



BETTER THINGS  
FOR SONS OF GOD

GEORGE T. LEMMON



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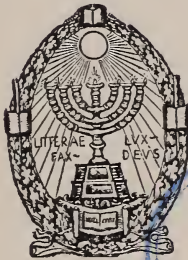






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FOR  
SONS OF GOD

BY  
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GEORGE T. LEMMON



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To  
GEORGE D. HERRON  
and  
JOHN G. WOOLLEY,  
The Twin Baptists  
Who Herald the Political Coming of the  
KING  
Whom I Adore,  
This Message is Dedicated.



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# BETTER THINGS FOR SONS OF GOD.

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## I.

### VISIONS.

“ God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect ” (Heb. xi, 40).

VISIONS of centuries photograph their wonders upon our sensitized brain. History, that marvelous phonograph of the millenniums of the past, unrolls its waxen scroll, and the voices of those who sleep after arousing the world speak to the sons of to-day. The eternal reach of the mind within us grasps the deeds which make illustrious the record of the long ago, and the heroes of all centuries march past us like an army on review. God lends us of his omniscience, and with eyes beholding fairer scenes than the sensuous visions

of the flesh we are enraptured as we pass through the gallery of the ages, where "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being" at least faintly "understood by" us who are made in the image of God, and are blessed of him with the mind "which was also in Christ Jesus."

What visions are these which the camera of faith by the lens of revelation prints for us! Enoch so keeps step with the majestic strides of Jehovah that the magnetism of the throne overcomes the attraction of the footstool, and the patriarch ascends the empyrean of the universe to the abode of the Deity. Abraham, master of the pilgrims, journeys forth from Ur before our eyes. Behold him before Pharaoh, the pyramids standing round! Yonder he meets King Melchizedek, rescued Lot one of his victorious train. There is his tent, wherein he is entertaining angels unawares; and looking again you behold him pressing the son of promise to his bosom. Mount Moriah now lifts its frowning peak to our eager gaze. Come, kinoscope, and illustrate for us these swift-changing scenes.



The altar is made, the kindling fagots already blaze, the human sacrifice is bound. "Why, father, must I die?" The father-priest uplifts the knife, the promise ends in death, obedience receives its reward, He who spared not his own Son now spares the son of Sarah. The altar is all ablaze, and on it burns the sacrifice of God's providing; while in its reddened glow stand father and offered sacrifice in fond embrace. Look once again. Abraham has died in the faith, and as his sons entomb him in Machpelah's cave we behold his glorified spirit opening its "bosom" to welcome the home-coming Lazaruses from every clime.

Now let us rub our eyes for the longer, fuller vision. Whom shall we see? Moses, the master of the law. Behold the "goodly child" rocked by the wavelets of the Nile. Yonder he leads the armies of Pharaoh to conquest after conquest. There the Abrahamic blood within him boils as the Egyptian's lash falls upon the bare back of an Israelite, and the rising moon tells of one more mummy in Egypt. How swiftly now his life paints visions of wonders on

the canvas of time! Look upon the bush, flaming but unconsumed, and hear the phonograph of revelation as it repeats the words of the Eternal, who, through changing centuries, crumbling empires, wasting nations, and dying races, still exclaims, "I AM THAT I AM!" Behold the plagues: Rivers of blood; roads and horses, homes and temples, beds and kneading-troughs, thick with frogs; lice covering the bodies of a race with a garment of itching; flies in such pestering swarms that the light of the sun is darkened; ulcered cattle bellying unto death in the very palaces of royalty; a nation diseased to a man, each one nursing his painful "boil breaking forth with blains;" the heavens, angry at such disobedience of their Master, pour forth their sharpened knives of hail to cut and maim a race and their possessions; winds gather themselves, and filling their chariots with the locusts of destruction, bear them to the accursed land; the sun, unable to bear such sickening horrors, veils its face, and darkness hides but deepens the anguish of the days; darkness withdraws its sable curtain, but only to speed

the work of the angel of death, who, with sword for brush, paints in a night the awful scene which the divine penman inscribed, "*Not a house where there was not one dead.*"

But turn to fairer visions. Moses stands with ear alert to catch the whisperings of Divinity. At his side Aaron holds the shepherd's rod which serves in the hand of a man as the scepter of God. Moses hears. The rod touches the crimsoned flood of Egypt's river god, and the blood is transformed to a cleansing, refreshing stream. Again he hears, and at his bidding the croaking of the frogs "died out." Again he hears, and "the finger of God," which through his created louse had written *unclean* upon the skin of Pharaoh and his priests and people, is withdrawn by the waving of the leader's hands. Again he hears; at his bidding the flies remove and the people bind up their stinging wounds. Again he hears, and, putting God's word on the wings of the morning, it bears throughout Egypt healing for boils and cleansing for blains. Again he hears, and, going "out of the city, spread abroad his hands unto the Lord,

and the thunders and hail ceased." Again he hears; the winds are obedient to his word, and blowing strong from the west take away the locusts they had brought from the east. Again he hears; the sun obeys him and shines once more upon the land of desolation. Again he hears; men obey him, the lintel of every Hebrew home is sprinkled "with the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain," and the firstborn of the captives live to become the conquering host of Canaan. Again he hears; the rod touches the Red Sea, and they clear an avenue for the passage of his people. It touches the same waters once more, and they "come again upon the Egyptians," and they were seen "no more forever." The waters of Marah were bitter, like the trials of life; he sweetened them with the tree, as our Marahs are sweetened by the Tree of Calvary. The people hunger; he hears the Voice, and they are fed with "angels' food," as are we with the Bread sent down from heaven. They were stung by fiery serpents, as are we to this day; and even as he lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness for

the healing of the sin-smitten of his people, so Christ lifted up heals those who look with faith to-day. Their souls were as thirsty as ours in the wilderness of sin; he touched the rock, and they found water as good to their bodies as are the waters which gush from the Rock of Ages to our souls. Again he hears; the tabernacle for the abode of the glory of the Most High rises in the heart of the camp. Again he hears, not a still small voice, but thunders which reverberated from mountain to mountain, echoed from sea to sea, and filled the valleys with the sound, not of an "*it*" that is forever silent, but of a God who eternally speaketh. Now it is not a mere bush that burns, yet is not consumed; but a whole mountain is ablaze with fire, yet abides without destruction. Amid the smoke that rises from this supernal flame the Lord descends, and confers upon Moses the peerless dignity of proclaiming the law of Jehovah unto this and every people who dwell on earth. Yet again this servant of the Lord heard his voice. He ascends to the peak of "Nebo's lonely mountain." Stricken with years, the telescope of love

and prophecy springs to his eyes. Pisgah's top is reached.

“Visions of rapture burst on his sight.”

There at his feet moans the Sea of Death. Yonder, winding southward from Hermon's snowy mountain, rushes the turbid Jordan. Jerusalem, not yet “the golden,” is perched on Abraham's mountain, thirty miles over that river. Far to the north rise Gerizim and Ebal, mounts of blessing and of cursing. Beyond the Dead Sea stretches the vast wilderness where centuries later the “seed of the woman is to bruise the serpent's head.” Far, far to the west the blue waves of the Mediterranean kiss the shores of the promised land. Backward toward the south is the path the old lawgiver has traveled until this hour. Meribah seems to rise, and his sin rises with it; the telescope falls, for the tired eyes are suffused with tears, sight becomes dim, the old familiar Voice seems whispering in his ears, murmuring winds sing a lullaby of rest, and, worn with the toil of sixscore years, the warrior falls asleep. An old legend tells us God kissed him while he slept. The

touch of that beatific kiss changed corruption to incorruption, and the mortal put on immortality. And there,

“ In a vale in the land of Moab,  
 There lies a lonely grave ;  
 But no man dug that sepulcher,  
 And no man saw it e'er,  
 For the angels of God upturned the sod  
 And laid the dead man there.

“ That was the grandest funeral  
 That ever passed on earth ;  
 But no man heard the tramping,  
 Or saw the train go forth.

“ This was the bravest warrior  
 That ever buckled sword ;  
 This the most gifted poet  
 That ever breathed a word ;  
 And never earth's philosopher  
 Traced with his golden pen  
 On the deathless page truths half so sage  
 As he wrote down for men.

“ And had he not high honor ?  
 The hillside for his pall ;  
 To lie in state while angels wait,  
 With stars for tapers tall ;  
 And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,  
 Over his bier to wave,  
 And God's own hand, in that lonely land,  
 To lay him in the grave.”

“ ‘ O God, can it be that a sinner like me' can have some better thing provided

for him than thou didst grant to this blessed servant of thine? Has not Paul made a mistake when he writes, 'That they without us'—that Moses without me—'should not be made perfect?' Nay. Thy word is truth. The mysteries of the fullness of thy love unfold with the ages. What 'better thing' hast thou provided me than to thy servant of old? My throbbing heart seems to hear a Voice, the music of whose tone is supremely sweet, saying: 'Go in spirit to Nebo's top. Look forth from the same eyrie that Moses did, and let thy heart tell thee of the 'better thing.'"

Then let us in the spirit on this Lord's Day, with faith and love to increase our vision,

"Stand where Moses stood,  
And view the landscape o'er."

Straight toward the west, over the Sea of Death, beyond range on range of hills, nestling like a jewel on the brow of the mountain, is Bethlehem of Judea, whose manger cradle is the shrine of millions and the adored of our hearts. To test our vision let us turn our eyes to the north and follow the zigzag Jordan till it leads us to



Galilee. There, a few miles from the sea, is Nazareth, out of which came One whose name is to us blessed above every name. This side of Nazareth is Nain, where my Jesus mastered death, and beyond is Cana, where

“ The modest water, awed by power divine,  
Confessed its God, and, blushing, turned to wine.”

Near to Nazareth is Tabor, Mount of Transfiguration, where Jesus stood enthroned in those habiliments of glory which were resigned when unto us was born a Saviour. Nor does he stand alone. Nebo cannot contain one who talked with God as friend to friend, and Moses, clothed upon with immortality, now presses foot upon the promised land; Elijah once more has mounted his fire chariot, and from the Carmel of the skies has ridden fast to hail his Lord. Tabor, thou art not the least of the mountains of Israel! Even as it was good for the Galileans to be upon thee that historic day, so it is good for our seeking spirits to behold thee from afar, and from thy beatific vision catch glimpses of the glory that shall be ours when we, too, become like Jesus and share the glory of his throne.

There nestled by the waters of Galilee is Magdala, with its memories of her who loved Him much because she was much forgiven; Capernaum, where Jesus loved to dwell; Bethsaida, from whence Peter and James and John went out to be "fishers of men." On those now blue waves, then lashed to fury, Jesus walked. On yonder plain the compassionate Son of Man fed the five thousand. More distant is Safed, city "set upon a hill," whose light cannot be hid; and there, the everlasting hills for its pulpit, and the rolling slopes for cushions soft, is the Mount of Beatitudes, from whence has echoed round the globe those words such as never man spake before nor since—words which have tuned the hearts of men of all climes and races to sing and pray and labor for the day when there shall be realized the Federation of the world and the Brotherhood of man.

Once again look west. Not far from "cool Siloam's shady rill" is Bethany, fragrant with memories of Mary and Martha, and that good scribe who wrote his name within the vale of death, and then, obedient to the call of the best of friends, came back to serve a little longer in this vale of tears.

And now look long. There is Jerusalem! City ever dear to all who love the name of Jesus. Its glory never fades; the interest of the Christian's heart in the holy city never wanes. There is the temple which Jesus cleansed; there Pilate's judgment hall, where the coward of the ages cringed before a lawless mob. Yonder is Gethsemane, garden of sorrows; and there the Via Dolorosa, over which Christ our pass-over trod his weary, cross-burdened way. There is the mount of mounts—Calvary! name ever dear to me. Calvary, mount of triumph! where Satan did his worst and failed. Calvary! from whence flow mingled streams of water and of blood, increasing in volume as the ages roll, till not a land escapes its quickening touch, nor a race, nor a man is left without fountain for cleansing. Calvary! where God, with a cross as a

“Lever to uplift the earth,  
And roll it in another course,”

swept sin from the throne of its dominion and rolled the earth so close to heaven that it has become the vestibule to those realms of endless love and life and joy.

Thither is the tomb where Rome, arrogant

mistress of the world, thought to confine Him whom Jewish hatred slew. But shall rocks bid defiance to Him who formed them? Shall swathing graveclothes find rest upon Him whose glory studs the heavens? Shall deathly spices continue on Him who gave to the winds their balmy incense, enriched the trees with their sweet aroma, and embalmed the world in the ambrosial perfume of the beauteous flowers? Nay. That Arimathean tomb which now we view from Pisgah's lofty peak is emblem of a conquered hell, a vanquished death. And, as we look, there seems to be one in form like an angel, standing near that vacant tomb, with an air of heavenly grace and joy, he points the glance of the groveling Satan who cumpers the ground to the ironical query which is blazoned on the portal, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Satan finds no voice to answer, but ten thousand times ten thousand voices swell the glorious reply, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

Jerusalem, hast thou one glory more for mortal eye to see? Yea; here is Olivet—Olivet! where Jesus wept for thee. Olivet! where the Man of sorrows often went

alone to pray. Olivet! where mankind was commissioned to make perfect the work of the Redeemer and lead "all people" into the kingdom of his glory. Olivet! It was his closet; and is prayer not a chariot? Aye; for here, where he had been oft alone in the still hours of the night, there now come band on band of angels, arrayed in all the livery of heaven. File on file, wing locking wing, rise this host of celestial warriors; the shining of their robes puts the sun to shame, the music of their harps transcends the description of human speech—the heart can only wonder and rejoice,—the singing of their carols makes known who taught "the sons of the morning to sing together;" the fragrance of their waving palms drives back the stench of sin from the nostrils of the Son of God and lets him breathe once again the sweet winds of purity which blow fresh from Jehovah's throne. He breathes that air, and earth can hold his form no more. O Purity, how fair thy garments are! How matchless is the magnetism of thy beauty! The Son of God feels thy power. He loves the world and died to

save it from its sin; but the attraction of heaven's purity is overpowering, and bidding us to be mastered by the same all-holy force Jesus of Nazareth lifts his nail-scarred hands in benediction on the awe-crushed company on Olivet's crown. Purity, thou hast conquered. The Master of purity rises evermore to dwell with thee. The angelic host sing the anthem of thy victory. A cloud—reservoir of thy scented mist—rolls beneath earth's Saviour's feet, and thy conquest is complete.

See the Saviour's cloud-chariot rise! Earth gives back her Lord. Heaven receives her King. But think who it is who now mounts up and up and up through that avenue of archangels. He is the Son of God. True, and just as true is it that he is the son of Mary. It is for the Son of Man that those everlasting doors are lifted up. Hallelujah! It is a *man*, a man who was made in all points as are we, who mounts yon empyrean. It is a man of the seed of the woman, common mother of us all, to whom those angels sing. It is a man, a child of Abraham, whose children are we, before whom those attendant arch-

angels, with Michael and Gabriel at their head, bend low and lay down the scepters of their power. It is a man, a man like us, full of sorrows and acquainted with grief, a man who on yonder hilltop died, who laid three days a corpse in yonder tomb, who now lives and flies on the wings of purity through those pearly gates. It is a man, a man! hear it, O ye who sorrow, a man! Nay, but it is my brother, my brother and yours, who now is welcomed to the bosom of the Father and enthroned as King of kings! Olivet, thy closet has a doorway into paradise! Sing now thy song:

“ Be lifted up, ye everlasting doors !  
Welcome his feet, ye bright and crystal floors !  
The mighty Victor enters with his train,  
And brings the trophies of his blood and pain ;  
He beareth jewels from the sands of Time,  
And brilliants rescued from the seas of crime.  
He leads captivity a captive in,  
And holds the keys of death and hell and sin.  
Within his hands are dark and mournful scars,  
But on his brow are radiant, flashing stars.  
He reascends the throne, and far and wide  
Resounds the honors of the ‘ Crucified.’  
His native heaven is jubilant with song,  
And choral hosts tell of his triumphs long ;  
The embassy of love a world hath won,  
And Christ is King. His royal reign begun  
Shall be the joy of endless years.”

Heart of mine, hast thou learned the secret of these visions? Hast thou discerned that "better thing" which God hath provided thee? What was there in thy visions from Pisgah's top which Moses did not see when he stood there? What? Speak out, that the world may hear. CHRIST! O matchless wonder! Moses, what wouldst thou have given that day on Pisgah to have beheld what it is mine to see? Silent! Aye, for even thy heavenly tongue cannot express the infinite longing that was in thy soul to behold the day of the Son of Man. Measure these visions, fellow-Christian, and learn the greatness of this better provision God has made for you. For Moses there was no Bethlehem, but there unto you was "born a Saviour." For Moses there was the awful majesty of Sinai, when he would commune with God; for you there is Bethany, where with Mary you can sit at Jesus's feet and let thy heart throb nigh to his. For Moses Galilee was only a splendid watering place for his children and their cattle; to you it is hallowed with memories that will survive the tomb. Jacob's well was precious to Moses for his father's sake;



to you it is precious because of the words of Jesus to her of Samaria, giving you the glad tidings that, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." The wilderness had no wonder for Israel's leader, but to you it speaks of the conflict of the ages and the thrilling triumph of Him through whom you also may triumph gloriously. To Moses Jerusalem was but the stronghold of an evil tribe which had usurped Moriah, the altar of Abraham. To you Jerusalem, though its shrines are yet usurped by sensual Mohammedanism and filled with the strife of many tongues, is forever the city of the King, whither thy spirit takes its pilgrimage, to walk the streets and view the scenes hallowed by the presence of your Lord. For Moses Tabor had no shining glories; Zion no upper room precious for its supper of remembrance and blessed prayer; Gethsemane told no story of bleeding love; Calvary lifted no cross to cheer his heart with hope; the valley of Jehoshaphat contained no riven tomb to bid his soul good cheer when he reached the parting of the ways; and Olivet sent no gleam of holy

radiance athwart the pathway the grand old pilgrim knew he soon must travel. Think of these things, then tell me if God has not "provided some better thing" for you than the unfolding of his purpose had made known to Moses. Take Tabor, and the wilderness, and Zion, and Gethsemane, and Calvary, and empty tomb, and Olivet out of thy memory's keeping. Pluck these blessings from thy heart; let Satan still stalk a challenging Goliath through the wilderness of thy life; let blackness hide that mountain whence you caught a vision of the glories which belong not only to your Lord, but to those also who live so as to wake some sweet day in his blessed likeness. Cease whispering your "Amen" to that prayer which plead with the Father that the Son and you might be one, even as they were one, thus pleading that you should be one with God. Return to Jewish lamb and paschal feast. Cover up that blood which dyed Gethsemane's moss, the cup is not yet ready. Do I not hear you cry, "O spare the cross, leave me that hope in the thickening gloom"? Nay, Moses beheld it not. Take down the cross, and when the

serpents bite you, turn your eyes toward yonder brazen symbol. Joseph, you may enter thine own new tomb, nor have more light than Abraham was blessed with, when Machpelah opened unto him. Olivet is not yet the closet of the Son of Man, and has no ascension splendors to give wings to hope and surety to thy faith. Now, with all these gone, you stand where Moses stood. Pine you any longer for that good old time when giants walked the earth? Ask you any longer if Paul was mistaken when he wrote, "God having provided some better thing for us," if you can only hold to these wondrous things which Moses's eye of flesh never beheld, nor faith full squarely grasped? Ah, no. If only we can still behold Goliath conquered by him of Judah's tribe; if Tabor will still smile on us, and Zion still let us feed on broken body and drink of flowing blood; if Gethsemane may only continue to teach me how to say, "Thy will, not mine, be done;" if Calvary may still retain its cross, and let me sing with Paul, my brother, "In the cross of Christ I glory;" if Joseph's tomb still be empty to tell me so mine will

be; if Olivet will still point my wearied eyes to the home whither my Jesus has gone to prepare a place for me; if these things are left me, then will I sorrow no more; then will I repine no more for living in a time like this; then will I tell to all the earth the wonder, God hath provided better things for me on earth than he did for Abraham my father. Mine eyes have viewed far grander scenes than ever blessed the eyes of Israel's aged leader.

Did the sun of this little planetary system stand still on Gibeon when Joshua cried unto his Lord for help? Then has the answer to my cry wrought a greater miracle, for the Son of God, who made heaven and earth, and all that in them is, stood still for me on Calvary, nor hastened to go down till my victory was made sure. O plain of Esdraelon, how many battles have dyed thy sod with blood! But thy maddened fray was ever for earthly gain; Gethsemane's triumph over self is by far the "better thing." Samuel, thy begrudging honor it was to crown Israel's king, but mine it is with joyful heart to crown, and be crowned of, "great David's greater Son." David, thou

couldest sing, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," but to me is given the better song, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Elijah, thou didst behold the fire descend and consume thy sacrifice and proclaim that the Lord was God, but I have seen the fire descending like a cloven tongue, and, making an offering for sin, fit those by it anointed to proclaim the unsearchable riches of that God as he is in Christ Jesus my Lord. Jeremiah, thou hast made me weep as thy broken heart mourned the destruction of thy people, but mine ears have also heard Paul's pæan of hallelujahs, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Ezekiel, I have been enraptured with thy vision of the wheels, but mine eyes have seen the forward movement of those wheels until the Spirit of them has encircled the earth. Isaiah, thy Lamb is no longer dumb, the echo of his voice has gone forth to the ends of the world. Thy little, thy holy Child has been called Jesus by millions upon millions of gladdened hearts, and he has led them one by one to the common Father of us all, to receive from him the inheritance of the saints in light. And in these later times I have heard such an one as John the aged exclaim in his tones of affluent love, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is." Therefore do we look for God to provide in the present, and in the future, some even "better thing" for us than the past has yet revealed, and, praising him for letting our eyes behold, and our lives be lived in a day that the mighty of old longed to see, let us with holy

reverence diligently inquire what there is for us to do, that we may bring unto perfection the labors of those who have blessed the earth with mighty works in the days long past. Meanwhile, as we look still further for the "better thing" provided us than blessed God's toilers in the past, and as we search the present for its revelations of the will of God, let us, with throbbing hearts, that speak of unfulfilled desires, with eyes eager to behold that beauty of holiness which like an aurora of glory shall spread round the world, when God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven; with ears that listen steady for every whisper of that "still small voice;" with minds so filled with love of truth that they become fit tablets for God to write the hid treasures of his wisdom on, let us do our best to apprehend the sublimity of that life which Christ made known should be ours, when on earth we shall have become perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect.

## II.

## FIRE.

THAT God has provided one better thing for us who live to-day than the unfolding of the measureless love of his infinite purpose permitted him to provide to our fathers we are now most confident. Ours it is to behold with unspeakable delight the face of the Son of God. In our ears have sounded words which poured forth in divinest accents from the very heart of that eternal Word which "was made flesh, and dwelt among us." The darkness of our day has been riven by the widespreading beams of light which flame from the divine person of this Holy One. The rising of this Sun of righteousness has by the healing of his wings turned the gloom of our souls into glorious day, and by a power which is not of ourselves we do now with great joy behold that "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." He by whom all things were made, and in



whom is that life which was, yea, is, the light of men; he has come, and the world is his; and it is our kingly privilege to behold "his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

"God manifest in the flesh!" How stupendous a mystery is this! God, the eternal, shrouding himself with time-decaying flesh. God, the one majesty of the universe, clothing himself with the humility of human position. God, the omnipotent, becoming weak as newborn babe. God, the pure, entering man's impure race. Such are faint graspings of our earth-narrowed minds as we seek to comprehend this wonder of redemption. Shall we despair because we cannot better comprehend? No. Rather let the sublimity of the truth lift faith to those altitudes where this spiritual faculty can take hold upon things which are spiritually discerned.

Why was such a marvel necessary? Because man should serve God aright, and to serve God aright man must know God aright. That necessary knowledge of God was possible to man only through such a

revelation of the heart of God as was made in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Rear all the grandest men of earth's nobility, whose knighthood is the reward of race-helping achievement, in one ideal man, and with him you could no more measure God than universe with shooting star. Compare the flight of this sparrow to the cycling of yonder sun. Compare the inches of my greatest height to the infinite reaches of the stellar measures. Gain you by such comparisons any comprehension of the speed of the orb of day or the magnitude of the universe? Nay. No more can you by studying the greatest men apprehend the infinitude of God. Yet it was this wondrous being, whose glory fills the heavens; whose eternity has bound the centuries and the ages together; whose power from nothing wrought out the jeweled fabric of the universe; whose wisdom shines from every star, distills in the dew of every rain, sends forth its perfume from every flower, and walks the earth in every beast and every man; whose truth satisfies that highest product of the earth, the human mind; whose love takes hold upon

the soul, that mysterious factor of human life which is beyond the ken of earthly search, and binds it to his very heart; whose character is the beauty of holiness; whose throne is righteousness, and whose scepter is peace; it is this Being before whom all in heaven do bow themselves and "Holy, holy, holy," cry; this God, glorious in holiness, perfect in righteousness, doing wonders, that has taken up his abode with man. This measureless Jehovah has been compassed by the Nazarene, that even as in him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily, so in us should dwell all the fullness of God. The divine spirit has been enshrined in the life of the Son of man, that even as the life he lived was in the spirit and not the flesh, so our mortal body should be quickened by this same boundless spirit dwelling in us. This all-glorious life, this God who endureth forever, has been tabernacled in a house of clay, fashioned by the agony of a daughter of Eve, that even as the life which he lived was a life hid in God his Father, so the life which we live should be hid with him in God. Thus the earth has become the abode of the Deity.

Man has become the temple of Jehovah. Immortal life has by the indwelling Spirit of the Most High flooded the house of flesh with the fullness of God, and when time, as an angel's finger, unties the ribbon which binds spirit to flesh, the spirit of the righteous soars to realms ineffable to be at home with God.

“Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.” With Job my mind reels when I try to think what all this means—the fullness of God entering within me, that the fullness of Satan may no more abide there and devour me. “How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them.” But how am I to understand them? Unto us has been given this better thing. The Christ whom our fathers longed to see has stood before us and made such revelations of the wonders prepared for us here, as well as hereafter, that our eyes have grown weary with grandeur. Our minds seem unable to grasp the fullness of the provision of grace, and with hearts faint and anguished I believe your spirit would exclaim with mine:

“The Christ—the expectation of the ages

—has come! God has provided me some ‘better thing’ than was provided to the saints of old; but woe to me! for I know not what to do with this better thing. I have a jewel of priceless worth, but know not how to set it in my life. I have found the Christ, but ere I knew him he passed from me to the skies. I know that my Redeemer liveth, but O, who will teach me how to live that I may behold him in glory?”

So cries the soul, and so it cries never in vain. Man could not know God till Christ revealed him, and the truth forces itself home upon us, man cannot know Christ until he is further taught. Where, then, shall the knowledge be found? The way to an answer comes in the remembrance of the Master’s words, “Search the Scriptures.” Let us then search the book to-day for this other “better thing” which now seems so needful, and as we search will it not be best for each to lift to God the prayer:

“Search the Scriptures! Yes, I will. But O, my Father, thou must help me in the search. Touch my mind, and with thine own finger write thy wisdom there. Open thou mine ears to hear thy word of peace.

Enlarge my vision, that it may view the wideness of thy eternal purpose. O my Father, even as an earthly parent delights to teach its offspring truth, take thou delight in teaching me, not wearying with my dullness in learning. Feed thou my hungry mind with the eternal bread of truth. Let my thirsty soul drink from that fountain of thine own being out of which proceedeth the issues of life. Lead me unto all truth, then shall I know Christ, thy Son, whom to know is life eternal; and when I say, Amen, let my heart believe its deepest meaning—*Amen. So shall it be.*”

The scroll of history rolls back and back until we behold a day when the world was young. In yonder valley, far away in the distance, is the bower home of the parents of our race. Before it a light flames between earth and heaven. It is the flaming sword which still stands guard “to keep the way of the tree of life.” From Adam’s hut visions of Eden and its lovely, enchanting shades are plainly seen, contrasting strangely with the thorns and thistles which infest the soil about the wanderer’s home. It is the Sabbath day, and, having learned from

the God who formed them to hallow it by sacred rest, we find Eve and Adam with faces turned toward that garden which was once their home, reverently lifting heart and thought to God. Their boys, now grown to manhood's years, have gone to yonder mountain to offer sacrifice unto God. Seeking them, we find the altars which crown the mountain top. Here is that of Cain, the eldest, on which, piled high, are the first fruits of his arduous toil. There is Abel's. On it the most perfect among "the firstlings of his flock." Cain, we have no mission now to repeat thy shame. Stand there beside thine altar, and may the shades of oblivion hide thee from the gaze of men. Abel, we would watch thee. What lesson wilt thou teach us? The sacrifice is ready; Abel kneels and implores for his offering the favor of the Creator. Then from the heavens there comes a flash of fire; it ignites the leaves, it burns the wood, it licks up the blood, it consumes the sacrifice, and Abel, his heart big with joy, his eye bright with hallowed wonder, his body exhilarated with a strange, first-felt emotion, parts his lips, and there ascends to heaven the first carol

of praise to the great Creator which he has heard from throat of man. The birds hear the melody of this music of a human soul that is at peace with God and owned of him, and join the chorus; the winds hymn it round the heavens; the waters that dash down the mountain side to the rivers beyond seem to ripple to the cadence of Abel's song; and the trees appear to wave their fragrant branches in rapturous unison. And why not? A soul has cried to God for witness of its devotion unto him, and God by fire has answered and consumed the offering; and when thus owned of God who would not sing for joy? For "ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with praise; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Abel, sing on, and may multitudes of thy father's children learn the same new song!

Roll up the scroll and come to later times. Around Carmel's rugged slopes are ranged the thousands of the rebellious tribes. This is to be a great day in Israel. A spectacle shall greet the eye of men and angels to-day which shall scarcely be sur-



passed for marvelousness in all the coming centuries. To-day shall see the contest of gods. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob will this day bide his displeasure while Baal does his worst. Behold the picture no words can paint!

“’Tis a scene

Such as again will not be, nor hath been,  
From utmost Dan to far Beersheba’s bound.”

Earth’s greatest painters have often tried to limn it. Poets have by it roused their muse to highest flights of genius. Music, in trying to re-enact its thrilling drama, has scored some of the greatest triumphs of the melodious art. Oratory to this mount has often come to touch its tongue with flame.

From Carmel’s brow survey the land and sea. There is left not one shrub of green on all that stately plain. Three years and more have passed since those deep vaults of heaven have been the race course for rain-refreshing clouds. No drop of dew has fallen for these many days, and every shrub and vine has withered; the trees have grown aged and mother but a few scraggy leaves; the plain is but a scorched

oven over which the hot burning winds drive the dust in blinding clouds. Kishon, the great brook at the mountain's foot, has had no water in it for many months. Not a field bears grain; not a garden blooms a flower; not an olive gives oil; not a vineyard offers shade or refreshment; the mountain sides are as barren as the plain; the valleys have no more green than the hilltops. Everywhere it is as if God had permitted hell to open wide its mouth and with blasts of hate burn away the beauty with which his providence clothes the earth. The multitude that have climbed the mountain are blinded by dust and heat; their bodies are parched and hard, their faces blistered and sore from the awful heat of the days just passed. Think of it! Three years without rain, three years without dew, three years without the rising of a mist from yonder sea! No wonder it is a land of desolation and a people gaunt with want. How dearly are they paying for their refusal of the Most High! Hear the trumpets! The king comes, his chariot drawn by lean and thirsty steeds. Behind him, chanting their

ghoulish hymn, tramp the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal. They reach the summit of the mountain just before break of day, and as a blast of trumpets announces the arrival of Ahab a great rough man, clad in the garments of the desert, strides with fearless step toward Israel's king. Fierce and angry is the greeting Ahab gives the prophet, but this man of God is not to be frightened by the puppet of Jezebel. He gives the challenge: "I am alone; your priests number four hundred and fifty men. Let us have two altars, honestly built; let us have two bullocks for the sacrifice; then let your priests call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord, and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God."

"Well spoken! Well spoken!" cry the people; nor can the king rebuke them, for Baal is the god of fire. Surely the prophet of the Lord is a fool, or he would never have made fire the test. The people clamor that the test be quickly made, for Elijah has goaded them by his stinging query, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."

The gleams which begin to shoot from beyond the horizon tell the sun is soon to rise. Hurry, ye priests. Dare ye enter your god in this mighty contest? They dare. Speedily the altars are reared, the bullocks slain, the sacrifice ready. Now the morning breaks; up rises the sun on the contest of the gods. Four hundred and more of Baal's priests are on their knees supplicating the rising king of day to send a fiery beam to ignite their sacrifice. Up mounts the sun. Distant Hermon sparkles like a jeweled dome, every frozen flake a diamond. The sky hangs heavy with the dull glow of brass, the baked fields shine like floors of gold as the morning rays pour upon them, the Mediterranean dons her purple robe to receive the coming king of light. But, though the sun thus paints its living colors upon the world, it sends no answer to the cry of those pleading priests. Higher and higher ascends the sun. Louder and louder grow the cries of the devotees of Baal. "O Baal, hear us! O Baal, hear us!" has been the cry of all the morning hours, but "there was no voice, nor any that answered." Noon comes. Straight down upon the mountain top pour

the awful, scorching rays. Surely Baal will answer now. More vehement grow the cries as the sun and god answer not. The priests become frenzied with fear. Shall Baal desert them? Shall Baal not hear and answer? They leap upon the altar, cut themselves with their sacrificial knives, rend their clothes, tear their flowing beards, and with voices harsh by much exertion continue their wild cry. The rocks send back their mocking echo, "O Baal, hear us!" The valleys and caves and dens continue the frenzied prayer, "O Baal, hear us!" Even sullen sky and moaning sea seem to hold them in derision and pass on and on the unanswered supplication, "O Baal, hear us!" The prophet of the Lord, who has stood beside his altar these weary hours, now lifts his voice to goad them with his relentless irony. The priests are faint with the exertions of many hours, but he bids them, "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." Ah, here is a hero. This is no angry man. These are no idle words. It is a prince of the truth, standing alone and pouring his

contempt upon a god who has no ear for his people's need. But though the priests heed the scornful cry of Elijah, and lift their voices with the energy of despair, cut fresh wounds upon their bodies, Baal hears not, and as the afternoon wears away they fall, one by one, beside their god-forsaken altar, still stretching their hands in mute appeal toward the receding sun, and whispering, "O Baal, hear us!"

Now the hour for the offering of the evening sacrifice draws nigh. Elijah steps forth and commands the host, "Come unto me." They crowd about him and watch with eager eyes as he picks twelve stones, one for each of the tribes which the Lord had chosen, and with them repairs the now broken altar of Jehovah. They note the trench he digs about it, and when the wood is piled and the bullock laid upon it they are amazed at his strange command, "Fetch from yonder hidden spring four barrels of water and pour it over altar, wood, and sacrifice." Again and again is the water brought, until it runs about the altar and the trench is full.

Now all is ready. The bleeding priests of Baal are prostrate on the ground, only

now and then feebly muttering, "O Baal, hear us!" Yonder in Jerusalem, where the true God is worshiped, it is the hour of evening prayer. Elijah steps back from his altar. Every eye is on him. What a moment is this! One man amid thousands dare stand for God. What mighty, glorious faith is this! Four hundred and fifty priests have failed; can he, alone, do better? Elijah, thou art an ideal for my faith to reach! The prophet is pale, calm, glorious in his loneliness.

"The people stood like monuments of stone ;  
All was so still the listener might descry  
The murmuring Jordan, but his fount was dry."

"Sublime, serene, that lone form looms, embathed in sunset now,  
And more than mortal majesty is gleaming on his brow ;  
He prays ; his few calm, clarion tones on night's faint zephyrs  
swell :  
'Jehovah, God of Abraham, of Isaac, Israel,  
Let it be known this day that thou in Israel art Lord,  
And I thy servant all these things have done but at thy  
word !'"

The prayer is ended. The hush continues on the throng. Every eye follows those of the prophet upturned toward the heavens. Will God hear? Will God an-

swer? Will Elijah put to shame those priests who lift their passion-crimsoned faces to his own? Yes. God hears. God answers. Look! The fire comes. It descends the heavens; it illuminates 'the mountain; it falls on the altar; it consumes the bullock; it consumes the wood; it consumes the stones; it consumes the dust; it consumes the water; and in consuming these it has consumed the hopes of Baal. God has answered by fire. Elijah is victorious. Baal is in derision. There was a moment of awed silence;

“ Then from a prostrate nation rose the long and loud  
acclaim :

‘ The Lord is God ! the Lord is God ! Jehovah is his  
name ! ’

From tribe to tribe, from crest to crest the shout rang glad  
and free,

Like trumpets echoing through the hills, or thunders of the  
sea :

‘ The Lord is God ! the Lord is God ! ’ The clouds roll back  
the sound,

And airy tongues from height to height the answering shout  
rebound.”

On rolls the grand acclamation, startling the dry bones on the plains of Esdraelon and surging out over the sea; but as it rolls on where is Elijah? There is a strange



sound in his ears, and running to the discomfited king he cries, "Get thee home, lest the floods overwhelm thee, for there is sound of abundance of rain." Then as the astonished, shouting people disperse, the prophet retires to pray. Soon arises the cloud not larger than a man's hand; but it grows fast, and soon "the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain," which sent the waters foaming through the brooks and gushing from innumerable fountains to soften the thirsty ground; and lo! when the morrow's sun went down the hills and the valleys were clothed with springing green; the trees had grown young again; gardens promised glorious blooming, and the vinedresser sang once more as he trimmed his creeping vines. The contest of the gods is finished. God and one man have conquered. Fire brought to Elijah the favor of the Most High. Fire burned the thought into each mind, the Lord is God. Fire, with its lightning flash, owned Elijah as Jehovah's honored priest. Glorious indeed was the wonder and the testimony which God provided to Elijah; and dare we think with Paul

that God has "provided some better thing for us" than was granted to this mighty man of faith? Carmel is the most sublime wonder of the olden time; the favor shown Elijah might well make angels covet his priestly mantle; and shall favor more gracious, wonders more marvelous be granted unto us? Surely it cannot be. But even as we question memory floods us with a great remembrance, and with throbbing hearts we do by faith behold a greater wonder in which Elijah had no part.

It is night, night in the holy land. The light of day has passed, and the silvery sheen of the moon now gleams upon the domes of the holy city. The "stars which stand as thick as dewdrops on the field of heaven" embroider the blue ether of the sky and stud the royal canopy which God ever spreads over the sleep of his children. It is a night of quietness; darkness has spread her wings and wrapped empires in her embrace, that not a sound may rise to break the stillness of our peace. But though all is still it is not the stillness of sleep, for in that little upper room more than a hundred are gathered on their

knees. Now and then a soul wings its way to the throne of grace in the melody of song, and sings until others take up the strain, and then upward swells until it seems

“ The song on its mighty pinions  
Took every living soul, and gently lifted it to heaven.”

Then the sweet breath of prayer rises to the God just praised, prayer that comes from hearts that have faltered not these many days, and is lifted now from one hundred hearts that beat in the unison of love. For ten days have they supplicated thus, nor has the good they craved been granted them, but now their

“ Prayer shall be up at heaven, and enter there,  
Ere sunrise.”

Not only shall it enter, but answer shall be sent in wondrous manner. On what street the windows of that upper room looked out we do not know, but gathered in it were a few names till then unknown to fame, but who were anointed there to victorious immortality. The roof of that room is open to the refreshing breath of night, and as the kneeling assembly lift their eyes they view the splendid creation

of the God they worship. The night wears on, yet still they pray. Morning soon will dawn. "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind." Glorious wind! grander than any that sounds through the tops of mulberry trees, swifter than any that speeds its way from empire to empire. Mysterious sound! Will it waft blessing to Pilate in Rome's palace yonder? Caiaphas, thou priest of the most high Pharisees, does it wing joy to thy impious soul? Temple of the living God, thou fount which Jesus cleansed, but to be polluted soon again with the attendance of Messianic murderers, does this mysterious wind blow the folds of thy riven veil together and unite them for evermore? No; the wind is freighted with no good to these, nor does it beat and surge like some awful gale leveling homes and sweeping streets, crushing life and destroying hope, but with its mighty rush it comes "straight from heaven."

Ezekiel, thy wind has come. Already the dry bones begin to move. Joel, thy sons and daughters begin to prophesy. Zechariah, the Spirit of grace anoints the

children of men. Awed, overwhelmed by this supernatural sound, the praying group bend lower, yet raise their heads to look whence this wondrous sound proceeds. Far, far away, a burst of glory fills the heavens. Swift as the light, noiseless as comes the daylight, descends this flaming glory. A second it glows upon the pinnacles of the temple, but leaves it to its shade; a second more, and the Roman eagles shine at the touch of celestial splendor, but Rome receives no tribute from the skies. Down falls the flame into that little upper room. Tongues of fire, tongues of glory, tongues of power dart everywhere and rest on brow of every praying saint. Peter wears a crown of fire. John and James, thy mother need not worry more, for thou, too, art crowned with fire. Nathanael, "come and see," Andrew's head wears a crown of flame. Thomas, you dare not doubt, the tongue of fire is on thy head. Magdalene, thou art not forgotten. Woman is lifted up and crowns of fire rest on Mary, and on Martha, and on that blessed mother of whom the Bible may well close its mention here.

But shall they not all be burned? Shall fire come upon them and they be not consumed? Abel's sacrifice was consumed when fire came; even the altar of Elijah was consumed when fire came to Carmel. Can these live and that flame descend upon them? Wait. Was the bush which Moses saw consumed, though it burned? Was Sinai consumed, though it filled the heavens with its radiant flame? No. Why the difference? When Abel's sacrifice and Elijah's altar were consumed God *sent* fire from heaven, but to the burning bush and Sinai's peak God *came in* fire. So now these tongues of fire which rest upon the children of grace are not mere fire sent from heaven, but it is *God come down from heaven* to take up his abode in human hearts. Wonder no more that they were not consumed, but rejoice that as "it sat upon each of them . . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Not consumed, but increased; not burned out, but burned *into* the kingdom. Not destroyed, but built up, that as the inheritors of the mighty promises of Jesus they may be filled with all the fullness of God. Is not this a "better thing"? Surely this is the proof that

our Jesus, that first “better thing” which we so lately found, lives and has sent forth this in fulfillment of his many promises. This is that Holy Ghost who comes to teach us all things—to teach us Christ, to teach us holiness, to teach us service, and to teach us these by bringing to our remembrance the words of gracious wisdom uttered by God while tabernacled in the Son of Man. This is the mighty Spirit who comes to guide us in all truth, that we who live in time may know eternal truth, and by that truth become free from the bondage of sin and death. This divine Instructor will teach us what to do with Christ. This Guide will direct us how to set the first jewel which we found so fittingly in our life, that its shining will attract the heaven-longing hearts of friends and kindred. This Comforter shall give us cheer, though eternal glories veil our Saviour from our sight. This abiding Guest will teach the way of life, that as the redeemed of the Redeemer we may live like him here and live with him hereafter.

Well may we bless God for this second “better thing” which makes the first more precious to us. The promises of Christ have

been fulfilled. Not one Son of God, but million sons of God, in whom the Spirit ever testifieth to their divine sonship, now walk the earth. How the lowly are exalted! Abel's innocent sacrifice was consumed; this fire in our hearts means that our sins are burned away. Before Moses the fiery pillar journeyed but forty years; this ever-present Guide within us shall guide us evermore. The fire which on Jewish altars burned died out as the centuries passed, but this fire, kindled of God's Spirit in the breast of every child of his, shall flame through all eternity. Elijah had his Horeb as well as Carmel, but the whirlwind and fire of that day brought God no nearer to the prophet; but now to us comes the holy wind—breath of God—and inbreathes itself in us. God comes in fire, and our souls are filled with energy divine; the Voice which speaks witnesses with our enraptured spirits that we are the sons of God.

Paul may well call this a better thing, and our souls may well rejoice that God gives us life in an age which, with all its vileness, still seems to the student of holy things a perpetual Pentecost. What won-



ders hath this second better thing, which, though denied in its gracious fullness to our fathers, has been provided unto us, wrought out in the history of the world since that upper room was lighted by tongues of fire! The Pentecost of the one hundred and twenty souls was marvelous, yet the Pentecost which daily comes upon the three hundred and twenty millions who bow the knee to Jesus is still more marvelous. Not only in that upper room has God revealed himself by tongues of fire. That was but the first flaming torch lit of God to disperse the blackness of sin's foul night. Torch on torch has flamed since then, and to-day torch answers torch across mountain, sea, and continent. The glory which first shone in Jerusalem's little chamber has spread afar, and pentecostal flames now glowing everywhere seem to hail that day as near when "the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Recount the conquest of the tongue of fire. It was that flaming tongue which introduced the church of the one hundred and twenty names to the knowledge of the

world. On that now famous day the Church of Christ faced a hostile world, without a history, priest, or people. "She had only her two sacraments and her tongue of fire." But the reception of that great gift had filled Jerusalem with wonder, and the people flocked in hosts to hear a fisherman preach. How he preached! No smooth-toned words or meaningless phrases, but straight as arrows fly he charges home their fearful sin:

"Men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

But though they crucified him, yet now he is not dead. The grave could not hold him. He lives, and is now at "the right hand of God exalted;" from whence he shall soon come on the clouds of heaven, and will judge them; yes, judge *them*, even his murderers. No wonder they fall on their knees; no marvel that they call with awe-struck tones, "Men and brethren, what

shall we do to be saved?" Look! there is a man prostrate on the ground. Apostles pray around him, and soon uprises the victorious shout, "Jesus saves! Jesus saves!" and the first convert won to Christ by man's preaching shouts his great redemption. What joy came to Peter that blissful moment! What increase of faith to those who had tarried long for sign from God! But see! there falls another; two are saved! Shout, Peter! There is another; three are saved! Shout, ye twelve! Thirty saved ones are lifting praise to God! Shout, ye immortal one hundred and twenty! Look how thy numbers are increased; three hundred souls are saved! Shout, shout, ye expectant earth! The day of God has come; three thousand souls are saved! three thousand sinners have become saints to-day! three thousand who were chained to sin have burst their bonds and have now become the sons of God! This is the pentecostal spectacle which inaugurated the triumphs of the soldiers of the cross. Day by day there was added to the Church such as should be saved, till Jerusalem was well leavened with the holy ferment. Then

persecution came. Satan, like his dupe, the sinner, seems incapable of learning aught by failure. The cross but made possible the conquered tomb. Calvary was but the prelude to Olivet's angelic chorus. So now, the persecution, which scatters wide the saints, but builds a church wherever those saints are chased.

It was the theory of Laplace that when the vast central mass of nebulous matter reached its utmost condensing point it hurled from it with incalculable velocity, yet to well-governed orbits, immense masses of its substance, each of these hurled-forth masses becoming the center of world systems like our own, which filled the infinite spaces with their shining inhabitants. So the early persecutions pressed in the Church until kindred-sundering throes of forced expulsion sent apostles and converts into all cities and lands. Where they went God went, Christ conquered, and the Holy Ghost built up monumental testimonies of his presence in the world. The close of the first century found Christianity established in nearly every part of the Roman empire, with the record of such converts as Paul,

Barnabas, Apollos, and Dorcas, to inspire the sacrifices of the coming years. The second century found the Catacombs full, waiting martyrs more plenty than pagan Rome could send to death, and Polycarp leaving his testimony to the Spirit who nerved his own. The third century closes amid awful persecution, but soon the spirit of the wheels rolls on, and Constantine the Great courts the favor of the rising Church, the Council of Nice assembles the faithful in holy conclave, and the fourth century is blessed with the glorious lives and heroic deaths of Eusebius, Athanasius, Augustine, and Chrysostom. The sixth century opens with Gregory the Great on the pontifical throne and Augustine of Canterbury establishing Christianity in mother England. The seventh hears Boniface heralding the cross in the Fatherland; and the eighth, Anschar proclaiming glad tidings in Denmark, and Methodius in Moravia. Then follow the centuries of night, when the love of pomp and strife for earthly honor crushed the common people to lift a self-perpetuating congregation of sacrilegious scoundrels to official place. Yet even this gloom was

brightened by such lives as only the Holy Spirit knows how to light, and Thomas à Kempis, Anslem, Bernard of Clairvaux, Arnold of Brescia, Peter of Bruys, Peter Waldo, Saint Louis, Wyclif, Huss, Joan of Arc, and Savonarola spake and proved that God spake through them.

Runnymede had already given the Anglo-Saxon race old Magna Charta, when Luther rose to lead in that grand attack on error long intrenched, in which Zwingli, Melanchthon, Latimer, Knox, Calvin, Cranmer, Tyndale, Coligny, and William the Silent bore such noble part. Meanwhile the Holy Spirit was leading others to those discoveries without which the work of God must go at halting pace. Gutenberg invents the printing press; the mariner's compass is perfected; Columbus crosses the sea on his world-finding voyage; Vasco da Gama rounds the Cape of Death and retitles it Cape of Good Hope; and Balboa, "silent upon a peak in Darien," first looks out on the Pacific's wide sea. Now the world is ready for swifter movements; yet for a century or more the Spirit's preacher must be the sword. The Armada is en-

gulfed in an angry sea, Protestantism is established in sturdy Scotland, and the Netherlands secure their freedom; Cromwell founds Britannia's empire of the sea, and the Pilgrims found freedom's empire this side the waves; William of Orange makes his long and weary fight for the right of Protestantism to exist, against the allied hosts of Rome, with mighty France and Louis XIV at their head; the Revolution of 1688 gives William the English throne, and Protestant control of the English language is assured for all the centuries; Wolfe wins on the Plains of Abraham, and the arbitrament of the sword declares that America shall be Protestant, and not Catholic, as French domination would have meant; and in '76 liberty's bell sent freedom's song rolling out over all the world.

Even while this glorious climax was being fashioned new forces were marshaling. Wesley has already commenced his ever-widening work, and the Church which in a century becomes the largest communion in Protestantism is founded; Whitefield went flaming up and down England and the

colonies; Raikes has inaugurated the Sunday school movement; Eliot has given his life for the Indians; the Danes have translated the Bible into Tamil; Egede has preached Christ in Greenland; and the Moravians have begun their apostolic work in those most difficult fields where, to this day, few others have cared to go.

Then by the Spirit came the era of missionary organization, running like a holy fever through all the Churches, and the century of the Spirit's greatest triumphs was ushered in. Carey leads the march on India; Morrison braves Confucianism in the Celestial Empire; Judson gives his life for Burmah; Calvert transforms Tonga and the Fiji; Bingham and Thurston lay the foundation for the work now manifest in Hawaii; Williams dies for Erromanga; Heber lives for Calcutta; Neesima studies for Japan; Moffat toils for Kuruman; Patteson dies for Melanesia; Chalmers explores Ranatongo and New Guinea for the cross; Livingstone dies on his knees beside "Afric's sunny fountains;" Comber pioneers for Jesus on the Congo; Crowther, slave boy and bishop, gives his life for the dwellers by the Niger;



Hannington falls with his work just begun ; and Damien becomes leprous at Molokai. All these and many more have lived and wrought and died, that we might enter into their labors and carry them on to perfection. And what sights are these that in the days of the youngest of us prove the Pentecost now rushing round the world ! Protestant churches, seminaries, and publishing houses lift their walls in Rome. Some friends of Paul have at last arrived in Spain. The offspring of the Huguenots dare lift their heads in France. Steam and electricity have brought the uttermost parts of the earth to our very doors, and Christianity sets the fashion for all the world. The Ganges is no longer clogged with murdered infants. Widows are no longer immolated on the husband's funeral pile. Britain, America, Brazil, and Russia no longer hold a slave. Souls are being born of God in India faster than they can be trained and baptized. The New Hebrides have become the islands of God. Korea's king asks American bishop to send his land more missionaries. China's great viceroy calls upon America for more servants of the cross who go with healing

medicines in their hands. China's queen begins to read the word of God. Japan parades whole divisions of her victorious army, that in marshaled ranks each soldier may receive a copy of the Testament of Jesus. Africa, from end to end, dispels her pagan darkness by the expulsive power of the Light of the world. Christian Endeavor leads in the organization of the army of the young, and nearly five million of this allied host are training for the fight. Christian benevolence is taking wider reach. Christian stewardship is being recognized more and more. Christian citizenship is born, and soon will father a Christian statesmanship that will right Armenia's wrongs, end the Eastern opium curse, crush the African slave trade, bury the liquor traffic, and open the way for the practicable socialism of Jesus to rise with blessing on the earth.

Verily the crisis of the ages is approaching. The triune God of Sinai, Calvary, and Pentecost seems nursing some great triumph for the kingdom of his righteousness. We are living in a time grand for its rushing, mighty manifestations of the

conquering power of God, and awful for the responsibility resting upon each who has named the name of Jesus. God is on his throne; Christ is pleading at his side. The Holy Spirit waits. For what? For a more marvelous baptism of power than grace has ever yet poured out on the supplicating sons of earth. It is coming. The consecrated Church for which it tarries will soon be kneeling at a million altars. The soldiers who will follow no chieftain but the Captain of their salvation, who will forsake all, kindred, friends, lust, luxury, pride, party, passion, appetite, ease, and pleasure, shall soon lift hand and voice in holy *sacramentum*. It is coming. Like an avalanche descending it will grind and crush every monopoly of mammon and of sin. Like lightning it will smite every brothel, dance hall, grogshop, gambling den, and foul pleasure house. Like Jesus with his whip of cords it will cleanse the Churches of their trafficking in sinners for their names and purses. Like a flood it will cover the earth with a cleansing stream, sweeping away from the ready heart the last remains of sin, and fill the breasts of millions with the

love that passeth knowledge. Like the sun it will rise to banish the night of sin and light the world with the resplendent favor of Jehovah.

It is coming. The world is God's. He will have his own. It is coming. The kingdoms are Christ's. He will rule them. It is coming. The work belongeth unto the Holy Spirit, and he will not fail. It is coming, not the end of the world, not the millennium, but the baptism of God for the mighty work which the present generation must do for him. It is coming. Get your heart ready; get your church ready; get your city ready; get your nation ready. It is coming. It is coming. Will it come in you? Will your head receive its tongue of fire?

## III.

## TEMPLES.

ONCE more we ask the photophone of revelation to picture us a scene of long ago. Nor is it some simple task we set it. Babylon had her hanging floral wonder. Old On, Egypt's city of the sun, had her famous temples, of which perchance the Avenue of the Pyramids was but the colonnade; Corinth rose in stately splendor by the sea; Athens built her famed Acropolis on the hill of Mars; Ephesus could go mad with pride while crying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians;" Rome might stud her seven hills with altars of superb magnificence; Karnac, Luxor, Baalbec, and Thebes may stop us with amazement to-day when we with pick and shovel lift the dust of ages from the ruined yet glory-telling piles. Yet, though all these were grand, Jerusalem in the day of her glory had not to bend the knee to any. Even as Dagon, idol of Phi-

listia, fell and broke its brazen neck when the golden ark that erstwhile shrined the manifested glory of Israel's God was entered in its temple, so, when on Abraham's mountain Solomon built the temple whose beauty filled the earth with wonder, every existing shrine bowed its glory and its rites became obsolescent. It was not until war's rude hand and the base apostasy of the chosen people had left Jehovah's temple to neglected ruin that Nebuchadnezzar dared to raise his image on the plain of Dura, Ephesus build Diana, the Delphic oracles of Greece speak their poetic lies, or the Vestal virgins of Rome kindle fires to Jupiter and Mars. The task we set our vision then to-day is to reveal us Solomon in all his glory; and if the vision appear quite imperfect it may be that the imperfection arises from the fact that no mortal eye which now flashes in the light of day has ever viewed a scene one half so fair as that which attracted millions to the Judean hills.

It is a day that marks the topmost reach of the wise man's ambition. The temple his father longed to build, but dare not, with

his war-polluted hands, now stands complete; emblem of the power of peace to accomplish wonders, an early proof that "peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." Moriah is crowned with gold, jeweled with precious stones, and perfumed with the cedars of Lebanon. The temple of the Lord is built; the ark of God is coming to its magnificent home. This day Solomon is to dedicate to Almighty God the palace which Jewish wealth and Tyrian skill have reared in the name of Jehovah. More than seven years the thousands of workmen toiled, laying stone upon stone, joining cedar to cedar, and touching gold to gold; yet, from the time the excavations were complete and the first stones of the foundations were put down until the crowning architraves of the beauteous structure found their place, not a sound of chisel or hammer or saw was heard. Now the task is done, and the stately pile lifts its many pinnacles to be kissed by morning sunbeams.

The spacious porch is occupied by a great company of priests in flowing robes. The two immense pillars of brass—Boaz

(strength is in him) and Jachin (he will establish)—lift their shining capitals forty feet or more in air. The sun shines through the many windows and dazzles the eyes as it makes mirrors of the immense plates of gold which overlay the walls and ceiling. There, raised upon the backs of twelve huge oxen of brass, is the brazen sea, whose capacious basin will not overflow though five hundred water barrels pour their fullness in it. Yonder gleams the Holy of Holies, radiant with precious metals and stones; ten golden candlesticks add their splendor; the two strangely fashioned cherubim spread their glorious wings over the sacred spot where the ark is soon to rest, and the richly embroidered curtains wave in the breezes of the morning air.

Now a blast of trumpets, long, sounding on the air, announces that the ceremonies are to begin. In answer to the summons of the king millions have gathered to watch while priestly strength bears the precious ark from Zion to Moriah. Countless numbers of these guard the lamb or ox which will this day be their offering to the Most High; while from the valley yonder



rises the bleating of the one hundred and twenty thousand sheep and the bellowing of the two and twenty thousand oxen which as night comes will constitute the nation's offering to the God of nations. But the great procession has swept down from Zion's hill and now climbs the steep slopes of Abraham's altar. Great companies of harpers, chorus on chorus of priestly singers, band on band of cymbal and timbrel players precede the king, who for the day turns his back on the forty thousand horses in the royal stables and walks with enthusiastic step before the priest-borne ark.

The brazen pillars are reached. The ark is on the ground where Father Abraham prayed to the God who spared his son. But before those priests dare pass those portals and bear the sacred ark within its resplendent shrine blood, blood must flow. Blood has for three thousand years rang its awful anthem in this people's ears. Blood must greet the rising sun, and blood must wave it a red good-night; blood must lift the tribute of health, and blood must flow in petition to stay disease; blood must flow to bind great bargains, and blood must

flood the altars when armies return from slaughter; blood must wrap its horrid band about the hands of those just joined in marriage, and blood must justly flow if that holy compact be violated by sin; blood must flow when the tiny infant is offered to the Lord, and blood must flow when the aged saint is carried to his tomb; blood, blood, blood has flowed like Jordan's stream through all these centuries, yet all its flow has never covered over the host of Israel's sins. Now—for these Jews know no better way, and are living up to the light they have, more anxious, no doubt, than are we, their critics, to render unto God what they know to be his due—now blood must flood the newly erected altars before king or high priest dare pass with the ark within the most holy place.

The priests man their altars, and the people press about them with their offerings. The king slays his sacrifice, and all through the morning the bloody task goes on, until when the people halt in their offering the sacred historian recoils from the duty set him of numbering, and can only write down for us that the sacrifices by the people of

sheep and of oxen "could not be told or numbered for multitude." At last the sacrificial service is done. The trumpets sound again. Every eye is fixed upon the king as he stands beside the ark. The voices of the singers break the stillness with the hallelujahs of David. The harps resound; the cymbals clash; the timbrels tinkle; the sackbuts send their shrill music over the hills; the dulcimers wail out their strangely plaintive tones; the lutes make merry as their dozen strings give forth their melodies. Then all unite in a grand symphony of praise as the priests at the king's command lift up the ark, march up the steps, cross the porch, and pass within the massive doors whose very hinges are formed of gold. Then a hush of awed expectancy masters the assembly. In the old tabernacle of the wilderness the glory of the Lord rested on that ark. Would God restore that gracious favor now? The dulcimers continue their low pleading music; it soothes, because it intones the heart cry of the people. But look! The king returns, the priests hasten out. God has come! His glory, as a cloud, cannot be contained by a twenty-foot holy

place. It overleaps such small-expecting boundaries; it fills the temple; it fills the court of the people; it drives forth king and priest, and as it overshadows Moriah with its cloudy fullness, mixes priests and king with common people, all, both high and low, bend in awe before this manifested presence of Him who is no respecter of persons.

Thus before the wise man prayed, or the nation's offering was consumed at eventide by fire sent from heaven, God, ready to own every attempt to serve him, sent the majesty of his glory to fill the temple built by men, there to abide until sin had so polluted the very priests who sacrificed at its altars that he must withdraw his glory and leave them rush on to ruin and the murder of Him who came to save. Through centuries of victories and defeats, of joys and woes, of Hezekiahs and Uzziahs, that glory filled the holy place, and the most magnificent temple earth ever knew shrined the Shekinah of the Most High. No wonder this all-per-vading glory sent Solomon to his knees in mighty prayer, or that this token of the Lord's high favor made him so rejoice that

the millions of Judea could not sing sweet enough to intone the gladness of his heart. No wonder that, rising from his knees, he must exclaim that by this manifested glory "all the people of the earth would know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else."

But that glory has long since departed from Moriah's top. That wise man has played the fool before our eyes, and from building a temple to Jehovah turned to building shrines for idols while lust ate up his life. Of that temple not one stone remains upon another, and the race that reared it are the outcasts of the world. Still the fact remains, there was a temple. Its magnificence was the glory of Solomon's reign, and to that temple God sent the cloud of his glory. To Solomon was provided this sublime expression of his God's good pleasure. Now, can it be that God has "provided some better thing for us" than came to this wisest of men to crown this most magnificent of buildings? God provided no Christ for the mortal eye of Moses to behold, but our eyes have seen him, and our hearts do know him. God came not in, but merely sent, fire to Elijah, next to the greatest of the prophets;

yet he has come to us in fire, and by it consumed our sins. God gave to Solomon this matchless temple filled with the glory of his presence. Can his wisdom devise a way by which his love can provide some better thing for us than the glory-shrining temple which called people from the ends of the earth to worship or wonder at its altars? Can God in these later times outdo the splendor of that glorious age? Can he build temples more marvelous than that which was Judea's pride? Let us ask him, and study well the answer that he sends.

It is a thousand years since Solomon was carried to his tomb. Out from the Damascus gate of the holy city a little band of travelers are emerging. A few Roman soldiers and a dozen or more angry Jews attend the leader of the party. Looking upon this leader we find there is no beauty or comeliness about him. A little, short, middle-aged man of halting step, blurred sight, and disagreeable though learned speech, is wrapped round with robes which proclaim him a Pharisee of the Pharisees. It is a far cry and a drear contrast from the stately sublimity of Solomon's temple to this poor

specimen of the animal, man. This raving Jewish fanatic, bent on the destruction of the unoffending, is making more noise with his pharisaical lips than all Solomon's artisans made in erecting the temple. There not a curse was heard, so sacred felt every man to be the task at which he worked; but this fellow is breathing out cursings as though the earth could only be purified by his sulphurous utterances. As they journey they think of no sacrifice save the poor innocents toward whom they hurry, and they cheer themselves by "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." Suddenly at noonday there shines upon them a light from heaven, more brilliant than the brightness of the sun. It envelops the form of the Pharisee, and, blinded by its glory, yet beholding the God who sent it, the blasphemous persecutor of the early Church falls to the ground. His tongue turns from hell and enters heaven. His soul bows down before this very Jesus whose disciples have aroused his ire, and in anguish of heart Saul cries out, "Who art thou, Lord?" The answer comes:

“I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.”

What does it mean? Paul cannot tell you now, for he is blind, and they lead him by the hand within the city walls. For days the darkness lasts, while he communes with God; then old Ananias comes and lays his fatherly hands upon the blind man, and “immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales,” and he who was a Pharisee is filled with the Holy Ghost. What glorious use the Spirit hastens to make of that well-trained intellect! What mighty concepts of holy things are crowded upon his thought! What possibilities for the sons of God are now foreshadowed! What certainties of grace made known! As this new-found glory floods his soul and energizes his wonderful mind Paul grasps a mighty secret, and, aflame with its first ever-blessed inspiration, he proclaims the truth just grasped.

I AM A TEMPLE. Not merely God's



glory, but his very Spirit dwells in *me!* God never dwelt in the temple of my fathers, for he dwelleth not in temples made with hands. His glory but rested there awhile, but now I am become a temple of the living God. Faints my spirit at such honor? Then let it lift itself to the heavens and learn the purpose of the Father. The temple which for centuries glorified Jerusalem bespoke the wealth of Israel's mighty king and the skill of Tyre's greatest architect; but this body, unsightly though it be compared with many of my brothers, bespeaks the wealth of wisdom possessed by that mighty Architect of the heavens who formed it for his glory. The stones of that massive pile were powerless to help or save; how much more glorious the several parts of this temple God has fashioned of my clay! Not always can I remain on Moriah's heights to worship there; therefore these feet shall bear the temple of which they are a part the round world over, that wherever I may be I can retire within the temple of my selfhood and worship my Creator; therefore "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content," know-

ing that wherever I am there God abides within me. These hands can minister to the cries of need about me; these eyes can look soul-touching love into burdened hearts; these lips can speak to the careless, sing for the cheerless, pray for the friendless, and voice the oracles of the Most High to my fellows. The capstone of the temple was but a block of stone; the capstone of this, my living temple, is a mind; a mind such as was in Christ my Saviour; a mind that is the holy of holies, within which the secrets of the Throne are told me; a mind which stays my life on Christ, which proves my sonship of the Creator by its stupendous concepts, and which opens the vista of eternity to my enraptured gaze by showing me the infinite possibilities of a world whose inhabitants know no king but Jesus.

The glory of the temple's holy of holies was its ark, containing the stones on which God's finger wrote; the glory of this temple of my body is the soul it shrines; the soul which bears the image of the Deity; the soul that lives because it is the breath of God and can never die; the soul that, fed by a

divine ambition, never rests content until within it is poured all the fullness of God. Ark of Israel, thou art lost, but my soul can now be found with God! Thy guardian cherubim could not protect thee from vandal hands, but multitudes of ministering spirits guard my soul and will finally bear it safe to realms ineffable. Beside thee was the manna, like that on which our fathers fed; but to my soul comes the bread from heaven, which satisfies my hungerings for evermore. Thou boasted Aaron's budding rod, my boast it is to bear daily such fruit of heaven that its life shall be manifest on earth.

O temple of cedar, of stone, and of gold, how worthless art thou compared with this temple God hath fashioned of my flesh! Speak to me not of thy great cost. Millions of Judean wealth reared thy splendor; but count thy cost to the highest figure, God's living temple, which temple I am, cost infinitely more. I am a temple, yet not my own. God bought me with a price. Think of it! God, him who formed the heavens and stretched the worlds and suns which form the universe in an empty place; God, who

is from everlasting to everlasting, whose glory fills the heavens, whose mercy brightens all history's pages, whose truth gives liberty to every heart that learns it, whose love overmasters hate, dethrones jealousy, and knows naught of prejudice; this God has purchased me, that in me he might dwell. Well may you ask, If God be the purchaser, what was the price? What price would God give for living temples! O Solomon, thy temple's cost is a bauble of meanest measure compared to the price God paid for me. The gold in all earth's mountains, the precious stones from her many caverns, the silver in her thousand mines, the cedars and perfumed woods from her million forests, the cattle upon her trillion hills, the fruit of her multitudinous valleys, the factories that multiply her increasing wealth, the ships that sail her many seas, the palaces that grace her noble cities, all these and more could not purchase me. The price God paid for me was the life of his only begotten Son. He wanted living temples; to gain them he gave of his own life, and thus by "the blood that speaketh better things than that of Abel's" am I, who am of God's

building, become the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in me.

Ah, Solomon, thy wisdom was great, but it was earthly. Its loftiest ideal was never higher than the first Adam and the delights of Eden. Paul outshines thee as the sun outshines the meteor which darts athwart the heavens and is seen no more. His wisdom is lasting, for it is heavenly. Its ideal transcends time, casts off the flesh, hurls worlds to oblivion, and soars aloft to the very throne of the Triune, nor rests content until Jehovah speaks, proclaiming, "Ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord."

Verily, God hath provided us better things than were granted to the greatest of other days. The secret disclosed to Paul was not for him alone, but for you and me as well. No radiant glory has blinded our fleshly eyes, but the glories which in our Saviour shine have attracted our spirits from earthly scenes and fixed them on the Crucified. The Son of God has drawn us with cords of love and bound us in sincere devotion to his ennobling work. While we were breathing out threatenings against right living and slaughtering our own and our neighbor's

character God lifted the cross of Christ his Son before us; the wondrous magnetism of its love drew us, and we followed on, charmed to confess in our inmost soul that that cross was the measure of our worth to God. Our spiritual vision has beheld the shining Sun of righteousness. From out its glory we have heard the gracious invitation, "Come unto me." With joy our wearied souls obeyed, and our hearts were opened to him. Christ has come in and supped with us, the feast has not yet ended; but lo, we find the food is not that of the flesh, but the shew-bread of the temple. Our soul is not the banquet hall of a palace, but the holy of holies of a sanctuary. God has dedicated us to his service. The enlarging hope with which he fills our minds makes the valley of the shadow of death to break forth before us into gladness. The cloud envelops us in numberless mercies. The presence within makes our lives to shine, and our fellow-men, beholding these strivings to do good in the name of Jesus, glorify our Father who is in heaven. The Shekinah dwelling in us is God's own Spirit come to witness with ours that we are the sons of God; and henceforth

throughout our life we are to be the temples through which God shall let his glory shine, from whence his truth shall be proclaimed, and in whom the victorious life of the sinless Christ shall be continued in the world.

Thus has God provided "better things" for us than cheered the hearts of the fathers. Christ came; earth had no dwelling place to give him; even the temple was foul with the sin of centuries, and when he would have cleansed it its priests slew him on the cursed tree; the foxes had their holes, the birds of the air their nests, but the Eternal Word, who was made flesh and dwelt among us, had not where to lay his head. God would not suffer such infamy to continue. Murder on, ye priests; pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall; destruction and ruin shall overtake you and the tumbling stones of falling temple shall bury you in disgrace; yet before the temple falls God will prove that his arm has not lost its strength nor his hand been shortened, that it cannot work his pleasure in the world. Christ needed not of stones to create sons unto Abraham, for the Father would of flesh

build temples for his Son's indwelling. The Spirit descends, Pentecost transforms the race and ennobles the earth. Tried so as by fire, the dross consumed, temple on temple rises in spiritual splendor over the globe, until the time draws near when it "shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Awake, ye who profess to yield obedience unto God. Let Paul startle you as he did the Corinthians from the lethargy of the ease that is devilish. "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" That Christ abides in your hearts by love; that ye are "stewards of the mysteries of God?" How then ought you to live? "For the temple of God is holy. . . . If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." Not all Solomon's learning saved him from his sin. Not all the gold of the temple's thrice-reared splendor saved it from destruction. So naught can save that soul or Church which defiles the work God's Spirit performs in the lives of men; but work with that Spirit and you enter into the triumphs of



Jehovah, become joint heirs in the conquests of Immanuel.

Think of what God has accomplished by these living temples. The Baptist was the last prophet of the temple; his message was unheard at Jerusalem, though thousands heard him by the Jordan, and he decreased as his Master increased. Peter became a living temple, preached with the unction of the Holy One resting upon himself and hearers, and the increase of his Master's kingdom worked the increase of his own. Daniel could close the mouths of lions, tell the visions of troubled sleep, and exercise the prerogative of kings; but where is the result of all his well-wrought labor? Largely gone with the temple for whose rites he so bravely stood. Paul becomes a living temple, he endures the tribulations of the blest, his pen writes out the thought of God, his tongue proclaims the unsearchable riches of his grace, his life proves the uplift of the spiritual force within, and his work has increased as the centuries round up their millenniums, until to-day, next to his Master, Paul is the greatest ruler of the intellects of men. Elijah nobly served the

temple economy and wrought his marvels, but his mighty wonders did not save Israel from oblivion nor Judah from beggarly captivity. Luther became a living temple, sounded his proclamation of the truth the oracle within had taught him; Rome was shaken to her foundations, the progressive races of the earth cast off her blighting thrall, and the work of the monk of Wittenberg gains new triumphs each time this earthly footstool of Jehovah rounds its orbit in the heavens.

Read again the history of the old and the new times of God in the light of this soul-stirring truth, and note the vast increase of power which attends the labor of these living temples. Nor is it strange that it should be so. Sinai thundered above the heads of men, Pentecost spake within men by tongues of fire; Carmel destroyed, the spirit of the tongues built up; Eden's serpent hissed its curse in every ear, Golgotha's Sacrifice startled the world with the transcendent love which pleaded pardon even for those who nailed him to the cross. By as much as Calvary's cross is more love-revealing than Eden's flaming sword are

the times in which we live more glorious and blessed than the days when the fathers turned their faith toward these better things they prayed might come; and in these holy times we are called to be the holy temples of the Lord. We are to use the tongue of fire to proclaim to all the world, Christendom and heathendom, that God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son," and by that love which proved itself on Calvary called us to dedicate ourselves to his redeeming work by a consecration that will be as continuous as the breath by which we live.

Christian, does God dwell in you? Do you feel this moment that you are a temple in which the Holy Ghost doth dwell? If not then it is time for you to halt—time for you to put your soul on trial, thankful that it can be done this side the judgment—and at the bar of God's truth ask yourself if you possess aught that entitles you to the great name, "Christian." It was that you should no longer be the world's man, or self's man, or Satan's man, that the first Better Thing came into the world and offered himself *to you*, that possessed of him you might be

heaven's man in the slums, Christ's man in the markets, and God's man in the councils of the nations. You are not your own. You have been bought with a price, and He who owns you commands—not wishes, pleads, prays, or coaxes, but *commands*—that you live so as to honor and magnify his ownership. That command must be obeyed, or you are none of his. This is a hard saying to a race that is in love with sanctimonious self, but escape from it there is none if the word of God be true. The Christian has no other business in the world than to exemplify by his holy living the message which Christ proclaimed concerning the possibilities and grandeur of the life that now is. Christ was the kind of a man God commands each of us to be. He has set no lower standard; we are to attain the nobility “of a perfect man, unto the measure of the fullness of Christ,” or we fail miserably of measuring up to the opportunity given us of God for ourselves, for men about us, and for him. The world hungers after righteousness. God longs to satisfy that hunger. He would feed the world by our holy living. Christ brought

righteousness into the world, Paul affirms that we are "made the righteousness of God in him," and are thus fitted to minister to the groaning need of the world. As another has wisely said: "Our business on earth, among men, is to be the righteousness of God embodied, with hearts, brains, hands, tongue, and feet. To this end are we born into the world," and if we perform not the task for which God gave us being it were better that a mother had never agonized for our birth.

How can this fullness of Christ be obtained? By simple, unswerving, unquestioning obedience through the continual sacrifice of our wills, pleasures, ambitions, and purposes to the will of God, that through us the extension and completion of the work which brought Christ to earth may be achieved. As we are not our own, so we are not to live or walk alone. Christ is to dwell in us continually, and thus go with us always, even should duty call us to the end—in distance or time—of the world. It was that we might always feel this presence with us that the second better thing came in fulfillment of the Saviour's promise, that the Spirit's con-

stant witness and daily prompting should nerve us to high endeavor. Yet more; even as God by the tongue of fire bore witness that we were his children, so we are by the tongue of fire to bear witness to the world that Christ is God to the glory of God the Father. The same better thing which is our witness of the Father's favor is our equipment to do the Father's work. With this equipment—a *tongue*, man's one great faculty for pressing himself close to the heart of his fellows—we are to continue the labors of God's workmen who have passed beyond. Thus equipped we are to stand before kings and plead his cause, summon nations to obey his commandments, end war by submission to the Prince of Peace, still mobs by the name of Jesus, silence the learned by appeal to the law and to the testimony, ennoble labor by the teachings of the Carpenter of Nazareth, teach capital the Sermon on the Mount, expel vice by the entrance of purity, crush hatred by the weight of a Christlike love, awake the indifferent by unveiling the judgment, arouse the lethargic by visions of Him who cometh on the clouds of heaven, and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord to

all who are bound by sickness, sin, or need. This is the work of the sons of God. This is the work which we must do, or our generation shall rise against us at the judgment in righteous condemnation.

How can we do this work? Only by being indwelt by Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. In other words, we can only do the work God has appointed to us, when we have realized in our lives the third better thing which he has made possible to us who live to-day. We must be temples. Even as they who mourn are not satisfied until they bear their dead to the altars of our churches for the rite of Christian funeral, because of the hallowed interests centered there; so we must live, that those in need or sin shall come with equal longing to our hearts, assured of kindly care and godly admonition. The masses may not come to temples made of brick and marble, but they will gladly welcome living temples who go to them with hand ready to help lift their burden, and sufficient brotherly interest to eat at their tables.

There is no church of wood or brick or stone in all this land, no matter how poor

or costly, that contains the presence of the Christ. Pentecosts may bless the thousand altars of our churches, but Pentecost tarries not at those altars. Christ dwells in hearts of flesh, made fit for such indwelling by miracles of grace. Pentecost, if it walks the earth at all, must walk upon the feet of those who are "shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace." If you are Christ's, you must be his temple. If your spirit is cheered this day by the witness of the Spirit of God that you are a child of the king, then that Shekinah makes of your soul an holy of holies, from which you are daily to draw the veil, that all the unpentecosted sons of men may see the glory that is given thee. The first and second Better Things, whose contemplation has so thrilled your hearts, cannot be yours unless by your obedience to them you are fashioned into a temple for their use. You must be a temple of God, or the altars of your heart remain unconsecrated to him. You cannot be a temple of God and continue in sin, for "what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" The idol of self counts millions of its devotees to-day. Are you among them? If in



you self is not dethroned Christ is not enthroned. Where Christ is not enthroned there he has no temple. If from you self is not cast out the Holy Ghost has not entered in: Be careful; your life without the Holy Ghost may end as Herod's unaccepted temple did. Face then once more the questions: Does Christ dwell in you? Is the Holy Spirit now witnessing within? Are you a temple of God? If with an undoubting heart you cannot answer, "Yes," then to your knees, and rise not until "ye also are builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

## IV.

## THE WORK OF THE SONS OF GOD.

POSSESSING Christ, filled with the Spirit, become temples of God, we may press on in our quest of the work which the sons of God must perform if the labor of the faithful of the past is to be made perfect. Let us understand our glorious privilege. We are intrusted with the past that we may advance toward perfection the work of God which in the past was begun by our fathers, and to which they dedicated their lives; a work which, when we have added our utmost labor, shall still need the consecrated endeavor of our children and children's children to bring it unto that perfection that shall greet the smile of the descending Christ.

We are to bring to perfection the labors of the dead, and when we have passed beyond our children shall perform a like labor for us. This seems the better meaning

gained from these words of Paul. Many expositors treat the passage as though it read, "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without *Christ* should not be made perfect." But Paul wrote no such unnecessary statement. Without Christ neither they nor we may attain the heights of perfect achievement and blessedness. Paul here fathomed the secret of the responsibility resting upon each succeeding present to advance the best of the age and ages past. The success of every generation's labor is bound up in the consummation of the whole work of God on which all the generations are employed. No generation liveth unto itself. Each generation has some white-crowned veterans long past their threescore years and ten that link their generation with one nearly a century buried; and there run beside them, set upon their knee, and eagerly listen to an old man's tales, the wee tots that shall bind the present with a century yet unborn. Such intermingling of babe with veteran is not a novelty of our age, but began when Methuselah trotted on the knee of Adam, and centuries after, in the wondering ears of

Shem, Ham, and Japheth, told how that first man looked. Thus the generations and the centuries are bound together, and bound that the work of God may never halt, and that the aspirations and ambitions of one age shall be perfectly known to the children of the next.

Certainly those expositors are right who hold that the galaxy of great ones marshaled in this inspiring chapter needed for their perfection the redemption of Jesus Christ. They also are right who hold that these great ones without the benefits which the whole race has derived from the Christian Church could not be made perfect in glory; but this leads to just the point we are now emphasizing, that the *faith-ful* labor of succeeding generations is essential to the perfecting of their work and life. They waited, toiled, prayed, for the redemption of Jesus Christ; they prepared the way for that larger expectation of heavenly life on earth in which the Christian Church was founded, but they died ere either had come. How shall their life work be rounded out, perfected? Only by succeeding generations accepting and heralding that redemption

when provided, and by the benefits of that redemption rear a Church that would do for the race all and more than the old Jewish saints prayed for and prophesied would be done by coming sons of God. The saints of the olden time were not to be made perfect by Christ, nor by the Church of Christ, but by us—we of the first and the present and the last century yet to come—who, having accepted the redemption provided us in Jesus Christ, work through the Christian Church to make it to and for the race what God meant it to be when from before the foundation of the world its mission shaped itself in the divine thought.

The chapter of which the verse we are studying is the glorious climax records the triumphs of the servants of Jehovah; names many, yet leaves more unnamed, of that mighty host who with Moses choose “rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.” And though they were many times destitute, and tormented, and wandered about through desert and mountain, clad only in goatskins and sheepskins, with no homes save dens and caves of the earth,

yet as good soldiers of Him who was to come, and for the hope that was set before them, they endured trials of mockery, bared their bodies for cruel scourgings, recanted not though bound and imprisoned, halted not though their comrades sank beneath the piling stones that pounded out their life, shrank not though their brothers were sawn asunder before their eyes and their dear ones slain by the sword; though thus sorely tempted to forsake the work of God they withstood the torture, held fast to God, and escaping the edge of the sword out of weakness were made strong, and stopping the mouths of lions, quenching the violence of fire, they waxed valiant in fight, so that turning to flight the armies of the aliens they obtained promises of even better things, and subduing kingdoms, they lived on to work righteousness in the world. It is this God-inspired work of subduing kingdoms and working righteousness, which they died before bringing to perfection, that we are to complete for them. We have entered into their labors, and with the better things provided us which they lived too early in time to see, we must hasten the

glad time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and righteousness prevail from the river unto the ends of the earth.

Perhaps we will grasp more clearly this idea of the dependence of one generation upon those succeeding for the perfecting of its work if we seek an illustration in our own national history. To Washington, Adams, Franklin, Jefferson, and their co-patriots we justly ascribe great honor for their splendid achievement in securing the independence, constitutional government, and foreign recognition of our nation. But though the semen wrought gloriously, the work to which they gave their lives was far from perfect when death claimed them. Had Madison and Monroe and the men of 1812 not opened their veins to give forth the Revolutionary blood that filled them the Declaration of Independence would have become waste paper while some who signed it yet lived. Had the aspirations and machinations of those who made possible the Southern Confederacy not been demolished by the persistency and daring of Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Meade, Han-

cock, Thomas, Hooker, Howard, and the thousands clad in blue, supported by the statesmanship of Seward, Sumner, Stanton, Wilson, and all those who bowed to the will and inspiration of that greatest American—God's gift to us in our hour of need—Abraham Lincoln, the republic made possible by Wolfe's victory at Quebec, founded by Washington and his compeers, and maintained by Madison amid the defeats of the second war, would have been rent and torn past all hope of mending, and the work for which the heroes of '76 and 1812 gave their lives would have had no longer a possibility of attaining perfection. Is there not also a work for us to do? What profit the terrible sacrifices of '61-'65 if Northern lust for federal office, Southern nullification of constitutional privileges, and national refusal to educate into fitness for citizenship those who by national enactment were with such shameful speed rushed forward to suffrage is to continue? The work for which in reality a million freemen gave their lives, Grant toiled, Sherman marched, Sumner suffered, Seward labored, and Lincoln died—the elevation of the Negro race—waits



upon the consecration of the present and the coming generation for its perfection. The Negro is no longer a slave. He is worse. He is the plaything of national parties. Hounded by one, puppetized by the other, he becomes the innocent cause of machine-constructed sectional prejudice. Thus buffeted he waits amid suffering, poverty, contumely, and ignorance the time when, by the men who rule, his children shall be given opportunity for education, industrial, professional, and ethical, and he himself, from Boston to Galveston, from Charleston to Seattle, treated as the man the law declares him to be. Yet more; if the nation saved unbroken by the peace of Appomattox is to prove worth the saving, by attaining in some measure the perfection proved possible by the labors of such as Washington, Hancock, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Webster, Clay, Marshall, Story, and Lincoln, if these and they who labored with them are to see the perfection of their work in a republic that for civil righteousness and national integrity shall be the model for all the nations, then surely there must soon arise that heroic host which will

chase the seat purchasers from the Senate, the stock gamblers from the House, bosses from the control of States, their dummies from gubernatorial chairs, monopoly-directed Legislatures from their halls, government-by-injunction judges from their benches, primaries and delegate-electing caucuses from the saloons, heelers from the polls and *healers*—honest but indifferent citizens—to them, and usher in the time when citizenship shall be exercised in the fear of God and the responsibility of office be expressed in weightier deeds than Fourth of July addresses.

No great man's work is rounded out as he would have it when death calls him away. The task to which years have been given is left unfinished. Plans just formed are left to the skill of others for execution. Completion of life's labor may be near, but there still remain some niches unadorned. Some pillar lacks its capital, some dome waits its crown when the life passes on. But if the soul has been laboring together with God the work goes on, for it is not man's, but God's; and laboring together with God we enter into the fellowship of labor with all

God's workmen of the past and stretch forth a brother's hand to his workmen of the future. Milan Cathedral is a many-pinnacled illustration of the co-laboring of the centuries. Men of one century draw the plans, men of another century excavate and lay the foundations, men of another rear the walls, but men of still another century must climb the walls and on the dizzy heights set the cornices and lift the pinnacles that crown the structure nobly finished, and the stately pile that is the consummation binds all this labor in one inspiring whole. So, as we labor with God the handiwork of the workmen of all the centuries is bound in one grand work of God whose consummation waits for the crowning touch of the last son of God placed as the resurrection trumpets sound; and the glory of that work is enhanced or marred, its consummation hastened or retarded according as each generation works or fails to work up to the full measure of the opportunities and talents given it of God.

The life, the ambitions, and the possibilities of all the centuries enter into each, for the life of each is God, and each works on the plan ordained of God. Some may seem

cold, some hot, but cold and hot are alike needed for the perfection of the whole. Just as the breeze that sweeps clear and biting about the poles constantly changes place with the hot pestilential air that hangs heavy in the equatorial regions, producing thus those fresh-tempered atmospheres which are essential to life in all the zones, so do the centuries minister to each other and to the progress of the full work of God. There would be no temperate were there no arctic and torrid zones; so there would be no mighty achieving centuries were there not the foul refuse of lethargic centuries to be destroyed, and the frigid indifference concerning the future to contend against. God rules all, and those who work with God enter into the rule of all.

Coming closer we may seek knowledge of the particular work God has committed to man which the past has begun and our endeavor must advance or perfect. Who are the toilers that wait on our labors for the shaping of their crown? Let us pursue our study under three divisions.

*First. Nature waits to be perfected by the skillful labor of the offspring of Adam. The*

glory of nature is linked with the glory of man. It fell when he fell and rises as he rises. God made nature perfect as to its fitness for the service required of it, not the perfection falsely ascribed to it by the poets, but such perfection as fitted it to be the kindly servant of the race who were to become its lords. Before the fall God said to Adam, "Be fruitful, multiply, replenish and subdue the earth, have dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." God thus gave to the first man and his seed the perfecting by care of the home he had made for the race. The old poets taught us that immediately after Adam's sin snakes first began to hiss and creep and miraculously develop the poisonous fang; lions and tigers ceased their affable gamboling with lambs and kids and turned with love of blood to become the foe of all other animal life; elephants marshaled themselves, trumpeting with rage, for their first campaign of destruction; eagles grew mad at sight of doves and pounced upon them, dealing death; and sharks first rolled on back and stretched their horrid jaws to entomb

their smaller kindred of the finny tribes. While these ideas may well pass with the grotesque fancies which gave them birth, there is a truth hid in all their crudeness well worth our attention.

There can be no doubt that the fall cursed nature even as it cursed the race. The sin of the first pair inoculated all their surroundings with its blighting virus, and nature refused its former unlabored reward. Dominion would still be man's; but with toil unmeasurable, sorrow most terrible, care unceasing, and with his life in jeopardy every hour must he now win that lordship over nature which without sin would have been obtained by the kindly fellowship and friendship of master and servant. Therefore it is "that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now," "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." The work which Adam begun when he cleared his first acre of its thistles and thorns, and with remembrance of Eden made a garden of the first wilderness plot to which he gave his toil, has been continued, haltingly, unlovingly, no doubt, by many, but still continued, and whenever nature has

been kindly and intelligently treated the reward has amply, surprisingly, repaid the toil bestowed.

Looking at the animals which have been domesticated we behold the practical perfection in usefulness to man which is possible to wise-directed effort. The horse, ox, boar, wolf, tiger-family cat, are now the friends of man, though reflecting very often in their dispositions the disposition of their master. The camel and elephant readily yield to the service of man. The sacred alligators, kept from being provoked by the wanton cruelty of man, never attack. Lions and tigers have yielded to the will of men, and travelers unite in declaring that the most powerful beasts observe an honorable truce until it is broken by the murdering desire of men. Surely these things more than hint of a possible dominion of man over the animate world. The legend of Orpheus entralling the beasts with music waits to become a reality of blessing to the world when this portion of man's empire, forfeited by the fall, is regained by the full-lived obedience of the sons of God whereby they shall gain the patience, kindness, and skill necessary to

the reclamation of the animate world from its unbridled rage and insatiable bloodthirstiness.

If we retain in our concept of heaven the four and twenty elders John heard singing the new song beside the throne of God, dare we cast out the four beasts which, according to his record, joined them in that song? Waiving all treatment of the theme of animal immortality, we may at least hold that this repeated use of beasts in the description of beatific bliss symbolizes some tribute by the powers of nature to the glory of God. Nor is it too much to believe that all the sub-human orders of creation shall reap some benefit from the redemption of the sons of God.

Studying the work which man has done in restoring the lost perfection of inanimate nature, or in cursing it still more with his horrid vices, we see more clearly how closely for good or evil it is chained to his own destiny. "Just as the law, in asserting the freedom of the individual, gives to the parent the custody of his own child, however vicious that parent may be, so God gives to man, in spite of the moral lapses that have



overtaken him, power over the world to modify it for good or evil at his will. . . . Man occupies, in relation to the inferior creation, a position analogous to that sustained by the divine Mediator to all mankind, and by the revelation of the glory of God's sons the whole creation will be lifted at last to higher beneficence and more perfect majesty." If man as the lord of nature exercises his lordship righteously, nature is blessed and blesses in return; if unrighteously, nature is cursed and curses man with scant or foul return. Nature is man's servant; no matter how good it may be in itself, its obedience to him harvests evil if his commands have been evil. This is clearly seen in the uses of the forces of nature which man has discovered, concentrated, and applied to the use of the race.

The steel which in the hand of one cleaves the skull of a brother man, in the hand of another cleaves the soil for his brother's sustenance. The iron which in war's cannon belches forth its blasts of death, thunders across the rails of continents as the throbbing herald of good will when devoted to the arts of peace. The dynamite which at will

of slum-bred or king-throned anarchist mines cities, demolishes public buildings, destroys homes, and sends human-freighted ships to ocean's bottom, maiming children, dismembering women, and killing thousands in a wild chaos of blood and flame—this mighty force, at will of others bent on blessing to the race, clears Hell Gate, tunnels mountains, cuts highways for the iron horses and fleets of commerce, digs reservoirs for storing the refreshment of cities, and gives the labor that purchases thousands of happy homes. Electricity, seized by men with minds inflamed for war, may deliver its bolts of death, make possible swifter discharging guns, more ready passage of the orders of the master murderers at head of armies, and flood the gory field with searchlight radiance to reveal to dehumanized fiends the hell their arts have made on earth; but this matchless offering of the omnipotence and omnipresence of God to his sons on earth, used as sons of God should use it, binds all continents together with its thought-conveying currents, impels all lands to do their best each day, conscious that all the world shall know their doings to-morrow, bids

darkness flee, cuts space in two, increases power a thousandfold, and in numberless ways of cheering, helping, healing, hastening, lines the avenues of the world with the trolleys along which God's work may speed.

Nature at her worst is kindly. Lightnings purify. Frost deadens and heat kills the countless disease-breeding foes of health. Even the poisonous plants have their mission of good; nearly all—perhaps we shall find when knowledge fully comes, *all*—poisonous plants rightly used yield a cure for one or more of the myriad ills of man.

More completely do we see the mastery of man in perfecting nature as we examine the results of his persistent and intelligent husbandry. Africa has its Sahara, America had her Great Desert, every State and county has its arid and barren lands, but these were and are simply nature's calls or commands for man to put forth his skill and strength in ennobling toil. God has promised his sons that "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall bud and blossom as the rose." The disappearance of the great American Desert from the geographies of

our children, and the blooming of rose, and the waving of golden grain over numberless acres that our fathers esteemed worthless prove God to be laboring at prophecy fulfillment in this nineteenth century.

Look at that wilderness! Mr. Lazybones and his non-expectant family would not take a mile square of it as a gift; yet what he refuses Trustful Toiler accepts, and with sweating brow clears, burns, ditches, harrows, seeds, and weeds, then grows large with honest pride as the rich loam lifts a glorious harvest to his gaze. The wilderness is glad.

Behold the desert! Mile on mile it stretches, fruitful only of death to the traveler, whether beast or man. The wise look on it and descant upon the lack of beneficent design in nature. Sanitary commissions declare it a menace to civilization. Capital curses it as so much unremunerative territory its rails must traverse to bind wealth-producing districts. One miracle it performs—Congress and Legislatures are *dumb* before it! Worthless, an excrescence on the national geography, is the universal verdict. Now comes one of nature's noblemen. He

cuts channels by which the torrents flowing from the melting snow of distant mountains may wend in and out among the sandy fields, or bores deep into the earth until the hidden springs are tapped and the fountains below rush up their welcome flow; and thus God's great supply for nature's great need **being** claimed by thought and skill of man, flowers bloom, fruits blossom, grain ripens, grasses grow, flocks nibble, herds graze, gardens thrive, homes rise, cities multiply, "the restorer of paths to dwell in" has been here, and civilization receives a priceless jewel as his expression of continued interest in the world. The desert has passed away; instead there is "a watered garden, whose waters fail not."

This, then, is the work which groaning nature waits to receive from the sons of God. The earth is the Lord's. He has given it to his children to enjoy; not to a few select, self-chosen, grasping groups, but to all, and for the need of all, he has made abundant supply. To us his children he commits the division of his bounty; and much as we may reject this duty in our daily practice we will find at the judgment's bar

that for the loving impartiality of that division we are accountable unto him. An English statesman has wisely said, "The laws of nature preside over the creation of wealth, but the heart of man over its distribution, in sympathy, justice, brotherhood." If with considerate sympathy for the need of all, exact justice for the rights of the lowliest, we do not prove ourselves the brothers of all men, no matter what their race or color, God will disown us as his sons. For if the love which Christ had for all is not in us we are not the brethren of the Nazarene, and if we are not brothers of Christ we are not God's sons, and the future has no hope for us, and when hope dies in us hope dies for the world.

*Second. Man waits to be perfected through his redemption from barbarism by a brotherhood that shall repeat for the good of all the race the sacrifices offered by God's sons in the past.* A brotherhood must be formed that will be content to inclose and love not one soul less than Christ loved.

The first great act in this perfecting of man was that manifested in Abraham's obedience to the call of God to come out

from among the unclean of his day and father that peculiar people who would be zealous of good works. Irksome and unsatisfying was the task, for Lot was unsacrificing, Sarah barren of seed and of grace, and Ishmael a thorn in the old hero's flesh. Yet in and through this man, who, for the good that was to come to those unborn, turned his back on Ur and kindred, God began the work on which he is to this day engaged. The people were as yet only in the thought of God, but the "father" was commissioned, and the new race within the race begun. Moses found the people peculiar in that they were a mob of slaves. As the Israelites stood on the farther shore of the Red Sea, saved by God from engulfing waves and Pharaoh's warriors, they were without either civil or moral law; a mob awaiting nationality and order, religion and morality. As a mob they were typical of the great soul-hungry masses that herd to-day in the moral jungles of our cities, the neglected back districts of every rural neighborhood, and of those larger, more needy masses that, in Asia, Africa, and the islands of the sea, bow the knee to gods as unhearing as Baal.

The commands God gave to that mob he gives to all mobs. The truth he revealed to them he revealed for all, and he waits on the consecration of the children of to-day to commission a Moses, and the Aarons and the Miriams and the Joshuas necessary to the completion of his eternal work. Israel knew not God, no more do these morally destitute ones to-day. That God is they must be taught, that what he would have them be and do may be learned by them. This was the one truth possessed by the mob as they stood singing with Miriam when Egypt's dark waters had drowned the host of Pharaoh. *God was.* This Moses declared, for "I AM THAT I AM" had sent him. *God loved them.* He proved this by the miracles that made them free and by the overwhelming destruction of their selfish oppressors. *They must love God.* Gratitude was already writing this truth on mind and heart. But beyond this was a pall of black ignorance they could not pierce. God was; but what was God like? They could only learn what God was like by learning what God liked. What did God want them to be? This only God himself could tell.



Therefore it was that Sinai made its revelation, and the wilderness experience in the hard school that opened many graves taught them that when God spake he must be obeyed. The wilderness school was a kindergarten. God made no attempt to answer their mind gropings as to what he was like until they had at least feebly grasped what they were to be like; this learned, he declared that the beauties he desired to behold in them were only the beauties which in perfectness existed in himself. This remains the desire of God for all men to this day.

The three great demands which God through the law made of that mob were purity of life, worship through sacrifice, and individual and national uprightness in all their dealings with others. To learn how to teach these truths Moses communed with God as friend with friend. To give a home to the learning nation Joshua conquered Canaan. That the well-being of all was affected by the acts of each was emphasized by Achan's covetous folly and terrible death. God's refusal to condone the wrongdoing of those in official position

caused the chastisement of Eli, Saul, and many of the kings. That the truth of this progressive revelation of the will of God might be kept bright in the minds and loved in the hearts of all Abraham's seed, David sang, Solomon wrote wisdom, Elijah thundered, Elisha wrought wonders, Isaiah prophesied, Jeremiah wept, Ezekiel dreamed, and Daniel governed. That they failed in holding the mass true to these teachings is less proof of their failure than the slums of American cities, the submerged tenth of England, and the vile immorality of the French middle classes are of the failure of Christianity. To the same work on which these mighty ones toiled, Peter, John, Paul, and the college of apostles, with James, Barnabas, Apollos, and the fathers of the early centuries, consecrated their lives. To continue this sacrifice for the uplift of humanity those whose lives are the only gleams of radiance shining through the gloom of the Dark Ages labored, prayed, and died. The Reformation was simply a new exodus into a new Canaan and the precursor of the political revolutions which for two centuries have followed one another

with almost too great a speed, re-shaping the laws of all nations as regards the rights of the common people. This onward march of the race toward holiness, true worship, and human brotherhood halts not in our day. "Speak to the people, that they go forward" is still the command that rings from the heights. We must step into line and keep step with the march, no matter how great the obstacles, regardless of the sacrifice, and continue the progress up the steeps toward the consummation that is in the thought of God when a perfected race shall do God's will on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

The law by which man has been governed has made great advances, but even the law needs to be born again into a full expression of the will of Christ for the present and coming generations. The end of the Hebrew law was the purification of the individual and his preparation for government. The end of the Roman law was the aggrandizement of the State, for which the individuals existed. The end of Anglo-Saxon law is the protection of the individual and his right to a voice in the government by

which he is ruled. These all wait to be merged in the law of Christ, whose end is the redemption of the individual, the government, and the State from the anarchy of selfishness outgrowing from the inherent weakness and partiality of all these other systems; under this Christ law the purified and practically perfected individuals will constitute a Christian State, existing to do the will of God, governing the people in righteousness and equity through their association in a true world-wide brotherhood. Only as men are purified and perfected through the redemption of Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, only as they become temples of God are they fitted for government. Only as government sits at Jesus's feet and learns its duty in the socialization of men in justice and sacrifice, rather than in their individualization in selfishness and the exploitation of the weaker, does it rise to the dignity of a Christian government. Only as the Christian State obeys the Lamb—not lion—who sits on the great throne as King of kings, and rules as God would have it rule, does it rule for eternity and merit the benediction of Jehovah.

If we are to perfect the race we must rise to a full conception of the fact, and the duties arising from the fact, that there is but one race in the world. Every man who lives, be he saloon keeper or preacher, king or slave, dwelling in ice hut of Greenland or palace of Germany, in jungle of Africa or on river boat of China, is our brother. Every woman who breathes, whether prostitute or princess, dancing half nude in the ballroom or toiling entirely nude in the tropics, glorious with the beauty of purity or foul with the sin of sins, free in Christendom or bound in paganism—all these are our sisters. By command of God we are our brother's and our sister's keeper. The race has but one Father, and he is the Father of the Christ in whom the whole world is to be bound to the heart of God. Not for one land or tribe, or family, but for the entire race was the Nazarene lifted up; to all men came his revelation of the love of God, and all to whom he addressed that message are capable of knowing God and being transformed into his image. From this race we cannot isolate ourselves, and its wrongs and woes

we must all suffer. 'Therefore it is that we must cast out evil wherever found, and sacrifice ourselves for the redemption even of those who have no mercy on themselves.

Would you be encouraged for this work? Then study the history of our own century. Follow that hero and his sacrificing wife, who, with life in one hand and Gospel in the other, march out of civilization into the barbarism of the Cree Indians of British America, find degradation indescribable and savagery rampant. Can these human beasts be lifted up? Is not the only good Indian a dead Indian? Twenty years give the answer in degradation vanished and holiness flaming with fervor. Ignorance has passed away, and educated sons of God are masters of waving harvests, lords of happy homes, patterns of Christian nobility, saints praising God in a score of Christian churches.

Go with that little band who set foot on the Hawaiian Islands in 1819. God has wondrously prepared for their coming. A strange revolution has within a year destroyed idols and temples, abolished the priesthood, and made an end of human

sacrifices. King and chiefs own all the land, and the people, a horde of half naked, drunken savages, living in surf and sand, eating raw fish, always fighting, and abandoned to sensuality, are their slaves. They have no written language, law, or courts, nor any conception of their worth. Yet in forty years this moral desert is abloom with righteousness. The whole people are educated, ethically and industrially, and their language preserved in a translation of the Book of Books. In the schools native teachers press the work until a larger proportion of the natives can read and write than can do the same in New England. Godliness reigns, and the foundation is laid for that temporal prosperity which made possible the present contest for their annexation to the United States.

Look at the Society Islands in 1823. Even as coral reefs belted many of the islands with their crimson walls on which the waves dashed only to froth and foam in vanquished might, so morally the islands seemed belted with superstition and idolatry, past which religion could not go. The idea of God seemed lost, if ever possessed.

Every man's hand was lifted against his neighbor. Licentiousness was king; war was perpetual and to the death; women were killed lest they should become the mothers of warriors; children, hooked by the ears on spears, were led as offerings to the rude temples; skulls of the defeated beaten in, the brain spread on breadfruit leaves and offered to the gods. To crown all cannibalism spread its feasts of human flesh. Can such wretches become Christ-like? Dare you, O Christian, in love with ease and propriety, count these as your brethren? Yet to these came John Williams, apostle to the South Seas. God preserved his life. In two years the natives were tamed, teachable, kind, and diligent. Converts came, and then rowed from isle to isle to tell the story of Jesus. In 1827, at Ranatonga, a vast concourse gathered, marching with their idols to lay them down at Williams's feet. Fourteen great idols, the smallest fifteen feet in length, were put away that day. Still onward went the transforming work. Chapels were built, spears which had been used for war now formed pulpit balustrades, wooden idols



served as props for roofs of sheds and barns. The whole population had become new creatures in Christ Jesus, and when in 1834, eleven years after the work commenced, Williams left the island, he could say, "I found them all heathen, I leave them all professing Christians," and the Bishop of Ripon could justly exclaim as he laid down the story of Williams's life, "I have been reading the twenty-ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles."

So you may continue the story of God's mighty work through men in uplifting those created in his image into a moral likeness to himself.

Jerry McAuley, become the prisoner of Jesus Christ, garners a blessed harvest in New York. Shaftesbury goes out from the House of Lords to spend his nights in London slums, loving hundreds back to manhood and honest labor, to womanhood and virtue. McAll, with three words, "God loves you," begins the work that spreading from the gay capital through all France, rescues thousands from lives of shame. Catherine Booth, with arms about the neck of the vilest, awakens a love long dead, and

soul after soul goes forth purified to call her blessed. Livingstone leaves as not the least of his legacies to the world, that matchless example of fidelity and of the perfecting power of the cross, the thousand-mile tramp of Susi and Chuma through jungle and hostile tribes, bearing on their shoulders the loved body of their dead master, that it might find a resting place in his native land. If Jonathan throws his arms about the neck of any in that heavenly land surely it must be about these Christ-revealing souls.

But time fails to tell of the blessed results that prove the possibility of the elevation of the lowliest to the heights where Jesus sits if only man will toil like Adams and Moffat, and Hannington and Butler, and Judson and Coan, and Mackey and the host of others whose names are written large on heaven's roll of honor. Do you still doubt? Then look on the Bethel of Sheshadri in India, Duncan's Metlakahtla, Neesima's Doshisha, and Lovedale, Stewart's monument in Africa.

How can this great work be accomplished? Only by a Christianity that will stretch it-

self on Christ's cross in a perfect abandonment of itself to the redeeming purpose of God. The unsaved are massed in mobs as dense as that huddled 'twixt the mountains and the sea when Pharaoh pursued Israel. How shall they be delivered? Only by sacrifice; there is no other remedy than that patterned for us by the Elder Brother on Calvary. He who loves Christ must sacrifice himself for those Christ offered himself. The call of a needy world is ringing wild with anguish this very hour. The heart of God is wrung at the manifested hardness of his children's hearts. Christ waits for your sacrifice to make perfect his own. The Comforter waits for your feet or your wealth to carry him where through your voice or by your hand he can minister to the sorrowing need of the mob. Will you sacrifice yourself for the redemption of the world? Victor Hugo, looking out on the wild mob that bathed Paris in blood and shook France with terror, exclaimed:

“Sacrifice to the mob; sacrifice to that unfortunate, disinherited, vanquished, vagabond, shoeless, famished, repudiated, despairing mob; sacrifice to it, if it must be, and

when it must be, thy repose, thy fortune, thy joy, thy country, thy liberty, thy life. The mob is the human race in misery; the mob is the mournful beginning of the people; the mob is the victim of darkness. Sacrifice to it thy gold, and thy blood, which is more than thy gold, and thy thought, which is more than thy blood, and thy love, which is more than thy thought; sacrifice to it everything but justice. Receive its complaint; listen to it, touching its faults and touching the faults of others; hear its confession and its accusation. Give it thy ear, thy hand, thy arm, thy heart. Do everything for it excepting evil. Alas! it suffers so much and it knows nothing. Correct it, warn it, instruct it, guide it, train it, put it to the school of honesty. Make it spell truth, show it the alphabet of reason, teach it to read virtue, probity, generosity."

Will you do it? God help you! The world appeals, God appeals, "Help me to help men." O, for the love of those who suffer, answer with your lives, "Here am I; through me bless the world, O God!"

*Third. The kingdoms of the world wait to be perfected by becoming the kingdoms*

*of God and of his Christ.* As the Hebrew people received direct revelation from God as to the duties of national government it is but reasonable to believe that those instructions conveyed some idea of God's thought concerning the scope and method of such government, applicable not only to them, but to all people. What, then, are the first principles of national government as evidenced in the transformation of that mob of brickmakers into a nation whose magnificence under Solomon was the wonder of the world? a nation which even without a capital has preserved its distinctness during eighteen centuries of unholy oppression.

*The recognition of God.* An atheist nation is an anomaly, its life a sacrilege. The world is not man's, but its Creator's, and as manifestly as that Creator gave Canaan to Israel has his providence given each branch of the race its abiding place. Failure to acknowledge this is national infidelity, and national infidelity is as blasphemous and vice-gendering as individual infidelity. If there be no God the world is the child of chance, and if chance be its mother lottery is universal and law an

impossibility. There is a God; the world is his, his will is law, and his law is universal. This universal law is moral as well as physical, as commanding in the conscience as in the stars. Nations must acknowledge this, not in part, but completely. The State must understand that it cannot make the Mosaic code the basis of its statute law and require the obedience of men to that code as regards their duties to their fellows, and not itself as a State render obedience to the God who proclaimed that code, commanding all men, and the institutions of men, to obey the whole. Not the last six, but all ten of the commandments demand the obedience and enforcement of the State. Not only does the State need the whole law, it needs the entire Gospel as well. As surely as the individual needs to be born again would he enter the kingdom of heaven, so surely must the State be born again would it become a kingdom of God; and unless it becomes a kingdom of God it will go the way of Babylon, Nineveh, Macedon, and Rome. The State needs God, and it needs the redemption of Jesus Christ, provided by God, enabling it to obey the

direction of the Holy Ghost, who is the administrator of the present dispensation of the work of the sons of God.

*The State must worship God through the obedience of its government to his revealed will.* Politics rules the world. This is the divine order. The politics of the past and the present have been and are dominated by the devil. This is not the divine order, but the fruit of a Satan-contrived, theology-bolstered theory of separation of Church and State which has led saints to try feebly to people heaven while permitting Satan to annex the earth to the pit. Union of Church and State in the old way, or such unsatisfactory Satan-pleasing union as now exists in most European States, is not desirable, for such union does not effect the purpose of God; but the spiritual union of Church and State must be accomplished by the sacrificing statesmanship of the sons of God of the twentieth century, or both will fail of fulfilling the purpose of God. Christianity must become political, for Christianity must rule the world, and can do so only by the Christianization of the methods of world government. Politics must be

taught the decalogue. Statesmen must go to school to Christ and learn of the King of kings his method of government. Legislators must fathom the equity of the Sermon on the Mount, and by its spirit shape 'all laws; judges must judge conscious of the bar before which they are soon to stand; citizens must vote as Christ would vote were their ballot in his hand. Thus all political life must be made to manifest the life of Christ that is in the world.

The notion that men have religious duties differing from their business and political duties is one of the most masterly devices with which Satan has degraded the race and robbed God of his right to the full service of man. Man's duty is not diverse, but one; it is to please by serving God. Buying and selling, voting and office-holding are as much religious acts as praying and tithe-giving. Christ waits to rule the world, but he can rule only as the sons of men who profess to love him manifest that love in every act, and not merely in a certain set of acts on certain days of the week. The State must be Christianized, and this can only be accomplished by the entrance of



Christians into political life in such numbers and with such purpose as shall chase the traffickers in civic virtue to the rear, and man the offices of the nations with men who will know no king but Jesus, and who will rule according to the direction of the mind which was in Christ Jesus and is now in them.

The State must recognize that it is a part of the whole family of God, existing simply to aid God through love and sacrifice in bringing all kingdoms under the scepter and righteous rule of Christ. The highest wisdom of Satan is manifested in his ingenious successes in making man's best faculties, passions, and loves pay tribute to diabolism. Love of country is just, noble; but the love of country that lifts its country's flag in unholy menace of all other countries manifests a love of evil and not of good. No man has a moral right to so love his own country as to seek its political, geographical, or financial aggrandizement through the spoliation of any other country. Forcible redress of injustice may be pardoned while the race continues so far from perfection as it is to-day, though even this

must be practiced according to the method of Christ, or reap the return of its Satanic use; but the exploitation of weaker or un-aggressive nations, as Asia and Africa are being exploited to-day by the land-hungry sons of Satan who dictate the colonial policies of European nations, is an offense to the cross and the stumbling-block in the path of the progress of Christ in those continents. Not even Christianity has a moral right to invade with missionaries an unoffending State, unless going, as she should go, to increase their power to rule themselves and love their fellows; and converts only as reason and aspiration reach out for that which satisfies.

It is not patriotism, but greed, not manliness, but mammon, that directs to-day the foreign policy of every European government, and spreads the Jingo fever over the mouthing "players to the gallery" who curse our land. While God has favored England with surprising national honors, Satan has not been idle, and a tabulation of the good and evil that has followed Britain's flag makes one wonder which counts most. We are no better; the wrongs we inflict

upon ourselves, our exterminating perfidy with the Indian, our present treatment of the Negro, evidence that had Columbia a colonial policy to foster and administer, St. George would not serve to-day as high priest at the altar of infamy.

Looking only at the international aspect of the question in our own century, though not forgetting the foul record of the past decade in India, Africa, and Turkey, we find that, so far from rising to the opportunities, God-given, to set an example worthy of her claim as the foremost Christian nation, but measuring and deciding every question by her insular selfishness, England secured the restoration of the despotism of the French kings when Napoleon fell, secretly intrigued against a united Italy, opposed the formation of the German empire by which the Fatherland was given brotherhood, feasted the Sultan Abdul Aziz at Windsor at the very moment when, as Mr. Gladstone says, "the air [of the Balkans] was tainted with every imaginable deed of crime and shame," and at the close of the Balkan war handed back four and a half million Christians who had been granted

their independence by Russia to the life-destroying rule of the Turk; defeated the plan for increasing the power of Greece by adding to it the Greek-speaking islands, forced the peaceful Boers to *trek* repeatedly for liberty's sake beyond her circle of influence, and to-day hails by mouth of laureate, as England's champion, the foolhardy agent of an African plundering company who sought with dastardly malice to plunge an unoffending State in civil war.

What does this illustrate? That we have a surplus of Christianity in our national utterances, but a terrible deficit of Christliness in our national deeds. Our tongues glibly proclaim the brotherhood of man, but we live with sword in hand to prove our talk a lie. If the status of a nation as to its paganism or Christianity is not to be determined by its national performances, how is it to be determined? The attempt by evil-condoning apologists to determine the status of a nation by any other test is an insult to reason, a species of jugglery to which only so-called Christian nations debase themselves. Tested by their performances England and America prove that they are

not Christian. The nations which have never been left without their redeeming minority, and which, because of his infinite purpose for them, God has made the foremost nations in the outward arts of civilization, and which give expression to the wisest humanitarian principles, are still the nations which by their national acts and their national failures to act, the most Satanic in their influence on the world. Think of the opium traffic forced on China, the State-paid prostitutes of the English army in India, the protected rum trade, and the winked-at slave trade in Africa; and then, looking at the white throne of Christ's purity, call Her Majesty's empire Christian, if you dare, facing that throne to lie. Behold the carnival of vice regnant beneath the dome of the Capitol at Washington; see the poor zealots who dare, on their own feet, bear their petition to the door of Congress, arrested for trampling on the republic's grass, the same week that monopoly gilds a new juggernaut to ride over the common people by trampling upon the republic's Constitution through purchased legislation; be photographed beside that Chinaman who

came hither believing we had sufficient honor to respect treaties of our own writing; follow the ships heavy with rum and handcuffs that sail from the harbors of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia; scan the signet on every barrel and case of the liquid evil that froths at the lips of appetite's slaves; sit in a prison parlor with the wealthy murderess confined *three hours* there to satisfy the law for the life she shot away; examine the law which provides no punishment for the president of a railway corporation who virtually stole six million dollars from its treasury, while sentencing a young workman to fourteen years' imprisonment for stealing a pair of shoes, his first offense. Look long at these things and at that vast mass of present evil that crushes men and communities beyond power of protest, and from them look up into the sorrowing face of the elder Son of God, who stands with whip of justice, and lash of sacrifice outstretched for us to take and use for him, and call this land Christian, if you dare so blaspheme with eye lifted to meet the eyes that are as wet as when he stood on Olivet looking on proud, self-glorifying, God-crucifying, Jerusalem.

Christian! We are no more Christian because mysterious Providence has committed to us so much of the wealth and glory of God than was Judas who carried the treasury of Christ in the long ago! This sad fact is true because, of the millions called Christian who constitute our best citizens, so few are sufficiently righteous to do with holy boldness the will of God in their business and politics, and so few so love, with a Calvary passion, as to sacrifice themselves for the redemption of a groaning race. We shall only become Christian nations when, obeying the Spirit of Christ, we give ourselves to the realization of the universal brotherhood of redeemed States, made possible through the sacrifice of national self-interest. And this mastery of the kingdoms by the kingship of Jesus is coming. What Christ refused from the foul hand of Satan in the wilderness he will receive from the sacrificing hand of the conquering sons of God.

“In God and godlike men we put our trust”

for this beneficent consummation of the redeeming work.

The kingdoms of the world were the devil's; they are becoming Christ's. The fall made Satan master of the minds of men, and through men he shaped the kingdoms to do his will. But steadily the patient purpose of God, working through the love that Satan-possessed men could so little understand, has marched onward, extracting some good out of the horrid wretchedness of his sin-choosing children. Egypt was Satan's, but she gave the world that hope which no philosophy can destroy—there is life beyond the grave. Nineveh was Satan's, but she became the monument of Jehovah's great mercy. Babylon was Satan's, but she brought some in Israel back to the thought of God, in whom alone was safety. Greece was Satan's, but she prepared a perfected language in which the fuller revelation of the divine love might clothe its thought for transmission to the remotest age. Rome was Satan's, but she built roads over which couriers of Christ could speed as swift as those of Satan, and armies of Jesus march to more peaceful and lasting victories than the legions of Cæsar. The barbarians of the North were Satan's, and filled with his destroying hate they dev-



astated the fair plains and valleys of southern Europe ; but among the captives they carried back were children of high heaven's King, who sowed the seed that will one day harvest so bountifully as to drive Satan from the continent. Spain was Satan's, but from her sin-serving sons God drew the crew by which Columbus could cross the deep and prove his larger provision for the race in this land of broad domain. Switzerland was Satan's, but a love for freedom as towering as her Alpine peaks rose in view of all Europe to spread its great contagion through all classes. The Netherlands were Satan's, but with mighty sacrifice they turned back the proud and cruel legions of religious oppressors. France was Satan's, and her Reign of Terror so monuments the fruit of Satanic possession that no other nation to the end of time will dare openly cast off all claims of God. England was Satan's, but the centuries have found God turning to the advantage of the cross of Christ the conquests of her lovers of pelf who have crossed every sea and invaded every land. America was Satan's; from barbarism God dedicated it to Christianity, through Christianity he established it in free-

dom, by Christianity he broke the shackles of the race it continued in bondage, and by Christianity he will yet cast out its vices and make it in deed and in truth a land whose God is in everything obeyed. Australia was Satan's; it is becoming the Lord's, and even in its upward march settling for all nations many of the hard problems of labor and capital. The isles of the sea were Satan's; they waited for the Lord, and when men were obedient to the call of God, and went where he commanded, their waiting was rewarded with his coming, Satan was vanquished, and Christ as King enthroned. Japan was Satan's; centuries had she served him. Christ entered, the leaven of Christian progress stirred the ancient realm, and it strides on to be perfected in the coming century by greater sacrifices, and made God's champion in the East to triumph in the name of the Lord of hosts.

Aye, the kingdom of God comes! Glorious in holiness, perfect in brotherhood, doing wonders for man's uplifting, it marches on. The Father watches, Christ leads, the Spirit inspires, the battle is joined. Who will fight with God? There will be hard march-

ing, scant food, terrible fatigue, awful sorrow, sacrificing death; but there shall be VICTORY. Dare you enlist? Dare you be a son of God? If so answer quick. Your arm is worth more to-day than a thousand soldiers in the next century. Your life will count more to-day than a legion of angels in the millennium. Fight; God fights with you. Satan is on the run. Press him hard. Hell is contracting. Close its pit. Up! Be doing. Prove yourself a son of God!

## V.

## THE EQUIPMENT OF THE SONS OF GOD.

HAVE you ever enlarged your mind, fired your heart, and aroused your faith by building in your "chambers of imagery" an ideal, full-orbed man? Only as you have, and have put to such majestic creations the questions, How would such ideal, full-orbed men live? What would such true images of the Creator do for the world? and pondered the answer which reason quickly voices in your inmost soul, can you form any adequate conception of the possibilities of the race and the triumphs that await the sons of God.

It is unreasonable and unscientific to judge of the possibilities of man by the one-sided, half-hearted, wild-willed, unsacrificing individuals about us, or that we know ourselves to be. "There is," said Coleridge, "some beast and some devil in man. So is there some angel and some

God in man." If you would know the coming man who will do the will of God, and work the works of God, you must picture the man in whom the angel has conquered the beast, God cast out the devil, and who stands full orb'd to all the winds of hell and heaven, majestic in his Christliness.

Would you put in the cabinet of your faith a man? Then you must construct him as the scientist does the specimen of perfect flower, grain, or beast, he builds for entrance to his cabinet of nature at her best. He will not accept as the full measure of the splendor of the rose the beauty of this one or that; but by utmost diligence to get the best from many gardens, and accepting only the gems of each, he will construct the best of them all into the perfect rose which each might have become. So would we build our ideal man, mindful that in him good and evil lie very close together, virtues and vices alternating for control, but that even in the worst some good remains, as the sensitiveness to poetry and music in the heart of Nero, and the worshiping love of flowers in the breasts of human-sacrifice-offering Tlascalans; yet in the good the expulsive

power of their love of holiness drives evil from its throne, and its remains are brought under the subjection of the mind that is stayed on Christ.

Then let us build a man; for material, those who for good or ill have been the greatest of the race. From Greece take Aristides; from England, Hampden; from America, Washington; and from all lands those most like them, to give to our creation a lofty attribute of justice. Enter into him the minds of such as Aristotle, Bacon, Kant, Hamilton, McCosh, and Cook, that his brain lack not for logic. Build in him Isaiah and Ezekiel, Fénelon and Bossuet, Bunyan and Milton, Dante and Beecher, that his imagination may ride at ease in earth or hell or heaven. Give him the commanding genius and the strategic grasp of the Grants and Napoleons and Hannibals and Cæsars and Alexanders. Let Peabody of New England, and Bright of old England be found in him as representatives of business ability and commercial integrity. Let Beethoven and Bach, Haydn and Handel, Mozart and Mendelssohn fill his soul with melody. David and Homer, Whittier

and Tennyson, the Brownings and the Careys store his mind with poetry. The Baptist and Bushnell, Paul and Punshon, Stephen and Simpson fire his tongue with eloquence. The Maccabees and William of Orange, the Pilgrims and Patrick Henry master him for freedom. The blood of Gordon and Livingstone, of Chrysostom and Polycarp, of Joan of Arc and Florence Nightingale throb in his heart the full tide of sacrificing love. Give him the tenderness of Lincoln and Spurgeon, of John the Divine and the mothers of the race, crowning all with the conscience of the martyrs and prophets and apostles. Now we have the upper zones of our full-orbed man well formed, but he is not complete. We will be true to science. There are lower zones, and we will fill them. Having put into the highest zones all these noblest traits of character that the race affords we dare enter in the lower zones the greatest growths of human wickedness that the race has produced. Resurrect the Pharaohs and Herods, the Neros and De Medicis of the human family, and put them in this ideal man. They will but give exer-

cise for the strength and skill of the powers within his upper zones. By the taming and training of them he will prove himself. A man can stand grit in his boots if he has God in his soul. He can master the tempests of passion if he possesses the Niagara of grace.

Now, how would such full-orbed men live? Would not each of them measure well toward the standard set us by Christ, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect"? What would such men do for the world? This is best answered by considering how much to bless and cheer, to righten and brighten, each of those did perform whom we counted worthy of entrance into the upper zones. But no such ideal man has lived! Wrong. More ideal than is the highest ideal that unideal men can rear was the character that rose from amid Judean darkness nineteen centuries ago. That all-perfect character commands that we grow into his likeness, or prove by our failure that we have no fellowship with him. As we elsewhere declared, the Christian must be Christ continued in the world. This means that the world is to be peopled



with a race who will be as Christ's unto God. Stumbles your faith at thought of even trying to attain the perfection of such an ideal man as we have built? Then verily you must pray, "Lord, increase my faith!" for Christ is immeasurably greater, nobler, grander than that ideal man with whom I have tried to startle you as to the possibilities before you, and the reality that soon will make many glorious. And unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ you must attain, or dwell a spiritual dwarf throughout eternity.

Remember, God is not partial. There is not a height of spiritual experience attained by Wesley, Knox, Spurgeon, Brooks, Moody, Mills, or Chapman that is not attainable by you if you will but seek it with mind, soul, and heart. You may not, need not, become denomination founders, great pastors, or mighty evangelists, as they have become, but you can have as much of God in your heart, as present a Christ in your life, and as complete an indwelling of the Holy Ghost as ever blessed one of these. The secrets of grace which God has revealed to others he will reveal to you if

you will seek as they sought, and in your life obey as they were compelled to obey in their lives in order to dwell in the secret place of the Most High. Not in the partiality of God, but in the abandonment of the soul to him and his work will be found the key that unlocks the mystery of the soul-transforming influence of the sin-conquering children of God. You do not need to flame because your soul is burning as you talk with Jesus on all the way of life; you do not need to preach to thousands because you have a message that makes glad your heart; you are not to pine because God does not see it wise to call you to some great task, as though he counted you less worthy than the soul commissioned. You have only to be ready to do promptly every task, be it great or small, his providence may commit to your hand. Remember, every task is also a test. Not every general who gets his commission wins his battle; not every man who enters office amid great acclaim leaves it with honor; not every preacher who mounts the pulpit steps mounts also to the throne. Count it all joy if God will but lift you to the highest

heaven from the humblest place, for verily there are many who from the highest place within the gift of God go down to lowest hell. No humbler life was ever lived than that of the Nazarene; yet no life has taken on so wide a reach. None were so poor as to do him reverence; yet none are now so rich as not to need his pardon. Christ reached the heights by way of the valley—even that of Jehoshaphat—and they who claim him as their Lord should not presume to walk an easier, more applause-winning way.

All that Christ was in holy living and brotherly kindness it is possible for you to be if you will but apply yourself to learn the lesson he set for all the race. All he was able to do for men about him you can do for those who look to you for aid if you will empty yourself of evil, and, filled with the Spirit, conduct the Father's blessing to those who need it in your community. All that the greatest of the sons of God have done for him in the ages past may be repeated to-day, and in the future under better conditions for noble work than those which they were compelled to face and conquer.

Greater victories, mightier revivals, more wonderful moral revolutions, grander revelations of character, await God's sons who shall be blest with life in the twentieth century than any the world has ever seen. It cannot be otherwise. We have the "better things;" we are reaping where the fathers sowed in blood; we are nearing the consummation of God's long work of grace. It would be no more wonderful for our children to hear the voice of the Saviour-Judge, and the song of the angelic host attending the descending throne, than for them to hear our voices after we are dead, speaking our message to them through the phonograph, or hear the music of the present age swelling outward from the gramophone. Some one is to win great victories for Immanuel in the days just at hand; some one is to beat the swords into plowshares and the spears into pruning hooks. Many shall clothe poetry, prose, music, and art in far nobler dress than they have ever worn as yet. Many are to herald the King's coming in every community; many are to lead the conquering host to God that shall aid in the coronation of the

King of kings. Shall you? Then you must be at work to-day. God commissions none who are not in the ranks. You must enlist or you will never be promoted.

Think not that you have a harder task than God set those who toiled for him in other days, and whose work waits your labor for its perfection. The mob you are to face is not more fierce than that to which Peter, James, and John sacrificed their lives. The rocks which in China, Japan, or Korea may be hurled at you will not be more hard than those that fell on Paul at Iconium and Lystra. The steel that may pierce your heart if you dare carry the Gospel of freedom to darkest Mohammedanism is not more sharp than the spears that Winkelried gathered in his bosom at Sempach. The chains that bind millions to the dead formalism of religion to-day are not more securely riveted than were the bonds of its mother error in the days of Luther. Nail the theses that will expose the vile hypocrisy and sinful indulgence of those who defile the Church of God through their unworthy membership, and name the Tetzels who for love of place proclaim a less exacting Gospel for the unright-

eous rich, to the door of your neighborhood's cathedral, no matter how humble it may be, and your hammer will sound as far as Luther's has. The moral degradation of even the slum districts of our day is not worse, though perhaps more congested, than Wesley found all England in his time. Dare to invade these outcast regions and proclaim there the cleansing Gospel of the Crucified and a reformation as far-reaching as that which in a century stretched its blessing over many millions will prove you as much a son of God as the toiler of Epworth. The rum traffic has not the host of sympathizers which Lincoln was compelled to face in his contest with the slave masters, but a still more glorious crown awaits that president who shall write America's emancipation from the rum demon than crowns the martyred brow of him who made men's bodies free. The New York that confronts Parkhurst, the Chicago that arouses Clarke, and the municipal corruption which appalls you in your home city is not more vile, nor more strongly entrenched than that Savonarola faced, fought, and for a time vanquished in olden Florence. The rights of the toiler have more exponents

to-day than had the rights of man when Magna Charta was wrested from the rampant John.

You are to surpass the grandest deeds of the olden time, and to make your task less difficult God has given you your greater equipment, and made the race more responsive to every appeal for a more practical Christ-imitating righteousness. The devil was not ashamed of himself in the days of Christ, or he would not have dared to show his unholy person to the Son of God and wage his brazen contest in the wilderness. He was unabashed in the days of Wesley, for lewdness of speech was on the lips of high and low, male and female, throughout all England. Verily we live in better times. Satan has become a gentleman. Vile like many a prince, vulgar like many a plebeian, still he moves in smoother ways. This may be more destroying to the easily duped, and more difficult to contend against because of his wily subtlety; but it is a protection to these much-loved bodies of ours. Satan may break more hearts to-day, but he breaks fewer heads. He still destroys many souls, but he leaves fewer marks on the bodies of

men. He is no longer brazen, but sly. He hisses no more. He has learned of his charmers and sings. He no longer stamps with vengeful foot, but dances with all the lightness of lust. This is only another way of saying that the fight in which you are to enter is by far a more spiritual one than the fathers were called to wage. There will be less to arouse that bodily fear it is so difficult to overcome, but the subtle contests of the Spirit will demand the full exercise of those holy powers which prove that in you, his temple, God's Shekinah dwells.

The denominations wait to be perfected. The Church of England, and her child this side the sea, needs the utmost endeavor of her noblest sons of to-day to stay the rising current of ritualism that flows swift toward Rome. The blood of Latimer and Ridley, of Hooker and Cranmer, cries out against the Church for which they died becoming a recruiting office for that papacy whose sons of to-day manifest no sorrow that their fathers murdered such sons of God. The work to which Seabury, White, Elliott, and Brooks gave their lives demands strenuous effort from the men of the present to make Church-



man and Christ's-man synonymous as descriptive of their lives. Presbyterianism needs a host of elect children if Calvin and Flavel, Knox and Chalmers, Doddridge and Henry, Tennent and McCosh, the Alexanders and the Hodges, are not to have toiled in vain. The Baptists need more of that spirit of intrepid straightforwardness which characterized the herald whose title they bear, if Bunyan is to joy in their progress, Williams to have sons for his freedom, Milton to greet them in paradise, Carey and Judson to see the heathen bowing at the feet of Jesus, and Spurgeon and Gordon to rejoice in heaven that it was theirs to help lay the foundation for the triumphs of the twentieth century. The Lutherans need a new thunderer to shake them from the dream state that has left the Fatherland a century behind in the upward march of spirituality and life-transforming piety, if the first thunderer is not to groan at so unworthy a monument. They upon whom the mantles of Muhlenberg and Hartwick have fallen may well pray that the Lutheranism that is transformed when stretching to the contest with other branches of the American

Church may leaven the millions of Germany and the Northlands, who only need more spiritual priests to produce more spiritual people. Bunsen and Zinzendorf, Christlieb and Harms are glorious examples of the Christliness the glorified Luther longs to behold in the character of all his sons. As long as the American Constitution endures will it appeal to the children of the Pilgrims to honor by their works the labors of their fathers. Hooker and Sam Adams were the prophets of American freedom, Edwards and Henry Ward Beecher, Lyman Beecher and Leonard Bacon, Timothy Dwight and Charles Finney, Moses Stuart and Horace Bushnell have set high the standard of Congregationalism; yet higher still that standard must be carried if worthy fathers are to be blest with worthy sons. Methodism needs sons who will toil terribly, daughters who will live gloriously, if the triumphs of the past are but to herald the greater things to be. Her altars need new Whitefields and Summerfields; her pulpits cry loud for more Simpsons and Punshons and Douglasses; her schools for greater Bascoms and Olins; her text-books for more

Clarkes and Whedons; her literature for stronger-penned Currys and McClintocks. The masses long for other Cartwrights and Father Taylors. Her bishops must learn sacrifice from Asbury and McKendree; her preachers surpass the tenderness of Janes and Lovick Pierce; her laymen work more grandly than Phillips or Fisk; her daughters serve humanity as loyally as Mary Fletcher and Eliza Garrett, and wear honor as Christlikely as Katherine Garrettson and Lucy W. Hayes.

Yes, the denominations wait to be perfected; not that the denominations be glorified, but that, by the Christ spirit and the Christ wisdom entering into and mastering each, the day may soon dawn when the Saviour's great prayer shall be answered in the confederation of all the branches of his Church in one great fold, which, working ever in the unity of the Spirit, will so shepherd the world that all men shall be found in the bonds of peace.

The arts and sciences, music and literature, wait to be perfected. The golden age is not past; it is yet to come. It may be here to-morrow. Raphael may paint his

Madonnas, and bring the world to its knees, but coming sons of God will paint blessed Mary's more blessed Son with such commanding pencil that the world will arise to do his bidding. Michael Angelo may make men quake with horror as they survey his "Last Judgment," but there will rise a more Christ-understanding master who will so picture the sorrow of the heavenly Judge in bidding any child of earth depart from him forever that all but very fiends must yield and by love so compassionate be drawn to serve him. Rubens may joy in setting on the canvas the adoration of the wise-men kings, but a greater shall inspire us more blessedly as he paints the adoration of the princes of the coming centuries to the King of kings. Leonardo thrills us with his masterly "Last Supper," but there will rise one who will by faith enter where John entered, and hither returning paint for us the feast in which our own soul will participate, even the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb."

Shakespeare wrought for God and man, but there shall a Son of God arise who will soar to loftier heights, and, passing from

the portrayal of conscience branded by the hot irons of murderous memory, voice the victorious exultation of a conscience at peace with God. Dante dipped his pen in gall, and from a mind necessarily vitiated by the awful vileness of his environment drew such pictures of eternal woe that the world has stood aghast for century following century; but there will rise a son of God who will dip his pen in the blood that flowed and write such a poem of sacrificing justice that hearts like adamant must melt and choose the better part. Milton, blind to earth, could see from hell—through paradise—to heaven, and write as though he had trod the streets of this trinity of wonders; yet a greater than Milton shall rise, and with a mind cleared for truer vision, rhythm tuned for richer harmony, pen trained to express loftier thought, so describe the glory awaiting the sons of God that Christ by his speedy coming will crown him as heaven's laureate.

Music will catch the melody of the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, and will bless earth with such songs as angels sing. Has Haydn filled

thy soul with awe as the glorious harmonies of the "Creation" have shaped chaos into order before thy enraptured mind? Expand thy soul, for it is yet to hear the Haydn of to-morrow making the wide world shout its joy as men sing the anthems of the "Consummation." Some son of Mendelssohn will sing of mightier triumphs than "Elijah" ever wrought. Handel has blessed the earth with the ringing gladness of the "Messiah," but a greater than he shall yet set the expectant sons of God rehearsing the alleluias which they shall sing when, by the crowned King of men, the kingdom is delivered to the Father, Messiah's work well done.

Greater secrets than Galileo, Newton, Davy, Watts, Morse, Gray, Edison, or Roentgen have fathomed wait on the persistence and adaptation of the sons of God to still further bless and change the world. Marvels more wonderful than steam or electricity, than telegraph or telephone, than graphophone or X rays shall continue the world's amazement and serve as means by which the men of earth shall do more perfectly their heavenly Father's pleasure.

Dare you not believe that these greater things are your portion? That the future is to record more glorious deeds by those who toil for God than the past has known? Then let me urge you to believe the Christ. On that last night before he was betrayed, as he sat amid those sorrowing disciples of whom he was taking leave, and whom he would cheer by the prospect of the glorious service they were to do for him, he promised, and promised for us as well as for them, that "he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Greater things than Christ! The disciple work more wonders than his Lord! The children of earth continue the works begun by the highest Son of heaven! Surely this must be a mistake. If so, then is this entire blessed book a mistake. The majesty of this truth is so measureless that our faith cannot bound it, but its reality is so indubitable that it proves its truth by our Christly service even while we doubt. This is just the equipment of the sons of God. This is but the natural endowment of the

“better things” which are our portion in these later times.

If you are a temple of the living God you must be open every day and hour of your life. From your temple's altar the incense of unceasing prayer must rise in supplication for the need of others. No money changers or traffickers may be housed there to defile you. Thy temple must be holy, the resort of saints for communion with God. If you are a temple you must increase the value of holiness in your community, as your church building increases the value of property. You must be a haven of rest to the weary and of safety to the oppressed, and all this you are to be, not because you are a temple, but because you are a temple of God, his instrument for the help of the world.

If the tongue of fire has come upon you it must flame through you. Wherever the Holy Ghost is there is a perpetual Pentecost. If you are indued with might, even the spirit of power, in your inner man, then your outer man must give forth its glory as the globe of the incandescent lamp lets out the radiance of the glowing wire. If the



Holy Ghost is in you he cannot be idle. He must work the works of God. By your contact with the needy must he emit that blessed energy that will cheer and bless and save them. You are his conductor, the live wire of grace that must carry the effulgent glory of heaven and the sin-mastering power of the throne from the Triune to the needy children of earth.

If Christ be in you he cannot be less the Christ because he is in you. Christ cannot be idle. He must work, and he must work through you, granting to you honor among men for doing work which you do only because he works by you, yet work which he could not do did he not do it through you. If Christ dwells in you he must walk on your feet, lift with your hands, speak with your tongue, in perfecting his great work for man. Greater works than he did in the olden time must you do to-day, yet not you, but the Christ in you.

Study closely these blessed farewell words, and you will find a sharing Christ. Heaven is already preparing her welcome for him. He is soon to return to the Father. Memory pictures him the glory and blessedness of the

heaven he resigned for our redemption. But he is going back; soon his mission as the earth-man will be finished, and into the glory he will ascend. That glory is sufficient for the bliss of millions. The avenues of that land have room for numberless mansions of God's building. He will share his glory with these who toil for him. His home shall be their home. What he enjoys they also shall enjoy. Nor will he leave them without revealing his loving purpose. What joy filled those listeners' hearts when he promised: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Yet even with this promise there is agony in the breasts of those disciples. Long will be the time ere he comes. Sore will be their trouble through the years. O, if they but enjoyed his calmness and freedom from fear! He reads their hearts, and gives at once the enriching promise, "My peace I give unto you." He can have no peace unshared with them. No joy, save as those who love him enjoy the fullness of his perfect life. Still they are sad, for he tells them he is soon to

be put to death. Death! Why, it will also soon come to them! Their peace will have an end. They may die before he comes to take them to the mansions prepared. The wings of hope are clipped, and they look with despair into the face that is to precede them to the grave. Once more speaks the sharing Christ, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Death shall not hold him. He shall live again, and his resurrection's triumph shall be shared with them.

Now he speaks to them concerning the work they are to do for him, and blameless are they that their hearts grew heavy at the task. Continue the work of the Wonderworker! Preach to those who had heard the voice of Him who spake as never man spake before! Build where divinity had laid the foundations! How could they? They could because all the power which the Father had committed unto him he would now commit to them. He would not rise to the throne without sharing its prerogatives with his people. He would be lifted up only to lift them to more glorious power; and so he promised, "Verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall

he do also." But this does not satisfy the bestowing, sharing love of Christ. Do only such works as his! What, shall he so limit his gift that the full measure of the power bestowed shall never be known on earth? No; they shall exercise to the full the power he used only in part. They shall do more than he; thus will he be glorified in them. Therefore he gives the promise, " 'Greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father;' and we will use our wisdom in multiplying the opportunities for the use of this endowment by those who do our will."

With reverent boldness, then, let us contrast the works of Christ and those performed by his disciples in all the ages. We must first learn the right standard of measurement. Our eyes are so dazzled by increasing bread and undiminished fish, the restoration of sight, or hearing, or speech, that our reason fails to grasp the mighty moral revolutions which were the real results sought for in our Saviour's use of his wondrous power. To heal the body is much, to heal the spirit is infinitely more; and it is in this realm of spiritual healing and re-making where we are able to rise to do

greater things than Christ. Great things in the physical realm we do for him. The bread that keeps alive the thousands of sorely afflicted Armenia, sent by those who are passionately fond of wealth, is a miracle of to-day as wonderful as that which multiplied the scanty store found at Bethsaida or beside Gennesaret. The appeals of Christly souls perform just this wonder of feeding the hungry whenever a famine or flood or persecution lifts its cry of need.

We speak of conversion as a miracle of grace. It is; but is there not far more of wonder in each conversion than we usually suppose? We are so much occupied in praising God for what we have been saved *to* that we forget to consider what we have been saved *from*. I do not mean the mire in which we were wallowing or the hell toward which we were journeying, but the untold evils of existence from which we were only saved by our conversion. If the veil should be drawn so that we could behold the evil from which our conversion saved us we would be ready to declare that the touch of the friendly hand that won us just as the legion of devils was about to enter

was as wonderful an act as that of Christ at Gadara. Our resurrection is no less a wonder because it raised us a new creature in Christ Jesus even while the sword of the rider of the pale horse was lifted to strike us with eternal death. "The evils turned back by the conversion of those present in thousands of Christian congregations are as ghastly and terrible as the evils that shrank before Christ's word in the days of his flesh." And it is by just this labor of healing and helping that the sons of God are through faith and love performing greater wonders than Christ performed in Galilee or Judea. He sowed, we are reaping, and the harvest is glorious. Did his eyes behold a *stater* in the mouth of a fish? So do the eyes of the mind he gives to us enable us, times without number, to lay bare the secrets of the hearts of those who wait upon our ministry, and gain their tribute for our Christ. We may not always know when we have exercised this preterhuman discernment, but the heart whose secret we have read knows, and has its message from the throne. Our prayers, do they not annihilate space as blessedly as Christ's? By as much as the

world is wider in our day than in the days of the Son of Man has God increased the power of the Christian's prayer to carry blessing round the world. Pray in America, and answering brightness gleams in Africa. Pray in Asia, and missionary revivals start forthwith throughout England and the colonies. Pentecost, what a wonder it was! More marvelous than any manifestation of the power of Christ in healing the deaf and dumb at Bethsaida, or stilling the storm on Galilee, or giving sight to Bartimeus at Jericho, or raising Lazarus at Bethany, was the fruit of the descent of the tongues of fire which transformed that upper room into the holy of holies of the newborn Church.

Look also at the more lasting results of these spiritual works than of the mere physical miracle. This it is that unlocks the mystery of that life beyond the grave where there shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor tears, whither death may not invade. The healed soul is healed for evermore, the healed body is healed but to fester again with as deadly sores. The soul that came back from the embrace of death at command of Christ, prophet, apostle, went

back through as great fear to its confines again, but the soul that walks forth from the tomb of a dead self shall never die. Our work it is as sons of God to perform these wonders that shall endure eternally. Those blind eyes which Christ spoke back to sight closed again in the blindness of death; but when that man who was spiritually blind is anointed unto sight by your sacrificing labor, and exclaims, "Once I was blind, but now I see," he finds a vision that shall grow more perfect as time fades and eternity rolls forever on. Those ears blessed with the voice of Christ as the first tones that ever sounded in them became deaf again when death whispered its message to them; but the soul which by your entreaty and your prayer shall obey the still small voice its new-gained faith shall hear, will never cease to sing, "His pardoning voice I hear," as long as the chorus of adoration rings in the ear of Him who saves. Friends carried a paralytic one day to be touched by Christ, and that touch received he went forth rejoicing in perfect health; but the day came when they who lowered him through the roof were called



to lower him in the tomb. Health had spent its strength. The cure of Christ for his body was ended, and the dust claimed its own. Ours it is to carry those paralyzed by sin to the ever-healing Christ, that through our spirits he may impart the touch that shall work the perfect cure and give them the spiritual health for which they shall praise God forever. Lazarus came forth. He who had been dead kissed again the sisters who mourned him; but there came a day when those sisters with heavy hearts brought forth once more those treasured graveclothes and re-wrapped the body of the scribe. Health had come, and health had vanished. The miracle was ended. Lazarus was again entombed. Your holy task it is to speak those dead in trespasses and sin into that fullness of life that will never know an end.

Thus we learn the full reach of the equipment of the sons of God. The physical benefits of Christ's miracles were but temporary; the spiritual benefits of the greater works he gives us to do are eternal. This is the dignity of the work of the sons of God. The pentecostal endowment can

never be diminished by use. Our greater works of spiritual upbuilding are not to be occasional, like Christ's physical miracles, but continuous in their relief of the great want of a supplicating world. Not the wants of one family, but of all families, are to be supplied; not the altars of one Church Pentecosted with power, but the altars of all Churches overflowing with souls renewed and filled with all the fullness of God; not one land redeemed, but all lands glowing with the glory of God; not one nation owning Christ as King, but all nations become the kingdom of God through the wonder-working achievements of the sons of God.

This great day is coming, the world will do the will of God. For him the cables will carry their messages of peace; for him the ships will sail the seas; for him the marts of righteous trade will amass their profit; for him the manufactories will give forth their multifarious products; for him the mines will uncover their stores of wealth; for him steam and electricity will speed their innumerable trains; for him the schools will drill the minds of millions; for

him the cities will do righteousness; for him the States will master evil; for him the nations will exercise their diplomacy; for him the banners of all people shall wave to the breeze; to him shall the kings and the rulers bow themselves, and unto him shall the gladdened hearts of the children of men uplift their songs of triumph. He who gave himself for the world will not fail of his victory. Christianity is for the world, and the world is for Christianity; the day comes when through the labors of the sons of God Christianity will possess its own, and, possessing it, will dare face the throne of the descending Christ.

At the last session of the World's Parliament of Religions Professor Tomlinson brought to the Hall of Columbus his wonderful Apollo Chorus of four hundred and fifty voices. The members of this Chorus were his own choice from the twelve thousand members of his four great classes of the three preceding years, and had been trained to render the oratorios of the great masters at the World's Fair Music Hall during the weeks of the White City's life. Every member of the Chorus was a soloist

of skill and power, yet all were here massed as the keys of a splendid human instrument of harmony. For the closing session of this remarkable assembly they were to sing the "Hallelujah Chorus." Dr. Barrows had pledged the Parliament that they would hear such music as had never charmed their ears before, nor would again until they had entered within the pearly gates, and the music that thrilled six thousand souls that night more than fulfilled the pledge.

The Chorus rises. The gallery has been given over to their use. Here at the right rise one hundred bassos. Next them stand eighty tenors. Across on the left are one hundred and twenty altos, and stretching in a double row from end to end of the rear gallery are one hundred and fifty sopranos. No orchestra is to share to-night with the full, rich melody and uplifting power of the human voice. The piano gives the chord, and then the only instrument that aids the choral host is the tiny baton in their leader's hand. The moment has come in the movement of the oratorio for the songs of men to lift their ascription of praise and honor to the Christ of God. First bursts

forth the deep tones, repeated over and over again, of the rolling, stirring bass: "He shall be King of kings. He shall be King of kings." Then the altos lift the same great title on the pinions of their melodious tones: "He shall be King of kings. He shall be King of kings." The tenors are now inspired, and still higher they raise the glorious strain: "He shall be King of kings. He shall be King of kings." Now, with full voice, and faces that seem to say, "So sing our hearts," the one hundred and fifty sopranos ring out high over all: "And Lord of lords. And Lord of lords." And then the four hundred and fifty joining, voice to voice, swell the exultant unison: "He shall be King of kings, and Lord of lords. He shall be King of kings, and Lord of lords. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!"

Then, as if from out the eternal splendors, a voice that would sound the hearts of men put the query: "How long will your hallelujahs ring when at heaven you are at home? How long shall Christ be King of kings, and Lord of lords?" The chorus gives reply. Deep as from hearts long schooled

in sorrow, but now alive with joy, rolling out the profound utterance of the bass: "He shall be King of kings, and Lord of lords, forever and forever and ever and ever and ever." Then the altos lift the confident acclamation, as from hearts in which the Christ was newly born: "Forever and forever and ever and ever and ever." Higher still the tenors steadily raise the resounding note of faith, as though they would conquer the world with song: "Forever and forever and ever and ever and ever." Then, like a prophecy of the music that carols from the spirits of the ten thousand times ten thousand burst out the sopranos with the same unending song. Once again the full chorus unite their soul-revealing voices, and on and on and on as though time were already dead, they repeat the stirring truth: "He shall be King of kings, and Lord of lords forever and forever and ever and ever and ever." Then once more, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" This time not four hundred and fifty merely, but thousands added unto them, are singing the spirit-lifting chorus. For once at least God heard from hearts his Spirit taught that

matchless chorus sung, and as I joined my voice to that heaven-inspired throng there flashed upon my mind a vision of the day that is to be, when from out the everlasting city the Son of God shall come enthroned in glory with hosts of angelic guards about him. The trumpet sounds, the dead arise, the gathered host bend adoring hearts to the Lamb who for them was slain. Then, as about that great white throne there gathered the people from the ends of the earth, and the kings of all nations laid down the scepters of their power, I heard the thunderous bass of Africa's ransomed millions roll out the adoration of their hearts to Him whose cross their kinsman bore. Europe, her millions upon millions singing with all the gladness of victorious faith, lifted voice to swell far and wide her melodious alto. From the young and vigorous host that come from the two Americas there rings out such a triumphant tenor that a smile answers them on the face of Christ. And then Asia, old Asia, the mother of all religions, bows at the feet of Him who brought the true, and from her reverent host that outnumbered all the rest,

the glorious climax rises, "He shall be King of kings, and Lord of lords, forever and forever, and ever and ever." Onward, ever onward rolls the glorious song, and as in my ears that choir keeps singing ever louder and more glad my soul beats high with exultation as I pledge it a part in that world-ending, heaven-enlarging chorus; and to the sons of God who pray with me that that day may quickly come I would repeat over and over the message that commands my soul: The world, and the whole of it, for God and his sons. No less will satisfy the Father. No less will satisfy his sons.

THE END.









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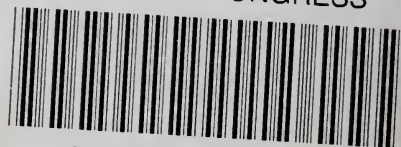
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