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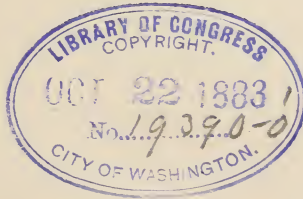
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CONTENTS.

SERMON I.

A DIVINE PHILOSOPHY.

	PAGE.
Ps. 3 : 10.—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.	9

SERMON II.

A TEMPORARY CREED.

JEREMIAH xxxv : 7.—All your days ye shall dwell in tents.	. 24
---	------

SERMON III.

MORAL ESTHETICS.

ISAIAH lii : 7.—How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth." 38
--	------------

SERMON IV.

CIVILIZATION.

ECCLESIASTES iii : 21.—Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward toward the earth? 52
---	--------------

SERMON V.

AN INWROUGHT LIFE.

	PAGE.
NUM. viii: 4.—And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold unto the shaft thereof; unto the flowers thereof was beaten work.	67

SERMON VI.

A SYMMETRICAL LIFE.

EPH. iv: 16.—From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted.	81
--	----

SERMON VII.

A GREAT BROTHERHOOD.

GENESIS xiii: 8.—And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife I pray thee between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself I pray thee from me; if thou wilt take the left hand then I will go to the right, or if thou depart to the right hand then I will go to the left.	
I JOHN iii: 16.—And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.	96

SERMON VIII.

THE BETTER CHOICE.

GEN. ii: 9, 16, 17.—The tree of knowledge of good and of evil.	113
--	-----

SERMON IX.

EIGHTEEN MISSING YEARS.

LUKE ii: 40.—And the child grew and became strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.	128
---	-----

SERMON X.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

PAGE.

REV. ii : 10.—Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.	146
---	-----

SERMON XI.

THE PREACHER AND HIS ENEMY.

JOHN x : 11.—The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.	160
---	-----

SERMON XII.

EQUALITY IN VARIETY.

ECCLESIASTES iii : 11.—He hath made everything beautiful in its time.	174
--	-----

SERMON XIII.

REASON AND IMAGINATION.

REV. xxi : 1.—And I saw a new heaven and a new earth.	189
---	-----

SERMON XIV.

THE OBJECTIONS TO EVOLUTION.

GEN. i : 1.—In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.	203
--	-----

SERMON XV.

MERIT.

ROM. viii : 31.—If God be for us, who can be against us?	
REV. xiv : 13.—Their works do follow them.	217

SERMON XVI.

THE BEAUTIFUL IS THE USEFUL.

PAGE.

- EZRA vii: 27.—Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers who hath put in the king's heart such a thing as this to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem. 232

SERMON XVII.

A GREAT GOD.

- PSALMS xcvi: 3.—For the Lord is a great God. 247

SERMON XVIII.

THE COMING ARISTOCRACY.

- MATT v: 5.—Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 263

SERMON XIX.

SPIRITUALITY.

- ROM. viii: 6.—To be spiritually minded is life. 277

SERMON XX.

THE HIGHER LIFE.

- LUKE i: 32.—He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest. 293

SERMONS.

I.

A DIVINE PHILOSOPHY.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.—Ps., 3:10.

SAID an ancient, "Happy is he who is able to know the causes of things." The happiness comes not from the mere gratification of a curiosity, but because when the mind has found a good reason of things it has suddenly come upon a harmony and a pleasure of a high quality. To know the causes of things helps society prevent or cure many of its troubles and to cause and redouble its pleasures. When one thinks of the inexplicable diseases which at times assume a devastating form and sweep away tens of thousands whose homes may be among the pure hills of the country, one becomes perplexed and unhappy and is ready to upbraid science as being only the chattering of children; but when along any path of human life

there is revealed a great cause of public welfare or of misfortune, a cause whose power can be increased or diminished, then is the mind full of delight. Not to know the reason of things is to live where musicians are always tuning their instruments, but where they never play a tune. All is discordant fragments of sound. Each sound would be beautiful if it could come in its proper relation to other tones. Thus the isolated events of our world distract rather than delight, but when they are all fastened together by an adequate causation it is as though many instruments had risen above the tuning experiment and were now sounding in the harmony of some great composition. It is the business of philosophy to discover the relations of facts, and to combine into sweet music the endless multitude of detached sounds. That is the greatest theory which will gather upon one thread the most and the richest pearls. The happiness of that soul would be great who should discover a correlation perfect and simple of all the varied moral scenery of our earth! What an achievement could some one take disease and sin and death and loss and gain and beauty and deformity and power and weakness and tears and laughter, and make them all the parts of some picture which would be less great if any of these elements had been wanting! Such a victory over earth's discord will never be won by

man, because man is too small to hope ever to find a measurement of the universe. This impossibility does not, however, change his duty or taste. He must find the largest harmonies possible to his faculties. And happiest will be the man or the age which shall find the largest and best theory of human existence.

The more you compare with each other what dogmas exist regarding man's coming and staying and going, the more will you sympathize with the psalmist who declared that the fear or assumption of a Jehovah was the principal element of wisdom. In the original language of our text the Hebrew writer used that word which might be written but not spoken—rendered into our tongue by the term Jehovah; but by the Jews of to-day by the term, The Eternal. The belief in the Essential Life—the One who was and is and shall be, is the chief element of all wisdom. Man has long been out in the wide world seeking the lost reason of things. He has sought by all the seashores where the tides come and sink back; he has carried on his search in the fields and woods where tree and leaf and fruit delight and amaze; he has continued his studies at night under the silent stars; he has been still more deeply thoughtful among the multitudes of men as they have triumphed or suffered, and at last he should come in from his long wander-

ing and should declare that no system will for a moment compare with the Divine Philosophy.

That you may feel the value of this assumption of a God, you must first consent to the proposition that no theory can be found that will be all through and through an explanation of man. The happiness of knowing the final reason of the universe to the uttermost is denied the heart. If we cast ourselves upon the major premise that all that exists must have a cause, we are at once asked to say who made God? for he at once asks of us a cause. It must be assumed in the outset that no perfect solution of the problem will ever be found by the children of men. Bright, noble being indeed is man! but he falls far short of the ability to grasp his world, and hence great gulfs are located called "eternity" and "infinity," places where the mind wearies and faints. But it must also be remembered that atheism and material science are in this same valley of humiliation, and in attempting to escape the divine philosophy they fall into parallel intellectual troubles. Coming upon man from any compass-point, his situation is inexplicable. All must wait for another life to come with higher powers and with more data before they shall declare that they have learned to the full the lesson of human existence. If you are in doubt in regard to the divine theory, do not for a moment imagine that there re-

mains for you some better basis of belief. Other theories do not heal doubts, they simply trample them under foot. As Indians do not dry up tears by removing the troubles that bring them, but by laughing at the powers of grief, so there are forms of philosophy which dispel doubts, not by bringing a solution, but by laughing at the soul that desires to have them solved. There are two kinds of peace for the heart: that which comes from having its troubles lifted, and that other which comes from an indifference of feeling. To fly from the perplexities of a divine system to find peace away from it is not to draw any nearer to the causes of things, but it is to take an opiate that insensibility may come to occupy the place which in religion is full of longings and hope. A material theory diminishes the chances of disappointment by dismissing from the heart all spirit of expectation. It does not solve riddles, but defies them.

The divine philosophy makes the existence of a Supreme Being its starting point. All systems are compelled to start with an assumption. Materialism assumes that matter never began. It was from all eternity. It assumes also that this matter contained something that would result in the phenomena of a space full of stars and globes full of such details as earth possesses. Atheism thus starts upon an assumption and *a priori* contains not one trace of reason

not possessed by those who assume the existence of a God. Setting forth from the same kind of premise, assumed premise, these theories very soon diverge, and the greatness of the realms of mind and heart settle upon the former system. God as a starting-point is superior to the cold assumption of the eternity of matter. Man being at liberty to select either origin of the cosmos, he would better assume the eternal mind. Apart from all questions of duty or piety, the inquirer, seeking a rest for the lever that is to lift up the universe, would better find that fulcrum in intelligence than in atoms of material, because the historic career of mind discloses its ability to arrange matter into shapes of utility and beauty. Mind is seen in the character of a contriver and fabricator and creator. It can discover a great end and then the way of reaching it, and it can love the end and the way. But the eternal particles of matter contain no care about ends and aims. The mountains do not project the idea of a sunlight or moonlight. Matter, whether diffused as star-dust or gathered up into suns and planets, has no desire to see buds in the woods or fish in the waters, or such a sublime scene as the family of man. The less mental anything is, the less active is it in making a variety out of unity. The oyster is one of the lowest forms of life, and compared with the oriole describes a small circle of action. The

oriole will construct an ingenious nest ; it will reveal wisdom ; it will reveal affection ; it will chirp, and it makes use of some kind of language. Thus as mind rises in quality it widens in the power to invent and combine and arrange and fabricate, and when we come to man the surface of the earth is marked all over by the action of intellect upon matter. The unity of dust is changed into variety. As when one looks upon the illuminated page of some old missal his eye surveys with delight thousands of lines running in all ways with their bright colors, now meeting in an arch, now bending into a circle, now crossing in diamond angles, now in the peaceful right angle, now moving away in parallels, now dropping like festoons of vines, now forming a cross, now a crown, all brilliant, all full of harmony ; and the admirer passes to wonder in what grave sleeps the hand which thus broke up the unity of a white parchment into such a delightful variety ; so gazing upon the surface of the earth we see it all made like a missal page by the mind of its strange occupants, and the conclusion comes resistlessly that the matter of the universe burst forth into its variety at the bidding of a mind. Some Soul living or now dead has sat down by the blank leaf of nature and has illumined the page.

Thus the assumption of mind aids best to explain the progress of insensate dust toward an infinite va-

riety. But we are not called upon to explain a simple variety, for although that would be argument enough in favor of a mental origin of the universe that matchless quantity of combination is not so wonderful as the quality of these details of life and action. The quality of this variety is something which matter will not explain. Man contains a wonderful assemblage of attributes: taste, reason, love, wit, faith, hope, the moral sense. These subdivide in the valleys of human life like that river which separated into four channels as it moved through the garden of Eden, and with one current washed the gold and onyx stone of Havilah, and with another the summer land of Ethiopia, and with another the man-growing vale of the Euphrates; only these springs flowing from the soul form into a hundred great streams and make arts and industries and thoughts and languages and cities and towns and homes on their banks as they flow. It is not a variety we behold, but a sublime variety. And as the tendency of dust is to unity and rest, a divine philosophy must come to us to explain the impressive scene. It is the most adequate cause. Unity passes into variety only at the bidding of mind.

Having found what theory can best explain the origin of man we must still seek for a theory which will best care for man after he has come. To originate man was no more of a task than to care for him

afterward. A creature having many passions and interests and fears and hopes, and possessing enormous powers does not contain all of his problems in the question of his coming, but he unveils new problems in the question of his stay. What will govern man after he has been created? He must remain here seventy years. Millions in number and full of passions these beings must possess rules and motives of conduct. As out of a divine mind can come the phenomena of life, animal and vegetable, so from such an infinite thinking power can issue the motives and laws of being. The divine theory appearing to account for the coming of man, comes again to regulate him while he is here. It surpasses other theories in almost every detail of law and motive. Its superiority lies partly in this, that man can not be perfectly made or governed unless he is taught that he is on the way to another and longer life. If man came from only dust and will soon go back to nothing, the worth of morals must sink down to the level of such a mean origin and mean destiny; but if man came from the Supreme and is on his way to a final judgment or reward, every law of action rises in significance. If human life is ruled by motives, the grander the motives the greater and better the government. The soul coming from a God and marching toward God and all the while in the presence of

God is *a priori* in a better path than the soul which springing from the dust and attended by laws elaborated from relations of dust is to pass back in a few years to simply other dust. This difference of motive needs only to be mentioned. Man having been brought into the world by a divine philosophy is best cared for by that system.

Having ordered this amazing variety to spring up from material insensibility, the divine system can best care for the immense products of creative power and can best harmonize these details in a far-off destiny. An irreligious causation leaves the young dead all uncared for; and when you remember how large a proportion of mankind dies in childhood you will conclude the theory of man hard and imperfect which has no tear for the death-bed of the little children and for those in the morning of life, but the theory of a God makes the grave a part of the general progress and weaves sorrow and tears and infancy and mature years and age into one perfect drama, and that a drama of happiness. It will embrace the most varied events and conditions, will apply to all races and all times, and will everywhere repeat the words that the troubles of these transient years are working out an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. It abandons nothing. It never surrenders nor dies. Meeting with great difficulties in

this world it appeals to the great coming eternity and goes on bearing with it all its problems. As our globe itself smitten here and there by storms and frozen by winter and shaken by earthquakes which have displaced oceans and continents has whirled onward around the sun and has turned silently upon its axis and has come again and again to its summertime and seasons of inexpressible peace, so the theory of God has surrendered nothing of man and his greatness, but has passed through many clouds and is pressing over the grave with man still resting upon its bosom.

In making an estimate of a scheme for this world we demand a method not only which will account for man's coming to the earth, and which shall furnish him with life-motives while he is here, motives taken greatly from another life, but we must seek a fundamental thought that will take care of an earth greater than the one we see, of a race greater than the one now living in the two hemispheres. Great as the modern nations and modern times are, they are still the infant days of the human race. It has been only about three hundred years since the human family began truly to advance in intellectual power, and from the achievements of such a brief period we must infer a future great beyond all parallel. Population is to double itself and then still go rapidly on-

ward. Science will drain marshes and water deserts and counteract climate until even the tropics shall rival the temperate zones as the homes of happy millions. Some of the European nations are now in such yearly peril as to food that they are willing some of their millions should migrate beyond seas. The mysterious wrapping of human life is being wound around the world, slowly but really and gracefully. Mexico and South America are to receive their hundreds of millions and while this almost numberless host is swarming into old and new nations, the inventions and discoveries will become more and more amazing and compared with such a coming world the history of our day will read like a great man's journal of his childhood. The increase of intellectual power and the presence everywhere of liberty will take this mighty multitude far away from the docility of the Asiatics and of the Africans, and will confer upon the coming mind the stormy qualities of awakened passion, for education confers unrest rather than peace.

Against such a day of greatly increased desires and demands what philosophy is adequate except the sublime theory of a God? Scientific and atheistic theories are daily revealing their inadequacy, for in the presence of all our school-houses and railways and telegraphs and countless marvels crime is as

composed and confident as it was when the mail was carried on horseback and when our parlors were lighted with candles. Nor do these crimes spring out of the wrongs of the common people, for did they they would pass away under the flag of freedom. The philosophy of the future would then be "Liberty;" but unfortunately for such a hope murder is as common in America as in Ireland and our parks are little more safe for a kind and noble man than an Irish park is safe for an exacting landlord. No man's life is secure under any flag or school-house-shadow or beside any group of inventions, and simply because there are murderers swarming forth from the years that have no God. There are hundreds of men in this city who would crush in a skull for the hope of finding two dollars in the possession of the murdered citizen—they would do this simply because they have not risen to any height whatever of a moral nature. In this land there is no motive for crime except the baseness of the criminal. All is explained by the word depravity.

France grew sick of its godlessness, and was glad to hear from the lips of Victor Cousin and Chateaubriand the inspirational eloquence of a new spirituality. This clear stream began to flow soon after France had descended into the depths of atheism and its volume was swelled by the romantic religiousness of

Lamartine and by the formal and deep argumentation of Guizot. Other gracious showers fell upon a land that was rapidly becoming a desert, and that France is not now a ruin comes chiefly from the fact that a divine philosophy rushed in between her sinking form and the grave. Of this salvation Victor Cousin was the prime leader. For fifty years, when France most needed guidance, the ideas of this one man formed an impulse and basis of French thought. The young men had by thousands listened to this new argument which had all the power of thunder and all the sweetness of a song. And now if France is again sinking into mere fashion and vice it is because the new science comes into its schools and streets empty of human accountability and human hopes. It would be impossible here to tell what were the salient points taken by Victor Cousin along with Royer Collard but all these subdivisions of his system set forth from the single word, *God!* Upon that deep foundation arose his structure into which was carried all the grandeur of earth. Coming like a triumphant but spiritual Cæsar this conqueror brought in grand procession the arts and morals and all the opulence of the soul, and placed them in the temple of Him whom the Jews called, "Was, and is, and is to be." Victor Cousin pointed out a gate-way vast enough to admit the human race when it came, and grand enough to

offer it an exit when it must die. Our age has had already a taste of the Godless form of logic and morals; and as men at sea at night tell by the chilling air that mountains of floating ice are near, so already in the depravity of the day we may feel the icy breath of a society which has no divine origin and no divine destiny. If any of you in these times of inquiry would find a theory that will prove adequate to the wants of man, that will explain the most facts, that will most inspire and most exalt, that will meet the great future of earth, that will neglect no one, the dying child or the dying father or mother, such a theory will roll like a pure river out of the single word—*God*.

II.

A TEMPORARY CREED.

All your days ye shall dwell in tents.—JEREMIAH, XXXV: 7.

EMIGRANTS to a new world, even when they are of a noble and rich order, must, when entering an unsettled country, construct the house of a day and the barn and fence of the present. They cannot afford the time nor can they command the material that would be demanded in the building of permanent structures. The most useful labor must be performed first. Trees must be felled or the wild ground must be plowed and planting must be done and some kind of shelter constructed against rain and cold. By slow degrees must come the ideal house and the ideal furniture. Thus railway men in their work of construction lay down first an imperfect track upon which they may transport material for the more enduring bridges and arches and stations. Each year brings more time and more material and more wealth and the temporary is gradually displaced by the enduring. Even Nature asks the privilege of doing

some hasty work in the outset and of making improvements at her leisure. Her first animals were neither intelligent nor handsome—great ugly beasts and birds and fishes valuable only as first lessons in the great school-house of life.

In the verse of Scripture from which our morning lesson is taken the gloomy prophet who loved shadow more than sunshine told Israel that they would never be worthy of possessing houses, that they must pass their days in tents. Mansions of brick and iron and marble were too good for their days of sin and doubt. Let us spiritualize all these thoughts and illustrations and find a lesson for the young and perhaps for the old in the reflection that in religion we must find a temporary but positive creed, and, reposing in it, wait for labor and merit and time to build for the soul a more solid philosophy of things here and hereafter. So many of the young are attempting to live these passing years without any form of religious belief, and so many are actually opposing all belief that it seems high time we should spiritualize some of the material habits of man and infer from his temporary house in the woods or prairies and from his hastily-made bridges and stations and from the tent life of the old Hebrews, that perhaps a similar scene is visible in the realm of faith. Unable to find a full set of articles of belief—a group in which no one shall

be of doubtful truthfulness—the young persons of the present should build a tent, a structure that will immediately shelter them from enemy and storm. The entire absence of a religious faith ought to be viewed as a personal loss, for man seems to possess a religious sentiment as truly as he possesses a musical sentiment or a feeling of the pathetic or of the joyful. The strangeness of the surrounding universe, the mysterious origin of man, his strange experience for three-score years, his more strange death, all combine to waken the sentiment of religion—a tie which binds the mind to a God—the Author of all these strange surroundings. When a cultivated mind finds itself suddenly in the mountains of Switzerland or of Colorado or for the first time on the shore of the ocean, a feeling of deep wonder fills up all its length and breadth. This feeling is called the love of the beautiful or of the sublime. When the cultivated or common mind looks upon the universe and is suddenly filled with a feeling that it has an Author great and wise and righteous, this feeling is not called the sentiment of the beautiful or sublime, but that of religion. If you will analyze it you will find it to contain elements additional to those in the heart when it admires mountains or oceans or flowers. The valley of Yosemite has a greatness, but not a greatness that will affect you or me in life or in death, it will

never reward us for virtue nor punish us for sin, it will never follow us and our family with a dark or a smiling providence. Thus all the magnificent things of land or sky are disjoined from you and me, from our grave and our cradle, and make up a peaceful emotion called the beautiful, but not so with the grandeur and power of God. They concern us. They are attached to a living person who fills all space and from whom we came and under whose hand we are living, and therefore it is that the sentiment of religion stands apart and rises above other sentiments in power and solemnity. The greatness of God is a living, acting greatness. His sublimity is a living, acting force, and the soul beholding or meditating becomes filled with prayers or hymns or penitence or hopes. The strange emotion is almost universal, it is strong, it is of increasing interest to the close of life. Religion is the general name for all these beliefs and thoughts and emotions which spring up from the idea that our universe came from a God. From such an assumption many and great influences follow; many actions follow, such as prayers, hymns, sacrifices, services, church-building and creed-making, and for all this varied form of human activity there stands the common name "religion."

The most active intellectual period known to history is the present. Nothing escapes scrutiny. The

laws of Russia, of Germany, of Ireland are undergoing review ; all instruments and machines and apparatus are being reconstructed ; science is being re-written ; history is re-studied and corrected ; and under this influence, good and bad, all the modern forms of faith have passed as though they too are to be purified in the modern flame. In a few instances it may be that Christianity has passed into the furnace of pure hostility, but as a general fact it has been cast into the same kind of refiner's fire as that which is testing science and political ideas—a fire which seeks without malice to separate the gold from its harmful alloy. The more mind is cultivated the more it asks for things in their purity. Civilization would purify the water it drinks, the air it breathes, the iron it uses in its places of power and trust, the gold it wears in jewels or uses in coin, the music it hears ; and passing into the moral world it asks, how can I find a politics that is more perfectly true, a history less distorted by passion or ignorance ? and equally, with the same kindness and earnestness, it wonders how it can find what is most divine in the tenets and practices of the temple of God. If on all sides the thought of to-day is seeking what is closest to the absolute ideal, we must concede sincerity to those who are making many inquiries within the field of faith, for mankind has ceased to be willing

to wear dross when it can have gold, or to wear bright pebbles when diamonds may be found on the same shore. No question was ever asked with more sincerity than the common one of our times: "What am I to believe?" It comes from persons in all the modern denominations, from persons old and young, from young women as well as from young men, comes to us on the street, comes in the assemblage of friends, embodies itself in a letter and travels hundreds of miles in quest of help or sympathy.

Whether intellect once awakened ever finds again the perfect repose of barbarism or of bigotry is of uncertain answer. Learning or meditation ought to bring peace, but we can not forecast the end, for we are still too near the beginning. Logical thought has just come into the world, and we can not yet sit down to a prognosis of the case. The storm must rage for a while before one can think of measuring its wrath. Philosophy bears of old the reputation of being peaceful. It gave peace to many from Plato to Newton. It is painted with white hair and a calm face, as though over that face all storms had ceased to roll. From this historic calmness of long thought came the lines of Pope :

A little learning is a dangerous thing,
Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring ;
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,

And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind,
But more advanced, behold, with strange surprise,
Now distant scenes of endless science rise.

Coming as our age does from times of endless falsehoods and follies as parts of religion, the mind has become familiar with the destruction of tenets, and may well wonder whether anything will remain when a few more years shall have passed by. As in times of great epidemics the death scenes are so numerous that those in perfect health lose confidence in life and go about bewildered, as though already doomed to the grave, so in the great critical period around us so widespread has been the destruction of church notions that many are acting and feeling as though the end of God and heaven had come. This critical work is perhaps nearing its end, and it is probable that the scenes of life will soon surpass those of death, and that times of religious peace will come, not by way of barbarism or bigotry, but by way of that deeper second thought and longer and sweeter thought called philosophy. The Author of our world has not offered any premiums to barbarism or bigotry that those states of mind should bring more rest and peace than are granted those who study long and faithfully the

problems of man as a religious and spiritual being.

Unable in these days to build a solid structure, many young persons who do really desire to make the most of their few years on earth must dwell in tents or booths. There is material enough for the construction of these.

Regarding the debated dogma of inspiration, while Professor Smith and his school and the German theologians are busy with their definitions and estimates you young persons can make a booth of boughs and logs and grasses and leaves which will be quite a home for seasons many or few. All religion is one, and it will be a good part of a temporary creed should you assume that the Old and New Testaments are a history of the best stream of religion which has ever flowed through the world. It arose far back, and it has flowed far forward, and rich has been the valley watered by this flood, and richer is it now than it was when Abraham or Solomon stood on its banks. You need not know what was the actual history of Samson, or whether Joshua actually had an order from God to destroy all the heathen, and suffer not even an infant to live; it is enough that in those old records you find the life of worship written down as it passed along from infancy to manhood. If that evolution of doctrine culminated in the teachings of Jesus, then you can throw away

all ideas which do not harmonize with that Nazarene standard. In London Bank each gold coin is weighed as it comes in, and if it does not move the balances in just the right manner it is degraded and sent to its own lower seat to be made over again and be made honorable. Thus, so far as you are concerned, a theory of inspiration will be good enough that shall make Jesus Christ the standard of moral excellence. To him you can bring the polygamy and slavery and exterminating wars of the Mosaic period, and can thus learn that they were more human than divine. The scientific statements of the Bible were all human; and if you will compare all of the old morals with that of Jesus you will find what was temporary and what eternal in the laws of sacred antiquity. Christ is thus a measuring line for all of that old ocean; a guiding star in that rather stormy sea. And in the New Testament, if doubts arise over words of Paul or John or James, go back to Christ and feel no alarm while his meaning is clear and most lofty. The words of Jesus alone are enough to save the soul in this world and in any subsequent career. These words are not the whole of Christianity, but they will form a tent in which the truth-seeker can dwell while the walls of some final mental structure may be gradually rising.

Pass now to the inquiry as to the nature of Christ.

For eighteen hundred years the question has been, what is Christ? Is he the very God? Is he the equal of God? To this day when a theological seminary or a presbytery wishes to test all the forms of ability in a candidate for the pulpit the authorities require him to write an essay upon the theme *Quid est Christus?* No amount of centuries will ever settle the question, simply because it is indeterminable—for two reasons: no one knows what Christ is, and no one knows what God is, nor can ever know in this life. In the former instance the evidence was all in fully eighteen hundred years ago, and as that has been reviewed over and over by all the religious teachers of each generation and no undeniable or clear conclusion has been reached, there remains no hope that exactly what Christ was or is will ever be known this side of heaven. In most of theological propositions there must be a vagueness which does not belong to material sciences. Man can measure a sea or a mountain but not a Christ. An English scholar says: "There is no preaching more offensive to educated men than that which puts forward with unblushing assurance all manner of assumptions and irrelevancies as cogent and irrefragable demonstrations. For theology is a science full of mystery; we are met almost at every step by the unknowable." One of these unknowable things is the exact nature

of Jesus. In this one particular make up your mind to dwell all your days in a tent. It so happens that no harm need come from the indeterminable in Jesus for all that the heart need believe is that he was the Son of God, divinely sent to be the adequate Savior of all who should love and follow him. It is enough that his character is so human and so divine that all the types of religious soul can find in this God-sent being the beauty they severally love and require. All the grandest things in our universe are so full and vast and varied as to be beyond analysis. The beauty of morning and evening in June cannot be gathered up and expressed, nor can one explain what it is in music that confers upon it such a power to charm and to fill with almost heavenly peace. If thus Christ is without definite human or divine nature none but a conceited theologian should betray any alarm. All moral and religious and great souls can find their inspiration in Him. Whittier goes to the Nazarene for philanthropy :

Whatever in love's name is truly done
To free the slave or free the fallen one
Is done to Christ. Whoso in deed and word
Is not against him labors for the Lord.
When He who sad and weary longing sore
For love's sweet service sought the sisters' door,—
One saw the heavenly, one the human guest;
But who shall say which loved the Master best?

Thus to Christ all may repair with personal success. Some are thrown into doubts or unbelief by the older evangelical doctrines of hell and heaven. Here there seems but one form of advice possible, and that must be to throw away boldly the opinions of the past. The past was accustomed to burn men for opinions' sake; we are all of kinder heart and will now spare the men and burn the opinions. The former times not only were full of superstition and credulity and cruelty but they aspired to quite a familiar knowledge of God and eternity. Hell was a part of the church's explored territory. All its torments were known and its groans heard and counted. Thither were sent not only criminals but millions who did not believe in enough of dogmas, and other millions who were born for that special and awful destiny. So fearful and unreasonable and dishonorable to man and God are all those old details about future punishment that the modern mind must if possible wash itself white of those sad memories and must encamp in a mere tent until time or eternity shall cast some new light upon the condition of the good and the wicked beyond the grave. While these years may be building some solid house of faith you need not be homeless in storm and cold, but you can construct a temporary house that may last you either till men have grown wiser or until bursting the veil of death you shall move on to bright-

er light. Under all the figures of the New Testament and the awful imagery of even pagan lands lies the one thought: It shall be ill with the wicked, it shall be well with the righteous—a doctrine out of which may come a lifelong effort to avoid sin and to follow the highest laws of God.

Details you need not know in any of these vast forms of thought. You could not know them if you would. The genius of our age is philosophy and the spirit of philosophy is found in a willingness to rest in a few general principles. Its serenity like that of Emerson and Longfellow and of the whole group of such noble characters is not the result of a universal knowledge but of a willingness to assume that the universe transcends the mind of man—the serenity that comes from a willingness to be as only children wandering on the infinite shore. As the truly large soul is willing that its house and furniture and dress and equipage shall be simple and simple its language, so entering the domain of religion it repeats the charm of its life and asks for only outlines of God and Jesus and of the destinies of the wicked and the virtuous when they go from earth to their final award. It is one of the phenomena of time that the more positive and detailed information one seeks of eternal things the smaller must be the mind that must be consulted in this appeal—a mind which cannot dream of the

awful greatness of the Almighty nor realize that man dwells upon an island world with a mysterious sea on every side. The noblest and most powerful intellects grasp the situation and instead of rebelling or giving up in despair they move to and fro carrying in the night a beautiful torch—waiting for the Sun to rise.

Thus all ye young hearts! who are feeling deeply the many and acute denials of the day, do not join in the wild crusade against faith, but consent gladly to dwell in tents. Pitch them in city or in country, on hilltop or by the placid stream. Plant by the door the flag of two worlds, its emblems a cross and a crown, and within these structures sing ye the joyful hymns of the two worlds; and when days have come and gone and come and gone the earthly house of encampment will be supplanted by something better in this world or else by the house not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens.

III.

MORAL ESTHETICS.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth."—ISAIAH, 52:7.

A SINGLE word often becomes an indicator of the drift of popular thought. As there are metal marks which record the rise and fall of waters in lakes and rivers, so are there words which tell what the multitude is most busied over, for or against. When some of the older ones of us were young the word "esthetics" was imprisoned in dictionaries. It was sometimes let out for recreation around college grounds. There the professor of "Belles Lettres" was wont to tell the highest class from what Greek word the term came, but when these young men left the college to go forth into the world they always left that word in the institution along with the other properties of the great seat of learning. Of late years that term has dared venture out into the same wide world and it will never go back again to the cell of the scholastic. It must take its place now alongside such allies as

“taste,” “judgment,” “appreciation,” and “perception,” and must live a public life. It stands for the world’s power to perceive the beautiful. It stands for one of the greatest and noblest qualities and capabilities of the mind.

There are nations or tribes which do not know of the existence of a God nor dream of any such person and which entertain no thought of a second life, but there is no tribe or race which is not aware of such a something as the “beautiful.” Either by feathers or by paint or by tattooing or by rings or by strings of small shells the Negro and the Indian attempt to gratify a sense of the attractive, and while we differ from them in the forms which beauty takes we accord them the possession of that sentiment which is always feeling after a pleasing shape or color or series of forms. The Indian loves a string of small shells, the American prefers a string of pearls or diamonds, the assembling of things is common to both; the African women love rings of iron, the Saxon rings of pure gold, but the neatness and form of the ring are common to both. Thus in some one respect all the varying tastes of the human family converge and we have before us a sentiment of the beautiful which is as wide as the empire of man. The whole race of man found in any time or place loves the beautiful.

Not only is this feeling universal but it is powerful.

It sways a scepter charmingly despotic and commands time and money like a King. It has given rise to five fine arts which consume millions of money. How expensive is architecture! While a five thousand-dollar-house would secure comfort for a family a hundred thousand or a half million dollars goes into the home as architecture or decoration for the sake of the sentiment of those who are to dwell in the abode. The piano must be beautiful, the plate beautiful, the floor beautiful, the ceilings, the walls, the stairs, the hinges, the very nails must be all marked with ornament. Other fine arts as truly consume money so that one who thinks of the matter for a moment will conclude that man is out upon a lifelong search after the attractive and that his labor and money follow his heart. The columns and the walls and gardens and statues and pictures and plates of the whole past assure us that the civilized races have always been pouring out money like water upon the altar of this one goddess of the pantheon. Old Roman millionaires have given feasts which cost each eighty thousand dollars. It was once the fashion for the guest to take home with him the dishes on which he ate and sometimes a favorite friend would go from the dinner attended by slaves of the host who were carrying home for the guest ten thousand dollars worth of goblets and dishes. The worship of external forms

and decorations changes its shape but it is the one everlasting worship. One epoch may delight in marble, another in brass, another in tapestry and laces, another in porcelains, but the delight is always present in the very soul of civilization—a river which changes its waters but flows continually.

Having thus marked what a lover of beauty man has been, and that the physical earth supplies him with materials and suggestions and forms which may be made to gratify this universal taste we may also note now that a counter world springs up in man's spiritual hemisphere and that then a still higher form of beauty may be found. In its physical form art generally attempts to make us realize some spiritual quality of great excellence, and does not work for the attractiveness of the physical form alone. In the architecture of the classics the mind was not to say only "How white and lofty and ornate is this marble?" but also, "How great is this god! How grand the oratory in these walls! How benevolent this Minerva! How just this Jove!" In Christian art the well-known faces of the "Madonna" and the "Christ" are the long patient efforts of genius to describe great souls. A soul is itself invisible, but the eye and forehead and mouth and all the face and form throw out great hints of what is hidden in the brain and heart. The images called "Madonna" and "Christ" are only the

efforts of human skill to deal not with paints and marbles but with soul. The beauty of form combines with beauty of spirit and acting in a happy partnership they make a work in art. Real high art deals in the material that it may express the spiritual and is thus always assuring us that the domain of physical charm is completed by the kingdom of the intellectual or moral charm. The artists who attempted to picture a Christ were not struggling with paint and canvas and preparations, but with the self-denial and modesty and purity and love and heroism of Jesus. The great soul of Nazareth retreated before the artist, and pause where he might that dear object at once appeared far beyond, and left painter and sculptor busy with the effort to reach the end of the infinite. The difficulty of art has always been the difficulty of throwing a bridge across that gulf which yawns so vast between the physical and the mental worlds.

The purpose of music does not lie wholly in the pleasing harmony of sounds, but chiefly in that strange experience the soul passes through as the piece progresses. At the close of a sonata or symphony by a great composer the heart able to appreciate the river of melody finds that it has been far away from the small and wicked things of earth, has been filled with a divine presence, has re-called all early and holy friendships, has remembered the beloved dead and

has seen some of the sweet mysteries of the future; for the hour it has been full of charity, full of forgiveness, full of purity, full of affection, full of fond remembrance. Thus this form of art like architecture and painting and sculpture hastens to declare itself to be a study of the human soul—an effort to deal not in material but in moral things.

We conclude therefore that above the beautiful in art there is lying in sweet repose, the beautiful in mind and that much of physical beauty is only a ladder like that of Jacob's dream to carry us to the heights. The Apollo of the Vatican awakens first the sense of physical perfection. The beholder is charmed with the beauty of each detail of the masterpiece from finger to forehead, but this physical value soon gives place to other charms and as Winkelmann expresses it: "Penetrated with the conviction of his power and lost in a concentrated joy the look of the figure reaches into the infinite. Disdain sits upon the lips, indignation is seen in the nostrils and it ascends to the eyebrows, but an unchangeable serenity is painted on the forehead and the eye itself is full of sweetness as though the Muses were caressing him." Thus by the ladder art, the angels of the soul go upward and escape the valley where the head has to be content often with a pillow of stones.

After this excensus we seem better prepared now

to approach that picture painted by Isaiah and afterward copied by St. Paul. The fact that Paul did not make an exact copy shows that inspiration has reference to the substance of things and not to words nor minute specifications. Isaiah and Paul alike saw one figure, and behold it lay wholly within the kingdom of moral loveliness. What may have been its costume, in what colors it may have advanced, out of what texture its raiment were woven, what flower may have been held in the hand are all omitted by the enthusiasm and admiration which cried out, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that publisheth Salvation, that saith to Zion, 'Thy God reigneth.'" Isaiah and Paul saw him "On the mountains" because such a sublime figure must repose upon a noble pedestal and because he must be far above the vale of unworthy human life. The mountains with the decoration of tree and flower and clear air and background of peaceful blue—the mountains with their ideas of grandeur and power make up the material elements in the picture, but these all are only invitations to the mind to awake and admire the soul that brings good tidings, that scatters peace among men and fills them with a faith in God. All our wonder about garments and drapery cease when the dream

of peace and righteousness and faith begins to unfold in the spectator's heart.

It must be inferred from this study that there is a moral esthetics which outranks the physical forms of beauty. This moral kingdom does not destroy the other empire. It is the old story of "empire within empire" "wheel within wheel"; but with this caution that moral beauty is the greater of the two kingdoms. That hand would be the rude one of a savage which should harm a carved leaf or a flower or a rational decoration upon any wall or floor, any ornament on metal or glass or earthenware or wood; but loving and keeping all these society must feel that these are all hints at the immense worth of spiritual things in the same world. An age can be great only when it is carrying forward that mental power of brain and soul whose merit it was the province of art to express and enhance. If old sculptors attempted to draw or carve a Socrates or a Pericles or a Jove or an Athene it was because some mental quality of Socrates or Pericles or Athene had become so impressive that it asked for perpetual remembrance and 'if subsequent skill struggled to produce a portrait of Jesus and his mother was it because the souls of these two beings had won a fame which made them the subjects of art, —thus hinting at the fact that moral beauty is the reason of physical art. Great will be our civilization

when this moral esthetics shall keep pace with the ornamentation upon our walls and in the many departments of physical charm. The morality which will restrain you all from murder or theft or house-burning is such a plain line of duty that it is not to satisfy the mind, for there is a powerful compulsion of many forms along that highway. It is when morality passes away from those common forms and becomes busy with those shapes of action not possible to a common, rude intellect, that it becomes a fine art or a supreme expression of the beautiful. If it be true that Auerbach wept over the sufferings of the Jews in Russia that is a moral esthetics which an Isaiah or a Paul, both Jews, could appreciate, and we might hear them saying from their graves: "How beautiful in the mountains of this century are the eyes of him who weeps over cruel wrong and whose looks publish peace and salvation!" A specimen this picture of that moral taste which the world needs more than it needs a taste for music or pictures. In a scene in London last week where Cardinal Manning presided, fifty thousand dollars were subscribed for the help of the persecuted Israelites in Russia, there was more beauty than in a landscape by Claude Lorraine or in a design on a Pompeii wall. What is more pathetic than the history, modern and earlier, of the Jews after the ruin of their empire! What untold sorrows

have they encountered in lands called Christian! Against such a dark background the intercession of Catholics and Protestants and their gifts of money and pity show like the rainbow on clouds. Were it in the power of American and English Christians to go to each Jewish home in Russia with love and perfect deliverance, how beautiful upon those mountains would be the feet of those who should carry such good tidings, who should proclaim such a salvation and say to that Zion, "Your God still reigns!"

It is said and oft repeated that there are in this city refined, well-educated girls who are sewing all the days of all the weeks of all their young years for a reward of twenty cents a day. Out of this must come food and clothing and the many expenses of life, for sweet as life is it costs money to live. It is said that some of these toiling ones obeying a tender nature are supporting little brothers or sisters or a helpless father or mother. It is further stated that at last the hearts of many of these girls become hopeless, and in despair of any noble future they part company with their mother and their God. What moral sublimity would there be in the individual or in the community which should rise up in behalf of these girls, and in some manner show them that their tears are seen by the wakeful eyes of our rich and enlightened century. How beautiful on the heights shall be

the feet that will bring glad tidings to these daughters of toil, shall bring salvation and tell them that their God still reigns!

Many of the cities of the land are now deeply pondering over the disgrace and ruin which gambling and intemperance and corrupt dramatic entertainments are bringing to tens of thousands who ought in such a country to be noble and happy. The public is more moral than ever before, but for that reason all that is criminal and debasing makes a blacker line upon the canvas. The blacker the cloud the more brilliant the rainbow. So upon the much whitened surface of our age crimes and vices stand out in awful blackness. Polygamy was permitted in the times of Abraham, but it becomes a repulsive monster in the land of Washington. Were it not that our age were much better than its predecessors there would remain no inducement for further philanthropic effort. If after the preaching of the last hundred years and after we have seen pouring along the great flood of public education and literature and religion and all forms of culture, the drama is more corrupt than ever and drunkenness more universal, then may the heart cease to hope for a better civilization and the feet on the mountain tops are beautiful in vain. There is no logic in effort if effort is powerless. It seems evident that all the efforts of the church and

the moralists and of high literature and high art have met with success—a success large enough to become the deep inspiration of to-day and to-morrow. The complaining ascetics of the dark ages were millstones upon the necks of the people and made the years dark by their uprisings, but the Roman Catholics of America marched out of that monasticism and they see around the altars a multitude far more intelligent and moral and happy than were the throngs of the sixteenth century. In God's world a plant placed in a cellar will reach out toward the window, and if the plant be a vine it will creep across the dark damp room that it may drink in the sweet sunlight. But God loves man more than He loves the rose or the ivy, dear as they are to Him, and He has made society such that from the recesses of its darkened room it will always creep toward the beams of light. It does not run indeed; it creeps, but it goes!

Moral esthetics is what our age now needs. Physical beauty is only an effort to express moral beauty. The two beautiful figures in Constant Meyer's "Consolation," the sweet face of the nun and the hopeful eye of the soldier, are efforts of art to express the love of the "Sister" and the yet deeper love of religion. Thus all our physical beauty along the street or in our homes should be a perpetual reminder that there lies far above such objects of sense a spiritual sym-

metry and harmony divine and everlasting, and this is the city toward which all the paths of time and sense should lead.

- “ Beautiful faces are those that wear—
It matters little of dark or fair,
Whole-souled honesty printed there.
- “ Beautiful eyes are those that show,
Like crystal panes where hearth-fires glow,
Beautiful thoughts that burn below.
- “ Beautiful lips are those whose words
Leap from the heart like songs of birds,
Yet whose utterance prudence girds.
- “ Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest, and brave and true,
Moment by moment, the long day through.
- “ Beautiful feet are those that go
On kindly ministry to and fro,
Down lowliest ways if God wills so.
- “ Beautiful shoulders are those that bear
Ceaseless burdens of homely care
With patient grace and daily prayer.
- “ Beautiful lives are those that bless—
Silent rivers of happiness,
Whose hidden fountains but few may guess.
- “ Beautiful twilight at set of sun
Beautiful goal with race well run
Beautiful rest with work well done.
- “ Beautiful grave where grasses creep,
Where brown leaves fall, where drifts lie deep
Over worn-out hands—Oh beautiful sleep!”

Before we dismiss our subject, let us all feel willing to declare that that Divine One of Nazareth is the source from which there has flowed into our century the most of this stream of moral beauty, and of the moral taste. His forms and designs, and decorations and ornaments, and his music were all in his heart. His forehead was noble in its thoughts, his eye and face in their benignity, his lips were beautiful in their words, his heart beautiful in its purity, his hands beautiful in their charity, his death beautiful in its intercession. Under such a Leader our material arts and our spiritual perceptions are moving slowly forward. Whither? Let us be true to the highest ideal and to the best reason, and say, "Toward a supreme city called—Heaven; toward a Supreme Being called—God."

IV. CIVILIZATION.

Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward toward the earth?—ECCLESIASTES, iii: 21.

IN an hour of distrust the author of the book of Ecclesiastes asks, "Who really knows anything about that spirit of man which has such an upward tendency, and who knows anything about that mind of the beast which looks downward toward the earth?" The common impression, indeed, prevails, that man is a high kind of being, and will climb in this world, and dying will rise to a new height; and there is a common impression that the beast looks down for his food and will always go downward until he shall have become dust. But who knows the real state of the case? It may be that all man's looking up will be labor and hope lost, and that he will meet at last, in the common dust, the brute, which looked down? "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, one thing befalleth them, as the one dieth, so dieth the other, they have all one breath, so that man

hath no pre-eminence over the beasts." Out of this sober soliloquy the wise man soon emerged, and seeing the real upward movement of man he drew a conclusion as to the whole of human duty—to fear God and keep His commandments.

This old meditation is able to awaken in our far-off time the reflection that man is a spirit which tends upward, and is thus distinguishable from the entire brute world—a reflection which makes me ask the question: What is civilization but an accumulation of the many forms of this upward progress? Civilization is the result of obeying the commandments of God, or the natural laws of society. In our century, which surpasses all its predecessors in the conviction, at least, that it has found a high condition of human welfare, a special study might well be made of the term, civilization, that we all may know what is the prize of national and personal life, and what part of that prize has been already won. It is my own impression that the fearing of God and the keeping of His commandments, is such a summing up of the elements of civilization as no modern definition can surpass. In order that this may be true, the laws of God must be made the equivalent of the laws of nature. His commandments must not be simply the ten of the Decalogue, nor the additional special commands of Christianity, or of any special religion, but

they must be the laws of all action and being. The constant discovery and obedience of law are the causes which push onward the human multitude. The beauty of the lilies, which Christ saw and admired, came from their keeping the laws of their part of the universe. They lived up fully to the statutes of sunshine and soil, and rain, and wind, and dew. They differ from man in two particulars—they do not need to study and discover their laws, and need not consciously obey them. Man must first find his law, he must afterward be willing to obey it, but aside from these two embarrassments man is like the lily, his glory comes from the fact and obedience of law. His beauty and color and perfume are called by a peculiar name, civilization.

Why may not civilization be a perfect following of natural law, regardless of the notion that the law must have come from a God? Is not its essence contained in the discovery and obeying of natural regulations, regardless of the question, "Who or what this nature may be?" It may be that the knowledge and the obedience are the essential elements of this progress, but an atheistic theory of our world omits the fact that many laws are made impressive only by the assumption that they came from an intelligent law-maker, and the greater this law-giver, the more powerful are the statutes. A few words found writ-

ten in a legal form but in some old dead language would not secure any great modern regard, for the reader who might see the law would at once remember that the Egyptian or Sanscrit or Greek crown which had enacted it had become dust; but were we in England and the same words were placed before us, as the imperative rule of the land, we should feel that the formula contained a strange inner power. The relation of a law-maker to the destiny of law is thus intimate, and when the mental and moral and physical rules of humanity are conceived of as coming from One, omniscient and all-powerful and righteous—the infinite Creator of the universe—those rules contain within them a potency which atheism dare not claim. There are many laws of society which do not ask for any external dignity. Man will seek food and drink without waiting to inquire who made the laws of hunger and thirst; in the universe of an atheist, man would attempt to keep out of the fire and out of the water, but there are laws of morals, of right and wrong, of nobleness and honor, and benevolence and personal greatness, which derive a new importance from the feeling that they are the will of a great God. The long roll of heroes, political and religious, has resulted from the feeling that God places men in great crises and carries forward His plans through these earthly soldiers. Beneath the

self-denial of the missionary, within the eloquence of the philanthropist, under the dust-cloud of the wars for freedom, under the head of the dying patriot we can all see the form of God as being the explanation of all sublime good, the consolation of each religious tear. Looking at the constitution of the human mind and heart, one cannot but feel that the obligation of a law depends largely upon an attendant feeling that the law is the will of some power not easily avoided by the wicked and worthy of all hope and love of the good. If a material universe has evolved the idea that man must be virtuous, it is indeed a noble principle, but that law is awful in sublimity if it came from an infinite Creator who can make ten thousand worlds, and toward whose presence we are marching by the way of the grave. It seems, therefore, an important element in civilization that it is a following of the laws passed by an Infinite God.

Assuming then this value of the Lawmaker, let us ask what are those laws, the obedience of which makes man pass upward above all the brute conditions? The answer has at last become perfectly obvious. All laws, physical, mental, and industrial, and moral, play an essential part in this large human drama. Of all the ages which have passed over man the present age alone has learned that man is not a simple result from one cause, but that he is a resultant—a picture

composed like a mosaic. His soul rises when his body and mind rise, and all suffers when any part is denied the advantages of the three-score years in this world. Our age only sees the manysidedness—the immense breadth of man, and therefore comes nearest to making a promise to the future of furnishing it with a civilization. Not yet has our era reached a perfect or a very high manhood, but it certainly is the one permitted first to note the fact, that human welfare is a stream made up of a confluence of many streams many of which were not named or even marked in the geographies of the past.

In surveying history we readily learn that the Greeks failed to produce the highest order of society because they did not study enough of the laws of man to make him move wholly upward. They discovered only some of the points in which he was superior to the brute. The intellectual and esthetic in the soul were wonderfully developed in that marvelous peninsula and these yielded so large results that the age seemed to have all riches. The arts and literature overshadowed all else. They monopolized Greece and reduced to starvation other adjuncts of human nature. When the pine-trees have the early woods all to themselves they hold the soil against all other forms of tree and plant, and no oak or maple can be found. No wild-flower or wild-berry can find air and sunshine

enough to make their life possible. All is solitude except as to the one companion—the pine, the color is the green of pine, the perfume is that of pine, the breeze is that which sighs through pine. It is all beautiful but not with the beauty of a world but with only the limited charms of the pine. When a tornado sweeps along and cuts out great openings in this old monopoly then the maple finds room for its autumn tints, and the wild blackberry and strawberry time and chance for their flower and their harvest for the birds. These hasten into the opening to show how broad the world is in its vegetable kingdom. Greece was too much a field that grew only one product—broad compared with the Asia that was dying behind it, narrow as seen beside that condition of mankind which lay far away in the advance. It was necessary storms should come and make openings in the great forest and prepare a welcome for the morals of Jesus and the mental philosophies and physical sciences of other times.

Christianity has generally repeated the blunder of underestimating the breadth of God's laws and has attempted to make a civilization out of a plan of salvation. Not only are the ten commandments too narrow a basis of human greatness but in all the doctrines of what the churches call "salvation" taken together, too limited to compel the spirit of man to go upwards.

Taken alone they make a bird with one wing which can flutter but not fly. The Christians of the middle ages were thus imperfect, and the imperfection crowded close upon modern times. The question what must man do to be saved? is of immense importance but it is only one of the great inquiries of our world and it turns into an evil when it displaces such questions as what must man do to be well-governed, or well-educated, or well-housed, or well-mannered, or well-respected? Progress is not the obedience of the gospel alone but it is also the obedience of science and art, for the same God that made man a candidate for Heaven, made him also a candidate for a school-house and an industry. The fifteenth century was full of religious faith, but it was equally full of idleness and ignorance. The only laws sought by scholars were the laws of a future salvation. All defined and redefined the terms of theology and failed to define such words as agriculture, and mechanics, and industry, and liberty, and equality. The whole human family attempted to walk as upon one foot and less of an advance was made in the first sixteen centuries than has been made in the last three. Walking through the sixteenth century you would have found each man you met to be a Christian but you would have found him to be also a beggar. No one studied or dreamed of such a thing as a noble and great society upon earth. All were busy

preparing for another world—some begging their way thitherward, some weeping out their time, some filling up forty or fifty consecutive years with solitary meditation. In all these dreary ages civilization was impossible, and for each one bright name admitted for some one merit into history, millions upon millions died without possessing any knowledge of human rights and privileges, and possible greatness, and not knowing anything of the earth or of the country that was to give them an unknown grave.

He would be an enemy of the human race who should cast any contempt upon the question proposed to men: "Are you a Christian?" but the spirit of man can not rise by such a study alone, but also by working out affirmative answers to such other questions as these: "Are you an industrious man? Are you a righteous man? Are you a temperate man? Are you a thoughtful man? Are you a kind man?" Out of a score of such affirmative replies the greatness of society rises like those majestic trees in California which spring from a soil deep as the trees are high, and which spread their boughs in an air ever mild and full of life from mountain or sea. The whole duty of man is to keep the commandments of God, but if those commandments lie like a network all over earth, then the man or the age that is keeping only the commandments of simple piety is not

regarding God, but is disregarding His word in many great particulars. The question "Are you religious?" is only one in the great catechism of Nature, and it may be answered by man as a child. Greece said to each citizen, "Are you a lover of the beautiful?" Rome said "Are you a military man?" The middle centuries said "Are you orthodox in the faith?" The chivalric period said "Are you romantic? Can you ride way after the hounds?" Each age said yes, and was as weak and narrow as the sunlight that would pass through the eye of a needle. To be valuable the sunlight must pour through a vast window; best is it when there is no window at all, but when it pours down from the whole broad sky.

Our era has not come to a perfect human welfare, but it has done so much toward solving great questions of progress that it begins to throw great light upon the inquiry, "What constitutes the civilized condition?" Religion or morals, as coming from God, must be a component part. The intellectual life of our period is also an essential part, for man must be so awakened and so mentally strong that he can perceive the relations and obligations of society. The mind must be so enlightened that such ideas as the slavery of a fellow creature will not be retained in its pure depths; so enlightened that the notion of religious persecution can find no favor. How fatal is

the absence of intellectual power, may be inferred from scenes now taking place in the rural districts in Russia, where Christians are mobbing the Jews, and doing this in the name of God; not having yet reached the intellectual power to realize that God is not a highwayman nor an infinite assassin. Russia is thus seen to be far away from the shores of an ideal humanity, for having religion without intellectual power, her peasantry are liable to become as madmen, and to make their villages red with blood and fire—a fact showing how deeply the Church injured society in those periods when it taught a way of salvation without teaching or studying all the sciences of this world. The streams of blood which flowed all over Europe in the triumphant days of the Church, compel us to admit that man may say his prayers at the altar and then emerge from his worship having many elements of the wild brute—the commandments of God being not those of religion alone, but of a wide and varied life.

Not only in Russia is civilization made imperfect and frail by the absence of a broad and deep intelligence, but so in our continent, which is the most lofty of all nations, the spirit of man is held downward by millstones upon the aching neck. The nation which pays millions a year for carrying imaginary mail-bags along imaginary highways by means of

imaginary steamboats and shadow horses and shadow wagons, is as yet a nation of mingled children and thieves ;—of which charity hopes the children are in the majority. The nation which permits a band of Mormons not only to defy all its own laws and to soil its good name, but to send emissaries all over Europe to ply black arts upon the soft minds of the ignorant and helpless, must be confessed to be a nation whose greatness is a matter of hope more than of fruition. And it must also be admitted that a government which will license three thousand saloons in any large city has many of the traits of the old Judas, in that it betrays its own youth to ruin for an income of silver. Of these specimen vices there is no explanation possible except that found in the fact that civilization comes from barbarism, and has not yet gotten out of sight of its ancestor.

We seem to have found two elements in a high civilization—religion and intellectual power. But this power needs a further remark. Mental life comes from the presence and dignity of labor. A great age must be one of manual industry, of popular and fashionable industry, because idleness of body passes to the mind, and is always an emblem of a coming sleep. The roar of physical action is an unfailing sign that the spiritual activity is real. Thus the mason and carpenter, and the plowman and the mer-

chant arouse the scholar and the student, and the din of the material is repeated softly in the soul. The flying train and the sailing ship help make the verses of the poet, and the wisdom of the president, and the discoveries of the inventor. It is a glory of our country that its wheels, and spindles, and plows have waked the mind from repose and made it a creator of the good.

The commandments of God are thus seen to reach out and include the numberless pursuits of the shop and field. Equally do they include the pursuit of the beautiful; for if man must perceive the relations around him, he must by some means reach a sensibility of nature that these wants of his fellow man may picture themselves upon his spirit. Some power must polish the plate upon which the most delicate image is to fall. A cultivated mother will waken if her child even sighs in the night; but by the side of a half-drunken father a little son can strangle and struggle and die. Sensibility is one of the divinest elements of a perfect society, and this is the fact which points out the office of the beautiful in the career of mankind. Under that term falls the grand, the lovely, the pathetic, and from these as embodied in the arts, man catches the grand and lovely and pathetic in the heart. A popular infidel, finding fault with the idea of a God, says "He would have made

disease non-contagious and good health catching." Nature has been kinder than the infidel, for when man as a child begins to look at and admire the beautiful, of God, he at last catches in his own bosom that affection so mysterious and powerful. The morning song of the bird, the greatness of the sea, the color and perfume of the rose, the sighing of the night winds, are all contagious, and man having been near them becomes infected, and no years can ever separate his heart and brain from this magic in the blood. So infectious is this good health that all the beauty which is enjoyed by infidel or saint comes from touching the garments of Nature as she passes along in her royal purple.

Could we pursue the inquiry further we should find that civilization is an uprising of man, not in some one quality, but in so many qualities that society passes from narrowness out into the breadth of the Almighty. That this breadth and fullness may be reached, there must be a liberty and equality of the people, so that the greatness of the epoch must not be sought in the few at a favored capital or metropolis. A barbarous state may show a few great minds, but civilization must be the condition of all, and hence can not exist except where there are liberty and equality. As all the depths of heaven mingle and compose its admirable blue so full of beauty and

peace ; so all the throngs of our streets must be so reformed and taught that they shall each be a part of that glow of soul called manhood—each be a part in the field of blue. All who in any manner help the people are servants of God, helping to lead that spirit of man which goeth upward gladly, leaving the lowlands of the brute.

When music was young it began with the vibration of a single string. That was sweet, but it was a monotony. Other strings were added as the ages came and went. At last the monotony was swallowed up in the rich flood of melody and harmony that came from the enlarged harp. Society once was only single-stringed. If it prayed it did not think ; if it thought it did not toil ; if it took up labor it omitted liberty ; if it dreamed of liberty it forgot God. But as the generations sweep along, new tones chime into this music once so low and dull. The spirit of man will have climbed a hight far up toward the sky when God and all his laws having been found and obeyed, these shall in some strange way combine in the soul and sound forth music from a full harp.

V.

AN INWROUGHT LIFE.

And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold unto the shaft thereof; unto the flowers thereof was beaten work.—NUM. viii : 4.

ONE of the wonderful elements in the old Hebrew religion is that love of fine work which is seen in the temple service and tabernacle service, and in the buildings and equipments for the worship of the true God. The details are as rich as though the race of Hebrews had been reared in the times of Angelo or in the galleries and museums of our century. The part is very large which was played in that far-off time by colored curtains, by wires of gold wrought unto cloth, by badger skins dyed red, by engraved cups and basins, and by ornaments of beaten gold. It is quite certain that were the temple of Solomon now standing in its first or second splendor it would make insignificant some of the wonders of modern Europe. This deep love of elaborate carving and hewing and weaving and casting and polishing tells us not only the story of art among the ancient Israelites, but the story of the same sentiment among the

Egyptians. Canaan was a picture of Egypt. The child Moses going into exile left behind him the land of his mother, but not her features. His people indeed borrowed jewels on the eve of their flight—jewels they never designed to restore; but the most valuable gems they stole must be found in the ideas and taste which they carried from the Nile to the Jordan. Those knops of flowers, those beautiful woven curtains, those basins with leaves carved on the margin and upheld by images of life did not come up from the desert or from the rocks, but came from the old and long industry and study of the kingdom of the pyramids; thus hinting to us that the arts are the results of much labor on the part of many generations. From this old scene along the Nile and afterward the Jordan, we must infer the conclusion that life to be worth the living must be wrought out carefully and patiently. Ideas and sentiments must be poured into it. It must be made of beaten gold; gold threads must be woven into its common fabric; it must be dyed into a rich crimson or royal purple; it must be hewed and carved and fully wrought out to the end. It is natural and easy to live, but it is difficult to live well. In the interior of the tropic lands existence is made easy by the presence of fruits all the year, and by a climate which asks not for houses or clothing; but here life is only

existence. There is no beaten gold in it. It has no jewels either stolen or made. It is a most familiar truth, hidden for a long time, but known in all later years, that individual life is beaten out like gold wherever it is found in any form of its worth or beauty. One law holds true in all the visible parts of God's Kingdom, and that law is that all things, mind and matter, must be wrought upon until they shall show marks of labor. Some temple stones are left untouched with the hammer, and the taste is approved because contrast is needed that the mind may possess the measurement found in comparison; as in music there may be some plain, dull passages, or even discord, that the heart may have a rest and feel the power of contrast afterward; but these unhammered stones and this discordant music are not the law of the arts, only exceptions are they, intermissions, just as a wise man may divert himself at times by moments of clownish nonsense. The universal law is that of labor, and by no money or stratagem can we escape that statute of nature. There is a little chapel in Scotland which draws an army of visitors each summer time, and its power of attraction lies in the quantity of thought and toil it embodies. It is carved on all sides; its stone ceiling is carved, its columns are carved, and when the interior could admit of nothing more the affection that built it went outside

and set up ornaments as long as place could be found for leaf or animal or saint. In the taste of to-day, when you find a house plain without, *amende honorable* is often made by ornamentation within; as though builder and owner desired to confess somewhere that God and man ask of us some proof of labor.

It was while dealing with this principle, Mr. Ruskin, in the former generation, condemned the carving done by a machine and the rings and flourishes achieved by a turning-lathe. He affirmed that when a living hand had by months or years of toil carved you a table or a column the work stood for human patience and genius. The fondness of this generation for this hand-carving and hand-painting prove to us that Mr. Ruskin uttered a truth in those essays composed thirty years ago. The machine-carving and the turning-lathe have been compelled to take a low seat at the feast of beauty, while pains-taking labor has been invited up higher. The candlestick of beaten gold, beaten in the shaft thereof and unto the flowers thereof is what the world demands now that it is summing up its observation and experience. The life of each of us is in the outset a plain piece of metal without figure or flower; it awaits the touch of the engraver, and often thus in waiting the years of life all hasten away and life ends as meaningless as it began. Our great business here is to add import to

our existence by marking it deeply with labor. It must show the blows of the hammer like the beaten silver and gold, not blows that break or bruise, but that give beautiful shape and leave evident traces of thought. Our world asks not for the labor that makes the shoulders stoop, that makes the body prematurely old and that breaks the heart, but it comes as far from demanding the perfect ease and leisure which some so deeply admire, for this idleness surpasses excessive toil in the power to injure man. We are asked to accept of and love that labor that braces up all the nerves, that makes the heart beat strongly and that acts as a daily inspiration and, above all, the industry that has a purpose reaching into the future.

It is probable that our age has its full share of aimless men and women. Evidently it is a better age than that of the classics who lived for physical perfection, and better than the barbarian times which lived for food and drink and sleep; but still we have a multitude large enough of persons who look at life through dull eyes—eyes which Carlyle says seem made of horn. There is no brightness in them; no inspiration from the heaven of to-morrow. When these souls reveal any animation it is when they are awaiting the next excitement to come to them from without. The approach of the play or of the opera, or of a marriage in high life, makes these mortals put forth

a smile or some little bud or leaf of the intellect ; but there is no perpetual and great purpose within. We are all of us too much like the birds and fishes and animals in the great zoological gardens, asleep and stupid until the feeding hour comes ; then the restlessness in each cage shows that some sensation is coming along from without. How are we much better than they ?

The Creator's plan is not thus fulfilled. The soul of his child—man—was to be made all glorious within, it was to be so in-wrought that it would be able to find happiness in society and in solitude ; so awakened that when nothing shown in it could light up its own recesses and turn dens into palaces. God has not left you at the mercy of the outside pageant alone. He is willing that all that is external should help you, and that you should rush to the window or the door when a band of music is passing ; but, beyond doubt, the most of each year's joy was to come from the kind of mind and soul carried by each of you in these days of earthly sojourn. We can not all be such pure beaten-gold as was Mrs. Browning, but you can all see a law of man's nature in these words :

“ With stammering lips and insufficient sound
I strive and struggle to deliver right
The music of my nature day and night,

With dream and thought and feeling inter-wound,
And inly answering all the senses round
With octaves of a mystic depth and height
Which step out grandly to the infinite
From the dark edges of the sensual ground !
This song of soul I struggle to outbear
Through portals of the sense sublime and whole,
And utter all myself into the air.
But if I did it as the thunder-roll
Breaks its own cloud my flesh would perish there
Before that dread apocalypse of soul."

In the immense external noise and movement of our country many a young person forgets the inner world of the mind, and instead of possessing a personal character, becomes only a perpetual motion ; and like rain-water will become stagnant if not stirred. The real truth is, it requires both worlds to make us live well ; the roar without and the capabilities within ; and then when the external dies for a week or a year, or for a few hours, the heart will be glad at the opportunity thus afforded of hearing what Mrs. Jameson calls " the octaves of mystic depth and height." Henry D. Thoreau, in his strange life, answered two questions for us : Has the soul great unknown depths in itself ? And is solitude the perfection of bliss ? His experiment gave us " yes " to the former of these questions, " no " to the latter. Whoever will read his writings will be amazed to find that

a universe of joy and peace is stowed away in each one of the human race to whom there has come a fair mental development. We should all have suspected as much from what we have known of Socrates and Epictetus and other noble ones from antiquity. A bright catalogue of names now comes to memory of those whose joy came streaming out from their own spirits in the face of poverty and torment—a catalogue which assures us that the heart is to shine not with the reflected light as the moon, but like the sun by its own outpourings. Thoreau, the Socrates of our era, sets forth exquisitely what is really in each man; but just as clearly his experiment shows that each heart must dwell in society as well as in itself; for it is an eccentric logic that will ask me to love the song of the bird and the frog, and to despise the song of a Parepa or the orchestral music of Germany. The Creator who made the throat of birds made the song-power of Parepa, and the wisdom that made the chorus of toads or blackbirds ordained the orchestras of Europe and America. Not only the woods and fields are nature, but society is nature, and the notes of the violin are as much God's as are the colored leaves of October. Thoreau was compelled to come back from the life of a hermit, and thus he revealed the utter failure of solitude; but he lived long enough in his cabin among the pines to

establish the fact that in each human spirit of fine natural powers there is lying quite a paradise of fruits and flowers. But this is the Eden that seems unknown to many of the young and of the old. They look out into the street all day long for their happiness. Some one says: "The traveller abroad finds only what he takes with him." And an old Latin said: "You do not get away from your soul by crossing the sea." We must have much within us before we can find much without. Therefore must we conclude that each individual is only a plain piece of metal, and that his noble career sets in when he has beaten his own gold into shape in the main and in the details. The candlestick of our text branched off so as to hold seven candles—seven being the perfect number that could yield a perfect and emblematic light. It was beaten gold in the main shaft, and beaten gold in the seven branches and in the leaves. Thus when the human mind has become fully wrought out in its central powers and in the seven mystical branches thereof it will realize that life is worth the living. It will not be like the sun dial of the ancient which said, "I take no notice of days unless they be sunny;" but it will wear a nobler motto, "I am able to make the sun shine through clouds."

Because of these inmost capabilities of man the education of the young should be general before it is

special. The one who is destined to be a mechanic or a clerk or a lawyer or an artist or a preacher or a pianist must also be a human being, and so momentous is this office of being human that education can not well bestow too much attention in that direction. The artist, the lawyer, the doctor, the book-keeper can not be occupied at all hours upon his pursuit; he is every night at least and much of each day set free to fall back upon his human self and he falls back upon a forlorn hope if his mind has no general education. Each one should have a kind double self—a self as a performer, a dealer in some shape of skill, and then a self as a human mind—a member of the immortals. Thus shall he have two paths of happiness—one for the working hours, one for all other days and years. The old question, “Why should a youth study branches he will not use in his business?” is fully answered by the reply that one’s business is only a part of one’s world, one’s soul is the other and larger part. There is no study of Latin or Greek or astronomy or botany or surveying or navigation that one will not use, for the man who buys wheat or lumber should turn into a human being at the close of business hours, and the lady who plays the piano should possess a grand human nature to return to at the end of her piece.

In all the cities and large towns the question is

raised, "What shall we do to help the young men and all the homeless ones to pass well their evenings?" The Sunday evenings create a particular anxiety because many resources are cut off for that one night. The homeless youth in our cities are to be counted by thousands. How their evenings may be honorably and happily spent is one of the benevolent inquiries of a benevolent age. One reply comes in from all those who think: We must have open libraries, open art rooms, open and good churches, lectures, concerts, sociables, and on Sunday nights sacred concerts, or popular church services of song. This reply is full of wisdom and solicitude and love; but there is another answer that should be joined to this, and be taught to all youth everywhere always, namely—that the mind should not be dependent upon the things and scenes outside of itself. Children must be amused by an outside force; it requires the whole time of a nurse to keep the rattles and toy-wagons and the building blocks in successful operation, but we should all hasten away from such bondage to another mind, and should be happy in the ability to shake our own rattle and put together our own building blocks. Is it not time for all our young people to realize their own personal power and worth, and that when galleries and concerts and even church doors are closed or are wholly wanting, the soul is

open and all lighted up and full of music or oratory and art? We all need help from all. Nothing is so unendurable as solitude. When in the reign of terror men were cast into dungeons, many of them of fine intellect went deranged from the awful pain of solitude; others of them screamed at the bars to passers-by to help in some manner their tortured souls. The dependence of each upon the many is very real and beautiful; but equally real and beautiful is the power of the mind to extract honey from some lonely hours, and that mind has wickedly neglected itself if it must each evening ask the outside world to supply it with entertainment. The desire to go somewhere each evening away from one's own fireside is simply a disease, as much so as the drunkard's longings for another cup. So broad was the intent and goodness of the Creator that man comes from His hand fitted for either the crowd or for the companionship of one or of only self. The city's roaring street and the path through the silent woods equally charm the developed mind. A walk of an hour along our lake shore in winter or summer in the evening, an hour with a good book, or an hour with a good friend by the winter evening fire, should be as full of earth's real blessedness as can be any gallery or drama or Bodleian Library. If any one can not find this good that one has missed one part of his

destiny ; he has been cheated out of half of his divine estate. More than a hundred and fifty years ago, when there were not half the spiritual riches in the world which now lie within the reach of the young, the poet Percy sang :

“ My mind to me a kingdom is,
Such perfect joy therein I find
As far exceeds all earthly bliss
That God and nature hath assigned.”

Long, long ago the poet Drummond built his castle-home upon the crags in an unfrequented forest, ten miles from the royal Edinburgh, that days could come when he could sing his own song :

“ Thrice happy he who by some shady grove
Far from the clamorous world doth live his own.”

Our cities must do all they can for the young generation as it swarms up into the streets. Temptations many and powerful await these pliant hearts. Our money and toil should be poured out as a river of life to flow before their feet ; but these same young souls should learn and should rejoice to know that they have power within—a personal power which can transform a small room into a world—a beautiful world that shall be all their own. “ Their own mind a kingdom is.” There is gold within that waits only the beating of the hammer, and forth it will come an ornament of matchless beauty. What a procession can you see of illustrious ones who have come up to

the highest usefulness and happiness simply by an unfolding of the divine in self! The pursuit of riches will not bring this triumph, for it is a chase after the external and is more wont to kill the spirit than give it life. It entices man away from the gold within to the coarser gold without. God having fashioned man, the infinite is not on the outside but it is within; and all self-culture is a wearing away of the rough exterior to set free the diamond's transparent depths. A city may possess thousands of dens of vice, but thou needest them not. Thy destiny is along some other path. There are poisons enough in the shops of chemistry to kill all the millions of earth, but thou dost not, needest not take the poison. So amid the awful surroundings of vice you can live uninjured if only you will look inward and behold in yourself a mission once worthy of the Creator and now therefore worthy of you. Our young comrades in this walk of life will ask little of the street and little of us older soldiers in the war when they shall have learned the grandeur of the personal kingdom bestowed upon each one by the heavenly Father; but lifted above temptation by a sublime estimate of existence each will say to his fellow :

“Oh, mighty brother soul of man
Where'er thou art, in low or high,
Thy lofty arches with exulting span
O'er-roof infinity.”

VI.

A SYMMETRICAL LIFE.

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted.—
EPH. iv: 16.

SYMMETRY is one of the elements of beauty in art. If the painter or sculptor or architect forgets this, it is vain he executes well the special parts of his work. If the arm of an infant is attached to the body of a man, or the large, heavy eye of a grave philosopher is painted in the face of a cherub, it is all vain that the arm or the eye in itself be excellent work. In a group of columns or figures it is easy for one to be too high or too low. In addition to the skill or genius demanded by each minute detail in art, the mind of the workman must possess breadth enough of intellect and taste to make him perceive the harmony of things—the unity possible in the midst of diversity. No wonder some have begged of our artists and literary men and dramatists to give them the unities, for indeed in such harmony there is infinite satisfaction, it is the soul's peace.

Literature is equally bound to be on its guard, for

if the writer be not full of measurement and comparison his introduction may promise more than is to be fulfilled in the volume, or some character of little importance may play far more than its part in the circle of events, and the hero may be hidden behind the valet. The cathedral whose spire is to rise four hundred feet, must itself be colossal. Its foundations and arches in the crypt, and all the decorative columns must act in the outset as though a lofty spire or dome was to set up an eternal comparison of some kind between it and them.

This law of symmetry, according to Paul, must be looked for in doctrines of belief and practice, and must help the finite mind in its search after and statement of truth. If man had to deal with but one doctrine in all his life, his danger of perverting it would at least be less visible even if not less real. His over-statement or his under-estimate would escape notice from self or society ; but the moment the mind must hold and arrange a score or more of dogmas or ideas or laws, then his troubles begin ; and to find the best truth everywhere the theologian or statesman must be as skilful as Meissonnier, who, in his battle-scenes, never makes his horses too large for the riders, nor the soldiers in the background as distinct as those fighting or dying in the front. Before us the very leaves and grass and sprinkled blood are seen ;

but in the distance the hills and trees with their green coverings and terrified beasts and birds, fade out of sight in smoke and dust. It is an embarrassment of our times that the public ideas have become so numerous in all the departments of thought and action that it is almost impossible to group them according to their merit; that a small man may not be mistaken for a king, nor a good king mistaken for an ignorant domestic in this great canvas of thought or principle. When the human race began first to feel that there must be a God; the one dogma of His existence lay before the multitude. The quality of that existence had not yet been thought out. The mind was free to imagine the Deity as awake or asleep, as full of revenge or passion; but as meditation and reason advanced it became necessary to modify this existence, and finally conclude that the Creator never slumbers; and then that He knows all and is present everywhere. These last ideas would make improbable a material body and a local home, and thus the first thought must be modified by a second, and the second affected by a third, and thus onward until at last the human race was called upon to weigh and balance opinions so as to make the arm respond to the size of the body; the foot to the limb, the eye and mouth to the face. When the Mosaic age arose up in the wilderness and stood alone, for it would not see anything

else, neither Greece nor Asia nor the coming Rome, and saw the surrounding tribes only long enough to destroy them, it possessed an individual grandeur. Its hymns and laws were wonderful. Its customs, public and private, composed as it seemed a civilization; but alas, for it! when a new era suddenly appeared in the person of Christ then had Mosaism to be deeply modified. Those who had written its laws had not seen all the outlying world; had seen only twelve tribes, had not seen the future of earth, only a narrow band of time; had not seen the whole being of God; had seen him quite hidden in the cleft of a rock, or had heard the rustle of divine garments. Burning bush, thunder-shaken Sinai, the parting sea, the drowning of the Egyptian host had revealed the divine power, and it stood forth all gigantic, but no one had come yet to draw the outline of the divine love. Christ's advent was therefore an overthrow of the past: a sudden inquiry into the relative proportions of God's wrath and His mercy; and John the Baptist told the whole story when he said, "He must increase but I must decrease." Emblems and localisms had lived their natural life—a wider grasp asked for the retirement of much that had once been great. Doctrine, like learning, is always relative. Herodotus passed in his day for a historian, and Pliny for a distinguished scientist, and Lycurgus was famous as a

statesman, but could those men reappear to-day in the exact condition of mind in which they left this world the one would not wear the glory of a historian, nor the others the fame of science or political wisdom. Each would reveal traces of his special merit, but in the new era they would be unbalanced like trees which have grown for a hundred years with the sun on one side. It was therefore impossible for Augustine or Tutullian or Calvin or Luther to make final statements of doctrine, and impossible for the early popes and bishops to delineate a church that should be the one church of all the ages, for into their creeds or their church ideas would be cast not in any just proportion but with the partiality of the different times. If you will read any old creed of Roman or Protestant fabrication you will learn from it what doctrinal wars were then raging, and what dogma was the favorite or the horror of the times. As the old coats-of-mail assure us that bullets had not yet come, that the weapons must have been sword and spear and arrow, so the creeds of early epochs tell us that it was the delight of kings and popes and priests to have their enemies well punished, and that a God of vengeance was more desirable than a God of forgiveness and love. Had Dante written in our age he would have cut down and softened the "Inferno" and have carried his grand rhetoric and flowers and

picture over into the purgatory and paradise, for the hell of our age is rapidly retreating into the purgatory of the past.

Mr. Beecher recently expressed the wish that he might yet find a Christian philosophy which should be everywhere and always true and valuable. The wish is noble, for it is only a longing of the heart for a harmony that shall make many particulars blend like the instruments in an orchestra. We all may well long to see the figure of theology rise up like one of the graces from the chisel of Phidias or Thorvaldsen, and not longer to stand forth as monster—a cyclops with one eye in the forehead, or like the creature of Milton that

“Seemed a woman to the waist and fair
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed
With mortal sting.”

There should be rising up from amid all the toiling artists to-day in the church, and in the closets of learning, and in the deeply thinking multitude, some form of Christianity which might reveal the lines of eternal beauty, and be to the realm of religious truth what the Apollo Belvedere is to the world of human forms. The generation now living asks for a Heavenly Father whose power and goodness, whose justice and mercy shall find some expression in the thoughts

and language of earth. It seems evident that the wrath and mercy of God are vast facts, and from those facts must emerge two other facts called hell and heaven; but where is the supreme equity that shall tell us in what form we shall depict an angry Creator, or with what colors we shall paint the world of punishment and the world of happiness?

To illustrate the assertion that it is difficult for our generation to arrange into symmetry its great and sudden arrival of new thoughts, let us cite the doctrine of benevolence or common charity. The last hundred years have been as busy in the theory and practice of love as were the dark ages in the invention and practice of cruelty. What military fame was to the Romans, or what physical beauty was to the Greeks, this sympathy for the common people is to our generation—a great dominant sentiment. And much nobler is it than any feeling which ever swept across the classic lands, for the wave of poetry or art or eloquence does not sparkle and smile like the bright waters of charity. Onward has come this sentiment like a spring-time hurrying up from the south. But suddenly the coins and food cast to beggars have to be withheld, for the charity which was supposed to save the poor only creates a new army of applicants. Benevolence has become a creator of idleness and wretchedness; and back we are all driven

again with our work of art, and are requested to make the arm harmonize with the body and the eye with the forehead, and to come back to the gallery with our work when we shall have gotten out of apprenticeship and can tell an angel from a monster. All would have remained as it was had not the same age which has evolved the doctrine of charity wrought out at the same time new ideas and estimates of personal labor and independence. An age may find peace by knowing only a little, or else by knowing a vast number of things. When our times began to ponder over the fact that Franklin was poor and yet needed no gift pennies, that Doctor Hogg was a coal-heaver, that Winckelmann was the son of a shoemaker, that George Stevenson began his career digging in the coal-pit, and expressed his joy when his pay was advanced to twelve shillings a week, that Herschel played music for dancers and in the intervals studied astronomy, that Burns plowed, that Lincoln split rails, they began to find their charity to be affected by the rising glory of self-help. It has now come to this that we all stand between two large truths, that we must be kind to our neighbor, and that that is the wisest charity which teaches the mind to help itself. England is now quite pervaded by the principle that man must be made to love his own self-support, and there are savings banks which do not suspend or

break whose motto is, "To help the poor to help themselves." Thus in a broad age doctrines come into conflict with each other, and the one first on the scene must often be much changed to make room, not for an antagonist, but for a companion. Difficult will it be to make the tree which has had the light and warmth on one side for a century straighten up its bent body and throw out branches on its feeble side. So our times affected by a long past, when all things tended to produce a onesided growth, will find a difficult task in the return to a symmetry of trunk and branch and leaf and fruit. Church and State will be in a temporary chaos like a doubting army, and the hearts of patriots will fear for their country and the religious fear for the safety of their altars. Good men and loving Christ are designated as infidels or skeptics, and the irreligious looking on laugh at man's faith in a God or a second life. But we have not come to a chaos, but to a luxuriant field where the soul is so rich that a score of ideas grow and become entangled together. To find the just value of each doctrine is one of the great labors that we must all help understand and perform.

If you would attempt to measure yet further this entanglement of opinion you can find a field of operation in the temperance question. The intoxicating cup met with a new and powerful foe in the temper-

ance reform which began early in this century and spread with great power in 1836 and adjoining years. The cheapness of whiskey made from the corn which grew everywhere made the distilleries more common than the school-house; and sending thirty thousand men to the grave each year when the population of the nation was small, that popular drink won for the country the fame in the words, "*A Nation of Drunkards*;" but here are we to day bewildered between the three ideas of total abstinence and moderation and personal liberty. Each idea is a large one. Abstinence stands upon a basis of logic; so does temperance. and equally eloquent are the arguments in favor of personal liberty. Where these three roads cross many good men have halted, not knowing fully what path to declare the wisest and best. But to our age alone have three such enigmas been proposed. To men in Bible times temperance was proposed and urged, but in those years individual right was of little significance, and of total abstinence little was said; but here the three thoughts meet, and it is required of us to find the symmetry of the whole piece. I do not wish to be a drunkard, but desire to be free, and yet do not wish to set up my liberty against the welfare of my neighbor, and hence join the multitude which is in doubt where the roads cross. But it is lawful for us to surmise that the symmetry of these figures will

at last be found in an education, intellectual and moral, which will make men ashamed to brutalize self by means of any of these drinks, distilled or fermented, known to our suffering race. It is probable that "self-control" is to be the final and ideal watchword of our nation in this relation of society to a form of appetite. That is probably the method which will make a unity out of the figures to be gathered upon the canvas; for the grandest manhood and womanhood is that which can hurl back temptation by a gigantic power within. All the great have become so not by a life in a sinless world but by life in a world whose vices they saw and despised. On one account the presence of a vice is a form of good fortune; it offers the noble soul an enemy to conquer and a proof that he has within some trace of excellence. Much of Paul's joy lay in his ability to say, "I have fought a good fight"—a sense of personal worth he could not have reached in an angelic world.

This difficulty of finding the proportion or equity of doctrine reaches outside of religion and beyond the questions of temperance and total abstinence. Let us look into another corner of this luxuriant age and note how vastly out of proportion has become the desire to amass riches. Industry and liberty and the unparalleled opportunities of the continent and men-

tal growth are facts which meet in this land and period ; but the love of money has outgrown its noble companions, and once more the human nature is becoming deformed. The passion for gain is trampling to death, with many, the passion for learning and contentment and friendship and peace and goodness and usefulness. Young men turn back from schools or colleges that they may hasten to make fortunes ; books of literature are closed, conversation is abandoned, home is postponed, marriage despised, reflection and peace forgotten that all the powers of mind and body may be given to the race for riches. Thus falls or soon will fall the possible harmony of mankind. Thus will a new deformity begin to spread itself over that soul which came to earth in the likeness of God.

Thus has the case been adequately stated. Is there any help for this disproportion ? There is indeed help, and that too within the reach of most hearts. Man cannot cure the diseases of the body. At last some fever or consumption or other illness will come and friends will say, " He must die." This is because nature has assigned us all to physical death. The free-will is not consulted ; hence before disease we are at last powerless ; but nature has not appointed any of you to spiritual disease and death. Rather it invites you to a higher and higher life. It has therefore given you all a will-power that may evoke a

beautiful world out of a chaos. What is a Franklin or a Washington or an Emerson or a Longfellow or a Lincoln or a Garfield except places where the human will has been with its creative touch. As one of the modern wise men said, "The universe is an enormous will rushing outward into life"; so may we say of each noble man or woman, that is a human wish and purpose unfolding into the external flower of being. All ye young hearts who are just setting forth upon the journey can not indeed solve all the enigmas of thought, but looking out upon this magnificent landscape you can say: "I shall worship a God of equal justice and love; He shall rise up before me holy, without spot and as loving as our mother; His heaven and His hell shall be the arenas of a wise and a just Creator; I shall throw Calvin and Luther and Tertullian and Augustine and thousands of other worthies into a new crucible, and shall extract the gold from each and from each the dross; I shall open my heart in charity, but will remember the new-born proposition that he best befriends who helps a neighbor to help himself; I shall compare together the glass of spirits and the glass of crystal water and try to measure the sorrow and crime of the one, and the clear intellect and rosy cheeks in the other; and seeing the mad struggle for only money, I shall try to make a life of industry turn its earnings daily into more mental and

spiritual power, and shall ask gold, not to make me a grasping monster, but to help me become a kinder and wiser man." Such a philosophy is not purely theoretic; it is practical and simple and easy; and in this kind of chariot many even in our age are riding happily along the earthly career; and oftentimes like the chariot of Elijah it seems to leave the dust and noise of the discordant crowd, and to advance through the higher and sweeter air.

This period, the widest and deepest of all in its intellectual grasp; this period so overflowing with facts and thoughts and inquiries, so equipped with the love of labor and the instruments of labor, and so generous in its rewards of toil, has dawned in vain to all the youth of our nation unless they draw near to it with that will-power which can compel the rich stardust to gather itself into a world. He who simply gazes at the magnificent surroundings of modern existence is only a child which watches the bubbles blown into the air, full of delight at the prismatic colors of the frail, sinking and fading balls. They only are worthy children of God who seeing the statue in the marble block begin at once to bring forth arm and hand and cheek and forehead, until like the image made by Pygmalion the lips give signs of turning into speaking loving life. Up amid the *disjecta membra* of old ages and old worships arose the Christ of St.

Paul. He debased some ideas and exalted others; He made a new grouping of the figures which had come, some from Egypt, some from Israel, some from Asia, and when this divine master had refashioned and remade all, the religious mind gazed at the scene and beheld a new symmetry of things human and divine. God was in the midst, humanity were as children about his feet, virtue was receiving a crown, sin was sinking into the earth glad to conceal its form from a God and Savior so patient and merciful.

VII.

A GREAT BROTHERHOOD.

And Abram said unto Lot, 'Let there be no strife I pray thee between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself I pray thee from me; if thou wilt take the left hand then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand then I will go to the left.'—GENESIS xiii : 8. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.—I JOHN iii : 16.

To us who live in what seems a golden age of thought and sentiment, it may well seem strange that an Abram who lived in dark times should have happened upon such a noble idea as the one advanced in this text. Had the two groups of herdsmen with their patriarchs as leaders ambushed or openly attacked each other, and put to death each other, and each other's wives and children, and have scattered the herds in the wilderness, the story would have met better our expectation of such an age. Our estimate of the past is often incorrect. There were glorious things and ideas in all that remote antiquity. The jewels of history are not all to be found upon one shore. They are scattered along, so that each gen-

eration may find its own pearl of great price. The reader as he passes along over the record in Genesis perceives the flash of this gold dust in the incident just read. Abram said, "Let there be no strife; the world is broad. If you would prefer the right, I shall take the left, and if you prefer the left I shall take the right, for we be brethren." St John coming many centuries later and full of the spirit of Jesus Christ went beyond Abram and said, "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." If such a sentiment of mutual love and of compromise began to appear in the days of Abraham, and even then to be beautiful, what an immense life it should be living in these far off and, as we think, better days. The words "Let there be no strife. Is not the whole land before thee" and "we be brethren," should be loud and musical in our century. Let us think of them while we contemplate what should be and is becoming the greatest brotherhood on earth—the pulpit brotherhood. Your attention has often been called to the ministry as one of the learned professions and as a powerful department of thought and work, but not so often perhaps have any of us thought of the actual or possible brotherhood that pertains to that calling. It may be that the brotherhood idea has not been large enough to awaken any public admiration. It may be that the clergy have quarrelled and fought until the impression

that its individuals are enemies has become more conspicuous than the impression that they are friends. The worst qualities of anything are often the noisiest. If from any cause the world has failed to mark the fact of this Gospel guild, yet the fact remains. If we were unable to discuss it in the concrete, at least it should be viewed in the abstract, for if it does not exist it should soon be endowed with life and cheered onward toward a noble business. But such a brotherhood exists. Its world is lying in outline and each year comes to clothe it with verdure and to awaken the hum of life. There is much discord still in the ranks. Individuals have their quarrels like so many children, but this is true of all earthly affairs and institutes; they move along with much jarring and noise. And yet no clergyman can meet a member of his craft in any foreign land or in any journeyings, without feeling a little nearer to that man than to the general crowd of the street. One of the deeply orthodox clergy of a neighboring city found a near friend in a Catholic priest. Get these ministers well away from home where the little local interests are silenced by the larger and sweeter voice of the wide world and all the meaning falls away from "High Church" and "Wesleyan" and "Calvinist" and hands are grasped regardless of immersion or apostolic succession. The mind and the heart and sometimes the

eyes fill up with the words of the old wanderer "*We be brethren.*" It used to be carved on the tombs of the early Christians "He sleeps in Jesus," "He rests in Jesus." This inscription blots out all other memory, and we know not whether the mortal thus remembered had been a carpenter or a farmer or a slave. He was wonderful in the one way in which he fell asleep or to rest. So on this side the tomb, clergymen meeting each other find all distinctions erased by the thought that he lives in Jesus or toils for Him.

But let us leave the fact, which is as yet too weak, for the theory which is as yet too little studied. Let us approach the theory that the Christian Ministry is the greatest brotherhood among men.

All professions are brotherhoods. Similarity of study and work and interest build up a sentiment that is much akin to a pure, deep friendship. Statesmen and scientists and lawyers know all about the pleasure that comes from this similarity of pursuit. When the telegraph brought to this city the news that its lady lawyer, Miss Hulett, had suddenly died, the resolutions of regret passed by her legal associates were not simply formal, but were the expression of esteem and love toward one who had passed over their long and difficult path of study, and had come earlier to her grave on account of toils and excitement which they only could measure.

Through all professions runs this sympathy; but in the pursuit called the ministry, it should be more marked than along any other path of duty or occupation. This profession contains the elements of a great brotherhood.

It springs first of all from a contemplation of life on its pathetic side. The arts deal with intellectual and æsthetic ideas; the statesman's guild rests upon political truths; the scientific ties upon study of nature; but the clerical association is sustained by the pathos of all human life; it is fed by the sorrow, and faith, and hope, and fear, and mystery of man. All fellowship brings friendship, but when the fellowship is located among such facts as sin, and virtue, and sickness, and death, and Christ and God, and immortality, it ought to result in professional ties deeper than those which bind the travellers along any other path of action. In this pathos of human nature sprang up the sentiment which Abram expressed so grandly to Lot. Why should we fall into strife? The ties of a common humanity bind us. We must journey along with our herdsmen and families and flocks toward old age and the grave, and hence let us journey peacefully, you turning to the right and I to the left, or thou to the left and I to the right. Such language did not spring from only a conception of justice. The term, "We be brethren," turns

us away from exact justice, and asks us to admit an element of the truly pathetic. Those two migrating hosts parted not at the bidding of right only, but by command of a sentiment of humanity. One of those higher emotions which sometimes strike the heart as a perfumed wind, sometimes sweep Northward from spicy islands, arose in the bosom of Abram, and it suddenly took the point off of every spear and transformed the wild herdsmen into children. Already doubtless the spirit of God had begun to attack the soul of the exile. He had just encamped at a place called Bethel and had there called upon the name of the Lord. The future which was to change the name Abram into Abraham, and was to crown him the leader of the faithful, had already begun to germinate in his heart. Out of this dawning religiousness sprang the sentiment, "Let there be no strife, for we be brethren." The city of foundation had begun to unveil itself.

Beneath the human race there has generally been some one shape of thought and sentiment at which distinctions have ceased and men have become brothers. Literature and the arts have often been this common ground where all feet, of king, or slave, might stand. It may be that these arts and letters were called the "*humanities*," from the fact that they belonged not to a class, but to the human race, and

because they built up in the soul not a feeling of caste, but one of humanity. The slave Æsop found his fables an introduction to the presence of kings, and the slave Epictetus was made one with the highest princes by the height and depth of his philosophy about God and the soul. It may be that all literature and art gradually acquired that name, *the humanities*, not only because they humanize, but because they are a common ground where distinctions cease and slave and king are equal parts of the human quantity. At least beneath the stream of life there is some common ground which each foot may touch. The ministry of religion has such a universal good or potency in that pathos which creates it and inspires it. Abram, Enoch, Job, Daniel, Plato, Epictetus seem to us now strangely bound together by the oneness and greatness of their inquiry; and then after Christ a still more impressive oneness appears reaching along over the many centuries. But so greatly has this brotherhood been interfered with by personal and sectarian interests that we shall much better employ the words "*should be*" than the words "*has been.*" With a wide and powerful sentiment flowing through the midst of it what a brotherhood should we find in the Christian ministry! When Mr. Beecher was making his brief sojourn in this city he said, in a private conversation, that often when he "lay on his pillow, or was gliding

along in a rail-car, half-asleep, there came into his mind an upper view of religion, above the region of cloud, where all creeds became one, and all the discords of the many systems gave place to a harmony. When the poor body had fallen half-asleep, the soul would steal away from it and fly up higher, whither no discord could follow. The body being fully awakened again by the fatal morning clock, or by the jolting car, back came the religion of the low valley again with its contradictions and petty interests." How true was that monologue! There is a harmony of Christianity positive and beautiful. But the local interests, those things of the flesh, must be lulled to sleep before the heart can rise into the upper air where doctrines change into one grand truth, and the servants at the altar are transformed into brethren. But it is an inspiration to know that there is a Tabor where this wonderful transfiguration may take place; for knowing of its existence we can always seek for it in all this pilgrimage, and when sight is denied, be almost transformed by the hope.

Let us mark the rational grounds for expecting and declaring such a brotherhood. One has been mentioned, the common element of pathos that runs like a thread of gold through religion. Now to this common sentiment of all religion, natural or revealed, add the one central character or idea of Christianity—its

Jesus Christ. This one idea is so powerful that it ought to bind all the gospel ministers into one friendship, of which the words of Abram, "we be brethren," could be but a faint shadow. It ought not to be possible for any two migrating patriarchs, moving their flocks about from pasture to pasture, while civilization was young, and the air dark, to happen upon a fellowship that could shame any of the relations that should spring up among Christians living in the dispensation of Christ. All the ideas of unity held by old Abram and Lot should fade in attractiveness before that unity of hearts which should spring from the idea of Jesus. According to writers in art, unity is the perpetual presence of one idea. It is seen everywhere on the canvas. If the picture be that of "Rispa Protecting the Bodies of Her Sons," though there be a hundred details in the composition, each one will tell the sorrow of the mother. On account of her desolation the seven bodies will hang without raiment. She will stand upon a garment of sackcloth. The rocks around will not mock her with any lichen or moss. The heavens above will have no sunlight or star. The forests will be dark, and the birds of prey black. The mother's hair will hang uncombed, and her robe unbound to show that her heart is far away from her black tresses and her vesture. Columns of cloud and smoke will be seen afar as

though the universe were a sharer in her wild grief. This is what art-lovers call the unity of variety. Now what these cultivated minds ask of art and find on all great canvases is to be found in almost sublime proportions in the Christian religion, for there hangs Christ upon a rude beam defending by His death His children from sin and suffering. This one fact should rush forth and change into its likeness all the details near and far. The Catholic and Protestant, the holder of this idea and of that should all be drawn into one circle and made equal parts of the one impressive picture. No discord should run through the scene, but from face of Calvinist, and Methodist, and Romanist should beam the sorrow and the joy, the work, the hope of Jesus Christ. The central Christ should impress all the surrounding scene into his service, and group a hundred sects into one picture.

As though this unity of the central figure were not enough to bind the ministry into accord, there comes a unity of result to unite once more to a close brotherhood. The work of the ministry is one—another unity amid variety. Not only is this a theoretic unity, that of leading mankind to the spirit of Christ, but it is an actual unity, for here, all through this land, after a winter of religious work, all the reapers come in from the fields, bringing their sheaves with them. These sheaves are equal in number and of the same

kind of grain. Some instructive lessons could be learned from the reports which the churches are making of winter work. Churches planted in the midst of one population draw equally from the world, and Methodist, and Baptist, and Presbyterian, and Episcopal, and Congregational folds find God equally near. Looking down from the higher heavens, the Spirit sees not the distinctions which we think so large and see so plainly, but God sees only the unity of the hearts that love Christ, and for each one who finds conversion in a Presbyterian sanctuary some one bows to be confirmed at an Episcopal altar. By many paths the sinful children press forward to one salvation. Hence, viewed in the light of results, there is a brotherhood in this army that follows after that Nazarene Chief. This oneness of result should turn into an inspiration that might bear the clergy along toward the divine words, "*We be brethren.*" Not only the oneness but also the greatness of the result should compel a marked fraternization. It is said that the large modern Society of Freemasons sprang from the bodies of temple-builders, which in the days of palaces and cathedrals went from place to place in the old world, and encamped around their future structure. From daily association and similarity of pursuits a great friendship sprang up and gathered all these toilers in its arms. This friendship blossomed

into processions, and regalia, and festal days, and then by-laws, and then secret words, by which the Mason would know and be known in a strange land. And yet the one idea, the unity out of which came such a variety, was only the temple or the palace that arose amid all these united hands. Here was only a beautiful purpose. But the Christian order does not join hands about a fabric of marble, an acropolis, or a basilica, but around a Christ and a temple of virtue and immortality. Here is not only a oneness of result, but a sublimity of result—a temple of the soul. The brotherhood of Masonry should be outdone. Moving about the world in the name of this one Christ and this temple of righteousness, there should spring up a brotherhood which could never be furnished the world by any other union of hands and hearts. A language should spring up which might make friends for any Christian wanderer in any land. Indeed, it is related of some dying man on a battlefield, or in a hospital, that when a humane visitor came to this sinking one and began to speak to him in a foreign language, the sufferer, not understanding a single sentence, smiled and grew happy whenever the strange speaker came to the word, Christ. That one word showed the fellowship of the two souls: Differing in language and condition, the visitor and the dying were one in Jesus Christ. Toiling about

one temple, and that temple being Christ and his regeneration, there belongs to the Christian ministry a brotherhood of unrivaled quality.

But we are not yet done with the theoretic unity of this profession. Not only does a humane philosophy coming down from Abram in Mamre impel toward such an affectionate association, not only does the unity of result seen in our times declare the folly of fraternal strife and the obligations of companionship but the mighty future of earth and of eternity whisper to us all of an equality and oneness of which few have yet reached the faintest dream. Advancing civilization is casting aside small ideas, is separating the incidental from the essential and is making up a brotherhood day by day as each spring-time enlarges the oak, but just beyond this powerful civilization lies the tomb which will unstring the discordant harps of earth and re-make them for music. Out of the grave men will not emerge Catholics or Protestants, Methodists, Calvinists, but children of God. So well assured are we of this that now over some of the grand tombs of earth, such as those of Fenelon and Robert Hall and Pascal, one seldom remembers to what sect each occupant belonged, because the silent grave has terminated those qualities and has made them pass into history as they passed into heaven, only sons of God. The grave is the final exposure of all the large and

little cheats of this life. It lies in the ground a judgment bar where the littleness of man is ordered into eternal dust and the greatness of man is welcomed to heaven. Perhaps man is compelled to march toward a sepulchre that its nearness and inevitable coming may help humiliate the heart into a fraternal love which could never come from a proud life unchecked by such a sad boundary. Thus before the ministry there sprang up in the old time the words "We be brethren," that ought to be potent in yielding mutual love; then came the sublime oneness of idea and work in Christ, and then came the levelling influence of the portal of eternity, that iron gate. Standing amid such facts and ideas it should not surprise us but it should profoundly impress us to see the clergymen of our own East communing at each others' altars and the loftiest genius of the Episcopal church helping an unlettered evangelist to carry blessings to the multitude. The rubrics are good. Many an army of souls has read itself into heaven over the prayer-books of the Episcopal church; and so education and learning are a valuable possession, but the uprising of religious longings and intentions is better than all, and hence the varieties of man give way to make room for the unity of God. It is a token of a better day when, all the world over, the clergy of the groined-ceilings and velveted desks can

join with unordained evangelists in a board meeting-house or canvas-tent in offering to the multitude the one Savior.

Doubtless many different forms of doctrine must remain. Unity is not identity, but sympathy. Abram and Lot held a unity in diversity, a diversity of path, a unity of love. Thus before the Gospel ministry lies the world. The Presbyterian looks out and sees a plain of Jordan, that it is well watered everywhere, and thither he turns with family and flock, while the Episcopalian finds Canaan charming enough for him, and into its vale of milk and honey he leads his host; but as the caravans file away from each other the Eastern air seems redolent with friendship, and the breezes seem to murmur through the palm trees the words, "We be brethren."

Of course not yet has the golden age come. Discordant notes will be heard in all music. In all moving armies there are weak hearts that long to turn back and give up the fatherland or the liberty. There will always be minds which will find more in a word than they can find in the Savior, and who for an acre more of ground, or for a half dozen more of palm trees would have drenched with blood those plains where Abram found such a compromise with man, and such a Bethel of God. But these seekers of discord grow fewer and fewer as the generations

pass, and all things indicate that the delicate harmony of Abram will in coming times swell up into a chorus.

Furthermore, it is not necessary that all men should confess and see plainly this brotherhood of the clergy. If some are happy without marking such a spectacle they need not exult over the oneness of the servants of Christ. A truth may be on hand or be coming without being universally known. An exiled king once returned to his palace after long absence and was confessed only as a beggar, and was fed and neglected as such. But his rags in due time gave place to royal robes. Along come great truths unknown, unheralded for a time, but at last the tattered garments fall away and the whole mountain is full of light and transfiguration.

The practical lessons for the people and the pastor who meet here each Sunday are simple and true. There is a Church to which we all belong. It has that central idea, Christ, which is the unity of every denomination. It matters little what variety is thrown upon the canvas around that central figure. Is not the whole land before the ministry? and if our brethren select the one hand where the fields reach out to their eye like a garden of the Lord, and thither we can not also go, then to us remains the other hand, and to us it will seem beautiful as Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Over to the other army we cry

out "We be brethren." At times the unhappy men who cannot see the brotherhood of the clergy or of Christians will inquire whether you and I have the true faith; but this inquiry, come as it may, will only remind us how wide the land is before all the wandering ones in the field of thought, and that to the right or left, God and Christ are equally near. Nearly all the fine distinctions about what is called orthodoxy are only the quarrels of the herdsmen in the rear of the army and are not the voice of the Abram who has found a Bethel in the front. The land lies before you inviting and broad. In the midst of such a vast encampment we need not be lonely. If we do not belong to one denomination, then, what is better, we can belong to all. And we need not ask man to admit us, for man has the keys of only his small sanctuary and could admit only to one little room. By casting ourselves in love and obedience at the feet of Christ we join all the Churches by finding the unity of the variation—the gate that opens into every sanctuary.

VIII.

THE BETTER CHOICE.

“The tree of knowledge of good and of evil.”—Gen. ii : 9; xvi: 17.

WHEN Thomas a’Kempis was a youth of about twenty years, he visited a great man of that day to learn of him what path such a youth should follow through life. In that era of church history there were but few roads along which an educated mind could journey. Theological lore (if errors gathered into volumes can be called lore) had displaced law and medicine and science and politics as human pursuits, and had displaced literature except so far as it related to abstruse questions and the wonderful lives of the saints. To this young inquirer after duty the old man had ready the only advice which seemed great in that dark age, “Enter a convent and study the deep things of God.” The youth obeyed and gave to solitude seventy years of this earthly time. The scene is greatly changed now and each one stands, in the morning of his existence, where many ways diverge. The world has become richer in pur-

suits and pleasures than it was when monasteries and convents and caves and lonely forests drew many thousands of gifted ones into the supposed purity and safety of solitude. Then education fled from the world and was thus a constant robbery of a gorgeous temple; now education adds to the world and instead of being a destroyer is a creator of good. Talents and learning and ambition may well become bewildered in a country which invites toward more than a hundred avocations. The monasteries have been generally closed; the solemn woods are disturbed by the lumberman's axe and the flying train, and even the philosophies, religious or abstract, have come out of the closet in order to adapt themselves to the highest interests of mankind. It is much to the credit of modern philosophy that whether it is inculcated by Stuart Mill or Harriet Martineau or Herbert Spencer, it seeks the immediate welfare of the multitude. Nothing is purely abstract any longer. All pursuits, intellectual or physical, seek one end: the betterment of the human race—a goal sought by all the thought of the century.

Mention is made here only of honorable callings; and this remark brings us to the sad fact that man's ingenuity has not confined itself to paths of noble industry of mind and body. After having enumerated a hundred honorable callings that may lead to health

and money and morals and happiness, we must find at last that there are two great highways that absorb all others into themselves. As many streams are received and are combined into one Nile and one Mississippi, so the avocations of men are attracted into two great channels: the right and the wrong. These are the paths whose flowers and thorns are of most pressing consequence. These sprang up when primitive man, in some far-away epoch, came upon the knowledge of good and evil. The story is that there was a tree once growing of which if a moral being ate, that being would at once know that the good was not all of life; that, also, there was an attainable evil, and with this knowledge would come the feeling that the forbidden were better than the permitted. Though the origin of evil may thus come to us clothed in fable, the advent of evil itself is no fable. It appeared and became one of the paths for human foot to tread. Among the flowers and fallen leaves of Eden it must have been only a dim trace once, the lonely foot-prints of a flying Cain; but by degrees it became a definite trail like those made by Indians in the early woods of our America. This trail was slowly enlarged until it became a broad highway along which great multitudes marched to their varying fates. These are to-day the two great avenues that sweep across our earth; so mighty, so

happy or so miserable that they eclipse those pursuits which we call "law" or "medicine" or "literature" or "trade."

Our earth is amazing in its two-fold ability to produce pleasure or pain—nobleness or degradation. Its dual nature is innate and endless. Its ocean is as able to destroy as to delight, and as many have written about its fury as about its beauty and sweetness and health. Three thousand vessels were lost upon it in the last twelve months. From the days of the Psalms to the last hour of any modern day it has been the joy and terror of our race, and having been praised in song and music it passes into church service and forms a prayer for those who go down into the sea in ships. So the rains which help create the vegetable world swell into floods that bring ruin; and the winds that are welcome zephyrs to-day, are tornadoes to-morrow. The frost of winter and the heat of summer will destroy. The lightning which purifies the air is an angel of death to some, and the nights full of stars and of poetic charm are often as full of the invisible seeds of disease. Poisons are hidden in plants; the soil which grew the wheat of Athens grew the hemlock of Socrates, and which made the wheaten cakes of the patriarchs made also the wines which intoxicated their brains and brought their names to dishonor.

Thus our earth reveals to us a dual nature as though ready for either a human career of happiness or wretchedness. The picture thus shown us by the sea and the land is repeated in the history of man. His virtues can all become vices. A power of righteous indignation can become a violent temper and make a madman or a common scold of a heart that began by longing to correct abuses; the sentiment of love, which is the glory of the home, can become a laughable weakness or a dangerous vice; the love of food may end in gluttony; the love of drink in drunkenness; the love of gold may make a tyrant or a miser; self-love may expand into egotism and repose into indolence, and religion itself into fanaticism. Thus our world, physical and moral, stands ready for either goodness or badness, the great or the small, the noble or the mean, the spiritual or the sensual, for life or for death. Its two-fold quality is more conspicuous than its mountains, as enduring as its sun and moon and stars. Between these two objects man as an individual or as expressed in nations stands, and is compelled to make a choice. He may decline the large group of industries and live on an inheritance, or may beg food like an old monk, but he cannot decline both of these highways of right and wrong. He must select and move on, and in

this fact lies the success of some, and of others the perpetual shame.

As long ago as when Horace lived, this frailty of the heart had become notorious :

“ I know the right and I approve it, too ;
I know the wrong and yet the wrong pursue.”

The disposition of many to make a wretched choice had become conspicuous in that far-off period—a disposition gratified so often and by so many that our world is now not a comedy, but a tragedy of errors. It has blundered and blundered until we may well be amazed that the race did not die long centuries ago by its own hand. It is a wonder we have not had the suicide of a race. Indeed vices have perhaps destroyed not a few savage tribes, and have perhaps compelled the old nations to decline from glory into decay and almost oblivion. But in all times a few have chosen the better path and have held up with noble hands the banner of a divine humanity.

Glance briefly at some of the blunders of mankind. War claims a very conspicuous place. Who can ever measure the absurdity and cruelty and crime of war? Under such leaders as Xerxes and Alexander and Cæsar and Napoleon, human groans and tears and blood were not counted or measured. A million men died at the command of Xerxes, a million men died at the command of Cæsar, a million at the bid-

ding of Napoleon. Such books as that one called "The Shadow of the Sword," and those called "The Conscript" and "Waterloo," are the merest hints at a sorrow as long and as wide as human life. This killing of men has always been an atrocity. It has taken place in a world where the right path led toward free commerce, free ships, equal rights, and a universal brotherhood. A path all adorned with flowers and cheered by the song of birds and the gloria of men was all the while lying upon the hills and fields and over the mountains, but the human eye would not see it, but it saw quicker and longer the path of innocent blood. War has been the perpetual delight of all the ages except the one now passing more peacefully along. And yet such is the eagerness for the field of blood that a humane statesman of England was recently compelled to say that only one honorable battlefield could be found in our century—the one on which the United States defended their national existence. Upon the Waterloos and Solferinos and Crimeas must rest always the stain of a deep wrong.

"No blood-stained victory in story bright
Can yield the philosophic mind delight;
Nor triumph please; while rage and death destroy,
Reflection sickens at such monstrous joy."

Mrs. Browning sang :

“ The battle hurtles on the plains ;
Earth feels new scythes upon her,
We reap our brothers for the wains
And call the harvest—honor ! ”

And yet there is a blunder of our race more cruel than that of the sword. It is rendered less impressive from the fact that it has been lectured upon and wrangled over in all parts of the land, and has often been rendered an unwelcome theme of remark by the quantity of ill-advised speech and action that have grown up around it. But notwithstanding the unpopularity of temperance lectures the truth stands that when the human mind learned to distil and brew drinks it committed a greater folly than when it invented the weapons of war. The cup is more destructive than cannon and musket, not only carrying more persons to the grave, but to a life and death of a greater dishonor, for the poets have always sung some sweet strains over the last resting place of the soldier ; but no poet has ever had the courage to cast any flowers upon a drunkard's grave. The dual quality of the very soil is illustrated in these fatal drinks of the human race. The grains which will make the bread for the table of the home will also help compose a drink fully capable of scattering forever those wont to meet at the table in a supreme contentment.

Not only were Adam and Eve ready to fall into sin, but the field of corn or wheat stands ready to become a harvest of vice. Strange earth! equally ready to grow the opium that kills, or the fruits and breads that enrich and cheer the mind; equally ready to produce drinks that will crush the heart, or the food that makes men great and happy! In the far east, where thousands of acres of roses are grown for the joy of their perfumes, there as many acres of poppies are grown for the delirium and ruin of the multitude. Mark the two fields: the one of roses from which the attar is extracted that fragrance may be carried over the world and that the noblest of all flowers may seem to bloom in the midst of winter—in the room where the cultivated mind reads or talks or sleeps. As the note-book holds the music of Beethoven, as language retains the genius of Homer or Virgil, so this attar holds the spirits of roses that are dead. A true perfume is the immortality of the rose. When the eye sees many thousands of acres of these flowers growing thus to honor, it blesses the hidden mystery of sun and soil and the genius of man; but when the same heart beholds the same human mind planting ten thousand acres of poison-plants which will extract money from the Chinese or other victims of folly, then does it realize that there are two paths across this world—a path of right and a path of in-

finite wrong. As the Orient yields thus its two harvests, one of rich perfumes and one of the opiate poisons, so the vast West grows the grains that create a powerful race and the drinks that hasten to destroy it. When Xenophon was writing down the customs of some wild tribes, through which he had to make his long march, he stated that "in the mountains of Armenia the natives made a popular drink from fermented barley. In their homes under the ground this drink was contained in large vessels, and when one would drink he must put his mouth to a reed and suck like an ox. Without any admixture of water it seemed harsh, but was good to any one who was accustomed to its taste." In these words we find the common beer of to-day, and see that twenty-four hundred years ago it was getting ready for an invasion of Germany to trample it under foot more cruelly than did the armies of Cæsar. Pliny describes also the coming enemy in these words: "The natives who inhabit the west of Europe made a drink from grain and water with which they intoxicated themselves. The people of Spain so brew this liquor that it will keep good a long time"; and then Pliny adds these words of great meaning: "So exquisite is the cunning of mankind in gratifying their vicious appetites that they have thus invented a method to cause water itself to produce intoxication." Thus we see a

Roman scientist noting the fact that the human mind was as cunning to invent evil as to invent good, and that the genius that can discover the telegraph and the properties of steam, and thus help make civilization, can discover opium and whiskey and beer, and thus be a Medea who can at once be the mother and the murderer of her sons. This path of private and public wrong has so broadened that the German nation has abundant company in these years in the English and Americans who have accepted of the genius that can make water into a poison.

When one cannot advocate total abstinence as a duty, and may admit that man may seek some pleasure in his drink as he seeks some in his food, and need not any more always drink water than he need always eat only bread and meat, yet such is not the kind of delicate treatment the millions bestow upon drinks. They brutalize self and quickly become slaves of their dram, and all else fades away to leave time and money for the destructive cup. England alone manufactures twenty-five millions (25,000,000) of barrels of beer annually, of which only one-fiftieth part is exported. Thus the money value of twenty-four million barrels of malt drinks is flung away by the people, rich and poor, high and low, in the islands of the Queen. Add the liquor traffic of our nation to these figures and we have an awful illustration of

the folly of man, of his fitness to be either a philosopher or a fool, his fitness to weave for his children garments of happiness or of sorrow.

The so-called German unity upon the beer question should fall to pieces in this enlightened century. What they should do at the polls may be uncertain, but that the rising generation of Germans should detach themselves from the saloons is one of the most evident of all the ways of duty. That national drink is rapidly injuring one of the best races our earth ever had. *The Scalpel* a few years ago published an article which went to show that this drink was changing the form and faces of German men and women; was making the flesh of the face so nerveless that it sunk with its own weight, and eyelids and cheek and the mouth were drooping down, making deformity of face common among men and beauty rare among women. To this havoc made in the physical form, add the perversion of mind and money along bad channels and you will have reason enough for lamenting the drift and probable destiny of the German youth. So powerful was their race in mind and body that it dies hard, but intemperance is a conqueror at last of all provinces he invades, and if the "German unity" of drink goes on the rising generations will find the unity of drink to be one also of German misfortune. The American German must pause in

their career and confess the "saloon" and the "garden" to be no longer their happiness but their calamity.

In a world where two such paths as those of right and wrong are sweeping along—one joyous and the other gloomy—it is not to be wondered at that all holy books and all holy men have been compelled to see a heaven and a hell toward which these paths lead. The duality of earth and of man declare a duality of destiny. If a mighty stream runs north we say there must be a North Sea into which it at last discharges its flood, and if we then find a large river running southward we feel that it must know of a Southern Ocean large enough to receive its floods from age to age; thus standing by these two paths and marking them diverge, we are compelled to confess that these ways lead to two different countries on this side and the other side of the grave. Logic and observation teach us that hell and heaven begin here. They are nothing else than the outworkings of man's own choice. A hot iron taken in the hand burns now and here, and so the path of folly hastens to offer its thorns. What more and bitterer tears there may be beyond this life is not known, but in this world you will not follow the wrong road far before the feet will bleed. From the very outset the ways are different, in the foliage on either side and in

the stones under foot and in the sky over head. Addison Alexander, in his form of Calvinistic fatalism, composed this hymn:

“ There is a time we know not when,
A point we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men
For glory or despair;”

in which lines there may be a solemn truth, but nature is so free from all mystery in her laws of right and wrong that the hymn would perhaps better be separated from all enigma and made to thunder forth the choice of each adult mind:

“ There is a time you know just when,
A point you know just where,
That marks the destiny of men
For glory or despair ”—

all being fixed by the soul that selects the evil path.

Young friends, you are entering upon a life which you can shape as the sculptor shapes his marble and the potter his clay. You are passing into a vale where upspring two paths; you can follow either of them and find victory or defeat. You have eaten of the tree of knowledge, of good and evil, that grew in your Eden, and before you there will always hang the two forms of fruit to be plucked and eaten. Henceforth it is for you a two-fold world and you must be at least as noble as the Hercules who, when

accosted by two beautiful forms, the one mere Pleasure and the other Honor, reached out his hand to the latter and won a place among the immortals. In our ennobled age you must toss the golden apple to moral beauty. Never forget the duality of your earth, and then the office of the human will rise up before you in all its divineness. Remember that the same land produces the poppy and the rose, both rich in scarlet, but from the one comes the Lethean sleep of mind and soul, from the other a perfume straight from the gardens of the angels. Life is nothing but the passing by of the one flower and the plucking and wearing of the other.

IX.
EIGHTEEN MISSING YEARS.

And the child grew and became strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him.—LUKE ii: 40.

IN those brief sketches of Christ which are called the gospels, eighteen years of experience are wholly wanting. Indeed in only one of those memoirs is allusion made to the fact that at the age of twelve years the young Jesus of Nazareth discoursed with some learned men in Jerusalem. To the eighteen years between this scene and the beginning of the public*work of Christ no allusion is made by any one of the four biographers. In the legends of the old church there is much related regarding the boyhood of him who founded our common religion, but since these legends contain only amazing stories that contain no traces of real human nature, and since legend has always weighed down with details of fiction all the great names of antiquity, we cannot but prefer the silence of the four gospels to the too abundant loquacity of the early Church. If the contemporaries—the four evangelists—knew little or had access to little

that related to the early life of their Master, it is hardly probable that a detailed and amazing information sprang up for the use of those who lived generations or centuries later. Let us inquire as to the probable history of those eighteen absent years.

It may be well to make a remark to explain, if possible, this large omission from these professed biographies. The best explanation is this, that in that epoch, and in almost all past periods, child life was not a matter of importance. It did not enter largely into literature nor into the category of the great things of the world. In some nations the death-day rather than the birthday was celebrated because the latter period was associated with fame or learning or some other form of merit, while the birthday enjoyed no associations of worth—it was only the period of all shapes of weakness. In the most of the ancient philosophies the reasonable soul did not come to the body until it was about twenty years old. According to one of the old Rabbis a man was free at twelve, might marry at eighteen or twenty, should acquire property until he was thirty, then intellectual strength should come, and at forty the profoundest wisdom should appear. Amid just what opinions of this nature the youth of Jesus was spent is not known, but at least this is true that he lived in an era where early life seemed to possess small worth and no scholar or biographer

encumbered with such details his record or oration or poem. Not only do we know little about the early life of Jesus but the early years of Cæsar and Virgil and Cicero and Tacitus lie equally withdrawn from the public gaze. Old biographies make their first chapter out of the actual beginnings of the public service.

The current of thought has of later times greatly changed. Not only has childhood become more beautiful to be seen, more precious to the parents and friends, but it has been more and more seen as the fountain whence flows the river of the subsequent career. The period of youth springs up as a cause. It is analyzed as being the climate and soil which help grow the manhood or the rich womanhood. The modern depth of affection and the modern reasoning process demand that each full biography of manhood shall fill its first chapters with the whole childhood scene. This affection cherished by the later periods, and this desire to find causes for all effects, come to-day to make us inquire about those eighteen years that are missing from the sacred memoirs of the Master. If to the ancients early duties and experiences and pleasures were of no moment, the times have changed and, to us all, they are full of interest and instruction. We do not celebrate the death of our friends but their birthday, for the death ends the blessed scene of which the birthday was the beginning.

The scene of this missing period was evidently the district of Lower Galilee and the little town of Nazareth in that district. Had the young Jesus travelled all through his youth and have gathered fame in all the adjoining lands, such a large fact would have appeared in even the simplest record of his life. We have more positive evidence that he remained closely at home for he was upbraided as being only the carpenter's son and with having no learning, and further, when Christ began his public teachings he taught away from his native village because of the little faith there cherished in the divine mission of one who had long been known to the villagers as only an humble artisan. Thus this story of local contempt comes forward to tell us that these unhistoric days were all spent in and around the little town which named the Nazarene. The scene is not without educational elements. The hills which make the site of the place are six hundred feet in height, on one side awfully steep and rugged, on the other side easy of ascent and covered with grass and trees and flowers. Springs and cascades are mingled with the cactus and with the blossoming orange and pomegranate, and when to these dumb forms of beauty we add the merry cry and the rich plumage of the hoopoe and bright blue of the roller-bird, making the landscape one of life, we have surroundings better for a meditative and sensi-

tive heart than the walls of a common school-house. Languages and laws change, and change comes over many human things, but so uniform and long lasting is nature that we know without the disturbance of a doubt that the youthful Jesus of Nazareth walked again and again all over these fields where fluttered the birds which now chirp and fly in the same old land, and that he saw the same emerald of grass and leaves which now carpets those massive hills.

This son of a carpenter was himself of that craft, but whether he worked much is beyond our conjecture. Trades followed families for many generations. Our modern names are many of them old landmarks of that custom of antiquity. The Carpenter family and the Smith family and the Fisher family and the Sailor family are proofs that certain pursuits remained in some one household so long that when the active following of the trade had ceased the name remained and contained, like Moore's shattered vase, the memory of the dead rose. Jesus thus belonged to a definite craft, but that he toiled much is not very probable. Indeed no freeman of that period toiled as we toil. The wants of life were very simple. The climate suggested a large amount of repose, and few are the instances in which man has not accepted this suggestion of the sky. The orientalist began work late and quit early. No one was ever in a hurry.

The man for whom the work was being done and the man doing the work harmonized in not caring whether the task should be finished this week or the next. Even if Jesus toiled quite regularly at his occupation, all was so peaceful in that time and place among the better families that we may be assured that the plane and the saw did not interfere much with the studies or meditations of this gifted youth. That taste which led him to seek at the age of twelve long discourse with some learned rabbis at Jerusalem was not much interfered with in the subsequent time by even the uniform pursuit in which he was born and reared. Indeed there is a form of learning and skill and wisdom which seems aided rather than retarded by the daily occupation. A mechanical calling becomes a matter of fingers and arms, and leaves the mind and soul free to follow their own spiritual longings. The familiar manual labor shuts out all disturbing elements, makes a kind of lullaby which gives the soul not sleep but long continuous thought. In exciting travel or amid constantly changing scenes you all remember that you have no thoughts at all, but become half distracted; but that after you have gotten back to your room or shop or desk then back comes your mind with all its clearness and continuity and wisdom and poetry. Thus a trade, high or humble, may easily be the silent gravitation which

holds the soul's star in an orbit. It has thus come to pass that many a shepherd from David to James Hogg, and many a rustic from Cincinnatus to Robert Burns has found an humble industry to become the absolute ally of a deep wisdom or a life of song. A shepherd's crook and the harp, the plow and the pen, have been partners of success. The regular roaring of a train wakes up the spirit of the traveller.

In the homes of old Nazareth there was not a little of common instruction. The Hebrew families taught the children to read and write. Christ wrote on the ground in a meditative manner, and he constantly alluded to what had been written, so that we are warranted in stating positively that through these eighteen missing summers there was a form of carpenter work which probably aided reflection more than injured it, and ran an education sufficient to bring the son of Mary into daily communion with some manuscripts and with some of the wise men of the period. Add to these facts the undeniable truth that the young Nazarene stood above his era in natural powers of mind and heart, and we find reasons for concluding that these absent years were not a blank in this high history, but were a part of that vast career whose two borders only are visible in the gospels. Indeed one might infer the middle from the two extremes. Should we find a young man of twelve making good

sketches on a canvas and then, having disappeared, he should suddenly come back to public notice as a skilful painter we should know that the interval not seen had been only a continuation of what we saw at the twelfth year, and saw on a higher perfection at thirty. If a stream is clear and fresh and sweet at its fountain and clear and fresh at its mouth, we must conclude that it flows all the way through rocky or pebbly fields. If Achilles chose a sword when a child and then in late mature life waked up the troops upon many a battle-field, we must conclude that all through and through he was a soldier from heart to brain, from head to foot. In such a world of analogies we see Jesus at the age of twelve studying the great questions of society and of all morals, and thus pondering about the Father's business, he enters into those hidden days, and lo, when he emerges, he has the Sermon of the Mount upon his lips. We seem to know all the interval, and can say that in those eighteen summers and winters this Galilean was putting together those truths which afterward shone like a sun upon a darkened world. All good and great works are the final outcome of a life. The statesman, the moralist, the dramatist, the orator, the painter, the poet, sits down to his task for thirty years, and fortunate is he if at the end of that long period he can emerge from his retirement with anything in his

hands for mankind to see, or with any word on his lips for mankind to hear.

It now seems that we can follow Jesus all through those unmarked days, and can see him walking at times alone, at times in company, over the great hills wondering what ruler would come after Archelaus, and with what cruelty or kindness would he come, and when a redeemer for the Hebrew would appear? Through that mind full of sacred meditation, and of sacred Hebrew hope and prophecy must have passed, daily, the resolves of a hero, and the colored dreams of a young soul. For a score of spring-times, piety and meditation and enthusiasm lived in this one heart.

From these evident generalities we can now pass to some other conclusions that crowd upon the mind which surveys the moral surroundings more in detail. Each spring this family made a journey to Jerusalem. At the age of twelve this son went with the family. That he ever after that visit remained away from the annual Passover is not probable. It was the one event of each year. The power of religion, the social element in man, the pleasures of the trip, the great pageantry at Jerusalem combined to make all, who could, wend their way in March toward the holy city. March was equal in warmth and beauty to the last days of our May. It is said that often two millions

assembled within the walls in that time of worship and memory. The travellers came with music and banners. Thither came all the wise men, not only of the Hebrew tribes, but of Syria and Persia and Greece, drawn into the throng though not fully of it. Nazareth was eighty miles away. The journey thither on foot would consume nearly a week, for none hurried to such a festival. The companies moved out from their villages long in advance that the journey might be one of pleasure rather than of toil. The night encampments by some stream under palm or fig trees were a part of the excursion not to be slighted. The feast lasted eight days. Then came the deliberate return home. Thus for a month of each year the young man, who became the leader in morals of the civilized world, was in the midst of the whole group of wise men from the east and south and west. Persia and Egypt and Alexandria and Greece proper and Rome, joined with the wisdom of Jerusalem in that month of the Passover; and, as though in some Paris or London of antiquity, Christ stood once each year for perhaps twenty successive seasons, where the streams of learning all seemed to meet. If in his twelfth year he had long and thoughtful talks with the great men who came up to Jerusalem, what must we think of those exchanges of ideas and feelings he must have enjoyed when his twenty-fifth or twenty-

eightth year had come with its greater insight and solemnity? It is evident that what of good moral philosophy there had been in Egypt, accumulating since before the times of Moses, and what of truth and wisdom there had been elaborated by the Magi of Persia and by the profound Greeks, and by the statesmen and prophets and wise men of the Hebrew nation, lay all outpoured before the new and powerful mind of Jesus of Nazareth, and that in those silent years he was busy culling the best ideas from the vast heap, separating the eternal from the perishable. In such a collection of old and recent truths, this new guide was a patient eclectic. He made a system of the accumulations of the past.

It was, you remember, a reproach to Christ that he was a Galilean, and it was asked sneeringly whether any good could come out of Nazareth? But who was it that asked this question? Who thus scorned the Galilean? Evidently the regular and most strict of the Jerusalem Jews. In those days there were great centers of orthodoxy just as there are in our day, and as Princeton might ask what good can come out of Andover or Oberlin, so the Jerusalem Hebrews looked with contempt upon the men and the dogmas which might venture out from Nazareth. For Galilee was somewhat out of the charmed circle of orthodoxy. It was called "Galilee of the Gentiles," because being

a mountainous region its early occupants had never been all killed or conquered. The heathen rationalists and naturalists and merchandizing Greeks and Romans and Persians and Assyrians swarmed all over it so that Christ drew in his education not where the worship of Mosaic ideas was most unbending but where it was weakest. He was therefore free in a wonderful sense, and while the Spirit of God was upon him in those invisible years, the Spirit of the Mosaic age was off of his mind and heart, and thus he enjoyed two blessings, the descent of the Father and the flight of a slavish Mosaism. The Galilee which won for Jesus the reproach of Jerusalem helped win for him the esteem of the human race, for in Galilee the chains of the Mosaic period had become so weakened that they did not fetter the soul that was yearning to speak those thoughts which came at last in the Sermon upon the Mount. The mockings of bigots was followed by the love of humanity.

Not only was "Galilee of the Gentiles" always the least orthodox but in this period all thought had assumed wider range and greater liberty and spirituality. The Hebrew power had almost faded into nothing. It had lost and regained its metropolis many times, but sixty years before Christ it had lost its sway forever. The Romans had come into full possession. All Hebrew officials were only servants

of the Cæsars. The city with its walls and temple stood in all its splendor, but the national and religious glory had passed away, and although the religion remained to the eye it had greatly changed to the heart. It was questioned and cross-questioned and by some doubted and by some rejected. Pagan thought had poured in from the east and the west and the Magi that came to see the babe in the manger seemed to Herod to bring about as good a religion and vision as could come from the priests of Abraham; and indeed we may say that the Magi and the Hebrews and the Roman Virgil all joined in one vague expectation that a new King would soon appear. Over the head of the crucified Lord the inscription was marked out in three languages because three great races were mingling in the streets of the holy city. Born in a Gentile region, not fettered by an exclusive form of faith, and in an age when the Roman arms had overthrown the empire of Solomon and had compelled Latin and Greek literature to commingle with the law, the prophecies, and the psalms, the meditative Christ had a grand task for those eighteen years to walk to and fro in his home or shop or in the beautiful hills to find what was the grandest in all that museum of ethics and doctrine. Instead of being lost or wasted we can now see that they were like the years which make a nation or build a St. Peter's or a pyramid.

“The grace of God was upon him,” says the record, when he entered this isolation. Not upon him for an hour or for a day, but in all those times when Judah was dissolving and Rome and rationalism were advancing, the grace of the Infinite was with the One who lived quietly in Nazareth. Upon the boards in his shop he would perhaps write down the thought “Blessed the pure in heart.” And perhaps for ten or fifteen years was he wondering which is the greatest of all laws, and with what delight he must have reached the words, “To love God with all the soul and your neighbor as yourself!” To him in these days of study must have come the maxim of Plato and others that one must not do to another what he would not have another do to oneself. How many years it was before the studying Christ saw the defect of this maxim we know not, but we can imagine a day when his face was lighted with a smile and he said “This is a maxim which only prevents crime, not one which commands active kindness,” and quickly he reversed the language and said, “We must do for others what we would have them do for us.” Plato had uttered a law of rest, Christ changed it to one of action. In those days could we have entered the home of this candidate for immortal fame and truth, we should have found on the walls of home or shop the tracings of that “golden rule” where affection had written it

down when it had burst upon him in all its imperishable beauty. One by one all those lessons of duty and righteousness and salvation which so glitter in the New Testament were thus gathered up by a mind powerful in itself and powerful in the grace of God. The jewels of the gospels were thus many years in the gathering and do not come to us as the sudden extempore speech of an ignorant slavish laborer, but as of one who passed eighteen years in communion with man and self and God before he opened his lips in presence of the world.

Coming now toward the close of these unhistoric times a new figure appears upon the scene. A relative of Jesus, born six months before the babe of the manger, had now reached that grand age of thirty, and had begun to preach in the wilderness—that is in lonely country places. He followed the dress and customs of the old Hebrew prophets. His raiment was a wrapping of coarse cloth held around his waist by a leather girdle. He found his food in the woods and fields where fruits and wild honey were abundant. He moved along the paths and the roads, and when he came to where there was one person or ten persons he began his wild chant, "Repent ye, repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Out of the fallen greatness of Judah, out of the growing anarchy and unbelief, and out of the longing for a King

of wisdom and love this sign was born. Each day the multitude grew larger around this wild but holy form, and each day the winds of fame blew further and further the aroma of his words. Many thought him the expected Savior, but he replied that he was not. He could have called the common people around his flag and have set up a spiritual kingdom of his own. He could have become the Mahomet of his day and have exchanged his dust and ashes for the pomp of some captain of thousands or of millions. But his heart was pure, his mission humble and sincere. He said he was only a herald running on in advance of the King. All wishing to be members of this coming divine state were baptized in its name in the Jordan river.

Christ was in his thirtieth year. His full manhood of mind had come. His heart had become full of longings to go forth and teach the truths which had been assembling for years in his heart. Upon some day in the summer time some slow traveller brought him the news that a certain John, called the Baptist, was preaching a new Kingdom better than that of the Cæsars—a Kingdom of God, and that crowds were joining the new hope. The scene of the new movement was about thirty miles away from the cottage in Nazareth. It is almost certain that Christ spent the ensuing night in meditation and prayer. In the

morning quite early, before the sun had become oppressive, this awakened soul walked forth over hill and vale to go to the Jordan where such scenes were daily coming to pass. It may have required two days to bring the Man of Bethlehem to the man of the wilderness. But while he walks mark how beautiful are the woods above his head and the rich sunlight all around him! The velvet of grass and flowers beneath his sandaled feet recall and make literal the words "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" But not all our thoughts can be thus light and joyous, for the home life was soon to end and with a public career were to come many hitherto unknown sorrows. Foreheads to be crowned with service and duties are always to be crowned also with thorns. But the divine One looks not back. He sees the Jordan at last and marks the outline of a Hebrew prophet and step by step he approaches the eloquent herald. It is one of the most important incidents of mind and heart in all history! Can you think of any event more sublime in results than this meeting of John and Christ on the banks of that stream? John was ready for the hour. He had no false or weak ambition to gratify. He desired the happiness and salvation of man. Lifting up his face and looking toward the stranger whom at once he

perceived to be Jesus, he said: "Behold Him whose shoe latchet I am unworthy to stoop down and unloose! I am not that light! Behold Him who is the Light!" And John in that lonely place resigned the crown. Humbly Christ received it. The resigning of John and the acceptance by the Man of Nazareth are pictures alike full of grace and humility. The eighteen missing years are thus ended and Christ passes again into history.

X.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.—
REV. ii : 10.

ONE obstacle in the way of human success lies in the fact that man has so many capabilities that it is difficult to develop them equally from his childhood, and equally difficult to keep them all in active existence in and through mature years. The brute creation enjoys two advantages, not the one only of being guided unerringly by instinct, but that of possessing a nature not subject to many laws. Man has so many powers that he is exposed to a hundred forms of failure, and like a magician dancing among knives which he is throwing around with his own hands, must be upon the alert lest some form or second of danger be overlooked. The more complex the machine the more difficult is its motion; the more easily is it thrown out of repair. As the richness of a soil is often its injury, causing it to send up more weeds and grasses and grains than can thrive well in one place, or to grow a stalk so tall that it breaks too easily

under the summer shower, so man's mind suffers from its marvellous collection of desires and powers and sinks under an overload of activities. Thus a perfect man or woman is impossible. As in the history of the body under the artificial laws of society and the inexplicable freaks of nature no one reaches perfect beauty, but must be told at last of some defect of some feature or of size or voice or walk or gesture, so in the history of the mind the record of defects fills a large chapter, and we say he is wise, but not bright, or bright but not deep, or good-natured but penurious, or honest but cold, or learned but selfish. Thus virtues come and go, and the heavens of the soul are as variable as an April sky.

If we had permission to demand from the Creator some form of merit which the civilized states have not yet fully acquired or even measured, but of which the need is most pressing, should we not all say, let it be faithfulness? Is not that a virtue which our times greatly need? Let us not dispute with Paul when he says, "The greatest of all is charity"; but let us confess that charity must indeed be a rare form of excellence if it can surpass the heart dreamed of by St. John as having been faithful unto death. Let us turn away from Paul's picture of charity to look upon John's statue of faithfulness. It was a defect of Greek sculpture that its marbles stood chiefly for physical

perfection and not for the highest forms of mental finish. The Venus, the Apollo at least, were expected to recall all the physical loveliness of mankind; it is an excellence of modern art that it aims to picture ideal truths as well as ideal forms; and were it to carve or paint an image of Fidelity, and were it to do justice to the subject, we should see a work of amazing beauty. When we cause to pass before us the attractive qualities of our age, we see a procession long and noble as some of those pictured upon old wall or frieze of Roman temple. Beauty, conversation, learning, taste, music, festivity, worship, science, and poetry are in the great collection, but are we wrong in the conclusion that there is one form of human greatness that is not seen often enough in our groups of great ideals—that form is the being over which you could write the words, "Faithful unto death." When written, such a phrase will be found over the tomb of some mother or child; but the civilization of the world will never be worthy of laudation until those words are engraved upon all the many forms of the human heart.

Evidently the original import of faith, when it was denominated the way of salvation and the doctrine of a "standing or falling church," was an unchanging devotion to the new master. The new religion asked for new minds and new hearts, and inasmuch as per-

secution was sure to follow an espousal of a new chieftain, those only were demanded who could see a great result, and keep their faces set steadfastly upon it through storm and calm. Faith was not an intellectual discrimination of doctrines, but it was the constancy of a soul amid great trials. As Christ himself defined it, it was a willingness to stand by the welfare of man and the higher right, even though wife or child or father or mother should follow some other path. Such a definition of faith will explain the glory, almost the charm of martyrdom in the first centuries—the true dignity of an early Christian reposing not in what he believed in detail, but in his heroism over the main issue—the central figure. Faithful over a few things they would be rulers over many things in the golden period to come. The fact of martyrdom is thus to be explained by the glory of a consistent devotion.

The human race has always laughed at or been angry at all fickleness of mind, and has generally charged it upon woman, because man, being the maker of literature and being the ruling power, has always possessed too much vanity to see the frailties of himself, and early learned to ascribe inconstancy to woman. Virgil learned it from the old world back of him, and thus shows us that man having written his own history has made himself to be a person-

age of conspicuous goodness in this one direction. In our day the facts are of more value than the feelings of men, and probably indicate that in the possession of fidelity, woman will be found rich when her husband or brother is a beggar. Be this as it may, the world has always heaped upon fickleness its anger and laughter and ridicule. The poets have compared a changing heart to the chameleon hues, the thinkers have despised it as a poor philosophy, the jesters have hailed it with laughter.

Our world is so formed that it asks for persistence. Society is based upon the constancy of nature's laws. What the snow or rain or sun or soil did last year it will do next year. Wood will float in water, and iron will be as strong in the next century as it was in the last. We know that the sandal wood will act as sweetly for the next age as it acts for the woman of our day, and that the rose will decorate a bosom tomorrow as richly as it decorated the bosom when Cornelia was a Roman girl happy in the home of Scipio. Looking into the future you know what the fields and hills will be in next May and June, and in that certainty of sunshine and foliage the imagination can find rest. Thus all nature conspiring in its numberless details to one result has fashioned for us the words that our God is "from everlasting to everlasting," and with "Him is no variableness or

shadow of turning." These words of honor which nature proclaims over its Creator it is anxious to find in the soul of the greatest creation—man. Out of nature and God has grown the first fame of constancy; out of the actual history of man has come an equal amount of honor.

History has crowned perseverance as one of the virtues. Men of deviating purpose have lived to develop the good of their character or brain or of their invention, and have thus hammered out the maxim that there is no excellence without labor and that perseverance will conquer all things. Soldiers are estimated by their staying qualities. Tributes of praise have thus come in from many fields of experiment until we now see before us a grace called faithfulness, one of the most attractive of all in the mind's dream. Whether seen in the Antigone of the Greeks—that ideal sister who would not desert even the dead body of her brother; or in the Penelope who trusted for twenty years in the returning ships of her husband; or in the disciples around Christ who died at last, here or there, in obedience to their attachment, or in the long line of martyrs whose blood is sprinkled all over the leaves of history, this fidelity stands forth in unmeasured excellence. So grand is this virtue that it now seems that could it come into our world to-day civilization would seem complete.

Such scenes as the dishonest officer of Tennessee, stealing a half million with one hand while he is gesticulating the eloquence of honesty with the other, are so common as to cause only the wonder of an hour. A state deeply injured by old political errors at last comes forth penitential but heroic and hopeful; and attempts to found public education and public industry, and to mark out paths of honor for all black and white; and calling to her aid one of her most popular and most trusted sons, she had the pitiable unhappiness to see him skulk away by night—a bandit—a thief instead of a son and citizen. The nation is full of these human beings who have no conception of the beauty of faithfulness. The thought that nature is holding a crown over each faithful one has never entered their souls. Even into the mind and heart of the unfortunate Archbishop Purcell, of Cincinnati, there never could have been any adequate sense of the value of fidelity. He was kind-hearted to an extreme degree, and he was fond of the success of his creed. Meanwhile the poor Catholics were trusting to this Archbishop four millions of dollars they were never to see again. He did not even keep books. He had not trained himself to fidelity, but had left himself to become the greatest modern emblem of business recklessness. Others have surpassed him in dishonesty of purpose, but he stands

without a peer in the large crowd of the reckless. Fidelity to a day-book and ledger would have been of more value to Archbishop Purcell than all the incense around his altar and all the processions of his chanting priests.

Nature has so made her worlds, our world at least, that when in any of her works you omit the word "faithful" you have done or suffered an injury. The poor victims of loss in Cincinnati send up a faint cry compared with those shrieks of anguish which filled the cold winter air a few days since, a few miles away. Those men and those hard toiling girls springing from windows a hundred feet from the solid ground, leaping out with a furnace behind them and an abyss in front of them, screamed and fell and died at the command of unfaithfulness. Builders and owners and managers all were reckless guardians of human life and each life was lost by their indirect command. The heroes who once fell in an awful carnage enjoyed in dying this thought: "We lie here at the command of our country;" but over the dead of last Wednesday the painful epitaph must be written:

We were tortured to death by faithlessness.

Watchmen pacing each floor in the night; watchmen relieved at short intervals, would have robbed the original architect and builders of their power to

maim and kill. But faithfulness to duty was not a part of those who built or who managed the machine of death. Mortar and brick and wood enter into all these large structures, but faithfulness is not thought a part of building material. It is too expensive for common use. The calamity of our sister city may be our calamity to-morrow; for it is all a question of an overturned lamp, or of a mouse and a match. Man does not govern his world, he only lives in it; and he does always live long and often his death is terrible. He builds windows to admit light and air, but they are often made use of by convulsed persons who clasp the sills and scream for mercy to the crowd below; he builds stairway and an elevator with which to climb to his bed at night, but he does not always come down by his convenient instruments. If the match or the pile of oiled rags or a fluttering curtain say so, the inmates hurl themselves from the upper windows and are mangled until no affection can see the features of loved ones. Thus the King of Kings, the Legislator of the universe, punishes all contempt for truth and constancy and comes to all the thinkers and all the patriots and all the men holding offices of trust, to all the builders of houses, and says: "Be ye all faithful and the reward is near your foreheads."

There seems no place in all the wide expanse of society where one can pause and say, "Here have we

found faithfulness in its full bloom." In the relation of mother to child it is more universal and deeper than in any other path of human life. Here the poets come to find an affection full of faithfulness:

"Ah, blest are they for whom 'mid all their pains
That faithful and unaltered love remains,
Life wrecked around them hunted from their rest
And by all else forsaken or distressed."

When his mother's portrait was shown him, Cowper said:

"Oh, that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine; thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me."

Up to this phenomenon of soul religion comes when it desires to illustrate the love of God; and hither come the moralists when they wish to prove that duty may be without admixture of self-interest. In modern times this one word—mother—is most fully unveiling itself, because it is only a mind strong in learning and sensitive by culture that can measure such a height or such a depth of devotion.

What a garden of Eden should we have should this faithfulness unto death spring up in the marriage relation as it has sprung up between mother and child! But here the recklessness of the human race re-appears, and this matrimonial fabric is built for a day and is

not founded upon rock like the mountains or the pyramids. Enough instances of infinite faithfulness exist to cast light upon the divine meaning of this great friendship, but not enough instances to secure for the homes of earth the most perfect happiness. The enemies of this tie are as numerous as the enemies of the wheat field or the vineyard. It was once thought that nothing was so valuable to the multitude as their bread and wine. In holy and profane books these two products stood for a strong body and a happy heart. The vineyard and the harvest field thus were used to express the goodness of land and of climate and of government and of God's providence. Here where most hopes were centered most foes appeared, and above all that grows the harvest field and the vineyard are most easily blighted. Rust, damp, insect, mildew, frost, and nameless unseen enemies seem always hovering around the borders of these blessed fields. The more valuable a house the more do the bandits and plunderers look toward it by day and night. Thus the marriage relation, perhaps the chief basis of society, is attacked by the most bandits from the woods or the desert. Compared with this sentiment a mother's love enjoys peace. It can bloom in a rich soil under a serene sky. As against nuptial perfection the depravity of the heart musters all its motley troops. The selfishness that will not admit of an equal

partnership, the selfishness that permits the wife to be a slave that the master may be free, the egoism which persuades the husband that he has outgrown the wife, or the wife that she has passed up above her husband, the degraded feelings which wonder if youth and beauty have not departed and which can not measure the value of a soul, the innate fickleness of mere passion which must have new toys each day, are specimens of the wild Arabs which come swooping down upon the rich train before it has moved many days' march from the orange blossoms and the loving benedictions of friends. There is no peculiar reason to be found in the times for the frequent failure of marriage-bells to ring in great happiness. Indeed the growing intelligence so confessed should now be making not only improved houses but improved inmates of houses, and should be making domestic love as fine and beautiful as the furniture and fixtures which are around it, or as the floor or carpets under foot. The truth is that total depravity has always loved to display itself in this relation of heart to heart, and in our era as in all before it labors incessantly to make a hell of a paradise.

To us thus pondering amid the human hearts and faces, happy or sad, which fill the houses or throng our streets, there comes the feeling that "faithfulness" is a new divinity whose coming a half-divine race

tearfully awaits. The young man entering a profession, the lawyer on the morning of a possible career, the young clergyman writing his first sermon, the officer assuming his place of responsibility, the patriot espousing the cause of his native land, the mother looking into the blue eyes of her infant, the husband taking the hand of his bride, the Christian looking at the cross, should all alike bow in the great temple of nature, and hear the law of success read to them in voices loud or soft, awful or sweet: "Be thou faithful unto death."

In the great blue there are planets and stars which are said to have passed through their great million-year life, and by slow decline to have parted with their last form of organized existence, and to be unable any longer to show a colored insect in a ray of light or even a spray of moss upon a rock. Our moon is thus counted as a desolation wrought in the old eternity; but so are there in the same depths of space other worlds, where the forms of life are just beginning to appear and where the morning of a sublime day is just dawning with its first dews and first flowers and first song of birds. This faithfulness unto death is not a burned-up star whose glory has long since faded; but it is rather a new world yet to wheel around in a grand orbit and be the home of a noble race. The human family is not standing in the

evening but in the morning of its intellectual and moral destiny.

The "Lost Chord" of the poet and musician is an idea richly ornamented with pathos and sublimity—a piece of soul lace-work :

" He struck one chord of music
Like the sound of a great amen,
It flooded the crimson twilight
Like the close of an angel's psalm ;"

but the heavenly note trembled away in silence, and he vainly ran over the organ-keys to find once more the strange tone divine. It would not come back, and he could hope for it only in times beyond the tomb. But this "faithfulness unto death" is not a chord lost from earth, but a strain struggling to enter in. It will sound at times in the inner recesses of all your spirits with its "touch of infinite calm;" and if our ear is too heavy to catch its great amen, it will not sink into silence but it will await the coming of nobler men and nobler women; for God's will is yet to be done on earth as it is done in heaven, and faithfulness shall be crowned on both sides of the grave.

XI.

THE PREACHER AND HIS ENEMY.

The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.—JOHN x : 11.

OUR land has grown out of its fertile soil an avowed enemy of the preacher. A man witty and eloquent and bold seems to have entered upon a life-long warfare against the clergy of whatever name. He passes from city to city and from town to town, not with Gough's eloquence against intemperance, not with the old eloquence of Everett upon the character of Washington, not with the silver speech of Wendell Phillips upon the arts or the heroism of L'Ouverture, not with the useful lessons of Greeley upon the economies of life, but with interminable complaints against all the tenets and teachers of religion. If this public speaker attempts to point out the oddities of a Talmage and would make a subject of "Talmagian Theology," the field always proves too small for his rhetoric, and beginning with a single eccentric preacher this lecturer quickly passes to the entire religion of the human race. Let his sentences begin as they may they hasten to form a general protest against all ideas and

sentiments that bear the name of religion. He moves along only one path, that one marked out by the Thersites of the Greek army, and is less kind than Thomas Paine and less broad and less learned than Voltaire. He has none of the outbranchings of mind and sentiment which helped ornament Bolingbroke and Hume and Gibbon. He masses all his forces into the one purpose, that of being an enemy of the common preacher. If any one shall deny him breadth of learning or feeling, that one must give him the credit of having power of concentration. Like a sun-glass he throws what rays he has upon one point, and thus makes his words carry the most possible of smoke and heat. Thus has he made himself into an enemy of the preacher—first and last and always an enemy.

There were errors and follies in the church which called for an acute and searching review from some critic who should stand outside the temple; for in the spiritual sense as in the physical we do not “see ourselves as others see us,” and could any one have risen up against the errors of Calvinism and against many almost disgraceful theories as to the character of God, he would have done all religion a valuable service; but a general and persistent attack upon the whole theory of a church and a ministry does not seem to possess a single element of the true or the

beautiful or the good. Such attack is not eloquence, but only fault-finding upon a scale so large as to make a complaining mind seem to be a philosopher.

Who is this preacher that seems to need expulsion from this earth? Is the world too good for his presence? Is his calling such as to impede art and learning and morals? Has he introduced intemperance and all the vices and the frauds? Are the other pursuits all so noble that this one profession has become a spot on the sun?—a fly in the sweet ointment of the apothecary? He must take a very imperfect view of the world-full of avocations who can not see that all of them are marked with imperfection and are open to a large amount of complainings whenever the complaining heart comes along. Whoever has the spirit of abuse need never want for a subject, for defects are as numerous in our world as are the flies of midsummer. The world was made imperfect that man might always make his new year better than his past, and might enjoy the inspiration found in going forward. Much of human happiness is found in the gradual advance of the individual and of the race. We are all happier if we know something to-night we did not know yesterday, or have seen to-day the sweetest rose we ever saw, or heard the best music we ever heard. We seem born in a valley that we may always have the pleasure of making an ascent and of

marking the growing landscape and the earlier rising and later setting of the sun in a horizon always widening so as to hold more of the golden glory. All the so-named learned professions have been the mere efforts of apprentices to do some task which in its best shape is beyond their reach. There is not a calling which may not be made a subject of laughter. Essays have been written to show that society would have more law and order if it had no lawyers, and would enjoy better health if it had no physicians, and Emerson playfully said we should all be happier if we had no amusements. All things are on the way toward the ideal, but no one of these journeying pilgrims has yet reached his Mecca or Jerusalem. There is an ideal music, but it has not fully come to any concert-hall or church or parlor; there is an ideal religion on its way to mankind, but it has not yet reached any denomination or any formula of doctrine, and thus the legal profession and the medical profession and the editorial pursuit have an ideal excellence to which no one of those avocations has made any near approach. The peculiarities of times and the blunders and eccentricities of individuals accumulate against a pursuit and modify the public admiration by mingling with it too much of laughter. The anecdotes to the disadvantage of the lawyer and the physician would fill volumes. The stage is weighed

down with a heavy load of bad actors, painting is injured by its annex of bad artists, music by whole flocks of bad singers and bad performers. All these earthly things must drag their garments in the mire and must give evident signs of passing through a world made of dirt.

What then was John Calvin but a man who attempted to be a theologian, but must at last be said to have failed. He gave the labor of years to the patient study of what God did in the past and would do in the future with His rational creatures; and now after generations have passed away, it is generally admitted that the Creator of the world has done and will do nothing of the kind of work assigned to Him by the man of Geneva. That was simply Calvin's mistake, and should weigh no more against religion than the astronomy of Herodotus should weigh against that of Galileo and Herschel. It was simply the opinion of the ancients that the sun went daily around the earth; and now, at last, that opinion has perished, and the sun and moon and stars are not injured by its stay in our world. Thus Calvin and Edwards were only individuals that came and went with their strange thought, and to-day there are clergymen who are filling theology with the temporary traits of men, and who merit only the laughter or smile of an hour. The kind of language used by a

Talmage, the figures of speech which occur in his rhetoric as to the punishment of the non-believer, are his own personal property, and do not belong to even his own denomination much less to modern Christianity. The "Talmagian Theology" is a kind of amazing statement such as Carlyle loved in his essays and discussions, and is not worthy of more than a passing remark. It is not the style of the great army of preachers any more than the tremendous adjectives of an Arab or an African are the standards of popular speech. In each department of mental labor there are phenomenal men and all the fair mind can do with these is to dislike or admire their peculiarities, but the same fair mind must look to the wide-spread facts when it wishes to measure a profession as large as that of the law or the pulpit.

Who then is this average preacher who is now attacked by a popular enemy? He is a hard-working man who, upon small pay, has toiled hard in the past and who is toiling hard in the present—for what?—always for the happiness of society. There may have been centuries in which the world held so little truth and wisdom that the preachers had not much of value to give to the populace; but if one will estimate this toiler by the Protestant work in the last two centuries alone he will find that no other laborer has done so much for the multitude and for so small a reward in

gold. An eloquence which pleads for the welfare of "man, woman, and child," and which has many tears of pity for them because Calvin may have consigned most of them to eternal fire, ought to gather into its argument the labors of all the country and village and city pastors undergone in two hundred years for the immediate happiness of that "man, woman, and child" which fill up the foreground of the oration. That is not a genuine sympathy for the people which can overlook the general work of the clergy in the world's behalf. The heart that truly pities and loves mankind will discriminate very carefully, and will not confuse the pastorate of a George MacDonald or of a Canon Farrar or of a Norman Macleod with the doctrines of election and reprobation and miraculous answers of prayer; but a dramatic love will do this; it will consult nothing but the unity of a single performance. A rhetorical sympathy will weep that some one taught that children might be lost, but an actual living sympathy will gather the little ones into schools, will sweeten their home life, will enlarge their pleasures, will teach them truthfulness and kindness, and will in all ways toil for them as though they were already inhabitants of the skies. This kind of sympathy all the pastors have revealed for two hundred years. If certain trains of Calvinistic reasoning led to the conclusion that some infants would be damned,

no logic ever led the human heart to act upon that hypothesis, for all the world's pastors have surpassed the infidels in leading children toward a heaven here and hereafter. The doctrines have varied and have given the age such personages as Baptists and Methodists and Presbyterians and Congregationalists and Episcopalians and Unitarians. Amid these many minds the future world has passed along in as many pictures of itself. Some see a terrific punishment; some a second probation for some offenders, some a second probation and final triumph of all; some the death of the wicked and the immortality of only those who lived well this life; but under all this variety of opinion the life of the pastor has been always the one unchanging thing—the effort of a heart to make a community better and happier. If you should investigate that notorious high church, St. Albans, of London, in which perhaps your plain taste would be offended by gaudy colors and excessive external forms, you would find that its clergy and money are educating not hundreds but thousands of the poor, and have done those noble deeds so many years that, could all those thus led from sin and ignorance to virtue and light be assembled now in one multitude, infidelity looking upon the scene would bow its head in shame that its eloquence could not point to any similar spectacle. Brought thus into comparison, in-

fidelity would hasten to tear its rhetorical laurels from its unworthy temples. But the moral good springing up around the church of St. Albans is only a single rose plucked from a Christian world which has ten thousand fields where such love-red leaves are seen. But the new, impetuous enemy of the pastor can not see living facts, but only old abstract ideas; and while chasing after these he tramples under careless foot the richest humanities of our globe. One can find in the book-stores the biography of a single pastor, whose work, limited thus to one soul and by that span of time that lies between the morning and the night of life, brought more good to a country than could have come to it by any other profession than that of the common pastor. The beautiful California was the scene of this man's labors, and the days of gamblers and murderers were the time of that drama which would have been thrilling if the human crowd were just enough to the sublime in humble life. This preacher began his work when he could find only about a score of Christians in that city which has since become The Golden Gate. So homeless was he in the outset that he sought shelter at night in the same dens with gamblers—for all public places were dens of sin and crime. He saw men fall in fights and in murder. He took up his abode in a society unblessed with the presence of wom-

an or child, and denied, as it seemed, the presence of even a compassionate God. Out of such a gold-mad multitude this one man brought forth the finer qualities of the human heart; he gathered up the memories of better days, of pious homes, of long absent mothers and sisters and wives, and compelled the hymns of religion to displace many an oath, and the simple little church to arise where only the eye had seen the haunt of the gambler. And yet the deeds of that one faithful preacher have been repeated in all parts of the States and Empires which now compose the wide outlines of civilization. You do not even ask whether he was a Methodist or a Baptist or a Calvinist or an Episcopalian, because you know so well that the picture here painted can be found over and over again in the history of any Christian sect.

Last summer there passed along toward his mother country a plain Protestant Bishop, seeking a brief rest. Was he turning aside from applause and ease and with a purse well filled with gold to be a luxurious traveller among the resorts of fashion? He was the Bishop of some lonely islands in the Atlantic, and for many years had gone on foot and on horse and in a sail boat to and fro among the natives who offered no charm except the worth of their mysterious souls. He lived and toiled that in those islands might be laid the foundations of human happiness. Learned, but

plainly clad, powerful in mind and kindhearted in nature, poor in gold but rich in spirit, he looked out toward his England with a merit greater than that of the soldiers about to return in such fame from the bloody fields of Alexandria. The coast of California and the shores of England are far apart, but all the land and sea between has been long occupied by these soldiers of humanity whose weapons are pleadings and prayers and books and hymns, and whose victories bring no tears. Wide however as is the world between the Pacific and the Queen's islands, the solicitude and toil of the faithful pastor are wider far and reach from the temple steps of Athens where Paul preached, to the coast of Africa where Moffat and Livingstone spent a life in exile from the grandest of nations and the happiest of homes. The history of modern civilization is so entangled with the history of the laborious and self-denying pastors that no analysis can ever separate the progress of man from this belief in a God and from the varied blossomings of that hope and trust. The woods have at the same time heard the ax of the pioneer and the prayer and hymn of the missionary. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the new world, reaching from Italy to the American lakes, was urged onward more by a reformed religion than by the impulse of the Baconian philosophy or the kindling love of gold. Mission-

aries sailed from all the great centers of traffic and learning ; graduates in Oxford and Cambridge and in Heidelberg and over the sea in Yale and Harvard entered the ministry not from a love of gain, but because there seemed to await them in that field the greatest returns of usefulness. The little meeting-house sprang up at the crossings of the roads, and many a valley where water and trees met, the camp-meeting out-did the old cathedrals in *misereres* and *glorias*. The foundations of nations were thus laid in prayer and song.

Our calmer and more fastidious period smiles at the ways and means of all former days ; but after smiling a moment at the religious fashions of yesterday, we suddenly remember that "the fashion of this world passeth away;" that "generation cometh and generation passeth, but the earth abideth forever," and carries onward all the solid education and morals, and cares no more about the eccentric men or methods or creeds of yesterday than it grieves over the costumes worn by Bacon or Watt or Franklin or Washington. Rising above the little accidents of the clergyman's history, when we are in the upper height of meditation we see the last three centuries, the mightiest of earth, marching forward under church flags and cheered by the music of those two worlds which death divides. In such hours of deep meditation over the causes of this modern grandeur you

seem to be a brother of the German Uhland, who, a half hundred years ago, dreamed of a church in the woods, the path to which he could not find, but whose power none the less came to his heart :

“ In the deep forest far away
 The wanderer hears the sound of bells,
 Whence comes the music, who can say ?
 For scarcely one old legend tells.
 It cometh from the old church gray
 That lies in deep, unbroken calm,
 Where hundreds went of yore to pray
 Or joined to raise the holy psalm.
 I went into the woods to pray ;
 From other paths I wandered wide
 For freedom from the evil day ;
 For rest and righteousness I sighed ;
 The music from the ancient tower
 Came, soothing through the forest air,
 And rose and swelled in greater power
 As higher rose my soul in prayer.”

Following long the holy leadings of the bells, the poet found at last the gray stone church, and declares that

“ The solemn glory of the shrine,
 As at the altar steps I kneeled,
 The sounds of harmony, divine,
 Can never be in words revealed.
 He who would learn these things must go
 Far in the forest, lone to pray,
 And follow well the sounds that flow
 From the church tower, far away.”

This is the mythical gray church against which the embittered enemy of the pastors of every name aims his poisoned but enfeebled arrows. To him walking through the great leafy and shady and silent wilderness the tower bells have no charm; but the fight is an unequal one, and the victory will remain where it has always reposed—on the walls of the “old church gray.” As Calvinism was only the peculiarity of a master mind, powerful enough to compel a following of weaker intellects, but a following to die away in more learned times; as many dogmas have been only the view of the universe taken by an Edwards or a monk or an ascetic, so atheism as a philosophy is the eccentricity of a few minds, and will die away long before the mystery of the church bells will die out of the woods where we wander while we live, and at the roots of whose trees we shall all at last be buried. Thinking of the pastor’s calling as reaching from Christ’s own ministrations to the chapels of to-day that dot the earth from Persia to Oregon, estimating its labors and poverty and usefulness, the mind seems authorized to gaze into futurity and behold an era when the eloquence of atheism will from choice or compulsion pluck the fillets of fame from its temples and offer them to those toilers who in all the wide world are attempting to lead man, woman, and child to that mind and soul-freedom with which Christ makes free.

XII.

EQUALITY IN VARIETY.

He hath made everything beautiful in its time. —ECCLESIASTES iii:11.

MANY years ago John Ruskin asked the readers of his volumes to detect and admire generic beauty—the beauty of special departments of life or nature or art. We must not compare the lion with the lamb or the eagle with the dove, but we must find a generic good in each class. Whether the person who composed the book of Ecclesiastes had this exact thought in mind it is impossible to determine, for the speaker is gone and the words are too condensed to be self-explanatory forever. He at least came very near uttering Mr. Ruskin's sentiment when sitting down amid the occupations and conditions of the old Hebrew world, this old writer said: "God hath made everything beautiful in its time." Paul announced the same thought when he said: "There is one glory of the sun and another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars." From such condensed and suggestive statements from holy and common lips we may draw a lesson of the general equality of human

condition amid its great variety. God hath made every condition beautiful in its time or place—beautiful in its own sphere. Notwithstanding the variety of human conditions each has its consolation and even its charm.

In an age when there is a very general struggle for one position, that of riches, the lesson of the text should offer to us all a warning or a consolation or a reproof. We do not read human life broadly enough and do not live broadly enough and thus we shut up all the gates of happiness except one, and that one perhaps nature closed against us when we were created. Human life like the floral-energy or the rays of light has great aptitude for division and subdivision, and as flowers are small or large, red or pink or blue, and as light can resolve itself into a hundred hues and each one be a perfect color, so man can take one of many paths or many conditions and find in that island of being a noble application of his days and years. In order to fill up His infinite regions of space, the Creator has called into being almost innumerable forms of existence and action, and in harmony with this general plan the life of man was ordered to flow along many channels. There is no one path of greatness or success or happiness. There are as many beautiful shades of the human heart and mind as there are colors among the silks or sweet

changes on a chime of eight bells. Some great error has seized the multitude when they all struggle for one position. It is as though all flowers were struggling to become roses and all roses struggling to become red.

The Creator has made variety to be one of the characteristics of His creation, but this variety would be a defect if there were there only one condition of excellence. In that case all effort after variety would involve the loss of something good. If only the rose were beautiful all blossoms ought to have been roses, and if only the rich man or great mind can be happy it should have been ordered that all might be rich or great. If there is only one path that leads to excellence, why is our world full of paths, and by divine command? The very fact of variety discloses the other fact that life has many conditions of equal honor and equal happiness, and that variety is a full partner of equality. There are not a hundred forms of right and wrong. There are a few eternal unities. All morals must agree in the idea of loving your neighbor as yourself. There is no display of variety around the law that man must not steal and must not lie and must not kill. In many places the universe marks out one formula for all places and all times, and stands by this formula with awful severity. But elsewhere the Creator loves all manners of variation,

and in keeping with such a divine wish the physical and spiritual scenes are full of changes and are laden with changes to come.

In the sphere of Christianity we may now look back and perceive that what the Church needed was uniformity of character, and not of idea or tenet. To be like Christ in heart and conduct should have been the aim of the early and later Church. All should have sought the unity of morals, of virtue and charity and hope, and then elsewhere to have enjoyed the exuberance and the diversified forms of thought. But of such a variegated landscape the early Church knew nothing, and to this day its successor has not moved wholly out of the follies of its youth. Augustine and Pelagius and Donatus, in their own persons or in their adherents, approached each other as hostile knights upon the field of battle. All three were one in love of the Master and in an effort to obey the moral law, but differing in some of the forms of thought they met as enemies, and after filling their times with an uproar they at last sprinkled their lands with blood. Great men in their period, they lacked that breadth of mind that can discern a unity beneath a variety. Able to read Greek and to read and write and speak the Latin, they had no more conception of the liberty and diversity and beauty of opinion than they had of a railway or a telegraph.

They were too small for the universe in which stood their homes. As little children led by their nurse to the bank of a wide river, will cast out stones or pebbles with a great effort and wonder that they do not go across, so these great men of the past stood by the great tide of life and fully expected to cast their arguments all over and through and through the minds and hearts of men. If they were not conscious of failure we can see that they ought to have been filled with disappointment. Their arguments did not go across but fell at their feet.

Our age has reached a larger conception of the intellectual horizon but it is still too much injured by intolerance. This intolerance does not grow angry enough to heap up fagots or behead or imprison or banish, but it is powerful enough to limit the bounds of friendship and to mar the conduct and language of man toward man. There is still too much anxiety among those who hold what they call "views" that others should glory in the same ideas. But it must not be overlooked that this failure to perceive the breadth of the world is as common with the non-believing as with the Christian, and as often bemeans an agnostic as a Baptist or a Presbyterian. Some of the bitterest and most intolerant of all letters which come to those who argue for the existence of a God come from men who have outgrown the narrow limits of a

creed and who stand upon the sublime heights of nature. There is one height yet for many of these persons to master—that calm and holy summit which can enable them to look down in love and sympathy upon the opinions of a Christian. Opinions are the flowers of the intellectual world. Almost all of them are of fair color and of some delicate perfume. Only a few of the blossoms of the field are poisonous, and so in the vast empire of opinion nearly all can be worn on a pure heart or can be carried by those who are journeying toward Heaven. At least may we say there are many thoughts varying from each other which yet may and do all meet in one righteousness, and are equally pleasing in the sight of God. The quarrels of men over ideas are often as the disputes over the excellencies of different fabrics in the shops, or of styles of furniture or dress—matters of personal qualities and not of absolute merit or demerit in the external things. There are some minds which in music always listen to the bass and other minds which follow the soprano faithfully, but alas for the day when these persons shall attempt by sword or flame to determine which strain is the better.

This equality found in variety is as much a fact away from theological matters as within them and rejoices to gather up into one merit many kinds of mind and many conditions of station or fame or

property. There is a glory of the poet and another glory of the philosopher and a glory of the thinker and another glory of the artist and still another of the rich man and the poor man, for one man differs from another in the drapery of a beautiful being. All this rush forward toward the possession of wealth—a chase which it is thought characterizes our age—originated in an ignorance of the absolute greatness of the human soul. The rich man is only one of a hundred shapes of a successful manhood. Assuming that one is making good use of his gold, and that he has a great store of it, this person is only one shape of prosperity. Not all can have abundant gold, for in that case gold would cease to be valuable and the wheels of industry would stop. Riches is a relative term and can exist only where some have none of it. Riches is the measure by which the one overtops the many. It is impossible therefore for even a majority to possess wealth, and to affirm therefore that wealth is the greatest aim of man would be to affirm that God leaves the most of His children without a motive of being; He has planned His world for the welfare of only a few. We must reverse our reasoning and conclude from the fact that not many can reach riches, that it is only one peak in a mountain range, and that the most success of all forms will come from the innumerable multitude which move up

higher heights. The mountain range is long. It sweeps across the world and if the millionaires were all to assemble upon one great summit, sunlit indeed and perhaps touched by the spirit of God, for among these there is many a noble philanthropist, yet would other summits and domes be visible, not one but many, and all covered with mortals robed in white and wearing crowns. So many are the heights accessible to human footsteps that it is to be feared there will not be noblemen enough in this generation to furnish occupants for all these upper regions. In the pages of old history when some soldiers complained to their general that they feared that when the war were over he would not have the property nor the gratitude that would pay them for all their toils, he replied that he had been wondering whether he would have enough friends to reward. Thus may we all affirm that there are more thrones of honor founded of God in this globe than there are kings and queens to sit upon them. The hills which have gold in their rock and sand are well trampled upon, but there is perhaps a great movement away from the Parnassus, so loved in the past, where assembled the poets, away from the groves and academies where the wise men talked and meditated, away from Zion once adorned by the Nazarene and his saints.

It is said there is a great decline in the number of

graduates who are fitting themselves for the field of religious service. If this decline were taking place only within the fold of orthodox belief we might affirm that the modern mind was protesting against the quality and quantity of tenets found in the creed, but it is said that Unitarian Churches cannot find shepherds enough to care for their flocks. It thus seems that no form of Christianity is as attractive as once were all forms, and thus we are led by unwilling steps to the conclusion that the young hearts of to-day have become filled with the feeling that there is only one hill to be climbed and at its base they are all assembling. This is only a panic arising from a false alarm. A false cry in a school-house full of children will send the mass down stairs as rapidly and wildly, and with as much trampling and killing as though the danger were real. So among the excitable children of this century, millions will rush along trampling each other under foot, grinding and suffocating each other, in their wildness deserting many sacred things of learning or piety or art, and all this because some one has shouted aloud that wealth only is happiness. Never before was there a more fatal stampede over a deeper lie. The rush is down stairs narrow, and steep and long. The loss of life will be as great as foolish.

What our age demands is a new study of generic

beauty—beauty of a single kind. Did the merciful Creator give you a bright intellect and a warm heart? Then you have your destiny in yourself, and that mind is all the fortune you should want. It is more than you can take good care of. Realizing its worth from youth onward, you might at the age of forty make a millionaire look at you with envy. Many a man of fortune is now lamenting that he did not love his mind more in past years, and he now would exchange his riches for the power to compose a speech or a poem or an essay.

The philosopher, the thinker, the skilled artist, the musician, the preacher, the essayist, the historian, the poet, has each his destiny in his own pursuit. He has his share of the universe, and his piece is as large and rich as that of Cræsus or Cæsar. The rich are not better than the common throng, they are simply different. At least this is true to a degree greatly overlooked in our generation. Some one comes to you and asks which is the greatest of human compositions? And you are amazed at the question, for you cannot compare Homer with Lord Bacon, nor Dante with Isaac Newton, nor Shakspeare with Guizot and Castelar. You must classify before you can compare, and you must compare before you can award honors. Separating the poets from the other forms of mind you may then weigh Homer as against Virgil or

Dante, and detaching the causists you may compare Calvin and Fox or Mill and Puffendorf, and thus you may compare the rich men with each other and may affirm that Cræsus was less wealthy than some modern *Aurum* or *Argent*; but the moment you pass from one class to another comparison ceases from want of any resemblance.

The man who composed the song of Home, Sweet Home, so touched all those hearts that have ever sat around the fireside of early life that after thirty years of gathering appreciation and gratitude, the entombed bones of the poet become sacred and are brought back from a distant land that they too may be at home. Thus the glory of Cræsus is one, and the glory of Payne is another. One man dazzles us by his millions, but the other draws tears with his song. To these differences of value there is no visible or logical end. They are as infinite as the species of plants. As on the banks of the river of life, as seen in John's vision, there grew twelve manner of fruits, and as there fell new ripe fruit each month, so the trees of fame and happiness are as numerous as are the stars, and their ripe fruit falls in all the days and hours of man's career. Sit down by any of the many greater callings of our world and you will soon be carried away by its greatness. When you hear a great, honorable lawyer speak, do you not for the hour feel that you would

love to have his form of learning and his form of power? Out of the court-room and in the studio of the artist a new desire comes that you could express yourself upon canvas; listening to a musician you wish you could recall wasted days and make them bring you the skill of piano or violin. But passing years will check these longings by a slow overwhelming process which will compel you at last to say: "The universe is too large for me. I shall love my handful of flowers since I cannot carry the whole field. The whole spring-time is too large for me. I shall simply walk forth into a part of its sunshine."

Each thing is beautiful in its time. The perfect wood-work of the carpenter, the strong iron-work of the smith, the carved marble of the sculptor, the August fields of the farmer, the cloth of the weaver, the school of the master, the quiet room of the student, the college with its turrets, the cottage with its hollyhocks and vines, all come with their separate charm and help compose the magnificence of the world. In the thrilling page of history the poverty of the learned is seen now to be as grand as the gold of the merchant or the estates of royalty. We do not feel that Socrates needed riches and we are glad that Jesus Christ had nothing but a soul. The isolation of his soul made it stand forth like white figures upon a dark background. His soul reposes upon poverty like a rainbow upon a cloud.

It has been nearly a half hundred years since some kind minds began to ask for woman all the occupations and pursuits and the form of education common to man. In an age full of sympathy and full of appreciation of woman, this reform, if we may give it such a name, advances but slowly. Great changes should indeed be made, great laws of equity should be passed, and the day should be toiled for which should announce one morals for all the members of society, but the exact equalization of woman and man will long be delayed by the wide feeling that there are two destinies here, and that the glory of man is one and the glory of woman another. They are different parts of the great creation of God. Neither is superior to the other any more than Homer is superior to Lord Bacon, or than Angelo is superior to Washington. With what comparison can we compare Paul or John with Mary or Beatrice? The harsh old world did make a comparison and decided that man was the chief personage in rational being, and woman was remanded to a bondage from which she has not fully escaped; but if to escape from this crime we should assume the identity, mental and spiritual, of these two classes, we should again sin, this time against that law of nature which has filled up all space with diversity. From the old wrong against women we should fly to a new wrong against the Creator. Just how near the

studies and pursuits of the sister may approach those of her brother it is difficult to state in detail, but our thought begins and ends with the feeling that God has marked out different paths for these different feet, and that to compel them to march in one road is a wrong to both of the pilgrims. A grander vision is it to look out and behold two continents in the ocean of life, upon the one the stupendous structures reared by man, upon the other the more spiritual and more divine works wrought by the hand of woman. These kingdoms are simply different from each other, neither being the greater or the less. Rising up in two forms they double the beauty of the whole scene. To blend woman into man would be to blot out a world. Woman has not yet found her calling to the full; she is still halting amid things of small import or of much evil, but when she shall find her "lost mission" it will prove to be something very different from the destiny of true manhood. There will appear a perfect equality but it will exist in the midst of diversity.

What an improved earth should we have could each honorable condition realize that it is a part of a divine plan, that riches and honorable poverty, fame and no fame, genius and common intellect, high professions and industrial arts are all parts of the one great symphony—the eternal music of God's spheres. As in time so in immortality there will be room for all

through whose soul there runs here one common gold thread of righteousness or innocence. In that still, inner life the infant who went early from this world and the sage who went late, the Christian who went to his grave in much light and the pagan who went in much darkness, the mind which died amid learning in the schools and the slave who died in ignorance in his cabin, can all find a welcome in the hereafter ; for if earth in its littleness had room for so many forms of soul, much more can the greater country beyond the grave offer to all these exiles a befitting home. As God is Himself infinite, He has stamped that sublime term upon all His works, and upon no object more deeply than upon the soul of man.

XIII.

REASON AND IMAGINATION.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth.—REV. xxi : 1.

IT seems the privilege of man, not to dogmatize over the unseen things of the universe but to meditate over them, and if he is so disposed, to venture upon conjecture. The mind, when forbidden actual knowledge, is wont to busy itself with probabilities and possibilities, and from these it can draw comfort and happiness if not information. The notorious Dr. Dick, whose writings formed the average family library of the second quarter of our century, imagined the punishment of the lost to consist largely in an isolation of the wicked from all communion with nature. They were in darkness perpetual, unable to look out toward a sun or moon or blue sky. In the midst of everlasting cloud they were to pass endless years, and because of that darkness came the wailing and gnashing of teeth. His theory has this value: it asks us to ponder over the immense amount of happiness that comes to us all from the freedom, the

intellectual range of the mind. It is true that after gazing at the stars or the planets we still know little about them, but it is a measureless delight to be able to look at them as they are, though they are only bright spots in the sky. No feeling is more oppressive than that of imprisonment. The soul contains a form of personal infinity and, to be content, must feel that all is open between it and the stars. Man may, from curiosity or love of variety, enter a deep cavern or descend into the deep crater of a volcano, but the happiest moment is that which sees him back again to resume his relations to the immensity of space. The dawn of day is made more sweet by the fact, that night is a form of imprisonment and morning is the opening of the doors and an escape into liberty—the liberty of light and space.

The soul having been constructed upon this liberal principle it inherited the right to form ideas and conjectures over what may lie beyond the confines of all its sciences. It cannot by any means determine what is heaven or what is hell, nor what may be the condition of things upon the surface of Mars or Jupiter or Venus, but it may, it must, continue to make arguments of approximation, and thus to take a few steps of imagination into those lands whose gates are closed against the men of science, however gifted and adventurous. It is not wholly to the credit of our period,

that speculation regarding things beyond our horizon and beyond the grave has fallen into great unpopularity, for such a deadness and silence may indicate not a simple reaction against such imposture as the old church played upon our ancestors, and partly upon us, but may indicate a decline of that imagination which not only wrought in the domain of religion, but which helped construct all the old poetry and the old arts. It is well enough to crush all of that old fancy which the Church once thought the voice of inspiration, and whose dreams it formulated into doctrines, but it is not well to destroy all the imagination of the soul, and thus to cut down the tree which needed only to be grafted and trimmed. The sweet orange groves of the South are made out of those trees which once bore bitter fruit, and the rich delicious olives come from old wild stocks whose great utility and powers science has turned along the paths of a better fruitage. Thus that religious imagination and affection which bore such bitter fruit as fell in the middle ages could be employed in our era in growing for us new children, better oranges and olives than those from even the orchards of Dante and Milton. Our period has cultivated the absolute and material to such a degree that we fear that instead of grafting the old tree of imagination, it has cut it down as a cumberer of the ground, and has sown with wheat and corn the field where it grew.

Toward such a desecration of holy grounds the scientists have lent a helping hand, for it is now about a hundred years since they began to attract us into their shops, that we might see things measured and weighed and formed and dissolved, and that we might learn how much bread and meat were consumed in the composition of an oration and a poem, and what food would turn most readily into the argument of a statesman or a lawyer. Emerging from those lessons we find our old poetry displaced by figures and quantities, and the map of heaven put away to make room for the sections of land for sale in Dakota or Nebraska. Not all the reproach of such a change must fall upon the scientists, because they are themselves a result of a past which made the imagination a tyrant who formed laws and theologies out of his fancies, and who put men to death for a non-belief of his fantasies. The absurd fancy of the past taken in connection with its superstition and arrogance was indeed more to be deplored than the modified materialism of to-day. If one were compelled to choose between the mind of a Herbert Spencer full of calculations and weights and measures, and a mind which would throw an inkstand at a devil or hang a poor woman for bewitching a family, one would ask instantly for the soul of Spencer, for one would better escape the happiness of imagination than be guilty of its bloody crimes.

The benevolence of the Creator has delivered us from such a dilemma, for He offers us the full privilege of following both science and imagination, and of asking them both to help us construct our moral world. It is our own error and folly if we become the slaves of either materialism or of fancy. Science—all pure reason—is not the destroyer of poetry and dream, but only their best friend; the one ready to check dogmatism and fanaticism and absurdity, and to point out to the religious dreamer the best path for his winged feet. Homer and Virgil and Shakespeare are instances of the poet's acting in partnership with reason. The ends and aims of these great poets are the actual and good in human life, and their poetic imagery and often extravagance are only the innocent but beautiful ornaments of their work; but the imaginative faculty of the middle ages, and of times reaching to the Salem witchcraft was an end and aim in itself, and it shed human blood like a maniac mother who murders her children. What poetry may remain in our age or may come to it is or is to be modified by reason, and is indeed to be composed out of the lawful inferences of the deepest science, and the deepest logic. Noble condition of intellectual development will that be when science and poetry shall be combined! When each mind shall ask the known to help it soar away to the unknown! Looking into the fire

the heart will muse, or while musing the fire within will burn, and the heart will pass far away from its little cottage or narrow calling of the day, and be an inhabitant of the broader country of God. In developing his reason, perhaps man was compelled to slight his sentiments, because to rescue his reason from the mire of the past was a Herculean task. To accomplish such a task, and bring common sense back to humanity, he had to omit all else of pleasure and duty; but now that reason is restored, perhaps the modern nations will return and bring back the forgotten poetry, and thus make a grand age out of the two infinite powers—logic and dream. Not only had imagination become injured by the long accretions of folly and terror and superstition, but to the same degree the reasoning principle had become weak from disuse, and the most intelligent part of the human race suffered under a bad judgment and a bad creative faculty. It will be a stupendous task to bring back these dethroned kings, and set them up in empires over which they shall reign in harmony. Not only reason can be dethroned, but such a fate can befall a noble fancy.

Agnosticism, so popular, is not more an expression of irreligion than of the bondage of the age to the exact letter of demonstration. It is Shylock invading the sanctuary. He exacts the last penny of truth. If you suggest any equivalents, any equities, he smiles

his sickly smile of victory and demands the exact proof. He exults in his power over the timid victim, Faith. The victim from her nature shrinks, and is dumb in presence of a foe so relentless. So much of human happiness and human greatness comes from inferences and probabilities and possibilities, that to give up a God and a heaven because you cannot perfectly demonstrate their realness, is to sell out the soul at a low price. It seems an uncalled for removal from a rich vale to a desert, on the assumption that in the desert no one will ever dispute the title to your few acres of burning sand. True! should a man stake out a small farm in the midst of Sahara, he would not soon be called upon to prove up a title, but all this peace would proclaim the barrenness of the soil. One would rather live in a vale so rich with fruits and grains and flowers, as to be at least worthy of an inquiry, and perhaps of a warm debate. Agnosticism is an effort to find rest by pitching tent in a desert, where the security of title rests chiefly in the worthlessness of the land. Its votaries are men without any trace of imagination; men incapable of enjoying a probability; men who have not risen above poetry, but who have fallen beneath it.

Naturalists will tell us that our domestic fowls were once birds of long wing and great flight; but that, as food was placed by man within easy reach,

and shelter was furnished them in winter, they discontinued all wish of migration and their wings grew shorter, and their bodies heavier, and now they are the victims of a narrower policy, and are the idle and clumsy occupants of a few square rods of ground. Men and birds belong to the same dispensation of law, and if we are each generation becoming more and more unable to fly toward the mysterious blue of heaven, perhaps such a result comes from the fact that some kind of food has been flung down, so much and so pleasant, that the soul's wings have lost power to wander, and we have become the occupants of a door-yard rather than of the upper deep. Materialism has domesticated us until the mind no longer dreams of eternity. An agnostic may be a soul domesticated out of its immortality.

But it may be too soon yet to find what peculiar shape of mind that is which abandons the glory of a God and the hope of paradise, for the phase of thought is new; it has not fully expressed itself as to the condition of heart it loves. We dare offer only conjecture; and one may well fear, that this willingness to surrender all spiritual things comes not from a new majesty of reason, but from a decline of the glowing power of poetry and imagination, and a general stagnation of the heart. It will, without much doubt, disclose itself as being at last one of those sub-

emergencies in history in which we see one continent of the soul sink under a wave to make more conspicuous another great domain of its vast world. In Greece, Stoicism came with its suppression of one continent and its upheaval of another. Some iron laws of duty arose, laws toward man and state; but as much glory of life went down on the one hand as arose on the other. This stoicism passed over to Rome to be reduced to a still harder rule of conduct and endurance. It had some traces of beauty, but in its teachings the soul was like the moon behind clouds—able to send forth only traces of its complete splendor. Epicureanism came as a second depression of much and an exaltation of much. Its inquiry was always for happiness; the Stoic delighted in a peaceful endurance, the Epicurean in a constant enjoyment. The Church, coming into the arena to displace the classic paganism, ran off into various excesses and filled up about twelve centuries with an asceticism narrower and more false than the teachings of Stoic or Epicurean. It was an awful eclipse of body and mind. Christians were made saints by reducing their minds to imbecility and their bodies to skeletons. Those were generations without poetry or song or romance or health or happiness.

Agnosticism is one more strange specialization of the mind. It says, "Let us feed upon the tangible,

the visible, the ponderable. Let us no longer imagine a God or a second life. Let us part company with the whole realm of probability; and form an alliance with facts. We shall dispense with hymn and prayer, and make the best use of what is, asking nothing of what might possibly occur." Such a philosophy seems a cutting of the soul asunder, to fling away the part that dreams and imagines and hopes and longs. It will need to draw its adherents from persons of peculiar mental structure, and it is barely possible that our age is fitting its youth for a life without those longings which inspired all the great children of the past. But it seems more probable, that this attempt to eliminate the eternal and the infinite from man will be an *extravaganza* of thought—an event as probable among philosophers as among actors and humorists and musicians.

It does not seem a matter of doubt that the imagination of man was expected to supply many of the defects of sensible proofs, and to draw inferences from the actual, to put foliage upon the barren boughs fashioned by a severer logic. After the sciences have shown the unity of the universe—the universal presence of one method—after the spectrum analysis has helped teach us that the planets and the suns are made of the same elements which compose our earth, we are compelled to feel that in many

worlds there is life, and that the intelligent and loving creature, man, is to-day dwelling in many a globe besides this one we love. The vastness of the universe renders foolish the supposition that this little planet is the only inhabited one; and the unity of laws and of substances asks us to imagine the beings upon other spheres to be moving to and fro in the likeness of man, speaking a language and busied by the useful and the beautiful. We may even assume that such is the oneness of intelligent life that if these inhabitants of different planets were to meet in some general home in immortality, they would prove to be of one race—a human race having different minor details of history, but all members of one brotherhood, and capable of one friendship, one virtue, one taste, one piety—ten thousand worlds full of one music, one art, one tenderness, one virtue, one creature—man—one God.

Immortality itself is not against the discoveries of science, but is rather a corollary following its long and careful demonstration. The infinite longings of man, the horror of death, the matchless glory of life, the loathsomeness of the grave, the boundlessness of truth, the happiness its discovery brings, the inadequacy of three-score-years as compared with what the mind might learn or do or enjoy, the littleness of earth as compared with the creation, man's imprison-

ment, the presence and power of imagination and hope, these are all facts as palpable as the facts of land and air and water. Out of these tremendous realities a second life rises up, as not an intellectual fabrication, but as an inference drawn by imagination acting under the guidance of logic. Not to infer a second life is to be more irrational than to infer one, because such refusal to look forward is to blindfold man and make him barter away the infinite and receive a prison in exchange. Poetry, romance, hope, inference, are giant powers in the human career, and have come down to us covered all over with honors richer than the decorations of kings. To ask man not to look away toward a God, and not to cast his eye toward anything beyond the hour of death, is not to be a student of nature, but it is to be an enemy of nature; since that nature, so worshiped, formed the mind and heart for an infinite outlook. It is one of the blunders of modern naturalists that they do not conclude any phenomena natural except those of water and dirt, and no sentiment reasonable unless it be one of despair. They rush into the theatre of man and put out the lights in the first act, because of inadequate proof that the piece is going to be great. If after death these should learn that man came from a God and has a sublime destiny, it would be too late for them to advise us to order up the curtain again

and go on with the majestic drama. No greater enemy of reason has ever appeared than this new professed friend. It asks us to exchange the infinite for the finite, a sublime poetry for a few facts, and the great summer-time of the soul for a brief period of cold and storm.

Reason separated from a warm imagination may be useful in that kind of ability which comes from concentration upon a single object of toil. Hence Zeno, Socrates, Seneca, Epictetus, Aurelius, a'Kempis, Pascal, Harriet Martineau, and John Stuart Mill were of great usefulness to the human family, for from them came many lessons in a noble ethics; but they were special toilers and passed life under deep clouds. They helped unveil a half of the universe, but the other half they left under the empire of night. They were all destitute of that buoyancy of soul which has made for humanity its art, its music, its song, its laughter, its love, its worship and its hopes. We are glad they all lived and toiled, but we are glad also that others lived also to cover the naked trees with foliage, their outline world with green grass and sweet flowers. Logic without passion cannot make a world.

If science and reason have stalked into the new scene in stature greater than old life, each as colossal as the Moses of Angelo, the sacred imagination of

religion need not hide away in alarm, but she too must aspire to a new height and beauty; and disrobing herself of the morbid rags of the past, those garments covered with pictures of fiends—vestments of death worn by victims of the inquisition on the way to the pile of fagots—she must put on diviner raiment, woven by tenderer toilers at looms, and with threads of finer silk, and must rise as colossal in beauty as reason is colossal in power. If science and reason are laying better foundations of thought, let imagination hasten and build upon these better stones a better temple of God, and make it tremble with a still holier music, and resound with a wider and more rational eloquence. Not afraid of this gigantic reason, let this exalted poetry of the soul extend to reason one hand, and holding it in friendship, point with the other to the sky; for demonstration and imagination, acting in harmony, can find the truest answer to the problems of human life.

XIV.

THE OBJECTIONS TO EVOLUTION.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.—GEN. i: 1.

THE doctrine of evolution is now enjoying a day of popularity. At times it seems on the wane, as though it were proving itself unable to satisfy the mind—much less the heart. In other months its star seems again a rising star, as though its zenith had not yet been reached. The espousal of the new doctrine by the most popular and most powerful clergymen of our country is destined to add a new impulse to these vague theories which agree in the one effect of concealing the presence of a God. It is true that evolution does not absolutely exclude God, but it introduces so many natural agencies that many minds rise from its contemplation with a feeling that these agents have displaced their employer, and are toiling in their own name. Quite a number of men of considerable learning and mental power have already declared that they are not aware of the existence of any such being as God. Not

ready to deny such an Existence, they confess that they are to be influenced only by the phenomena of society, and must find their laws of conduct in all temporary interests. That these leaders are being followed by a large number of minds who are hidden away in the factory, the shop, and the fields, is well known to be true. The doctrine once laughed at, the doctrine once answered by calling the monkey the ancestor of at least philosophers, has outlived the laugh, and engages the most serious attention of the learned and unlearned.

This serious and almost universal attention and respect are, however, no proof that the new theory is to be accepted; but they come from the change undergone by the public in relation to all new announcements in any department of human inquiry. Once all new ideas were received with derision, but such amazing new truths have sprung up within this century that men have grown respectful, and spiritualism and evolution and even atheism are treated with a public politeness. Men are afraid to laugh for they remember what recent history has taught nations and individuals, that "he laughs best who laughs last." In our times, the attention which evolution is receiving is not an indication of its reasonableness; but it is only a proof that the human family has moved up out of that self-conceit which once ex-

cluded all possibility of error, and which made the holding of new opinions a sin, punishable often with death.

To this question whether man was evolved from the lowest form of life, there is another side. Evolution has its objections, material and spiritual. Some of the great men in science dispute its claims, and those who are now pondering over the problem of life should keep in mind the objections as well as the arguments in favor of the gradual construction of man. Mr. Beecher can harmonize the theory with religion more easily than he can harmonize it with scientific facts. A personal and good God might indeed have seen fit to create or produce man through a thousand intervening creatures, and man thus produced might at last have become religious; but the facts of science do not blend with the assumed situation as readily as does a more facile religion.

Darwin and Spencer and their schools are urged onward by their full conviction in the universality and persistence of law. With them the persistence of force takes the place of the old dogma about the perseverance of the saints. It was the comfort of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the elect could not, by any power of temptation or crime, be deprived of final salvation. Onward toward Paradise they must go, led or impelled by "irresistible grace." The other

name for this onward march was "effectual calling." It has died away from religion to spring up in science, and "persistent force" is the name of this agency which hurls animal life along from slime to cell and from cell to vertebræ—from brute to man. But a survey of the facts of nature does not reveal any such never-resting law; for if, as most naturalists admit, the human race has been on this globe fifty or more thousands of years, the forces which formed man and the animals around man have enjoyed a wonderful period of rest, so far as any transmuting of genera is concerned. Man, when he made rude images on the surface of old ivory, or when he made tools of stone, was just what he now is in all the essentials of a unique creature. He had then imagination, fancy, invention of tools and a love of the beautiful; and the vertebrate animals around him were as perfect as they are to-day. The brutes have made no progress and man no progress by any law of force in all that fifty thousand years. What advance man has made in that vast period has not been caused by any physical laws of which science takes note, but has been made by means of school-house or meditation—things which do not belong to what are called forces; for if there were forces which tended to produce meditation, the mammoth ought to have learned in fifty thousand years to make a few letters or images upon his own

tusks, or upon the tusk of his next friend. It is a singular situation that the evolutionists trace man back fifty thousand years by the unchanging works of his mind, and trace the cave-deer and cave-bear back just as far by the unchanging qualities of bear and deer, and then infer from that long separation and isolation of genera the variations of genera and species. To infer changes from constancy is a new form of reasoning.

The marks of constancy are as numerous in our earth as are the traces of change. Go back to the cave-men who may have lived a hundred thousand years ago, and they stood no nearer the ape than we all stand to-day. They carved upon pieces of ivory pictures of the hairy elephant and of animals whose remains are found in the formations of the quaternary period; and thus man, lying in death among those animals, with his stone implements around him, and with his rude engravings by his side, assures us that there he was in France and Switzerland, with his lofty mind, fifty or sixty thousand years ago. His implements, his carvings, his bears and elephants are now his historians. Thus are revealed great pauses in what is called natural, persistent force, spaces of vast extent, during which no changes are taking place in any of the genera of earth, higher or lower.

It weighs against the evolution theory that the changes found in the historic periods are all wrought within the boundaries of a genus, and not in the wider kingdom of life. One genus will furnish many varieties of species, but one genus has never been seen passing over to become another. The variety of dogs is immense, and points back toward the wolf; but the dog does not threaten ever to pass out of the genus, and become a member of the genus bovine or the equine family. So the variety of horses is very great. What a wonderful collection we find between the great, heavy animals painted by Rosa Bonheur and the little ponies from the Shetland Islands! But in all this spirit of variation, marked in all history, there is no tendency in the horse to pass over to the kingdom of the lion or the elk or the bear. The variety of tame pigeons is also very large, but this tendency to change size and color and decoration limits itself within the species, and never carries the pigeon toward the hawk or the owl. Thus, while rabbits are multiplying their colors, they are never moving toward anything else, but are always the same timid essential rabbit. In the floral world, the rose has branched off into a hundred shapes and colors and perfumes, but the rose and the sunflower are as far apart as they were when man first heard of them, and both of these are equally far

from the moss below them and the oak above them. Much as we all admire and esteem Mr. Beecher, he is more of a popular orator than at least was our Agassiz. Agassiz was all his life a student of the facts of nature; and after making a survey of all the variations of animals and birds and fishes, he was compelled to say that he could find no evidence of an evolution of one class from another. His words are: "There is nothing like parental descent connecting them. The fishes of the Palæozoic age are in no respect the ancestors of the reptiles of the Secondary age; nor does man descend from the animals which preceded him in the Tertiary period. The link by which they are connected is of a higher and immaterial nature, and their connection is to be sought in the wish of the Creator himself."

There is much demand made for the "missing link" between ape and man, but that call is not the one-tenth part of the difficulty in the argument of evolution. We want thousands of "links" to join not only man to the ape-world, but to connect all the modern animals with the oyster and mollusk. Great use is made by evolutionists of vast periods of time. "Give us millions of years for our task." If, then, all their agencies must act in long time, those "missing links" did not act hastily, and the animals between man and the monkey must have been the partakers

of these long periods. There must have been vast numbers of those animals which attached man to the ape, and they must have been upon earth a long time. Under the lead of the evolutionists we must believe that earth will preserve anything except the bones or impress of a "link." It will preserve the ape and the man, but it cherishes some ill-will toward a "link," and refuses them any kind of immortality. Nature will preserve things delicate as a fern leaf or the little fishes that swam long before the *mammalia* appeared, but it has issued a decree of perfect oblivion against all "links" and asks us to write over them the word "missing." This we do cheerfully, and feel that there is a good reason for absence of their remains in death—the absence of their organisms from old life. These "links" now missing could not have made a short stay of a few years, for evolution demands long times; nor could the ancestors of man have possessed a pulpy body that would not remain as a fossil; for so gradual are the assumed processes of evolution that the ancestors of man must have possessed the substantial bones of the higher order of animals and should have left some remains. The absence of "links" and the isolation and perfection of all the old species, are facts which may well call us to halt awhile before we dispense with the successive wishes and acts of an intelligent Creator.

It would be pure dogmatism to declare the evolution theory false or impossible, for the case is one of such magnitude that we are invited to think rather than to exult in mere declaration; but this remark applies as well to those who espouse the doctrine as to those who reject it. Up to this date much of the popular faith in this new theory results from the courage and bold assumption of its advocates in the fields of science; for it is becoming an evident truth that in the power to speak like an oracle the theologian is fully equaled by the scientist. The terms of the old theologian were but little less lucid than the terms of the modern evolutionist. The words "force," "magnetism," "persistent force," "potency," parade before us in all the mystery of those days which uttered such words as "fate" and "free-will" and "three-in-one" and "eternal procession." Both these sets of names are apparent efforts of the mind to find points where its knowledge may fade away into ignorance in a manner elegant and gentle. When found in a fog, man names the fog and it becomes a part of his science.

It is now objected to the doctrine of evolution that it has been imposing upon us and upon itself by its use of the term "force." In a sermon of a few weeks ago upon the "Moral Element in Creation," the ground was taken that forces in nature could not prefer a

“survival of the fittest,” for natural forces possess no taste of a moral quality, and the “potency of life” could not make man love the perfume of a rose or a painted sunset. Instead of placing God simply further back, this idea of persistent force seems to fail wholly along its pathway. It not only fails to produce certain much needed “links,” but it fails to explain any plant or animal that has come or which may yet appear. Force may hold together particles of material and make them assume the form of a rain-drop or even of a planet, but there must be something added before any of the dynamics of nature can make particles of material arrange themselves into a tree or a bird or a man. You make no gain by calling it “persistent force”; for if the force which holds the particles of lead together should continue to act for a million years, it could never make that lead take root and grow, or take lungs and breathe. These terms have been permitted to blind all us non-scientific souls until at last we have come to believe that force can achieve a wonderful end in making animals if only we grant it plenty of time. We are asked to believe that force loves the final end in man more than it loves the intermediate end in ape and bird and tree.

In “The British Review” of last month, a writer of great acuteness calls attention to the fact that after all said about “forces” by Darwin and Herbert Spencer,

they will not find in any such term any assistance in constructing the organic kingdoms, for the question will be: What is it that determines the direction force shall take? The question is not one of power, but of *guided power*. Two ideas must meet to make up the effective "potency." The writer illustrates by saying that power will dissolve a sand-bank and make the soil flow away from the flint or gold, or will shatter a stone or melt a snow-drift, but power will never form an organized body—a bird or a tree or a rose, because that formation is power guided to a special end and asks for a second element.

Such a setting aside of the word so dear to the friends of evolution will not utterly destroy their theory, but it does cast upon them the necessity of confessing that they need a second element of power; something that will guide power, and they ought to confess that they have been imposing upon the common people by the false use of a term. The term did not contain all the causation the evolutionists were making use of in their new mode of genesis. The force of wind will carry a ship, and it is true enough to state that the breeze was a "persistent force" which brought the bark or schooner to our harbor; but the remark is not fully true, for the wind would, if left to itself, have sent the vessel on the shore at any one of a hundred points. Force, therefore, does

not bring our shipping into this particular harbor. The potency is *guided force*—something so different as to change the whole phase of evolution. Our animals and birds and trees and blossoms are, therefore, not the results of forces, but of forces under a guidance.

Evolution, therefore, as viewed by Professor Clifford, and so many who, by means of it, displace a God, is a form of imposition upon the public, an imposition in the shape of extracting more from “power” than lies in the term. The breeze which will waft a ship in a general way is made by them to select a particular harbor, and to lay the vessel up quietly and gently at the dock.

Such are the objections which rest against the theory of evolution held in either its religious form, by the most of its friends, or in its atheistic form by the fewest. All that is made certain by research is that great varieties of life have come within the borders of a genus, but the genera all stand yet as the result of some cause that can determine and plan and guide. James Croll, an English writer, quoting from some one whose name he does not mention, but one who has abandoned the belief in any Creator, introduced these words:

“The theory of theism in any shape is, scientifically considered, superfluous . . . and I am not

ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness, and when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible." Words these, which lead us all no doubt to marvel at the ease with which some minds part with their most sacred opinions, and how ready they seem to be to move away from the "hallowed glory of a creed" and "to wander in the lonely mystery of existence." Our own horizon has just presented us with this premature spectacle of moving away from a hallowed creed, and hurrying into a lonely mystery. An actor died wishing no religious service or allusion; a fellow actor read over the coffin some dreamy words of annihilation, and a leader in this spiritual *abandon* telegraphed for the funeral some words of kindness and dust mingled. Thus three forms are seen bending in a melancholy worship of oblivion. All one can say is that what sadness they reveal is as yet uncalled for. No argument has yet been framed in science or out of it that need cast any new doubt upon the existence of an Infinite Mind that is everywhere in power, and wisdom and love. That group, actors and lecturer, have surrendered too

soon and too easily the "hallowed glory of a creed." Two years ago this actor had reached no such a depth of hostility to religion. His private talk in those summer days was full of a belief in a God, and of hope of a second life more free from temptation and fuller of all that is nobler and better. He had a heart full of complaint against the church of his boyhood (the Roman) and against the Calvinistic creed, but he seemed to rest quite well in the thought that we were in the hands of a God, and that we were journeying toward a greater and a better land. It was not important that a clergyman should be present at the funeral, but unless that actor's mind had emptied itself fully of recent thoughts there are hymns and chapters in religion which would have been full of adaptation to that sad hour of burial.

Time remains for only one practical inference. Man, the wanderer, the one who thinks and loves and struggles, and, above all, the creature who foresees death and dies, has met with no new enemy of religious trust. What "soul of loveliness" the universe ever had it possesses yet. Not a leaf of that rose has fallen. It always was a mysterious flower, with hidden roots and with colors and perfumes from unseen urns, but what it was in the years far gone it is in the years that are still unfolding.

XV.

MERIT.

If God be for us, who can be against us?—ROM. viii : 31.

Their works do follow them.—REV. xiv : 13.

THE world having come from God and God being the supreme wisdom and right the immense inference follows that the greatest success will always attend the greatest merit. *A priori* such a conclusion is true. Resting in such an undeniable tenet a great philanthropist of our century not having many human allies to stand with him on the field of his moral battle said : "A man is in the majority when he has God on his side." He lived to see his trust confirmed by those awful battle-fields in which slavery fell never to rise and where the American name was washed white from its deep stain. Many heroes of the remote past cast themselves upon the grand assumption that the right would prevail, and found in the intrinsic greatness of the thought a deep inspiration. A universe would soon fail if it were a general law that the demerit should avail more than merit, deformity more

than beauty, hate more than love. The mind of man is wholly incapable of believing that the true and good shall be finally dethroned, and the false and the bad reign in their stead. Men leading false lives expect in some future day to transfer their allegiance and be found at last under the flag of the right and the true. None expect a lasting success to come from any antagonism of God's law. It is impossible for the mind to think otherwise than that truth and right will prevail.

The writer of the book of *The Acts* quotes these words from a saint: "If this work be of men it will come to naught, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it." Sophocles makes the drama of *Antigone* turn largely upon the idea that even the gods are held in their paths by the absolute right, and from the dark pages of that tragedy one may learn how deeply the mind was imbued in that age with the feeling that only right can be successful. The wife of Pontius Pilate warned her husband against injuring the innocent. Herod feared to behead that just man who had preached the right on the banks of the Jordan. Thus does history set before us a continuous scene of faith in the absolute right and of distrust in all the efforts of society or of the individual to escape the truth and justice. Most of the sublime pictures in human life are drawn from the times and places where the mind

has discovered the true and good and has toiled for it and waited for it through long years of intervening storm. Out of the intrinsic excellence of the right and the true and the good come the happiness of the artist, the dignity of the wise man and the repose of the Christian. We must conclude therefore that we are in a world where questions of success are all questions of merit. Toward such a conclusion we are driven by that which ought to be and that which has been.

What embarrasses the action of this principle is that the reward of merit may come very slowly while most men desire a near end, a goal at hand. Tell a young man that he will become a better lawyer or better physician or clergyman if he will prepare himself the most perfectly for the coming pursuit, and he will not dare deny your premises, but he will gather up some individual reasons why he cannot follow the longer path, and will perhaps admit that he will expect only a moderate amount of power or fitness. The larger proportion of the young and of those in mature life cannot trust much in the morrow and therefore they attempt to force out of one year the good which can only come from ten or twenty years. It is this forcing process which compels many to resort to artifice and all forms of pretense and base imitation, fraud being more instantaneous in result than

honest merit. To the injury which impatience and distrust of the future is bringing our world, conceit is making a large addition. Thousands confess that as a general rule real merit comes slowly but they feel that they are made personal exceptions by their possession of genius. Thus between the impatience of many and the natural-born greatness of many the long path to excellence is not much travel worn in these days. The grass is growing in the highway. Many of the marks of chariot wheels seen on that royal road were made centuries ago by beings who are dead.

All this hasty preparation for a profession be it that of a preacher or lawyer or doctor or editor or actor or for any leading avocation is a struggle against God, just as truly as is a life of positive sin. Such conduct has not the baseness of immorality and is not amenable to criminal law but it is none the less an insurrection against the universe, and without having the turpitude of sin, suffers at last the penalty of a broken principle. The old catechism of the Presbyterians says "Sin is any want of conformity unto or actual transgression of the law of God," and if God passed a law that all human success must be based upon human merits, that all questions shall be those of real worth, then alas for the moral attitude of those who can show only the outward sign of a profession

or calling or art! They are all transgressors and will come sooner or later upon some form of punishment—at least the punishment of failure.

Man having inherited a seventy-year life, his success along any path involves the assumption of a morrow. Not being an ephemeral insect, he dares not live as such. He must live as a seventy-year tenant of a large estate, and since man lives as much for his family or children as for himself, his period of thrilling interest reaches beyond a whole century. Such is the arena for the acquisition and influence of merit, and it is in that long outreaching of time that real excellence wins its victories over that forlorn competitor found in pretense.

The boundaries of life were marked out for special reasons—the work of man must have demanded such an expanse, and hence, when one attempts to leap into learning or art or fame or wisdom in a single year, he casts an insult at the slower process of nature. When the youth with his gifted mind can not assume the future and fall into the large plan of the Creator, he ruins his career in advance. The young must either assume a future or else ruin it. There are lawyers and preachers and writers now living who would gladly go back if possible, and lay with more patience all the foundations, mental and emotional, of their pursuits. They would have

lingered longer among languages and sciences and literatures and essayists and rhetoricians, could they have realized in advance that a half century was to come year by year after they had left the early school-house. Each new decade has revealed the bad judgment of that early impatience, and has brought the wish for permission, if possible, to try the race of life again.

Woman joins in an insurrection against the universe when she acts as though her life were all involved in those few years covered by her personal beauty. Life coming from the Supreme Life contains no dead or deformed divisions or departments. The glory of God is all over it. Physical beauty is only one of the gifts of Heaven to the daughters of Earth. That form of worth may fade away into beauty of mind and heart, but it should be as dawn passes up into morning, and not as evening passes down into night. Merit never deserts the soul. At all points of human life the individual is a blending of the human and the divine. Woman is fully authorized by Nature to make her fiftieth year as noble as her sixteenth, her learning, her conversation, her taste, her matchless purity, her infinite friendship which has not enough worlds to conquer being more than able to atone for the tints that may have faded from the cheek. When physical beauty is made the aim of being, life is lim-

ited to about twenty years. Thus are fifty years left without an adequate reason of being except that a part of the period was the approach to beauty, the other part a retreat full of much humiliation. The rose lives for its physical charm alone. Its beauty is the whole philosophy of its existence ; but the moment we estimate an intellectual and emotional being, then color and youth are only the incidents of a few years, and not the interpretation of a life. Merit stands ready to take possession of the whole three-score and ten years, and to make the last years more glorious than the first. God is with his children always.

Even Shakespeare does injustice to mankind when he divides life into seven ages and uses up the last two in the formation of a kind of shivering ghost. The words

“ The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper’d pantaloons.”

and the succeeding lines are a kind of unintended insult to man and his Maker, for not one old person in a hundred passes away from life in such decrepitude. What ones of the world’s great have thus staggered on and mumbled their way down to the tomb in your sight? Did Washington and Jefferson and Madison and Webster and Clay and Jackson thus go down to their last sleep? Pass rapidly over the mighty roll

of those who in the civilized nations have died since our country began, and you will find that not many of the grand multitude acted out the sixth and seventh scenes of Shakespeare, but rather sank suddenly down as heroes lie down to rest when a great victory has been won. Edmund Burke may stand as an average picture of an old age which comes after a life lived upon God's side. He moved England the more deeply the older he became. His mind seemed to acquire power as the gray hairs increased in number, and the heart grew yearly warmer toward friends and country. One of his greatest political productions was on its way to the printer when he fell in death—a colossus to the end. Thus Lord Brougham, thus Archbishop Tait went away, and thus the living great men, Gladstone and Victor Hugo and their class, are not playing the final parts assigned by the old dramatist, but they are moving along, giants to the last.

Thus human life lies before us in its whole expanse an arena where the sons of God gathered their stores of merit. Childhood and youth and middle life and age are all one in the divine philosophy of man; they all make one long harvest-time when the arms may be full of rich sheaves. As a general rule for those whose three or four-score years are run it takes only three months to die. Angelo, when in his ninetieth

year, went onward with unabated mind and soul, throwing out his great thoughts in art and in poetry in a power of which his youth had not even the dream. His mind revealed only the sadness which comes from having discovered too late the inexpressible grandeur of the universe. In his last months he wept this sonnet, full of regrets but full of power :

“ Borne to the utmost brink of life’s dark sea
Too late thy joys I understand, oh Earth !
How thou dost promise peace which cannot be
And that repose which ever dies at birth !
The retrospect of life through many a day,
Now to its close attained by Heaven’s decree,
Brings forth from memory in sad array
Only old errors that still follow me.”

Thus ran this mind for nearly a hundred years and encountered nowhere a month or a day not marked with the strange divinity of soul. A single winter-time contained the period of failure, while it took ninety years to contain the days of triumph.

It thus appears that our earth was projected as a place where the children of God were to gather up the virtues and powers and beauties of their Father. God is the Infinite Worth. He is Infinite Good, the Infinite True and the Infinite Beauty.

All have said this, and deeply felt it. The material creation is only the unsealed alabaster-box

whose perfume has rolled outward into space. Our world is therefore full of the outpoured spirit of the Almighty, and here the human race are permitted to wander to find what they can of the attributes of God. Man is out seeking merit, worth, worth of mind and heart, chiefly because his body shall return to dust; and while he is seeking this merit of any color or form, God is upon his side. In youth or in middle life or in old age, the pursuit and success are all one. Beauty will fade into some higher excellence, romance will be changed into wisdom and eloquence, the love of one enlarged into the love of all.

No questions will ever surpass therefore the questions of worth. All things false, all things which seem only, all things gotten together in haste, all shams fabricated by fraud and impatience are in the minority because God is not on their side. All who trust in these subterfuges will reach the most perfect disappointment.

It was one of the many injurious blunders of the theologians that good works were to play no part in salvation. All was achieved by faith. In a world where lawyer and student and physician and orator and farmer and artist and statesman and poet and mechanic were to succeed by their special excellence, the doctrine that works were of no value in religion was a strange discord.

Merit was of infinite moment in all domains except that of morals. Here it was displaced by faith, and what that faith was no one exactly knew. Salvation by merit would have had two things in its favor: it would have harmonized with the world in which all merit wins, and it would have been by a method capable of being understood. Man may quarrel over the import of "faith," but all know an upright life when they see it, and have little doubt regarding its meaning and excellence. The office of Christ would have been enlarged rather than lessened, for to help the soul to find merit is better than to help it find salvation without such intrinsic worth. Christ's scheme was one for helping the heart find as much morality and piety as the world would help it find of pleasure or gain or ambition. To oppose the doctrine of works was to oppose the whole genius of our world, and the church labored and groaned for centuries because it had not God on its side.

So far as the church believed in works it misconstrued them. It called fastings and abnegations and prayers by that name, and having lived in poverty and pain and seclusion, and having said a hundred prayers daily, the members summed these up as works, and often accumulated more than one soul would need. A surplus was often given kindly to some deficient soul. But when Christ or St. James

spoke of works they did not allude to the ceremonies of a formalist, the frequency of fastings and prayers, but to all that religious advance of the soul in piety and love which in study would make a scholar or in reflection a wise man or in traffic a merchant. The works of religion were an unfolding of the religious sentiment into action and character—a development of the divine quality of the heart—and therefore each half-starved monk or each gloomy, weeping Christian was an insurrection against the God and Savior whose service was dear but misunderstood. Should a group of earthly children attempt to worship their parents by a starvation and humiliation of self and a praise in hymn or prose of their parents, the father and mother thus exalted would beg their children to change their method and to honor their parents by a development of their youthful lives. Thus the Heavenly Father asks for those human works which evoke and enlarge and establish the powers of the human souls. The education and liberty of the nineteenth century are better works than the hymns and prayers of the fifteenth. What heaven asks of earth is a perpetual accumulation of merit.

Defective as modern civilization is, it contains this quality that it thinks more of enduring good than the past times, recent or remote. Government and religion especially are compelled to seek permanent

principles. The spread of education is the spread of reflection, and the essential worth is demanded of the government of an Ireland or the perdition of the Calvinist, and so far as an intrinsic merit is not found, the two schemes are condemned. Church and State must soon gravitate about a new center. As England studies absolute law of nature when she builds her railways and bridges and homes and temples, and has little of which to-morrow will be ashamed, so in administering government and in teaching religion all nations must hasten to that presence of God who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

Perishable goods may trifle with forms and shapes. A lady's toilet may cast aside to-morrow the style that prevailed yesterday. Here caprice or fancy may rove quite free because the fabrics are soon to soil or perish, but when one works in marble or upon a canvas, the permanent beauty is demanded, and lo! we see the Corinthian capital or the statue of Apollo as beautiful at the end of twenty-five hundred years as at the beginning. Thus the mind of man not born to flourish a month only, but with great outreachings, must gather up from time to time only that excellence which no years can efface. The Corinthian capital of Greece is no more enduring than her Socrates, and the grace of Venus and Minerva in marble is no more eternal than the honor of Aristides and

the piety of Plato ; the arches of Roman architecture are no more lasting and graceful than are the verses of Virgil or the orations of Cicero.

As education and reflection advance, it will become more and more difficult for anything to succeed but real merit. There are some departments of human life into which true worth is not rapidly coming, but in the intellectual and moral fields the demand will be alarming to many who had based their hopes upon external practice. A poor book, a poor doctor, a weak lawyer, a dull or vulgar editor cannot live as proudly as once they lived. The daily paper which shall bring to bear the most of enterprise and the most of literary talent and vivacity and the most of real manhood and honor will distance all competitors if ten or twenty years be assumed as the period for experiment. Sensationalism is for to-day, merit is for the long morrow. What Dr. Johnson said of a comedy written by a duke of Buckingham : " It hath not wit enough to keep it sweet," may furnish us with a parallel utterance over human life. " It must have merit enough in it to keep it sweet "—intrinsic worth being that richness or aroma that confers immortality. The spices of the East do not decay, they are preserved by their own principle.

Do we not therefore perceive in our earth a time and place where the beauty and goodness and great-

ness of God are attempting to cross over to man? Not that man is to become as a god, but the universe is evidently the wish of the Creator rushing outward. It is the infinite spirit becoming visible and tangible and lovable. As the influence of the sun called light is said to be dark until it strikes an atmosphere and then suddenly it makes a flood of sunshine, so the Spirit of God invisible and unknowable strikes upon the external and we have the universe—the music made by an unseen hand upon seen strings. Man is the being in which some of the attributes of the Supreme Soul are seeking a home. Humanity is a rolling stream which is gathering up into its ever swelling flood the glory of God and the glory of mankind. All merit will be saved and rewarded. A soul setting forth in its early years resolved to seek only absolute worth has hold of God's hand and nothing can be against it. Be the path amid darkness to-day it will emerge into light, the desert will become a garden, the wilderness shall blossom as the rose; and since earth may not bring to pass all this promised triumph, this mortal full of imperishable worth can say on his death-bed with an ancient: "I am not going to die to-night, I am only going to be born."

XVI.

THE BEAUTIFUL IS THE USEFUL.

Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers who hath put in the king's heart such a thing as this to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.—EZRA vii: 27.

OF all sentiments, none is more universal than that of the beautiful. Some tribes can be found with no altars and no prayer and no hope of a second life, but no tribe can be found in which there is not a love of personal decoration. Wherever there has been a human mind, there has been this passion for ornament in more or less of power and judgment. Looking at all human history, the beautiful is a river that has followed the marching human race like the sweet, fresh water which followed that army that wandered in the desert under the banner of Moses. As man has filed along through Egypt or Greece or Palestine or Rome or Italy, the river of beauty has followed, or rather he has floated upon its deep and peaceful wave. The ruins of all the old States may be silent over the particular merits of those who built and occupied temple and palace and forum and villa,

but those ruins agree in assuring us that all those hearts harmonized in just such a taste as is now the foundation of art, and through art, of happiness.

The thanks Ezra offered the Almighty that He had moved the spirit of Artaxerxes to beautify the temple are thanks which all the world offers when any grand decoration is added to the scenes where the people must pass life. It is said that seventy thousand workmen were busy over the second temple for about seven years, and in after generations so much more time was exhausted upon pillars and porches and gold and silver finishing that the Jews said to Christ: "Thirty and six years was this temple in building." Such an item from history is only a leaf from a forest; for time and power would fail were any one to attempt naming the mighty and the minor decorations which man has left behind him in his long journey. Asia, that rich land that has swarmed with untold millions, joins Egypt and Greece and Rome and Italy and America in declaring that the sentiment of the beautiful is universal and powerful. It almost leads the heart to forgive the sins of the old states, the thought that they so loved to decorate their persons, their cities, their homes, their temples. The history of the human race, if widely written, would not be a record of only war or of quarrels in politics and religion, but it

would be also a history of a sentiment—a strange sentiment, which in a child reaches after a rose, in manhood reaches after marble and purple and jewels and harp and song. This sentiment is not an incidental quality of man, but it is the great air around him or the solid land under foot.

If you move away from city and town and home, and pass into the wild country, you have simply escaped from the decorations of man to fall into the richer enchantment of God; for lo! His fields are carpeted with grass, His green foliage blossoms, and not only reveals odors but sends forth a perfume; His dew-drops sparkle like diamonds; His lily-stems are graceful; His vines are festoons; His trees make Gothic arches with their branches; the winds make a music in this grove-temple, the birds are its choir. Thus from the fact of beauty there is no escape when the mind and heart are not broken by sin or calamity. Go where man may, and by day and by night he is in the immediate presence of the beautiful.

Utility as exalted in our times has become a passion of the hour, but that which is called utility is often only the lowest form of that kind of good. A high utility will include the beautiful; for the beautiful is the useful. We shall not dare assume that these forms of thought and labor are one and the same, but we shall venture upon this, that beauty is one of the

forms of utility, and shall dare offer as our theme that beauty is utility.

Of such a proposition it should be proof enough not that God Himself ordered a great Nation to beautify a temple, for some might deny that such an order had ever issued from the skies, but proof enough that we pass life in a world all marked by decorations wrought by the Creator, and that we belong to a race which loves the ornaments of the world as much as it loves the world itself. We find in man a powerful appreciation of forms and odors and sounds and perfumes, and we find a universe in which even the wing of the butterfly is painted, and where black clouds receive a rainbow, and where the birds are red or blue or spotted. God being thus fully committed to this sentiment of taste, we might well assume that all this scene of attractiveness has a moral end and is not a simple path of pleasure, but is a highway of greatness. Beyond doubt some of the states gave too much of their time and gold to that form of utility found in temples and statues and pictures, for the highest success will come from a symmetry of action and feeling, and that nation will be the grandest whose grasp shall include not only a good statue and a good poem and oration, but also a good wagon-road and a good reaping-machine. The periods of widest reach will be greatest just as those trees are strongest and most

fruitful which have air and sun upon all sides of their branches. The fact that ornamentation injured of helped ruin Greece and the subsequent pupils—Florence and Rome—resulted not from the bad influence of beauty, but from the absence of all else. Water is useful to sustain life; but the world can not live on water only. It has a limited utility. So the moral law is useful; but man can not exist upon only moral law. Man would die were he only a saint; he must enjoy also natural law, and be also a farmer or an artizan. Thus Greece and mediæval Europe were injured by their pursuit of the beautiful because that pursuit was exclusive of all else. Out of those injured and ruined states beauty emerges not in the least marred in reputation, for it does not ask to be an Atlas and carry all the earth on its shoulders; it asks to be one of the divine benefactors of society. It declines the office of a simple pleasure and asks to be confessed a servant—a beautiful slave of the soul. Songs are as useful as plows; poems are as full of utility as are railways and the telegraph; architecture is as full of the valuable as is the carpenter-work, and the sewing machine is no more useful than is the bed of roses or violets. If you affirm that the carpenter can build a hut that will save life and that the bed of roses will not make a suit of clothes, then it may be affirmed that if man is to remain in a hut his life is

not worth saving, and if he is never to appreciate roses he needs no clothes but a shroud. Thus the lower forms of utility need not toil much for man until the utility of taste has made or is to make him worthy of being an object of solicitude. The carpenter turns into an architect when the beautiful of God's world has made the mind outgrow its wigwam or cabin. Thus the conclusion comes back to us that beauty is utility; it is usefulness in full bloom.

Defective as was classic and Florentine economy of life, injured as it was by an excessive use of only one branch of power, by that one hand it raised man out of a savage condition and helped make him ready for the wider civilization of Europe. All those crumbling columns and arches and all that statuary perfect still or marred by the ages, all those forms of grace which remain to tell us how the old nations bowed to a single sentiment—that of admiration, are remains not of old pleasures but of the great school-house where mind was awakened and cultured and strengthened. A world once awakened to feel the beauty of an arch or a column or of an exquisite face is thus made ready to appreciate other forms of the attractive as they may appear, and can pass from a Venus or a Minerva to a spiritual Madonna or Beatrice quicker than it could pass to such a height from the low ground of barbarism. The figure of a Christ or of St.

John was made more lovable to the human race by the figures which had come and gone before them in Greek art. Penelope and Zenobia and Cornelia prepared the human mind for Magdalen and the "Mother and Child," and for the ideal of woman in the nineteenth century. All that study of eye and forehead and mouth which had engaged the artists for centuries along the Nile or around Athens or on the Tiber, all that carving of leaves of laurel or vine upon classic foreheads, all that working amid expression by Phidias and Parrhasius, was a fitting up of the studio for that day when art would be called upon to picture a divine face under a crown of thorns.

There was an age once which reached and wrote down the conclusion that "knowledge is power," and so knowledge is power; but it is rather such by its ability to cast the soul into a finer form of feeling toward society in its multiplicity of relations. But such learning as Calvin and his age possessed, such vast knowledge as John Milton and his equals enjoyed, was an inferior form of power compared with the deep feelings which can free slaves and establish public instruction and found nations upon principles of universal equality. Men of great stores of learning have often been men of great coldness or cruelty. From which facts the conclusion comes that although knowledge is power, it finds its om-

nipotence only when it is joined to a divine tenderness of heart. When the knowledge held by a Milton or a Scaliger combines with the sympathy of a John Bright or a Wilberforce, the highest power results. Calvin was incapable of feeling the equality and the rights of all humanity, because he was an intellect rather than a symmetrical soul; but Stuart Mill, with a mass of learning greater than that of Calvin or Milton or either Scaliger, pitied the bondage of woman or child, and was capable of sadness over a possible limit to the composition of music. As civilization advances, the character of the ideal man widens to admit a hemisphere of love, to make amends for the barbarism which struck from man all the elements of womanly nature; and the character of woman widens to admit a hemisphere of intellectual power, to make amend once more for the vandalism which had forbidden woman to wear any of the mental jewels of manhood. Thus compassion and learning combine in the ideal mortal.

In making necessary adjustments and reforms in character the beautiful has performed and is performing a measureless part. Nothing is more useful than the beautiful, not even the useful itself. A sensibility once awakened is like a river once started from the melting mountain snows. It has received its gift of waters from the spring sun which has touched the

Rocky Range or the Alps, and with pure clear treasures, better than the wine in a goblet of gold, it starts onward through the plains of populous life. The channel is dry and empty no more. New grasses and flowers on the bank salute their best friend. It is ready for many purposes. The miller asks it to turn his wheel; the merchantman to float his ship; the farmer, perhaps, to irrigate his field; the flocks crowd down its banks at noon to slake their thirst, and the hidden veins in the soil and rocks transport this blessing afar to the roots of the elm and the oak. Not otherwise the sensibility of the mind once awakened by the ages of the beautiful ran on and was ready with one or another generation to realize the equality of man, or to sail in the ship of the missionary, or to gather all the children into the school-house, or to make laws to protect them from excessive toil. The river of sensibility ran for the local needs on its banks.

At first sight the reformation in theology under Luther, and in philosophy under Bacon seem the causes of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. And powerful causes they were, and compared with them some may pity the centuries which poured all money and genius into the arts which around Angelo climbed up to a height which seemed bewildering and mad. But this very "beautiful" helped

fit the three last centuries for their immense development of a colder utility. It was an awakening of man's soul—an inspiration of his heart, an inflaming of the ambition he would need along the new paths of Luther and Bacon. In an important sense the architecture of Europe, reaching from the Parthenon to St. Peter's and St. Paul's, the frescoed wall from Pompeii to the Sistine chapel, all the marbles, all the paintings, and all the poems between Homer and Shakespeare, were a preparation of the mind for that march it was to make in these last centuries of a pure utility. The mind could pass easily from the construction of St. Peter's to a bridge over the Menai chasm or the chasm at Niagara, and souls trained by Dante and Shakespeare could all the sooner grasp the idea of an engine or of a steamship, so nearly related are the domains of beauty and utility. The last three centuries descend, not only from Luther and Bacon, but also from Angelo and Dante and all those who gathered up forms of song or music, for if Bacon marked out a new path of thought and labor the times before him garnered up the mental and spiritual power which was to sweep along the new pathway. When a voice from heaven commanded the king's heart to rebuild and beautify the temple, that voice was not whispering in behalf of only a pleasure, but it was laying the foundations of a culture which would

soon be called upon to behold the utility of the Sermon upon the Mount.

The mind is at last a unit, and although its power may come from many sources, it is simply at last power, and hence the songs which children sing at school or at church, the flowers they may pluck on the way when May and June cast shadows of trees on the school-house roof, the poems they may commit to memory are woven into the subsequent force they may reveal in pulpit or in law or senate or in the common paths of life. As the vast sentiment of the beautiful came from the All-wise Creator, the pleasure it brings does not exhaust its import, but onward it flows, and helps keep up that grand usefulness which is remodelling the career of man. The flowers of the field are all wedded to mechanics and practical science, and the king's ornamental garden is fully related to the cornfield of his humblest subject, so that the mind trained in the one could go without violence to care for and enjoy the other. In the preparation of such practical and influential characters as Webster and Gladstone and Mill and Bright and Castelar and Hugo, every scene in nature, the hills and valleys, the days of spring and summer, and all the fine arts enter early and abundantly, so that statesmanship itself is only an application of a mind whose power came not from politics only, but which

simply spent itself in that vast field. Thus beauty is not a mere decoration of life, which like a lady's ribbons or feathers may be worn or omitted at pleasure, but it is an element always present in the composition of mind. A soul with no sense of the beautiful could not be good or great in any field known to man. Beauty is a high form of usefulness.

In that well known and remarkable village where labor and capital, engines and wheels and tools and furnaces and lumber and iron are made companions of beautiful homes and walks and parks and an attractive library and theatre and a sanctuary as beautiful as an Ezra could have wished for a Hebrew ceremony, the ornaments of home are as practical as is the engine which drives the machines. The yard in front of each home or the growth of grasses and flowers, is as full of value as is the water that runs in the house or the fire that burns in the kitchen. For civilization comes not by bread alone nor by bread and clothes and shelter, but by the uprising of many sentiments, and the true man or true woman is made at last like the temple of Artaxerxes and Ezra, by a wonderful mingling of rude timber and beaten gold, of hard rock and precious stones, of hidden iron and visible knobs of flowers, of solid walls and delicate curtains of purple and crimson, of ordinary recesses and of spiritual holy places fitted for the breastplate of jewels and the presence of God.

If in far-away half civilized times there came from Heaven a command to beautify the great temple of Jehovah, that voice is still sounding on the earth with a wider import than it carried when it was heard by the Persian king. For then man saw only the material sanctuary. Religion was external. It was located on a mountain, and was composed of altars and incense and robes and forms. The temple has diminished in these days in splendor, the seventy thousand workmen and the fifty millions of money are not exhausted upon any one pile of towering magnificence, but what marvels of splendor have departed from the external, material part of religion have sprung up in its thought and emotion, and our age has turned away from the candlesticks of solid gold and from the gemmed breastplate of the high priest to find the higher glory of doctrine and service. Year by year the horrible, the cruel, the bitterly unjust falls away from the nature of God and His Christ, and year by year there comes a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. All admit now that the Father of the human race cannot be the author of a terrific and irrational system of doctrine. There must be a harmony between the character of God and the doctrines of His sanctuary. This fact our age is the first of all to perceive, and the zeal with which Hebrew and Persian toiled to rebuild the great fabric

on Mount Moriah is now equalled by that modern zeal which rebuilds the teachings of the temple and beautifies the paths of salvation. For as barbarian and idolater assailed the beauty of Jerusalem, and plundered and burned and razed the house up whose marble step Solomon and his nation passed in such pride, and where the Queen of Sheba paused in such amazement, so in the middle and dark ages iron-handed men came with their curious and erring and pitiless philosophy to trample in the dust the simple flowers of faith and love and hope planted by the hand of Jesus Christ and abundantly watered by his tears.

The moral beauty of modern religion is the best hope it possesses of utility. It must attract by its reasoning, for it can frame an argument which, compared with atheism, shall be full of eloquence; it must attract by its good works, for the rumor of good works reaches even to heaven, "for their works do follow them." The beauty of the sanctuary must once more become its charm. No young heart advancing into its career upon earth should be permitted to find in any other field of human thought or sentiment more food for mind or soul, a beauty more real or unchanging, a pleasure more free from all alloy, an argument more reasonable or more kind, a group of

fellow mortals more cultivated and less cold and vain and more sympathetic than he will find in the modern temple of worship. The beautiful is the useful, and in the finer, sweeter truth of to-day there is lying a mighty usefulness.

XVII.
A GREAT GOD.

For the Lord is a great God.—PSALM xcvi: 3.

WONDERFUL as the unfolding of the natural world is the unfolding of the world spiritual. The natural world is the school-house in which we may, if we will, learn the higher truths of the moral universe. But as children often sit in the school-room all through their early years, unwilling to learn the lessons, longing for play or idleness, so we older ones pass our time in the great academy of nature, with our idle eyes wandering far away from the valuable page. Let us try to-day to study one lesson, if for only an hour; perhaps, as we all grow older, we may pass from page to page, and find all the book richer and more valuable the more we hang over its varied contents.

The first idea in this morning's study is that as the floral world is developed out of itself, as the animal world is evolved from the less to the greater, so ideas grow, and from humility pass on to greatness, from

cloud roll out into light. As the moon at night often remains partly concealed, and leaves the traveller or the poet or the lover uncertain as to where the loved satellite may be, but as presently the great silver ball moves out into the clear sky, so the ideas of man are only half visible at first, and pass out into the cloudless azure only after the eyes of earth have watched long and faithfully. There is a perfect harmony between the world of plants and animals and the world of ideas. Once there was a wild dog moving stealthily through the old forests back of the Aryans and the Greeks. It was the color of the ground, that more powerful enemies could not see it readily, and that in its own ambush it might be invisible. It did not bark. It did not recognize in man its coming friend, nor did man six thousand years ago see in that creature of the forest the brute that was to come nearest of all the wordless animals to being a companion. Thousands of years have passed, and now a hundred or more species exist of this once wild beast of night and of prey. Once the plain wild rose bloomed in the woodland. But the toil and science and affection of man stood by this "sweet briar" for hundreds of years, and now all the civilized world is filled with roses of every size and every color and every perfume. Thus the material kingdom widens under the influence of intelligence

and industry, passing from the small to the great as the spark of fire kindles into a conflagration.

Just such is the growth of ideas. Man reaches a physical maturity at the age of thirty or forty, but there are ideas which will grow steadily for thousands of years without having reached any perfect stature and without having found a resting place. There are other notions that are born complete. When the first human intellect declared that two and two are four, it exhausted the formula. The idea was finished. But when man for the first time pronounced the word "mother," or "liberty," or "friend," or "God," he began the construction of an object that should turn into a world, and from a world into a universe. The word "mother" did not mean much in the earliest tribes, for they would often put to death parents too old to work. In Abraham's day the word "sister" did not imply much beyond the meaning of woman or slave. And in Lot's day the home-names now so full of sacredness had little significance. Father and daughter were sounds that scarcely rose one shade above the terms male and female, and the word man differed little from the word brute. But along came the mighty stages of development pouring around these ideas the light of new thought and the warmth of new love. As the foliage of each summer and the riches of the elements fall upon the earth each year and

make its soil deeper and richer, so the successive generations cast their thoughts and affections and actions down upon the world of ideas, and these ideas grow more and more luxuriant under this long lasting care. Behold the Greeks adding to the import of the word "art!" Under their care how the word "beauty" expands! And there Antigone came along, born out of poetry, and by her pure and infinite affection put to shame that estimate of sister seen in the history of Abraham and Lot. Look into the nineteenth century and mark how it has enlarged these terms. Ask Cowper the meaning of that word "mother" that runs along through so many languages. He gazes at the portrait and says with tears,

"Oh, that those lips had language!"

The word "muth" comes down through thirty languages and through thirty centuries, but each age pours more of love and reflection into the beautiful urn. Our word "grace" once in Sanscrit represented the prancing horses that drew the chariot of the sun, but the deeper spirituality of subsequent eras has made the word mean the easy yielding friendship of a God. The sun's chariot passed away to make room for Christ.

Among the ideas of earth that are most restless and most progressive and most infinite, let us confess

the idea of God. As the first geographers made our earth so contemptible that a man or a turtle was an adequate foundation for its mass, so the first theologians saw God only as a hero or a sleeping, dreaming, Oriental king. Compared with the nations around, the God of the Hebrews marked a wonderful progress, and looking into the darkness around him, David truly sang his song "For our Lord is a great God," but even his picture was far below the reality, and the world hastened to move on. Christianity came and gave the idea of the Heavenly Father a new and wonderful impulse. The actions once attributed to Deity were repudiated by Christ, and out of that New Testament era there came a new Creator, a new Father. An idea marched rapidly forward.

You perceive now, my friends, the method of my argument, and it need not be pursued further. It is time to apply it to the religious faith and practice of our day. The lesson that comes to us from the argument is simply this: We must take the words of the past, "Our Lord is a great God," and empty into them the light and sentiment of the present or else there will be no psalm for our hearts. One thing that chills modern worship may be found in the attempt of modern hearts to worship the God pictured in the far-off yesterday. If you would love your child you will not dare ask old India to define the word

child for you. If you are to fight for liberty you will not dare ask an old Persian king to define the political idea in your behalf. No heroism, no sacrifice; will spring up in your bosom out of his thought. But if your own day tells you that liberty implies the freedom of all, even women, and implies the freedom of the mind from ignorance and of the soul from degrading vice, then you can go to the battlefield with divine calmness and power. It can not be otherwise in the act of worship. It will be perfectly vain for you to attempt laying flowers of affection upon the altar of the Hebrew God or Calvin's God or the papal God.

One of the first preludes of worship must be the gloria, "Our God is a great God," for unless the soul feels that it is approaching a being of infinite beauty, a being without spot, the worship will all turn into mockery, notwithstanding the upturned face and bended knee. As a fact, no age will ever be able to find an exact image of the Creator. But the world is cumulative, and will, as a general rule, give in its later estimate more truth in religion than it found in all former meditations. Hence, you who feel ever the impulse of worship, the sweetness of it, the solemnity of it in the spirit, must be careful to kneel at the altar of a great God, that you may yourself be transfigured on the holy mount. It often comes to

pass that the best worship comes into the soul when it is out under the heavens at night or in the forests in summer, because there the infinity of the sky, that host of stars whose light has come to us only by falling a million years, or the sweet solitude of the forest where every leaf seems written upon by the finger of the Omnipresent One, fills the human spirit with such a consciousness of a great God that the worshiper bursts forth in tears. Coleridge, in the valley of Chamouni, betrays the secret of all deep worship :

“Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn,
Thou first and chief sole sovereign of the vale,
Oh, struggling with the darkness all the night
And visited all night by troops of stars.”

Thus that immense phenomenon of nature became a voice eloquent; proclaiming the greatness of that Being before whom the human soul is wont to kneel. Whatever thus exalts the Creator exalts him not only as a power, but as a love, and hence in the sublimity of that mountain there came not to the religious mind only the feeling of nearness to one who made the world, but in the magnificent light and in the whispering of the pines there came full persuasion of Heaven's tenderness toward man. We cannot love

a contemptible human being. All the beloved ones of history stand forth in some alluring atmosphere of genius or truth or beauty, and without much admixture of meanness or sin. Never can we carry our worship to a defective God. He must rise up before us in such a holy and alluring form that the heart will ask all the world to join it in its anthem. Actions, ideas, persons, creeds that once were the symbols of religion, and marred the divine idea by the blighting power of association, must be carefully removed from the temple that the worshiper may bow before something that he may deeply love.

Men come to the minister of religion and ask him how he explains this and that dark page of history, this or that dogma. Oftentimes the best reply would be, "Turn aside from all that record and go ask *this* age, *these* scenes, the wants of to-day, the longings of your soul to give you back the lost or injured God." Much that is called theology is only the place where men have trampled down the ground in their own mad conflicts. In India devout heathen move in procession through the streets saying "ram," "ram," and the spectators bow because those who thus run are priests of religion; but the infinite God is not there. Those fakirs that cut their bodies with knives are all theologians. Thus the religious history of the world marks not the place where God has been, but

only the places where human hope and human madness, human darkness and light, met and struggled and bled. When the poor heretic was burned at Geneva, when the covenanter girl was tied to a stake where the tide would slowly rise over her, when the witches were burned, when infants were damned,— God was not present; religion was not there. Those places were spots where contending men met, just as old Carthage and old Alexandria, were places where opposing vandals came together, and where between sword and spear warm life became death and brilliant cities a desolation. When looking back you behold these harrowing scenes reaching along over the centuries, remember God was not there. For our God is a great God. The sufferings of the martyr, the tears of the exile, the children lost because unbaptized, the men condemned from all eternity, the auto-da-fes of earth, are not ideas to which ever God drew near; but rather paths where the feet of man trampled when he was just emerging from the night of perfect barbarism, when women loved the amphitheatre of death, and when heroes drank from the skull of an enemy. Before the modern soul can become a true worshiper it is often necessary to approach God, not upon the side of old history, but upon the side of new nature. Give us Jesus Christ and the great spectacle of the universe, that Being

and these heavens, and we can find a God, to worship whom will ever be a joy. The moral splendor of Christ and the parallel infiniteness of creation give the mind a Deity so great that all the universe becomes his temple, and all winds and thunders and bird songs combine in a hymn of adoration.

Religion has been wrought out in its details from two different points of observation. A strange geographer, from some star, landing upon earth in the northern regions, would go back saying he had found a world of ice; landing at the equator, he would declare he had found a planet covered with flowers. Thus religion has been described from two stand-points, but chiefly from the stand-point of man. The survey of it from the modern idea of God has yet scarcely been made. The world's heart has not toiled under the sublime watchword of the psalm, "Our Lord is a great God," and from that lofty statement made up all the essential parts of its worship; but rather the human family has said, "Man is a great man," and has drawn its creeds and ceremonies out of the human bosom. When you perceive candles burning by the altar and a pageant of bowing priests, whose robes are bespangled with gold, you may chant the words, "Great is man," but you must reserve for some other hour the higher chant, "Our God is a great God." You must keep back these higher

words until either the vastness of the universe, or the great wave of human life, or the awful mystery of death, has led you away from the wax tapers, and brought you into the presence of the Infinite. The great sanctuaries of man, from the mighty St. Peter's of Rome to the great abbey of Westminster, were for hundreds of years places where the little children of religion played their sacred games around the altar of a God for whom they had no measurement. Could the real Deity have come down from the invisible home and poured himself into those vain hearts, all the toys and ceremonies of the hour would have been overwhelmed by the glory of the Heavenly Father. When John Rogers or Servetus was suffering in the flames could the great God of Heaven have revealed Himself, could that wretched throng around the kindling fire have had their souls enlarged until the true idea of God could have found entrance, that company would have plucked the victim from the stake and have begged to be forgiven for an error so weak and for a crime so cruel. They would have wept for days over such an injustice to a brother, and for engaging in such a satire upon the Almighty.

Much of the indefiniteness of the Bible comes from the fact that God cares nothing for the minutiae of human worship. There is nothing definite in the Bible except the picture of Christ leading man to

virtue, because the greatness of God forbids that he should care for aught beside. To suppose the Creator of the universe to have a choice between immersion and sprinkling, to suppose the Almighty to be partial to a posture in prayer, to suppose him to have a choice between a government of bishops and a government by all the clergy, to inquire whether the Infinite One loves better the robes of the priest or the plain dress of the citizen—this is to degrade the name of God and to drag worship down to the level of a court etiquette. The Bible is the most indefinite of books in the delineation of forms, and the most definite of all books in pointing out the reward and punishment of virtue and vice. Its baptism is obscure; its righteousness is most evident. Only a most precise and trifling argument can find Presbyterianism or the Episcopacy in the Bible, but a broad, visible, noble argument points out the Savior of mankind. It is only a microscopic analysis that can find in that book the world's "Confessions of Faith," but the human soul can not read a page in the book without hearing a whole sky-full of angels saying: "Blessed are the pure in heart." The manner of baptism, the time, the manner of the Trinity, the last analysis of Christ, the presbyter or the bishop, all these, and a thousand more ideas lie in the Bible in utter neglect, because the God whom we worship

has no preference here. He cares not what man finds in the holy writings if only he finds virtue. We should all as soon ask of God whether we should plant our flower-bed with pinks or with violets as to inquire of him whether our baptism must be in much water or by a few drops. Taking your stand close by the greatness of God, not only does the smallness of much of man's creed appear in a strong light, but also much of its falseness falls with a thrilling pain upon the heart. Who is this God that any age or any individual should ever have debated the destiny of a dying infant? What is there in the Infinite One, what is there in that Being whose throne is in the centre of the universe, in that Being whose sunlight is only a feeble emblem of His love, that should make the mother hasten to have her dying child baptized lest it might fall from her bosom into a world of torments? What has God done that His name should suffer such long and painful degradation? God has done nothing to merit such a creed. But religion has been wrought out, not from the being of God, but from the being of man. Man has come to us in all ages, and offered us a Deity fashioned after the nearest king or despot, and millions of children, old and young, have gone to bed whispering their prayers to a Deity not so kind or sweet or just as the mother who has just bidden them "good night!"

In those days it used to be a dreadful fear that perhaps we might that night go from the kingdom of our mother to the kingdom of God. Our mother was always more beautiful than God!

It is now complained by public men, men full of fear for our country overrun by all forms of vice, that religion is doing little to purify the atmosphere that hangs like a cloud of doom over our nation. How far the church at large merits such words of half sorrow and half reproach, no one can tell, but we feel fully ready to say that the more the altars of human worship draw their light and inspiration from the character of God alone, and linger less around the ideas that come only from man, the more rapid will be the ascent of the nation toward a higher life. Many an altar now exists to which the worshipers repair, not that they may find holiness, but may keep alive some ideas held by their fathers. A large part of church life is only a rivalry about systems instead of an humble worship of God. Oh, had we all the wings of piety that would carry us, and the breadth of mind for such a flight, and should we fly to the throne, and instead of deducing religion up from man bring it down from the realm of light, we should return to earth with a piety that would dispel the fears of the statesmen, and make radiant the future of the great nation and the poor mortal heart. How can an altar

reform earth when it is itself a part of earth? How can it lift us to God when its god is already upon the ground and is himself partly clay? Altars enough there are along the paths. And when the patriot counts them he may well wonder that good citizens do not come marching forth in holy multitudes out of such a cloud of incense. But it is not numbers of altars that most save men. All depends upon the idea to which the holy stones are heaped up. It will be ages upon ages before an altar to Presbyterianism or Methodism or to Romanism or to Independency or to Eloquence or to Genius will bless the world like an altar to the Living God. The running to and fro of men full of anxiety lest their church may not be visible enough, the acrimonious warfare of sects over their childish properties, will never enter the world's great life and form a part of its goodness and piety. In presence of such a church our nation can march right along to destruction, just as Rome sunk in vice while the temples were full and a thousand priests were intoning psalms at the altar. The altar was inscribed to man, not to God. The sanctuary of the Great God with Christ as the High Priest, is the only one from which the present century can come forth with a soul whiter than it carried into it. Our age must part company with the baleful associations of the old theology. A theology that unconsciously degraded

the God it loved ; it must define religion to be, not a belief, but a piety ; it must look up to God and from the Father, Son, and Spirit draw down a religion with the greatness of God written all over it. It must hear that voice that created all things by the word of its power repeating the deep laws of His temple—a righteousness that loves the true and good ; a faith that guides ; a penitence that washes white ; a love that embraces the world ; a hope that adds eternity to time, paradise to earth, and a Christ the leader and inspiration in the midst of these doctrines, and then upborne by ideas so vast and so true the age may soon cease to weep that its temples do not bring it a higher civilization. We dare not make God a party to our petty warfare of creeds. We dare not employ him in our inquisitions or in our debates over transubstantiation or legitimacy. He must be seen only as a Great God sitting upon the throne of justice, so lofty, so infinite, that a soul passing into his temple will feel that nothing but a pure heart can fit it for so sublime a worship.

XVIII.

THE COMING ARISTOCRACY.

Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.—MATT.
v: 5.

OUR earth has been governed in turns by military chieftains, by hereditary rulers, by patriarchs and by majorities, but it has not yet passed into the hands of the meek. And yet there must be a great truth lurking in this one of the beatitudes, because Christ spoke no empty words. The words of Jesus have all through our era been an inexhaustible mine of wealth, and there is no probability that this brief benediction is any exception to the rule or standard of excellence. To catch the probable import of such a teaching we must remember that Christ was not only practical, fitting himself to the immediate wants of His times, but He was also an idealist and optimist of the highest order, and spoke for the far-off centuries and epochs His goal was the perfection of God, as is seen in the words: "Be ye also perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Far more than the old artists who produced their masterpieces as though for the delight

of remote nations, Christ spoke for the future of the world, however long it might continue. Remembering this fact we can imagine that there may yet be before mankind an expanse of time in which the meek can pass into power. They may be a kind of spiritual century plant—very slow to bloom.

The word translated by our English term "meek" demands a moment's attention. Our word is not an exact equivalent of the one in the Greek manuscripts, for in our day the term "meek" rather involves the idea of patience when imposed upon—a willingness to bear burdens even when placed unjustly upon the shoulders. In the Greek tongue the term implied a peaceful and gentlemanly bearing, a tendency to avoid violence and to seek the good and the peace of all the community. The term was used to express something of that refinement represented by our word culture. In the Bible and classic period there were many blustering generals and demagogues, many violent and cruel officers making the most possible show of authority, and compared with such, a Christ and a Paul and a St. John stood forth in an amazing outline of gentleness. In such a contrast the meaning of our term appears, and by such an interpretation the final triumph of the meek is made more probable. For this benediction and prophecy fall upon simply the cultivated minds of the human

race—those developed upon the moral and intellectual sides. Into the hands of these will pass at last the many principalities and powers of our globe. The kingdoms of mere force, or of royal blood, or of money, will fade away in the splendor of the new kingdom of the mind. The earth, through and by means of many vicissitudes, is advancing toward a government swayed by a mental aristocracy.

The word aristocracy originated in the desire of the Greeks and other races to escape absolute despotism. It embodied in a degree the very thought seen in the benediction, "Blessed are the meek," for the Greek term *aristokratia* betrayed a weariness of one-man power and a longing for a power that should be vested in the best citizens. "Let our laws and orders and decrees be issued, not by one man often ambitious and cruel and senseless, but by all the best men." This was the original import of the political term aristocracy. Not often, however, does a noble idea, issuing from some idealist, retain or ever reach its import out in the actual field of service. The term Christian is worn by many a criminal, and by none who are perfectly like him from whom the epithet came; and liberty is said to have had great crimes committed in its name. Into an imperfect world moved that noble principle, of being governed by the best; but the best soon came to imply those

who had heaped up money, or had long held office, or whose parents had been in power, and along came the political contradictions called "aristocracy of blood," or "aristocracy of land," or "aristocracy of office"—verbal and political blunders as great as theologians would make should they speak of "landed Christians," or "Christians by blood," or "millionaire Christians." The vital element in a Christian is a likeness to Jesus, and a vital element in an aristocrat is that he be one of the best men. Our text is a blessing let fall upon that grand future when the best persons will take possession of the earth. It is a looking forward toward a period when the despot and the military hero and the blooded prince will be displaced by the cultivated mind and the moral heart. Living eighteen hundred years after Christ uttered this prophecy, we should see some signs of its fulfillment.

Our own land ought to show some buds of this promised blossoming, for into this continent have migrated nearly all the best ideas which the world has elaborated since the death of Christ. Ideas seem to be endowed with the attributes of persons and to become travellers as in search of a new world. Could the eye see spiritual things it would have had the pleasure, all through the last hundreds of years, of seeing social and political truths embarking from

the shores of Europe to become voluntary exiles in the Western continent. Here the wide expanse of unoccupied land, here the soil, here the climate, here the absence of old fixed institutions, here a thousand possibilities invited the young truths of the old lands, and for this continent these ardent young ideas set sail. As the wild birds perceive the approach of winter, mark it in the falling leaf and in the wind of autumn, and at last direct a long flight southward where they will find beautiful forest and green field, so the social truths of mankind take wing and seek a world where the fields are fresh and sweet for their varied action. Many of these migrating ideas have alighted in the hills and plains of America. Here, therefore, can be seen most plainly the progress of the idea that the cultivated shall inherit the earth. Here is not to be seen the actual rule of reason and virtue, but here are to be found hints that our world is moving toward such a destiny. Let us make a hasty survey of the principal social facts that have been created since the days of the Nazarene.

The military rulers are fading away. You need not be reminded that human, political and religious history is written in blood. The "meek" have been under the wheels of the war-chariot. All the long way between Cæsar and Napoleon the eye of the traveller looks upon old battlefields. Between the field

where the great Cæsar met the Germans and the field called Waterloo there were not many indications that the wise and kind and good would ever inherit the earth. The benediction of Jesus could not be heard above the great tumult. An English poet expresses well in verse this sad delay; making Napoleon the figure in the scene :

“ On eyes and lips
Burnt the red hues of Love’s eclipse;
Beneath his strong triumphal tread
All days the human wine-press bled;
And in the silence of the nights
Pale prophets stood upon the heights,
And, gazing through the blood-red gloom
Far eastward to the dead Christ’s tomb,
Wailed to the winds. Yet Christ still slept,
And o’er his white tomb slowly crept
The fiery shadow of a sword.”

This picture, none too vivid as to the nineteen centuries, seems to fade somewhat in the second Napoleon, as though at Sedan the reign of pure military power had reached its terminus. The surrender of a military chieftain and a hundred thousand soldiers threw almost the grandest of the nations back upon industry and reason and peace, upon personal rights and equality; and thus added the republic of France to that of America. Two such examples as France and the United States are enough to disturb the equilibrium

of the world, and make the shadow of the sword grow faint upon "the white tomb." Under the lead of such men as Castelar, Spain is drawing a little nearer to a kingdom of thought, and under the guidance of distinguished scholars and essayists and philanthropists England has moved far away from the despotism of her own history. All who will make a survey of the centres of power will confess that mental force is superseding the logic of bayonet and gun.

But is there rising up on the ruins of this old military aristocracy an aristocracy of wealth? Must we change the beatitude and say: "Blessed are the rich, for they shall inherit the world?" Must the meek, flying from the sword of the warrior, fall into the hands of the rich? Even if so, this would be a pleasant change. The aristocrats of money are far better governors than those of war. Men of wealth develop a country, but the pursuit of war is a perpetual destruction. Money, even when held by the few, is wont to ally itself to art and education and religion, and to all forms of internal improvements. Intelligent capitalists must develop the country which contains and supplies their substance. The money lords of Ireland are not intelligent, for they have for generations so crushed the tenantry that only one or two per cent. of profit is realized from estates which might have been made to yield four per cent. to the

owner and two to the tenant. A landed aristocracy is a bad thing, but especially so when it is an ignorant landed aristocracy; men skilled in the chase or in the details of the race-course, but not in the laws of labor and wealth and increase. The enterprise near our city called "Pullman" is an instance of an intelligent aristocracy—a money power which helps itself by helping the laborer. The rule of an intelligent monied class might thus be a great advance over the governments by blood and by sword which have filled so many pages in the records of earth; for it must be remembered that the great light which is falling upon this age is falling upon the millionaires as well as upon the middle and poorer classes; and never again will capital deal with labor as it dealt with labor in France and Ireland a hundred years ago, or in Georgia and Mississippi when our nation was lingering in the darkness of the past. Should a monied empire come to America, it will not come as a Shylock, but as an incarnate selfishness, seeking the supreme good of self by a tolerable welfare of all. It will permit you and me to flourish a little that it may have a greater income of gold. The Irish landlords and the old slave-owners expected riches to come from broken hearts. The monied aristocrats of to-morrow, if they should appear, will take good care of all birds that lay golden eggs.

Having conceded this much to the supposed kingdom of money, should it come, let us proceed to state that this kingdom, like that of royal blood and that of the sword, is fading away. The reign of the educated and moral, as foreseen by Christ, is coming more rapidly than the sway of riches. In the new evolution of government, the man who has many millions can have his vote cancelled by a country school-teacher, who may be toiling for fifty dollars a month. And when we remember how few are the very rich compared with the millions who read and think, but who are in only a moderate financial condition, we do not see any great obstacle in the way of the kingdom of the mind. No good for the individual or for the State advances by a flowery path. As spring always comes by sudden onsets and retreats, making the human soul exult and sink by turns, and in this latitude consumes sixty days in its struggle with the north wind, so the progress of a mild and sweet philosophy makes many an alarming halt in a struggle with old and new enemies. Blind is the eye and dull the soul which can not see in our land an amazing phenomenon—that of the intellectual and moral inheriting a continent. Without a standing army, without a navy, without valuable forts, here are fifty millions of people living under the throne of reason alone. Much folly is mingled with this intel-

ligence, as there is no gold that has not its alloy, but if there is folly within, it is not the wretched folly of royal blood, not the ruinous folly of the sword, but the blunders of men living in a world greater than their grasp or than their virtues. Our land seems to be an effort of the school-house to supersede the cannon and the crown and the musical ring of gold; and to that degree appears to be some outline of the dominion foreseen by the One who said: "Blessed are the meek."

That humanity is nearing a reign of thought and virtue rather than of folly and vice, may be inferred from the new position accorded to woman. Woman was perhaps first degraded in the primitive times, when power was all a physical force. As a physical machine, she always has ranked below man; and it may be that barbarism, vain of physical powers, made a hero out of man and a slave out of woman. Be this as it may, once out of her high birthright it was impossible to find a way of return. In India and in pagan lands, she has lost all memory and dream of inherent equality, and as did the slaves of our former South, indorses her own sorrows. The recent and rapid return of woman to her lost empire of equality shows that the general kingdom of mind is setting in, and that the reasons for the subjection of woman have disappeared. In the old world of battles and

wrestling and boxing, woman became a pigmy, but in a world of mind and morals she escapes all charge of inferiority, and in rising heralds a new era.

The triumphant passage of the "anti-polygamy" bill is the utterance of an age in favor of the equality of man and woman. It is monstrous that the continent tolerated so long the idea that woman was only a twentieth or fiftieth part of a man's value in mind, morals, or money. The isolation and remoteness of Utah made the nation overlook, for many years, the deep insult to woman involved in that Mormon settlement. The whole utterance of that colony was, from the outset, a satire on religion and a defiance of nature itself, for nature has for thousands of years declared that each woman is as valuable as each man. That some Mormon females should favor their degradation is natural, for conditions the most monstrous become at last accepted, and are made even matters of delight—many an Indian squaw feeling honored by her bondage, and many a slave woman being gratified at the prices brought by herself and children in the public market.

We thus behold polygamy and slavery and monarchy and military powers falling before those forms of power which Christ ascribed to the meek. The human scene to-day is that of vast millions trying to marshal themselves under the lead of thought and

taste. The millions have tried everything except reason and culture. They have experimented with all forms of abstract philosophy, and have dressed in rags and eaten plain food with the hope that a theory could bring blessedness; the millions have fled to the wilderness, to caves and all solitudes under the impression that the best way to use the world was to fly from it; again have the millions been slaves to royal blood, and have fallen down on the face and placed the mouth in the dust while the gilded chariot of a king was passing; again have the common people sounded the depths of ignorance to learn whether there is most bliss where there is most ignorance; nor in their long and dreadful inquiry have the numberless throngs forgotten to fasten their bodies to the wheels of war to find the rewards of arrow and spear and bayonet; and now at last humanity is coming in weary from this mad chase, and is slowly but surely taking refuge under the words: "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." The scene is that of a lost world coming home.

Strange result if the human race shall quietly steal away from despots, monarchs, generals, from landed lords, and from royalty to be governed by universal thought and sentiment. Are the Cæsars and Napoleons and Bismarcks and the King Williams and the czars to abdicate in favor of the aggregate wisdom

and tenderness of mankind? Beyond doubt they are thus at last to resign, for their thrones have floated along until they have reached a strange land. The people are a strange people. No ancient monarch ever looked out upon such subjects. They all have books in their hands. Those who once were slaves are now reading; and souls once willing to be offered up to king or soldier now glow with a sense of personal manhood or womanhood. On old Egyptian tablets there are rude pictures of one man leading many men by strings or wires put through their tongues; the Roman slave did not dare speak to his master, there were middle men to repeat the slave's words and to receive the answer, but in the tablets of the present the common man has a book in his hand. Not a transient picture this, but one painted by the human race for immortality. We know it from these two reflections—the one that Christ uttered no words which have not given full sign of coming true. All His remaining generalizations have fitted themselves to society and have become more applicable as civilization has advanced. We must suppose the words about the "meek" to be robed in stainless truth and to be partakers of a divine destiny; the other reflection that Christ and God are supreme ideals of mind and sentiment. Those names stand for soul. The king throws down his sceptre and the conqueror his sword

when they go away to their God. Christ and God, therefore, emblazon the thought that "There is nothing great on earth except man, and there is nothing great in man but his soul." The fading shadow of the sword, and the decline of force, and the gradual uprising of the public thought and love are only the efforts of God's children to find their way to their Father's presence—efforts of mind to enter upon its dominion over all the forms of brute force. God is called love, and Christ is called a lamb, and the universal Spirit a dove, thus showing us in a threefold emblem that the sword and spear shall rest, royalty will perish, wicked ambition fail, but the gentle empire of reason and affection will blend with the image of God and be the final country of mankind.

XIX.

SPIRITUALITY.

To be spiritually minded is life.—ROM. viii : 6.

THIS is one of those expressions which come to us from the Platonic atmosphere. The spirit was a certain divine spark in man. With it the Almighty communed. In it lay divine qualities and the germ of immortality. Opposed to this and in the same individual was a coarser, ruder nature, fond of food and drink and riches, and all temporary and animal pleasures. In the flesh this lower nature dwelt; and hence it was called the carnal or flesh-nature. These two warred incessantly. They were like the summer and winter of nature. Winter slays the flowers which the summer takes so much delight in producing. After all the long husbandry of spring and summer-time comes

“ * * * the frost from the clear cold heaven as falls the plague on
men,
And the brightness of their smile is gone from upland glade and
glen.”

Thus all through the moral world, around Paul and John and their Greek companions, moved these two seasons, the spiritual and the carnal, the summer and winter of man, the carnal always anxious to lay waste the garden in which the spiritual nature had been toiling with love and industry. Hence Paul declares that to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life. These once significant words the old theologians and literalists have tossed about and repeated until their original significance is forgotten, and they come to us children only like dead flowers placed in a damp old book by people of good intentions in the last generation. And yet through this text: "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life," there once flowed a clear, deep stream of thought between fresh and green banks. But this was when Paul and Plato were seeing a new world through eyes which had just received light. Since then the stream they saw has run dry. Instead of the landscape they beheld, we are sometimes pointed to little standing, stagnant rills, called total depravity or orthodoxy, as being the streams which Paul saw under the name of flesh and spirit, long ago.

One half of Paul's sentence will furnish theme enough for the hour. "To be spiritually minded is life" are words which offer as a theme Spirituality.

The truth is best seen by contrast; hence the former half of Paul's sentence casts light upon the latter, for in the death which carnality brings, one may perceive more clearly the life which comes by the path of the spirit. All the years and generations around Paul had borne witness that to follow the flesh was to make life hasten toward the end, and to an end inglorious. The glutton and drunkard and libertine, the man of violence, the man of wicked ambition, the brutalized criminal, all these had marched along then even more strikingly than they file along in our age, and had made him realize that the passions of the flesh lead to death. In his time many a Herod was dying before his day; many an Antony and Cleopatra were hurrying through their careers; many a prodigal was spending his substance in riotous living; many thousands of young men were dying violent deaths; and viewing this spectacle, the philosophy of the hour came back with force to Paul's bosom that the passions of the flesh lead to death, the passions of the spirit lead toward life. In the opening chapter of this letter to the Romans, there is a picture of Roman morals, and in that condition of society you will find the cause of that great generalization that the flesh brings ruin, the spirit brings triumph. What were the battles of Alexander and of the Cæsars but a fleshly vanity,

gratifying itself in the tumult and blood of carnage, and in the applause which rewarded the conqueror?

But as opposed to this picture, around Paul lived and died in peace and dignity not a few righteous, not a few literary and thinking and even devoutly pious men and women, their years running far along toward a beautiful close, and this, too, must have confirmed his theory that to be spiritually minded is life. All else is death. The drunkard and glutton and libertine not only die early, but their grave seems an absolute annihilation or a hell, but the death of the spiritual seems only a sleep. They depart to be with Christ, which seems far better. Thus, by means of the contrast in the text, the light falls more clearly upon that spirituality which is our subject for the day.

Let us seek an approximative meaning of spirituality. Approximative, because few are the words in morals which will admit of an exact definition. We may and must use words all through life of which we can not give exactly the meaning. Words are not things, but only pictures of things. And as there can be no perfect picture of anything, so there can be no perfect embodiment of truth in the material of letters. If there has never been a perfect portrait painted of king or subject or child, if colors are so powerless in the hand of even genius, why should the

sound of letters be so adequate and tell perfectly what the soul thinks? The infirmity which attends painting or sculpture attends language too, and the end of all art being expression, language comes in at nightfall along with painter and sculptor, sad that it has so imperfectly done its task. And this also is true, that the more insignificant a thing, the more truly can art express it. The painter can depict a log or a box, or a stone, but when he would hand down to posterity a Christ or a Madonna the imperfection of the art becomes manifest. So in language, we catch the meaning of "and" and "of," or "add" and "subtract," but the moment the ideas threaten to rise in value and to assume such outlines as "love," "God," "goodness," "soul," "spirituality," the sounds of vowels and consonants, like the colors of the artist, refuse to do full duty. There are men who will tell you that they know the perfect significance of every word in the domain of salvation. They know what salvation means, what Heaven means, and know all about the import of faith and reprobation; but just so there are painters who will set up before you a great canvas and tell you that that picture is the ocean or an autumnal woods, and so there are musicians who will play away at a "*Sonata Pathetique*" and sigh at last as though that were the whole idea, but all these, theologian and painter and musician

are like children who throw a stone out on the sea or lake and imagine it went almost across.

It may be the glory and beauty of such words as "spirituality," that its final meaning baffles pursuit, for it leaves a charm for to-morrow, something still to be sought and won. It stands like the future, always open to receive new hopes and plans, and to offer to the soul new mystery and charm. But vague as is this term, it has, as ages have passed by, given out a few qualities of itself; it has exhaled some fragrance upon the air around its growing and blooming form.

Spirituality is a culture of the highest. As the spirit stands for that part of man which resembles his Maker, as it is not the God in man which loves food and drink and riches and war and office, as these wants spring from the body, but as the divine part in man is that which loves truth and honor and benevolence and all eternal beauty, hence spirituality is a culture of all that is highest, a gathering up of things most divine. It is the mind's escape from the temporal and petty, and its voyage into the open sea of great truth and emotion. Men by common consent call the body the casket, the soul the gem. Hence two sets of ideas spring up to meet this two fold man, this casket and this gem. Much of the language and struggle of the street and shop and farm is regarding

the casket, its house, its table, its raiment, its furniture, its carriage, its servants ; but passing away from these walks of life, and coming to the rooms of the poet or philosopher, or into the chapel or solitude of the worshiper, or passing into the galleries of highest art, you have come into the language, not about the casket, but about the gem. Hence an approximative definition of the term might be that spirituality is a living amid the highest. By no means does the word belong to religion alone. It follows man along all his paths, and if anywhere he rises above the appetites of the flesh and deals in the pure and absolutely beautiful, it calls him by its own lofty name. When Whittier writes his "Snow Bound," he is as spiritual as a Cowper or a Heber, for all through the poem run the lofty ideas of home and friendship and love and God and immortality, not dragged in, as into the cold creed of a theologian, but stepping in of their own sweet free-will, as song-birds betake themselves to tree or hedge. What can be more spiritual than the lines in the memory of the dead sister :

" I cannot feel that thou art far
Since near at need the angels are,
And when the sunset gates unbar
Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
And, white against the evening star,
The welcome of thy beckoning hand ?"

It may, indeed, be that spirituality is always an inseparable part of religion, but if so, religion must be widened out until it will embrace the soul in all its best hours of pure joy and deep thought and deep sadness. And doubtless the definition should be expanded until within its wide domain there should be room for all those who have seized upon all the highest things of which their poor hearts knew—a Plato studying eternal beauty, a Confucius reaching up for the highest, a Joseph of Arimathea coming to a holy tomb with the spices and oils which might embalm forever such a divine Lord. Indefinite though the bounds of religion are, and indefinite though the word of our theme may be, yet, no doubt, could all hearts of the past be weighed and measured, there would be found in the bosom of many a heathen a spirituality nobler, richer, more pleasing to God, than the so-called religion which many a self-deceived mortal has proclaimed along the streets of Christian lands. In the power to look up with love and delight toward the Infinite Spirit many an Antonine has surpassed many a Louis XIV or Henry VIII. Judged by the presence of spirituality, religion in its true sense is as old and as broad as the historic race of man. To be spiritually minded must have been life in the days of Abraham and Job.

Let us seek for further information about this grace

by recalling the names of those confessed to possess the virtue. Beloved names are they all; for, as spirituality deals only in the highest and broadest ideas, it does not intrude upon mankind narrow definitions which please a sect and offend a world. It is everybody's friend. A Calvin comes along with his strong and analytical mind and offends a half of the world by his sharp affirmations and denials. So comes Luther. So come Edwards and Wesley. These are all great and useful men indeed, but their value is in the field of temporary battle rather than in the field of perpetual peace. Calvin was made great, like Orange or Wellington, by battling against the foes of the human race. But the battle once over, Calvin and Luther did not remain the types of the ideal, everlasting Christianity. They were sent to manage a war, and not to mold the peace. The makers of creeds some part of the world always hates. He who builds up a philosophy offends the holders of all other systems. But when spirituality comes along, all love it because it moves along above their local questions, as the sun pours out his light on the evil and the good. Antonine, the Pious, all moral minds love regardless of denominations. Jew, Mohammedan, Christian, Catholic, Protestant, all quote from the great Roman Emperor's "Meditations," because in them the soul pours along not as

a cold discrimination, but as a love of God and man. The "Meditation" moves along above the halls of debate as broad as the soliloquy of Hamlet or Gray's elegy. All hearts find their delight as they find it in nature or in friendship. Antonine breaks away from the body and pours out all his thoughts in the name of the soul.

But more deeply spiritual is Thomas a'Kempis. The Roman had only an imperfect conception of God, and the future he faced with resignation rather than belief. The spirituality of Antonine was thus divested of joy and was clouded day and night; but the a'Kempis stood in an unclouded world and saw clearly God and immortality. In his great book there is little trace of distinctive Roman Catholic ideas. Pope and bishop and saints, and all the questions that vex the church, and which make the food of ambition and strife, were far down in the noisy vale beneath the dreamer's feet. His book, like his cell in the monastery, is a solitude across whose page no being but God can pass and repass. As for seventy years the gates of the convent shut out the world, so that a'Kempis knew not and cared not what king or pope was buried or crowned, so the same seclusion shut out local and temporary dogmas and disputations, and left the book open only for the footstep of God and the soul. Many false notions accompanied this

old saint when he was born into the world and they followed him till he passed out, but notwithstanding these inherited errors, Thomas a'Kempis adorns greatly the roll of spiritual names.

Of this school was Bunyan. He was full of special doctrine indeed, but his doctrines are only the most general doctrines of Jesus Christ, and these are so covered up in metaphor that they offend no one of whatever sect. The bundle of sin on the Pilgrim's back does not seem to be the depravity announced by the theologians. It is a bundle which all will confess themselves to be carrying. The entire creed of all the churches might lie in that Pilgrim's Progress without awakening any protest, for the doctrines are so softened by imagery, by allegory and impersonation, that they are not any longer the dogmas of schools, but pictures in the gallery of life. In John Bunyan's hand religion becomes exalted, resolved into its highest elements. It passes from the dry catechism out into the world of beauty or feeling. The Wicket-Gate, the Delectable Mountains, the House Beautiful, the Valley of Humiliation, all these great visions take Christianity away from quarrelsome intellects, and place it out among the entities of man, along with ocean, hill, forest and river. Men who deny a personal devil are perfectly willing to see an Apollyon striding across the human path; men who deny a hell

are firm believers in the dens of the giants which Bunyan describes. Thus, in a mind so spiritual, all the world looks and sees the truth it needs and loves. The human heart says: "You may say what you wish about orthodoxy or heterodoxy, or this or that creed, this in the Pilgrim's Progress is religion."

To these add Fenelon and Madam Guyon and George Fox and the poet Cowper, and you have other members of the large and powerful spiritual school. With them Christianity was transfigured in its shining garments. Thither must we look if we would see the inner quality of such a holy faith. These names only awaken memory of a large multitude who have known that spiritual mindedness which is life. The great names we have pronounced are only leaders whose voice and example a large army follows. There are men in all denominations and times, who, caring little for the formulated words of the church, are finding, in its highest significance, a religion the highest, a salvation from sin the surest.

Having asked some great names of history to help us find the meaning of spirituality, let us assume that we have found some part of that infinite import, and let us then attempt some estimate of its worth.

Spirituality must be the chief quality in Christianity, because that which deals with the highest is al-

ways the best. The book or the painting which places before us the highest thoughts demands our chiefest reverence and study. The man who mixes the paints in a back room or who tunes a musical instrument, can never merit from society the praise or love flung to the one who paints the picture or sweeps over the harp strings. So in religion, the dealers in creeds and forms, valuable though such persons may be, can never equal in goodness or divineness those who paint for mankind the religion of the soul. The literalists and sectarians may be only mixers of paints which they cannot use, custodians of ideas, as a slave may be the custodian of a vault full of gold and jewels. The world has need of these, and faithfully do they stand guard, ready to growl at all passers by. But the men of spirituality have owned the treasures of the vault and have often lavished the gold upon the human race, and worn the jewels of religion in its sight. In our age, many a leader in church matters breaks down in public affairs and reveals an utter want of common integrity. What Christianity these hold is only a consent to some logical system, such a consent as one gives to free trade or a tariff. Left with these minds, the name of Christian would soon lose all its significance. For its lasting hold upon society, Christianity must look to those who are colored in their souls by the spirit of that Prince of

spirituality—Jesus Christ. As when a war is over the general goes into retirement and leaves a happy populace to restore industry, to build and decorate homes and temples and streets, and bring back the arts, so the theologians, having fought the battle of thought, pass into rest and leave the minds full of spirituality to carry the ark of the Lord onward in power and beauty. These come with song and prayer and sweet meditation, and transport the ark across a wilderness wide, and, but for them, desolate.

Most righteous of all forms of religion is this inner piety. In its loftiness of spirit this little world becomes well under foot. Its temptations to dishonor lose their power. Antonine, though an emperor, lived in plainness and humility; Bunyan was happy in his jail; Fenelon was joyful in exile; Madam Guyon gave away her fortune to the poor—all this because in this spiritual atmosphere earth became small in its riches and honors and gratifications, and great only as the home of the soul. In the lives of these lofty ones you will find the purest form of integrity. A religion which permits food and drink and riches to be large elements in life, enlarges all the temptations to dishonesty; but the spirituality which depresses these things silences their loud and fatal eloquence. Should an age come when religion shall be not a creed, but a high life, a life full of prayer and meditation and

song, then, in such an age, to be honest, to be pure in heart will be easy, for the lofty spirit of the church shall lift all its children above the street. All dishonor comes from the vanity of the body. Make the soul only great, and gold and office and appetite will clamor no more.

Truly, as Paul says, "To be spiritually minded is life." It is life honorable, for it lifts the feet out of the mire of unrighteousness, and places them upon a mountain full of God and the angels. All these spiritual mortals, from Paul to Guyon and Cowper, have not found it difficult to obey the words of the Master—"Blessed are the pure in heart." They are seen high up in a mountain air, where the path, winding around, takes them daily farther from earth and nearer heaven.

To be spiritually minded is life broad and generous, for it is an escape from the little and a taking refuge in a practice the purest, in a creed the most universal and hence permanent, in a love the most comprehensive. The slave of a creed will always be narrow, the worshiper of God, in the full sense of that term will be charitable and generous, for the mantle of the Father seems to fall on the child. Hence John, the most spiritual of the New Testament group, said to all the world, "Love ye one another." So vague is spirituality that into its courts a conflict over words can not come.

To be spiritually minded is life beautiful, for spirituality is not the frame-work of religion, but the finished temple, with every minaret and ornament finished and with organ tones within; not a naked tree in wintry blast, but the tree in summer's rich verdure.

To be spiritually minded is life indeed, life immortal, for it is the soul getting away from its dust. It is man ascending the mountain on whose summit is God. To be carnally minded is death, a constant descent into more darkness and blight; but to be spiritually minded is to be moving up toward the serene sky, where the sunlight is sweet and no storms come.

O Paradise! O Paradise!

Who doth not crave thy rest?

Who would not seek the happy land

Where they that love are blest;

Where loyal hearts and true

Stand ever in the light,

All rapture through and through

In God's most holy sight?

XX.

THE HIGHER LIFE.

He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest.—
LUKE i: 32.

IN this incidental sentence from the life of Jesus, God wears an almost lost title, that of "The Highest." It has pleased best the modern heart to call the Deity by the name of Almighty or Allwise or Omnipresent One, or Creator, or Father, and to let fall into disuse the old name of Most High. Perhaps the common mind has been most amazed by the power or wisdom or omnipresence of God, and has been less moved by that figure of speech which places the Creator upon a sublime height. Be the facts what they may, in this expression just quoted, this peculiar phase of divinity comes up before us, and we rejoice over the words, "Son of the Highest." They recall a certain quality of our world, and bring to remembrance many events and utterances that belong to the history of man. We remember now that certain noble philanthropists spoke and lived in the name of the higher law, that certain Christians have dreamed of a higher life, that

some great lawyer told his young brethren at the bar that there was room above for more members of that profession, that at the old feasts it was customary to invite some humble one to come up higher, that Christ was transfigured on a mountain, that Moses met God up in a mountain, and at last was buried in the eternal heights. We now remember, too, that some of the famous ones of earth have been called "lofty minds," and others have been called "eagles of eloquence," or of learning, because they so soared above the common multitude. From all which meditations and remembrances may come a lesson about *The Higher Life*.

Let us leave wholly to a certain class of Christians the idea that man can easily reach a moral perfection, and having come to that condition must wait for the visible appearing of the Savior, must despise daily duty and pleasure, and wait for a visible kingdom of Christ. We think of the phrase "higher life" only as illustrated in all those great names which are carved in history as it unrolls from the most remote antiquity to times the most recent. What a roll of greatness should we have were there tables of marble or brass or gold in which were engraved the names of those who in all times and places have attempted to attain mental and spiritual excellence. It is a sad thought that what is called history is only a page

from a vast and grand, but lost, volume. Violence and reckless ambition impressed into service all the chroniclers of the past, and that kind of greatness we see in Christ was not often asked to sit for its picture. It was too high for the surrounding kings and their hosts of sycophants. It would require a whole London of Westminster Abbeys to hold the urns of the noble ones whose very names are forgotten. The loss is great to the present, for many minds see a preponderance of evil in our age, and are not sure that our world was planned by benevolence, to which desponding minds an adequate conception of the continuous glory of man would be a welcome inspiration. The doctrine of the "Apostolic succession," that always the literal hands of a dying bishop rested upon the literal head of a successor, may be a religious fable, but it is no fable that there has been a succession of minds on the heights, and these have signaled to each other in all the years of man upon our globe. What ones are visible, are only a few wanderers from the mighty herd. Solon and Moses studied at the Egyptian Heliopolis indeed, but of the many thousands of men always studying there, it can not be possible that the honors were all borne away by a Hebrew and a Greek. At that educational centre, thousands and tens of thousands came and tarried and went while centuries passed along. It

must be that the few names that have come to us are only types of a great army which was scattered over the prolific East. Aspasia was not the only intellectual, powerful woman of the age of Pericles. She was the one brought into the foreground by her alliance with a powerful king; others having her education and her beauty and power lived and died in a fame that could not cross the gulf of many centuries. Nor was Cleopatra the only Greco-Egyptian woman who could speak and write in all the tongues of the Mediterranean coast, but she was one made historic by the accidents of crowns and vices, leaving us to assume that there were other women, many who equaled her in learning, and passed far above her in all higher worth. Thus history is only a page out of a lost volume. As those who dig in the sands of the Swiss lakes, or in the deserted cave-homes of man and beast, or who explore the ruins of Mycenæ, toss out a few implements or a few carved bones or a few jewels worn once by beauty, so history casts up out of the vast sepulchre where the ages sleep traces only of an absent world. Each noble name spoken in our day stands for ten thousand of men and women—names which no lips will ever pronounce again. As Victor Hugo says: "Their tombs are gone. The rain has washed them down, and the grass has concealed them." But your imagination

need not be fettered by the unjust records of scribes. It can easily look back and see a long line of kings and queens of thought and taste and kindness and morals and piety, many of whom should, if all were known, be full of earthly fame. The stars that are brightest in our midnight sky are not therefore the largest and grandest. They are simply the nearest to our little ball; and so in history, some men and women are made great by being near us in language or style or ancestry or sympathy. In reality there are many souls as great in the outer depths of time, but their orbits were in other domains of the great blue.

From the seen and the unseen group of illustrious mortals of yesterday, we perceive that there is a lofty table-land of mind and sentiment and morals, which offers man a happiness far beyond that which he finds in the vale. In one of his essays upon the phenomena of nature, Bacon tells of a mountain so high that no storm ever disturbs its air. Its climate knows little vicissitude. The clouds can not float so high. The sunshine is constant by day, and the night comes late and the morning comes soon. So peaceful is that summit that a traveller having written some words in the white ashes of his camp fire, found the words still there after a score of years had passed. What an Elysian field is that! far above tornado and

lightning shafts, and the miasma of the marsh and the battlefields of men. A fable in part, but an emblem of those heights where dwell those mortals who have reached the widest and deepest education and affection and the purest ethics.

As in classifying physical beauty we feel constrained to make distinctions between a violet and an oak, or between a cascade with its murmur and mist, and a cathedral with its spire and arches, and between a trailing vine and a range of mountains, and must change our words with the change of feeling in the soul, and to the rose say "beautiful," to the oak "grand," "pretty" to the violet, and "sublime" to the mountain, so we must divide into many parts the attractiveness of humanity, and must confess some to be witty, some pretty, some beautiful, some learned, and then when already the heart is full of admiration it perceives one more class rising above all other grades of mortality—those morally and mentally great. Here the scene is not beautiful, but sublime. In this grouping all ages may meet. Wealth becomes a mere accident, whose presence or absence counts nothing; for Zeno was poor, Marcus Aurelius rich; personal appearance goes for naught, for Socrates and St. Paul were without charm of face or form; ancestry is omitted in this estimate of values, for Gustavus, "The Lion of the North," was born a monarch,

Epictetus a slave; differences of creed are excluded, for Grotius was a Protestant, Massillon a Romanist, Cousin an Eclectic.

The infinite love of the Creator is in nothing more manifested than in this, that he has made this moral height accessible to all. Not all can be rich, not all can be beautiful, not all can be witty, not all can be young, but all can climb upward to the higher life. It is not the mere privilege of all, but the pressing duty of all. The heights are large and voices full of mercy and of alarm are bidding those in the valley to "Go up higher." God is represented as being in the holy mountains, and thither He expects his children to come. The heights are everywhere. They are seen in each profession and pursuit. There are merchants who grovel in the mire and whose gains stand for fraud, and there are merchants whose wealth tells of the industry and growth and welfare of the people. There are lawyers low and high—lawyers who are always upon the side of criminals and concerning whose health and presence criminals are said to make inquiry before they plan a new crime; other lawyers, to whom men repair for help when they feel that their cause is just, and the points of law and equity must be placed clearly before jury or bench. There are writers low and writers who are lofty. The former are witty and verbose in the defamation of character,

and in detailing the sins of society—these are the remains of human coarseness that are being slowly but steadily eliminated from all written thought, and therefore in greater multitude appear the writers of the pure school whose editorials or essays or books or poems come into all homes as welcome as the beams of the morning sun.

It is one of the humiliating things of the modern stage that it will compel a high-minded actor or actress to recite some of the low ideas of even Shakespeare, and compel an audience to sit and wait for the outgrown and outlived vulgarism to pass by. All of you who have attended what is called "High drama" have blushed because some noble person on the boards has had to wade through a stream of mud to reach the beautiful and good beyond. The world has not yet fully learned that the low in Shakespeare is no more pardonable than the low in the Five Points of New York, or in the "Fish Market." Appearing anywhere it is the relic of barbarism, and has no claim whatever upon the time and taste of a sweeter age. Shakespeare has so much richness and purity, that to fling aside all his coarseness would be only to lop a few dead limbs from a blossoming orchard. The low style in a new drama has no defense whatever, and it should be eliminated from all literature, ancient or modern, sacred or profane, because the fame of a

writer is not half so precious to mankind as the fame of that which is highest. The coarse words of the past must be deposed, dethroned by that kingly successor called Purity now coming into the world. This coming purity is not, one may be sorry to confess, the result of religious progress, but rather of an advance of refinement, of a gradual triumph of mind over animal qualities. But coming by way of either piety or enlightenment it is a welcome visitor and should be asked to stay.

The arts are affected by the higher life of the age and are struggling up toward subjects which awaken the nobler order of emotion. But here the future may well be a little doubted, for France so leads in the painter's art, at least, that we may well fear that she will continue to soil her canvas with the general landscape of sin. France is still the victim of passion and emotion in art, and feels that the heights are noble but too quiet, divine but cold. Perhaps the other nations can rise in their own might and escape the snares of the enchantress. The struggle has been long, and victory is yet in a balance. But should England and America go on purifying all other forms of thought and emotion, painting will be compelled to appeal to the growing sense of the pure and the eternal.

This "Higher Life" is visible in the theology of our

period. Some of the oldest of you can remember when the many denominations were as quarrelsome as they were numerous, as fond of abusing their neighbors as they were of singing about heaven. Piety and ill-will seemed in constant alliance, offensive and defensive. The terms of reproach and abuse were as numerous and familiar as the terms of theology. Sermons were charged with warning against all the creeds except the one of the pulpit that uttered the warning. The war of the parishes was incessant; not bloody indeed, but full of the words that kill the buds or fruits of friendship, and that set neighbor against neighbor in a war of words. Thus was Christianity down in the valley of strife. It was indeed a Church militant, but unfortunately it warred upon itself. It devoured its own children.

The uprising of an external world to be conquered, to be educated and civilized and christianized, has drawn the Church away from itself, away from its distinctions and definitions, and thus away from the ill-feelings that such words engender. The individual heart always climbs a height when it ceases to think only of self and embarks upon some other sea. Hence the German maxim, "Look not inward but outward, not backward but forward, not downward but up." It is the soul that looks always upon its own thoughts and feelings that finds the most unhappiness in the

world and that narrows the stream of life into a rill rather than widens it into a sea. The old inquiry was: What do I believe? What do you believe? The new question is: What can I do? What can you do for mankind? Small inquiries as to the number of words, but so vast in meaning that the Church has been transformed and redeemed by them. The abstruse in theology has been displaced by the welfare of man. Questions of education, questions of suffrage, questions of benevolence, of ragged schools, of liberty, of labor and of home life have risen and consigned to obscurity the useless themes of our fathers. The modern Church is too busy to quarrel, the old Church was too idle to avoid bad humor. The smaller a mind the greater its ill-nature—the smaller a religion the more intolerant its life. The Church has moved upward by moving outward.

Many of the practical questions of to-day have not yet received a final answer. How to reach the millions with spiritual and physical health, how to supply good amusements to the multitude, how to educate, how to define the career of woman or the mission of man, are problems not yet fully solved but they have blessed the age that has discussed them, for intellect and heart are exalted, not by the final answer of a noble inquiry, but by the search for the answer. Woman has for a half century been contemplating her wrongs

and rights, and has drawn the best men into the same meditation, and although the perfect answer does not come, woman's mind is ennobled by the deeper thought, and the pursuit of a high destiny has become almost as rich as the possession. It is a beauty, and a part of the wisdom of this world, that to those who set out upon a high errand, the reward does not wait for the close of the journey, but it begins with the start. If it takes a hundred years to learn the true relations of man, woman, and child, the good of the research falls upon all the years of the hundred. The century would close only with ripened fruit on the trees which had all along been rich in blossom and verdure.

Plato in his ideal republic did not find the best theory of society, of marriage or childhood or industry, nor did he, in all his life-long research, come to the perfectly true in its imperishable form, but he was borne far above the sensual world by his ponderings, and, as the face of Moses up in the mountains shone, not because he was God, but because he wandered into the divine presence, so Plato grew radiant, not because he had found the infinite wisdom, but because his foot had touched that mysterious sunshine. Thus Pythagoras failed to find the whole truth about the sun and the earth and the stars, and, perhaps, regarding the birth and changes of the human soul, but

out of the grandeur of his themes he won an equal grandeur of character, and though future ages corrected his astronomy, it could not touch the purity and dignity of his being. Thus in one important way is fulfilled the saying of Jesus: "They who seek shall find." Find what? The blessedness of the seeking.

The modern mind, so far as it acts in the domain of religion and ethics, is purified and sweetened by the new propositions of the new world. The Church and all the moralists are toiling like Plato with an ideal republic, and allured onward by a research so noble, they have left behind, to perish and be forgotten, many things and words which filled the world once with their noise. An empty room being the noisiest, the Church made the most uproar when it was most empty of education and liberty and love and piety. Even the arguments of the new infidels and new atheists are crowding the religious minds, not down into the ditch, but further up into the heights.

Thus look where we may, into any pursuit, from that of the merchant to that of the clergyman; into any literature, from that of lover or dramatist to that of holy men moved by a holy spirit; look into any art, the stage, the studio of painter or sculptor, or into the editorial room or into the office of a railway

king; look into the amusements of the land; look into the homes where those who should be dear meet by the same fireside and at the same table; look into the Churches where man is assumed to be a worshiper of the Almighty, and everywhere the low and the lofty are seen, the former degrading the world, the latter making it sweeter and happier. This is the more wonderful when we remember that all dies that is in the valley in this moral topography of mankind. It is amazing that a poet, having the powers of Whitman or Swinburne, should wish to tax the public with the inquiry whether his verses had whiteness enough to warrant their entrance into good society, and it is equally wonderful that the author of "The New Republic" should have followed it with a romance full of the pictures of vice, set there, not in their deformity, but in their charm. The stain of the latter book took away from the fame of the former. He who breaks one commandment has broken all.

Said one of the greatest poets: "On every height there lies repose." This peace is not found elsewhere. It is not a sleep, not an easy existence of inaction, but a repose that comes from the sublimity of the landscape, and from the matchless purity of the air. It is not to be wondered at that the human mind while sitting in the long past ages at the loom

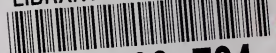
of thought wove for the Deity such an attribute as "The Highest." And it is not to be wondered at that when Christ came with His faultless words and deeds, with His boundless friendship and upper forms of thought, the admiring world felt that He was a son of the Highest—figures of speech which should be taken up afresh by our far off age. We have read in the ocean and in the storm and in the stupendous size of the universe that the Creator has power. We have seen in the marvellous laws of mind and material that He has wisdom. We read the divine love in the entire pageant of life, animal and rational, and we read the divine eternity in the awful age of the universe, which drinks up millions of years as the sun dries up dew-drops, but we have omitted to learn from the high in thought and industry and art, from their eternal beauty and repose, that God is also *The Highest*. Far above the sun, far above the suns to us unseen, is enthroned the world's God—the God of all worlds—on a height undreamed of by mortals. His mansions are there. Compared with this summit, the mount in the poetic philosophy of Lord Bacon sinks down and becomes a part of time's vale of tears. God is on the heights, and all those minds in this lower world which love the higher life are steadily walking up the slope of this range, hidden now perhaps by mist, but covered with light beyond the clouds.

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