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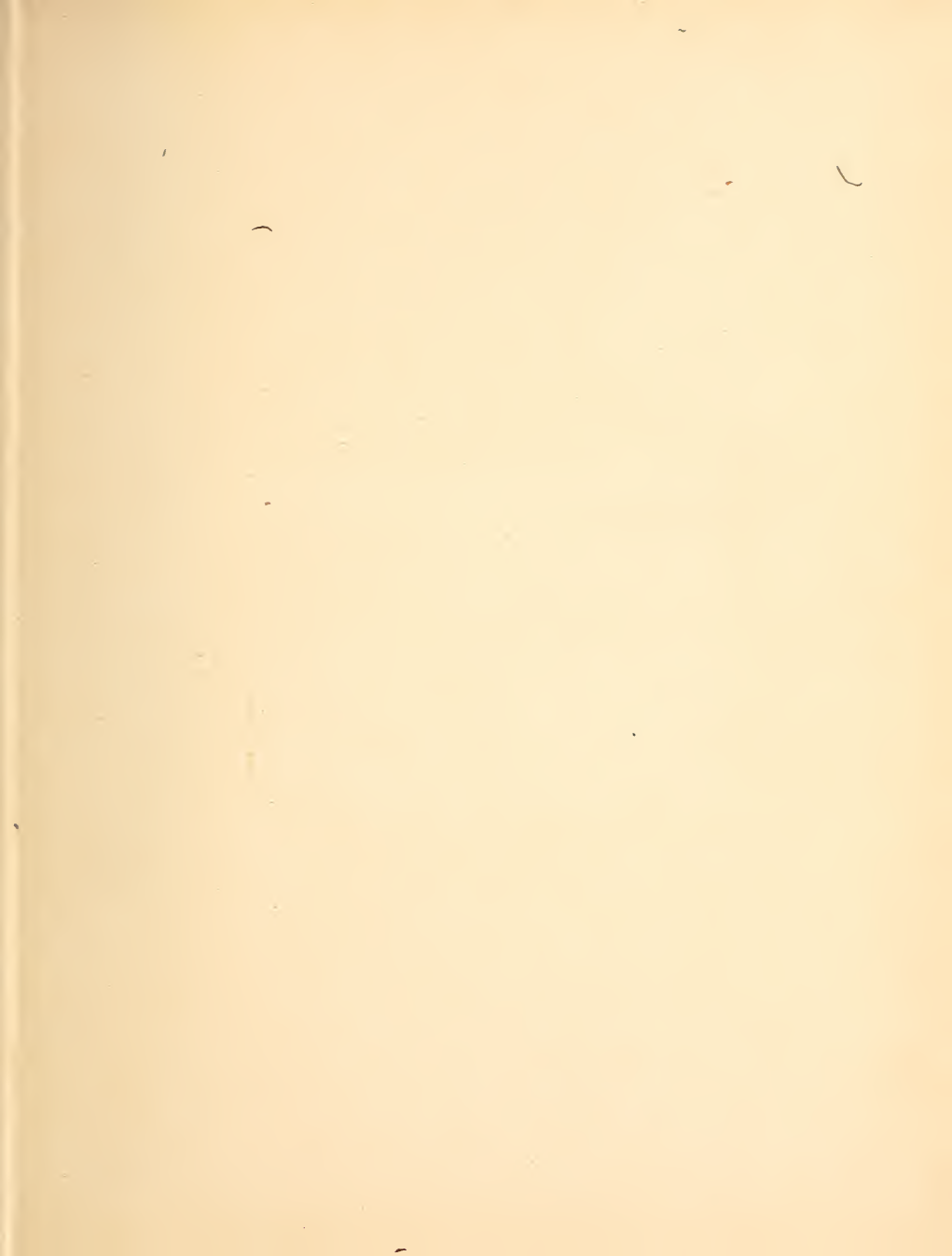
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A decorative floral border with leaves and small flowers surrounds the central text.

Helpful Words.

Drawings by Frank T. Merrill.







HELPFUL



WORDS

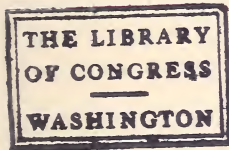
From the Writings

OF

EDWARD EVERETT HALE

SELECTED BY

MARY B. MERRILL



BOSTON

ROBERTS BROTHERS

1893

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University Press :  
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*PRAISE God for winter's store of ice! Praise  
God for summer's heat!*

*Praise God for fruit-tree bearing seed; "to you it  
is for meat!"*

*Praise God for all the bounty by which the world  
is fed!*

*Praise God his children all, to whom he gives their  
daily bread!*

FOR FIFTY YEARS.



*PRAISE God for wheat, so white and sweet,  
of which to make our bread!*

*Praise God for yellow corn, with which his waiting  
world is fed!*

*Praise God for fish and flesh and fowl, he gave to  
man for food!*

*Praise God for every creature which he made, and  
called it good!*

FOR FIFTY YEARS.





THE good God wishes and means to save health and strength and joy and abundant life. So much we know. It is always going on. Jesus Christ is giving life more abundantly, and awakening the dead now, just as he said he would. Five hundred years hence they will publish a story about you and me. We shall seem very romantic then ; and we shall be worth reading about, if what we do is simple enough and brave enough, and loving enough for anybody to think that we do it "for the love of Christ," or for anybody to guess that we had been bound together IN HIS NAME. And service cannot be mistaken which is rendered.

*In His Name.*









ALL men, of whatever calling, so far as they deal with these divine and infinite relations of men, — truth, beauty, justice, or life, — are all Knights of one Round Table, linked together in one great fraternity of duty, blessed by one privilege, and called by one call. That these drudges in the crowded city may truly live ; that these heathen in the polluted islands may truly live ; that this miser heaping up rusty gold may truly live ; that the nation, not hampered by her useless acres, nor bound to earth by her mines of wealth, may truly live, — this is our office, an office which is our privilege. This is the service in which we are united as servants of the liberal professions. It is the service to which we are called by Him who lived and died that men might have life more abundantly.

*What Career.*



A MAN because he is God's child maintains his intimacy with his Father. Mere *creatures* of God may be supposed to keep out of his presence unless they are called. But children come and go as they will. As for nearness, nothing need be said. That we live, and move, and have our being in this Infinite Power all around us, which asserts itself in every pulse of life, in every sound, in every perfume and color, — that this is near us, nay, in us, nobody need say or prove. But that we belong to this Power and he to us, that he is conscious of our strivings and we of him, — this is what Jesus Christ tells us we shall learn if we try. To try that experiment, to plunge into the ocean of God's life and see if he will not bear us up in a Father's arms, — this is to pray. It is to attempt nothing serious without the thought or word which asks him to help and make the endeavor his. It is to come to him in every sorrow, talk it over, and recognize him as sympathizing in our failure. It is as well to come to him in every great delight, to thank him for the quickening of our power which has gained success, and to recognize him as sympathizing in our joy.

*The Life in Common.*



YOU may talk as much as you choose about being tossed alone on a billow and communing with Nature. I tell you that when you lie on your back on the top of a load of hay, you may commune with Nature in solitude just as perfect. The blue sky above ; sometimes a flight of birds ; once, a lonely eagle, — and nothing else ; but you imagined a possible angel between you and the empyrean. Live much in the open air, touch elbows with the rank and file, and see every day some man who is your superior. Hold to these rules ; anyway these three will do for a beginning. It is “with God, for man, in heaven.”

*Mr. Tangier's Vacation.*





*"Thou art the Son of the Living God."*  
*"Upon this rock will I build my church."*

ON that truth, Jesus meant to build his church if, in his own words, we are to find his meaning. I believe we find his meaning there undisguised, and that we find the whole of it. I believe that history has made good his assertion, and has illustrated his meaning. His church exists. It has spread over this world, subdued this world, governed this world, re-created this world, as not the most intense prophecy of that day declared it would in so few centuries. It grows more powerful and more. It compels government to obey it, and literature and science. It heals the broken-hearted; it opens the eyes of the blind; and slowly, but surely, frees the captive. His kingdom comes, with the certainty of eternal power; and his church is the agent by which it comes. Or, to take the figure of this text, the shelter of his church becomes wider and wider; her roofs and spires and domes welcome more worshippers and more, — are the homes of the devotion of more hearts and more. Every land bears up her crosses where they may flash in the sun; every breeze curls her incense as it rises to the living God. And of this whole great fabric, wide as the world as it extends, there is one foundation, and one only; which is, that Jesus is the Christ, and that he is the Son of that living God.

*Sermon.*





AND for the centre of all life, which is communion with God, intimacy with him, — there is but one way to it, sure as it is simple. The pure in heart, they see God. Those who speak to him as his little children, hear sooner or later his reply. Those who look for his handwriting find it sooner or later. Those who listen for his voice find they are walking with him. And all this, in its best and highest, supposes not only the aspirations of the spirit, but the use and control of the body, and the enjoyment of the world. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear ! He that hath eyes to see, let him see ! He that hath feet to run, let him run ! He that hath voice to sing, let him sing ! He that hath his home in a paradise of beauty, let him walk with God, morning, noon, and evening ; and in that paradise, where he finds, as he will find, the work of God unfinished, — let him with God be fellow-laborer.

*A Summer Vacation.*



THE young people confide to me that they are sad because they have no special genius for this or that. Dear children, for all of us there is the divine pre-eminence that we are all the children of an Infinite God. He does not want us to use merely our accomplishment in his work. Has he not legions of angels? He hopes, and lets us hope, that we will use his life in our endeavors, we will claim his help in our exigency. Let come what trial may, before whatever tribunal, we will be sure that, if we only choose, his infinite help will be ours. He will tell us what to say. He will show us what to do. We fail? We cannot fail, for we are his children.

*Sermon.*





“IF you are ever tempted to say a word or do a thing that shall put a bar between you and your family, your home, and your country, pray God in his mercy to take you that instant home to his own heaven. And for your country, boy, and for that flag, never dream a dream but of serving her as she bids you. No matter what happens to you, no matter who flatters or who abuses you, never look at another flag, never let a night pass but you pray God to bless that flag. Remember, that behind all these men you have to do with, behind officers and Government and people even, there is the Country herself, your Country, and that you belong to her as you belong to your own mother. Stand by her, boy, as you would stand by your mother.”

*The Man without a Country.*





THEY who look to God, listen to God, live with God, and work for God, succeed. They who look to man or love the praise of man more than the praise of God, they who are listening for men's hosannas or waiting for their palm-branches, fall as Herod fell, and Annas and Caiaphas and Pilate. Where is the temple, of which the gold glittered in the sun of Olivet? Where are the legions whose files of soldiers led out the Son of David to his death? And he? He leads the world this day, inspires its law, and directs his victory, not because multitudes welcomed him as king, but because he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

“And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.”

*Sermon.*







THIS is what I mean by aggressive Christianity, — or religion on the aggressive. Count such work as a specific duty which each one of you has in hand. “Is it not enough,” asks some easy-going man of me, “if I try to do about right?” No: it is not enough. “Why, is it not enough if I am honest in my business, provident in my household, and kind to my wife and children?” I dare not guess how many men put that question to themselves or to others, and are satisfied with an easy “Yes” in answer. It is not enough. You must be willing to live and to work all the while, so that other men shall be honest in their business, provident in their households, and kind to their families. Good God! Who are you, who so blandly tell me that these are your virtues? How came they to be your virtues? How happens it that you are not a convict in the prison, or a beggar on the sidewalk? Did nobody take care of you? Did nobody teach you the difference between right and wrong? Did nobody teach you to read your Bible, or to lisp the Lord’s Prayer? Why, man of ease, — martyrs have died for you, brave men have fought for you, prophets have prophesied for you. Do not be so mean a maligner as to refuse to strike a blow yourself, to carry a burden yourself, to open blind eyes yourself, when so much has been done for you.

*Sermon.*



REMEMBER it as a fact, even if you cannot account for it, that though we all seem so old to you, we do not, in practice, feel any older than we did when we were sixteen. We enjoy building with blocks as well, and we can do it a great deal better; we like the "Arabian Nights" just as well as we ever did; and we can laugh at a good charade quite as loud as any of you can. So you need not take it on yourselves to suppose that because you are among "old people," — by which you mean married people, — all is lost, and that the hours are to be stupid and forlorn. Above all, dear children, work out in life the problem or method by which you shall be a great deal with your father and your mother. There is no joy in life like the joy you can have with them. Fun or learning, sorrow or jollity, you can share it with them as with nobody besides. And you can and you will draw in from them notions and knowledges, lights on life, and impulses and directions which no books will ever teach you, and which it is a shame to work out from long experience, when you can — as you can — have them as your birthright.

*How to do it.*



WHAT is that bird? How they sing,—  
those cheerful little fellows on those  
branches which will swing to and fro  
across the open doorway! They understand  
Sunday wonderfully well; or, better, I suppose  
they keep Sunday every day. There is no incon-  
sistency between their Sunday and their weekday  
lives. Sing away, little fellows; there are no bet-  
ter masses than those, to-day, all round the world!  
To-day, as land after land flashes into the sun,  
there is a perpetual morning prayer going up to  
God, from that Church which he sees as one,  
though we sub-divide it so. And every day, as the  
lands turn to meet the sun, there is poured  
upwards *this* song of praise, which does not know,  
perhaps, that it is praise; and yet is perpetual,  
has been, ever since Adam was. An eternal  
hymn, of bird and beast, going up to the God of  
life!

*Friends Meeting.*



THE truth is that we are all dealing with angels unawares, and we had best make up our minds to that, early in our interviews. If you will boldly try the experiment of entering, with anybody you have to talk with, on the thing which at the moment interests you most, you will find out that other people's hearts are much like yours, other people's experiences much like yours, and even that some other people know as much as you know. In short, never talk down to people ; but talk to them from your best thought and your best feeling, without trying for it on the one hand, but without rejecting it on the other. You will be amazed, every time you try this experiment, to find how often the man or woman whom you first happen to speak to is the very person who can tell you just what you want to know. Conversation is the providential arrangement for the relief of ignorance. Find out your ignorance, first ; admit it frankly, second ; be ready to recognize with true honor the next man you meet, third ; and then, presto ! — the right person, who knows the right thing, will appear, and your ignorance will be solved.

*How to do it.*







AND I went down to the chapel to preach. There was the text, and there were the pat illustrations, — of the comfort Mary Magdalen gave Joanna, the court lady, and the comfort the court lady gave Mary Magdalen, after the mediator of a new covenant had mediated between them; how Simon the Cyrenian, and Joseph of Arimathea, and the beggar Bartimeus comforted each other, — gave each other strength, common force, *com-fort*, — when the One Life flowed in all their veins; how on board the ship the Tent-maker proved to be Captain, and the Centurion learned his duty from his Prisoner; and how they “all came safe to shore” because the New Life was there.

And I said to them all, “Oh, if I could tell you, my friends, what every twelve hours of my life tells me of the way in which woman helps woman, and man helps man, when only the ice is broken; how we are all rich so soon as we find out that we are all brothers, and how we are all in want unless we can call at any moment for a brother’s hand, — then I could make you understand something, in the lives you lead every day, of what the New Covenant, the New Commonwealth, the New Kingdom is to be.”

*Christmas Waits in Boston.*



“ ‘T IS N’T good to live all alone. Et ’s no good lookin’ back to old times, whether they wus better or wus wuss, onless ye ’s lookin’ forward to what the good God has ready to-morrow. There ’s no sayin’ what to-morrow ’ll bring, boys. Sure it ’ll bring sunrise, sure it ’ll bring light ; and there’s no sayin’ what more it ’ll bring, ef ye ’ll trust it. When you come to live ez I live ye ’ll know there ’s one friend that ’s near ye all the time. Ye seek the good God, ’n’ ye find the good God ; ye seek your Saviour, ’n’ ye find your Saviour. Ef ye aint lookin’ for worms, ye ’ll see angels, boys. But, wot I say, boys all, is this : Ef we is a club, — w’ich is, I b’lieve, a little church without ’any meetin’-house, — ef we is, w’y, we has to convert the heathen. ’N’ if people is crooked, we is to make ’em turn round and be straight. Wot is it the song says, — et will be all right ef we ‘Look out and not in’ ? ”

*Four and Five.*



BECAUSE they saw the love of God in every-  
thing around them, the immediate compan-  
ions of the Saviour found the world a new  
world. The joyous and cheerful aspect of their  
life strikes every careful reader of the life in  
Galilee. Is God Father? Then we are children.  
The soft breath on your cheek is God's breath.  
The joy of life, as you look out on the morning,  
as all Nature sings its song of praise, is the echo of  
his present joy. And at night, when you sink to  
sleep, that blessing is the blessing he gives his own.

So you find him in the sunshine, find him in the  
cool of night, see him in the stars of the infinite  
heaven, and hear him in his whisper which tells of  
right and truth ; you find love, and know that love  
rules the heaven and the earth. As you know that,  
all darkness flies away.

*Sermon.*



IT is better to do one thing well than two things by halves ; better to learn one thing thoroughly than to get a smattering of two ; better to stick to one duty till it is finished than to make two beginnings ; better to stand loyally to the post God has pointed out than to try to serve here and there and everywhere. Let society tell you what is everybody's business, and you will find laid down for you in its neutral colors a picture of very level backgrounds, of very vague middle distances, whose foregrounds are crowded with undecided groups of dreamers, who are all preparing to begin to try. But do *you* tell society how *you* mean to serve mankind, find your own place and strike your own blow, and society will meekly obey each true word you speak, and will fall into order at your requisition. Hold to the level best which the commonplace of society demands of you, and you come out on the quagmire-flat of the dismal swamp of worthless independence. Ask God to show your duty, and do that duty well, and from that point you mount to the very peak of vision. It may be that you plant there another beacon-light for the world.

*His Level Best.*





GREAT God! how beautiful this world is! Sound and sight always delighted, never bewildered. Spring crowded with wonders, which we say we never felt before, — nay, which we never did feel before; for, thank God! if one power of our nature does grow as we grow older, it is this with which we so enjoy Nature. There is the dancing shadow of the branch on the wall yonder! Never, till this moment, have I noticed such easy gracefulness of movement in a shadow.

The highest power of man, his best calculation, shows, like his weakest and his poorest, that God has ruled all things in beauty, and that all man's twitchings and struggles are powerless, when they act against this eternal law. God of order, God of beauty! how can we thank thee for such daily miracles? How can we learn, grow, to prize as we ought life and its wonders? Strengthen us, Father, strengthen us! that our free lives also may accord better and more often with thy Eternal Life; that we may labor with thy laws, with thy power, — thou in us, and we in thee!

*Friends Meeting.*



LET us bring, and let us consecrate, all study, all observation of Nature ; let us gain the eternal blessing on our conversation, on music and all other fine arts, on our business and our politics. Nothing shall be outside the range of our worship. We will worship with all our minds ! And for this we will offer not only David's devotions, but our own ; we will speak not only the Bible language, but the language of to-day. A living service, and not a dead sacrifice, is what we have to offer. We must worship with all our souls ! And all this means and requires that worship, the love of God, and the constant recurrence to God shall be central in all life. We will not buy or sell without prayer. We will not eat or drink without prayer. We will not vote, or write, or read, or go on a journey, without prayer. While we bring every interest to God in prayer, we will seek God's help for every duty. We will worship with all our strength.

*A Summer Vacation.*



IT is not simply the training of the voice to speak ; it is not simply the training of the eye to see ; far less is it the training of the fingers to this service or that toil. It is that we may come unto a perfect man. The whole body, soul, and spirit are to be presented blameless, — the body, by those exercises and by that temperance which come from that wisdom that is first pure : the mind, by that discipline which shall quicken fancy, shall strengthen memory, and shall clear argument from sophistry ; and the soul, the infinite child of an infinite God, is to be trained in faith, hope, and love, — in faith to look above the world ; in hope to look beyond time ; in love to look outside its lesser life, in that communion in which we are one with all God's children, one even with himself : the willing sons of Almighty God, strong in the liberty in which Christ has made us free.

*What Career.*





“ I DO want to go forward in my every day work, as I do in what I say on Sunday, on Christian principles. I should like to explain what I mean by Christian principle. Indeed, it is all in very short language in the New Testament, where it says we must bear each other's burdens. It says that no man is to live for himself alone, and no man is to die for himself alone. For my part, I do not think I should work a day if I were not pleased with the thought that I was doing my share to clothe a man who cannot clothe himself as well as I can clothe him, — some poor fellow off in Dakota or catching whales in the Arctic Seas, maybe. I want to do my share in the work of the world. It happens that I have been trained to do this as a weaver. I call myself a good weaver, and I think I am able to teach other people something about weaving. If I did not think so I should go about something else. But I want to do this as a disciple of Jesus Christ and a child of God. I want to do it in such a way that I shall not be ashamed of doing it when I come to die.”

*How they lived in Hampton.*



IT was from the truth and steadiness of Manco and Oello that the great nation of Peru was raised up from a horde of savages. They did not know much, but what they knew they could do. They were not, so far as we know, skilful in talking; but they were cheerful in acting. They did not hide their light under a bushel. They made it shine on all that came around. Their duties were the humblest, only making a fire in the morning, cleaning potatoes and cooking them, spinning, braiding, twisting, and weaving. This was the best Oello could do. She did that, and in doing it she reared an empire. If she had lived among her kindred, and done at home these simple things, we should never have heard her name; but none the less would she have done them. None the less, year in and year out, century in and century out, would that sweet, loving, true, unselfish life have told in God's service. And he would have known it, though you and I — who are we? — had never heard her name. Forgotten! do not ever think that anything is forgotten!

*The Story of Oello.*



THE "practice of the presence of God" will bring to every man the habit of seeing God in the mist, the cloud, and the curling wave; of hearing him in every sound; of resting in his arms when we are tired, and exulting in his strength when we are at work. I am always obliged to any man, who, instead of saying "Good-bye" to me, says "God bless you," which means just the same thing. I am glad to have him recognize with me that here are not two of us, but three. Because a day is crowded, we do not want God crowded out of it. Because we have the joy of "eventful living," we do not want to forget the Lord of Life from whom we are born. We are willing to serve Him. We are glad of His help and inspiration.

Every day, then, is glad of a new method, if it can find one. And it is well for us if every hour can speak with some new voice, help us with some new hint, lead us by some new inducement, to express our joy that "we live, and move, and have our being in our God."

*The Life in Common.*



LIFE was purer and simpler and less annoyed to us, because constantly now we met with near and dear friends whom we had not known a day before, and who looked up and not down, looked forward and not backward, and were ready to lend a hand. Life seemed simpler to them, and it is my belief that, to all of us, in proportion as we bothered less about cultivating ourselves, and were willing to spend and be spent for that without us, above us, and before us, life became infinite, and this world became heaven. The Harry Wadsworth Club had enlarged itself, in six years, without knowing it, to a thousand members. The life of that young freight-agent had made them less selfish and less worldly. The freemasonry of it was that you found everywhere a cheerful outlook, a perfect determination to relieve suffering, and a certainty that it could be relieved, — and a sort of sweetness of disposition, which comes, I think, from the habit of looking across the line, as if death were little or nothing; and with that, perhaps, a disposition to be social, to meet people more than half way.

*Ten Times One.*





WHEN the profession is chosen, and prepared for, consecrate yourself to God as his servant in it, that its work shall be well done. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father who is in Heaven is perfect." That is the rule. Whatever you do, do that work well. Do it as a leader does it. And, above all, do not blow your own trumpets; nor, which is the same thing, ask other people to blow them. No trumpeter ever rose to be a general. If the power to lead is in you, other men will follow. If it is not in you, nothing will make them follow. It is for you to find the eternal law of this universe, and to put yourself in harmony with that law. Speaking more simply, it is to find God, and to work as fellow-laborer with him. Do that, and you may afford to be indifferent, who else works with you.

*What Career.*



SUCH plans, for the good of all, as those attempted at Hampton, could not have been carried out in any heathen civilization. They belong only in the social system founded by the Saviour of mankind. The men and women who embark on such plans must understand in their personal religious experience that "if one member suffer all the members suffer with it," and that if one member is to rejoice all the members will rejoice with it. They will remember that the Saviour, in his promises for the coming of the Kingdom of God, does not address such promises to any one lonely follower. He takes it for granted, rather, that such lonely follower breathes the common life of the church, and that its life-blood flows in his veins. It is to the "little flock" that he promises the Kingdom. And to the flock, "if ye seek the Kingdom of God," He promises the temporal success which belongs with the Kingdom, and is the reward of such endeavor. It is nowhere promised to the Buddhist, satisfied with self-inspection; it is nowhere promised to the hermit, parting himself from men. It is promised to those who are sons and daughters of God, united in one Spirit, who pray with one prayer to the Father.

*How they lived in Hampton.*



“THE Lord will direct,” said Father John, “and the Lord will provide. Whether my journey helps or hinders, only the Lord knows. But it seems to be His work. For the Love of Christ I am summoned, and IN HIS NAME I go. When I left Lyons, they burned in the public square the precious books to which I had given twenty of the best years of this little life. I said then, as their mocking Viguier led me to the drawbridge, and bade me ‘Begone!’ — I said, ‘I will not see you till the day in which ye shall say, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”’ But time brings its recompense. Father Almighty, grant thy servant wisdom and strength to render some service this day somewhere to thy children.”

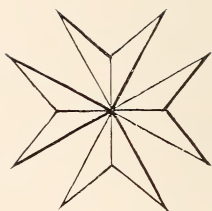
*In His Name.*





UNLESS you mean to say that God made a mistake, there can be no surplus of labor, or unless you choose to say that all of us have everything we should like or can dream of. But till every music-lover in the world has the Steinway or Chickering piano that he wants, with all the music he wants; till every picture-lover has his private gallery full till he can enjoy no more; till every dinner table from pole to pole is set with the choicest food and china; till every beggar from pole to pole rides a better horse than Smuggler or Goldsmith Maid, — why, there will be no “surplus of labor.” There may be too many people doing one thing and not enough doing another; but, till the perfect world has come, there will be no “surplus of labor.” Indeed, then, I suppose, the only change will be that labor, which men dislike, will be changed to work which they do like. “They rest from their labors and their works do follow them.”

*Back to Back.*











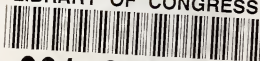






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