagle's wing or insect's eye,
Nor through the questions men may try,
The petty cobwebs we have spun.

"If e'er when faith had faflen asleep,
I heard a voice 'Believe no more,'
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the godless deep,—

"A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part;
And, like a man in wrath, the heart
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt.'

"No, like a child, in doubt and fear;
But that blind clamor made me wise;
Then was I as a child that cries,
And, crying, knows his father near.

"And what I seem beheld again
What is, and no man understands;
And out of darkness came the hands
That reach through nature, moulding men."

And thus our analogy finds some verification even in this curious movement of the tendrils away from the light and toward the darkness.

There is still another point of resemblance here which we may think of for a moment. The truth that it gives us may seem to contradict the one we have just seen, but it does not in reality; it is only the other side of the same truth. The darkness is a symbol of God's infinity, of the veiling of his nature from our sight. But it is only, let us remember, by the help of shadows that we see. Where there is nothing but light there is no vision. Look directly at the sun and you can see nothing. It is when your back is turned to the sun that you see most clearly. There must be some combination of shade with light that we may be able to see anything. And this is one reason why our faith, like the tendrils, turns away from the full light. It turns not only toward the darkness that hides God's infinity, it turns also toward the shadow because in that something of his nature is visible. The shadow not only conceals, it also discloses.

You cannot conceive of absolute deity. Your mind is dazzled when you look God in the face, just as your eyes are dazzled when you look the sun in the face. Infinite knowledge, infinite power, self-existence, unconditioned being — you cannot grasp these ideas. You must believe that there is such a God; you need such a God to trust in, and so you feel after him in the darkness, by the outreaching of your faith; but you cannot see him by the intellectual vision; when you try to gaze upon his perfections you are blinded by the sight. And men have always found it necessary to learn what God is by looking

toward the shadows and the types which he has given us. The human nature is a reflection of the divine; and we can only comprehend God when he is revealed to us in the forms of the human life. This is the Incarnation — it is God in the shadow. Our faith finds something here that we can take hold of and cling to. The adumbration of God in humanity meets the deepest need of the human soul. Thus it is not only toward the darkness that hides the Infinite but toward the shadows that temper for us the brightness of his glory that our souls reach forth. And the tendrils seem after all to have a lesson for us when they turn away from the light.

Yet, though they seek the shade, they know what it is that they seek, and they are not deceived. "Knowing," says Mr. Darwin, "that the tendrils avoided the light, I gave them a glass tube blackened within, and a well blackened zinc plate; but they soon recoiled from these objects with what I can only call disgust, and straightened themselves." Here we have not a likeness, but a contrast. For the human spirit is not always, like the tendrils of the climbing plant, unerring in its selection of the objects on which it will lay hold. Full often the tendrils of our desire touch and fasten upon that which defiles us; and the faith that ought to bind us fast to God's righteousness and power, is entwined about some groveling superstition or some ensnaring sin. The plant obeys the impulse given to it by the divine goodness, and obeys it unerringly; but man to whom the power of choice is given — a power that the plant does not possess, — abuses his birthright and clings to the corruptions of flesh and sense.

"When a tendril," says our teacher again, "has not

succeeded in clasping a support, either through its own revolving movement or that of the shoot, or by turning toward any object that intercepts the light, it bends vertically downwards and then toward its own stem, which it seizes, together with the supporting stick, if there be one." The aptness of this simile you do not fail to perceive. When those spiritual instincts of our nature that reach out naturally after God and goodness do not lay hold on that which is their normal support, they, too, are very apt to turn downward and inward, and to lay hold upon that self which it was their true function to bind to a firm support. Man ought to trust in and worship something outside of and above himself; it is his nature to go forth from himself in search of such an object to worship; but sometimes his own perverse and wicked will checks these natural aspirations, and will not suffer them to fasten upon the Object to which they ought to cling. And when this is done the affections are apt to be turned backward upon self; the man comes to believe only in himself and to worship himself, and the character that is developed is a most unlovely product of egotism and selfishness. Alas for the man whose trust and hope are in himself alone!

"If the tendril seizes nothing," says this naturalist, "it soon withers away and drops off." There is a world of meaning in this trait of the parable. The tendril shrivels and dies when it does not find any support to cling to. The disused faculty perishes by disuse. And these instincts of our souls that reach out after God — these yearnings for his strength and his peace — may perish in the same way. The desire to know him and to love him and to serve him is extinguished in the breast, if we refuse his service. It is

possible thus, by simple neglect, to destroy that part of our nature by which we take hold upon God. The extinction of the faith-faculty is not an impossible calamity. Of all calamities that could befall us this is the direst. How can the climbing plant climb when the tendrils have withered and dropped off? It must thenceforth grovel in the dirt and be trodden under foot of men. And how can the soul lift itself up, when all the faculties by which it takes hold on God have fallen into decay? From that hour its destiny must be corruption and death.

Let us hear Mr. Darwin again: "Tendrils, soon after catching a support, grow much stronger and thicker and sometimes more durable to a wonderful degree; and this shows how much their internal tissues must be changed. Occasionally it is the part which is wound round a support which chiefly becomes thicker and stronger. I have seen, for instance, this part of a tendril of *Bignonia æquinoctialis* twice as thick and rigid as the free basal part." Is not this, also, true in the higher realm? The instincts of the soul that feel after God are wonderfully strengthened when they find him, and take hold of his power. Faith grows by exercise. The man who says, "Lord, I believe!"—even if he must, because of the infirmity of his faith, say in the same breath, "Help thou mine unbelief!"—finds always that his power of believing increases while he speaks.

"The tendril strikes some object," Mr. Darwin proceeds, "and firmly grasps it. In the course of some hours it contracts into a spire, dragging up the stem and forming an excellent spring. All movements now cease. By growth, the tissues soon become wonderfully strong and

durable." The very character and quality of the tendrils themselves are changed as they thus fasten upon their support, and perform the function to which nature has assigned them. And so it is with these spiritual faculties of ours by which we lay hold upon God. Our trust, instead of being a tender and fragile thing, grows firm and strong and holds us fast to the throne of God with a grasp that the shocks of change cannot break nor the storms of adversity loosen.

One more quotation from this wonderful fable of the climbing plants must suffice us for to-day: "The tendrils and internodes of Ampelopsis have little or no power of revolving; the tendrils are but little sensitive to contact; their hooked extremities cannot seize their objects; they will not even clasp a stick unless in extreme need of support; but they turn from the light to the dark, and, spreading out their branches in contact with any nearly flat surface, develop discs. These adhere by the secretion of some cement to a wall or even to a polished surface. The rapid development of these adherent discs is one of the most remarkable peculiarities possessed by any tendril." I cannot help seeing in this wonderful provision of nature an analogy of that phenomenon of the spiritual life which we so often witness, by which those natures which have but little power of comprehending religious truth — of reaching round it and getting hold of it by their understanding — do yet lay hold upon it in a way of their own, and hold fast to it very firmly too. The Ampelopsis that climbs the wall of your church has no need of a ladder or a rope to climb by; its own little discs make fast to the wall, and hold it quite as firmly as if it were wound round a trellis. And

so there are Christians whose faith does not seem to need the leading strings of logic or theology, but mounts right up by its own sure-footed intuition. And it is a blessed thing that those to whom the paths of philosophy are thorny, and the steeps of speculation hard to climb, may thus, by a simple and direct confidence in the Christ himself, who is to all who receive Him the Way and the Truth and the Life, ascend to the serene and tranquil heights of virtue. And doubtless it would often be better for us all if, instead of believing much about him, we would just believe on him, joining ourselves to him by a living faith, and trusting where we cannot see.

Such then is our parable. Its meaning has been disclosed as we have told it, and I do not think you have failed to see the significance of its teachings. For one thing it brings us into a better acquaintance with those other creatures of God that we sometimes think have but little in common with ourselves, and makes us see how near of kin we are to the vines and the lilies and the grass of the field. In the story of their lives we see our own lives prefigured, and some new meaning is given to that bold parable of Paul in which he represents the whole creation as sharing with man in the degradation of sin, and toiling upward with him out of the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

For proof of the existence of these instincts of the soul, that feel after God, if haply they may find him; that impel you, often, in hours of darkness and unrest, to acquaint yourself with him that you may be at peace; that bear witness to you over and over again, telling you that for these things of life — these choices, these burdens, these

conflicts, these fears, you are not sufficient; that your strength needs to be supplemented by the strength of One who is almighty — for the existence of such instincts I need only go for proof to your own consciousness. You know what they are; you have felt their gentle but powerful drawings in your own hearts. Toward the darkness in which the Infinite is hidden, toward the shadow in which He is disclosed, your desire often reaches out; upon the sure support that you know is somewhere on that side of your nature your needs and your longings strive to fasten themselves. Is it true of any of you that these affections have laid hold of coarse and unworthy objects, or that, failing to find the Object to which they ought to cling, they have turned back upon yourselves, aggravating your own "selfishness?" Or have these instincts in any of your natures, through neglect or disuse, withered and dropped away, leaving you with no faculties by which you can take hold on the things that are above? God forbid that so sad a fate should overtake any of those to whom I am speaking to-day!

Remember this, that He after whom our desires reach out is "not far from every one of us." He is near enough to you to-day so that by faith you may join your life to Him, and rest forever upon his unfailing love. And remember, too, that though our grasp upon the everlasting strength be frail at first, it strengthens as we cling; as we hold, we are held; all the experiences of life confirm the bond that joins us to him; until at length we shall be able to join with Paul in that triumphant utterance: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things

to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

THE TAMING OF THE TONGUE.

JAMES III: 7-8.

"*For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea is tamed and hath been tamed by mankind; but the tongue can no man tame: it is a restless evil; it is full of deadly poison.*"

The story is told of an ignorant but godly man who came in the ancient days when the Bible was not in the hands of the people, to one of the fathers of the church desiring to be taught the Scriptures. His first lesson was the thirty-ninth Psalm beginning thus: "I said I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue." He went away and did not return for his second lesson. Many years passed before his teacher saw him; and, when they met, the preceptor asked the pupil, "How was it that you never came back for further instruction in the word of God?" "Because," was the answer, "though I have been trying hard, I have not yet learned to keep the first verse that you taught me." He had found the taming of the tongue to be a task as difficult as James reports it to be.

James, the writer of this epistle, was the brother of our Lord. Whether he was the son of Joseph by a former mar-

riage, or the son of Joseph and Mary, or the son of Alpheus, and thus a cousin rather than a brother of Jesus we do not know, but he was certainly a near relative, and probably a member of the same household. Although most of the brethren of Jesus believed not on him, it would seem that this brother was his disciple, and as such had unusual opportunity of knowing not only the words but the spirit of the Master. At all events, this epistle of James, not only in the style in which it is written, making free use as it does of simile and natural imagery, but also in its vigorous ethical tone, in its persistent putting of conduct above every thing else, is more like the teachings of Christ as they are recorded in the first three gospels than any other part of the New Testament. This man — we should say at once, if we knew nothing about his family record — this man has been with Jesus and has learned of him.

The intense practicalness of James as a religious teacher leads him directly to this topic of the taming of the tongue. Here he sees, what every man to whom behavior is a chief concern must see, one of the pivotal points of character. The religion that does not rule the speech is a failure and a fraud. "If any man among you," he says in another chapter, "if any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Hence James struck straight and hard at the vices of speech; more than any other teacher except our Lord he emphasises the evils that grow out of the abuses of this goodly faculty of man.

The tongue, in the figure of James, is a wild beast that needs taming — fierce, reasonless, uncontrollable. A good part of the evils of life arise from its depredations. We

will not pursue his figure for the present, but will try to make a catalogue of some of the more common forms of transgression and injury of which the tongue is the author; of some of the kinds of tongues that need taming.

First, of course, is the lying tongue. Of all the evils of speech falsehood is central and seminal. How many ways the skilful tongue has of lying I will not try to tell, —from the brazen utterance of the thing that is not, to the careful form of words that conceals instead of revealing the fact; that conveys to the mind a falsehood, while literallly stating a truth. It is useless to classify this devil's brood of lies; their name is legion; and despite the attempt to invent fine names for some of them they are all of a color; or, if there is one kind of lie blacker than the rest, it is that kind which deals in insinuation and in the artful conveying of false impressions.

2. Next to the lying tongue we must put the reviling tongue. The tongue that utters blasphemy, that lightly and wantonly discourses of sacred themes; the tongue from which the oath and the ribald jest drop thoughtlessly; the tongue that assails with brutal and abusive speech not only the Lord most high but men who are made in his similitude, — how many are there of these that fill the air we breathe with noxious forms of speech. The tongue that was made to bless with, men use to curse with; the tongue that ought to utter words of reverence and words of praise and words of cheer and words of good-will becomes the utterer of withering scoffs and chilling execrations. How often, when we hear men talking, we are moved to cry out, "What a wild beast that tongue is! who can tame it?"

3. After the reviling tongue the foul tongue must be

reckoned, — the tongue that is the channel through which the impurities of a bad heart discharge themselves; the tongue that deals in indecent and salacious speech. O the poison and pollution that thus drip day by day from wicked tongues into untutored ears, bearing their curse along with them!

4. Next we think of the passionate tongue; the tongue that hastens to give voice to the anger and the hate that arise within. Anger, the Latin poet said, is a brief insanity; and when it begins to rage within the breast it needs to be chained and kept under till its paroxysm is past. But the mischeivous tongue sometimes sets it loose and becomes its servitor — to hurl missiles of hot and stinging words right and left, doing damage that it is hard to repair. Not only to those against whom these angry words are flung is the damage done; their reaction upon the one who utters them is even worse. He who in anger gives vent to harsh or unjust or reckless words generally hurts himself far more than he can hurt any one else. The remembrance of this outburst either fills him with shame and humiliation, and thus lowers his self-respect, or else, in a foolish consistency, he goes on to make his conduct conform to this hasty utterance, — to *be* as spiteful or as desperate as he then rashly professed to be. Thus, often, the unbridled tongue commits a man to ways in which he never really chose to walk, and drags him along toward folly or sin. Is there not need that we should all learn to put a curb upon it?

5. The sarcastic tongue is another kind that needs taming. Sarcasm has its uses, no doubt; in our warfare with incorrigible evil doers we must sometimes resort to it;

but in the common intercourse of life it is scarcely more legitimate than the cudgel or the rapier. Yet we are tempted, many of us, to use it too often. It lies near our hands; it is an effective weapon; we can make some people wince, and some people tremble when we use it; it is a great self-denial to refrain from using it. Nevertheless, it would be better for many of us to handle it much less frequently. A sharp and biting tongue is a dangerous instrument; they are not wise who play with it. Keen and bitter words, albeit they are deserved, often rankle in the memory long after they are uttered. They hurt harder than blows and are harder to forget. Reproof may be often necessary, but a reproof, even a stern one, need not be a scornful and biting one. The arrows of sarcasm are barbed with contempt; that is what makes them rankle so; and contempt is a feeling that a good man cannot afford to indulge. Resentment, indignation, wrath, are sometimes holy feelings; but contempt for any creature God has made is not a feeling to be cherished. Human beings may sometimes behave themselves in such a way that it is hard for us to keep the feeling down; but that is our business, to keep it down; no word ought ever to give it utterance. And sarcasm is the utterance of it. It is the sneer in the satire or the ridicule that galls and wounds.

Let us beware of the indulgence of sarcasm. It may sometimes be resorted to; so may a club or a revolver be sometimes resorted to; but we do not usually think it wise to employ them in our intercourse with those whom we wish to regard as our friends, nor with those over whom we hope to maintain a salutary influence.

6. The scolding tongue is another kind that calls for a

reckoned, — the tongue that is the channel through which the impurities of a bad heart discharge themselves; the tongue that deals in indecent and salacious speech. O the poison and pollution that thus drip day by day from wicked tongues into untutored ears, bearing their curse along with them!

4. Next we think of the passionate tongue; the tongue that hastens to give voice to the anger and the hate that arise within. Anger, the Latin poet said, is a brief insanity; and when it begins to rage within the breast it needs to be chained and kept under till its paroxysm is past. But the mischeivous tongue sometimes sets it loose and becomes its servitor — to hurl missiles of hot and stinging words right and left, doing damage that it is hard to repair. Not only to those against whom these angry words are flung is the damage done; their reaction upon the one who utters them is even worse. He who in anger gives vent to harsh or unjust or reckless words generally hurts himself far more than he can hurt any one else. The remembrance of this outburst either fills him with shame and humiliation, and thus lowers his self-respect, or else, in a foolish consistency, he goes on to make his conduct conform to this hasty utterance, — to *be* as spiteful or as desperate as he then rashly professed to be. Thus, often, the unbridled tongue commits a man to ways in which he never really chose to walk, and drags him along toward folly or sin. Is there not need that we should all learn to put a curb upon it?

5. The sarcastic tongue is another kind that needs taming. Sarcasm has its uses, no doubt; in our warfare with incorrigible evil doers we must sometimes resort to it;

but in the common intercourse of life it is scarcely more legitimate than the cudgel or the rapier. Yet we are tempted, many of us, to use it too often. It lies near our hands; it is an effective weapon; we can make some people wince, and some people tremble when we use it; it is a great self-denial to refrain from using it. Nevertheless, it would be better for many of us to handle it much less frequently. A sharp and biting tongue is a dangerous instrument; they are not wise who play with it. Keen and bitter words, albeit they are deserved, often rankle in the memory long after they are uttered. They hurt harder than blows and are harder to forget. Reproof may be often necessary, but a reproof, even a stern one, need not be a scornful and biting one. The arrows of sarcasm are barbed with contempt; that is what makes them rankle so; and contempt is a feeling that a good man cannot afford to indulge. Resentment, indignation, wrath, are sometimes holy feelings; but contempt for any creature God has made is not a feeling to be cherished. Human beings may sometimes behave themselves in such a way that it is hard for us to keep the feeling down; but that is our business, to keep it down; no word ought ever to give it utterance. And sarcasm is the utterance of it. It is the sneer in the satire or the ridicule that galls and wounds.

Let us beware of the indulgence of sarcasm. It may sometimes be resorted to; so may a club or a revolver be sometimes resorted to; but we do not usually think it wise to employ them in our intercourse with those whom we wish to regard as our friends, nor with those over whom we hope to maintain a salutary influence.

6. The scolding tongue is another kind that calls for a

curb. Angry and severe and constant complaints or reproofs are not often wholesome to those who deal in them nor to those who suffer them. Doubtless it is sometimes hard to refrain from scolding. The temper is tried by the little vexations of life and out of the abundance of the provocation the mouth speaketh more than is meet. To keep from angrily chiding children and servants and clerks and pupils and parishioners when they are disobedient or careless or negligent or wayward or unfaithful, takes not a little grace — more, I fear, than is vouchsafed to some of us. Reproofs must be spoken, but sometimes there are too many of them, and their tone is too impatient, or too harsh or too loud. Reproof must sometimes be severe, but it may be severe without being petulant. The scolding tongue makes great trouble in many homes, and takes all the vigor and wholesomeness from the discipline of many parents and teachers — turning it into a teasing and irritating application, that rasps and blisters but does not cure.

7. The flattering tongue is a tongue that needs the bit. The wickedness and mischief of flattery who can overstate? Honest and hearty praise is not to be avoided; we do not have half enough of it. The sincere commendation of one who has done well is a means of grace to him; it strengthens his purpose to do better. Many are toiling on, heartsick and hopeless, to whom such a word of recognition would be as cold water to a thirsty soul. When your children do well, praise them; speak with moderation, with discrimination; do not let your words be so extravagant as to kindle their conceit; but let them see that you are as quick to recognize and approve the good in them as you are to censure the evil. If your pupils or your domestics or your working

people or your clerks are diligent and faithful let them know that you appreciate their endeavors. But this is not flattery. Flattery is either false praise, or praise addressed, not to the quality of our actions, so much as to our excellences of person or that which is external to us. To praise your child's looks, and so stimulate his vanity, that is flattery, a most nauseous exhibition of it; and the tongue that indulges in it ought to be bridled. There are many such. But the worst kind of flattery is that which seeks to please, and so to entice, by artful and insincere praises. This is a species of lying, of course; but it is a species so mean and dangerous that it needs to be singled out and denounced. How many base creatures there are who by the arts of flattery are beguiling the unwary to their ruin! How many such flattering words are spoken in this city every day—words of admiration or esteem or tender regard that are false and deceitful; the very slime of the pit is on them! "He that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet," says the wise man. Remember it, I pray you; and "meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips." And if, in your natural desire to please, you yourself are somewhat addicted to the utterance of insincere and deceitful words of praise or admiration or personal interest, seek to overcome that fault; it is a grievous one.

8. The chattering tongue is another kind that needs restraint and discipline. It is a fault of many tongues that they talk too much. The nerves that connect the brain with the vocal organs are too active; the communication between the mind that thinks and the tongue that utters the thought is too close. A thought can not come into the head without flying out of the mouth. A few people are too taci-

turn; a great many are too talkative. They talk so much that they cannot weigh their words; they say many things every waking hour that were better unsaid. Such endless prattle is an encroachment on other people's rights. They who listen to it are defrauded. How much time is consumed in attending to words that are utterly destitute of thought, that convey no ideas and impart no benefits! How many things we might have done that were worth doing, how many things we might have thought of that were worth thinking of, while we were listening! But what is worse it is debilitating to the one who indulges in it. He talks so much that he has no time to think. The tongue runs so steadily that it gets a habit of running; it is a kind of physical habit; it is almost involuntary. There are those who seem to me to talk much as one moves who is afflicted with St. Vitus's Dance, because they cannot help it. This irresistable impulse to talk calls for a constant supply of words, and in they go, to keep the hopper full, without consideration or order or judgement. Such a habit must have a constantly enervating effect upon the mind. The meaning and value of such a talker's words are as much depreciated as is the currency of a bank that resorts to an enormous over-issue. "Set a watch, O God," prayed the Psalmist, "before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." The trouble with some of these constant talkers seems to be that there is no door to their lips, nothing but a doorway. There ought to be a door, and it ought to be shut a good deal of the time, so that the mind within may have time to set its thoughts in order, and judge them and utter them with wisdom and deliberation.

9. The last kind of tongue I shall mention that needs

taming is the slanderous tongue. How great is the mischief of slander is indicated by the fact that far back in the dawn of history, when the law of morality was reduced to the form of commandments, this was one of the things singled out and ranked with murder and theft and adultery, as especially worthy of condemnation. Slander, in the strict meaning of the term, comes under the head of lying; but it is a kind of lying which, like its antithesis, flattery, ought to be set apart for special censure.

To speak evil of their neighbors is to some men and women a positive luxury. They enjoy a bit of scandal as they enjoy a delicious viand; they roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongues. If they discover something to the discredit of a man or woman or child, they can never refrain from repeating it. I confess myself unable to understand or interpret this propensity. Some explain it by saying that those who are so quick to circulate bad stories about their neighbors must be bad themselves; that they want to drag everybody else down to their own level — but this is a harsh judgment. Many who are adicted to this vice of talebearing are, I am sure, in other respects worthy and blameless people. I know some in whom this is almost the only fault. They are honest and generous and helpful, but they will tell tales about their neighbors; they will retail gossip. To make a grave in their own breasts for an injurious rumor; to refuse to credit or to lend currency to a mischievous story — this is a thing which they are incapable of doing. Many of these would not tell a story for true, if they knew that it was not true. But they will tell it, all the same; and say that they do not credit it. "Have you heard that Jones & Brown are about to fail? It is reported

on the street that they have called a meeting of their creditors; but I don't believe it." Well, then, what do you mention it for? The person to whom you repeat the tale may have more credulity or less charity than yourself, and may repeat it without any disclaimer; and so you become the abettor of a most harmful assault upon your neighbor's credit. "Have you heard the story that Mrs. X. lives unhappily with her husband? I don't believe it, do you?" Such currency as this is given every day by people who call themselves Christians to tales which they have not only no reason to believe but which they have every reason to disbelieve.

There is another very large class of stories which such people spend a good part of their lives in circulating. These are tales that may be true, and may not; but of whose truth they have no knowledge. The tale-bearer hears the story from a reputable person, and does not *know* that it is *not* true, so he passes it on. The great mass of all the gossip in circulation is of this character, and the injury and wrong that is done by keeping it in circulation no words can tell.

Here comes a woman with a story on her lips about another woman — a story which, if it were true, would sink the woman of whom it was told into a pit of infamy. The tale-bearer rehearses it to you, with the greatest particularity; there are certain suspicious circumstances that give color to the story, and she does not fail to descant on these; if you credit her you never again can trust or honor the person of whom she is speaking. But suppose you let me question her.

"Madam, this is a grave accusation that you are making against the character of one of your sisters. You are

aware, I suppose, how sensitive and how precious a thing a woman's reputation is; you would not utter a word that would bring reproach upon a woman unless you were absolutely sure that that word were true; do you know, from your own knowledge, that these statements that you have made are true?"

"O, no," she answers, "I know nothing about the matter myself, but I have no doubt that they are true; I had the story on good authority."

"You do not *know* that it is true: how dare you repeat such a story unless you *know* that it is true? How can you, a woman, take any part in giving currency to a tale about a woman that *may not be true?*"

"Why, I did not think there could be any harm in repeating it: it was told to me by Mrs. Soandso; she is a good woman, a prominent member of the church and an active worker in all the benevolent societies; she would not be likely to tell a story that was not true."

"Madam, it is no flattery to say that you yourself are a prominent member of the church, and an active worker in benevolence; you have reported this story to me without knowing that it is true; you yourself have furnished me the evidence that respectable people can tell evil tales about their neighbors, the truth of which they do not know. I have no reason to suppose that Mrs. Soandso is any more scrupulous in such matters than you are; therefore I have no reason to believe that she knew anything about the truth of the thing she has reported, or that her informant knew anything about it, and so on. And I do know, by long experience in these matters, that, of the evil tales that are in circulation among respectable people, Christian people,

concerning their neighbors, more than half are utterly destitute of foundation, and four-fifths of the rest are so grossly exaggerated and distorted that they are little better than lies. There are, therefore, nine chances in ten that if you repeat a story that comes to you from what you regard as good authority, you are helping to perpetrate a grave injustice; you are conspiring to inflict a wanton injury upon an innocent person."

Yet the wickedness of reporting such stories is not, I am sure, as obvious to a great many good people as it ought to be. Slander, talebearing, mischievous gossip, they know they ought not to practice; but these sins consist, as they seem to suppose, in telling tales about others that they know to be false. To repeat a story which comes from a respectable source and which they do not know to be a lie, this is not gossip as they understand it. My friends, this is gossip; this is the very talebearing that is denounced in the Bible; this is one of the worst depredations that the ravenous tongue of man ever commits upon the rights of his neighbors. I wish I could make this seem as plain to all of you as it seems to me. I have seen so many reputations stained, so many lives marred, so many strong friends separated, so many homes made wretched by this vice of talebearing, that it has come to appear in my eyes one of the most mischievous faults to which men and women are addicted. And I know some men and women — there are some whom I love and honor — who are greatly given to it. I wish they would stop it. They do not mean to be cruel and unjust, and it is cruel, it is unjust to repeat a story to your neighbor's discredit whose truth you do not know. Even if you do know the story is true, it may be a

grave question whether you shall circulate it or not. If your neighbor's fault is a crime against society, it may be your duty to deliver him up to justice; if it is a fault which society has no power to punish, it is probably your duty to take the charity that covereth all things and hide the fault from the sight of men. But if the accusation is only a rumor, then no matter how respectable the source from which you receive it, your duty is to suppress it. That is a rule to which there can be but few exceptions; and if the people who profess to be Christians would only live up to it, the fellowship of the churches would be greatly strengthened, and their power for good indefinitely increased. Your tongue, O talebearer, is one of those that most need taming!

What is true of spoken gossip is equally true of that which is printed in the newspapers. The tongue will be tamed, I judge, quite as soon as the types. If a man would not be deemed a gentleman who went about every morning ringing his neighbors' door-bells, and rehearsing to them bits of gossip that he had picked up in the street, why should the man be considered a gentleman who prints such stuff in his newspaper and sends out his newsboys to peddle it through the town? You would use harsh words about a man who got his living by retailing scandal, orally, for five cents a customer; what have you to say about the man who spices his newspaper with such items to make it sell?

"But the tongue can no man tame." So much the more need, then, that a power stronger than man's should be invoked to subdue its unruliness and mitigate its fierceness. Such a divine power the fables of all the peoples

have celebrated; the power that tames the wildest beasts, and makes the tiger as gentle and docile as a lamb. The mythic song of Amphion is but a prelude of the triumph of the Prince of Peace, under whose blessed reign all savage and noxious creatures shall learn obedience and service; when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And though, as James testifies, the tongue is more intractable than any of these, yet He is able to bring this also into subjection. No man can tame it; but He at whose word the demoniac ceased his ravings, and the savage seas hushed their tumult, — He who has the power and the purpose to subdue all things unto himself — can cause the lying tongue to speak verities, and the reviling tongue to praise and bless, and the passionate tongue to be silent when the anger rises, and the foul tongue to utter purity, and the sarcastic tongue to temper its severities, and the scolding tongue to learn gentleness, and the flattering tongue to speak with sincerity, and the chattering tongue to be more discreet, and the talebearing tongue to be still.

THE TAMED TONGUE.

PROVERBS XV: 4.

"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life."

We gave some heed, not long ago, to the taming of the tongue, a task, as we then learned on good authority, quite beyond the power and skill of man. All other wild beasts bow to his sway and do homage to his intelligence, but the tongue is more intractable than the wildest of them; many a lion tamer blasphemes God and curses men; many a man who proves his mastery over the lower tribes, is a slave to garrulity or deceit or boastfulness. Yet though with man this may be impossible, with God all things are possible; and more than one fierce or false tongue has been subdued by the victorious grace of God to obey the laws of truth and kindness. The fountain that sent forth bitter waters with the sweet, and bitter more than sweet, has been purified so that all that issued from it was pure and refreshing. The unruly evil full of deadly poison has been transformed into a servant of order and a minister of health and blessing.

For proof, I need only appeal to your own observation. You have witnessed more than one such change as this. You have known those who were deceitful of speech and who by the grace of God have become truthful and sincere; those who were foul-mouthed and profane, who have been taught to speak purely and reverently: those who once were passionate and petulant in their talk, but who have learned to guard the door of their lips so that hot or hateful words rarely found utterance; those who were once given to tale-bearing, but whose habit it has become to speak good and not evil of their fellowmen.

History, both sacred and secular, is full of such examples. John the Evangelist, the son of thunder, who was ready to call down fire from heaven upon the people of an inhospitable Samaritan village, and who afterwards became the very voice of gentleness and grace; Paul the apostle, who from being one who breathed out threatenings and slaughter as his native breath, was changed into one from whom all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking, with all malice, was forever put away; John Newton, the slave trader, John Bunyan, the profane tinker, and many others, are living witnesses of the power of the grace of God to cleanse the fountain from which the speech proceeds, and to chasten the unholy tongue into sobriety and kindness.

And as we saw, in our other study, something of the evils that flow from an untamed tongue, it will be useful for us this morning to consider how much good may proceed from the tongue that is tamed: what a source of all healthful and beneficent influences is to be found in sanctified speech.

"A wholesome tongue," says the wise man, "is a tree of life." Wholesome is a good word. The "restless evil full of deadly poison," which is James's label for an unsanctified tongue, finds its exact antithesis in this word of the proverb. A wholesome tongue is one whose speech is not corrupting nor irritating, but full of nourishment and helpfulness — sound and sweet and salutary: such a tongue is a tree of life. Wise words proceed from it as naturally as the leaves grow upon the branches: beautiful and fitting words adorn it as the blossoms adorn the tree; and the fruit of the lips not only gratifies but strengthens the hearts of all those who seek to do God's will. A tree of life; a shelter, and a shadow from the heat of scorn and obloquy, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall; a living source of comfort and refreshment and beauty and blessing — such is the sanctified speech of the wholesome tongue.

1. The tamed tongue is trained for service. All things that are tamed are tamed for the service of man: and the tongue follows this law. And when the tongue is thoroughly tamed, when it ceases to be a reckless and lawless member, and becomes subordinate to the mind and will of man, it becomes a most helpful servant. It is by speech that many of our best gains are made. A large part of the good that we receive comes to us in conversation. Opinions are formed in this way; knowledge is acquired, good impulses are received, we are stimulated and cheered and comforted by our conversation. By conversation, I say; for it is the interchange of thought that is most valuable to us; the talk in which we give while we receive; the commerce of speech, in which we are not merely passive, to be

lectured to or preached at, but active, imparting while we receive; questioning, turning the thought about so that it may strike our minds at the right angle of vision. The conversation of the teachable and honest mind is full of profit. When your tongue is rightly trained, it will be a most diligent purveyor of knowledge. Of the fine art of questioning, it soon makes itself master. Jesus approved himself to the doctors in the temple by hearing and asking questions. It was because of this, I suppose, that he grew in favor with men. He was always learning; always modestly and earnestly inquiring into the truth of things. There is, of course, a troublesome and impertinent inquisitiveness, which we must all avoid; but the habit of taking toll of every mind that travels your way, is a most useful and commendable habit. And if your questions are asked with becoming modesty and deference, and if they show you to be not a mere fidgety quidnunc, but an honest learner, you will generally find people ready and glad to communicate to you what they know. With the exception of a few persons whose business it is to answer questions — such as policemen, hotel clerks, and railway conductors, I think that human beings like to answer respectful and proper questions. It is a positive satisfaction to most of us to communicate truth to those who are seeking truth. And thus, without imposing in any wise upon our neighbors, we may make the docile tongue serve us well in gathering for ourselves the knowledge that shall guide our conduct and give us food for many pleasant thoughts.

2. The tongue will serve our own needs in quite another way. The reaction upon our own minds of truth which we have expressed, of worthy purposes or sentiments

which we have avowed, is most beneficent. We fix our thoughts by putting them into words and uttering them. Whether a man really knows anything that he has never expressed may be an open question. "I know it but I can't tell it," is a common excuse of dull or lazy pupils — an excuse which intelligent teachers are never ready to accept. What we know we generally can say; but the saying of it greatly strengthens our hold upon it. Thus the trained tongue serves not only as the purveyor of knowledge but as the organizer of knowledge — as the agent by which our mental acquisitions are set in order and fastened in the memory.

The wise and temperate utterance of manly feeling reacts in the same way upon ourselves. We saw that the untamed tongue, by its intemperate and passionate utterances, often serves to commit us to evil ways; in his passion a man says a thing, and, though his judgment does not approve of it, he resolves to stand by it, and is thus plunged into conduct that is harmful and ruinous. But the hearty utterance of a right thought or a right sentiment reacts in the same way upon the man. The value of the truth, the excellence of the sentiment, are impressed upon his own mind when he speaks them; a truth declared is better worth fighting for than a truth muttered; and thus the tongue is often a means of committing us strongly to honest pursuits and worthy ways of living. This, I suppose, is one reason why confession of the mouth is so strongly emphasized as one of the conditions of salvation.

These then are some of the ways in which disciplined and sanctified speech becomes a means of self-improvement. But it is not only a purveyor: it is a minister. It not only

serves us royally; it helps us to serve our fellow men. Untamed, the tongue is a source of endless mischief and injury to others; tamed, it may be an instrument of uncounted blessings to them, as well as to us.

3. It is, and always will be, one of the most effective agencies in communicating truth. The printed word plays a part in the education of mankind now far greater than ever could have been imagined one thousand years ago; far greater than ever was dreamed even one hundred years ago: a very large share of all the knowledge that we gain comes through our eyes from the printed page or column; but after all, written instruction will never supersede oral instruction. The tongue will always have a function, and a large one, in the communication of truth. Many things can be said much more clearly, much more impressively-than they can be communicated in writing. Shades of meaning can be conveyed by the lips that the types cannot suggest; and the freshness of life and the warmth and vitality and tenderness of love which spoken words often reveal can be but poorly transferred to paper. There must therefore always be much oral teaching; much that is professional and functional, indeed. The trained and fluent tongue plays not now so large a part as once it did in instruction and persuasion, but it has not yet passed out of use, nor will it very soon. I find that the teaching of the colleges is more and more taking the form of lectures.

But it is not only the professional talkers and teachers who convey truth in wise and helpful speech. In conversation, as I have said already, it is freely communicated. I am now only giving the converse of the proposition I was urging a little while ago, when I tried to show how we

might learn truth through conversation. What we have learned in this way we may also teach in this way. And without pedantry, or assumption of superior wisdom, or any other offensive display, we may often in our conversation with others greatly aid them in acquiring knowledge.

The art of questioning is not only adapted to the gaining of knowledge, but to the imparting of it also. Nobody, save the divine Master, ever taught so well as Socrates; and nobody else ever asked half so many questions. A question may awaken much thought, may start an active mind upon a wide range of profitable investigation. A pertinent comment, a wise reflection, a remark that stimulates observation, may fall like a fruitful seed into the good soil of some listening mind and bring forth an abundant harvest.

4. Not only the mental improvement of others but their moral invigoration may be most effectually promoted by sanctified speech. This is the precise doctrine of our text — "The wholesome tongue is a tree of life." "The tongue of the wise," says Solomon again, "is health." It is in the moral effects of earnest and gracious speech that we see its chief advantage over other forms of communication. Here again I am showing the reverse of the picture that I first presented; for if we receive good influences through conversation, then we may impart good influences in that way. And, as a matter of fact, the greater part of the moral and religious influence that is exerted in the world passes from one soul to another in the form of familiar talk. The words of the parents in their conversations with their children; the daily talk of the nursery or the table or around the evening lamp; the more intimate and earnest conferences

about grave matters of life and conduct — these are the forces that shape character. I suppose that most of us, if we could trace the influences that have helped most to form our habits and fix our principles, would discover that the most numerous and effectual of these were words dropped in familiar or even casual conversation with those whom we trusted and honored. A complete change in plans and ideals of life is often brought about by such an unpremeditated utterance. A school-boy says a manly word in favor of doing right to one of his companions, and the impulse goes home to the heart of the one who hears it, and braces him for better choices in a critical period of life. An employer says a friendly word to one of his work-people, and the word with its truth and reasonableness falls into the life and proves a conserving and constructive influence as long as the man lives. Of the good that is done in this manner, quietly, through the utterance of words that are forgotten by those who speak them, eternity alone will be the revealer.

5. Not always, perhaps, but very often, we do people good by making them happy. I am aware that even in the qualified form in which I have expressed this sentiment it will seem like a fatal heresy to some good people. There are not a few who suppose that the only way to do a fellow being good is to make him miserable. I do not think, however, that this was our Lord's way of doing good. Certain it is that he made a great many people happy in one way and another. Nobody else ever did a tithe of what he did to make men happy. Wherever he went he was feeding the hungry people, and healing the sick ones, and opening the eyes of the blind, and causing the lame to

leap for joy. Many persons wish that they could have witnessed the working of these miracles; if I could see but one, I would rather see the people after the miracles were wrought than to see the miracles. To have gone through one of those great companies of men who but a little while ago were walking in darkness or stumbling with paralysis or perishing with leprosy — and are now all sound and whole — to see the light in their eyes and hear the exultant tones of their voices — that would have been a goodly sight. And when I think of one of those companies and realize how many such companies there were, and remember that Jesus came not merely to minister to the bodies of men but also to their souls, I have pretty good evidence that he believed in making them happy as one means of doing their souls good. Now it is certain that there lies in kind and winning words a wonderful power of adding to the happiness of our fellow men.

There is, to begin with, no little pleasure in listening to beautiful words or graceful words. "The tongue of the just is choice silver," says the wise man; and again, in similar phrase, "A word fitly spoken, how good is it! It is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

The artists in verse or prose who discern the melody of words and know how to order and utter them so that they shall speak to the ear in music — they often give us great pleasure. But it is not the artists alone; many humble and unlettered people also by the aptness or the simplicity or the homely grace of their speech give us pictures with words for colors that dwell long in our memory.

It is not, however, through the beauty of speech, so much as through the kindness of it that we impart and

receive the greatest happiness. O how much power there is in kind words to soothe, to uplift, to cheer, to bless the souls of men! How much every one of us can do to make this world a better place to live in, by just having a kind and cheery word ready for every body! Of course we want no treacherous or deceitful words; and it is seldom that these give much pleasure, for their insincerity is generally apparent enough; but when there are kindly thoughts, we want the utterance of them in friendly words. How many such thoughts there are that never find voice! How often we walk along the streets, silent, self-contained, hardly noticing the acquaintances whom we meet! It is not that we do not care for them; we do; it is diffidence, perhaps, or absorption in other thoughts, that keeps us from giving them the greeting that would send a ray of brightness into their lives, and rob us of nothing. How often, when our social opportunities are ampler, we omit the chance of uttering the generous or considerate word that would add greatly to the happiness of our fellow men. People come into church, sit near each other in the pews, walk out of the aisles side by side Sunday after Sunday, and never say a word to each other; hardly nod, even! They seem to feel that a word of pleasant recognition would be a profanation of the place or of the day. Why, brethren and sisters, is it not lawful to do good on the Sabbath day? And is not the speaking of a friendly word one of the simplest and easiest ways of doing good? If our church is too holy for such uses, we had better burn it up and worship out of doors where there will be less formality.

I cannot undertake to point out all the ways by which words can be made to minister to men's happiness. I

might as well undertake to point out all the uses of the light in quickening or in painting vegetation, or to catalogue all the good that the summer rain does in refreshing the thirsty earth.

6. Quite another kind of power resides in sanctified speech. It has not only the power to please, to confer happiness, it has the power also to conquer, to quell, to subdue. The vulgar notion is, no doubt, that this sort of power belongs to the untamed tongue; that the man who rages and curses and threatens is the kind of man who overpowers opposition by his speech. But that is a foolish notion. "A soft tongue," says our wise man again, "breaketh the bone." Gentle words, quiet words, are, after all, the most powerful words. They are more convincing, more compelling, more prevailing. There need be no lack of firmness, of positiveness in them; they may be just as strong and sure as the everlasting hills, and just as calm; just as resistless as the river and not any noisier. We often forget this, most of us; but it is true. Noise, anger, explosive tones, superlatives, exaggerations of passion, add nothing to the force of what we say, but rather rob our words of the power that belongs to them. But the utterance that shows a spirit subdued by truth and mastered by wisdom, is the utterance that sweeps away opposition, that persuades and overcomes. Go into a heated political convention, and you will find that it is not the men who get angry and storm and swear who carry the day, but the men who never lose their tempers and never raise their voices; who keep talking as quietly and placidly as if they were discussing the weather. This is a truth that all of us who seek to influence our fellow beings, in the family, in

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

MARK IV: 25.

"For he that hath, to him shall be given; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that which he hath."

This saying was more than once repeated by our Lord, and it seems to have been used to convey more than one lesson. In quoting it as a comment upon the parable of the pounds, he seems to teach that the productive use of a gift increases its value, while the neglect of it tends to its diminution and final loss. By "him that hath" is meant one who diligently uses the gifts and powers he has; and, as a great preacher of this generation has said, no man can truly be said to have that which he does not use. Of mental and spiritual gifts this is certainly true. And it is not less true of such gifts that they are increased by use and diminished or lost by disuse. But this is not the only truth taught by this suggestive saying. It conveys to us a broader lesson respecting the operations of natural law.

In its form the text is, of course, hyperbole. It is a paradox to talk of taking away what he has from a man who has nothing. The expression is the proverbial embodi-

ment of a great truth. No doubt it was a proverb, in popular use among the Jews at that time, and quoted by our Lord as a convenient expression of the doctrine that he wished to inculcate. Proverbs are often constructed on this plan. Take, for an example, the familiar and homely one, "The farthest way about is the shortest way home." This is a perfect contradiction, and yet we all perfectly understand it as a strong expression of the truth that it is often better to go deliberately around difficulties than to drive precipitately over them. So with many popular saws and sayings. They seem to be the outcome of a desire to intensify the expression, and the speech sometimes overleaps itself and falls on the side of absurdity. We understand their meaning, however, in spite of the overstatement; we see the intent, and allow for the hyperbole. So in this text, we recognize the truth that the Savior is teaching, interpreting the proverb by the parable; and it sets before us a great two-fold law of increase and decrease whose bearing upon our own lives we do well to study.

The tendency of gifts, powers, possessions to accumulate in some hands and dwindle in others is a common fact of observation. And it often appears, too, that when accumulation begins it goes on by a momentum of its own; that the farther it goes the faster it goes; and on the other hand that losses follow the same law; disaster breeds disaster, and misfortune multiplies by a geometrical law. Nothing is so successful as success; nothing is so fatal as failure.

1. We see the workings of this law in the conditions of our physical lives. Health and vigor have a tendency to increase. The food we eat builds up the body; active

exercise confirms its strength; the cold increases its power of endurance; the summer heat nourishes its vitality. Nature brings constant revenues to the healthy man; all things work together for his good. On the other hand disease and physical feebleness have a tendency to increase. The food that ought to nourish the system irritates and oppresses it; exertion brings to the body fatigue and enervation; cold benumbs it; heat debilitates it; nature seems to be the foe of feebleness; all things work together to prevent the recovery of health when once it is lost; often it is only by the greatest vigilance and patience that it can be regained.

2. The law that we are considering is fulfilled in the facts of the social order. The man who has station or influence or wealth or reputation finds the current flowing in his favor: the man who has none of these things soon learns that he must stem the current. Popularity always follows this law. It is often remarkable how small a saying will awaken the enthusiasm of the crowd when spoken by a man who is a recognized favorite; and how many great and wise utterances fail of producing any effect whatever when he who speaks them is comparatively unknown. Sometimes the popular favorites commit great blunders and exhibit gross ignorance, but these very mistakes are praised by the multitude as proofs of their superiority. "He never troubles himself about such small matters," they will say: "he has larger affairs on hand!" The same error committed by a less famous person would expose him to merciless ridicule. Acres of platitudes, and reams of vapid nonsense are perpetrated by men who have somehow gained fame — all of them received with applause; while

much that is precious is ignored because it falls from the lips of men unknown to fame.

It is almost impossible for one who has gained the reputation of being a wit to say anything at which his auditory will not laugh. His most sober and commonplace speeches will often be greeted as great witticisms. On the other hand the purest wit and the choicest humor, if it happen to fall from the lips of a plain, matter of fact individual, will often be received with funereal gravity by all who hear it.

On him that hath popularity, of any sort, society bestows popularity, and he has more abundance; while to him that hath it not, society will not give even that which he richly deserves. Every body wants to be the friend of the man who has many friends; comparatively few persons care to show themselves friendly to those who are alone and desolate. A depraved man or woman, cherishing in secret many longings after a purer life, meets daily with averted faces, and suspicious glances; hears no words but those of distrust or reproof, and sinks desparingly into still lower depths of disgrace. From him that hath but little honor and respect, society takes away the opportunity and the hope of being honorable and respectable; while to him who has these goodly possessions in abundance, it gives them still more abundantly.

3. So with other things besides reputation. Men are apt to bestow their help as well as their applause most freely on those who need it least. Those who have gifts to bestow often give them to those who do not want them, passing by those who are suffering for the lack of them. "The destruction of the poor," the wise man says, "is his

poverty." Because he is poor he cannot get the credit, the privilege, the favor that he could get if he were rich. The narrowness of his resources cramps him. With larger means, that would enable him to take advantage of opportunities, he could subsist more cheaply. It costs him more to live because he is poor. So circumstances seem to conspire against those who are weakest, to help those who least need help and to hinder those who most need it. And men, who ought to be governed by a better law, often follow the lead of circumstances, and help to kill off the weak that the strong may have more room to grow.

The church that has the rich people is likely to attract the rich people; the weak churches are often left to their own destruction, while those that are strong financially are strengthened by constant accessions.

What is this law that we are studying? It is nothing else than what some philosophers call the law of natural selection — the law of the survival of the fittest; that is, in most cases, the strongest. When a tree is cut down in the forest a number of sprouts frequently spring up from the stump, and these grow together for a while until they begin to crowd one another. There is not room for a dozen trees on the ground where one tree stood; there is only room for one. But it is generally the case that one of these shoots growing from the root of the old tree is a little larger than the rest, and this one gradually overshadows the rest, takes from the air and the light more nourishment than they can get — takes that which belongs to them, so that they dwindle and die beneath its shadow, while its roots reach out for a firmer footing in the soil and its branches stretch forth with loftier pride and ampler shade. Nature selects

the strongest shoot for preservation, and destroys the others that it may live.

We know that man adopts this method of selection in all his agricultural operations; in the corn field and in the fruit-nursery it is the likeliest growths that are chosen and cultivated; the others are weeded out to make room for them. And the naturalists say that nature adopts this method of selection — does so by a law of her own which they try to explain; that in the struggle for life the favored races are preserved; and thus they account for the existence of species. Surely there is something very like this law in the order of the physical and social phenomena which we have just been studying. The law can be verified; whether it explains the origin of species is a question not yet fully answered.

But some of you are asking, "Is this law of natural selection God's law?" To this question there is but one answer. If the law of natural selection is the law of nature, then it is God's law. When we study its operations among the lower orders of nature — among plants and animals — we have no difficulty in admitting that it is a law that God himself has ordained. We are certain that God has so ordered the natural world that the hardiest plants and animals will survive; that they will crowd out those less vigorous and thrive upon their decay. This does not trouble us at all until we come to the domain of intelligence and morality. Then it seems hard and unjust that to him that hath more should be given, while from him that hath not even that he hath should be taken away from him. But, the question returns, Is not this the very thing that happens, all the while? Are not the social phenomena

that we have been studying the constant facts of social life? Is it not true that the fame of the famous man, and the obscurity of the unknown man tend to increase; that the rich man's wealth tends to accumulate, while the poor man's poverty tends to become chronic and permanent? Is not this the state of things that we are all the while witnessing? If such is the general rule, then we know that it results from a condition of things which God has ordained. If it is a social law, it is a law of God, for all the social laws are God's laws.

We must distinguish here, however, between different meanings of the word law. A law is a rule of order or conduct fixed by authority: a law is also a regular succession of events: the first is called a moral law; the second is a natural law. This law of natural selection is a natural law, and not a moral law. We speak of it as a law in the sense in which we speak of the law of heredity, or the law of gravitation, or the law of supply and demand. This law is *announced* by Christ but it is not *enjoined* by him. "This," he says, "is the way things are: this is the course things uniformly take. The world is so made, human beings are so constituted, society is so ordered, that accumulations and losses follow this rule. The order of nature strengthens the strong and enfeebles the weak. To him that hath is given; from him that hath not, that which he hath is taken away."

This law of natural selection is a law of nature, ordained by God. It is the law under which rewards and penalties are administered; it is a retributive law, for the sanctions of the moral law are found in the natural order. The machinery which God has provided for the punishment

of sin and the rewarding of virtue, is in the order of nature.

But some of you are protesting that this cannot be true. "How is it," you ask, "that the natural law of the survival of the strongest tends to the rewarding of the good or the punishing of the bad? By this law it is the strong, rather than the good that are rewarded. It is to those that have, rather than to those that deserve, that abundance is given."

True; but this is only an illustration of the fact that a dispensation of law always works hardship. Law makes nothing perfect; it hurts some that need help and it helps some that do not deserve it. Law must be uniform and inflexible; it cannot adapt itself to differing conditions and abilities. Gravitation is a good law, but it kills thousands of innocent people every year. Yet it would not do to have it less uniform and inflexible than it is. So this law of nature whose operations we are studying, by which the strong are strengthened and the weak enfeebled, is a good law, on the whole, though it does work hardship in many cases; for it is better that strength and vigor and health should be encouraged and promoted; we do not want the universe so ordered that there should be penalties for strength and rewards for feebleness. The universe is built on the basis of universal righteousness and health: its laws are all adapted to that condition of things, and they ought to be. If all men were good and wise and strong, then this law would only tend to increase the virtue and the wisdom and the vigor of all men. It would be seen, then, that this is a good law. But sin has entered to enfeeble and deprave many, and the result is that the law which ought to be a

savor of life unto life to them becomes a savor of death unto death. The same forces that ought to build them up tend to destroy them. So it often is that when the law enters offenses abound, and hardships are suffered; under its severe and inflexible rule more is given to those who have abundance already, while those who have but little are stripped of that they have.

Thus we see that the natural law, which is the instrument of retribution, inflicts suffering and loss not only upon the sinful, but upon the weak, the unfortunate, the helpless, upon those who have fallen behind in the race of life. That is the way the law works. The law is a messenger of wrath to many; and when a man is down, having lost his standing and his reputation and his friends and his hope and his moral stamina, there is nothing in any law that will do anything for him. To such unfortunates law is no friend. The one thing that law cannot do is to lift up a man that has fallen under its severities.

Now remember that it is the law that Christ is declaring in the words of the text.

But remember also that there is something better and diviner than law in the tidings that he has brought us. What the law could not do he came to do. It was for the deliverance and the relief of those who are being pushed to the wall by the operation of these retributive forces that he came.

How he proves this. He did not fall into that social order that we have seen prevailing. He did not bestow his praise upon the famous, nor his friendship upon the popular, nor his benefactions on the rich. His words of applause greeted the saints who in obscurity tried to live virtuously;

he was the friend of publicans and sinners; he was the constant helper of the poor. It was not to those who had abundance that he gave, but to those who had nothing. So, in regard to the more precious things of character. "They that be whole," he says, "need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

This is the gospel of Christ. This is the meaning of the incarnation and the sacrifice of the Redeemer. The law works injury and destruction to all who do evil and to many who have never themselves done any evil, but who have come into the world in a disabled condition through the sins of others. Christ comes to take the part of all these. They are morally helpless, but he will help them; sin has abounded in them, and wrought ruin in them; but grace, if they will receive it, shall much more abound. He can repair the ruin that sin has wrought. He will give these defeated and prostrate souls another chance. The law of the spirit of life that is in him shall make them free from the law of sin and death.

The world is against them: all its social laws and usages join to crush them; but "Be of good cheer," he bids them: "I have overcome the world!"

Nature is against them; their own natures are infirm and corrupt; their appetites entice them; their selfish desires mislead them; but he assures them that by faith in him they may be made partakers of the divine nature, and thus be reinforced and invigorated for conflict with the evil. And thus, though they feel that they are empty and destitute of all good, that in very deed they have nothing, he

brings to them abundant supplies of grace; when they receive him, all things are theirs!

And, mark you, in doing all this he does not destroy but fulfils the law. The law contemplates and requires health, prosperity, moral soundness; and so long as these are preserved the law is a minister of good to men. It expects that all men will *have* all the real good of life, which their Creator has provided for them; but for disobedience and transgression all men would have all the real good of life, and to them that have the law gives; it enriches and blesses them abundantly. And what Christ does is to give the real good of life, the moral strength and soundness which are the source of all life's real good, to those who have nothing — who are so reduced in moral vigor that they are practically destitute; to restore to them that which they have lost, so that they shall *have;* and then this law is a minister of good to them as God meant it to be to all.

Here is a vine that has fallen from its trellis, and that is being choked by the weeds that have overgrown it, as it lies prostrate on the earth. The law of nature, the law of vegetable growth, is only operating to destroy it so long as it remains in this condition; for the sun and the showers nourish the weeds, and they overshadow the vine more and more, preventing its growth, and drawing away the strength from the soil. But the gardener lifts up the vine and fastens it to the trellis, and pulls up the weeds that are stealing its nutriment, and then the laws of nature promote the growth of the vine; the same laws under which its life was being destroyed now confirm its life and increase its growth. Some such service as this Christ ren-

ders to all those who are morally weak and helpless; by the communication to them of his own life he lifts them out of their helplessness into a condition in which all things that were working together against them shall work together for their good.

It will be well for us all to remember that if we are Christians, we are co-workers with Christ, and that our business, therefore, is not to add force to the law whose severities bear so heavily upon many of our fellow men, but to counteract the severities of the law by ministries of sympathy and tenderness and help. It is not for us to take away from those that have nothing even that which they have; to strip a fellow being who is in disgrace of the last shred of his reputation; to give all our applause to those that are famous and all our scorn to those that are obscure and unfortunate; to trample on those who have fallen and make the portion of the poor and the sinful still more forlorn than it already is. Circumstances may work against them in this way, but we are not circumstances, and we are not called on to aid and abet circumstances in this destructive work. The laws of nature, and of a depraved and selfish human nature may work together against the weak and the sinful; but there is a higher law than the law of nature for us to obey, and that is the law of Christ, which is the law of love. Our work is to raise the fallen, to succor the unfortunate, to deliver the helpless from the pit into which they are sinking. Our work is to temper, so far as we can by our good will, the fierce laws of trade that often work hardship to the poor, and to rectify the social standards by which misfortune is punished as sin, and no space is given for repentance to one who has

once committed an error. Our great business is to infuse the Christian spirit into all the laws and customs and usages of our civilization, and to inspire with the Christian hope the victims of disaster or of sin.

And if there are any here who sometimes feel that they have very little, and that the forces that hem them in are conspiring to take from them what they have; that things seem to work against them all the while,—especially that they are steadily losing moral strength and soundness, and that the events of life, its trials and its blessings, its misfortunes and its good fortunes, rather tend to stimulate their selfishness and to strengthen their evil passions—if there are any who are conscious of the working in their natures of this element of decay, let them remember that the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and death. If they are morally weak and helpless, they are the very ones that Christ came to save. The law can do nothing for them, but the Lord of life can do everything. It is the destitute that he came to enrich; it is the sick that he came to heal; it is the hungry that he came to feed; it is the poor in spirit to whom he promises the Kingdom of Heaven. He is the one who above all others fills the measure of the prophet's wonderful words: "For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." If they will but lay hold upon his strength, and trust in his abounding grace, they who have nothing will soon find themselves possessing all things.

HOW MUCH IS HE WORTH?

ISAIAH XIII: 12.

"*I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.*"

The text is part of a prediction in which the prophet foretells the desolations that are to befall Babylon. "Therefore, saith the Lord, I will shake the heavens and the earth shall remove out of his place in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And it shall be as the chased roe and as the sheep that no man taketh up; they shall turn every man unto his own people, and flee every one unto his own land. Every one that is found shall be thrust through, and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword." So great is to be the slaughter among the Chaldeans, that men shall become as scarce in the land as nuggets of gold.

Doubtless this is the first idea suggested by the prophet's bold figure — the great scarcity of men in the land after the devastating war which he announces. But, doubtless, there is also connected with this the economical suggestion, that the value of men would be enhanced by

their scarcity. Rare things are commonly precious things. Men would be too precious to be purchased with gold, on account of their scarcity. Probably it is not true that human life is held more dear in times of war; the contrary is true. Men become so accustomed to the sacrifice of life that they witness its destruction with a strange indifference; but some sense of the value of the lives sacrificed is apt to dawn upon the people after the war is over, when the nation finds its resources wasted, and the people sit desolate in their homes, waiting for the strong and the brave who shall return no more. It is a hard school in which to learn this lesson of the preciousness of man; but if it can be learned in no other way it may well be enforced upon the world, even by such fiery tuition.

One who listens to the talk of the street and the shops, might easily get the impression that the value of man is a subject of general interest. "How much is he worth?" is a question often heard. Tradesmen and money-lenders are asking it with a mercenary accent; neighbors and gossips with perennial curiosity. How much is he worth, indeed? It is a momentous question. What answers do you hear? He is worth five thousand dollars; ten thousand; a million, ten millions: such are the estimates. And of one and another it is said with a mixture of pity and contempt, "He is not worth anything!" We all understand the meaning of the familiar phrase and know what a distorted sense it gives to the word worth. Probably we all use the phrase innocently enough; yet it sounds, after all, a little strange, when we pause to listen to it. "How much is he worth?" "One hundred thousand dollars." Shall we estimate the value of a man in dollars? Before the war

men and women were actually bought and sold for money. How much is he or she worth, was then in some quarters a question simply commercial; a question to which a perfectly literal answer could be given. Of course it is not in this sense that we employ the phrase. It is a figure of speech as we use it; and whether it is metonymy or synecdoche, I leave the students of rhetoric to tell. Perhaps you cannot rightly name the figure until you know the thought in the mind of him who speaks it. The association of ideas is between the man and his possessions; when we ask how much he is worth, we wish to know how much his estate is worth; we put the man for the estate. The figure gives a vicious twist to language; it seems to merge the man in his belongings; it hammers in, by its incessant iteration, a notion that we are all quite too willing to entertain. Pope's often quoted line,

"Worth makes the man, the want of it the fellow,"

is sound doctrine, vastly sounder than much that this verse-maker preached; but our common question seems to imply that it is not worth, but money's-worth that makes the man; that worthless and moneyless are synonyms. May it not be well to go a little deeper than the common usage goes into the meaning of this phrase, and ask, with all seriousness, not concerning this man or that man, but concerning man, any man, every man, "How much is he worth?"

Questions of value are apt to be questions of comparison. The object whose value is inquired about is compared with some other object. "How much is the house or the horse worth?" So many dollars, you answer.

The dollar is the standard of value. If there were no circulating medium, articles would be exchanged one against another; a bushel of wheat would be worth so many yards of calico; a ton of coal would be worth so many days' labor. Value, as we conceive it, results from comparison of exchangeable objects. We will not go into the question of absolute value, but we will make use of this figure of comparison in trying to determine the value of man.

1. Man is worth more than his institutions. This has not always been the received doctrine. Many persons have supposed that the chief end of man was to support certain institutions. We get many a hint of this error in our study of the people whose history is contained in the Bible. They thought that their ceremonial law was vastly more sacred than the men who worshipped by means of it. If their ritual obstructed human growth, crippled virtue or killed charity, no matter; these must stand back and let the ritual be exalted. And when Christ told them that the sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath — that men were of more account than all this ritual machinery, they were astonished and scandalized; they called him a blasphemer.

This is no singular phenomenon. History is full of the outworking of this tendency. All over the world, all along the ages, men have been made the the slaves of systems. Rites and forms and ceremonies and doctrines have been lifted up and men have been made to prostrate themselves before them. The problem of the religionist generally has been, not how to make his religion serviceable to men, but how to bring the most men under the sway

of his religion. The crowds of converts were his trophies, signs of the victory of his faith, to grace its triumph as it moved on to universal dominion.

When Christ came his teachings were so entirely out of harmony with this notion, that the people were fairly bewildered by them. Listen to this first announcement of his mission, made in words which he quoted from one of the old prophets in the synagogue of his native village: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Here is promise of a religion that has no higher object than to benefit mankind; a religion that addresses itself immediately to the task of alleviating all human woes and ministering to all human needs. No wonder that when the Founder of this religion spoke the common people heard him gladly. In his eye man was of supreme worth; man was of far more account than the most august and sacred of his institutions.

What has been said of religious systems is equally true of political systems. Man is of greater value than these; but there have always been those who sought to make him subordinate to them. There is now, and always has been a prevalent notion, that people were made for governments, and not governments for the people: that it is more important that certain dynasties should reign, or that certain political institutions should be kept intact, or that certain parties should remain in power, or that certain policies should be adopted, than that men should be

free and wise and good and prosperous. There is many a courtier who thinks that the people were made to be ruled and robbed by the despot on the throne; there is many a partisan who cares more for the success of his party than for the welfare of the people; there is many a reformer, so called, who would rather see men debauched and ruined by thousands than to see them saved by any other methods than those which he advocates. So prone are human beings to make idols of their own schemes or contrivances, and to offer their fellow men as sacrifices to the gods that their own hands have made.

It is not true that human institutions are of no value; they are often of great value. They are indispensable to human life and progress. Institutions of religion are necessary; so are institutions of government. But they are not ends; they are instruments. Those words of Christ before quoted—"The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath"—are a specific statement of a general truth, namely, that all social, political and religious institutions were made for man, and not man for his institutions. These great organic systems of religion and government may well be likened to garments, intended for the protection and comfort of man; and the mistake of politicians and ecclesiastics is simply in supposing that man is nothing but a lay-figure on which to display the fine fabrics of religion and government.

If what we have said is true, it follows that those systems are best which best assist the development of manhood. Find out what kind of men they produce, and you have found out exactly what they are worth. If the men who live under them become strong, wise, self-reliant, heroic,

benevolent, the institutions are certainly good; if they become weak, cowardly, superstitious, selfish, the institutions are certainly bad. Your religions, your governments, your doctrines, your rituals, your polities, must all be judged by the men who grow up under them. Men are more precious than all this institutional machinery, and the machinery is precious just in the degree to which it serves to produce men.

2. Man is worth more than his costliest possessions. This is another of those truths, often on our lips, but not more than half believed. Evidence of this is visible in the respect paid to wealth, even when it is joined to one who is but a caricature of manhood; even when it is the spoil that has been won by the debasement of manhood. You see men and women thrust out of society one day and lionized the next, not because any change for the better has taken place in them, only because their possessions have been increased. It is true that there are some circles of good society into which the passport must be something better than a bank account, but these are rather exceptional; the crowd is more ready always to worship a golden calf than to honor a prophet. How plain are the proofs before our faces every day that the multitudes do not believe a man to be more precious than gold!

It is not the rich alone whose judgment in this matter goes astray; the poor fall into the same error. They say that money does not make the man, say it angrily and bitterly, not seldom; but their conduct often shows that they think, after all, that money does make the man. Their envy of the rich convicts them. They hate the rich for possessing what they have not; the intensity of

their hatred shows how much they value such possessions.

Perhaps we need not look abroad for evidence that character is less valued than here. Are there not in our own conduct, sometimes, clear illustrations of this fact? Do we not often find ourselves preferring gold to manhood; laboring more diligently to enlarge our possessions than to improve ourselves? Are we not often more desirous of having much than of being somewhat? Ah, brethren, shall we ever learn that it is of more consequence that our minds should be enlarged, and our hearts purified; that we ourselves should grow unto a goodly symmetry and a godly manliness of character than that we should get any or all gains whatsoever?

It is not true that property is of no consequence; you must say of man's belongings exactly what you say of his institutions; they are good, just in proportion as they assist in the development of his character. Money may be made to minister to manhood: when it does so it is a blessing to its owner and to the world; when it does not, it is a curse to him, and probably no blessing to anybody. Find out how the *man* is getting on, how the character is thriving, and you have found out the real value of his wealth. For the piercing question is, after all, "How much is *he* worth?"

Now and then you find a man, like the venerable Peter Cooper, who died not long ago in New York, to whom money becomes a means of grace: who learns how to use it in such a way as to enlarge and ennoble himself. What a happy life Peter Cooper has been living for the last thirty years! What magnificent returns he has been getting on his investments! Not to speak of all the numberless

charities that have flowed unceasingly from his hand, see that great Institute for the Working Classes that has been standing now for more than a quarter of a century; in whose free schools two or three thousand pupils are receiving instruction every year in the arts and the sciences; whose great free reading room and library and art galleries are a source of pure delight and boundless benefit to millions; whose ample endowment will maintain it there in the center of that great city doing its beautiful and blessed work for generations to come.

How much was Peter Cooper worth? If you ask that question with the ordinary meaning, I suppose that there are some scores of men in New York whose estates are larger than his: men who have got their money, as he never did, by spoiling their neighbors; colossal highway robbers, some of them, who plant themselves on the great thoroughfares of the land and levy tribute on all who pass over them; men whose thoughts of their fellow men are mostly thoughts of pillage, and whose dearest wishes for the public take the form of curses; of such men there are several whose estates are far larger than Peter Cooper's; but how much more he was worth, after all, than the richest of them! "The richest man in New York," one of the papers called him. Rich indeed he was in the ever enlarging resources of a noble manhood; rich in the gratitude of his fellow men; rich in the resources of happiness that have come to him, even in this life, as the fruit of his investments, and that will go on and on increasing and multiplying through the ages to come.

"What I spent I had," reads the old English epitaph; "what I kept I lost; what I gave I have."

How much there is in it! "What I spent," for my own pleasure merely, "I had." The momentary delight for a moment was, and then was not. "What I kept I lost." All that a man keeps till he dies he loses absolutely. The moment his breath is gone from his body his power over it ceases. He cannot take it with him; he cannot control the use of it. It is as absolutely lost to him as if it had been swept away by flood or flame. "What I gave I have." If the gift has been judicious that is true. If it has been given for the enriching of manhood, for the building up of character, that is true. If you can invest in a man in such a way as to save and strengthen and enlarge the man, the man will continue to live; your interest in him will never be extinguished; your satisfaction in the fruit that comes from your labors and your sacrifices will endure through eternity. Is not Peter Cooper alive to-day? Is not the money that he invested in the great charities *his*, to-day, in the deepest and truest sense of the word? Is he not getting, is he not sure to get, for ages to come, a glorious income from those investments? Think of the tens of thousands whose path has been smoothed, whose burdens lightened, whose lives cheered by his benefactions, and who will be telling him, all down the eternities, the story of their gratitude? How much is such a man worth? Count his gains if you can; they are beyond the reach of my arithmetic.

But notice that it is the man and not the money that is the precious thing. It was the man who gave to the money all this power of productive service. And the reason why he had the power to do this was because he himself believed from the bottom of his heart that a man is more

precious than gold. Any man who believes this as heartily as he believed it is just as rich as he was; he may not now have the power to confer so many benefits, but he has within himself the resources out of which all manner of blessings shall arise to him and to all men throughout eternity.

I want you to believe this, you poor, who are sometimes oppressed and angered by the false standards with which society measures worth; you who are sometimes ashamed and humiliated because your possessions are so small. You have not much gold? No: but you have a human soul, and that is something worth far more. And now will you, with a mind whose faculties, ranging free through the universe, are fitted to grasp all knowledge; with a heart that can hold an unmeasured volume of holy love and joy; you, who are allied to God himself in your nature, and to whom immortal life and blessedness are offered — will you be found complaining because to you but few of the baubles of wealth and honor have been given? How much would they add to your native honor and dignity, if you had them all?

Have you ever seen the Apollo Belvidere? It is the statue of a man, chiseled out of marble, one of the noblest figures that art has ever produced. Do you think that this statue would be made any nobler or more beautiful if men should put gold rings on its fingers and gold bracelets on its wrists, and strings of gold beads upon its neck, and should trick it out with ribbons and buttons and fringes. Would not these tawdry ornaments detract from the simple dignity and majesty of that model of manly grace and strength? Well, the accidents of wealth and rank and

office and station cannot add much more of ornament or value to a true man than could trinkets like these to the beauty of the Belvidere Apollo. His manhood itself, to all clear insight, is something infinitely grander and diviner than these belongings.

I beseech you, then, ye poor, remember this. If you have not wealth you have manhood, and how much more than this have the lordliest of men? What though, upon the garments of some of your fellow-pilgrims in this world, a little more of the dust of earth has gathered? Came you not all from the same starting-place? Travel you not all to the same destination? And when you reach it, will not your earthly possessions be just the same as theirs? Why, then, should they lightly esteem you, or why should you despise yourselves? I charge you that you despise not yourselves. I charge you that you think upon your divine origin, and your immortal heritage, remembering always, that however honorable it may be to be a rich man, or a titled man, or a famous man, after all it is the crowning glory and honor of earth simply to be a man!

A bright truth is this; but it has a shadowy side, and that I must not conceal. Man is more precious and honorable than his institutions, than his titles and offices, than his possessions and goods; more precious than all else on earth; but things the most precious may have their beauty tarnished and their excellence spoiled. And man, who outranks all other values, is not exempted from this liability. The loss or the ruin of a man is not an uncommon accident. Would that it were! Would that our eyes were not so often pained by the sad spectacle! Would that our ears might never again hear the wail of sorrow that earth is all

the while sending up to heaven for souls that are lost. How glorious and godlike a thing your manhood is I have tried to show you: now I would warn you of the danger that it may be defiled and lost.

What is it, then, that makes manhood so precious a thing? Wherein resides this excellent value? It is found in those powers of man that fit him for communion with God. It is because of his kinship to God that man is of such illustrious worth. And nothing seems more certain than that these powers may, by disuse or misuse, be impaired and finally lost. And so cut off by his own act from the source of all light and love, he is deserted by all generous impulses, by all holy aspirations, and is left to grovel in the mire of selfishness and carnality. Thus does he who was so royally endowed fling away his birthright; thus does he wander, miserable prodigal, into the far country of sin, wasting his substance, and perishing with soul hunger.

Are there any among you whom this truth does not concern? Some of you are trying to save yourselves from such unhappy fate as this; to preserve from harm and ruin your spiritual natures; but is it not plain to you that scores of men all about you are losing that precious thing which you are trying to keep? Some are whirling in the giddy dance of dissipation; some are dallying with the toils of vice; some are frittering their energies away in folly; some are stiffening in the frosts of covetousness; some are wasting away by the slow decay of idleness! Alas! how many ways there are that seem right to men, whose end are the ways of death! And is it not possible to save some of these? Is not a man worth saving? If there be joy in the

presence of God over one sinner saved, is there not good reason why you, who see so many lost, should do what you can to save them? Are not men too precious to be lost? Can you not, will you not, by some means, save some?

Are there any signs that any of those to whom I speak are losing themselves? These natures of yours, worth so much in their perfection, so precious to you and to God, made in the image of God, is there any danger that they will be perverted and ruined? Alas, I fear that with some of you there is danger! I am afraid that you are squandering the precious thing which God gave you to keep. I am afraid that the rust of slothfulness is corroding it; or that the fires of lust are consuming it; or that the attritions of worldliness are wearing it away. I am afraid that you have forsaken God, and despised the loving-kindness of His Son. And if you do thus cut yourself off from all communication with Him who is the life and light of men, what else can happen to you, but that all that is most like God within you shall shrivel and decay; but that innocence shall be supplanted by deceit, and purity by foulness, and honor by intrigue, and generosity by selfishness, and all noble affections by all crafty and Satanic passions? Is there not danger of some such fate? Look within, I beseech you, and measure the tendencies. Give diligent thought, I pray you, to this matter, lest the majestic nature God has given you become but a majestic ruin; lest angels bow above you chanting solemnly, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"

"How much was he worth when he died?" some man may ask. What if the seer must answer: "He was the heir of immortality, but he sold his birthright for a song."

HAGAR IN THE WILDERNESS.

GENESIS XVI: 8.

"And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou, and whither wilt thou go?"

GALATIANS IV: 24.

"Which things contain an allegory."

We have here a dramatic incident in the early Hebrew history. An Egyptian handmaid belonging to Sarai, the wife of Abram, was found by the angel of the Lord near a fountain of water in the wilderness. The place seems to have been somewhere in the northeast corner of Arabia Deserta, on the road from Egypt to Assyria. The word wilderness applied to the region is not therefore used in that restricted sense in which we often find it employed in the Bible, as signifying simply an uninhabited region devoted to pasturage; it was a dreary waste of rock and sand, seared by south winds that came hissing from the great Arabian desert; offering the traveller no better shelter from the scorching sun than now and then the shadow of a great rock; a desolate and thirsty land, with only here and there a fountain where the pilgrim paused to refresh himself and gain strength for the weary leagues before him.

It was near one of these infrequent fountains, in the midst of this unfriendly region, that the angel of the Lord found this Egyptian girl.

The angel's greeting is a recognition; he names her and defines her in three words: "Hagar, Sarai's maid!" he says; and the girl hears the searching voice and looks up to see a face of commanding majesty and sweetness. "Whence camest thou?" the angel demands. Was not the question superfluous? Do not the words already addressed to her show that the angel needed no information? If he knew her name and knew that she was Sarai's maid, he knew whence she had come. But questions are often wisely asked, less for the benefit of the questioner than of the questioned. It is often the strongest way of putting a statement, to make a question of it. And it is often the surest way of fastening a truth in the mind of another to frame a question that shall elicit from him the expression of that truth. The teacher does not ask the pupil how much is six times four, or what is the capital of Maine, because he wants information, or merely because he wants to find out whether the pupil knows the answer; but also because he wishes to have the pupil strengthen his own hold upon the truth by expressing it with his own lips. The question that prompts us to tell what we know sharpens our knowledge; and, similarly, the question that makes us tell what we are doing, may often greatly influence our conduct. For many a man, drifting on in a course of evil conduct that he has never stopped to define, it would be a good thing if some one, by a pointed question, could get him to say out, in plain words, just what he is doing. If he would only honestly state it

to himself, he would shrink from it with horror. Always when one is going in questionable ways it is well to pause and put the thing he is doing into a clear proposition. I am engaged in some business transaction and a good angel stands by my path and asks me, "What are you doing?" If the operation, though nominally legitimate, is really fraudulent, and if I, though sometimes a little too eager for profits, am not an ingrained rascal, it may be good for me to have the question put to me in just that way. For, on reflection, I shall be forced to answer: "I am endeavoring to get the money of my neighbor without giving him a fair equivalent." And, having been brought to put the matter into such plain words, I shall be forced, if I am not a rascal, to withdraw from the operation. My belief is that the angels ask us questions of this sort very often; that the demand, "What doest thou?" spoken by a monitor we do not see, often searches us in moments of disobedience or waywardness. Sometimes, I fear, we lie to the angel, as Hagar did not: we try to disguise the purpose or the deed in seemly phrases; we strive to make ourselves believe that the evil thing is lawful and right; and such paltering with our consciences has frightful consequences; it is thus that men lose their souls. But the pointed query, spoken to us in the silence, that fixes our thought directly on the nature of the thing we are doing, may serve to arrest the soul that is not wedded to iniquity, and may result in the reversal of its choices.

Not only for clearing away the haze that often obscures an unworthy purpose, but also for removing the fog in which good purposes are sometimes involved, a pointed question may serve us. There are those whose intention to

do right, to live the highest life, is rather nebulous. There are men who really mean to be the servants of Christ, but they have never said so, even to themselves. Their intention lies there, cloudy, crepuscular, in their mental horizon, but it is there. It influences their lives, not seldom; it ought to have far more power over them than it has, and would have, if it could only get from themselves a frank and clear statement. If some question could be put that would lead them to say right out in words what they mean to be — to objectify their purpose in language, so that they could look at it and understand it — the process would be most salutary. There is a deceitfulness of sin that sometimes hides from a man his own deepest and purest purposes; and if these could in some way be clearly discovered to himself, it would be a great service to him.

Whether a man is good or bad at heart it is well for him to know the truth about himself; and any question, whether it come from the lips of angel or of mortal, that helps him to a clear self-revelation is no doubt divinely spoken.

Hagar answered the angel's question, "Whence camest thou?" honestly. "I flee from the face of my mistress, Sarai," she said. The girl was running away from home. It was a home by no means perfect, according to our standards, from which she was bent on escaping. Many things went on within it that would not be tolerated in any Christian home. The social order, of which this home was a part, was of a kind that we should consider defective and even abominable. Hagar herself had been wronged; her deepest wants had not been met; her holiest

feelings had been outraged; and she had gone forth in resentment and desperation, vowing never to return.

But this home from which she had gone forth, in spite of all the enormities wrought into its structure, was about the best dwelling place on the earth in that day. It was the dwelling place of a man who, although his notions of conduct were extremely crude, if judged by our higher standards, was yet one of the noblest men the world has ever seen. And although the conditions from which Hagar was seeking to escape were such conditions as we should urge any self-respecting young woman in our day to flee, and stand not on the order of her going, nevertheless her best welfare and her highest duty doubtless required her to do the thing that it would now be impossible for any woman to do without degradation. For there was no place to which she could escape where the same conditions would not surround her; there was no other household that was not polygamous, in which she could find refuge; no other mode of life was even conceived of then; the hardships she encountered in the house of Abram she would suffer everywhere else; while she could find in no other household the elevation of thought, the nobility of character, the moral stimulus and strength that she could find in Abram's family. She was turning her back on a better society, a purer life, a larger opportunity than she could find anywhere else in the world. This was the fact to which the angel's question, "Whence camest thou?" at once recalled her.

But this was not all. There was another question. "Whither wilt thou go?" the voice demanded. Hagar was going down to Egypt. And what was there in Egypt that

could give her peace? It was a land darkness and moral of degradation; a land where the soul of man was held in hopeless subjection to the things of sense. Egyptian art, the critics say, shows us the prevalence of matter over mind; mind vainly struggling with the forces of nature, and domineered by them. Thus the pyramids show us a structure in which the downward pull of gravitation is most feebly resisted — the mass taking the shape in which gravitation would have the least effect upon it. The Egyptian architect scarcely ventures to rear a perpendicular wall, much less to lift a graceful column or spring a shapely arch, lest gravitation should get hold of his fabrics and topple them over. The mastery of matter that we see in a great Gothic cathedral the Egyptian does not attempt; he dares not match his constructive power against the forces of nature. He is the slave of nature. And the social life in which this bondage is felt must be a life of degradation. I do not wish to deny that there were great elements in the ancient Egyptian civilization, but the downpull of materialism was too strong for them; and the sands of the desert have been drifting for centuries over the ruins that alone remain to testify of their existence.

How much did Hagar, Sarai's maid, know of all this? Very little, I suppose. Yet she did know that life in Egypt was coarser and poorer far than life in Abram's tent: she knew that the influences surrounding her in Egypt would be far less wholesome than those from which she was escaping; she knew that that lofty vision of the one true God which made the ground holy where Abram stood, would not be likely to sanctify the society toward which her face was turned.

This, then, is the simple fact that the angel's questions bring into the light of the girl's consciousness. Hagar was running away from the household of Abram, friend of God, and she was going down to Egypt. She was leaving a very light place, for a very dark one. Behind her were perplexities and discomforts, but great hopes also, and inspiring associations; before her was no relief for her trouble and no hope for her future. It was more than doubtful whether she would ever reach Egypt; she was far more likely to wander in the wilderness and perish by the way: but the goal, if she reached it, showed no prize worth striving for.

Such is the historical fact. Is it not lawful to use it as a type? Paul seems to say so. He refers, in the Galatians, to the story of Hagar — to another chapter in her story — and after reciting what happened he says, "Which things contain an allegory." They *contain* an allegory, the New Version puts it; the Old Version says, they *are* an allegory. The New Version is the more exact, and the more reasonable. The story was not intended to teach the spiritual truth toward which we are looking now; but it serves to illustrate that truth. It furnishes us a pertinent analogy. For there are other wanderers, in other wildernesses, to whom some good angel might well put the questions that Hagar heard by the fountain Lahai-roi, "Whence camest thou, and whither wilt thou go?"

I suppose that I may be speaking to some whose feet are pressing the shifting sands of the wide wilderness of doubt. Their religious beliefs are in an unsettled and chaotic condition. They are only certain of one thing, and that is that they are not certain of anything. They are agnostics. Now there are subjects on which most of us

can well afford to be agnostics. An agnostic is one who does not know. Well, there are quite a number of things that I do not know, and it seems to me the part of wisdom to say so. There are not a few subjects concerning which the Lord of light has seen fit to leave us in darkness. Neither in nature nor in revelation is there any distinct teaching about them. And the things which are least positively taught in the Revelation are things which men often teach with the greatest positiveness, and which they are willing to make all their neighbors heretics for refusing to believe. But we must venture to resist all such dictation, and, to say frankly, sometimes, that we do not know. Our faith will be all the sounder and clearer and stronger if mixed with a resolute agnosticism respecting the things that we do not know.

But while there are subjects of this nature, about which we do well to confess our ignorance, there are other subjects of which faith ought to give us a strong assurance. Agnosticism does well for certain outlying districts of our thought, but not for the great central tracts of religious belief and feeling. The navigator may acknowledge without shame, that he does not know the boundaries or the channels of those Polar seas where man has never sailed; but you would not take passage with a captain who declared that he knew nothing of the way out of the harbor where his vessel lay, and nothing of the way into the port to which you wanted to go, and did not even know whether there were any such port. The doctor may safely own that there are some things that he does not know about disease — about malaria, for instance; but if he should tell you that

nobody knows anything about laws of health and methods of treatment you would ask him to send in his bill at once. As a business man you will readily confess that trade has many contingencies which you can not predict, but you feel that you know something about the general laws of traffic and the conditions of success, else you would not venture your capital in trade.

Just so in the religious life. All wise men know that there is much that they do not know; it is the beginning of wisdom to discern the limitations of knowledge; but the theory that all is uncertainty in the religious realm; that there is no sure word of promise, no steadfast anchor of the soul, no charted channels, no headlands of hope, no knowledge of a port beyond seas, is a bewildering, benumbing, deadening theory; out of it comes nothing but apathy and despair. The religious faculty in man is one of the central elements of his nature; call it what you will — instinct, feeling, tendency — it is there; it is ineradicable; and it needs and must have its appropriate nutriment, its normal training, else the life is defective; its joy and its strength forever depart. The space that ought to be filled by a normal and wholesome activity, a healing, invigorating, commanding, unifying energy, becomes a dismal vacancy, and the soul is wretched albeit it knows not the meaning of its own wretchedness. Even when the doubter stops short of complete agnosticism in religious matters, this sense of desolation often invades his life. When doubt becomes a larger factor than faith in his religious thinking; when the things that he denies are more than those that he affirms; when the posture of his mind toward all these highest themes is that of negation, then a sense of lonesomeness, a

vague, undefined melancholy are sure to overspread the life. This land of doubt is a wilderness, treeless, verdureless, shelterless, a dry and thirsty land where no water is. This is a truth — if it is a truth — that admits of no argument. It is a fact of experience; if none of you know that it is true, then it is true for none of you; if any of you do know it, you do not need to have it proved; the simple statement of it is enough. I could not prove to you by argument that the dumb ague is uncomfortable; if any of you have had it, you do not wish me to waste any words in proving it. It is because I believe that there are some in this congregation who know that the wilderness of doubt is a desolate place, who know that in losing their hold upon the great spiritual verities they have parted with much that gave zest and charm to life, that I am speaking now. To all such wanderers, I bring the question of the angel to Hagar in the wilderness, "Whence camest thou?" You were not always in this wilderness; whence did you come? Do you not look back to a home from which your thought has wandered, a house of faith in which you once abode in confidence and peace? I am speaking now in parables, remember; it is not of the literal home where your father and mother dwelt of which I am speaking, but rather of that edifice of sacred thoughts and firm persuasions and earnest purposes and joyful hopes in which your soul was sheltered and comforted in the days of your childhood. Was there not for you, in those earlier days, a spiritual tabernacle of this sort, a house not made with hands, in which you found protection and peace? The hymn that we sing, sometimes, helps me express my thought:

"Dear Comforter, eternal Love,
If thou wilt stay with me,
Of lowly thoughts and simple ways
I'll build a house for thee."

In some such house as that, built of lowly thoughts and simple ways, of humble prayers and faithful services, your soul was wont to dwell, in days perhaps not long departed. I want you to look back to that life and think it all over. Doubtless there were perplexities and difficulties that you now recall. Doubtless that belief in which you were trained had in it some elements of ignorance and darkness. There were gloomy corners in it, and chinks through which the bitter winds of a rigorous and lifeless dogmatism sometimes blew; nevertheless it gave you such shelter, such cheer, such outlook as you have never found since you left it. Was there not, I ask you, in the Christian faith of that past time, not only a comfort and a solace, but an inspiration, an invigoration, a bracing energy that you do not find in the dim and dismal negations of the present time? O wanderer, astray in the bleak wilderness of doubt, whence camest thou?

But this is not the only question. "Whither wilt thou go?" Tarry here you cannot: here is no continuing city. Agnosticism is not the end, barren and profitless as it is. The road that you are travelling leads down to Egypt,—to "a land of darkness as darkness itself, and where the light is as darkness." Did you imagine that by breaking away from the bonds of the historic faith, and going in search of new light in unknown paths, you would escape all difficulties of thought? You have found out by this time that you were mistaken. The old faith did not make everything

plain, and therefore you abandoned it. Is everything plain now? Are there no mysteries unsolved?

Every man must have some sort of theory by which to explain the universe. The savage has his theory; no civilized man can live without one. He may not undertake to teach it; he may not hold it very firmly; but some kind of notion about how things came to be he must have. A clear and sheer agnosticism will content no man. Some of our scientific people profess agnosticism, but they are forever thrusting in our faces their theories of the origin of things. And all possible theories on this question of origins reduce to these: Theism, Pantheism, Atheism. You may believe that there is a God, who is the author of the universe; pu may believe that the universe itself is God; you may believe that there is no God, and that all things are the result of blind chance. One of these opinions every man who thinks must hold, explicitly or implicitly. The agnostic position cannot be a permanent position. No man will stay in that wilderness. And to you the voice comes in that wilderness, "Whither wilt thou go?" You have turned away from the old faith of Christian Theism, and there is nowhere for you to go but to Pantheism or to Atheism. And these are only different names for the same benighted land. There is no light in either of them. They will not satisfy your heart. They will not satisfy your imagination. They will not satisfy your reason. There are difficulties connected with the old Biblical theory — the theory that the universe is the orderly creation under law of an infinite personal God; but the difficulties connected with this theory are trifling compared with those that arise from the attempt to explain the universe by the theories of Atheism

or of Pantheism. Try to account for all the things that you know on the supposition that the All is God or that there is no God, and you soon find yourself in the midst of endless contradictions and absurdities. I am talking now simply as a thinking man; I am discussing the problem merely as a problem of reason; and I say that there is no light in the Egypt of Atheism or of Pantheism that clears up the mystery of the universe; that there is no relief for any thorough thinker in either of them; nay, that they plunge us into a darkness that can be felt. Like that monumental Egyptian architecture of which we spoke, these theories show us the mind of man mastered and overwhelmed by the downpull of material forces. Theism, Christian theism, the doctrine of a Divine Father revealed to men in the person of a Redeemer, does give a reason for the universe, and does introduce into human history a grand purpose and an intelligible order; but Atheism and Pantheism leave us in blank dismay before a problem that seems to have no rational solution.

And if the mental darkness into which they conduct us is so dense, what shall we say of the moral darkness in which they envelope us; of the blotting from our sky of every star of hope; of the quenching of that torch of Bible truth by which our feet are guided through this land of shadows; of the extinguishment of our faith in the infinite love of God, which is the inspiration of all our holiest endeavors?

No, my friend, I tell you truly, you who have lost your hold on the great spiritual verities and are wandering in the wilderness of spiritual doubt, you can not tarry where you are; you must go further; and every step you go in the

path that you are now travelling takes you nearer to a region where there is no ray of light or hope, a land of darkness and of the shadow of death. Can you not see, is it not clear, that you would better turn your face toward the spiritual home from which you have been wandering? I know what you are saying, and it is true — that you cannot force your mind into accepting what does not seem to you rational. I do not ask you to do that: all I ask is that you should soberly think of what you have left behind, and of what is before you if you go on. Rest for the thought, comfort for the heart there is none in the abysses of negation toward which your feet are tending: they offer you no inspiration for the present and no hope for the future. This is plain as the sun in the heavens. And I am sure that if you will but pause and think: if you will let the angel of memory touch the chords that once vibrated with tender feeling; if you will gather round yourself again the associations of your earlier years: if you will put yourself into a friendly and hospitable attitude toward the old Bible faith, ready to accept all of it that approves itself to your intelligence and your sense of need — no more — you will still find in it more light for your mind, more invigoration for your virtue and more joy for your heart than you can find anywhere else in the world. Perhaps the old spiritual house in which your youth was nurtured may need enlargement in its intellectual part. Enlarge it, then! There is room on its strong foundations to build a house of faith large enough for the amplest intelligence. If there are gloomy corners in it into which the light ought to be let, let in the light! If there are chinks through which the bitter winds of a fatalistic dogmatism blow, stop them! If there

are poisonous vines that have fastened on its walls strip them off! It is the faith that we cherish, and not its flaws, nor its parasites.

It is a precious faith, a glorious hope, a mighty inspiration that the old Bible offers still to those who will take it in its simplicity and rest in its strong assurances. It was the staff on which the patriarchs leaned, as they trod the land of promise: it was the mantle of might that the prophets wore, handed down from one generation to another; it is the energy that has kindled the hearts and the lips of apostles and missionaries in all the ages; it has lightened the shackles of the slave; it has cheered the toil of the patient workman in shop and field; it has given to weary watchers songs in the night season; it has fallen in low tones from the lips of happy mothers as they crooned the lullaby; and when the casket has stood in the cradle's place, and the happy song has changed to a wail, it has poured into the broken heart the healing of its hope; it has strengthened many a pilgrim going down into the valley of the shadow, and has left upon the marble brow its parting smile of peace. Happy are they who have never lost this heritage of faith; blessed are they who, having forsaken its comfort, and known the desolation of the wilderness of doubt, come home before nightfall to its shelter and its rest!

THE FUTILITY OF THE SENSUOUS.

JOHN VI: 62.

"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?"

This is part of that conversation between Jesus and the people which took place on the day following the feeding of the five thousand. He had gone back from the farther shore of Tiberias to Capernaum, to escape from the throng; but the people had followed him, and were now industriously questioning him. Some measure of earnestness in the pursuit of truth seems to have been awakened in them by their contact with him; some of their questions reveal a quickened perception of spiritual needs. Yet the tone of most of them indicates that the questioners were sensation-seekers, rather than searchers after truth; that they were hungering and thirsting for prodigies, more than for righteousness. "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" they ask him. A great question, truly, if one gives it the right meaning. But if one only means by it what Simon the sorcerer meant — "How shall I be able to astonish the populace by preternatural signs?" it shows that he who proposes it, like Simon Magus, has no

part nor lot in the great matter that brought our Lord to earth; that his state of mind is one to which no real spiritual gift is accessible.

The one urgent question of this multitude that now were thronging about our Lord, was this: "What sign showest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? what dost thou work?" They had just seen one marvel, and the effect upon them was to whet their appetite for the marvellous. They wanted to witness more wonders. Our Lord tells them, indeed, that they were seeking him not because they had seen the miracles but because they had eaten of the loaves; but what he means by that saying plainly is that they had failed to see the real meaning and intent of the miracle. It was not any want of susceptibility to the marvellous with which he was reproaching them; for one of the complaints that he often makes against them is that they are a generation always seeking for a sign. That is what they are seeking now. And therefore all his replies to their questions serve only to baffle them.

"Moses sent us manna," they cry: "let us see you bring down a shower of it."

"Nay," he replies: "that was not the true bread from heaven that Moses gave you; my Father is giving you now, if you would but receive it, the true bread from heaven. I came down from heaven to bring you that. I am the bread of life."

And then he went on to unfold to them, in words whose meaning they scarcely comprehended, the wonderful doctrine of the communication of spiritual life to men by their union with himself. But doubtless the one thing that

puzzled them most was his assertion that he had come down from heaven.

"The Jews then murmured at him because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it, then, that he saith, I came down from heaven?"

The coming down from heaven meant to them, only the descent of a human body out of the upper sky through the clouds to the earth. This they had not seen. If this had really taken place, *why* had they *not* seen it? Had they been defrauded by the concealment from them of this spectacle? How could this Jesus expect them to be his disciples if he kept such a taking entertainment as this from their sight? The truth was that they did not believe the story of his coming down from heaven at all. If he had done a thing of that kind he would not have done it in a corner. It was incredible and preposterous. And over this doubt, not only the multitude of the Jews, but some of those who had enrolled themselves among his disciples, stumbled and fell.

That the mental difficulty of the Jews was something of this nature seems clear. Doubtless they were offended by his mystical sayings about eating his flesh and drinking his blood; but doubtless the thing that was hardest for them to receive was this very saying that he had come down from heaven. At any rate this is the unspoken cavil to which our Lord addresses his reply: "Does this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth, the

flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life."

Is not the meaning plain? "You find fault," the Master says, "because you did not see the Son of man coming down out of heaven. The incarnation is without meaning to you because your eyes did not behold this physical prodigy. But what good would it have done you if you had seen it? And suppose that you should see the Son of man — this very body of flesh and blood — ascending through the air and should watch it until it was out of sight. That would be a still greater wonder, but what would it avail you to see it? It would gratify your curiosity, but what effect would it have upon your characters? What real need of your souls would it supply? How much better off would you be after you had seen it? It would be a physical marvel, nothing more. It would thrill your senses; it would make your nerves to tingle; but it is not by such sensations as these that men are saved. It is the *spirit* that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. And although I do show you signs and wonders, they are only as object lessons through which I seek to convey to you spiritual truths. When you see nothing in a miracle but the display of physical power you do not see the real miracle at all, and what you do see is an injury rather than a benefit to you."

The subject thus suggested to us is the futility of the sensuous as a factor in the religious life, — the small value that must be attached to any revelation that is addressed primarily and mainly to our senses.

I am sure that there is among us not a little hankering after this very thing that the Lord here teaches to regard

as a thing of little moment. "If we could only witness a miracle," say some good Christians, — "if we could only see water turned to wine or dead men raised to life, if we could only hear a voice speaking to us out of heaven — above all, if we could see the Lord Jesus himself in the flesh, and hear his voice, — how it would help us! It must have been a great deal easier for the disciples who saw all these things to follow the Savior; and we cannot understand how the Jews who witnessed them could have denied him." To all such as these the Master's searching question comes, "What and if you should see and hear all these things? What relation would such visions and signs have to your spiritual life? Suppose that you should witness what purported to be a veritable miracle; what good would it do you?

"It would show me God," answers one. "It would give me a demonstration of his existence and his power that I greatly long for. It would make me certain of a great fact, which I now believe, but of which I am not certain."

Would it? I must be allowed to intimate my doubts. I do not believe that you have closely studied this problem of mental certitude. You say that a miracle would demonstrate the existence of God. Well, grant that, for a moment. But you could never be absolutely certain that the thing you thought a miracle was not an illusion of the senses. You have seen tricks of jugglers that looked like miracles. For your life you could not distinguish them from miracles. Yet you knew that somehow the magician had made your senses deceive you. You know that your senses do sometimes deceive you. You cannot

put absolute faith in their testimony. Now a miracle must be verified, if it is verified at all, by the senses. What is a miracle? It is "a deviation," says Webster, "from the known laws of *nature*." "A miracle," says President Seelye in Johnson's Cyclopedia, "is a *sensible event* wrought by God in attestation of the truth. It must therefore occur in nature, else it would not be apprehensible *to our senses*." It is to the physical senses, then, that every miracle is addressed. The only testimony by which it can be established is the testimony of the senses. And you and I know that, while our senses can be trusted well enough for the common operations of life, they can yet be deceived; and we, who have been fooled more than once by optical illusions and by the tricks of jugglers, could never feel absolutely certain that we had seen a miracle. But the difficulty is deeper still.

You say that a veritable miracle would prove to you the existence of God. But a miracle, according to the authority I have before quoted, is "a counteraction of nature by the Author of nature." In other words it is an interruption of the order of Nature by the Power that established the order. Such an interruption, you think, would be a signal proof to you of the presence and power of God. You would feel sure that God exists, because none but He who established the order could interrupt it. But this reasoning involves a fallacy. The condition of the miracle, according to your own conception, is the order, of which the miracle is the interruption. If it were not for the order, established beforehand, there could not be a miracle. The order must exist or there could be no interruption of it. And the order, according to your own theory,

implies an Orderer. A miracle is a counteraction of Nature, by the Author of Nature. But Nature must be made to act before it can be counteracted. And the Power that counteracts it is the same Power that caused it to act. You assume the existence of God, then, in the expectation of a miracle. If you do not believe beforehand in a divinely established order of nature, you cannot believe in a miracle. "The miracle," says President Bascom, "rests back for its support on the personal being of God; without this prior doctrine there is no opportunity for it."

There is, therefore, a subtle fallacy in this notion that a real miracle would demonstrate to you the existence of God. The thing to be proved is assumed; and your argument has no basis until it is assumed. If you believed in God a miracle might authenticate to you some special command of God; but the belief in God must exist before the miracle can be looked for.

Now reflect for a moment. Which, after all, is the clearer and more convincing proof of the divine presence and power, the existing order of Nature, or some sudden and violent interruption of that order? Take the great law of gravitation which keeps all the matter of the universe in its thrall; which holds the worlds in their orbits round the sun, and marshalls them all in perfect order, so that each one of them makes its daily and yearly revolution in exact time; so that the position of each one of them in the heavens at any moment can be predicted with confidence; so that seasons and months and years and days go on in their unbroken march, and we have the light for labór and the darkness for rest, and the ebbing and the flowing of the tides, and cold and heat and sunshine and rain, and

all the marvellous procession of events and products that makes life possible and delightful on this planet — this great law of gravitation, under which all these things take place with such beneficent regularity — is not this, to your mind, a more convincing proof of the existence of God than any violent counteraction of that law could possibly be? Suppose you should see a heavy granite boulder fly up into the air. That would be an apparent counteraction of the law of gravitation; and, if it were not the effect of an illusion, or of some unseen force, and if the phenomenon were produced by the divine volition (of which you could never be sure) — it would be a miracle. But would the sight of such a phenomenon as this, if you were perfectly sure that it was caused by the divine volition, be to you a proof of God as strong as that which you see in the constant working of the law thus set aside? To my own mind, the order is the marvellous thing, the divine thing; and while I believe that the Power that ordained the order may and does sometimes interrupt it for moral purposes, I see a stronger proof of his being in the regularity of its action than in the occasional irregularities produced by the divine volition.

Ruskin puts the same thought with his accustomed vividness when he says, for substance, "I should not be astonished to see the sun stand still in the heavens. I have always been wondering that it does not stop. The marvellous thing to me is that it keeps going on."

A man visits an orphan asylum and inspects it from top to bottom, finding on every floor the most complete provision for all the wants of the children, for their comfort, their protection, their instruction, their enjoyment;

everything that the benignant wisdom of good men, and the tender care of good women can invent is brought in here to bless and brighten the lives of these little ones; and the visitor observes all this good work going on day by day with order and grace, and sees nothing in it; but by and by somebody sends up a toy balloon from the play ground to please the children, and in that he discovers the sign of the presence of a loving will, a sign that he had never seen before. In all the vast provision that was made regularly and daily for their highest needs he found no evidence of a beneficent force working for their welfare; in this one little innocent gratification of their love of the wonderful he does find a reason for believing that somebody loves them and cares for them.

Such a mind as that we should call childish; but it is exactly the same quality of mind that discovers a clearer proof of God in an occasional miracle than in the orderly manifestation of his power and goodness everywhere in nature.

That miracles have their use I do not doubt; but it is only in the childhood of the world that they can be frequently employed. Certain it is that God does not think it wise to authenticate his revelations to men in these days by miracles. That is not because he loves us less than he loved the people of former times, or because he is unwilling to communicate his will to us as fully and clearly as he communicated it to them. He chooses for each age such methods of revelation as are suited to the age; to childish ages he makes himself known by those signs which will most clearly attest to them his presence; to more mature and thoughtful ages he is revealed in ways altogether

different. And just as soon as the idea of the divineness of natural law begins to get possession of the minds of men the miracle begins to lose its importance as a means of authenticating divine messages. Even in the childish ages, as we have seen, the appetite for miracles as mere prodigies, and the tendency to forget all about the spiritual lessons they are intended to convey, need to be constantly rebuked; but we who live in an age when the evidences of of God in the order of the universe are so many and so convincing, shall deserve a severer condemnation if we join ourselves to the multitude who are always "seeking for a sign."

The evidential value of miraculous signs must therefore, in these days, be small; and those who covet them as helps to their faith must be persons of weak faith. There are numberless better and stronger reasons for believing that God is, than any miracle could show us. He who asks for a wonder to be wrought to convince him of the great first truth of religion, is like a man who stands out of doors under the open sky of a cloudless noon, and asks some one to strike a match that he may have a little light to see by.

And if a prodigy, wrought by some unseen power in physical nature, can have but little effect upon our minds, much less can it reach and purify our hearts. Experience abundantly proves that the people who are hungriest for such prodigies are by no means the hungriest for righteousness. The addiction to the preternatural is commonly the mark of a weak if not a corrupt character. The people who are always in pursuit of such signs and wonders are not, as a class, the people who are the most faithful in their

homes, the kindest to their neighbors, the most industrious and orderly citizens, the most upright and honorable business men. Quite the contrary. And there is nothing strange about this; for those who give all their thought to mere physical prodigies, as all these are, must needs lose their grasp of spiritual and moral truths.

It is by this standard that we must judge the alleged marvels of spiritism. They tell us great stories about the things that are done; the visions, the noises, the materializations, the messages: I do not wish to answer with disrespect, but I simply ask: "Well! what of them? You have seen them all: what good have they done you? Have they delivered you from one easily besetting sin? Have they helped you to live a purer and an honester and a more charitable life? Can you point me to a community anywhere, that is addicted to these marvels, whose social life has been made cleaner and sweeter and worthier by means of them? If they have no such effect, then the most marvellous of them are not worth seeing."

"Ah," says one, "but they have done this much for me; they have made future existence certain."

But what sort of future existence? What kind of people are they whose existence is thus revealed to you? You may have had better success than I in your search for truth or wisdom in their revelations: but I have not yet found a gleam of genius or a spark of high thought, or a pulsation of noble feeling in all their communications. So far as we can judge them from their words they are a set of moon-struck maunderers who mistake big words for great thoughts and hifalutin for philosophy. Messages come to us which purport to be the words of men who once lived on

the earth, and who while here had profound and inspiring truths to tell us, and from whom noble strains of music and eloquence were wont to reach our ears. If these words that are now repeated to us as their words are really theirs, then they are rapidly verging toward imbecility. God forbid that we should continue to exist after death if we must degenerate after this fashion!

As Dr. Boynton says, in "The Undiscovered Country": "If men live again, it has been found that they live only in a frivolous tradition of their life in this world. Poor creatures! they seem lamed of half themselves,—the better half that aspires and advances; they hover in a dull stagnation, just above this ball of mire; they have nothing to tell us; they bring us no comfort and no wisdom. Annihilation is better than such an immortality!"

So when you tell me that you have wonderful communications from another world I only ask you, What of them? Do they tell you anything worth knowing? Do they show you a life worth living? Do they quicken the growth of trust and truth, of righteousness and love within your souls? By such fruits as these ye shall know them.

Again, there is a lesson in this discussion for those who are always looking for God in unusual places and in exceptional manifestations. It is a childish conception, as we have seen, that discovers God more readily in an interruption of nature than in the order of nature. And something of this childishness shows itself in our religious life. We are fain to think that the divine truth and love reach men only through occasional, unexpected, irregular

channels; that the spirit of God is much more likely to visit an extra service than a regular service; that if we leave our ordinary duties and go about sight seeing we shall be more sure to meet him than if we stay at home and attend to them. The fact is that it is not in the miraculous but in the natural; not in the unusual but in the ordinary; not in strange places but in familiar places; not in hunting after extra duties but in doing common duties faithfully that we have the strongest reasons to expect his presence and his help. The one blessed and comforting thing about God's grace is the homeliness of it; it is as common, as close, as unobtrusive as air or sunlight; and it shows a dull perception to go about looking for it with much ado.

The things that a man's real life consists in are not the things that can be seen with the physical eye. Truth, purity, love, these are the only enduring possessions; and these are beyond the reach of our senses. Eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the imagination of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. *Hath* revealed them; not will reveal them. The great verities of the Kingdom of God are made known to men in this world. All that makes heaven precious is bestowed on us here; but it is not revealed to our senses; they who are always looking for marvels never see it; spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The faith that cleanses the heart and gives us an inward and abiding hope of immortality is nourished neither on materializations nor on miracles. Not in looking on strange sights nor in listening to unearthly noises is its vision cleared and its

grasp of things eternal strengthened; it is with different faculties that it lays hold on eternity.

"As when, in silence, vernal showers
Descend and cheer the fainting flowers,
So, in the secresy of love,
Falls the sweet influence from above.
That heavenly influence let me find
In secret silence of the mind."

HOMES AND HOW TO MAKE THEM.

I KINGS V: 13, 14.

"And King Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel, and the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home."

Solomon, the son of David, had just ascended the throne of his father and had set himself about the building of a temple at Jerusalem. An alliance with the neighboring king of Tyre had been negotiated, by which Solomon had secured a large force of skilled workmen to superntend the erection of this great structure; and thirty thousand of the Hebrews had been detailed to assist the Tyrian artisans. But these thirty thousand were not, as the text informs us, all to labor continuously upon the work. Solomon divided them into three courses, or reliefs, and sent them to Lebanon, where the timber was preparing, ten thousand a month: so that each of these three divisions was one month at Lebanon and two months at home.

Probably no work was ever undertaken to which greater sacredness or importance was attached than this work of building the temple at Jerusalem. The men who wrought

upon that edifice were, no doubt, impressed with the belief that they would never be called to any public service more holy or more momentous. And yet, by the direction of their king, these men were required to devote to the performance of their home duties twice as much time as they devoted to this sacred and honorable public work. The inference is not unwarrantable that, Solomon being judge, the home is holier than the temple; that the duties which belong to home are more urgent than those which belong to any other station.

The Thanksgiving day is the home festival; more and more it is taking on this character. The public and national uses of the day are not neglected, and will not be; but the emphasis of the observance rests upon the domestic festivities. It is a day for the reunion of scattered families, for the renewing upon the household altar of the flames of parental and filial love. Therefore I shall be justified in seeking to draw your thoughts toward the building and ruling of the home.

Every human being ought to be a member of some household, and every household ought to have a fixed place of residence, a place of its own — in one word, both short and sweet, a home. That is the only right way of living. A home is, for every human being, the first condition of the highest happiness and the best growth. No one ought to be satisfied until he has supplied it for himself. Probably a larger proportion of the people of this country than of any other have homes of their own. Yet the homes of New England and of America do not contain all the population. There are among us a multitude of homeless ones. Of these there are several sorts.

First, there are the sturdy tramps, who go wandering about from city to city and from hamlet to hamlet, stopping where night finds them, and quite literally obeying the Scripture which bids us take no thought for the morrow. The sudden and large increase in this class of our population is somewhat alarming. The complaint of their presence is heard everywhere. Doubtless the division of labor, and the disturbances created by the shifting of our industries may partly explain this evil growth; but we must remember that evils are in this way set on foot which are not easily subdued. When men take up the trade of vagrancy, they are too apt to follow it as long as they live. We cannot afford to have this subdivision of our homeless class increase.

Next are the gypsies, that dusky race from over the seas, who have managed for so many years to puzzle the ethnologists and frighten the children; scarcely a town in the land but has them now and then for a nine days' wonder, — camping in the suburbs, peddling their small wares from house to house, with maledictions muttered between clenched teeth upon those who will not buy; passing through the village streets quite unconscious of inquisitive and suspicious glances that greet them; and never, I suppose, feeling a pang of regret as they look upon the pleasant homes where families live from generation to generation. Here is a whole race that for centuries has been homeless, and for that reason has no history, no literature, not much religion if any, and hardly any knowledge of the arts of civilization. Such possessions and acquirements as these are scarcely within the reach of people who have no homes.

Next after the gypsies there is a considerable class of persons who are too restless to stay long in any place, and whose lives are spent in constant migrations from one place to another; who tarry nowhere long enough to get wanted. Some of them are poor, and, because rolling stones gather no moss, they are continually growing poorer; others are well-to-do, but their anxiety to do better keeps them constantly in motion. Our floating population — that part of our population which is continually afloat — is very large, as any pastor in a city like this soon finds.

Somewhere in this category I am afraid that we must put the clergy. As a class, they are wanderers. There is a wide difference between the theories of different denominations about this matter, but the difference in the practice is not so wide. The blame of this unsettled condition of clerical life is partly with the people and partly with the minister. Sometimes the people become dissatisfied. The pews are not all rented; the debts are not all paid; the Sunday-school classes want teachers; the prayer-meeting is not so full nor so interesting as it ought to be; there are not many conversions, and they themselves are not stirred up to duty as they ought to be; therefore, "Go to," they say, "let us dismiss our minister. He is the man whom we employ to get all these things done, and, since they are not done, we will make it either hot or cold for him until he takes the hint and goes away." That is the way they sometimes manage it. But sometimes the minister himself is restless; does not know when he is well off; thinks because certain individuals in his parish are afflicted with an infirmity popularly known as human nature, therefore

he will go away in search of a parish in which there shall be no human nature. We all know where that pilgrimage ends.

Next after the floating population comes that large class of persons who have a local residence but not a local habitation; who continue to live in the same community, but do not live in homes; who make their abode in such public residences as hotels or boarding houses. Now, as respects these, it must be said that many of them are compelled to adopt this manner of life. Young men and women whose homes have been broken up by the death of their parents, or who have been called forth from the habitation of their childhood to seek education and livelihood in distant places, cannot, of course, have homes of their own. In every large town there is a considerable number of these young persons, and the sympathies of Christian people are often appealed to in their behalf. How to reach them, how to shelter and to save them is a problem to which we are constantly summoned. Various public provisions for their entertainment and diversion are suggested; reading-rooms, Holly-tree inns and the like; and these are all well in their way, but the kindest thing of all would be, if we could do it, to introduce every one of them into some good, orderly household. Homes are what these young people need more than anything else. Reading rooms are good, and other good places of resort may be provided, but there is no place like home. Many of us are so circumstanced that we cannot enlarge our families, but where it can be done, it is one of the best ways of doing good. You remember that incident that was current in the form of verse, not many years ago, about the

young man who had died and who was being buried among strangers, to whose coffin a kind lady came just before it was closed, saying, "Let me kiss him for his mother." That was a very beautiful thing to think of and to do; but let us not wait, my friends, until these young men and women are dead before we show our interest in them. The mother will thank you far more for saying a kind word to her boy while he is yet alive, or for supplying to him, as well as you can, that motherly service which she longs to bestow upon him, than for kissing his cold forehead in his coffin. And the good Master himself, who knows all about the hardships of homelessness, will tell you at last that, inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto Him!

Besides these homeless young men and women who constitute so large a class in all our larger towns, there are many others, not young, whose lives are spent in hotels and boarding-houses. Some of these are prevented by impaired health, or other sufficient reasons, from assuming the care of a home. It is sometimes necessary to live in this manner, but the necessity is to be deplored. I know that some of those who have in charge these public dwellings do exert themselves to furnish to those who live with them as many as possible of the comforts and enjoyments of home, and this is a very praiseworthy endeavor. I have myself experienced much kindness at the hands of persons of this class, in former days. Nevertheless, life in public dwellings is a poor substitute for home life. It is in the nature of the case quite impossible that one should find the freedom, the seclusion and the repose of home anywhere away from home. The organizing principle of

the hotel or the boarding-house is "business." Sometimes this hard fact is greatly mitigated by the good nature of the landlord or the landlady; but it is the fact after all. Of course it is. They are not actuated wholly, or mainly, by charitable considerations. It is a way they have taken to earn a livelihood, or to increase their income. If the business did not pay, they would not follow it. That is no discredit to them. It is a necessary and even honorable business; and they are no more selfish in their pursuit of it than other human beings are in the pursuit of gain.

The organizing principle of the home must be, on the other hand, good-will and affection. The interest which its inmates have in each other is not a commercial but a benevolent interest. The question with each is, not "How can I get the most pecuniary advantage out of this relation?" but rather "What can I do to increase the common welfare and the common happiness?" The law of the home life is the law of love; and, although it is often indifferently obeyed, it is always the recognized ideal. Surely the atmosphere of the dwelling in which love is the law must be the best atmosphere for any human being to live in. Those who are at present obliged to live in these public dwellings will never, therefore, I trust, come to regard it as the proper way of living, but always recognize it as their misfortune — to be borne, while it must, with becoming patience. If the opportunity of making themselves a home ever comes to them, let them joyfully embrace it, knowing that the best of all worldly fortunes is thus put within their reach.

One reason why every young man and woman setting out in life together ought to have a home of their own

is found in the fact that they can gratify their tastes and manifest the life that is in them in no other way. Of course they will consult their own preferences in arranging for themselves this home. If they build the house, they will build it after their own notions; they will put into it their own thought and feeling. The house represents them. The building of a house is thus often an important part of a man's education. His constructiveness and his judgment are greatly strengthened by the exercise. Wisdom is sometimes dearly bought in this way, it is true, but wisdom that costs the most is commonly worth the most. If, instead of building the home, the couple only furnish and arrange it to suit themselves, that is a pleasant and a useful work. There will be limits to their expenditures, and many things which they desire they will not be able to obtain, but these limitations will not arise out of the taste or the will of somebody else. Their surroundings will be more perfectly adjusted to their own wants. There will be a greater measure of harmony between their life and their conditions than would be possible under any other circumstances.

Another, and the strongest justification of the home life, is in the fact that there are certain affections of the soul that can be developed in no other manner of life. The domestic virtues and graces are not easily described or catalogued, but they form an important part of the best human character. There are sentiments, sympathies, habitudes of thought, which are native to the home, and which are essential to the best growth and highest development of human beings. Domesticity gives to every beautiful character an added charm. No man is truly good who

is not good at home; and the best men are always best on the side that touches home. Home is the school where human beings learn how to be tender and pitiful, patient and forbearing; how to turn duty into joy and self-denial into a sweet and pleasant sacrifice. For the cultivation of these higher forms of morality there is no place like home. Hospitality, one of the oldest and most beautiful of human virtues, is of course impossible to one who has no home.

Public spirit is fed and fostered at the fireside. The man who has a home of his own is interested that the community in which he lives should be lacking in nothing that could help to make it desirable as a place of residence. He who makes himself a householder by that act gives a hostage to society for his good behavior and his devotion to public interests. Patriotism, too, has its foundations laid upon the hearthstones of the land. The patriot's love for his country is rooted and grounded in his love for his home. He knows that every assault upon the peace and prosperity of his country is an indirect assault upon his home, threatening its security and its permanence. Every new tribute of honor paid to his land, every new element of strength added to it, helps to make his home a surer and a dearer possession. You may estimate the strength of a nation by the number of its homes and the measure of the development of the domestic sentiments. The larger is the proportion of the population which dwells in homes, the more nearly invincible is that nation by internal foes or by foreign enemies.

"'Measure the frontiers!' shall it be said?
'Count the ships,' in national vanity?
Count the nation's heart-beats sooner!"

And for the nation's heart-beats you must listen in the nation's homes. When the great mass of the people are not only householders but freeholders — when they own the homes they live in — the sentiment of patriotism finds its intensest development. It is quite impossible that any considerable government, whose domain is parceled out in small estates, owned by the people who occupy them, should be overthrown by seditions or conquered by rival powers. And therefore, that the national life may be invigorated, and the bond of union strengthened, wise statesmen will in all possible ways encourage the people in making themselves possessors of the homes in which they dwell.

One prime cause of the strength of the North and the weakness of the South in the late war lay just here. The northern armies, to a far greater extent than the southern, were composed of men who were fighting for their homes and firesides. It was a conflict between two hostile political systems, and the northern soldiers knew it. The very watchword of the northern civilization was and is "Free homes for all." The southern civilization provided no homes for any but the aristocratic classes. That was, at any rate, the tendency of things in that quarter. The North meant diffusion of wealth; the South meant centralization. It was a square fight between the plantation and the farm; between the home of the northern freeholder on the one side, and the poor white's squatter shanty and the

slave's hovel on the other. The issue to be decided was whether the system of large estates and privileged classes should overrun all the western territories and finally the northern states, or whether the system of small freeholds and equal rights should overspread the impoverished southern plains. That was the question that was settled by the war, and settled the right way.

The strength of the home-sentiment in the heart of the soldier is well illustrated by the story of that loyal East Tennessean, told by himself to his nurse in the hospital: "They watched us a long time," he said, "me and some others. They thought we was a-goin' for the Union. We had made up our minds what to do. One night we went off. We made for where we thought the army was. The first night, we stayed in the woods. I laid the fire before I went. I laid her a good fire. At daylight we got to the top of the mountain, where we could look down on our homes behind us. They were getting up and building the fires. I saw my little home. The smoke was coming out of the chimney. She had to light it herself. I sat down on a flat rock and looked down into the valley. I wanted to see if the fire burned. Well (with a long sigh) it was my home. I suppose it was as sacred to me as any other man's home to him. But I had to turn my back on it — me and the others."

No one who ever carried tidings from the home to the camp needs to be told that this love of home was in the hearts of many of the men in the ranks a continual inspiration. And an army composed of such soldiers never can be conquered.

Such, then, are some of the uses of the home in

developing individual and national virtues. I presume that, to most of you, the effort I have made to set forth the benefits of the home-life has seemed rather a labor of love than a labor of necessity. Most of you are sufficiently convinced already of the advantages of such a manner of life, and those who are now dwelling in other habitations are, no doubt, cherishing the expectation that you will sometime have homes of your own. Never lose your grasp upon that possibility. But, when you have secured for yourself a home, what shall it be? How will you build it — not merely the walls and the partitions, but also the invisible spiritual temple, of which this outer structure is only the shrine?

Your home will be a place of comfort and repose. That, of course. You will take delight in contriving all its appointments so that the burdens of toil shall rest as lightly as possible upon those who have the ordering of it; you will find pleasure in furnishing and arranging it, so far as you can, in such manner that gloom and cheerlessness shall be excluded, and it shall seem to be a true haven of rest and good cheer to all upon whom its hospitable doors shall open.

Your home will be a school of culture. I do not mean that you will fill it with pedagogic instruments and appliances; but it will be so arranged as to educate by impression those who dwell within it. Probably few of us are fully aware how sensitive we are to the influence of external objects. A minister travelling in Vermont entered a farm-house, and fell into conversation with a farmer and his wife, persons in middle age. He inquired for their children, and learned that they had four boys, and that

they are all at sea, following the hard trade of the sailor. "But how happened it," asked the minister, "that your boys should take such a fancy? They never lived by the sea-shore." The good people could offer no explanation whatever. It was simply a notion, they said, and a strange one, they had always thought, but it was a very strong one, and they had found it impossible to dissuade the boys from their purpose. But, pretty soon, the minister was invited into the little room which served the family for parlor, and there, hanging over the mantlepiece, the only picture in the room, was a magnificent engraving of a ship under full sail. The parents said it had been hanging there ever since their boys were little children. Who could doubt that the daily sight of this beautiful picture had had much to do in inflaming the passions of these farmer's boys for the seafaring life? This is hardly an exaggerated instance of the effects produced upon our lives by the objects that surround us. Very much of our education comes thus, by impression. And, therefore, for the sake of cultivating, in this indirect way, grace and nobility of spirit in its inmates, every home should be made, without and within, as beautiful as possible. A vast amount of money is expended in dressing and in pampering the appetite which might with a truer economy be spent in adorning the home. Of all places the home should be made the most attractive. Nothing that art can do to increase the power of the spell by which it binds us should be left undone. The beauty that finds expression in sound, as well as the beauty that reveals itself in form and color, will be domiciled in your home. Good instruments of music are not only means of enjoyment but means of grace, oftentimes. Books will

abound in your home. The library will be one of its choicest rooms. Upon its shelves will be found a careful collection, all the while growing, of books, old and new. You will curtail your expenses in many other directions sooner than in that. "When I get a little money," said Hugo Grotius, "I buy books; if I have any left, I buy food and clothes." You will not fall into the delusion that the body is alone worthy of your care, and spend all your time in getting food to satisfy its unhealthy cravings, and garments of beauty to deck it withal, neglecting to provide stimulus and nutriment for the mind. You will not imitate the folly of those whose larders are always crammed with all manner of edibles, digestible and indigestible, but to whose stock of mental pabulum not a single book is added from one year's end to another. In short, you will remember that your home is for your spirit, at least as much as for your body, and you will try to make it minister to your higher nature quite as liberally as to your lower nature.

Your home will also be a place of enjoyment. Innocent play will often be in order. If there are young folks in the house, they will more easily be kept at home by liberal provision in this direction than in any other way. There's no place like home for the young folks, especially in the evening; and everything that can be properly done should be done to make the home the pleasantest place in the world for them. The grown people should not only tolerate the children's pastimes, they should participate in them for their own sakes, as well as for the children's. If every day they would unbend a little, throwing off the stateliness of the street and the drawing-room, dismissing

care and labor and joining with the children in some merry, rollicking sport, they would renew their youth every day.

Finally, your home, when it is builded, will be, I trust, a sanctuary of religion. There will be an altar there on which, every day, the sacrifices of prayer and praise will be laid. You will not try to keep a house without having God in it. You will not go on from year to year partaking of the blessings of the Heavenly Father, and never thanking him for them. You will not forget to place it as one of the daily lessons before every inmate of the house that there is another and a better home, of which this earthly habitation is but an imperfect type, a home into which there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. The children of your household will remember, when they are grown up, that their first impressions of the Christian life, and their strongest impulses to enter upon it, were furnished them in their earliest years at home. I know that I am speaking of that which ought to be, and I fear that I am also speaking of that which with some of you is not. There are, I am afraid, before me dwellers in some homes where God is never acknowledged. They know that this is wrong, but it is a wrong that they have been slow in redressing. I beseech you, therefore, by the mercies of God, that you delay no longer. Shall not the voice of thanksgiving and of consecrating prayer be heard in your home, to-day?

Such homes as this which I have been describing, filled with comfort, adorned with beauty, cheered by all manner of innocent pleasures, warm with filial love and

beautiful with heavenly light, most of us have seen. Happy indeed are we, if in such homes our lives are spent!

I should hope to be delivered from so mean a passion as envy; but one who has been for the greater part of his life a pilgrim and a stranger can hardly look without some strugglings between desire and regret upon those homes where the same household has dwelt beneath the same roof for scores of years; where a whole generation has grown up from infancy to maturity, passing forth at length to other homes; where still the aged parents dwell in peace, and whither, on this Thanksgiving day, the children with their several broods of grandchildren return, to fill the old house again with the light of love and the melodious mirth of prattling voices. What a treasure, to all time, such a home must be to every one to whom it has ever belonged! With how many memories it is stocked! How rich are its stores of sweet association! Here is the mother's chamber — is there any sanctuary more sacred? Here she has knelt to pray — how often! — for the children God had given her; here, for many waking hours of darkness, she has pondered their bright sayings, and grieved over their misdeeds, and laid her loving plans for their well-being. Pause upon this threshold! Let the head be uncovered; let the lips be mute! It is the holiest place! Here is the old parlor — these matrons coming home to-day can remember when they, in their maidenhood, sat in this quaint old room, embellished then as now with many devices of their own hands, and listened with beating hearts to the unfolding of their life's romance; can remember, too, the time when the bride, adorned for her husband, here pronounced those solemn words which fixed her earthly destiny. And there

are sober recollections here, to-day; memories of times when in waywardness or in rebellion these children laid heavy burdens upon the hearts of their parents. Doubtless the furrows in these cheeks are deeeper, and these decrepit bodies stoop and totter more, to-day, because of those offenses. It must be, too, that the grandparents themselves, looking upon the fathers and mothers, who, but a little while ago, were making the house merry with their childish laughter, can remember harsh and arbitrary commands of theirs, which galled the spirits of their children; moments of fretfulness and impatience; errors of judgment in their parental government, over which they grieved in days gone by. Such remembrances as these, while they are not joyous but grievous, nevertheless work in the soul the peaceable fruits of righteousness. With humbled and softened hearts they are recalled, and parents and children speak to each in kinder tones because of them.

There are other memories! While the circle is sitting round the fire on this glad Thanksgiving day, recounting the things that are behind, there comes a moment of silence. They are all thinking of those days gone by that were so dark; when the noises of the children were hushed, and an unwonted stillness filled the house; when the doctor, commonly so chatty and so cheerful, came often and went away looking very sober; when at length there was no more need of anxious watching, and the household bowed down by the bed-side, while the minister knelt and in tremulous tones lifted up the voice of prayer, that it might steal in when the gates of heaven opened to receive the soul departing, and bring back comfort and support to the stricken ones left behind; when the neighbors came in

and took as much as they could bear of the burden of sorrow, tenderly closing the sightless eyes and folding the helpless hands; when the last look was taken and the last benediction spoken at the grave — it all comes back, to-day, as vivid and real as though it were yesterday! The scent of the white roses that were scattered then so thickly through these rooms has not yet quite departed. And yet this is not a ghastly memory. It hallows and endears the home. The family altar is never truly sanctified till the chrism of a great sorrow has been poured upon it.

Consecrated by such sorrows, endeared by such joys, hallowed by the affection of which they are the shrine, fragrant with the incense of prayer and praise, all glorious within by reason of the immortal hopes that cluster round their altars, may the homes be in which you dwell, good neighbors, every one! So shall the dearest spot on earth prove only as the porter's lodge standing by the entrance of the fair gardens of the Palace Beautiful; and when at last the silver cord is loosed, and through the mists of life's last hour the light of a better morning breaks, they who stand by shall hear you saying, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

PRAYING IN CHRIST'S NAME.

JOHN XIV: 14.

"If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it."

These words of our Lord, several times repeated in his last conversation with his disciples, constitute the charter of that great company of believers to whom prayer is a daily vocation and a practical power in life. Those who suppose that something is really effected by means of prayer — that it is a method of procuring benefits that would not otherwise come to us — refer to these specific promises of our Lord more frequently than to any other Scripture, as their reason and warrant for praying. Here, they say, is an assurance that lacks nothing of definiteness nor of comprehensiveness. "If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it." If we believe that he who spoke these words always spoke the truth, and has all power in heaven and on earth, then we may ask what we will and it shall be done for us, providing we ask in his name. It becomes, then, a matter of great importance to know exactly what is meant by praying in Christ's name.

In the common acceptation, the phrase "in my name" means the same thing as "for my sake" or "on my ac-

count." The common notion seems to be that if we present ourselves before the Infinite Majesty with any request and make use of this formula, "In Christ's name" or "For Christ's sake," our requests will be granted, no matter what they may be. I have often heard this promise explained as an unlimited order upon the treasury and storehouse of heaven.

The young soldier, dying on the field, sends by his wounded comrade a letter to his father at home, saying, "This is my friend; give him whatever he asks for, for my sake;" and although the requests of the wounded man are unreasonable; although the things that he asks for are injurious to him, the father of the dead soldier grants the petitions of the living one, simply because of the love that he bears his son. Just so men go to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with this text as their warrant: "He is my friend; he has given me this promise; therefore, because of thy love for Him, honor the promise and give me the thing that I ask for." The claim is made solely on the ground of the Father's love for his Son Jesus Christ.

Another conception of the promise refers it to an infinite fund of merit which Christ has accumulated by his death, and upon which this promise authorizes all his disciples to draw. Christ, by his obedience and his sufferings, has put the Father under infinite obligations to him; those, therefore, who come to the Father in the name of the Son, have a claim on him which he is bound to recognize. The transaction, as thus conceived, is partly legal and partly commercial. The Father gives good things to Christ's friends when they ask him, in view of a

claim which Christ has upon him; or the Father gives good things to Christ's friends when they ask him, out of the proceeds of a capitalized stock of merit which Christ has accumulated. To ask in Christ's name is therefore substantially the same thing as to present an order at a store signed by one of the joint proprietors, or a check upon a bank certified by the cashier. The name, as we say, is good for the amount. It matters not to us whether the persons to whom the check or the order is presented are friendly or unfriendly to us; it matters not to them whether the thing that we receive is good for us or not; there need be no acquaintance beyond simple identification, nor affection, nor confidence, nor even good will between us and them; what they impart to us is not of grace to us but of debt to the one whose name we present to them.

This view of the intercession of Christ needs only to be distinctly stated in order that its crudity may be perceived. To suppose that God answers our prayers, not because he loves us or desires our welfare, but because of his love to Christ; or to suppose that he supplies our wants, not out of his own abounding mercy, but out of the stores of grace which Christ has accumulated by his atonement, is to hold a most inadequate view of the whole subject of prayer and of the relation of God to men. It may be difficult for us to explain the exact nature of Christ's mediation, but we can surely say this about it, negatively, that it does not teach and cannot mean that there is any difference between God's feeling toward us and Christ's feeling; if we believe that Christ and the Father are one, we cannot believe that. Christ is a media-

tor between God and man in the sense that he is a revealer of God to man; not in the sense that he is a negotiator or referee between two parties, both of whom have confidence in him and affection for him, but neither of whom has any affection for or confidence in the other. The idea that our prayers for blessings go no further than Christ by whom the requests must be endorsed before they will be attended to, and whose endorsement is all that entitles them to attention, and that the gifts of God on their way to men come no nearer to us than Christ, by whom they are distributed among men, is a view that degrades God, that dishonors Christ, and that contradicts the doctrine of the divine unity.

What then is meant by asking in Christ's name for gifts from God?

The name, in the New Testament, generally stands for the person. It is not a mere sign or appellation, it is the essential character or personality. Thus when Peter says of the lame man who was healed at the temple gate, "His name [Christ's name], through faith in his name, hath made this man strong," we know that he means not merely that the syllables which spell the words Jesus Christ, used as a charm or incantation, have wrought this cure; but that the divine power there present and acting has done it. So always when miracles are said to have been wrought by the name of Christ, it is the personality of Christ and the power of Christ that are referred to. Believing in the name of Christ is believing not merely in a word but in the person of Christ himself, with a glance, no doubt, at the character or reputation which he has gained, of one worthy to be trusted.

To ask for anything in the name of Christ is to ask, then, in the person or character of Christ; to put ourselves in his place as nearly as we can, and to ask for the things that he would ask for and in the spirit with which he would present his requests. "When we desire another to ask anything from a superior in our name," says one, "we mean to ask as if we asked. It must be something then which we should ask for personally. Therefore Christ, desiring us to ask in his name, limits us to ask those things which we presume he would ask for us."

"Name," says Olshausen, "used in application to God and to Christ as the manifestation of God, always denotes the divine entity itself in the whole compass of its properties. Accordingly prayer in the name of Christ is such as is offered in the nature, mind and spirit of Christ." So Robinson, also: "The name of God, or of Christ, is used as a periphrase for God himself, or Christ himself, in all their being, attributes, relations, manifestations."

To pray in the name of Christ is, then, to have the mind of Christ when we pray; to be in the spirit of Christ; to think the same thoughts that Christ is thinking; to be cherishing the same desires that he is cherishing; to have the same purposes that he is following; and when this is true of us, then whatever we ask for we shall surely receive.

But is it possible, you are asking, for any of us thus to be completely identified in thought and feeling and purpose with Christ? Perhaps not; but just in proportion as his mind is in us, and our lives reproduce his life, will our prayers be effectual. Just in proportion as we are one with him in thought and life are we able to pray in his

name; and anything that we thus ask will surely be done for us.

The same truth is put in another form by our Lord when he says: "If ye abide in me, and my words [that is, my laws or principles] abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you. It is the interblending of the Master's life with that of the disciple, the perfect unity of mind and heart, that is the condition of successful prayer. So again in the same chapter: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." It is only when the life of the Master quickens and invigorates the disciple, just as the life of the vine does that of the branches, that the disciple brings forth fruit that remains; and it is only when he is in this condition, mastered by the spirit of Christ, inspired by his truth, governed by his will, that he can truly pray in Christ's name, and find a certain answer to his prayers.

But some will say that this interpretation of the phrase greatly limits the promise. "If it means no more than this," it will be said, "it does not mean nearly so much as we always supposed it to mean."

It must be admitted that this interpretation does limit the promise in certain directions. That is really no objection to the interpretation. There is such a thing as making a phrase of Scripture mean so much that it means nothing at all. In our eagerness to extend the force and application of the words of Christ we sometimes overload

them with all sorts of extravagances from which reason recoils dragging faith along with it.

These words of our Lord have often been seized upon by ignorant and wilful disciples as warranting them in an attempt to coerce the bestowment of the divine bounty. If we ask for anything in his name, they say, he will do it for us. Asking in his name is simply asserting his mediation, and claiming for ourselves the benefits of it. We do not claim this in our own right; we have no rights in the premises; but we have become by our hearty and loyal choice the disciples of Jesus Christ, and he tells us that if we present any petition at the throne of grace, in his name, it shall be granted us." Reasoning in this way, men have brought to God many strange requests for objects unworthy and injurious to themselves, and yet have supposed that by the use of this phrase they made good their demand upon Him. Those to whom worldly prosperity would be a curse, who have no power to use wealth wisely, and would surely be corrupted by it, sometimes ask for it, and say that they are asking in Christ's name, and seem to think that God is not faithful to his promise because he does not give it to them.

There are a thousand forms of temporal good for which men are wont to pray; and their theory is that if they only desire these things, and confidently ask for them, and take care to say that they expect them only through the mediation of Christ, they will surely receive them. When they fail in obtaining these things that they want by this process, their faith is sorely tried, and they begin to doubt the word of God.

A little reflection will show us how foolish it is to

suppose that our Lord ever meant to commit to those who are as blind to their own true interest as we often are the power of summoning heaven to our undoing. If we, by simply fixing our mind in a certain way, or by using a certain phrase, could secure for ourselves anything that Omnipotence is able to give us, we should speedily destroy ourselves. We may be very sure that God will not interrupt or modify the order of nature to give us anything that is not good for us, no matter how urgently we may ask it, nor how passionately we may plead the all-prevailing Name.

Sometimes good people have whims, not only foolish but hurtful and hateful ones, that they wish to have gratified. One good woman whom I knew prayed all night, as she said, that her husband might be kept from joining a certain church — a church in good fellowship with the one to which she belonged, but in another denomination. She was sure, she said, that her prayer would be answered, for she had prayed in Christ's name. Thus she imagined this promise to be a weapon put into her hand with which she could compel the Deity to gratify her small bigotry, her antipathy to another Christian sect. She used the name of Christ in her prayers no doubt; but she was very far from having the mind and temper of Christ; and it was therefore not in his name, in any deep and true sense, that she was praying.

Such crude and sordid and selfish petitioning this interpretation of the promise does not encourage. Neither does it encourage that kind of speculative or experimental praying which was proposed a few years ago by an eminent scientific man, by which the power of prayer was to be

tested. The proposition was that Christians all unite to pray for the patients in a certain ward of a hospital; and if the patients in that ward recovered more rapidly than those in other wards the result would be a demonstration of the power of prayer. But Christians who pray inquisitively or empirically, just to see whether there is any use in praying or not, are not praying with the mind of Christ, no matter what phrases they may use; and there is no promise of answer to any such prayers. To ask a good man for a good gift, just to see what he would say, would be an insult; and it is not less offensive to approach God in this way.

Neither does this interpretation encourage the expectation that God will work miracles to relieve us of work or of deserved suffering. Some Christians imagine that God will support them in idleness if they only pray in faith for food and raiment and shelter. We know, as well as we can know anything, that it is God's will that we should earn our livelihood by labor, and husband our earnings with prudence; this is the discipline which he has appointed for man; to suppose that he will interpose miraculously in answer to our prayer, to discharge us from the obligation that he has laid upon all men, is to show a very poor understanding of his laws and a very small respect for them. One who thinks that he can suggest to the Most High a better regimen than the regimen of industry which he has appointed for his children, or who thinks that he ought to be made an exception to the general rule, cannot be said to show much of the temper of Christ in his prayers.

The same principle applies to suffering. One who

violates a physical law the existence of which he knows or ought to know, and then thinks to escape through prayer from the penalty of that law, really insults God by his prayer. No one can pray in the name of Christ, in the sense in which the phrase is here used, who is not careful to observe and obey every part of the law of God, that which is written in Nature as well as that which is written in the Bible.

These, then, are some of the limitations which we must give to this promise. When the Master says to us, "If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it," he does not mean that he will give us things that are not good for us, nor that he will gratify all our unreasonable and selfish whims, nor that he will satisfy our speculative curiosity, nor that he will work miracles to deliver us from the need of labor, nor that he will set aside for us the penalties of violated natural law, simply because we ask him to do so and append his name to our petitions.

The very first condition of asking in Christ's name is an entire and hearty willingness to know and to do the will of the Lord. He who truly prays in Christ's name wants nothing so much as to be conformed in every thought and every desire to the Heavenly Father's will. All his prayers, in fact, can be reduced to this one prayer, "Thy will be done!" Through all his petitioning this desire runs; it is the tonic of every melody that breaks from his lips when he speaks to God in the holy place; to this one central wish of his life every phrase turns and every thought is moulded.

To pray in the name or character of Christ is to remember that we are ignorant and that God is infinitely

wise; and that what he chooses for us, though it may seem evil to us, is far better than anything that we could choose for ourselves; that therefore it would be the height of unwisdom for us to dictate to him what he shall do for us; that we can only make known to him our desires, and then leave ourselves with entire submission in his careful and powerful hands.

"I came not to do my own will but the will of him that sent me," is the uniform expression of Christ's deepest thought; when that purpose takes possession of your life and subdues to itself every thought and every desire, then your prayers in his name can not fail of being answered. You do not pray as he prayed until you pray in this tone.

I am aware that these limitations will seem to some persons to rob prayer of much of its efficacy. The notion that prayer is a device for making our wills prevail over God's will,—for constraining God to let us have our way, is a very common notion. But it cannot too soon be abandoned. The very elements of prayer are humility and not self-assertion, submission and not self-will, trust and not dictation.

And after we have qualified this promise in all these ways it is still large enough—so large that we shall never begin to realize all the good it offers us.

It does not forbid us to ask for temporal mercies, for the least of the good things that God provides, nor for the greatest of them. You may pray for health; that is a blessing that Christ gave to many while he was here; peradventure he will give it now to you; it is one of the things that you may fairly presume that he would ask for you. But it is a gift that he does not always give to those he

loves best; and when you pray for it you must always say, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done."

You may pray for success in business and for prosperity if you desire financial success and temporal prosperity for spiritual or benevolent rather than for natural and selfish reasons. You would better be careful just here, however; for this is one of the places at which the deceitfulness of the human heart is apt to assert itself. Many a man has said to himself: "O how I wish I could be rich! How I should like to have all the money I want to do good with!"—when after all the benevolent thought was only the mask of a selfish one. The person to whom he wanted to do the most good was himself. No doubt he did imagine some gratification in using his wealth charitably, but the deepest and strongest longing was for the gratification of his cravings for pleasure or for power. Men do, however, sometimes desire wealth and material success for higher reasons — that they may have the means of self-improvement, and the means of usefulness; we know that they desire it for these purposes, because when they get it they use it chiefly for these purposes; and any one who is entirely honest in cherishing such a desire, may ask for wealth and material success, because he can fairly presume that Christ himself would ask for the same thing for him. But here, too, the dominating wish will be that God's will may be done. You may honestly think that you could use wealth in such a way as to derive moral and spiritual benefit from it for yourself, and to confer benefits upon others; but the Omniscient One may know that you are mistaken about this, and, for your own good, as well as for his glory, he may therefore withold what you

crave. And therefore it is necessary that you should always frame all your petitions for such gifts in such a manner as to condition them upon his wise and loving choice for you. And so of every kind of earthly or temporal good. You may ask for anything that seems to you to consist with your own moral and spiritual well being; for the bestowment of any gift, for aid in any undertaking, that seems to you right or wise. But inasmuch as your judgment may be at fault in deciding what is right or wise, the ruling petition of every such prayer must always be, "Thy will be done."

There is one class of petitions, however, in which you do not need to make any of these reservations. When you ask for spiritual gifts, then if you are sincere you know that you are asking in Christ's name. You do not presume, you know that you are speaking his mind, when you pray for deliverance from the evil, for power to do the right. If he were praying for you, you know that this is exactly what he would pray for. He *might* ask for any of these other things that we have been speaking of; he would surely ask for this. What his purposes are concerning our earthly conditions, whether they shall be prosperous or adverse, he has not thought best to tell us; he wants us to trust him for all these things; but we do know of a surety what his purposes are concerning our characters; we know that he wants them to be sound and pure and holy. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." He who prays, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin," knows that the thing he is asking for is in accordance with Christ's will,

and knows that if he is enough in earnest to set his own will to working out the salvation that he asks for he will not ask in vain.

And now do you say that I have narrowed this promise by my interpretation? How much have I made it include? I have made it embrace all forms of spiritual good — everything that improves the character, that benefits directly or indirectly the soul of man. Whatever this word "anything" in the text may not mean, it does offer to us and certify to us all that is involved in hungering and thirsting for righteousness. All that comes within the sweep of that beatitude is assured to us by this word of Christ. Therefore I do not confess that I have stripped the promise of its preciousness. All that is really worth having is included in it now. It does not assure us that by the use of a certain phrase we can constrain God to let us have our own way about everything, for his way is better for us than our own, and he loves us too well always to let us have our own way. But it does assure us that if we seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, these shall be ours, and that all needful things shall be added. Is not that enough?

EXAMPLE AND LIFE.

I JOHN V: 11, 12.

"And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life."

In revolting from the hard legal and commercial statements of the work of Christ which grew out of mediæval philosophy and mediæval law, many Christians have gone to the opposite extreme, and have attributed to him a part in the salvation of men that is almost trivial. This is a common fact of human experience; overstatements are followed by understatements: when it is discovered that a truth has been distorted or exaggerated, it is apt to be cast aside altogether. When men found that their ideas of justice would not suffer them to say that Christ was punished for our sins, or that his sufferings were judicially inflicted upon him by the Father, for the expiation of our guilt, then they began to make statements about his work that were utterly and painfully inadequate. Those who rejected the view of penal substitution, were commonly content with saying that Christ in his life and death was simply an example to us — an

example of self-sacrifice; and that we are saved by following his example. It is quite commonly supposed by many persons that this view is the only alternative of the penal or commercial view. And you will often hear it said of one who rejects the doctrine of a judicial infliction of sufferings upon the Son by the Father, that he thinks that all Christ did for us was to furnish us a good example. The fact that there is any middle term in Christology between Expiation and Example is a fact that many good people have failed to comprehend. I wish to set forth at this time a truth concerning the relation of the work of Christ to our salvation which seems to me to be deeper and more vital than any of these extreme statements.

It cannot be denied that the New Testament constantly represents the death of Christ as having the effect to reconcile men to God. Between God and men there was alienation and enmity; Christ is the mediator between God and men who has brought them together and made peace between them. The work of reconciliation is represented as being wrought by the death of Christ. I do not care to philosophize about this: I have no theories about it that I care to promulgate; I am content to accept the fact, only protesting against any theory which seems to impugn the justice of God.

But this work of reconciliation, as the Scriptures represent it, is only the beginning of the work of salvation. Christ reconciles us first and then saves us. "For if," says the Apostle, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." This may be regarded as the classical passage of Paul's writings on this subject.

No other single text of his tells us so fully and so explicitly what the Redeemer does for us. He reconciles us by his death, he saves us by his life. Of the work of reconciliation I will not speak to-day; I am concerned with the larger work of salvation which follows reconciliation. How is it that Christ saves us by his life? "By setting before us a perfect example," some men say. I wish to show that this answer is altogether superficial and inadequate.

It will be admitted, of course, that Christ has given us a perfect example. He has not only told us what to do, he has shown us how to live. He was himself, by the method which he followed, the great Object Teacher, and his life was the great Object Lesson. He not only taught us the truth, and showed us the way, but he *was* the Truth and the Way. The example that he gave us is not, indeed, sufficient to fit in detail all the experiences of our lives. A thousand things which we must do he never did; the outward circumstances of our lives are very different from those of his life: and any attempt slavishly to follow his example in matters of detail—to do the identical things that he did, and not to do anything that he is not reported as doing, would be absurd. His conduct was, however, governed by certain principles, and it is possible for us to detach those principles from the specific acts in which they found expression, and to govern ourselves by them. When we do this, we rightly follow his example.

But while we have in the life of Christ an objective representation of perfect conduct which serves a very important purpose in our moral education, and while it is useful and even necessary for us to study the model con-

tinually, and to fashion our lives after it, yet this example would prove powerless for the renewal and reformation of our characters.

Example is more powerful than precept; its influence goes deeper and takes hold of us with a stronger grasp; but after all it is of the same nature as precept. You can give a child in words some idea of the rules of polite behavior; you can give him an example of politeness which will be much more instructive and effective in forming his manners than any verbal rules that you could give him; but the rules and the example would both operate in the same way; they would reach and influence him through his intellect and his will. He would learn your rules, and would try to obey them; he would observe your actions, and would try to copy them. In both cases the effect produced would be the result of a voluntary effort. It is easier for him to imitate your actions than it is to remember and obey your rules; the object teaching of etiquette is more vivid and effective than abstract teaching; but both address the will through the intelligence.

Now while the imitation of an action is easier and pleasanter than the obedience of a precept, there is still a great lack of beauty and of vigor in the conduct that is simply the result of imitation. We do not, ordinarily, admire imitations. Articles of food or of dress or of ornament that are mere imitations we do not affect. And this is not only because the imitation is less valuable, intrinsically, than the object imitated, but also because the beauty of the original fails to appear in the imitation. The best copy you can get of a great painting will be far behind the original. No matter how skilful the hand

may be that executes the copy, it will fail to catch and reproduce the spirit and vigor of the first painting. The artist who is copying may be equal in manual skill to the one whose work he is trying to copy; but when he sits down and simply tries to reproduce the other man's lines and tints, to express the other man's thoughts, there is a certain stiffness and hardness about his work which you would not see in it if it were original work — if he were expressing his own thoughts in his own way.

Here is a penman of great skill; his hand is finely trained, and his chirography, when he writes with a free hand, is beautiful; but give him a specimen of another man's writing, and tell him to imitate it as closely as he can, and, though the other man's writing may be much more beautiful than his, yet when he tries to imitate it, his work will probably be cramped and unsymmetrical — much less fair to see than his hand-writing.

In every department of art this rule will be found to hold, that original work is much more spirited and vigorous and characteristic than mere imitation; that it is when a man is thinking his own thought and expressing himself in his own way that he is doing the best work.

And what is true of art is not less true of conduct. Behavior that is the result of simple imitation is never admirable, and is often ridiculous. Conduct has its artistic side as well as its moral side, and the rule that applies in other departments of art applies to the forms of behavior. You sometimes see a person whose manners are evidently the result of study and imitation; he does nothing spontaneously; every movement is copied from some model of

deportment, whose manners he has admired. Such manners are commonly ludicrous in the extreme.

You sometimes see speakers whose style of oratory is largely the product of imitation. They have chosen either some teacher of elocution, or some favorite popular orator as their model, and they give you a copy, as nearly exact as they can produce, of his gestures and his tones and his cadences. Such an imitation is never pleasing, and is often disgusting: it is always lacking in force and effectiveness; the mere imitator has little power to convince or persuade.

What is true of the external graces of the person is still more true of the deeper traits of character and the weightier matters of conduct. Virtue that is a simple imitation is lacking in beauty and in power. It is infinitely better, of course, that we should imitate good conduct than that we should imitate evil conduct; the mere copyist in morals is a far less disgusting person than the copyist of vice and vulgarity; but good conduct in one man that is merely a servile imitation of good conduct in another man lacks in the repetition all the spirit and grace and excellent flavor that it has in the original. There is a perceptible hardness and stiffness and unreality about it; it is an artificial flavor after all.

So, then, if a perfect example were put before us, and we should set ourselves resolutely and carefully to the copying of that example, we should be sure to fail; our lives, though they might seem outwardly very like the life we were trying to imitate, would resemble it only as the artificial flower resembles the real one. "That peculiar character," says Dr. Mozley, "which we admire in another, would become quite a different one in ourselves could we

achieve the most successful imitation. The copy would never have the spirit of the original, because it would want the natural root upon which the original grew. We ought to grow out of our own roots; our own inherent propriety of constitution is the best nucleus for our own formation."

When we give ourselves simply to the servile copying of another character, not only do we fail to reproduce that character, we fail to produce the best character that we are capable of. The best character that we can produce, as Dr. Mozley says, is that which grows out of our own roots. It is when we are our own genuine selves, not when we are imitating somebody else, that we are reaching the mark of the prize of our high calling. The rose may be more beautiful than the violet, but the violet attains its own perfection not by trying to be a rose, but by developing its own life to the highest possible degree, — by growing out of its own roots and fulfilling the laws of its own being.

When God gave you being he gave you character and personality of your own. What he meant you to be is indicated in the very constitution of your soul. And although by disobedience and alienation from him you may have badly injured your own character, though the divine perfection in which it ought to shine may but dimly appear in it, yet the ground plan, so to speak, is there, and that is the plan on which your character is to be built; the thing for you to do is simply to become what God meant you to be, and this you cannot do by trying to imitate the character and conduct of some one else. The prodigal when he was in a far country "came to himself." That is what you need to do. You want to be brought back to your true and real self, not to become like unto somebody

else. An effort to imitate any other character or life, then — even that of the Highest — would not produce in you the result that you were made and meant to bring forth.

One of the results which is sure to accompany the effort to live by example, is the aggravation of self-consciousness. The steady and laborious attempt to imitate the conduct of another necessarily keeps our attention fixed all the while upon ourselves, our own appearances and performances. The comparison of our actions with those of the person whose example we are following must be constantly made; we must all the while be thinking of how we are behaving. Now it is certain that the virtue which is all the while conscious of itself is not the highest kind of virtue. The elements of spontaneity, of freedom, of self-forgetfulness are among the cardinal elements of the highest conduct. A life that is the result merely or mainly of imitation cannot possess these elements in any high degree.

I think I have shown that the theory of Christ's work which represents him simply as living and dying to set before us a perfect example of purity and truth and self-denying love is a very inadequate theory. At any rate it is plain that merely to place before men a perfect example is not to do them the greatest good; that they need to have something more than this done for them. For even when they set themselves conscientiously to imitate this example, the result in them is a formal and artificial virtue, a type of character far less beautiful than they are capable of, one of the traits of which is likely to be a morbid and disagreeable self-consciousness. The life whose formative method is

imitation is not the best type of life, even though the model imitated be the very highest model. If, then, Jesus Christ had come to earth and had lived as he lived and died as he died, and had merely said to men: "Imitate me; take my life for your example, and follow it as closely as you can,"— if that had been all that he had done, his work on behalf of humanity would have been altogether defective in character and in result. And those who find in him only an example to imitate receive but little of the benefit that he came to bring.

What men most need is the healing, the quickening, the replenishing of their spiritual life. It is not a model to live by, it is "new life and fuller that we want." And this is the want that Christ supplies. "I am come," he says, "that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." And the beloved disciple bears the same testimony, in the words of the text: "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Still more closely and strongly our Lord himself declares the purpose of his coming, in his last prayer for his disciples: "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." I know not where we should look for a more explicit or more authoritative declaration of the object for which our Savior came to earth than we find in these words that I have read. And it is plain that the work which he

has undertaken to do is something more than to set us a good example, something much more radical and vital; something that takes hold of us in a different way and works in us by a different set of forces.

The work that he does is the impartation to us of life. He that hath the Son hath life. The life that he imparts to us is spiritual life. And spiritual life consists in the love of the right and the true and the good, and in power to do the right, to apprehend the truth, to find and follow the good. This love of righteousness and moral goodness as the best possessions, this power to lay hold upon them and make them our own and realize them in thought and word and deed — this is spiritual life. In the first chapter of this Gospel the same truth is set before us under a different phrase: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." The sons of God are they whose life is in the highest sense spiritual. It is in imparting to them this spiritual life, this love of righteousness and this power to do right, that Christ enables us to become the sons of God.

How is it that he imparts to men this life? Ah, I do not know that. How does the sun impart life to the seeds and roots and bulbs that during all this long winter have been waiting for him under ground? I do not know how he does it, but I know that he does it. Some of them have heard his voice already and have come forth from their graves; many others will hear it soon, and, drest in new garments bright and clean, these long imprisoned tribes of earth will spring rejoicing into life and beauty. The subtle might of his regenerating rays is seeking them out already; they begin to feel in every fibre the influence of

his power; life is quickened within them by his genial influence.

And as many as receive Jesus Christ, as many as will accept Him as the Lord of their life, and will let him instruct them and lead them and inspire them, sweetly yielding to the influences of his grace, will find that he is doing for them something like what the sun does for the germs beneath the soil; that he is imparting spiritual life to them; that he is kindling in their souls the love of all things right and true and good, and increasing in them the power to realize such things in their lives. This is what he does for all who will receive him. The flower bulbs under the ground have no choice about receiving the awakening influences of the April sun. But that is where flowers and men are unlike. Men have the power to shut their hearts and lives against the regenerating light of the sun of righteousness. But as many as will welcome this light and walk in it will find it quickening all the sentiments and forces of virtue in them; cleansing away their foulness, overcoming their selfishness, filling them with a love of all things that are true and honest and of good report.

He that hath the Son hath life. The divine life is imparted to him, he becomes by his union with Christ a partaker of the divine nature, and thus the very sources of thought and desire and imagination and choice in him are purified. The influence of this life-giving grace goes down to the very roots of your being; it is a radical change; it is what men call regeneration. Yet it is still, in Dr. Mozley's phrase, out of your own roots that you are growing; your personality is not suppressed, it is strengthened, it is invigorated; you are not trying to be somebody else; you are

more really yourself than you ever were before; from the aberrations of your vanity and folly you have come to yourself again.

Such is the work that Christ does for every one that receives him. And it is a great deal more than furnishing us an example. It meets our deepest want, which is not so much a model as a regenerating power. The tulip bulb does not need a fullgrown tulip to look at, that it may know how to blossom; it needs to feel at its own heart the warmth of the life-giving sun. Not Christ before you, as an example, but Christ in you, communicating to you the vitalizing energy of his own eternal life, is the power of God unto salvation. If you will take Him for your Lord and Savior, will commune with him daily in secret places, will try as earnestly as Paul did to know him, to become fully acquainted with him, to identify yourself with him in feeling and interest, I know that just this result will follow; you may hardly be conscious of it, but this change will surely be wrought in you; you will pass from death unto life,— from animalism and deceitfulness and selfishness to purity and truth and love. That will be salvation, and nothing that stops short of that is salvation.

But the text says that this life is eternal life. The witness is that God has given to us eternal life and the life is in his Son. Yea, verily! Such life as this is eternal life. The life of virtue is not subject to decay. The soul whose ruling loves and motives are such as I have been talking about has in itself the instinct and the assurance of immortality. Over such death has no power. Spiritual life is eternal life. The life whose organizing principles are righteousness and truth and love, is a life that takes hold of the

æons to come with a sure grasp. God has so made the universe that these principles are indestructible; in the nature of things virtue is immortal; the life that is incorporate with it has the promise of an everlasting day.

"But he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." No doubt there are many who have not known the Son of God under his historic name of Jesus Christ, who yet have this life in them of which we have been speaking. "In every nation," says Peter, "he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." Some men have the Son, who know him not by his name. Those principles and attributes of God which were revealed to us in Jesus Christ they have learned to love and obey. In receiving thus the revelation that they have had of the divine nature, and in walking in the light of it they have entered into life. And it may be that to some even in Christian lands Jesus Christ has been so misrepresented — that the truth about him has been so travestied and caricatured — that they have been unable to receive him, under the name that he bears, and yet have received the essential truth that he came to teach and the real spiritual life that he came to communicate.

But I fear that there are some who have not the Son in any true meaning of that phrase. To them he has not been misrepresented, but faithfully and lovingly presented: they have his gospel in their hands, and they are not misled by any harsh travesty of it. Yet they do not want Jesus Christ to be their friend and Savior. It is just because the life that he inspires is pure and upright and unselfish that they do not wish to have anything to do with Him. They want to do some things that are not pure and upright and

unselfish. And when any one who fairly knows Jesus Christ — who he is and what he is — who knows him to be perfectly wise and unspeakably good — yet turns away from him because he is good, and because he does not want such a good Master as he is, then we must say of such an one not only that he has not life, but that so long as he continues to turn away from Jesus Christ he will not have life. No true spiriual life can be the portion of one who is in this sad condition; and since spiritual life and eternal life are one, he can not know what it is to have eternal life. How much it means to be without eternal life I cannot tell, and God forbid that any of you should ever know!

THE NECESSITY OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

ACTS II: 24.

"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

It was not possible that Death should hold our divine Lord and Savior. Over him the Conqueror of Nations had no power. Him the iron bars of the sepulcher could not confine. But what is the reason of this glorious impossibility? Why could not Death prevail against our Lord?

Was it simply because of his power? Is the victory that he gained when he came forth from the grave only the prevalence of a stronger force over a weaker? Have we here nothing more than the repetition of that matching of might against might which had furnished to men of all ages and all grades of culture so large a part of their diversion? The love of power, the delight in wielding it and in witnessing its exercise, the joy of battle, the elation of victory, the excitement of the spectator who hangs over the arena, as well as of the gladiator who fights upon its crimson sands—how much of human energy finds vent in these great passions! Is this spectacle

of the triumphing of Christ over Death only another exhibition of strength?

Doubtless we must see in the resurrection a proof of superhuman energy. "No man taketh my life from me;" said our Lord; "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." What he meant by the power to lay down his life probably none of his disciples fully knew; what he meant by the power to take it again they did dimly understand, when they saw his empty tomb on the Easter morning, and heard him on the Easter evening saying unto them, "Peace be unto you!" Here is the sign of a Strength superior to Nature; of an Energy that is not confined by the uniformities of physical law; of a Force that is stronger than the strongest of the forces with which our science deals; of a Power that is mightier than Death!

But is this all? Is this the most significant of the lessons that the resurrection teaches us? Is it chiefly an exhibition of power? No: this is the least and not the greatest of the truths disclosed to us upon the Easter day. Men had faith enough in physical power before Christ rose from the dead. They were quick enough to see and to applaud any revelation of force. Worshippers of power most of them were. The triumphs of men, of armies, of nations over one another, awakened all their enthusiasm; they were ready to respond to every demonstration of marvel-working might. Men believed quite enough in the power of God: as a revelation of the fact that there is a Will behind nature superior to nature, the resurrection was not needed.

What, then, was this impossibility? Was it logical,

if it was not physical? Does the Apostle mean that Christ could not have been left in the grave, because, as one says, "the divine plan and purpose made his resurrection necessary?" Doubtless this is true. The success of his mission required him to rise from the grave. It was necessary as a practical measure, for the confirmation of his claims, and the verification of his gospel. But is this all? No: I do not think we have begun to state the measure of the Apostle's words, "it was not possible," when we have said that it was both physically and logically impossible for Christ to be holden of death. The impossibility was moral more than physical or logical. It was not might nor power nor policy but love and right that conquered when the angel rolled away the stone, and the Prince of Life came forth from the tomb. It was not that Jesus was too strong to be overcome by death, nor that his plans for the redemption of the race were too well laid to suffer defeat at the hands of this enemy; it was simply that a life as good and pure and loving as his life was could not be extinguished by death. That it ought not to be was plain before. It was now seen that it could not be. This is the deepest meaning of the resurrection.

The apostle expresses in this phrase one of the strongest and most persistent of the instinctive moral feelings of man. This is the feeling that virtuous being ought to continue. It is sometimes said that man has an instinctive faith in immortality, and it is doubtless true that men do naturally look forward to existence beyond the grave. They hope for it, though there may be no clear evidence of it. But the feeling to which I refer is much deeper and more dominant than this. The question

whether *all* human lives will be continued beyond the grave is very different from the question whether *virtuous* human lives will be continued. To the first question reason might answer: "They may be; let us trust that they are." To the second it replies with the emphasis of a mighty conviction, "They ought to be!"

I am not speaking now of the testimony of revelation concerning future existence; I am speaking of the conclusions to which our own instinct and judgment would lead us. And I think that if we had to depend wholly on these for our light upon this great question, while each one might hope for life beyond the grave as his own inheritance, we should hesitate to affirm it confidently respecting all our neighbors.

Here, for example, is one whose life has steadily gravitated downward; who has grown more sordid, more sour, more brutish, more malignant with every passing year. There may be good elements left in the man; probably there is somebody who loves him yet, and who finds good in him; but to most of those who have dealings with him he seems almost wholly bad, and ripening in badness. If he ever does any good it does not appear; what power he has seems to be used to irritate, to corrupt, to despoil and to destroy his fellow men. So he lives, and so living he goes down to death. If we had no other guide than our own reason, and our own moral instincts, should we confidently affirm of such a man that there would be life for him beyond the grave? I do not think so. I think we should be more likely to say of him, pityingly and mournfully: "If there were any prospect that his character could be mended, if there were any assurance that regenerating influences could

be brought to bear upon his life in some other world, then we would hope that he might have life beyond; but if his life is to go on in this strain, if he is to be a corrupter and a spoiler and a malefactor, there is no reason why his existence should be prolonged. If this universe is built on righteousness, the continuance of such lives is illogical and inexplicable." That is what the moral reason would say about it.

But here is another of different quality. His life has been full of faithful and loving service of his kind; he has been a helper, a comforter, a peace-maker among men; his benignant presence always brought sunshine into every circle where he stood; the contact of his spirit made every man more manly and every woman more womanly. Steadily as the years have gone by his character has been ripening, his insight has grown clearer, his purpose firmer, his wisdom serener, his beneficence larger, and now in the midst of his years he suddenly falls, and among men no more is seen. Is not our feeling about such a man's departure quite different from that with which we noted the passing out of life of the other? Do we not say at once, that if this universe means righteousness such a man ought not to cease to be: that the discontinuance of such a life would be as illogical and inexplicable as the continuance of the other would be? Whatever might be the conclusions of our metaphysics respecting the probability of future existence in the abstract, our moral sense most strenuously asserts that such life as this ought not to terminate. Death has seized upon our friend, we say, but it is not possible that death should hold him fast.

In cases of many that we have known we have felt that

this impossibility was strong, almost invincible; but how much stronger should it have been in the minds of those who had been the companions and disciples of Jesus Christ all their lives! Might they not have said, with far clearer emphasis, when the hand of death was laid on Him, "It is not possible that he should be holden of it?"

Recall, if you can, some faint outline of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Remember the clear truthfulness of his speech, cleansing away all mists of error and perversity, as the north wind sweeps away the fog — penetrating to the heart of all moral questions, and revealing to men the secrets of their own hearts; remember the courage, that confronted and denounced the religious leaders of his time, for their hypocrisy and greed; remember his friendship for the outcasts and the despised, his readiness to identify himself with the poor, as well as to sit at meat with the rich; the grand independence with which he brushed aside the conventional estimates — the contempt of the rich for the poor, the envy of the poor for the rich — and dealt with men as men; remember the tireless beneficence and the boundless sympathy of his life — how he went about doing good, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, comforting the sorrowful. The story is trite and hackneyed, we have told it over so often, but try to make it real to yourselves, if but in some faint degree; try to imagine what a subtle and sacred and mighty effluence of virtue went out from him continually; what a center and source of righteousness and truth and love he was wherever he stood among men! And now suddenly this life terminates. By wicked hands this Prince of Life is crucified and slain! Is it possible that such a life, so pure and perfect and benignant, should

end like this? Eliminate all the miraculous; think only of the moral elements that entered into this character; and does it not seem wholly incredible that this should be the end of it?

"But the disciples," it may be said, "did think that Jesus had ceased to be." No, I do not believe that they did. They were dull and slow of heart; they did not understand what he had told them concerning his reappearance on this earth; but there is no evidence of any doubt in their minds that his life was going on, beyond the vail. Even this faith needed confirmation, of course, and this they were to have; but their grief was not because they feared that he had ceased to be, but only because he had passed away from them without restoring the Kingdom to Israel. It was partly a personal bereavement, and partly a patriotic sorrow.

It is hard to put ourselves into the places of these disciples, mentally; to look at religious questions with their eyes; to surround ourselves with the haze that then enfolded them. But go back with your knowledge of spiritual truths and moral laws, with your convictions that this is a righteous universe, over which a righteous God is ruling, and look at that life of Jesus of Nazareth and then say whether it is possible that death should be the end of it? You could not affirm that it would reappear *on this earth;* on that point experience could give you no encouragement; but you could say that there ought to be and must be given to that life, somewhere, glory and immortality.

The force of this conclusion respecting all highest and noblest life it is hard to evade. The expectation of future

existence in the abstract may be more or less shadowy; but the expectation that virtuous life will continue rests on the very foundation of our moral nature. And there is a great word of science that reaffirms this verdict of our moral sense. It is the fittest that survive, we are told. And, in a moral universe, it is the righteous, surely, who are fit to survive.

So when we see any life gathering moral force and moral beauty through all its years on earth, accumulating a great fund of ripe wisdom, harvesting the fruits of discipline in a sanctified character, we cannot conceive it to be true that death ends all. That would be a moral absurdity. How is it possible that the power of goodness, of purity, of love, contained in this character should stop short at the grave, vanishing there into nothingness.

You stand upon some elevated spot, where you can see, far down the valley, a railway train approaching. The pennant of smoke is lifted by the wind as the train draws nearer and nearer, bending round the curves, speeding swiftly along the straight alignments, its first faint murmur deepening into an audible roar, until it rushes past you swift, majestic, resistless, the very incarnation of motion and of might. Quickly, almost before your nerves have ceased to thrill with the onset of its power, it is out of sight behind an embankment, and out of hearing beyond a hill; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, it is gone. Would it be easy for you now to believe that that wonderful power has vanished out of being; that when it passed beyond your sight it suddenly ceased to be; that all which you saw and felt but a moment ago is now nothing but a memory? No; that would not be possible.

You are sure that the glory of going on still belongs to that wonderful mechanism, though it is now beyond your sight. And it seems to me that the reasons for believing in the persistence of a great *moral* force after it has disappeared from these scenes of earth are far stronger. Of such a power we say, more confidently than of any physical energy, "It cannot be blotted out; it must continue to be."

This is the deepest and most fundamental of the moral convictions of men. If it is sometimes silent in the soul, it is because the moral perceptions have been dimmed by sin. It was to strengthen this conviction, to demonstrate its truth and its reason, to give the world, in a great object lesson, the proof that virtue does not die, that our Lord came back to earth. It was not only to show his own divinity; it was also to show that virtue and holiness are immortal.

And as it was not possible that he should be holden of death, so neither is it possible that any of those who have his life in them should be detained in that prison-house. This is no arbitrary decree by which a future life is assured to the disciples of Christ; it is the law of the universe. Over such characters as his death has no power; and they who by faith in him are brought into harmony with him in this life can never be the prey of the spoiler. "He that believeth in me," said the Master, "hath everlasting life." "This is the record," said the beloved disciple, "that God hath given to us eternal life, and that life is in his Son." Not promised, but given. It is not to be hoped for, it is to be rejoiced in. This word of the apostle's is not a testament; it is an inventory. He who is one with Christ,

who has the spirit of Christ, hath eternal life. What, to him, are all the vicissitudes and perils of our mortal state, all the sullen and ominous noises of the flood of years whose tides steadily gather round the narrow neck of land whereon he calmly waits? There is a hope within him that many waters cannot quench. His life is hid with Christ in God.

THE GOSPEL IN THE GRASS.

II SAMUEL XXIII: 4.

"And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."

We are standing once more among the glories of a new world. The heavens are old, they change not; by day the same soundless blue or the same somber curtaining of clouds; at night the same starry cope, upon whose arches the same constellations flash, in whose depths of gloom the same nebulæ are hiding; but the earth is new; we see

> "In all that meets the eyes
> The freshness of a glad surprise."

New color is in the meadows, new blooms are in the borders, new songs in the branches. Some of the old furniture of the earth is here — the houses in which we live, the pavements on which we walk; but the world itself is as new as it was when God first called the dry land earth and the gathering together of the waters seas — as new and a thousand times as beautiful. How do I know? I know partly by experience. Is there any knowledge more certain? The

earth is a great deal more beautiful now than it was when I was a boy; the meadows are greener, the skies of May are sunnier, the blended colors and the mingled odors and the choiring voices of the world are fairer and sweeter every year. If the world has been going on in this way in my short day — from glory to glory — it is not unreasonable to suppose that it has always been going on in the same way; and that it was far less beautiful when it first began to be than it is to-day. There are other evidences, to other minds doubtless more convincing, but I will not go into them; that would lead us aside from the pleasant paths in which this morning we have chosen to go.

But the miracle of spring once more repeated before our eyes, the return of the birds and the blossoms, the reviving of life in the fields and the woods — this is not to be lightly noted, not to be passed by as commonplace, but to be studied with reverence and beheld with wonder and rejoiced in with ever increasing thankfulness.

Of all the things that come back to us from their long exile in the regions of winter, not the least pleasant, not the least welcome is the lowly grass. It was the last to leave us when the tribes of life took their departure. When the winter came in with his soft-footed frosts, and his careering blasts, and when, before his onset that grew deadlier, day by day, one after another of the green things growing failed and fled, the grass held its ground till all the rest had gone; bravely it covered the retreat of its kindred; its green pennants waved in the rear of the flying foliage and the departing bloom. The brave beauties that held their heads so high in the soft days of spring and the proud months of midsummer vanished long before the grass surrendered;

the forests, after all their songs of battle, and their boastful notes of victory over winds and snows, had folded their splendid banners many a day when the grass was still keeping guard over the graves of the dead flowers. The last to depart it is the first to return. Long before there is any sign of life in woodland or garden, long before the crocus lifts its head, and

> "Daffodils
> That come before the swallow dares and take
> The winds of March with beauty,"

have ventured from their beds, here and there upon a sunny southern slope a pale golden tinge appears, catching a little of the hue of the sky and growing steadily greener; and the heightening color shows us that our humble fellow-creatures and steadfast friends, the grasses, are coming back to clothe the world with beauty.

The words that I read for my text suggest not only to the poet a simile but to the teacher an analogy. They are the last words of David. "David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said: The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was on my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."

The King of men must be clear and frank and open, ruling by truth and light, and not by artifice and diplo-

macy; a man without guile or concealment; a man from whose face liars and tricksters flee as the fogs flee at the sunrising — "a morning without clouds." So much is plain. Just how the ruler is like unto "the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain," may not be so evident. To our thought kingliness would seem more aptly figured by the oak or the elm, the palm or the pine, or some more stately growth of the kingdom of plants. It may be that King David was thinking of his own lowly origin, when he wrote these words; or that he meant to hint at the humility that so well befits the great ones of earth. But though we may not be able to see very clearly how these words apply to kings — not being kings ourselves — we may discover some fruitful resemblances between the common people, the rest of us, and the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. At any rate, we may discover in the grass, whose return to meadow and lawn is now making us glad, some native qualities that we by free choice and culture of the soul may seek to make our own. For there is no glory of sky or forest, no excellence of garden or meadow, nothing beautiful or beneficent in the world about us that may not have its fair reflection within us. That great doctrine of correspondences taught by Swedenborg is, for substance, true; all things natural are symbols of things spiritual; the teacher who taught in parables did not invent but reported the similitudes that he gave us; and the tale of the parables will not be told till the microscope gives up its last secret, and the whole boundless universe is mapped and dissected and analyzed.

When we study the similitude of the grass, then, we come first upon the quality of beauty. He who made

everything beautiful in its season made the grass to be beautiful in all seasons. The flowers have each its month; though the foliage is bright in the early Spring most of it grows somewhat dull in spite of our best endeavors; but the grass, if we give it kindly care, will show us its beauty all the season through, from early March to late November. How fair it is to look upon! How winning to the eyes are the tints of that bank, the carpet of that lawn! You call the grass green, but how many other hues are shot through its texture! The sheen of burnished gold shines up from that sunny slope; a ruddy flush passes over it as now the wind stirs it; delicate browns and maroons and softest purples are mingled with all its vernal brightness. The painter who uses nothing but green lakes or chromium in painting grass gives us but a tame and conventional picture of its mottled and variegated masses.

There is no sight so restful and welcome to the eye as a verdant meadow or a well kept lawn. Other natural growths are gayer and more brilliant; they strike the sense with a keener excitement, but they do not give such solid and lasting gratification. The beauty of the grass is to other natural beauties what the wholesomeness of bread is to other forms of nutriment — it is the staff of visual pleasure as bread is of life. No wonder that it is; it is God who so clothes it. A bright flower garden is a goodly sight, but the strongly accentuated color wears at length upon the eye. Mark tells of the feeding of the five thousand, in the place where there was "much grass;" the people were made to sit down, he says, platwise, like the beds in a garden; the gay colors of the Oriental clothing made him think of the resemblance; yet the frame was the best part of the picture, no doubt; the grass, that spread its carpet

for these thousands to sit upon, was what the eye-witness who describes the scene most gratefully remembers. Flowers are fair to see, yet round about our homes we choose to have the homely grass; a bit of color here and there lights it up prettily, but nothing suits a home so well as the quiet greenness of a tidy lawn.

How welcome to the foot as well as to the eye is the carpet of the early meadow! From the uncertain footing of snow and ice, and the stubbornness of frozen ground and the dismal depths of March mud, what a delight it is to pass out upon the springing turf! Many a wearied pedestrian of the pavements has found more soothing for his nerves in such a quiet stroll across a suburban pasture in early spring than all the drugs of the dispensary could give him. There are few things more trying to a tired man than the brusque legend that warns him, while grinding along upon the gravel of the park, to "keep off the grass." It is a hard thing to do. What is the grass for, he wants to know, if not to be a cushion for pinched and quivering feet, and a couch for weary limbs?

The beauty and delightsomeness of the grass is scarcely marked, I suppose, by many of us, and chiefly because it is such a common thing, and such a modest thing. In a showery land like ours the abundance, the omnipresence of the grass make us unmindful of the pleasure it gives us. It enters into all our feasts of vision as a most delicate and pervasive flavoring, but we cease to note the gratification that it brings. It incorporates itself into our life so fully that we take its good as we take the air or the sunlight, as a matter of course. Shut it away from our sight for one week of midsummer and we should begin to

know how largely it enters into the sum of our enjoyments.

Its modesty, I say, as well as its commonness, is a reason why we do not think much about it. Nothing else gives us so much pleasure, yet nothing is so unpretending as the grass. It does not seek to flame in the sunshine as the flowers do, or to have the winds blow its trumpet as the forests do; its only voice is the gentlest of sighs, audible only to one who bows down to listen; but it keeps pouring into our lives a steady tide of gracious ministries. The flower of grass — for grass, like all its gayer kindred, has its own perfect flower — is the very incarnation of modesty. Studying this, let us listen to an interpretation of the parable of the grass, as its qualities are traced by one of keenest insight in a gracious human life:

"The gracefulness that homely life takes on
When love is at its roots, you saw in her;
No color, but soft tints in lovely blur —
A charm which if so much as named was gone
Like light out of a passing cloud. Yet when
The fairer faces bloomed on you alone,
Without the softening of her presence, then
Into their look had something garish grown;
A tenderness had faded from the air —
A loss so suble and so undefined,
The thought was blamed that hinted loss was there.

The nature of such souls is to be blind
To self and to self-seeking; let them blend
Their life as harmony and atmosphere
With other lives; let them but have a friend
Whose merit they may set off or endear,

"And they are gladder than in any guess
Or dream of their own separate happiness.

Earth were not sweet without such souls as hers;
Even of the rose and lily one might tire;
She was the flower of grass, that only stirs
To soothe the air, and nothing doth require
But to forget itself in doing good —
One of life's lowly, saintly multitude."

Thus our friend has taught us one of the revelations of the Gospel in the grass. It is this unostentatious beauty, this humble ministry, this quiet and self-forgetful service that the grass symbolizes in leaf and flower. For such ministry as this no brilliant parts, no shining excellences of person or of mind are wanting. The humblest of us are called to it, and fitted to perform its sacred offices. Even as a homely and common thing like the grass makes up far the largest part of the great sum of visible beauty spread for the delight of men, so the homely virtues that adorn the characters and the common services that spring from the love of lowly men and women make up by far the largest part of the blessedness of life in the world. It is not the great makers of verse or song or statue, nor the great builders, nor the great Captains, nor the great explorers that are doing the most for this world, though the services that some of these have rendered may well be praised; it is the unknown multitudes to whom most of our thanks are due; the multitudes whose fidelity, whose tenderness, whose patient labor clothes the earth with beauty, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.

"'What shall I do, lest life in silence pass?'
'And if it do,
And never prompt the bray of noisy brass,
What needst thou rue?
Remember, aye the ocean-depths are mute;
The shallows roar;
Worth is the ocean; fame is but the bruit
Along the shore.'"

We have seen that the grass ministers directly to the spiritual nature of man, by furnishing him an innocent pleasure, by filling him with a quiet joy which beauty always brings, by preaching to him its own pure gospel of gentleness and grace. But it ministers to coarser needs than these. It serves us in a way that will be more obvious to the unreflecting, yet that is still indirect and mediate. The physical wants of men the grass does not directly supply. The psalmist is speaking the language of science as well as of poetry when he says, "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle and herb for the service of man." The word here translated "herb" in the original signifies those plants which are edible by man; the word translated grass, all those plants which furnish food mainly to animals. This is the chief economical use of the grass. It does not nourish our bodies directly: but it nourishes the lives of those creatures upon which we subsist. Is this ministry any the less beneficent because it is indirect? Are we any less indebted to the grass because the substance that its life organizes for us comes to us through other lives which it feeds and nourishes?

Here again we find a lesson that need not detain us

long. Much of the good that we do will be done indirectly. Truth that we impart to those nearest us will be imparted by them in their turn to others. Impressions made upon the lives of those about us by our characters and conduct will be reflected from their lives to the lives of others. But this is not all. We must not forget that much indirect and preparatory work must needs be done in morals and in religion. It is not always possible for us to reach directly the ultimate and supreme results of character in our work for others. It is sometimes a question whether those results are in any way directly attainable. The ways of spiritual culture are sometimes long and circuitous; and there is no royal road to character any more than to knowledge. You would like to see the life of your friend and neighbor wholly transformed. He is now a gross, hard-natured, selfish man; you want to see him changed into a gentle, amiable, pure-minded man. That is a most benevolent wish. But perhaps if you should go to work to secure that great change by preaching to him immediate repentance and radical reformation, you might fail of your purpose. That is just what he ought to do, no doubt of that; but perhaps he is not yet ready for a moral revolution. It is sometimes necessary to take a character by siege; the attempt to take it by storm is not only futile but disastrous. A great many things can be done for this man that would tend indirectly, but very effectually to bring about this result in his character. If you preached repentance to him he might turn you out of doors; but if you give him a kindly word as now and then you meet him; if you show yourself his friend sometimes at cost to yourself of time or toil or wounded sensibility; if you

approve yourself to him as the servant of a better Master, by pureness, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, the Gospel as incarnated in you may make its impression on him, and though he would not receive your message when he heard it from your lips, he may be constrained to heed it when he sees it organized into your life.

We sometimes seek to reform men who have fallen into vice, and fail because we aim directly at the result, and are not ready to do the indirect and preparatory work which is necessary in order that the reform may have some sure ground to go upon. This man is a drunkard. You want him to sign the pledge. That may be well; but the danger is that he may not keep it. The man's habit of drinking is not an ultimate and isolated fact, out of all relation to other facts of his life and environment. There are reasons why he drinks; they are not good and sufficient reasons; they are bad and insufficient reasons; but they serve as motives to lead him into this evil course. You must get down to them, if you can, and remove them. Perhaps he is out of work, and low-spirited, and takes to drink in the hope of forgetting his anxieties. It is the device of a fool, of course; for the remedy only aggravates the disease; but this man is just such a fool as that, and there are many such. If you could help him to find work you might indirectly but very efficiently help him to reform. Perhaps he is lonely, and takes to the dram-shop for society. There ought to be places enough where he could find pleasanter society. If you will provide such places and bring him

into them, and make him at home in them, you will indirectly aid him to break off his evil habit. Perhaps he is wretched for some unexplained cause, and foolishly seeks to forget his wretchedness in the momentary exhileration of the cup. If so, by doing what you innocently can to make him happier you will take away a good part of his temptation.

My friends, this great evil of drunkenness is not merely the source of misery, it is a symptom of misery as well. People are not only miserable because they drink, they drink because they are miserable, and you will never get them to stop drinking, by the strongest laws that men can make and the strongest pledges men can frame, until you get at some of the causes of their vice and misery and remove them. The *indirect* work to be done in removing the evil of intemperance is measureless in its extent, and in its urgency, and the people who think they can cure it all by legislation or by preaching, either, have but childish notions of the real causes of it, or the depth to which its roots go down.

So, then, the parable of the grass has taught us once more not to despise the ministry that is indirect and mediate, that spends itself before its end is reached; the service that begins a long way from the reward and works toward it silently and patiently, content to merge itself in other lives, and to let the fruit of its sowing be reaped by other hands.

In the gospel of the grass we read also a homily on discipline and how to bear it. The grass thrives on it. The oftener it is cut the greener is its hue, the thicker its texture the softer the nap of its velvety carpeting. You can over-

prune almost everything else that grows except the grass. All of us need more or less discipline, but we do not always take it kindly. It is for our own good that we are cut back now and then. "Every branch in me that beareth fruit he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." But these severities, though they are calculated to bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, do not always have that effect, because of our perverseness. We sometimes weep, as the vine does when it is trimmed, pouring out the strength of our lives in unavailing lamentations. This is not needful, nor is it right. It is for us to choose how we will be affected by the trials through which we pass; it is for us to find in the discipline of life what the grass finds under the whirling knives of the mower, refinement and vigor and beauty.

One of the commonest of the messages of the grass to men is the truth of our mortality: "As for man his days are as grass; as a flour of the field so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof knoweth it no more. In the morning they are like grass that groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up. In the evening it is cut down and withereth." I need not emphasize the message. Even amid the fresh verdure of May you will not forget it. The tender grass springing out of the earth to-day will soon return to earth as it was, and so will you. "Whatsoever therefore thy hand now findeth to do, do it with thy might."

But there is one more message not quite so commonplace, that we will hear before we go, by the lips of another interpreter, from this lowly preacher:

"My days are as the grass;
Softly my seasons pass,
And like the flower of the field I fade;
O soul, dost thou not see
The wise have likened thee
To the most living creature that is made?

"My days are as the grass;
The sliding waters pass
Under my roots; upon me drops the cloud;
And not the stately trees
Have kindlier ministries;
The heavens are too lofty to be proud.

"My days are as the grass;
The feet of trouble pass
And leave me trampled that I cannot rise;
But wait a little while,
And I shall lift and smile
Before the sweet congratulating skies!"

"My days are as the grass;
Soon out of sight I pass,
And in the bleak earth I must hide my head;
The wind that passes o'er
Will find my place no more—
The wind of death will tell that I am dead.

"But how shall I rejoice,
When I shall hear the voice
Of Him who, keeping Spring with Him alway,
Lest hope from man should pass,
Hath made us as the grass,
The grass that always has another day!"

THE CONSECRATION OF THE PEOPLE.

ZECHARIAH IV: 11-14.

"Then answered I and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

This vision of the prophet is much less mystical than many of those recorded in the Old Testament. The picture that he saw is set before us with distinctness, and the meaning of the symbol is not obscure.

"As a man that is wakened out of his sleep" was the prophet, when before his eyes came this bright vision. "What seest thou?" demanded the revealing and interpreting angel. And the prophet made reply: "I have looked and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it—[the bowl being, no doubt, the common reservoir for the oil] and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which are upon the top thereof [the pipes, evidently, communicating with the bowl.]

And the two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl and one upon the left side thereof." Moreover these olive trees were connected by golden pipes with the bowl of the great candlestick, and they were continually emptying the golden oil out of themselves into this bowl, supplying, in this manner, the lamps with abundance of oil. Such was the striking symbol that appeared to the prophet. It is not strange that it riveted his attention and aroused his wonder.

The significance of the central figure — the candlestick, or candelabrum, all of gold — he knows perfectly. Concerning that he asks no questions. Is the meaning equally clear to all of us?

To every student of the Biblical symbolism the answer will at once be suggested. The golden candelabrum or lamp-stand always symbolizes the Church. In the Apocalypse the seven candlesticks, or lamp-stands, are the seven churches. The Church is represented, not as the light of the world, but as the receptacle or support of the light. The light is divine; the flame that illuminates and cheers and warms and vivifies is kindled from off the heavenly altars; it is the Promethean spark by which the world is enlightened; but the place where this divine fire is guarded and kept burning is the Church of God. This is the point at which the divine energy and the human sensibility meet and mingle. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord; the Church is the candlestick in which the light is set, that its flame may be protected, and its brightness diffused. The single lamp-stand, seen by the Revelator in the Apocalypse, may be regarded as representing the local church; the great candelabrum, with its

seven branching lamps, the symbol of completeness, may be the type of the church universal.

To the mind of this prophet, however, the figure had a larger meaning than these words have conveyed to most of us. The candelabrum all of gold was indeed to him the symbol of the Church of God in its latter-day glory; but what, to him, was the Church of God? Was it an organization purely religious, concerning itself wholly with worship and sacrifice, with those interests that we call spiritual as contrasted with those that we call secular? By no means. The Jewish Church and the Jewish nation were not twain but one. That sharp discrimination which we make between things sacred and things secular the devout Jew did not make at all. Between politics and religion he drew no line; economics and ethics did not belong to separate realms; if one part of life was more sacred than another, it was only a matter of more and less; there was no radical diversity among its parts; they were all held together in one divine unity. The last words of this prophecy of Zechariah put strikingly before us this deepest thought of the Hebrew religion: "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD"—the same sublime inscription that was engraven on the High Priest's crown; "and the pots in the Lord's house"—the least honorable of all the temple vessels—"shall be like the bowls before the altar"—the most sacred vases that received the blood of the sacrificial victims. And not only so: "every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be Holiness unto the Lord of hosts." The very kitchen utensils in the homes of the people should be counted sacred, for all life was to be sanctified; every meal

should be a sacrament and every menial task a holy service.

It must be admitted that this old Hebrew conception is a little nobler and finer than the theory of life that generally prevails among us. For certain historical reasons, which we cannot now carefully trace, we have come to make a broad distinction between that part of life which is sacred, and that part which is secular. Temporalities are in one category, and spiritualities in another; and we think of the two classes of interests as antithetical and even hostile the one to the other. So we divide the Church from the State by a bottomless chasm, and make politics and religion two wholly distinct departments of life.

There are reasons for this, as I have said; for our fathers came in contact with a kind of union between the temporal and spiritual powers against which, with good cause, they protested and fought. We have inherited their repugnance and have emphasized their protest. Indeed we have gone much further than they ever went in insisting upon the separation of the Church from the State. They were opposed to some kinds of union between the spiritual and the temporal governments, but not to all kinds. They feared the Papacy, with its persecution of heretics by the secular arm; they did not love the English establishment much better, nor indeed had they much more reason; but many among them did think it would be an excellent thing to have their own form of faith established and enforced by law. They were not agreed about this; for there was a party among them who consistently opposed all establishments of religion, and wished that no form of faith should be proscribed, and none prescribed; that all should be protected and all be free. Yet the Pilgrims, who

belonged to this latter party, made no clear distinction, in the organization of their colony, between the secular and the spiritual; in fact they came not to found a State, at all, but only a Church; the spiritual element overshadowed and dwarfed the temporal. Their reason for coming, as given in their own words, was "the great hope and inward zeal they had of laying some good foundation for the propagating and advancing the Kingdom of Christ in these remote parts of the world." And in all the communities planted by them throughout New England, town and Church were one; none but Church members could vote in town meeting; the town built the church and the parsonage, called the minister, and paid his salary. The theories of our fathers about the relations of Church and State were therefore somewhat confused, and their practices not always in accordance with their principles. Yet there was something noble in their inconsistency. They were clinging to an ideal that it was hard to realize; they were endeavoring to work out a scheme that required for its successful operation a degree of spirituality and charity that was not possessed by their generation, and has not been gained by any succeeding generation. It was inevitable, when freedom of thought on religious subjects was granted, that there would be diversities of opinion; that these diversities would be emphasized and magnified by human selfishness and contentiousness, until they became hardened into sects; that the State must then withdraw from all affiliation with these contending sects, protecting all, and preferring none; and that thus the union of the temporal and the spiritual realms which the Pilgrim Fathers undertook to establish on these shores should come to an end.

The complete divorce between the Church and the State which exists among us is, therefore, the result of sectarian divisions. If there were but one Church, or if, in the great interests for which they are working, there were a real practical unity among Christians of all names, it would be easy to secure a much closer affiliation of the Church with the State. That such a practical unity is one day to be realized, I have no doubt. The era of schism is passing. There have been days when, as the Psalmist says, "a man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees," yea, upon the goodly cedars that stand for pillars of the temple of God. The church-splitter has been a conspicuous and highly popular personage; the founder of a new sect was almost as distinguished as the inventor of a new patent medicine. Thus a late Russian explorer was able to find on this continent, as he said, three hundred and sixty-five different religions, not one of which, we may add, was simple Christianity; every one of which was a little more or a little less than simply Christian, and unchristian to precisely the extent to which it emphasized its pet peculiarity. This is religious liberty run mad. For such a state of things there is no justification. People keep saying that the division of the church into sects is a good thing; what sort of a good thing? Is it one of those good things of which it is not possible to have too much? Shall we go on splitting the church into smaller and smaller fragments? If not, why not? Are there too many of these fragments now? And if there are, where shall we begin the work of consolidation, and where shall we stop? Suppose that in this work of gathering together the scattered groups of disciples, we had reduced the "three hundred and sixty-five

religions," more or less, of the Russian traveler to a dozen, or a half dozen? Would that be just enough? Would not the reasons that had urged union up to this point continue to urge a further effort in the direction of unity? Depend upon it, my friends, when that movement toward unity once sets in, it will sweep away all the barriers of sectarianism. Sectarianism is the fruit of intellectual pride and self-will and passion for leadership; so long as these bad elements rule in the Church, divisions will continue and multiply, and there is no end to them; the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of the Church and the blessedness of disunion come to be regarded as elements of orthodoxy. But once let the principles of Christianity itself begin to control the organization of churches; once let men begin to see that tolerance and self-denial, and a spirit of co-operation are virtues that are required in the organization and management of churches as much as in the relations of individuals, and the centripetal and cohesive forces will begin to act irresistibly. The pressure of these forces is already felt in many quarters; the era of disintegration is well nigh past; the era of consolidation is at hand. We shall keep all desirable diversities of ritual and polity; we shall not have uniformity in the modes of worship or of work; but we shall have, by and by, a real and practical union of believers in Christian work; a union that shall sweep away the hateful and wasteful rivalries between churches, and replace them with good will, and mutual helpfulness; so that nothing shall be done for sect's sake merely, but everything for Christ's sake and the gospel's.

Of course this practical union can never be realized, until the different sects all learn to exalt that which is

essential, above that which is secondary. The things that are essential are the values of character — righteousness, purity and love; the things that are secondary are rites and forms and dogmas. It is only by making these lesser things supreme that sects are created; the moment the values of character, the interests of righteousness, the motives of love are made supreme, the sects and schisms will cease. There will still be diversities of administration, but there will be substantial union — a union not merely sentimental, but practical: friendly consultation, and co-operation among Christians of every name in every community, resulting in the concentration of their energies upon their common work — one Church to all intents and purposes, realizing, as it has never yet been realzed in this world, the last prayer of Christ for his disciples.

And when the Church of God in the world shall thus be one, it will be possible to bring it into the closest relations with the State. So long as the Church stands mainly for dogmas or rites or forms its separation from the State must be complete; but so soon as the Church shall unitedly stand for righteousness as the principal thing, its main interest will be identical with the main interest of the State, and the two must meet and mingle; they cannot stay apart; Christians, standing together in one body, will take possession of the State, will *be* the State; and they will administer its affairs in such a way as to secure justice and order, purity and peace, safe liberty and firm government. Thus the vision of the prophet shall come true; the candlestick, all of gold, that symbolizes no mere churchdom, and no mere secular satrapy, but the one undivided Kingdom of God in the world, shall be lifted to its place in that temple

of redeemed humanity that shall stand at the latter day in the midst of the city of God.

The wish for the union of Church and State which has always been cherished by some good men is not then a chimera; it is a prophecy of the thing that shall be. Like a great many other good things, the time is not yet ripe for it; and its advent cannot be forced, any more than you can hasten by resolutions, or laws, or constitutional amendments the coming of the Spring: but come at length it surely will. When the Church and the State both come into the full comprehension of their real mission in the earth, they will unite as quickly and as perfectly as two water drops that rush together when they touch and are mingled into one. Then it will appear that what we call the State is not less sacred than what we call the Church; that all life is sacred; that the high calling of God summons us not only to the closet and the altar, but to the workshop, the kitchen, the school, the field, the forum, the court,— to be, in every vocation, witnesses for Christ and servants of man. "And this," says Dr. Bushnell, in a noble passage, "is the true issue of that 'great hope and inward zeal' which impelled our fathers in the migration. * * * * All kinds of progress, political and spiritual, coalesce and work together in our history, and will do so in all the race, till finally it is is raised to its true summit of greatness, felicity and glory in God and religion. And when that summit is reached, it will be found that, as Church and State must be parted, in the crumbling and disintegrating processes of freedom, so, in freedom attained, they will coalesce again, not as Church and State, but in such kind of unity as well nigh removes the distinction — the peace and love and

world-wide brotherhood, established under moral ideas, and the eternal truths of God's eternal kingdom."

We have reached, I think, in our discussion, the full meaning of the central symbol of the prophet's vision. But we have not yet come to the question that graveled him, and that he thrice repeated. "What are these two olive trees on the right side of the candlestick and on the left side thereof?" What the golden candelabrum signified he knew very well; but these two olive trees, growing on either side of it, connected with it by golden pipes, and pouring a perennial supply of golden oil, pure and precious, into the golden bowl — what did they symbolize?

The figure is indeed a striking one. The candelabrum needs to be constantly replenished with oil. The oil is the motive power, the illuminating principle. A lamp without oil is like a river without water or a body without a soul. But the lamps of the candelabrum seem to be furnished in a wonderful manner. The olive trees secrete the oil, and empty it out of themselves; no oil mills or presses intervene; there is no machinery about it; the oil is not manufactured, it grows; the powers of life produce it, and pour it, in a constant supply, into the branching tubes of the candelabrum.

But what is the oil thus provided? Plainly it must be taken here to represent the divine inspiration which is the power that moves and the life that energizes the Kingdom of God in the world. It is the immanent and perennial grace of Him "whose light is truth, whose warmth is love." It is the influx of his being of whom it was said, "In Him was life and the life was the light of men." The divine influence, the divine energy, the divine inspiration are

symbolized by the oil, with which the lamps of the candelabrum were thus marvellously supplied. But again the prophet's question returns, "What are these two olive trees?" "Knowest thou not?" the angel queries. "No, my Lord," he replies. Then, said he, "These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

But who are the two anointed ones? To the prophet but one answer was possible. They were the king and the priest. Kings and priests were anointed with oil when they were inducted into office. The pouring of the sacred oil upon their heads signified the communication to them of the divine grace. The thought was that no man could be king, and no man priest, unless he was filled with the spirit and power of God. The one needed it as much as the other; it was the very condition of kingship and priesthood. And it was believed not only that the grace of God was thus imparted to them, but that it was communicated through them to the Church and the Nation; they were the channels through which blessings flowed from heaven to earth. The two olive trees, therefore, as the angel interprets the vision of the prophet, were the two anointed ones then standing before the Lord in the temple, Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and Joshua, the son of Josedeck the high priest — the two men in whom, as we are told, the spirit of the Lord was dwelling; the two men who were working together, with one mind, to rebuild the temple and restore to the holy place the glory that had departed; the men whose work God had promised to crown with abundant honor, when, at length, the capstone should be laid with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it!" These were the olive trees of the prophet's vision, the living

sources of inspiration and help to the restored and glorified kingdom.

To the prophet, when the angel had explained the symbol, the meaning was plain; to us what does this part of the vision signify? With us there is neither king nor priest. Are there no channels, therefore, through which the divine energy is conveyed to the Kingdom of God in the world? Are there no provisions made for feeding the candlestick with heavenly flame — no anointed ones that stand before the Lord to receive and impart the gifts of light and love and power? Some of those among us who hold the sacerdotal theory, and the old notion of the divine right of kings, might answer this question in a sense not different from that in which a devout Hebrew would have answered it. The king and the priest are still, they might say, the special representatives and vicegerents of God. But we, with our republican or democratic theories of Church and State, have room for no such explanation. Does this part of the parable then fail us altogether?

By no means. We were hasty when we admitted that there were among us no kings nor priests. Pause a moment in the presence of this bright vision, and listen! Can you not hear the echoes of the great ascription of praise that rings out so often amid the voices of the Apocalypse, from the hosts of the redeemed — "Unto him that hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and *hath made us kings and priests unto God?* Every loyal son of God, by faith, is both a king and a priest. All you that believe, says Peter, are "a royal priesthood." Faith gives to all believers all the rights and privileges of the sons of God; makes them priests to minister and kings

to reign. And even as kings and priests of old were anointed, so, says the apostle, speaking to all the sons of God, "Ye have an anointing from the Holy One;" not the chrism of oil, but the immediate gift of that grace which the oil symbolizes. "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and * * * teacheth you of all things, and is truth and is no lie."

Here, then, we find that the vision has to us a meaning far larger and grander than it could have had to the prophet. The "two anointed ones" whom he saw have become a great company that no man can number, and they stand before the Lord day and night, praising him who hath made them kings and priests to God. The grace that was specialized in the olden time is generalized in the new; the right of standing before the Lord of the whole earth, of receiving his messages, of transmitting his truth and his love and his power, is not restricted to a few; it belongs to all faithful and loyal souls.

There is no sure foundation of popular governments in Church or State save as this principle is recognized. Republicanism and Protestantism both imply the inspiration of the people. There is no special grace conferred on magistrates or clergy; the power is with the people, but it is only because God is with the people; there is no power but of God; if God be not with the people, the people have no more right than the veriest usurper to rule in Church or State. We speak of the old Jewish nation as a theocracy, and conceive that as such its government differed radically from every other government. Not at all. Unless your democracy is in the broadest and deepest sense a theocracy, unless God is ruling the Nation through the hearts and

lives of the people, there is no security or peace for the Nation. And what is true of the Nation is not less true of the Church. A republican government in which the people are not loyal to God is a league with death and a covenant with hell; a Protestant Church, in which the brotherhood are not filled with the Spirit, is full of confusion and every evil work. The inspiration of the people, the anointing of the people with consecrating grace, the lifting of the people to the altars of ministry and the thrones of power — this is the watchword of the Christian dispensation.

I fear that we do not always grasp this truth in its completeness. We do not apprehend the vital relation which the members of our churches sustain to the churches — the fact that the organization does not sanctify the membership, but that the organization itself becomes sacred through the consecrating grace abiding in the lives of a holy membership.

Still less do we comprehend the importance of the relation which we as citizens sustain to the State. It is one of the commonplaces of the newspaper and the schoolroom that ours is a government of the people, as well as by and for the people: but it is one of those commonplaces that has little power over the lives of the citizens. The average American, in prosperous circumstances, habitually conceives of the government of his country or his State or his city as something apart from himself — something with which he has no vital relation. He scolds a great deal about the government, and never considers that he is scolding himself. The people in office are the government; how they came to be in office he does not often inquire. If it is convenient, he votes, on election day; but it is frequently

managed so that in voting he can only make a choice between two evils; and it does not occur to him that any responsibility for reforming the management rests upon his shoulders. Voting is, under these circumstances, dubious business; it becomes a serious question whether it is worth while to vote; but, having voted, our average citizen deems his duty completely done; what remains is the inalienable right of grumbling at the bad streets, and the poor schools, and the shocking morals, and the high taxes.

Two things are necessary; first that the olive trees should generate the golden oil — that the people should have in themselves abundant moral energy; and secondly that there should be the golden pipes connecting the olive trees with the candelabrum — the people must be in close and constant relation with the machinery of their government, so that their moral energy may flow into it, and vitalize and reinforce it continually. I do not think that the people ought, ordinarily, to undertake, by means of independent, volunteer agencies, to enforce the laws; the people have put that work into the hands of the constituted authorities, who are their servants to do this very thing; they ought not to take it out of their hands; but they ought to give them any aid and encouragement that they can in doing the work, and they ought to see to it that the work is done; to watch the manner in which it is done; to be ready summarily to set aside those who will not do their bidding. The need of a near and constant relation between the body of good citizens and the men whom they employ to administer the government is the one crying need of our American polities. The supply of oil to the candelabrum in the prophet's vision was not fitful or semi-occasional;

the olive trees did not come about the candlestick once in a while and drip a little oil into the bowl; they were planted right beside it; they lived there; they grew there, and they poured the golden oil out of themselves into the golden bowl perennially. Thus the moral energy of the body of good citizens, the flame of a holy enthusiasm for virtue, must be communicated continually to those who are placed in authority. It is the only motive power of good administration, and there is no other way, in a republic, of supplying this motive power.

Of *good* administration, I said, it is the only motive power. But there is plenty of power of a very different sort, steadily brought to bear upon your officers, instigating them to bad administration. There are a great many cities in this country, whose candelabrum of civil magistracy is surrounded, I fear, by altogether different scenery from that which appeared in Zachariah's vision. If some prophet should be inspired to show us, in pictorial symbolism, the sources from which many of our municipal governments draw their inspiration, he would reveal to us, instead of the olive-tree, a gin-mill, and instead of the golden pipe, the worm of the still. Fed by such supplies, it is no marvel that the lamp of the civil power often burns luridly and balefully, filling the air with sulphurous stench and noxious vapor, and only serving to add danger and terror to the surrounding darkness.

It rests with us, fellow citizens, to say with what kind of fuel this lamp of ours shall be fed; what kind of inspiration shall be potent with the people who execute our laws. Doubtless it is our first business to put into the places of authority men who will be open to good influences—

naturally and habitually *en rapport* with the best elements of society, instead of the worst elements; then it is our business to keep ourselves in constant communication with them, to vitalize their virtue, and feed the flame of their zeal for righteousness.

The government of this city is put into our hands. It is a grave responsibility. Municipal government in all our great cities is becoming more and more complex; the problem of administration is a difficult one; the opportunities for waste, for plunder, for mischief of all sorts multiply as the machinery becomes more intricate; the pressure of the disorderly classes against all the restraints of law becomes more and more determined; there is need of knowledge, and trained faculty, and ripe experience, and courage, and probity in the men who preside in its councils and manage its affairs. When requisition is made upon such men for service, let them not excuse themselves. If there is one call of God more distinct, more imperative at this day than all others, it is that which summons good men to take the places of trust in the municipal governments of this country. No appeal for soldiers in the day of the nation's distress was ever more urgent; no voice from Macedonia, crying for missionary volunteers, ever deserved to rouse a holier enthusiasm, or to kindle a more consecrated purpose. To refuse to obey this call; to turn away, one to his clients and another to his mines and another to his merchandise, when such a duty invites, is a kind of infidelity of which good men ought not be guilty. I lay it on your consciences, my fellow citizens, and I believe that the message which I utter is one that has been given me by Him whose commission I bear.

that you must manfully take up these duties and discharge them in the fear of God.

With good men sitting in the places of trust, and, round about them, the multitude of anointed ones, to fill and replenish their hearts with the strength of virtue, we may trust that the light in our candlestick will burn with a pure and steady flame; that peace and health and thrift will abide within our borders, and that every year will bring us some new reasons for thanksgiving.

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE.

ISAIAH II: 2-3.

"*And in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*"

It is quite the fashion in these days for those who do not believe in the Christian religion to bestow on it their patronage. The Bible is full of delusion and falsehood, but they regard it, on the whole, as a book that deserves notice; parts of it are almost as good as the Rig-Veda. The Church has been the handmaid of bigotry and superstition, yet they find in the history of the Church some passages that are inspiring. Jesus of Nazareth was a teacher in whose doctrine they find many things to set right; yet, so rich were his contributions to ethical science that they feel themselves justified in bestowing on him a qualified approval.

This fashion of patronizing Christianity may have been set by Goethe. Into that temple of the future which he describes in his Tale, the little hut of the fisherman, by which he symbolizes Christianity, was graciously admitted. "This little hut had, indeed, been wonderfully transfigured. By virtue of the Lamp locked up in it [the light of reason] the hut had been converted from the inside to the outside into solid silver. Ere long, too, its form changed; for the noble metal shook aside the accidental shape of planks, posts and beams, and stretched itself out into a noble case of beaten, ornamented workmanship. Thus a fair little temple stood erected in the middle of the large one; or, if you will, an altar worthy of the temple." This is Goethe's view of the Church of the Future. He has been magnanimous enough to provide a niche for it in the perfected temple of the Great Hereafter; it is to serve as a pretty decoration of that grand structure, as a dainty bit of bric-a-brac.

About twenty-five centuries before Goethe's day another poet, dwelling somewhere in the fastnesses of Syria, had visions of the future in form and color quite unlike this of the German philosopher. Isaiah was this ancient seer's name, and the words which describe the vision to which I refer have already been read in your hearing. In this poet's sight of the Latter Day, the Church of God is not merely a feature; it furnishes the outline; it fills the whole field of vision. It is not merely a trait of the picture, it is the picture. Instead of putting the Church into a niche in the temple of the future, to be kept there as a kind of heir-loom — a well-preserved antique curiosity — Isaiah insists that the Church *is* the temple and

that all stores and forces of good are to be gathered into it, to celebrate its empire and to decorate its triumph. The mountain of the Lord's house, the typical Zion on which the spiritual church is builded, is to be exalted above all other eminences. Toward that all eyes shall turn; toward that all paths shall lead; toward that shall journey with joy all pilgrim feet. For the heralds of its progress, for the missionaries of its glad tidings it shall have many nations; it shall give to all the world the ruling law and the informing word.

This is Isaiah's view of the Church of the Future. When twenty-five centuries more shall have passed it will be easier to tell whether the Hebrew or the German was the better seer.

Isaiah shows us the Church of the Future only in outline; the great fact which he gives us is that in the last days the spiritual Jerusalem shall gather into itself all the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them. It may be possible for us in some indistinct way to fill in this outline; to imagine, if we cannot prophesy, what the scope and character of the future Church shall be.

I. Will it have a creed? To this some persons will be inclined to answer that creeds of all kinds will be outworn and discarded when the glory of the Lord is fully revealed. The undue prominence which these formularies of faith have had in the past — the preference which has often been given to that sort of Christianity which is intellectual over that which is ethical or spiritual — has led many persons to undervalue those expressions of truth which, in all ages, the Church has possessed. A creed is only a statement, more or less elaborate, of the facts and principles of relig-

ion accepted by those who adhere to it. Religion is not wholly an affair of the emotions; it involves the apprehension of truth. In the future, as in the past, this truth must be stated, in order to be apprehended. A man's creed is what he believes; and there must be creeds as long as there are believers.

It is probable, however, that the creeds may be considerably modified as the years pass. Certainly they have been undergoing modifications, continually, through the centuries gone by. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes told the graduating class at the Bellevue Medical College a few years ago that he would rather be carried through a course of fever by the poorest scholar in that class than by the best physician alive in the days of the famous Rush. This is a startling testimony to the progress of medical science. Has theological science been advancing at the same rate? Hardly; nevertheless the changes have been many and important. The elements of theology are subtle; the movements of thought are often difficult to trace; but the careful student discovers wonderful transformations in the ruling ideas of theology from age to age. The point of view in theology may be said to have wholly changed within two hundred years. So great has been the progress that we often find men who have a reputation for intelligence denying, ignorantly or disingenuously, the plainest facts of history, and contending that nobody ever believed doctrines that were almost universally received in the days of their great grandfathers. To the mind of the Church to-day it is almost incredible that certain beliefs of a century or two ago ever could have been held at all.

It must be understood, however, that the changes

through which theological science has been passing have been changes of spirit rather than of substance, of form more than of fact. The essential truth remains. The historical elements of Christianity are not altered; the words of Christ remain as true as when they were uttered; the person of Christ is still the unifying and reconciling force in all our theological systems; but our explanations of the facts of Christianity, and our theories of the relations of God to men are greatly modified by the growth of knowledge. Most important, however, of all the factors by which changes in theology are produced is the purified ethical conciousness of the race, through which such words as justice and righteousness take on larger and nobler meanings. The great changes in theology are moral changes. Theology is constantly becoming less materialistic and more ethical. This progress will continue through the future.

The creed of the future will contain, I have no doubt, the same essential truth that is found in the creeds of the present; but there may be considerable difference in the phrasing of it, and in the point of view from which it is approached.

1. Men will believe, in the future as in the present, in an infinite personal God, the Creator, the Ruler, the Father of men. The speculations of science will not destroy the faith of men in the existence of such a Being. That a Power may be behind all the forces of nature — the Supreme Energy from which they all proceed — science does not now deny; the most that she can say is that the Power is unknowable. When she says that, she seems to me to deny herself. To declare that any fact or event is unknowable is

unscientific. It is the business of science to find out and set in order things known, not to dogmatize about what knowledge is possible. The scientific men may say that the existence of God has not yet been demonstrated by their investigations; they have no right to say that it never will be scientifically demonstrated.

But, whether the investigations of physical science ever lead to this result or not, there is no reason to doubt that the faith of men will cling, in the future as in the past, to the existence of a conscious personal God. The better man knows himself, and his own needs, the stronger will be his conviction of his personal relations to such a divine Being. Nothing else will satisfy the hunger of his spirit. They point us to Nature, but there is no voice in Nature that answers the soul's deepest want. They tell us of a reign of law, but law is a sovereign that cannot forgive our sins or comfort us in our sorrows. The abstract, impersonal Force to which Agnosticism leads us has no relation to that which is deepest in man, and can have none. Christ bade us love the Lord our God with all our heart and mind and soul. Can any man ever be perfectly happy until he has found some Being whom he can love in this way? Must not the Being who is worthy to be loved in this way be both perfect and infinite? And is it possible for a man to love with heart and mind and soul, any Being, however vast or powerful, that has neither heart nor mind nor soul?

2. Concerning the mode of the divine existence, men will learn in the future to speak more modestly than they have spoken in the past. It will become more and more evident that it is not possible to put the infinite into terms

of the finite. There is the doctrine of the Trinity: there is truth in it, or under it; but can any one put that truth into propositions that shall be definite and not contradictory? Men have been trying to do this ever since the Council of Nicæa, with very indifferent success. We need to know God under the three characters of Father, Word and Spirit — as the Supreme Creator and Sovereign, the Incarnate Divinity, and the Indwelling Life; yet these are not three Gods, and any forms of statement which give the impression that there are three are, to say the least, unfortunate and misleading. While, therefore, the essential truth which underlies this doctrine of the Trinity will grow more and more precious, the attempt to define it is likely to be abandoned.

If one may judge the future by the past there is no reason to fear that the person of Jesus Christ will be less commanding in the Church of the Future than it is in the Church of the present. There never was a time when men believed in Jesus of Nazareth as firmly as they do to-day. I cannot doubt that this will be increasingly true in the future. But, even as all theology becomes more distinctively ethical and spiritual, it is probable that increasing emphasis will be put upon the moral elements of our Lord's personality; that when men affirm his divinity they will think more of the quality, and less of the quantity of his being. When the thought of the Church lays hold on the righteousness and the love of its Lord, more than on his natural attributes, her communion with him will bring her more abundant gifts. But I cannot doubt that the Church will hold fast her faith in her divine Lord and Master, exalting him, trusting him and following him in the future

far more loyally than in the past. "The Church that shakes itself free from Jesus Christ," says an eminent Unitarian minister,* "is destined to an early decay and death. * * * My observation and experience, through fifty years of effort and conflict, teach me that child-like but manly allegiance to Him who is the Captain of our salvation, is the general condition and measure of spiritual, moral and philanthropic success." The experience of the past verifies this saying, and the Church of the Future will not despise the experience of the past.

4. The fact of sin will not be denied by the Church of the Future. That vicious compound of materialism and sentimentalism, now so widely current, by which moral evil is explained away, and evil doers are comforted in their evil doing with the assurance that everything they do is the result of circumstance or the product of organization, will no longer confuse the consciences of men. Doubtless organization and circumstance will be taken into the account in estimating human conduct; but the power of the human will to control the natural tendencies, to release itself from entangling circumstances, and to lay hold on the divine grace by which it may overcome sin, will also be clearly understood. The supremacy of the moral nature will be vindicated; men will be held to a strict account for their deeds, and made to understand that the plea of moral insanity, while it may sometimes be allowed, will in every case be rigidly traversed.

Punishment, as conceived and represented by the Church of the Future, will not be an arbitrary infliction of suffering, but the natural and inevitable consequence of disobedience

* Dr. Wm. G. Eliot.

to law. It will be discovered that the moral law is incorporated into the natural order, and that its sanctions are found in that order; while, in the work of redemption, God interposes by his personal and supernatural grace to save men from the consequences of their own disobedience and folly. Law is natural; grace is supernatural. Punishment is the fruit of our own doings; the mercy and help that bring salvation are the free gift of the divine love.

With times and seasons and dates and numbers the Church of the Future, when dealing with punishment, will be much less familiar than the Church of the past has been. Its teaching on this subject will have the tendency to bring these dread realities near; judgment and retribution will not be put far off among the "last things," and hidden from the eyes of men behind the curtain that falls upon life's strange eventful history; their trumpet will be sounding, and their note of doom ringing in the ears of men continually; transgressors will be made to see, what they now so dimly apprehend, that no effect can be more closely joined to its cause than penalty to sin. Just what theories the future Church may hold with respect to this great matter I will not prophecy; but it will not blink the fact of sin, nor overlook the truth that salvation from sin must come from above, nor put out of sight the solemn truth, that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

5. I have indicated, but roughly, some of the essential truths which are sure to survive the destructive criticism of these times, and to be incorporated, in some form, into the creed of the future. Whatever that creed may be, however, it will not be put to the kind of use which the creed of the present is made to serve. It will not be laid down as the

doctrinal plank over which everybody must walk who comes into the communion of the Church. The Church may have some sort of concise statement of truth as the charter of its existence; but it will not insist on the acceptance of this doctrinal statement by those who seek admission to its fellowship. The church, like every other organism, has an organic idea, and that is simple loyalty to Jesus Christ, the head of the Church. An assemblage of persons which does not expect of its members this loyalty is not a Christian Church; an organization which does expect and require this, whatever its errors may be, is a Christian Church. Whoever exhibits this loyalty belongs to Christ; and what right have you or I to shut him out of our communion because he does not understand or accept certain doctrinal statements that we have chosen to make? The creed of the future will not be a barrier over which men must climb to get into the Church of the Future. There will be but one door into that Church — you may call it broad or narrow — Christ will be the door.

II. What will be the polity of the future Church? Will it be governed episcopally, by prelates or bishops, or presbyterially, by an elect few of its members, or congregationally, by the people themselves. That is a question which I am not concerned to answer. It is likely that, of these various sorts of ecclesiastical machinery, each of the several religious bodies will freely choose that which it likes best. Doubtless the Church will have some form of government: it will not be a holy mob; lawlessness will not be regarded as the supreme good, in Church or in State. Heaven itself is a kingdom; and the New Jerusalem that comes down from heaven will be fashioned on the same

model. The notion that every human being ought to do just what he likes, with no reference to the welfare of his neighbors, is a doctrine of the woods, and not of perfected society. Doubtless, too, there will be in the future Church the largest measure of true liberty. The great problem of all governments, ecclesiastical and political, has been rightly to adjust the conflicting claims of authority and liberty; to give the individual the widest possible freedom and yet preserve society from disorder and anarchy. Of this problem, both in Church and in State, we must trust the future to find the right solution.

In whatever ecclesiastical mould the Church of the Future may be cast, there will be no mean sectarianism in existence then. Less will be said about Christian union then than now; but much more will be done about it. The various families of Christians will dwell as happily together as well-bred families now do in society; it will be regarded as a mark of ill-breeding for one Church to be jealous of the growth or influence of another, just as it now is for one neighbor to be jealous because another neighbor dwells in a larger house or drives a finer carriage. There will not be one form of belief nor one form of worship; there will be as many varieties as there are at present. When the mountains are all of one height, and the rivers are all of one width, and the trees are all pollards, and the flowers are all after one pattern; when our houses are all alike, and our costumes all alike, and our appetites all crave the same viands, then, and not before, our churches will be all alike. But though there be diversities of form in the future, there will be real and thorough intercommunion and co-operation among Christians of all names, and nothing will be permit-

ted to hold apart those who follow the same Leader and travel the same road.

V. What kind of work will be done by the Church of the Future? That is a large question; I will not attempt to answer it with any degree of minuteness. It will have many ways of working that the Church of the present has not dreamed of. For, however it may be with reference to doctrine, in the practical development of its life the Church of the Future will be a broad Church — broader by far than any now upon the earth. "The field is the world," Christ has told us; and in that better day the Church will have learned to occupy the field.

1. Paul said that as a preacher of the gospel he magnified his office. There is no office more honorable. But it must not be inferred that there is no other way of preaching the gospel except the formal utterance of religious truth, in the presence of a congregation. Certainly the living voice, so far as it reaches, is the best of all vehicles for the conveying of truth. A power can be put into spoken words which written words cannot contain. For this reason the old fashion of preaching the gospel will be continued, beyond a question, through all the future. The gospel will be preached in the latter day as the Christ preached it on the Mount of the Beatitudes and by the shores of the Sea of Galilee; and the common air will thrill with the joyful sound as the messengers of God declare the good tidings to men.

But the truth will be disseminated, in that time, in many other ways. For though the living voice is the best instrument for the proclamation of the truth, so far as it will reach, the living voice cannot reach very far. One or

two thousand people are the most that an ordinary man can be expected to address at one time; while, by other methods of communication which have been discovered since Christ was on the earth, it is possible for one man to reach an unlimited number. The art of printing has been given to the world since that day; and by that invention the whole business of instructing and influencing men has been revolutionized. The Church has already appropriated this agency; the printed word now reaches multitudes that the living voice does not reach; and it is doubtless true that this agency will be employed in the future more effectively than in the past. Let no one suppose that these modern methods are any less fully authorized than those ancient ones. The command to preach the gospel includes the command to print the gospel. It means, Proclaim it; spread it; let all the world know it: that is all it means. It does not shut us up to any one way of proclaiming it. The method of oral preaching may keep the place of eminence, but it will be supplemented by other and no less valid methods.

Neither will the range of teaching be so narrow in the future as it has sometimes been in the past. It is the Roman Catholic theory that the work of education belongs to the Church; our American policy entrusts it mainly to the State. Up to a certain point we may adopt the American theory; but it is a grave question whether we have not pushed it quite too far. If, however, the machinery of public instruction be left mainly in the control of the State, there will still be a great function remaining for the Church to fulfil. The work of education, in its ministry, must always keep pace with the work of conversion. To

apply the ethical rule of the New Testament to the conduct of individuals, and to the relations of men in society, will be the constant obligation of the pulpit. Out of Zion must go forth the law by which parents, children, neighbors, citizens, workmen, masters, teachers, pupils, benefactors, beneficiaries, shall guide their behavior. The application of the Christian law to all the concerns of human life; the extension of the kingdom of heaven so that it shall cover all the kingdoms of this world — this is the problem to be solved in the future teachings of the Church. There is a gospel of the secular life which it will hear with joy, and which it will not cease to proclaim. Remembering that men are to be sanctified through God's word of truth, it will remember also that every truth which God has uttered, whether in the rocks of the shore, or in the lilies of the field, or in the secret chambers of the soul, or in the firm characters by which his purpose is traced upon the page of history, is God's word, to be reverently studied and compared with every other part of his revelation.

Science, long the night mare of the theologians, will no more trouble their dreams; it will be understood that there can be no conflict between truths; that the upper and the underworlds are not discordant, but harmonious; that physical science has its facts and its laws, and spiritual science its facts and its laws; that these are diverse but not contradictory, and that the one is just as positive and knowable as the other. The unfriendliness now existing between the scientists and the theologians will exist no longer; because both parties will have learned wisdom. The theologians will stop quarreling with facts; the scientists will cease to insist that nothing is a fact which

cannot be weighed with steelyards. Men will be cautious, in the future, about accepting scientific theories; perhaps the scientists themselves may be a little more cautious by that time; but when a fact or a law is established by sufficient evidence, the religionist of the future will not be such a fool as to fight against it. If it make a modification of his opinions necessary he will modify his opinions to conform them to the fact; if it require a new interpretation of Scripture, he will interpret the Scripture to make it conform to the fact. That will seem to him a perfectly natural thing to do. And he will read, with a half-incredulous wonder, the strenuous debates of this century, in which obstinate dogmatists have beaten their own brains out against facts. The reconciliation of science with religion over which the church of the present is often puzzled, will give the Church of the Future no trouble.

As you go down the long avenue in the great city in the evening, you pass between two parallel rows of street-lamps. Near you on either hand the lights of each row are isolated from one another; there seems to be quite a space between the lamps, and between the rows flows the turbulent stream of travel, the noisy cars and the clattering carriages. But, as you look ahead, you notice that the space between the lamps of each row seems to lessen the further on your eye ranges, and that the two rows seem to draw nearer together, till at length, far off, the two converging lines of light are blended into one.

So, as we travel through this world, the lights of Religion and of Science seem to range themselves on either side our way. There are travelers who walk by the light of the one, and travelers who walk by the light of the other —

(not all going in the same direction either) — while between the two there are passengers who dimly see by the light of both. The lights on either side are separated by spaces of darkness; now and then we come upon truths that are luminous, both in science and religion; but we fail to bring them together into relations of unity; while between the two rows of lamps the interval is so wide and so full of strife and clamor, that it seems hardly safe to pass from the one to the other. But look down through the future! Can you not see that the dark spaces shorten, that the parted lives converge, that beyond these noises, in the far-off silence of the Latter Day, they merge into a common glory?

2. But the work of teaching will not be the only work to which the Church of the Future will address itself. Large and wise enterprises for the welfare of men will be set on foot; many of the instrumentalities now in use will continue to be employed, under modified forms, and many new ones will be devised. It will be understood that the law of the Church is simply this, "Let us do good to all men as we have opportunity." No means of making men better will be counted unlawful; everything that helps to lift them out of misery and to bring them near to God will be received with thanksgiving. The fact will be kept before the mind of the Church that its work is the work of Christ — to save men; to save them, not by mutilating but by completing their manhood; to save them, as Christ did, from disease and ignorance and loneliness and sorrow, but, greatest of all, to save them from their sins. The moral evil is the radical evil, and the remedy will be applied first and most faithfully to this. Yet it is impossible to do this

work as it ought to be done, without doing at the same time many other things. So the various ministries of philanthropy are and must ever be an inseparable part of the work of the Church. It is to be hoped that in the future there will be less of doing good by proxy and more of personal sympathy and help; that the Church will learn a little better how to bring the giver and the receiver into contact, that they may share the blessing together.

Much of the sin and sorrow of the race arises out of bad social conditions. Inequitable relations between labor and capital: unwise domestic relations; the neglect of needful restrictions on vice and evil doing, all these occasion more or less misery and sin. The Church of the Future will take hold of all these matters with a firm hand; it will investigate them and discuss them, till a sound public opinion is created to deal with them; and while it will not entertain the delusion that such mischiefs can all be corrected by legislation, it will not hesitate to do what can be done by force of law to supply the remedies. The Church of the Future would be a very uncomfortable society for some fogies of the present to belong to; for it will meddle with politics far more than any of the Churches of our time have ever dared to do.

In short, the Church of the Future, loyal to its great Head, and leaning on his counsel and his might, will go out into the world and take possession of it, in his name. Wherever there are wrongs it will strive to right them; wherever there are needs it will work to supply them; wherever there are sorrows it will love to comfort them; wherever there are any whom Christ would have helped, it will go to them and carry the gifts he came to bring.

Thus, very imperfectly, I have sought to outline the character of the Church of the Future. It appears to me that such a study may have some value for us all. Our work is in the present, and it is not well for us to get too far in advance of our time. The fact that none of the Churches of the present are quite so catholic in their spirit or quite so vigorous in their life as this Church of our imagination, by no means justifies us in standing aloof from them all; all human methods are imperfect; and it is much easier to define a perfect circle than it is to draw one. The best thing we can do, under the circumstances, is to take such tools are at hand and do the best possible work with them. Nevertheless, it is well to abide, now and then, in the region of the ideal — to think of what might be; and it is certain that the ideals of the noblest work must come, as they have always come, out of the future rather than the past.

On the morning of that day when the Savior rose, the women who sought the sepulcher found there not what they sought, but two young men in shining garments greeted them from the grave-side, saying; "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen, and behold he goeth before you into Galilee." So to all who seek amid the traditions of a vanished past for the warrant of their faith and the pattern of their life, God's angel speaks to-day: Look not for this Christ in the cerements of old forms or phrases; he is not here; he is risen; the world is full of the light that shines through the bars of his sepulcher; you, like the Magdalene, may hear his glad "All hail!" Lo, he goeth before you; rise and follow him!