

A
VOICE from
the ORIENT

Mangasar M. Mangasarian



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TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE SPRING GARDEN CONGREGATION,
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THESE SERMONS ARE AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED, AS A TOKEN
OF GRATITUDE,
BY THEIR FRIEND AND MINISTER.

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A VOICE

FROM THE

ORIENT.

A Series of Sermons

—BY—

MANGASAR M. MANGASARIAN,

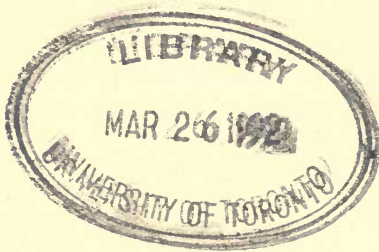
PASTOR SPRING GARDEN CHURCH.

“Religion is the master element in man, it is meant to rule.”

Thought,
“The golden key
Which opes the Palace of Eternity.”

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J. G. DITMAN.
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

To gratify the wishes of a large number of Mr. Mangasarian's friends, I have requested him to consent to the publication of a few of his sermons. Most of them were delivered since his return from the Orient, about three months ago, and were preached before very large congregations. I have no doubt that this will widen the Preacher's influence for doing good. And if it accomplishes this end, the publisher will have his reward.

J. G. DITMAN.

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INTRODUCTION.

About four years ago I came to this country as an utter stranger. To receive a better and more thorough education for the Gospel Ministry was my main object. I began the study of the English language when thirteen years of age, and in 1876 graduated at Robert College, on the Bosphorus. In 1877, when nineteen years old, I began to preach in the Congregational Church, at Marsovan, Asia Minor. In a few months I was ordained over this Church, with a congregation of 7-800. My desire to visit America and carry on my special studies was so great, that in 1880, with the consent of my people, I came to this country and entered the Seminary at Princeton, N. J. The first few months in this country, I felt very home-sick, and often sought a secret spot and shed tears as I thought of the distance of 7,000 *miles* between me and my home. America was a new world to me. I was a perfect stranger to everybody. This loneliness and isola-

tion added to my misery. I cannot explain why, but one of the professors took a special interest in me. On one occasion there was a tap at my door, I opened, and Prof. A. A. Hodge entered my room, took a chair, and asked me of the friends and the home I had left behind. My heart was full,—and there I felt the power of his sympathy. From that day the Doctor took a deep interest in me, introduced me to the churches and Christian people and made me welcome at his home. I could go to his study under all circumstances, feeling perfectly free. My first letter from Princeton to my people on the other side was full of Dr. Hodge. It gives me pleasure to-day, to acknowledge that my position as a minister in Philadelphia, I owe to his friendship, advice, and influence upon my character.

But I must speak of another person. One warm day in August, while walking on Broad Street and asking for Dr. Wylie's church, a certain gentleman, with an open brow and kind face, put his arm around me, and with a smile asked me where I was going. "To hear Dr. Wylie." "Good, come with me," said he and took me to the church and prevailed upon me to occupy the pulpit that afternoon. With the kind consent of the pastor, I preached, and there, that afternoon, I won the heart

and friendship of George H. Stuart, the gentleman who had discovered me on the street. Through him I was introduced into the pulpits of the city and soon had some excellent friends in the West Arch Street church, the North Broad Street church, the Second church, the North Sixth Street church, Bethany church, and many others. I soon forgot my home-sickness and began to fall in love with the country.

About two years ago, the congregation of the Spring Garden church gave me a unanimous call to become their pastor. The church then was in a very deplorable condition. Already, they had had a number of meetings, advocating the sale of the building. Most of the members had withdrawn their letters. There were only a handful of the strong friends of the church left.

I accepted the call, entered into the work with enthusiasm, and to-day, no minister has a larger number of hearers and a warmer, kinder people than I have at Eleventh and Green. Quite a number of prophecies were made at the time. One day, being in New York, I went to see a leading Christian preacher of the city. After being introduced to him by a friend who had accompanied me from Philadelphia, I told the eminent divine, that while study-

ing at Princeton, I would like to do something in the line of self-support, and asked him whether he could or would be kind enough to introduce me to some of the churches needing a supply. The clergyman was wroth, bringing his fist down on the table with a thump, he said:—"No, sir, do you think the Americans would leave the American preacher and come to hear an Armenian? Why! suppose here is a church where there is an American minister, and here is one where there is an Armenian; everybody will say, we don't want the Armenian, and go to hear the American." Similar words of encouragement were spoken to me by others. But my great inspiration came from the *people*. Their grasp of the hand was warm. Their sympathy was great. I had faith in the American people, in the genius of American civilization, in the breadth and impartiality of the American heart. In these, I have not been disappointed, but my highest expectations have been fulfilled. I am constrained to say that I love the American people. I owe a great deal to their generosity and kindness. Forgetting that I was a foreigner, they came to hear me and filled my church from pulpit to vestibule, and from wall to wall. For two years they have given me their interest, co-operation and cheer.

Out of gratitude, I dedicate this book to the kind people of the Spring Garden Congregation. It is an imperfect and humble gift. But just as it is, 'tis a token of reverence and gratitude. If I succeed to strengthen the tie that has bound us together for two years so happily, I shall feel greatly rewarded. That you will forgive, where your forgiveness is asked, I am sure. I am also sure that you will encourage me to do better in the future. There is no happiness comparable to that, which a minister enjoys, when standing in the pulpit, or moving among his members, he feels the electric sparks falling upon his soul, from the warm, sympathetic and unanimous heart of his congregation. I have had this, and therefore I can say that I made a wise choice when I entered the ministry, and a wiser choice, when in the face of discouraging circumstances, I accepted the call of the Spring Garden Church. The best chapter of my life, I have written in this community; the highest moments of inspiration I have enjoyed in this pulpit; the greatest consolation and reward have come to me from this field.

The aim of this book is not to teach a new theology. My position does not differ from that of any other minister of the Evangelical church. If I have

said things, seemingly out of harmony with the general teachings of the Presbyterian pulpit, it is not done from a desire to differ or criticise. I have spoken in plain speech, my convictions and beliefs. I have always believed that cowardice is out of place in the pulpit. By an earnest, reverent, sincere search and discussion of the truth, nothing is lost, but much gained. Investigation is the road to truth. Free speech is the sacred right of the pulpit.

“ Ye earnest men, no longer shrink
From speaking what you truly think ;
Proclaim the truth you find,
And let free search, free speech, free thought,
By blood of ancient worthies bought,
Advance the human mind.”

“ Heed not the shaft too surely cast,
The foul and hissing bolt of scorn,
For with thy side shall dwell at last,
The victory of endurance born.”

“ Truth crushed to earth, shall rise again ;
The eternal years of God are hers ;
But error wounded writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers.”

“ Another hand thy sword shall wield,
Another hand the standard wave,
Till from the trumpet’s mouth is pealed
The blast of triumph o’er the grave.”

I am a minister in a Presbyterian church, and I love and honor that body. I love it, because of its freedom, breadth and depth; I love it, because of its glorious past, and its promises for the future. But in a higher and broader sense I belong to no sect, no ism, no denomination and no party. My individuality is not swallowed up in any denomination. I belong to the Christian church as *I* understand it, and not as somebody else interprets it for me. Christ has made a revelation to the individual Christian, and He is to me, what I make Him to be. I must see Him with my own eyes, feel Him with my own heart, and comprehend Him with my own mind. You cannot fasten a creed, or a belief on the soul, as you fasten a rope to the tree. The faith must be the outgrowth of the soul. Individuality of thought in the domain of religion is the immortal principle of Protestantism. Between the individual soul and God, no church, no sect and no council can stand.

Christianity is the religion of joy and love. Jesus is the author of spiritual freedom. God is a father in the broadest and kindest sense. And His word in its spiritual outlines, is the infallible rule of thought and conduct.

Life is more than creed. A living faith in the person of Christ, is more than a belief in dogmas.

A shinningly Christian character is more than a passive adherence to sectarian isms. A broad, inclusive, Good Samaritan Church, is more than an exclusive and narrow denomination.

A Church is not Christianity. A sect is not religion. There is no such thing as "Presbyterian Faith," or "Baptist Hope," or "Methodist Love." Faith, hope, and love, are absolute verities, and belong not to the phases, but to the *essence* of religion. Our Father in Heaven, has *one* Church. It is neither the Episcopalian, Lutheran, nor Unitarian. It is Christian. And all who live Christ, independent of creed and ism, are members in good and regular standing of that Church. These are some of the thoughts I have endeavored to emphasize in the following sermons.

It is with much diffidence that I consent to their publication. I am fully conscious of their imperfection and poverty. The earnest wish of a large number of friends to have them in a permanent form, has called forth this volume. Had I the time, I would give them the benefit of a complete reconstruction, but under the pressure of pastoral and pulpit duties, I am compelled to offer them to the public, in the main, as they were originally delivered to my people.

In the selection of the subjects for this work, I have consulted the wish of my congregation, whose warm and generous appreciation of my efforts in the pulpit, has been one of the chiefest delights and inspirations of my life.

The fourth sermon was preached soon after my recovery from the effects of a sad accident and immediately before my departure for the Orient. For the few prayers in the book, I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. T. Johnson, the stenographer.

Though the absence of the living voice, and the expressions of the speaker's face, greatly impoverish and weaken these sermons, still, I will pray that the dear God may render these silent pages instrumental in feeding the reader's soul with large thought, with strong faith, and with divine love.

“ They will reach the hand of the reader chill and discolored, but, when in the autumn evenings the leaves fall and lie on the ground, more than one glance may still fall on them, more than one hand still gather them. And even if they were despised of all alike, the wind may sweep them away, and prepare with them a couch for some poor man, on whom Providence looks down with love from the heights of Heaven.” And thou, without whose notice not a sparrow falleth to the ground ; let this

little volume be a message from Thy Love to Thy children!

“ The seeds are planted, and the Spring is near ;
Ages of blight are but a fleeting frost ;
Truth circles into truth. Each mote is dear
To God, no drop of ocean is e'er lost ;
No leaf forever dry and tempest tossed.
Life-centers deathless underneath decay,
And no true word or deed can ever pass away.

“ Work on, oh fainting heart, speak out thy truth ;
Somewhere thy winged heart-seeds will be blown,
And be a grove of pines ; from mouth to mouth
O'er oceans, into speech and lands unknown,
E'en till the long-foreseen result be grown
To ripeness, filled like fruit, with other seed,
Which time shall plant anew, and gather when men
need.”

MANGASAR M. MANGASARIAN.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

January, 1885.

THE ARMENIANS;
OR THE
CHRISTIANS OF THE ORIENT.

ARMENIA.

“ Upon her soil they say those violets grew
That wove a fragrant crown for the feet
Of curious Eve, ere by that snake’s deceit
The world lost innocence and suffering knew ;
Brave Noe, riding with his motley crew,
Her highest hill-top, black above the sheet
Of turbid waters, hail’d as resting seat,
And thither in his batter’d life-boat drew.”

“ Such honor had she in the years agone,
Whose lands lie desolate beneath the sky,
Whose people, now, the tyrant tramples on,
While few are fain to listen to their cry.
Oh! pray we, that before her day be done
She taste again the sweets of liberty.”

THE ARMENIANS, OR THE CHRISTIANS
OF THE ORIENT.

“*They shall come from the East.*”

MATT. viii, 2.

The Armenians are the children of Mount Ararat. It was on its summit, that the Ark of Noah rested, after the waters of the great deluge had subsided. The Bible speaks of the river Euphrates, as one of the four streams that ran through Eden, moistening its soil, watering its trees, and washing the flowers thereof. Both Ararat and Euphrates, the one crowned with the historic Ark, the other famous by the recollection of man's primitive grandeur in Paradise, are in the possession of that ancient and Oriental nation known to the world by the name of *Armenian*.

The Armenian's fatherland lies under the shadow of the great Ararat, and it is girdled by the sacred and beautiful stream of the Euphrates. It is claimed by the Armenians that their ancestors descended the heights of Massius, and populated the whole world. The tree of humanity first found root in the Armenian soil, thence it was borne to other por-

tions of the globe. Paradise, it is believed, was located in beautiful Armenia. To this very day, notwithstanding the fact that "where the Sultan's horse-hoof treads, there grass never grows again," is a terrestrial Paradise. The beauties of nature in that land transport the mind. What springs of the coolest and sweetest water! What charming valleys of verdure and fields of flowers! What olive-clad hills and rich vineyards of delicious fruit! She is the first-born of all the ages. The early Fathers of mankind dwelt amid these picturesque valleys, and breathed the pure and virgin air of the eastern azure. Armenia therefore, more than any other country, is the womb of all nations. The birth-place of all civilization. The sun rise of mankind. Humanity, like a heaven-born infant, stood first upon her sky-kissing mountains, to survey the great globe of lands lying at its feet. Between her hills of immortal green, was rocked the cradle of the first human child.

But I beg to lead you a step further. Armenia deserves your earnest study, for it was the first country in all the world to embrace the Christian faith. This does not stand on tradition, but on sound and indisputable historical basis.

All great church and religious writers admit the authenticity of the evidence, which goes to prove, that, before the Greeks, and before the Romans, and before any other people on the face of the earth, the Armenians, as a country and as a nation, opened

their hearts and homes to the young Prophet of Nazareth and made him their Saviour. As early as the close of the third century these Christians of the Orient began to tear down their idolatrous temples, demolish their heathen altars, dismiss their false gods, and make the religion of the Crucified the ruling and supreme faith of the people; the aristocracy as well as the common masses. The beginning of the fourth century found Christianity the religion of the State. St. Bartholomew was the apostle of Armenia. Through his influence was raised another leader and mighty reformer in the person of Gregory the Illuminator, the brightest and largest star across the Armenian blue, who, in his lifetime, completely overthrew paganism, old and established, and enthroned Christianity, then despised and weak. Even to this day lives the dead hand of Great Gregory, with an immortal thought in it, guiding and moulding this people of ancient birth.

Let me ask you to take but one more step, and that will carry you to the Middle or Dark Ages, the ages of superstition and papal rule; of persecution and bondage of conscience; of corrupt Christianity and a degenerate clergy; of dangerous heresies and religious bigotry. When Rome stretched every nerve to introduce her anti-Christ into the Oriental Church and subdue them into obedience to the Pope, the brave Armenian Christians resolutely resisted popeism and barred their doors against the Western thief. They main-

tained themselves free from the spiritual yoke of the tyrant who sat in St. Peter's chair. To this very day the See of Rome has no ecclesiastical control or social influence upon the Orthodox Armenian Church. On the other hand, Catholicism in the East bears deep marks of hard-dealt blows received at the hands of Armenian reformers. I am sorry to confess that the Catholic Church of late has made some progress in the Orient. The Jesuits, banished from the Occident, have gone thither with their mediæval theology and church furniture. Yet, it exists as a sect, and not as the ruling Christian faith of the people. In all the religious battles the Gregorian Christians have come out victorious. They have held up the cross, the symbol of their faith, high in the air for sixteen hundred years. They have held fast the hem of Christ's garment under the cruelest and bloodiest persecutions that have ever befallen a nation on earth. They have kept the faith for sixteen centuries of war and of defeat at the hands of the barbarous tribes of the East.

“Such honor had she in the year agone,
Whose lands lie desolate beneath the sky.
Whose people, now, the tyrant tramples on,
While few are fain to listen to their cry.
O! pray we, that before her day be done.
She taste again the sweets of liberty.”

From a political stand point, Armenia, at the present day is dead. She has no government of her own. She has no independence, no soil, no property

or power. Years ago, the Ottoman Turks overrun the country of Armenia, swallowed up her fairest portions, converted her walled cities to a ruinous heap of dust, and with a hand as heavy as lead and as sharp as steel, scourged the people into poverty, into bondage, into ignorance and into despair. Centuries of groaning and sighing, under the iron hoofs of Islam, have crippled and paralyzed her noblest and bravest energies, insomuch, that to-day there is hardly any sign, or spirit of life, patriotism, or of a general uprising in the breasts of the children of Haig. To-day, Armenia, is a mere geographical name, for there is no such country as Armenia. Not long ago, the avaricious Russian opened his mouth and roared for the remaining portion of the land, and now she holds her morsel fast between her teeth. The Shah of Persia, put forth his hand and took what was left. To-day three Oriental despots, Sultan, Czar and Shah, sit upon the neck of the Armenian, determined to crush him under their intolerable yokes.

It is, however, only from a religious point of view, that I care to speak to you this evening. Let the parliaments of Great Britain, and of Russia, and of Germany, discuss the political salvation and situation of Christian Armenia, this most ancient, and most unjustly persecuted people of Christ. To an American audience, I would only lay emphasis upon the religious and spiritual aspects of the country.

Four years ago, when I first came to this country, and began to preach in the Protestant churches, if I am not mistaken, the general opinion was, that I had been converted to Christianity from the Moslem faith. "Were you not a Mohammedan once?" was a question often asked. "There must be a great many converts from Islam in your country," was another remark frequently made. My greatest surprise was on being introduced as the Turk, or the Turkish preacher, or the Christian Turk, by the pastors of the churches. I do not blame the people of this country for knowing so little about the Armenians; if there be a party to be blamed, they are the missionaries, who have not taken the pains to enlighten the people, and have willingly or unwillingly conveyed the impression, that these Armenians are a heathen people and need the gospel in the same sense, that the Tartar or the African do. Now the difference between Turk and Armenian, in language, in nationality, in race and in religion, is just as marked and irreconcilable, as that existing between the Englishman and the Hindoos of East India, or between the American and the red man in the West. The Turks are the followers and disciples of the Saracene Prophet. Mohammed is their Christ. The Armenians believe—in the language of Christendom—in one Lord Jesus Christ, and have followed Him for sixteen centuries. The Turks would never mingle with the Armenians, and gather up their skirts less they

be defiled by contact with those Christians, and the Armenian always thinks it an insult to be called a Turk.

On the banks of the beautiful Euphrates there is the little, but, very old town of Mashgerd. Few mud huts are on the brow of a hill, washed at its base by the Ganges of Armenia. Some regal trees, softly whistling their music and keeping time with the murmur of the stream, mark the spot where I was born. Little did I think as I played with the sand and threw pebbles into the river, that I too, would be caught by the westward moving current and be borne over the seas to make my home in the far, far West, the land of the setting sun. At the time of my birth, my parents had already joined the American Congregational Church, and in their arms I received Christian baptism. I was born in the faith which I now preach. I have always been a Protestant. I have therefore just as good a birth-right claim to Christianity as any one in this large assembly. But the Gregorian Church to which my parents formerly belonged, and from which they seceded, is not the Protestant Church. They do not recognize the Reformation. Not having become Catholics, they think they never needed to protest and come out of the Catholic Church. The missionaries, about sixty years ago, began their work of proselyting in the Armenian Christian Church, and it was through them that my parents left the old national faith. If you bear with me, I will mention a few of the

principal points of difference between the Gregorian and Protestant Creeds. I pray you to hold fast this one fact, that we have been, before any other nation, a Christian people. In the cardinal and fundamental truths of Scripture, they are sound and emphatically Orthodox. The doctrines of the trinity, the atonement, the decrees, the divinity of Christ, inspiration of scriptures and salvation only through the supernatural Jesus, are firmly held and expounded in the Armenian pulpit. I admit, with great sorrow of heart, that from lack of enlightenment, and by reason of poverty and persecution, the Church has neglected the education of her clergy, and through their indifference and sloth, there are to-day, some superstitions and errors of worship in the old Church, once purely evangelical. She has unscriptural forms and beliefs. Yet these do not make the essential part of her creed. What Church is perfect? Where is the infallible creed? Are the Protestant Churches entirely above reformation? I feel it in my deepest heart, that the advanced members of the Christian Ministry of the Armenian Church are honestly laboring to return to the Gospel purity of their martyr ancestors. To-day on the Patriarchal throne of Constantinople sits a Nersess Varjabedian,* on whose shoulders has fallen the mantle of Gregory, the Xavier of Armenia. A child of Armenian Chris-

* This eminent and Godly and patriotic Patriarch died a few weeks after the date of this sermon.

tianity, he is devout, reverent, noble-hearted, great-souled and exceedingly sweet in disposition. Under his ecclesiastical reign the Armenian Church has been put through a hundred degrees of enlightenment and excellence. He preaches the pure truth, lives a shinningly Christian life and carries the dearest interests of his people close to his thrilling heart. Aye, the care of millions and millions of Armenians rests on his faithful shoulders. Armenia has one bosom swelling with this one emotion of love and reverence for Nersess Varjabedian. Perhaps you will say, Why, then, do our missionaries, instead of going to heathens, spend their time and money in converting the Christian Armenians into Congregationalism, Presbyterianism, or to the Baptist faith? I do not object to missionaries, representing various sects, carrying a spiritual power and introducing a diviner energy into this old church. They are welcome to labor for the enlightenment and the leading out of what is noblest in these people. But I do think that it is a mistaken policy which aims at dividing and taking to pieces the old national organization and, instead, creating a number of sectarian isms. Here is a historic Christian institution. Against it are arrayed the forces of the Western denominations. First comes the Congregationalist, with his creed, his form of worship, and succeeds to tear a few from the mother church, and puts up a new building for the seceders. Then enters the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the

Episcopalian, the Carmelites, and, last of all the close-communication Baptist. All these build with Western money sectarian churches and put up their respective machinery. The Orthodox Armenian Church turns to the Boards that support the missions and asks them whether it be honorable and fraternal thus to assail and directly or indirectly to undermine this Christian church. Should there be no Christian courtesy between the Church of the Orient and that of the Occident? Has she no rights which the Western churches should respect? It has often been answered that the missionaries at first desired to labor in the old church, but that they were refused and compelled to go out. Did they think they could do it in a day? Does it not take time and effort and perseverance to bring about a glorious reformation? How many years did they labor before they were forced out, and was it not their method and policy which brought upon them the suspicions of the people? Far be it from me, to antagonize missionary enterprise. There is a sad need in the Armenian, as in a great many Protestant churches of more spiritual life and less formality, and may God make the missionaries instrumental in kindling a new fire and devotion on our national altars. May their preaching stir the depths of our souls and exalt our minds in reverence and worship of God's truth. Still, as an Armenian, with my Christian ancestors' blood throbbing in my heart, I will lift my

humble voice against this sectarianism of the West, which stands without, and throws stones at our institutions hoary with age, illustrious with her calendar of holy martyrs, honorable with her heroism and defence of the faith, against the semi-savage Turks, the barbarous Kurds, the fire-worshippers of Persia, and the jealous sects of Latin Christianity. For the cause of Christ upon a thousand fields, the Armenian has given his share all warm from the heart. Her history is sprinkled with the blood of glorious martyrdom. To-day this is *all* that poor, persecuted, conquered, exiled Armenia has. It is the one thing, the true patriotic and Christian Armenian loves. Break that national stronghold, which has inspired her children with moral courage, and Armenia is lost. Her sun sinks in gloom. Even if she had a few things peculiar to her worship, let her live and enjoy growth, progress and light.

There are signs of a better day coming, the glorious morning will soon break and the sun of righteousness with healing on his wings will shed down his perpendicular rays upon this apostolic country. What! will the many prayers of her saintly leaders be forever lost? Will the good seed planted by the illuminator, rot in the soil? Will not the blood shed at her shrine bring freedom to her sons? Already the Eastern hills are red with the purple promise of a magnificent sun-rise.

Not many weeks ago, I was in the city of Constantinople, and by invitation, went to hear a bishop

of the Armenian church deliver a sermon, the large building was one mass of humanity, a sea of upturned faces. The eloquent preacher, dressed in gorgeous attire, after the custom of the Orient, ascended the pulpit. How still, how hushed the great throng, one could hear their breathing. The sermon was altogether evangelical, and full of sharp and searching thrusts at the sinner. I could see the moistened eyes in the audience, the lips trembling in prayer, and the glance of the eye turn heavenward. He held them spell-bound in his hand, and they drank in his sweet words, as the thirsty traveller stoops to drink from the silver edge of a flowing stream in the desert. He had no note, no manuscript, no written discourse to chain his hand and mind, but spoke out of a heart warm and glowing. Are not such men and such preaching brave prophecies of a revival and spiritual life? Not long ago I was at Amasia, which is about five hundred miles from Constantinople, and which is one of the most picturesque and historical towns in the East. Here Julius Cæsar came, and not very far from it, fought his memorable battle, and wrote his still more memorable letter, "*Veni, Vidi, Vici.*" This city lies in the embrace of rocky and sublime mountains, which descend into the river Iris. As a Protestant preacher, the Armenians of that city invited me to occupy the pulpit of the bishop, stand in the old Church and speak to them concerning religion. Few years ago, this would have been impossible, no Protestant minister could preach in

the Armenian Church. God has prepared His people for the reception of His truth, and if our methods be wise, kind and liberal, we will succeed in washing her ancient walls of all the stains of superstition and renew the immortal spirit of true worship in her temples. Armenia will be purged and saved through the power of Christ. She will become a polished and precious jewel in Emanuel's crown. In the great Orient, the Armenian Church shall be the guardian and evangel of truth. Armenia sighs for freedom, sighs for education, sighs for deliverance from oppression, sighs for the true and splendid light of religion. Yonder Heavens, that have been stormed with these piercing sighs, shall one day melt into a shower of benediction and blessing upon her desolate fields.

*CONSTANTINOPLE, OR CHRIST
AMONG THE TURKS.*

“One God the Arabian Prophet preached to man,
One God the Orient still
Adores, through many a realm of mighty span,
A God of power and will.”

“Islamism, following as it did on ground that was none of the best, has, on the whole, done as much harm as good to the human race.

“It makes men tyrants or slaves, women puppets, religion the submission to an infinite despotism.”

CONSTANTINOPLE; OR CHRIST AMONG
THE TURKS.

“ *Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance.*”—PSALM ii., 8.

It was a charming day in July, the waters of the Euxine were murmuring softly, the tender blue of the Oriental sky was without a cloud. Our hearts beat high and loud, as we felt the breezes of our native land fanning our cheeks, and the old, old associations of home, transfigured into noiseless tears, unconsciously flowing from our eyes. As we sailed through the two rocks of ancient fame which guard the entrance into the Black Sea, through which, like an open gate, rushes forth the Bosphorus and mingles with the Marmora, the feeling came over us, that we were the happiest beings on earth, for between us and home there was but a step. Slowly and smoothly we glided down the famous stream, with Europe and Asia on either hand. Hills peeping o'er hills, picturesque valleys, handsome Oriental palaces, and a thousand glittering minarets, giving to the Bosphorus a loveliness, a

charm, and a magnificence not to be surpassed. Yonder, centuries ago, Crysostom opened his mouth of gold, and his immortal voice can still be heard over the din and roar of traffic. There sat Persian Darius and watched his great army with pride and glory. Thither came the enthusiastic crusaders, under the influence of one Peter the Hermit, and leadership of Godfrey the Pious. Across this blue stream which gives to history some of its most dazzling pages, sailed the mythical Greeks in pursuit of the golden fleece; the first Constantine for his Nova Roma, and Mohammed the Second, dressed its waters in wedding garments for the capture of this Oriental Queen from Christian grasp. With all this, your imagination is thronged, and while plunged in contemplation of these hard problems of history, suddenly your steamer turns her head towards Dolma Bapche, and Constantinople, the only imperial city in the world, bursts upon your vision. In the glory of the rising sun gleams the city of the Sultan adorned as an Eastern bride. Thou! thronged metropolis of the Orient, that containest all nationalities and languages and religions, who made thee so fair, thy waters so blue, thy heavens so tender, and thy foundations so sublime? Constantinople is built on seven hills, and from all over the city we could see the Moslem Mosques lifting their proud brow against the Eastern azure. We turn our eyes towards Galata, and all at once the vision of home is before us. "Home again, from

a foreign shore," we forgot all else, and with bounding heart we thank God, for home and fatherland. In the midst of the noise and confusion on deck, our neighbors hear us whispering the Song of the Occident, which seemed so much sweeter in the far far away Orient.

'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble there's no place like home ;
A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met elsewhere.

Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
There's no place like home.

My purpose in this discourse is to tell you something about the religious aspect of Constantinople, the attitude of the haughty Turk towards the Cross of Christ. In one sense Istamboul is the Mecca of Mohammedanism. The Kaliph, successor to the dead prophet, who is at the same time Sultan of the Ossmanlies, resides here. This is the stronghold of that Oriental faith which is the chief antagonist and foe of Christianity. Here rules Mohammed, whose dead body sleeps in a gilded tomb at Mecca, but whose thought for many centuries has chained the hands and pinched the forehead of every Mussulman. From the numerous minarets of this city ascends the cry that fashioned Mohammedanism, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his prophet." The learned Ulemas—doctors of Mohammedan law, the great preachers of the

Koran, the enthusiastic leaders of the people,—with green turban, flowing gown, and yellow sandals, walk its streets and guard the faith with jealous care. With the exception of Christianity, Islam is the only missionary and aggressive faith. More than Buddha, than Brahma, than Confucius, than Zoroaster, lives Mohammed in the religious world. These other faiths have ceased to be missionary in spirit. The great field is occupied by Christ and Mohammed. Islam is making fresh advances every year in Africa, Australia, and the interior of India. Graduates from its theological halls mount on their camels, with a Koran in their bosoms, without salary or endowment, plunge into the deserts of Arabia or the wilderness of Africa to propagate the truth as it is in Mohammed. Like Jesus, Mohammed was at first persecuted by his own people and disbelieved by his own brethren. Mohammedanism at first, like Christianity, was very weak and helpless and limited in influence, but in the course of time it spread far and wide, swelling the number of the prophet's followers to hundreds of millions. In a few years Mohammed conquered Arabia, overturned her heathen temples, put to flight her false gods, established the worship of the one true God, and converted the "sand of the desert into explosive powder, blazing heaven-high from Delhi to Grenada." To this Saracen founder of religion was given

“The monarch mind, the mystery of commanding,
The birth-hour gift, the art Napoleon,
Of wielding, moulding, gathering, welding, banding
The hearts of thousands, till they moved as one.”

This day Islam is twelve hundred and seventy years old, with one-fifth of humankind under her sway. The immense mosques of Sultan Selim, of Soleiman the Magnificent, of St. Sophia, of Kaliph Ormar, and of other countries, are daily thronged with a multitude of enthusiastic worshippers calling upon the name of “Allah,” unaided by the pompous forms and cumbersome rituals of Latin Christianity, but in simplicity and plainness of manner. Five times every day the Imams, priests of Islam, ascend the tall minarets and lift their turbaned heads in the clear sky to call the faithful to prayer. “Prayer is better than sleep!” rings from every minaret, until the sound goes around the Mohammedan world, girdling it with these never-ceasing vibrations, keeping it awake and at worship. At the sound of the Muezzin’s call the faithful hasten to the house of prayer, or fall on their knees, with face turned to Mecca, and perform their religious duties with an untiring zeal. I was at Constantinople in the month of Ramasan, the *fast* month of the Turk. For a whole month, from early morning to the going down of the sun, they abstain from all food and drink. It is the month of pennance and penitence. The great and eloquent Moslem preachers

ascend the pulpit, and the mosques are open at all hours of day and night, with an endless throng going in and coming out. The Koran is recited, the Prophet's life reviewed and the virtues and excellencies of the faith discussed. The people perform their vows, offer prayers to God and renew their allegiance to the Prophet. The embroidered curtains that hang on the gates are in perpetual motion by the surging tide of Mussulmen, entering, with sandal and turban, the temples of worship. I was standing upon the iron bridge which connects Istambol with Pera, and all of a sudden there was the crash of music, the clash of arms, the shout of soldiers, and the rush of horses. I turned around and behold, a mass of gold, the most dazzling grandeur bearing the Sultan to the treasury where Mohammed's "holy coat" and other articles of wear, his comb, his wooden clogs, a few hairs from his beard and the sacred sheets on which his life is written, are preserved. There the Sultan, with all the Shahs, goes to listen reverently for two hours, a detailed account of the Prophet's life. As he comes out, faithful in his zeal for the faith, he is followed by the enthusiastic crowd, who follow his chariot wheels and shout their hearts out. The next day found me standing at the gate of St. Sophia. Alas! what lingering memories in those walls, those marks of ancient date, that architecture of magnitude and of beauty, too. Once a Christian temple, built by Christian money and for Christ,

now a Moslem house, with every vestige of Christianity rubbed out. Yet even now as you go in, such is her immensity and magnificence, that you exclaim "Justinian, thou art immortal in this temple." In the holy month of Ramasan, Christians are not admitted into the Mosque during service time. I wore a fez and with a backsheesh approached one of the door-keepers, and succeeded to get his permission to enter in, and see Mohamedans at worship. Said the doorkeeper to me: "Be free, do not betray your nationality and you will be safe." Uncovering my feet, I walked in. Oh! what a sight, what a transfiguration, what changes has history made. I could have wept when I beheld such a possession fallen from the grasp of Christians. Its spacious halls were filled with turbaned heads, white, green, red, and black. It was one mass of humanity praying, shouting, singing in a whisper, preaching and teaching. Under each column or swinging chandelier sat one Ulemma, surrounded with a congregation of hearers, sufficient to fill any of our churches on Broad street—listening to the expounding of the word. I drew quietly near to one of the preachers, and it was thus he ended his thrilling discourse. "The merciful God on this sacred spot, and in this holy month, pour his spirit of peace and light upon you." The congregation, out of their deepest heart, cried Amen. "The almighty God, keep you true and faithful to the very end." Amen, again rose

from the people's souls. "The great and only God, write upon your hearts the precepts of Al Koran and pardon you all your sins." Oh! the thunder of "Amen." That raised the preacher who had been sitting down on a soft cushion, to his feet, and with one majestic gesture, that seemed to carry him far above his kneeling hearers, far above the white columns, far above the ringing dome, far above the oriental blue, to the throne of the eternal, he exclaimed in a pathetic, and eloquent voice. "Thou Allah! deliver these, thy children from the darkness of the world, the snares of evil men, the houses of shame and sin, the dens of vice, of drunkenness and blasphemy. Save them from the influence of infidel books, of false religions, and hear the intercessions of the Prophet Mohammed, in their behalf." Methought Justinian's temple shook from its foundation with the eloquent Amen of the people. Methought, never before, had this noble structure heard so earnest and thrilling a voice.

In this large concourse of people, I did not see a single woman. One solitary creature, trembling under the weight of years, was kneeling on the cold, bare marble in the vestibule, and offering her prayer.

I hastened out, and with the pure, fresh air, fell on my ear a musical voice coming from the heights. I lifted my face, and lo! a young Mussulman was chanting a sweet prayer. If my efforts have been a success, the translation of his prayer

would be, "Thou bountiful one, thy mercy ceases not; my sins are great, greater is thy mercy, I extol thy perfections." I went home and thought over what I had seen and heard on that day of Ramasan. My heart grew sad and sadder still, as I saw how near, in one sense, the Mohammedans were to the Kingdom of Heaven, and yet, would not enter in. So much of truth and goodness, and Scripture in their religion, but the chief thing lacking. The Moslems believe in Jesus, as a Prophet of great power who lived eighteen hundred years ago, and prepared the world for the coming of Mohammed, the last and greatest of all sent from God. Islam students quote the Scriptures to prove the Apostleship of Mohammed. These words of Moses to the children of Israel, "The Lord, thy God, will raise up unto thee a Prophet . . . of thy brethren" are often quoted. The brethren of Jacob's children were the Ishmærites, and Mohammed, descending from that race, is said to be a fulfilment of this prophecy. In the Septuagint translation of Isaiah, we read of "two riders, one on an ass and one on a camel." The one represents Jesus, as he entered Jerusalem on the ass, the other is a foresight of Mohammed entering Mecca on his camel. Again, in the new Testament, Jesus was asked by the people whether he was Christ Elijah, or *that Prophet*. Who is that Prophet, but Mohammed? "I shall send you the Comforter;" even these words have been interpreted as being prophetic of the Arabian's birth.

The faith of Mohammed has also its dark side. It lacks the spirit, teaching, and glorious example of Jesus Christ. As a system of ethics, or of religion, it is cold, barren and weak. Nay, it is a source of positive evil, by reason of its spirit of hate, persecution, and bigotry. It believes in pushing Mohammed at the point of the bayonet. Its war cry is "the Koran or the sword." It puts up Mohammed as the ideal man. Higher, no man can be. Better, no man can be. The sensual, ambitious, blood-thirsty, fanatical soldier of Saracene birth, is held as the best, purest, and noblest example. It puts up the Koran, a book of very many good and devout sayings, but also, filled with fables, immoralities, bad advice and fiction, as the Holy Book to become their law, faith, life and worship. With such a belief woven into the very texture of Islam, it has opposed education and progress, from the day that Kaliph Omar ordered the burning of the Alexandrian library, saying that "If these books agree with the Koran, we don't need them; let them be burned; and if they do not agree with the Koran, they are pernicious, and on that account should be burned." Wherever the Turk has gone with the Koran he has hindered the dawn of day. Wherever he has set his foot there he has sown the seeds of ruin.

Under Turkish rule fertile lands have been converted into a wilderness, walled cities to a ruinous heap. Mohammedanism has dragged down man

into the lowest vices and immoralities. Oh, that I could make the great number of sufferers—their bitter complaints, their sad groans, their broken hearts, their oppression and persecution under Moslem justice—to speak to you at this hour! It would fill your eyes with tears and wring sighs from your hearts. Let Mohammed be judged by his fruits; let the civilizations he has ruined testify against him; let the misery, ignorance and tyranny he has nursed by his spirit of intolerance be the argument against his claims.

Do you want to know what Christ is doing among the Turks? Will you hear what the truth, as it is in Jesus, has done for the Mohammedan people? I am ashamed to confess that in Constantinople, the great heart of Islam, the religion of the Risen One has made very little progress. There are very few or no converts from Islam in the capital. For sixty years the American missionary has preached on the classic shores of the Bosphorus, but, apparently, without any effect. No Mohammedan church has been built, no Mohammedan preacher has been ordained, no Mohammedan convert has been baptized. Shall we say that Christ has been a failure with these children of the Arabian desert? Shall we say that the Gospel can avail in China, in Japan, in dark Africa, but not in Turkey among the Turks? No! Let us not lose faith; let us not despair; let us not turn our backs and flee from the battle-field!

On the heights of Roumeli-Hissar, overlooking the castles of great Darius and the blue Bosphorus, stands Robert College, unfurling the Star-Spangled Banner in the land of the Crescent. This American institution of Christian learning is verily the light of Asia. From its halls proceeds the invisible but invincible influence, moulding, shaping and carving the character of the whole empire. You cannot capture Turkey by the cannon, or by the force of diplomacy, but by the power of light. Education is the road to salvation. Robert College is doing more for the cause of Christ, of truth and of goodness, than all the powers of Europe put together.

The days of Islam are numbered. Its dark and long night is wearing out. The heavens begin to gleam with Orient light. Christ the King is coming, and superstition, ignorance, fanaticism, falsehood and fiction cannot stand against the sweeping might of light, of knowledge, of truth, and of the divine life? Can Mohammed resist the eloquence of Calvary and the almightiness of love, and the power and pathos of the gospel of the resurrection? Come quickly, Lord Jesus, and like a full-orbed sun shine upon that ancient land of glorious birth, that once more the shores of the Bosphorus may ring with the song of Christendom. "All hail the power of Jesus' name."

“ There’s a fount about to stream,
There’s a light about to beam,
There’s a warmth about to glow,
There’s a flower about to blow,
There’s a midnight blackness changing
 into gray,
Men of thought and men of action
 clear the way !”

“ Aid the dawning tongue and pen,
Aid it hopes of honest men,
Aid it paper, aid it type,
Aid it for the hour is ripe,
And our earnest must not slacken
 into play,
Men of thought and men of action
 clear the way.”

HEART FRAGRANCE.

“ Thy sweetness hath betrayed thee, Lord,
Dear Spirit, it is thou ;
Deeper and deeper in my heart I feel
Thee, nestling now.”

“ Dear Comforter, eternal love,
Yes, thou will stay with me,
If *manly thought and loving ways*,
Build but a *nest* for thee.”

HEART FRAGRANCE.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.”

MATT. xxii.—37.

The two great commandments of Christ are, love to God and love to man.

We cannot love God and hate our fellow men. “How can we have the love of God in us and hate the brethren?” This two-fold love, the one feeding on the other, is the fragrance of the regenerated heart. The heart is made to love. It is forever springing up within us and fastening its affections upon the supremely beautiful, and altogether lovely One. It fills and refills its little cup with love, and pours it upon the object of its worship—God. It is a vase of alabaster, full of fragrance, breaking, every time it comes into communion with Christ, “the beauty of Angel Worlds.” God with the largeness of His heart draws all hearts to Himself. He makes earthly parents, who press on their bosom their darling children and cover their round, rosy cheeks with kisses of natural affection, and who will die for their offsprings, instinctively to look up to the Infi-

nite Father and Mother, who presses all His children to His oceanic heart and stoops to kiss their lips, as the blushing morn kisses the eastern hills. When we are very weak, and the waves of some great sorrow roll over our heads, like the billows of the sea over the storm-battered coast, and when rayless gloom settles upon the soul, how we long for the wings of a dove to fly away, and be at rest in the Great Heart of God, where there is perfect calm. In our afflictions and bitter disappointments, when our eyes are tearful and our crosses heavy, how sweet to think of the love of God, where dwelleth peace and joy and light. Love of God is the antidote to sorrow. Love of God is also the inspiration of life. When fighting in the battle of life, pressed with foes on every hand, thousands falling at your side, sharp arrows piercing your heart, weary and worn, how cheering to think of God, who loves you, and follows you with His unslumbering eye, and sends His angels to minister to your wants. How inspirational to feel that your heart is locked in God's heart, and that He will be with you even to the end of the world. This divine love stirs the the depths of our soul and under its warm and penetrating influence the human heart blooms into beauty, blossoms all over and bursts into a flower of sweetest fragrance.

The love of our neighbor is the offspring of our love of God. The one is the stem, the other is the flower. Our love to God grows into love for our

fellow-men. Religion is not complete without this. "Love one another as I have loved you," is the New Testament Commandment. Have a pure and unselfish desire to help and benefit and comfort even the lowest and meanest of all. The disciple of Jesus must not wish evil, must not be revengeful, unforgiving, envious, belligerent, cruel, selfish or indifferent to the wants of others. Even his enemies he must bless, and return them good for evil. This seems very hard, but Christianity is a religion of sacrifice. It costs a man to be a Christian. It costs a man to breathe the Divine Spirit. It costs a man to follow Christ. But the love of God to-us-ward, makes the sacrifice a privilege. Is there any virtue if I should love my benefactor and hate those who have wronged me in word and deed? Is it Christ-like to bless your friends and wish evil and curse your enemies? We shall know that we are His disciples if we overcome evil with good, hatred with love, cruelty with compassion, jealousy with generosity, slander with truth, meanness with frankness, hypocrisy with honesty, and the spirit of revenge with forgiveness. Be like the "trees that yield their fruit to those who throw stones at them." This broad Christian principle is the silver bell of heaven, ringing in our ears at all the hours of day—"but the greatest of these is charity." The Persian poet, Hafis, voices this same sentiment, when he says:

“ Learn from yon Orient shell to love thy foe,
And store with pearls the hand that brings thee woe.
Flee like yon rock, from base vindictive pride,
Imblaze with gems the wrist that tears thy side :
Mark when yon tree rewards the stony shower
With fruit nectarious, or the balmy flower.
Shall man do less, than heal the smitten, or the railer bless.”

Love and goodness, the one to God, the other to our fellow-men, are the two cardinal doctrines of religion. This evening, I call your attention to the nature of the love which our hearts must generate for “our Father in Heaven.”

To love God is to lift our minds and our hearts and our consciences and our souls in reverence and worship towards Him. It is to bend our minds in humility before His truth, our consciences before His justice, and our souls before His holiness. It is to serve Him with every faculty and fibre of our manhood. It is the deep of humanity in us calling upon the deep of Divinity in God. It is the reaching of our heart after His sunshine. And when the fullness of God dwelleth in us, and all the living strings of the inward harp are in chord with the Divine will, then is our flower of piety in full bloom, beautiful as the chaste stars of heaven, and fragrant as the lilies of the field.

My hearers, you will be surprised to see what erroneous ideas men possess concerning the nature of this heart-love. Years ago, people supposed that the “love of God” consisted in tormenting their

physical frames and abstaining from food and fleeing from the world. The person who lived in a cave and suffered his nails to grow and cut himself with knives and wore a shirt of iron next to his flesh, was considered the friend of God. The theology of those days said to the people, "If you love God, show it by denying yourself all rest, by banishing sleep from your eyelids, by wearing your flesh thin, by carrying an iron girdle and a head-plate of coarse iron wire in the form of a heart, which will bruise you, wound you, and tear the flesh from your bones for Christ's sake." Simeon, the Stylite, spent thirty and seven years of his life on the top of a pillar at Antioch, for the purpose of growing in his love for God. Others forsook their children their parents, and fled to the deserts, that they may be, alone with God. Others shut themselves up in convents, cells, nunneries and dark cloisters, that their hearts may expand with love of God. Others, again, ruined by bad usage the house of clay where God has lodged His spark of immortality, and clipped their spirits, disfigured and mutilated the noblest in them, thinking that in this way they will please God and persuade Him to come down and dwell with them. Oh! the crimes, the suicides, the blasphemies, the wrecks, in the name of love of God; oh! the atrocities, the barbarism, and the cruelties committed with a purpose to appease the wrath of God and win His friendship. All this passed in the name of love, in the name of sweet and tender

affection for the dear God. The heart, which like a flower opens to drink in all the sunshine of the heavens, then scatters its fragrance all around, was converted to a hollow, dumb, dry and insensitive sepulchre. Yet even to-day there are Christian sects which associate piety—the sincere love of the heart for God—with fasting and abstaining from food. It is thought that a pale countenance, a thin frame, a sad and sorrow-stained face, and a sickly look, are evidences of strong and growing spirituality. St. Paul is quoted to prove that the body must be prostrated by frequent fasting, and the soul thrown into a melancholy state by constant meditation upon our sins and transgressions. The theory is that when God beholds our sufferings He will be pleased, and seeing the leanness of our flesh will delight our spirits with fatness. This again, my kind hearers, is at war with the idea that true and vital love consists in our hallowed affections rising Godward and fastening themselves on His person, the heart, soul and conscience, the whole man springing up towards the Supreme sweetness. True fasting consists not in setting apart certain days and weeks for a prescribed abstinence from food, for the soul fasts truly when it is feeding on God with such enthusiasm and rapture that the body forgets its need of food. It is spontaneous, unbidden and voluntary. The strength and ecstasy of the spirit sustains the frail frame and imparts to it vitality. Mary, the sister of Martha, was so in-

tensely absorbed with the Master's love that she sat for hours at His feet, forgetting all else. I have read of the philosopher Newton being so profoundly interested in his studies that he often found no time to eat, did not care to eat, for he had found something sweeter to his taste than meat and drink, and they took away his meals from his study just as they had brought them. Sometimes, when our hearts are swelled with a great joy, we lose appetite for food, we would rather dwell upon the dear object of our happiness, than have our minds diverted from it. Thus, when the adoring soul rises to the serene summits of devotion and spiritual communion, and lovingly lingers on the heights, where God is and where the heavens are peaceful and calm, and the sunshine is constant, it is then that the body fasts while the spirit is fed from the exhaustless breast of God.

Another wrong idea, which is very prevalent, renders this love of God, to consist in a sentimental, purely emotional, and therefore superficial worship of God. In the discharge of my pastoral duties, I have found that some people think that to be religious is to be talking and gossiping about religion all the time, they have an idea that if they repeat the name of God a dozen times during the day and call Him in endearing names, such as "sweet Father," "precious Saviour," and "dear Jesus," and "sing love-songs to Him," and pray to be taken away from the world and placed in the arms of Jesus, and

shedding tears at the communion table, and picturing before their eyes Christ in the agony of death on the cross, with wounded side, and bruised brow and broken heart, and lament over his sufferings in a sentimental way, they will be loving God with the heart, mind and soul. In the Eastern countries Christians think that no one can have profound love for Christ, and having the means, neglect to visit Jerusalem, to weep over the holy sepulchre and make the footprints of Jesus in Judea wet with tears of penitence. Candles are burnt before the shrine of the great martyr. His picture is hung on the wall and in the beautiful months of summer, His tomb is converted to a monument of flowers. But this alone, is sentimentalism. It is superficial religion, religion of the feelings alone, of the eyes and hands, not of the deep, deep heart. It is not the inexhaustible fragrance of soul ever ascending up to the nostrils of God. Conventional piety is a mere show, not the real thing, the words are there, the phrases are perfect, the form is beautiful, but the spirit, the vital breath, is absent. The persons without any faith whatever, may manifest this kind of religion by using similar words and forms; the hypocrite may have all the appearance of piety, by imitating the prayers and songs of sentimental worship; the Pharisee may pass for a saint by concealing his true self behind the screen of emotional and shallow religion. This one fact has given religion a bad name. Ah! say people, we know what that means;

to be religious is to assume a grave sepulchral tone, carry about a long face, spend hours on your knees in long prayer, to be seen of men and become visionary, unpractical and sentimental. Do you wonder at the irreverence of the multitudes for religion? Are you filled with surprise at the coarse indifference of men for the professions of Christians? Remove therefore from religion all that is formal and conventional, and let it be the pure and undefiled love of the heart, growing into wholesome fruit and filling the world's lap with riches, beauty and usefulness. Bury mere talk, mere feeling, mere sentiment, under the waves of the sea. Have first the reality, the jewel, and then your speech will be sanctified, your feelings and emotions an acceptable offering unto God.

How shall we win this prize? How can we make our whole life to yield this fragrance? I answer, by being *busy* in the cause of goodness on earth. We are living in an eminently active age. Science, trade, commerce and art, are stretching every nerve and employing every live matter and utilizing every second of time. Indolence, sloth, hesitancy, means failure, to stand still is to give up hope. See them pushing, driving, toiling and yearning for the mark before them. This activity adds to their interest, warms into life new efforts, fans into flame their desires and keeps them growing and getting deeper and deeper in love with the aim of their life. Thus it is in the Christian world. Be up and doing, employ every talent and gift to better the little sphere

wherein God has placed you. Push with both hands and shoulders, the chariot wheel of the Kingdom of Heaven. Do not stop to rest, there is a heaven of rest for you when you have done well. There are the ignorant to be instructed, the poor to be helped, the fallen to be lifted up, the lost to be rescued, and a world to be pushed through greater degrees of excellence. Do with all your might, your part, your duty, and you will find no time to doubt or disbelieve. But like a green and tender vine, your affections will twine closer and closer around God, who is the author of all that is true and just, pure and lovely in human life.

I believe that an active Christian piety, loaded with rich fruit, is the only hope of a world. You who are believers "look aghast on the spectacle of a world's corruption." Think of the amount of sin, of misery, of drunkenness and of ignorance. Has science put an end to these crimes? Has education helped man, completely to overthrow these evils? Has wealth accomplished the desired end? Nay! but has religion done it? Alas, for eighteen hundred years it has been preached. Christendom is dotted over with church and chapel, but where is the wickedness we have stemmed, the monster we have slayed, the abuse we have reformed, or the bad custom we have put down? What then, is religion obsolete? Is God asleep? Is Jesus dead? Is piety foolish sentimentality? Not so, Oh! thou Eternal One. Not so, Great Guardian of all truth.

Let us *do* for Christ,^f let us love God in deed and in truth, let us translate our confession into conduct, let us practice the precepts of Christ, let our whole life be a prayer of faith, of truth and inspiration. In one word, let us be *busy* in God's vineyard after our Father's business as was the child Jesus, and like Him we will grow stronger in spirit, deeper in love and piety. Then will the whole earth and all humanity grow in a living likeness to God, and bud and blossom as the fragrant rose in His right hand.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

All-together lovely one; Chief among ten thousand. Communicate unto us the pure, unsullen love of thy divine heart. Fill us from the endless Ocean of thy Being. We pray thee, cleanse our hearts of all other idols, of this transient world, riches that perish, and the passions and ambitions of the flesh, and reign thou God of light and love, supreme over all our desires. Our souls thirst for thee, thou living God. Our hands are stretched out to thee in filial love and faith, disappoint us not, laugh not at our folly and weakness, reject us not by reason of our short-comings. But take us all under the shelter of thy motherly wings, and feed our love and zeal for thy truth and in thy service, by the Holy Spirit. Moisten the seed sown into our hearts and give growth to the flower of piety, that its leaves may open and its ripe fruit fall into thy lap—and unto thy name Jehovah, God shall be ascribed all praise in all ages.—AMEN.

WHAT IS GOD?

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Father who art in heaven, thou all perfect, all knowing, and all righteous one: We come into thy presence to behold the matchless beauty of thy countenance, to commune with thine infinite spirit, to be fed from thine exhaustless breast, and to be made purer in heart, holier in soul, and larger in conscience and in mind.

We hasten into thy house of prayer, of praise, of holy worship and inspiration, where thou, our shield and our reward art present, to bless, to heal, to comfort and to save. We thank thee for this day of rest, of joy and benediction. We thank thee for thy truth, so freely and magnanimously given unto us, to become our daily food and drink. Above all, we thank thee for Jesus, the brightness of thy face, and source of all good. Breathe upon us his spirit, and kindle within us the flame of love, and devotion for his cause. Creator of all things, we thank thee for the return of Spring, and for the promise of Summer in the green grass, the swelling bud upon tender branches, in the sweetness and beauty of the flowers so generously scattered at our feet, and in the genial warmth of the sun, shaking down glorious day upon our eyes. In the

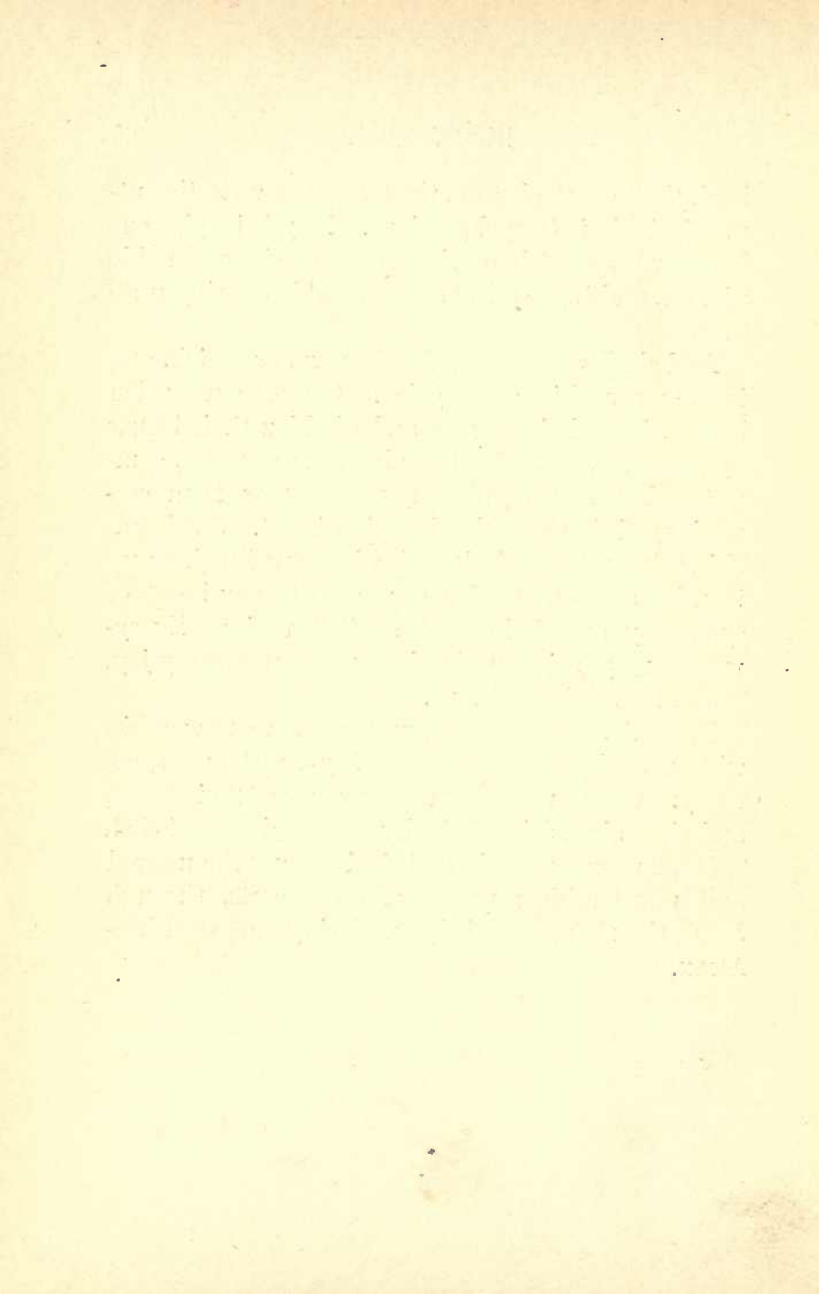
ten thousand objects of thy power and wisdom, we behold the beauty of thy thought, the magnitude of thy being, and the wondrous love of thy heart. We would mingle our voices with the murmur of the streams, the rustle of the leaves, the singing of the birds, and the music of the stars, and praise God from whom all blessings flow. Oh! Holy Father, may there be a Springtime in our spiritual life. May there be sunshine and Summer in the realm of our souls. May every seed of virtue, of piety and of love, be warmed into generous growth in our lives, filling thy lap with ripe and rich fruit. Deliver us from the cold chilling blasts of sin. Save us from the Winter of barrenness and unfruitfulness. Save us from the night of doubt and disbelief. Keep us forever, upon the heights where thou art, and where the cares and passions and ambitions of earth cannot disturb us in thine arms. Thou art the God of love. In the largeness of thy heart, there is room for us all. When earthly parents forget us, Thou Divine Goodness shall not forsake us, but keep us in the hollow of thy hand. When billows roll over us, and dark clouds float above us, and we are in distress, in grief and in affliction, underneath us shall be thy everlasting arms. When we fall and our hearts bleed from the thorns of life, and we sin against the light, and thy goodness, and thy love, then we shall seek thy face and implore thy mercy and forgiveness. Oh! thou friend of the fallen, thou canst pardon, thou canst

heal, thou canst cleanse, thou canst save to the utmost. This is Gospel glorious. May it inspire our hearts with great hopes, brave prophecies and noble virtues, making our life an acceptable offering unto thee.

And shall we not pray for those who are sick, and in sorrow and in great grief? Come, thou burden bearer, into their homes and gladden their hearts by sweet messages from the heavens of peace, comfort and strength. Wipe away the tear from sorrow's eye-lids, cheer the drooping heart. Shed sunshine through the darkened windows, lift them up in thine arms of tender care, and let thy heart of sympathy and help beat against theirs. Everywhere may thine uplifted countenance carry joy, peace, rest, light and love.

Bless also the strangers, who are here to worship with us. Welcome them to thy heart and sanctuary. Grant unto them the prayer of their heart, and shed abroad in their lives the fullness of God.

Hear us, now, good Lord, and answer the uttered and unutterable requests of our hearts, through Jesus, the risen, ascended, ever-living one, we ask.—
AMEN.



WHAT IS GOD ?

“ What think ye of Christ ? ”

MATT. xxii.—42.

God is immeasurable. Our finite minds cannot contain the Infinite One. His nature, His attributes, are too vast for human sight. Even “imagination’s utmost stretch in wonder dies away.” Who has crossed the unbounded and mysterious ocean of His being? Who has risen to the heights where the Eternal dwells shrouded in the glory of His love? What mortal has told us His name? In the words of the Poet Young, “A God alone can comprehend a God.” And shall we say, that because He is so far above the grasp of our mind, heart and soul, that therefore, He is the “Great Unknowable?” Are we in such starless night; in such helpless ignorance; in such pitiable weakness; that we cannot catch a glimpse of His face, smiling upon us at all the hours of mortal existence, or touch the skirts of His immensity, or even think of Him, who is “Our Father in Heaven?”

Believe me, there are lines of communication between man and his Maker. The clarified vision of

the spirit, beholds God and adores Him as the center and soul of a universe throbbing with His divinity at every point. Says Emerson, "By some private door God enters into every individual." His truth finds our mind ; His justice our conscience ; His love our hearts, and His holiness our souls. In some way God fills this little human cup brim-full with His sweetness, His light and inspiration. He is a great God, yet He reveals Himself to the immortal soul of man.

Christianity is not the worship of an indefinable and incomprehensible being. Were it so, then would our faith be a farce, our religion a mockery, and our profession a shame. Jesus Christ is the "brightness of the Father's face," and through him we know God. Knowing Him, we can love Him; loving Him, we can obey Him; and obeying Him, we shall be happy forever.

It is written that God made man after his own image. But man very often makes God to correspond to *his* likeness. We all have our ideas and impressions about the Divine Being, and our daily life is fashioned according to the loftiness and sweetness, or the meanness and hideousness of these thoughts. The real God is to us, precisely what we make Him to be. We see Him as our thoughts represent Him. Our life is the outside of our idea of God. We are happy, kind, useful, and forgiving, if our view of God's nature feeds these virtues in our life. We are grim and

gloomy, uncharitable and partial, if we believe this to be the character of God. He is tender hearted, compassionate, fatherly and gentle, or awful, revengeful, tyrannical and ugly, according to our thoughts about Him.

I do not mean to say that *our* thoughts change the divine nature. For if God is merciful, our opinion, that He is cruel will not make Him so. Thoughts only affect us, and become the anvil whereon our character is beaten and fashioned.

The tree of thought will bear fruit after its kind. The idea we have of God, will become a thing. And when I want to know your real God, I do not go to your creed, or to your theology or to your church : but to your every day life in the counting room, the street, the fire-side ; and from the character of the motives and impulses which sway your desires, from the nobleness or baseness of your conduct, I form an idea of the God, whose name is written on your heart. Your thoughts are translated into actions ; the ideal becomes the real in your life, and your life the true language of your creed.

“ We live in deeds not years, in thoughts, not breaths,
In feelings, not in figures on a dial ;
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest acts the best.
And he whose heart beats quickest lives the longest—
Lives in an hour more than in years do some,
Whose fat blood sleeps as it slips along the veins ;
Life is but a means unto an end ; that end
Beginning mean, and end to all things, God.”

Let me illustrate this power of our ideas of God in the formation of our character. In the dark ages the Christian church had an idea that God was a cruel, dreadful and narrow being, believing in persecution, and hate and fire, loving only the miserable and indolent hermit in his filthy cell, and frowning upon the toiling masses who remained in their spheres of battle, instead of fleeing to the desert. This was their notion of God. And this picture they reproduced in painting, in sculpture, in worship and in life. In Oriental churches, I have seen these ghastly representations filling one with horror and disgust. On one window is the throne of God, high in the clouds, while at his feet are the burning flames of hell devouring the enemies of the church. On another window is a devilish scene of the judgment day, which makes one turn pale. While yonder are the black and ugly demons, heaping fire upon the heads of the excommunicated heretics. Think of it, —all this in a Christian church. It was the idea they had of God, and they lived up to it. This one idea, that God was a cruel and vengeful being, originated the inquisition, Spanish, Mexican and South American; kindled the fires of Smithfield; inaugurated the massacre of St. Bartholomew; the thirty years war in Germany; the slaughter of the Netherlands; and the cold-blooded murder of many thousands of honest souls, who died lingering deaths in damp, subterranean cells. Christendom ran red with human blood; the Christian church was one huge wound

from the gashes cut in it by this savage and barbaric conception of the Supreme Being. They said, if God will burn the heretic forever in hell-fire, we must burn him now, for in so doing we are co-workers with God. If God hates the unbeliever, and the ones who disobey the church, we must follow His example and curse and anathematize them. If God will shut the door of heaven against the heretics, we must keep them out of our churches, away from our communion tables. All the disgraceful wars of the sects, the bloodshed and heartless atrocities of the believers, the harrowing scenes in dungeons and torture-chambers, had their origin in this inhuman and accursed idea, that the God of Heaven was a little, jealous, cruel and angry Being, loving a few of His friends, and hating all the rest.

Again, there was the idea, that God hated free thought, and the man who did his own thinking and differed with the established church. So when John Wickliffe, a poor monk in his cell at Oxford, began to teach the great truths of Protestantism and died before the wave of persecution had reached his abode, the Council of Constance ordered his bones to be dug up and burned. What little was left of the Reformer in the Lutterworth churchyard, was burned to ashes and cast to the winds. Why this cruelty to the dead man's remains? Because they had an idea that God, who is himself, the chief persecutor of such men, will hold them responsible in the last day, for not being God-like in their hatred

of the heretics. It was blasphemy to disagree with the church. Free thought was an unpardonable crime. God would punish this sin with eternal torment, and the followers of God ought to manifest a similar dislike for this crime and a likeness to God, by burning the sinner on earth. It makes my heart sad to think of the horrible crimes committed against the religion of light, life and freedom, by Catholics and Protestants, in the name of this anti-Christian idea. John Calvin was a master mind. John Calvin was a great soul. John Calvin is peerless in the ecclesiastical world as a man of head. But, as drunkenness is the one sad spot in the life of the Patriarch Noah; Debauchery, in that of Sanson; Adultery, in that of King David; Treason, in that of Peter; The one black stain in Calvin's character was his religious bigotry. With the Papal world he refused the right of private judgment and individuality of thought, which inspired the great movement of the Reformation. With this idea in his head, he became, to say the least, the cause of the burning of Servetus. Calvin could have saved the unfortunate man, but why should he? Did not God hate such men as Servetus? Will he not burn them forever? And should a man show any pity and compassion when God would not? Could Calvin come back to the world to-day and see Christ with the eyes of modern Christianity, he would hide his face in his hands for his cruelty against a brother-man, whose only fault was the free use of his faculties. Ah! even

had he then seen Jesus on the cross, breathing away His Holy Ghost in a glorious beatitude for his murderers, he would have fallen on his knees and wept with bitterness over his lack of charity for a frail, weak, mistaken creature of the Heavenly Father. It was not because these great theologians were naturally unsympathetic and cruel men. It was their idea of God and of His nature, which they carried out in their lives. Taking the religious history of the Mediæval Ages as a test, we infer that the God they worshipped was an altogether different Being. Their God loved the barren monastic life; our God loves the fruitful, active life in the sphere wherein he has placed us. Then He said, "Believe or burn," now He says, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Then He loved the Catholic and hated the Protestant, or loved the Protestant and hated the Catholic, now He says, "Ye are all brethren one of another." Then He was a tyrant before whom men and women trembled and grew pale; now He is the Father, who shall not forsake us, even when our earthly parents have forgotten us. God Almighty is the same immutable being, blessed forever. It is only our thoughts and ideas that have changed.

Once more. There is another idea that the Sovereign Creator of the universe, the Lord of men and King of angels, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, who occupies all time and fills all space,

is a petty, *sectarian* being, who has a choice between Presbyterianism and Methodism, between sprinkling and immersion, between written and extempore prayers, between the attitude of standing and kneeling in worship, between bishops and presbyters, between ministers and priests. He is represented as preferring one form of worship to another—the flowing gown to the ordinary dress, the cross-formed chapel to the plain house, and a great number of other non-essential, secondary matters—which convey the impression that God was a little being, extremely one-sided in His preferences and sectarian to the very core of His heart. Do you know what this idea has done? It has torn Christendom to a thousand sects. It has given birth to a multitude of irreconcilable schisms, all from the Bible. It has robbed the Body of Christ of its unity, glory and strength. It has made a Babel of the Church of God. The greatness of God and the greatness of His Word are a condemnation of the sectarian spirit. Read the inspired writers and you will see how plainly and emphatically they speak of the royal law of love, of righteousness, of purity of heart, of integrity of soul, of living faith, and of charity. There can be but one interpretation of the passages in Scripture where these solid truths are revealed. Only one sect, as far these great revelations are concerned. But with forms and numbers and figures or modes of prayer, or worship, or baptism, or sacrifice, a Great Bible has simply nothing to do. The

important truths have not divided Christendom so much as the little, obscure and secondary matters in the Word.

Once more. Coming still nearer to our times, we shall meet with people who will tell us of another idea about God. This represents the Divine Father as an unfair and imperfect being. God, it is thought, has provided an atonement for His special friends. The plan of salvation is full and complete, yet *limited* in its application. He is made to say to Himself, "Is not this offer of life free and gracious on my part and purely unmerited by my creatures; I will bestow it therefore on whomsoever I will, and pass by the rest." Accordingly Jesus died for the whole world, but *effectually* only for a certain number. He is offered to all men, but *irresistibly* to the chosen ones. God does not draw you, in the sense that he draws your neighbor. He does not offer unto you this great salvation, as he does to the *elect*. His atonement is limited. Christ's death only avails for the predestined. This idea of a limited atonement, I reject and consider it in direct opposition to the broad outlines of scriptural teaching. It makes God, "with whom there is no respect of persons," a partial and unjust judge. He provides no salvation for a certain number of His creatures, then punishes them for not accepting what was not offered to them in earnest. He does not make the *same offer* to all his creatures, who were brought to life, not by their own volition, but by a Divine

fiat, and then holds them accountable for not accepting what was really and sincerely never meant for them. Suppose you would set a table, rich with food and free to all, announce it as such, then invite all the hungry and needy to come and eat and live, but refuse equal privileges to all, would that, humanly speaking, be just and impartial. Then suppose you would turn around and strike these men on the head for not availing themselves of your bounty as the more favored ones have done, would that be fair, kind and in accord with the highest justice? Yet it is said, as Jonathan Edwards would say, as Hopkins and Emmons would say, "Is not God sovereign? Can He not do just as He pleases? Does He lack the power and right to save your neighbor and condemn you? Is it unfair in Him to offer His salvation to some, and withhold it from others?" We answer — God does what is right, just, impartial and absolutely fair. Using the faculties He has given me, I say such a course would make God an extremely unfair being. Do you say that I, being a poor human creature, may be mistaken in my ideas of justice and fairness, then I say, I may be mistaken in my ideas of love and kindness. How do I know, what Divine goodness is, or what divine compassion is? But if I may define these benevolent attributes in the Deity and be confident that in the main I am right, likewise I can form my ideas of divine justice and feel confident that what seems irrational and

contrary to Christian consciousness is not the attribute of an absolutely and infinitely perfect God.

Jesus Christ died for all men. For Judas Iscariot, in the same sense that He died for the great Apostle to the Gentiles. He called each one of these men, with equal love, sincerity and willingness to save. The one refused, and died; not because Christ would not help him as much as the other, but by reason of his own hardness of heart. I may be asked to reconcile the divine sovereignty with human freedom. My answer is, I cannot. I believe in the decrees of God, and I believe in a certain amount of freedom given to the human will. Further than this I cannot travel, for it is darkness and mystery. In preaching the gospel, I say to my people that this glorious gospel of the blessed God will do for you all that it has done for the purest spirit that ever drew breath. Christ is to you all that he ever was or will be to any other human creature. He is as near to your soul as he was to the great and saintly martyrs, reformers and heroes. Never for a moment suffer yourself to doubt this. Never say to yourself that, perhaps you are not elected to be saved; that perhaps God does not love you as much and as truly as he loves others; and that perhaps from eternity you have been predestined to be cast into the outer darkness. No, NO. Fling aside all such thoughts. Rise above all such doubts. God loves YOU. Jesus seeks to save you. You, yes, even you, the Infinite One yearns and agonizes to save. Am I asked to re-

concile this doctrine with the theory of fore-ordination and fore-knowledge? Do you tell me that I am not consistent? I answer, with consistency, I have nothing to do. I preach a free, full, gracious, glorious good news, and if it clashes with and seems to contradict certain theological ideas about God, I cannot help it.

“ I walk with bare hushed feet the ground
Ye tread with bo'dness shod,
I dare not fix with mete and bound
The love and power of God.

“ I know not where His islands lift
Their froned palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

“ And Thou, O Lord, by Whom are seen
All creatures as they be,
Forgive me if too close I lean
My human heart on thee.”

I plead with you this morning to shake off from your souls all these false thoughts about the dear God. Cast aside the horrible conception which, like iron, pierces the heart of tenderness. Tear from your bosom all these barbaric images of the infinite affection, and learn Him through the incarnate Christ. Believe in your innermost and centermost heart, that God is love, love above all and over all. Love, free, generous and warm as the sunlight at noon of day. Love, broad, tender, and comprehensive as the distant blue over our heads. Love, eternal,

illimitable and unconditional. Believe in this with all your being. Say you believe in it, till you are filled with it. Say it, till this beautiful thought pervades all your life. Say it till His all-conquering love has melted your heart to glad submission. Say it, till the love of God, glorious as the morning, has purged you from the stains of sin. Say it, till it becomes the unfailing inspiration of a gentle, meek, frank, reverent, true, devout and godly life.

Believe also in His *greatness*. The heart of God is large, there is room there for all who call upon His name, and put forth the little arms of the soul to embrace Him, and grope in the dark for the hem of His garment. It makes no difference in what language, or under what form, or by what creed they worship Him, Orthodox or Hetrodox, Calvinist or Armenian; they that worship Him "in the beauty of holiness," are His children. He is the father of all men; but they that "have not the spirit of Christ are none of His."

Believe again in the absolute perfection of God. He cannot fail in His gracious purposes. He will see that all wrong is set right, and justice is done to every creature. He will bring good out of evil, and better thence again. Though the Heavens fall, not one iota of His truth shall perish. In wisdom, He is all-knowing, in power, almighty, in justice, all righteous. And sure of His infinite perfection, we can face any thing in the shape of sorrow, of disappointment, or of death.

Fill your mind with such thoughts, feed your heart with ennobling and bright ideas; and your daily religion will be like the pure stream that descends from the tall mountains, is fed by the virgin snows and runs through the vast fields of humanity, fertilizing the soil, moistening the seed and filling God's lap with golden sheaves.

“Jesus, there is no dearer name than Thine,
Which time has blazoned on his mighty scroll;
No wreaths, no garlands ever did entwine
So fair a temple of so vast a soul.
There every Virtue set his triumph seal;
Wisdom conjoined with strength and radiant grace
In a sweet copy, Heaven to reveal,
And stamp perfection on a moral face;
Once on the earth wert Thou, before men's eyes,
That did not half Thy beautecus brightness see;
Once on the earth wert Thou a living shrine,
Wherein conjoining dwelt the good, the lovely, the Divine.”

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Thy name is love! Oh, thou Eternal One! And with exceeding great joy we repeat this dear name of thine! Thou hast the power to save to the utmost, and to be gracious unto all thy creatures! Mightier than the tide of the Atlantic Sea is the omnipotence of thy love! Wider than the blue heavens is thy providence, hedging us in on every hand! Thou art a great God, yet dost thou condescend to dwell in our humble hearts, with all thy glory and goodness, too! Come and deliver us from fear, despondency, bondage and darkness! Lead us into the glorious light of thy gospel! Impart unto us, we beseech of thee, the beauty, sweetness, freedom and holiness of thy nature, through Jesus, the Redeemer!—AMEN.

*RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS IN
HEAVEN.*

“ Upon the frontier of this shadowy land
We, pilgrims of eternal sorrow, stand ;
What realm lies forward, with its happier store,
Of forests green and deep,
Of valleys hushed in sleep,
And lakes most peaceful, 'tis the land of evermore.”

“ What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven and things therein,
Each to other like, more than below is thought.”

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We lift up our eyes unto Thee, source of every good and every perfect gift; once more we hasten into thy presence, Thou father and saviour of our souls; with hearts full of gratitude and full of praise we surround thy throne. Thou invisible but ever present One, we thank Thee for thy watchful care over us, and for thy providence hedging us in on every side, delivering us from sickness and death, and always guiding us with Thine own eye. We praise and magnify thy name that Thou hast been so very nigh to us in all the hours of mortal existence, in the hour of trouble and sorrow, in the hour of darkness and of gloom, in the hour of sickness and bereavement. Thou has been our comforter, our friend, our help, our strength, and for all these unnumbered mercies we lift up our hearts in praise and in song, in gratitude and in love to thy throne, for Thou deservest all our worship and adoration. We confess in thy presence that we are not worthy to take thy holy name upon our unclean lips; we are not worthy to bring offerings with our unclean hands; we are not worthy to lift up the eye and behold thy face so luminous with glory and goodness;

but in Jesus Christ, our elder brother, we approach to thy throne and we present our petitions to Thee this morning with a firm, immovable trust that Thou wilt hear us and also wilt answer us.

Oh Lord God, we pray, first of all and over all, for the gift of thy Holy Spirit, knowing that without the inspiration of thy Holy Ghost, we cannot worship Thee acceptably; we cannot render unto Thee service that shall praise thy name and profit our souls. Therefore, we pray that we may be guided by thy Spirit; be taught by thy Spirit; be inspired by thy Spirit, that our eyes may be opened, our feelings may be rendered tender, our hearts prepared for the precious seed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We pray that this morning, as we come to confess our sins and to ask for blessings new, we may be in the Spirit. Heavenly Father wilt Thou graciously smile upon us, forgiving our many sins and shortcomings and filling our hearts with thy peace and with thy love and with thy holiness. Give us strength, give us courage, give us help from above, that in the discharge of our duties we may be faithful and brave; that in the doing of thy will we may be true, that in thy service we may be useful and fruitful. Give us instruction from above that we may know what is pleasing in thy sight, what is thy will, and that in the doing of that will, we may be crowned with never withering blossoms. When temptation is too strong for our arms to put down;

when we are in great peril and moral danger send Thou an angel from above to strengthen us and lift us up in his arms lest we dash our feet against a stone.

In the great fight of faith upon the battle-field for Christ may we ever see His banner unfurled over our heads, and listen to his inspiring words of cheer, and see His smile of approval and joy. In our everyday life, in buying and selling, in doing and praying, in our homes and on the street, everywhere may God's love shine through our works and words, and may men be persuaded that Christianity is a power and a reality.

Enable us to prove that the Cross of Christ is full of charm and inspiration, and that the name of Jesus is above every other name. May we have the grace to be faithful unto death, that we may hear the Master's "Well-done."

Shall we not pray, Almighty God, for all thy children who are in affliction, in distress, and in bereavement? The Lord anoint their heads with the oil of gladness, and fill their cups brim-full with His comfort. Help them to lay their burdens at thy feet and find rest, sweet rest, in thine arms of infinite affection. Grant unto us a glimpse of that future world of immortality and peace, that our drooping, sinking spirits may mount to the heights of spiritual vision and communion.

Bless all the strangers who have come to worship with us. Let this be the house of prayer, psalm,

and gospel to their souls. Welcome them, gracious One, to thy large and loving heart. Put thy hand upon them, and bless them in their souls and in their homes.

Hear us, Holy Father, in these, our petitions; answer the uttered and unutterable requests of thy people, and feed us from thine exhaustless breast, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.—AMEN.

RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS IN HEAVEN.

“ Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him.”

I COR.—2, 9.

Our friends are very dear to us. We carry them close to our thrilling hearts. What is life without friendship and the tender relations between husband and wife, between parent and child? Put a person in a beautiful palace, surround him with all the comforts of wealth, let him have all that his heart desires, let him have honor and pleasure and health, but take away from him his loved ones—perhaps a little child, or a kind mother, or a faithful and affectionate wife—and he will be perfectly miserable in his magnificent mansion. Love is the soul of life. Ever-growing affection for our own is the free fire that keeps the human heart warm. Let these be extinguished, and what is life? Without this love, which shall outlast the ages, and which shall know no parting, life is dreary, aimless and burdensome. Would you care to live if you could not love? Could you love and not wish to love forever?

You who are parents, would you believe for a moment that this fragrant flower of affection growing out of your heart will soon wither and fade away without any future for its greater growth? Would you believe that the jewels God has set on your parental brow fall forever from your crown at death? Would you believe that beyond the grave you have no friends—no darling children, no father or mother? I am confident every true, deep and noble soul in this large congregation will say, “No, NO, not for one moment can our hearts entertain such a chilling, saddening and despairing belief.” And is there no significance in this firm, unambiguous and brave answer of the world of love?

This subject, my hearers, is a very delicate one. I know there are in my audience hearts that have been broken and bruised by reason of death in the home circle. There is a vacancy in your life, and nothing in the world seems to fill that void. You had a bird in your arms, which has flown away to other regions, leaving you comfortless; Death, that grim visitor, put forth its icy and cruel hand and tore a loved one from your heart; you felt the cold blast from the wings of Death fanning your cheeks as you sat beside the bed of the dying, and when the end came, and the sufferer sank into sleep, you asked yourself this question: “Shall we not meet again?” “Will I not find, some day, what I have lost to-day?”

Oh! that I could inspire your hearts, this morn-

ing with the strong assurance that death does not mean everlasting separation. The parting is only when the narrow and sullen stream is being crossed. On the other side there is re-union. In our fathers house we shall meet again. This belief is full of inspiration, solace and gladness. In that glorious spirit land we shall know our friends, our loved ones, our blossoms, and walk hand in hand with them through the golden streets of that larger and better land. This is the faith of the heart. It is its brightest and bravest hope. It is the longing of love. It is its most ardent prayer and wish. As we stand upon the brink of the grave, and follow the departed one, in imagination, to the unseen world, how we believe in it with all our heart. What power, there is in this hope to dry the reddened eyes, to illumine the darkened tomb, to put a permanent lustre at the entrance of the valley of shadows, and to robe the heavens with the immortal stars of promise and prophecy? What charm in this faith, to make heaven real, eternal life a boon, and to rob death of its sharpest sting? Can a belief which is so minutely woven into the texture of our hearts, so closely associated with our highest, purest and divinest aspirations, so intimately connected with our ideas of God, of heaven and of happiness, be a lie, a mockery, a deception, an unreal show? Can it be, that our hearts deceive us? Can it be that this natural and sacred instinct of the soul is a cruel cheat? Can it be that this sweet hope which lights

us to the grave is a traitor? If these be treacherous guides, then the moral foundations fall from underneath us. Then is our anchor torn from the shore, and we are at sea, amid the fog, the darkness, the rocks, and "false lights." "What is right." "Is God good," and is "truth dear?" Can we answer these question, if our holy instincts have organized a conspiracy against us? But nay! believe in the gospel of your heart. Accept the prophecies of your soul. Follow unhesitatingly the lead of your consciences and they will not deceive you, they will not disappoint you, they will not turn traitor.

Again, the conception of heaven, as imparted to us by the word of God is incomplete, without the recognition of our friends. If there is no re-gathering and meeting again in heaven, then it is an imperfect joy and an unsatisfactory rest, which is held before us as our succeeding great and eternal reward. Heaven means happiness, means unalloyed joy, means full gratification of our noblest desires, means growth and development of our affections. On this conception of heaven is rooted and grounded the belief in future recognition. Could you be happy in the celestial world without the society of those, who on earth made your life cheerful and constituted your invaluable treasure? Would heaven be heaven, without the presence of familiar faces? Could you be at home there, without the company and friendship and love of all that were nearest and dearest to you on earth?

It may be answered, that this is a human way of reasoning concerning the future life, and that when we go there we shall be so changed, that we will forget friendship; forget the tender and sacred ties formed here below; forget all the objects of our best affections, and be absorbed in something else. I reply to this, that, if we shall cease to be men and women in heaven, the very same beings that we were on earth, then our interest in heaven is lost. If the heart here, so sympathetic, affectionate and loving, there will become hard, indifferent and cold; if friendship, now, so sweet and so essential to my happiness, there will lose all its charm and power, surely that will be a great change; and if death works such a change, then we are in total ignorance as to what kind of creatures we shall be after death.

But death does not work such a change upon human nature. Death is merely the messenger of light and victory to the faithful in the battle, throwing open before them the palace gates of immortality and joy. There, our hearts shall be the same, only purer, holier, deeper in love with God. There our souls shall be the very same, only, the image of the Eternal shining brighter thereon. Our whole nature will be the same, only ennobled, redeemed from sin and sorrow, sanctified, glorified. Our life the same, only in a loftier and diviner sphere, free from the imperfections, temptations, accidents and shams of life, and without the lusts, passions, ambitions and failings of the flesh; the

hypocrisy, deceit and hollowness of earth. I take heaven to be a world of infinite truth, of infinite goodness, infinite beauty, and infinite love. Into this state we shall enter, not like new-born souls, but as we are at the hour of death. And if the future life is a continuation of this, then in that sphere of activity, growth and unceasing work, how needful to us, the co-operation, sympathy, help and inspiration of our friends who on earth assisted us to gain the crown! In that immense arena of spiritual enterprise of rising, and climbing to higher heights of excellence, how essential is friendship, its words of cheer, its smile of approval, and the power and pathos of its love! Death will not kill friendship. The grave will not destroy the social nature of man. Love is immortal; and an undying love will not rest till the object of its affections is found. It will search the heavens, scan the heights and depths, haunt the ages, till its deep, deep thirst is satisfied. Accept this conception of heaven and the recognition and society of our friends become just as essential there as they are here. Heaven is not a mere singing school, where nothing else is done but chanting psalms and playing on harps, which will leave no time to renew the friendship of our once loved ones. Heaven is not an endless prayer meeting; where no one is allowed to talk to his neighbor, but where all commune in solemn silence. Heaven is our *home*, for the re-union of sundered love. Our home, for the full growth and development and en-

largement of every faculty of the mind, every affection of the heart and every aspiration of the soul. In that heavenly home, God will wipe away all tears from our eyes, by first of all and over all, giving Himself to us, and filling us with His divine sweetness. There He will re-unite the scattered family on earth. There He will make happiness twice happy by satisfying love. The mother who has sobbed and wept these many years, until her cheeks are swollen and her eyes dimmed, shall behold her dearest child resting sweetly upon the bosom of eternal love, safe from sickness, sorrow and sin.

“One look sufficient to tell me they were mine;
My babes, my blossoms, my long parted ones,
The same in feature and in form, as when
I bent o’er their dying pillows last.”

The revelations of the Christ encourage me to believe that my departed friends are still thinking of me, still interested in me, still love me and pray for me. When the summons comes for me to join their ranks, will they not greet me with a come and welcome? Thus greeted and surrounded I shall feel at home in heaven.

Did I hear you say that this is only a dream? If so, let it be a glorious one. But I am not speculating, not theorising, I am repeating the *prophecies* of my heart. When I say man cannot live without bread, I am not uttering a greater truth than when I say man will die without love. I am just as far

from speculating when I picture the joy and rapture of that re-union and fellowship in heaven, as when describing the satisfaction and gratitude of the thirsty traveller in a desert, when he sees a clear, sparkling stream, inviting him to drink deeply and live. If I am dreaming, it is in obedience to my heart; if it is a speculation, it is the creation of what is noblest in man. Faithfulness to my best thoughts, my purest love and manliest trust, assure me of the purpose and power of God, in his own wise way, to fulfill this great prophecy of the human heart.

Once more. In speaking to you on this subject before I employed the immortality of memory as an argument in favor of future recognition. Let us reconsider this proof. Memory is indestructible; it does not perish with the body. Memory knows no break; it leaps over the grave; it does not die. The remembering is chiefly done by the mind. It is there where, like a vast mansion, all our past life is stored. Its many halls are crowded with imagery; its walls echo with a thousand sounds; its ceiling and floor are frescoed with the numerous events which have taken place in our history. From its huge galleries look down upon us the faces that have cheered us and constituted the sweetness of earth. The mind is a world of memories. All our thoughts, all our whispers, all our imaginations, all our actions, all our relations with our fellow-men, leave their imperishable impress upon the walls of

the soul. Nothing can wipe them out. Nothing can destroy these marks cut into our mental organism. Its pages are deathless. The record it keeps shall be handed down from generation to generation. Another important fact is the freedom of memory. We have no control over it. It is not a slave to the human will. By a mere act of volition you can neither remember or forget. Can you arrest the palpitations of your heart? Can you discontinue the circulation of your blood? Can you bring to a standstill the wondrous machinery of thought? Are these under the control of your will? Nay! So is memory a free faculty, which cannot be held in prison at our pleasure. Ah, if we could only forget some things, how happy we would be. If we could only bury in oblivion, hide under a heap of dust those sad and shameful chapters in our biography; if we had the power, understood the art of washing out those dark stains from the chambers of recollection: what would we not give in return? Every time you turn your eyes upon the past, a certain form rises before you, a certain scene is spread before you, and you say to yourself; oh! if I could only forget, utterly forget that form, that scene, I would be the happiest being on earth. Impossible! memory works independent of your will. Your choice has no influence with the workings of the mind. The great Italian, Dante, in his immortal poem, speaks of a stream of water which, on one side was called Lethe, and on the other, Eunoe.

This poetic stream possessed on one side, the power to take away the remembrance of sin and shame and shortcoming, while on the other shore, it possessed the virtue of bringing back the memory of every kind deed and holy thought and of sweet experience.

Plunged into its waves you forget the guilty past
and from the other shore you come forth

“ Regenerate,
E'en as new plants renew'd with foliage new,
Pure and made apt for mounting to the stars.”

But such a virtuous stream exists only in the imagination of the poet. The hard facts of life are that memory is an independent and impartial author, putting down the good as well as the bad, and holding up the picture before our eyes. You cannot bribe memory. You cannot get him to prophecy smooth things in your hearing. It is indestructible; it is independent. In all this, there is an unanswerable argument for future recognition. If memory shall go with us to the other world, and if on the “eternal walls all the past shall reappear,” what shall hinder us from remembering our friends, who make up so much of the happiness, usefulness, quality and even quantity of our lives on earth! Shall we remember how we were brought to Christ and to truth and virtue and forget by whom? Shall we remember the place where first the Divine Voice thrilled our hearts and stirred the depths of our souls with hunger and

thirst for Him, and forget the dear friend who became the blessed means for such a consummation? Shall we remember how we lead our darlings to the Good Shepherd's fold and seated them on His lap for a Divine benediction, and fail to recognize them in heaven? The heart says, it cannot be, and I believe in the judgment of the heart. Almighty God shall withdraw the curtain of the great past, and there shall rise before us a perfect picture of our life here below, the bad as well as the good, for we cannot forget the one and remember the other, but the bad shall be freely pardoned and the luminous veil of Christ's righteousness thrown upon it. While the good shall shine like solid bars of gold, like polished jewels in Emanuel's crown. If therefore memory be a fact, the recognition of our friends is beyond a doubt.

In conclusion, let us turn the broad and splendid light of revelation on this subject. Jesus said, "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 you may be also." Can this precious promise be fulfilled without recognition of our friends, as dwelling with Christ in the place prepared for us? Again He promises to seat his disciples on thrones with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God.

Shall we make the acquaintance of these Patriarchs and pass by our own; soul of our souls, and

part and parcel of our lives? Again, the Saviour promised to feed us from His table. "Ye may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom." Does not this present the picture of a happy brotherhood, a complete family dwelling together in love? And can this idea be carried out without recognition? Then sounds in our ears, from the sweet Heavens, the inspirational words of the Son of God, "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Oh, is not this overwhelming and assuring that there, in the words of Paul, "I shall know, even as also I am known." In the early Church, there were those that sorrowed for the departed and wept bitterly, and would not be comforted. St. Paul, addressing his words to them, says, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them, which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him." Is not the direct and emphatic meaning of this passage "re-union, fellowship, recognition?"

What remains for us to do but to believe firmly that in Heaven we shall be at home with our children; at home with our parents; at home with our friends; at home with the prophets, martyrs, apostles, angels; at home with Jesus, who died for

the whole world; at home with God; the all-satisfying Good?

With such a home before us, such friendship, such re-union, such fellowship and happiness waiting for us on the other shore, we can address death and the grave in the manly words of Paul, and with David exclaim, "Oh that I had the wings of a dove, to fly away and be at rest."

"When the holy angels meet us,
As we go to join their band,
We shall know the friends that greet us
In that glorious spirit land.

We shall see the same eyes shining
On us, as in days of yore
We shall feel the dear arms twin ing
Fondly around us as before."

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

O thou who hast a father's heart, a father's feelings, a father's care and love; we look up unto thee for an answer to the deep desires of our hearts. For the precious promises of Jesus, thy son, we thank thee, for His revelation of the future world of peace, of rest and of love, we adore thy name. We believe in thy word. We trust in thine infinite tenderness. The earthly mother may forget her child, and the earthly father forsake his own, but thou Divine parent shall follow us with thine unslumbering eye. Oh! thou compassionate one, lift us up, and clarify our vision, that through the shining veils we may behold the exceeding great joy into which our beloved have entered, and where we too shall follow them soon.

Comfort thy sorrowing children, wipe away their tears with a soft hand, and thrill their hearts with the great hope of a happy re-union in thy presence, "where there is fullness of joy."

Dismiss us now with thy benediction, and the power of this immortal hope, inspired by thy word.
—AMEN.

THE MISSION OF WOMAN.

THE MISSION OF WOMAN.

“That our daughters may be as corner stones.”

PSALM cxliv.—12.

We read in the new testament, that “there was a man sent by God;” but in a broader sense, every man and woman is sent by God. We are not the children of chance, but of Divine wisdom and purpose. Life is not aimless and meaningless, but it has a task to perform, and a mission to fulfill. The Almighty Maker created you for an end, placed you in a certain sphere, and will demand of you an account of your life. In a perfect universe, every thing has its mission. From the grain of sand to the sky-kissing hills, capped with snow and blushing rose-red in the rising sun; from the apparently insignificant insect crawling in the dust, to immortal man, “a little lower than the angels,”—the importance and significance of the mission increase as you ascend in the scale of being. The thought that we may make our destinies, carve our characters, and succeed to be the glorious creatures we were intended to be, when first the Divine breath

passed through our nostrils, is full of inspiration and power. You may commune with yourself and say, "Soul! thou hast been fashioned for a glorious purpose, for a mark loftier than the stars, a mission hast thou to perform in the presence of a cloud of witnesses, of God, and of Christ, looking down upon you from the galleries of eternity; quit thyself like a man, and let a shout of triumph and congratulation arise from the vast throng that surround you."

My object in this discourse is to discuss the peculiar mission of woman. Not in the spirit of eccentricity, neither from a wish to create a sensation, have I chosen this theme, but simply to lay strong emphasis upon those tender graces and charming virtues which crown Christian ladyhood and arm her for the great mission of life.

The endurance and triumph of what is noblest in our civilization, demands the careful and thorough development of woman, that she may become the corner stone in the marvellous architecture of mankind, ever rising into immensity. On their soft shoulders should rest the huge columns of the human edifice. From her Amazonian breast, she must feed body and soul, the physical strength and spiritual beauty. The hand that rocks the cradle and leads the lambs, should also sway the sceptre and guide the kings. Exalt woman to her proper position, and society will have vigorous and healthy blood in its veins, she will give birth to the dearest principles, noblest motives and most philanthropic

institutions; introducing into life's arena, heroes, brave and true. Ripe, Christian womanhood is the inexhaustible source and supply of excellence and inspiration. Cultivated and Christian womanhood is the rich soil, out of which spring the roses and violets that bloom on our pathway; the human heaven, whence descends the shower and sunshine; the terrestrial Paradise, feeding the human bee with honey. Wherever woman has enjoyed the privileges of her sex, there civilization has taken long strides in the path of progress. There, with her white arm she has drawn the sword and led the human forces to the field of action. There, with excellence of heart, tenderness and delicacy of conscience and transcendent spirituality of soul, she has raised humanity from a low ebb to the heights. There, she has become the champion reformer, carrying the cause of truth, of religion, of freedom, of justice and of temperance close to her thrilling heart and supplying them with fresh sap from her soul. There, she has become a mountain spring, pouring its virgin waters through a thousand pipes and bubbling up in all the avenues of sin and haunts of disease. The world owes great gratitude to woman, for she has made her breast bare against the darts and sharp arrows of the enemy of home, Fatherland and God. Take away woman from the battle of life and all the efforts and aspirations of mankind fall to a lower octave. We lose the oil that keeps the lamp of pro-

gress burning so sacrificingly; we lose the valor that spurns our cowardice and timidity; we lose sight of that soft silvery star, which in the night of defeat and shame, when the sky is palled in the dunnest smoke of hell, shines smilingly through the parting clouds and turns inglorious defeat into a stupendous triumph. How often, when the ship of humanity was sinking, gallant woman rushed to the helm and steered the bark, laden with a precious burden, amid the waves, rocks and false lights—to the haven, safe and sound? More than the intellectual empire of Von Humboldt, the philosophic spirit of saintly Socrates, the far-reaching genius of La Place, and Liebnitz, the world owes to the heroism, patience and self-denial of woman. It is also a historical fact, that in countries where she is a slave, crushed, degraded, despised, there man too is a slave, poor and wretched. Barbarity, ignorance, darkness and despotism reign wherever woman is thrust out of her sphere and denied the full enjoyment of her rights. The degradation of woman breaks the wheels and wings of civilization and blows out the lamp of progress. I come from a country where woman is caged and imprisoned, and forced to wander from the cradle to the tomb with a mind which is a blank and a heart which is a void. She is scourged by an iron hand, dragged to a condition lower than the brute, and dwarfed in body and spirit. Alas! was she created for such servitude? Was she sent simply to satisfy man's lowest and

meanest passions? Woman! wert thou created to be a tool and a slave to man? No, it cannot be. For hundreds of years the Ottoman Turk has lived on the shores of the Bosphorus, the brightest spot in all the earth, but because of his savage cruelty to woman, and refusal of her freedom, the Turk has gone down, down into ruin. History will bear me witness, that the emancipation and elevation of woman is the harbinger of civilization, the rosy dawn that gilds the mountain tops with the promise of a handsome day.

What a factor woman is in the affairs of man! At home she has the influence to save or to destroy. In society, she can purify or corrupt. In the nation, she has the power to lift to heaven or to drag to hell. What an incalculable blessing to the domestic, social and national life, is a true, noble, Christian womanhood. Piety virtue, goodness, how wondrously fair they seem in woman's character. Not fairer is the blushing morning in the month of June, among the hills of Switzerland. Woman's heart was the best friend of the man of sorrows. Last at the cross, first at the tomb. Hopefully Mary outruns the bearded and broad-shouldered Peter, and *first* awakens the sleeping world, with her triumphant declaration, "the Lord is risen." The most royal thing Jesus ever said, was said of a woman—"She hath done what she could."

To immortalize the memory of a *woman*, who had dropped her mite into the treasury, Jesus reared a

a monument on the glittering pages of His gospel. The most glorious words that ever fell from His lips were uttered in the ears of a woman at His feet.

Christianity is the great friend of woman. Mohammed cursed woman with the yokes of polygamy, bondage and ignorance. Buddhism and the Paganism of China, Japan and Africa, make a woman's life intolerable. The religion of Christ breaks her chains, frees her faculties and leads out the noblest in her. Christianity is a new inspiration in her veins, new blood in her heart, new vigor and life in her soul. At the knee of Jesus, she learns her true mission, finds her proper sphere and does her share for the fulfillment of the infinite purpose, wherewith the universe throbs at every point.

The mission of woman, in the first place, like an anointed priestess,—is to guard the sacred fire of *love* upon the altar of humanity. She must add fresh fuel to the flame that burns in the heart of mankind. She must be life and immortality to love, without which, the world would grow cold and freeze to death. She was made to love. A life of the affections is her primary mission. The unconquerable in woman, which spreads over our heads a majestic arch fretted with golden fire, is *love*: in its influence, ennobling, sweetening and purifying; in its *strength*, immeasurable. From the serene heights of womanly love, descends the sunshine of home and the happiness of life. With jealous and sleepless care

she guards the sanctity of the home, the sacredness of family ties and the sweet intimacies of friendship. The love of woman goes further and binds faster in the cause of right, than the armies and navies of all the world. When all have failed and fallen, love will triumph. God has given woman this oceanic heart, and these growing and clinging affections, that she may use them, and not abuse them. It is infidelity in woman to fasten her affection upon the world and by this misuse decay her noblest powers. What think you is the most lovely thing in life, the highest object that deserves our purest love?—God: Is He not perfect beauty, perfect mercy, perfect justice, perfect holiness and perfect goodness too? If God is your treasure, then is your heart set on Him. If He is your jewel, then your heart is His humble home. Ah, me! how many fail to find any loveliness and beauty in Christ. Nothing which touches their imagination with a peculiar pleasure and fascination. Hence they open their hearts to the gaudy pleasures of the world; and sin against love—by not loving, the true and the good. Often woman is idolatrous, desiring the perishable things more than God. If you love dress more than God, think more of your apparel than of your God, then dress is your idol, closer to the centre of your heart, than God. If you think your chief end is to wear jewels and decorate yourself with costly and precious stones, and take better care of them than you do of your soul, then are these articles your

gods. As I have often said, I am not opposed to elegance in dress, for nothing is too good for you. Elegance fits woman. All the beautiful things are for your use; the sparkling diamond finds its home flashing in your hair; the pearls are for a necklace around your neck; the gems of land and sea are for your person. Nor am I opposed to pleasure or gayety. I do not believe in a sour, ascetic, grim and gloomy life; I do not believe in smothering the song upon the lips of youth and plucking the rose from the cheeks of beauty; I do not believe in sharpening and lengthening the thorns of life—rather would I add to the innocent, happy laughter and mirth of the world. There is joy in nature, in the music of the streams and stars, the rustle of the leaves; and the ten thousand objects of creation clap their hands with joy. And why should the young heart hate happiness? But is this the only object for which you were created? Is this your crown? To walk in elegant apparel and move in gay society—is this the sum of your life? Is there no greater meaning, no higher importance attached to your vocation and mission? Is there no room in your heart for the Infinite sweetness who has taught thy heart to love? Woman fails in her mission when she fails to keep the love of God burning brightly in the world's heart. All the elegant accomplishments—culture and wealth, will not atone for this misuse and decay of love.

Again, woman is a minister of religion. It is

given to her in an attractive and persuasive way to demonstrate in her life the graces and virtues of the Christian life. She need not be an eloquent *speaker* in order to accomplish this, or an ordained preacher of the Word. She need not go from house to house with religious tracts and Bibles to give away. All cannot do that. But in the discharge of her household duties, in her intercourse with the world, and in her church life, let the spirit of Jesus—his meekness, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, charity, self-denial and piety—shine on her person and fill the sphere wherein she moves with a fragrance and sweetness, and she will render to the cause of religion inestimable service. The silver stars do not shine brighter on the distant blue than these Christian graces in a woman's life. Is she a wife, like a magnet let her hold the husband to her heart, to truth, to fidelity and love. Let her pure and spiritual life throw a halo of glory around the husband's earthly toil and toil. She must be that higher life, higher atmosphere, higher heaven of calm and joy, into which the husband shall enter at the close of a day of care, anxiety and fatigue. Spirituality in woman is like the majestic heights that inspire us with reverence, with aspiration and love. Is she a mother, like the constant shining of the sun her example lifts them up to higher heights of excellence and clothes them with angels' garments. The children see that her life is a prayer; her going out and coming in, a sacrament; her work, her worship

of faith and love; her home, her temple of truth and piety. The motherliness of her heart, like a beautiful picture, rises before her children in after-life, and when everything else is forgotten, this one dear vision follows them "like the Madonna in a chapel where all the lights are out save the one that burns before her shrine." If there is any thing in the rush and push, and jarring noises of life; in the din of business, the temptations of the street, the heat of the passions—which reminds us and leads us to think of God—it is the Christian mother. She is a revelation of the divine motherhood. She is an incarnation of pity, tenderness, love, and long-suffering. By virtue of this peculiar fitness; she can be very successful in helping and furthering the cause of true and undefiled religion. Believe me, piety is not so beautiful in the church, in the rich court, as it is in woman. In her, it dwells in its fairest and most pleasing aspect. What is a woman, destitute of the virtues inspired by the Gospel? She is a failure, a wreck, without the possession of those graces whereon angels look down with emulation. What sadder sight is there than to see a woman growing with the stains and smutch of sin on her white raiment; sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind; suffering the misuse and decay of her affection; trampling the fragrant flowers of her heart into the dust; dashing to pieces her beautiful rainbow of promise, and crushing her spiritual self underneath the body's cruel hoofs. Can the

sternest man withhold his tears? Can such ruin and wreck fail to touch the hardest heart?

Woman was made to *live* religion, and manifest its excellencies. She is sent to our world as an evangel of religion. With her beautiful feet she descends the mountain tops, pressing softly the grass; in her mouth a green leaf, and in her heart sweet messages from the excellent glory.

“ The very first
Of human life must spring from woman’s breast ;
Your first small words are taught you from her lips ;
Your first tears quenched by her, and your last sighs
Too often breathed out in a woman’s hearing.”

Once more I call your attention to woman as the *reformer*. The power of conscience, the profoundness of feeling, the strength of sympathy, and the tenderness of affection in woman, qualify her for the work of ameliorating and reforming the condition of society. She is more hopeful, more faithful, more courageous in a great enterprise than man. She has a keener perception of justice and mercy. She possesses a more sensitive and responsive heart, giving loud echo to the cries of suffering and sin. She is ever ready to help, to heal, and to hope. Give woman authority; and intemperance, the curse and shame of drink, will be wiped out of existence in an instant. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, there will not be one den of drink. She will knock the monster down and put her foot on his throat. She will plunge

her dagger into the demon's heart, and bring happiness, health, honor and freedom to a million homes. Give woman power, and there shall be no more war. To the shame of man, let it be said, that under the reign of the light and spirit of Christ, war, the evil of evils and curse of all curses, most horrible, has not been exterminated. Oh! the homes ruined, the flower and beauty of the country trampled under foot, the precious blood shed, the barbarities, atrocities, inhuman cruelties perpetuated in this age of enlightenment and Christianity. Fie on our professions. Fie on our manhood. Fie on our churches. Think you, woman would go to war or countenance bloodshed? Nay! She will spread the sails of peace, and adopt the platform of universal brotherhood, The cause of temperance, of peace, of charity to the poor, the sick, the fallen and the wayward, have no better friend, supporter, inspirer—than woman. The world has no brighter names than Florence Nightingale, Miss Dix, Elizabeth Fry, Sarah Martin and Joan of Arc, the maid of Domraimy, who under the soldier's armor wore the purity, gentleness and faith of a philanthropist. "Half angelic, half heroic,"

"The whitest lily on the shield of France."

To day all great institutions of humanity, hospitals, asylums, homes and associations for the furtherance of peace on earth, good will to man, draw their sustenance from woman's breast. With a

heavenly pity, a sweet sympathy, patient kindness, enduring faith and love, supreme in adversity, she goes to battle, and with these unconquerable weapons crowns her fair brow with never-withering blossoms.

“ Oh, fairest of creation, last and best,
Of all God's work, creature in whom excelled,
Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,
Holy, Divine, good, amiable or sweet.”

What firmer foundation can the glorious edifice of mankind, have? Their outstretched arms holding the crown over our heads. Their mind a casket of noble ideas, great and glorious thoughts, sparkling like polished diamonds. Their deep heart a box of alabaster, pouring fragrance and sweetness into our lives. Their Christian and consecrated womanhood; the strength, beauty, and glory of our civilization. Every noble virtue, every heavenly grace, every great reform, every benevolent institution, every deathless idea, every honorable cause, shall draw inspiration and long life from woman's oceanic heart. She will be the friend of God, the helper of man, the ameliorator of the world. The bravest prophecies of her soul shall be fulfilled. Her divinest ideal shall be realized. No cause that hath the friendship, sympathy and love of woman, shall fall to the ground. Behind every great cause, stands woman pushing it on to triumph.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

“ Shall not be forgiven.”

MATT. xii—6.

Is there an unpardonable sin? What is it? Why is it unpardonable? If you lend me your attention I shall endeavor to answer these three questions.

The idea contained in this verse has been differently interpreted by writers and preachers. The most common view makes this sin to consist in blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Every other sin shall be forgiven; all crime, wickedness, worldliness, usurpation, tyranny, and infidelity shall be forgiven. It has even been directly or indirectly preached, that, if through all your life you have been dishonest and mean, selfish and sensual, in the last hour let a tear of repentance flow from your eye, or a cry for help or pardon escape your lips, and all shall be forgiven you. Let a man who has lived a seventy or eighty-years' life of sin and shame, of hypocrisy and deceit; on his death-bed pray to be forgiven; and the few seconds of sorrow for sin will atone for eighty years of unrighteous-

ness and crime. On the other hand it has also been taught that this *one sin* when committed, years and years of repentance and prayer and faith shall not wipe it away. You may shed tears till they begin to flow in streams to the sea; you may sit on dust and ashes the rest of your life; you may fast and convert your body to a torture chamber for your soul; you may storm the skies with your sighs—but there is no hope; *it* “shall not be forgiven unto men.” Such has been the interpretation of this much disputed text. The preaching of this sin in this light has everywhere filled men with fear and with awe. Tremblingly they have sat to listen to the grave and gloomy descriptions of this crime from the Christian pulpit. The dreadful definitions of the unpardonable sin have driven people to the verge of despair and moral suicide. How many have been thrown into a state of melancholy meditation from the dread of falling into this pit! It has ever been a topic for vehement preaching. It has turned the sacred desk to a smoking Sinai, in whose presence the people grew pale. It made the messengers of the “Prince of Peace” and gentleness, harbingers of the “wrath to come.” Their preaching was like the thunder of the clouds, not their silver lining; like the lightning of the sky, not its soft and tender blue; the foaming roar of the billows, not the soothing music of the waves; the wild hurricane that marches with irresistible sweep, not the gentle breeze that descends from the

tall mountains. They preached as they believed, and the nature of their themes created the austere character of their ministry.

“It shall not be forgiven unto men.” Ah! how could Jesus, the tender-hearted, the one altogether lovely and full of compassion, infinitely kind and forgiving, be the author of this declaration? Could such a sentence proceed out of the mouth of the Friend of sinners, the great burden bearer, the large-hearted philanthropist and martyr, the mightiest and sweetest inspirer of man? Was it the same Jesus, who forsook the ninety and nine, and wandered in the wilderness in quest of the one lost sheep, who healed all manner of diseases, and dried the bitterest tears from sorrow’s eyelids, from whose garments’ hem blessing and beauty descended upon the multitude, and who suspended between earth and sky, with his brow bruised by thorns and his side wounded by a spear and his heart broken by grief, plead for the forgiveness of His murderers;—who on a certain occasion opened his lips and ere they were closed again, the awful words were spoken? Undoubtedly, very heinous, appalling and black, must this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost be, to have wrung such words from the lips of tenderness and love.

The twelfth chapter of Matthew’s gospel describes the miracle which Jesus by supernatural power performed in the very presence of the Scribes and Pharisees. It was a miracle of compassion and

generous sympathy. They brought to Him a sightless and speechless man. Poor creature! he could neither speak, nor see. Jesus out of kindness, with the sincerest of motives, spoke the word of might, applied the healing touch, and the miserable and wretched man was made whole. Into his opened eyes entered upon the wings of light, the sun, the stars, the earth and ocean, the glory and magnificence of the universe. The blind could see, the dumb could speak. Now the Jews, according to our narrative, were eye-witnesses, the priests in their long robes, the self-righteous Pharisees, the learned scribes, all saw in the clearest, most emphatic manner, the power of the son of man to glorify God in the healing of the unfortunate man; but instead of bowing their faces in honest acknowledgment of his supremacy and divinity, instead of honoring and worshipping the power that had so marvellously and unmistakably manifested itself, they put their hands upon their eyes, seared their consciences and declared in the face of the overwhelming argument that Jesus was an imposter, a false prophet, a demon, who had the forces of Beelzebub, the prince of devils, at his service. They said this, not because they believed it to be the truth, but knowing well it was a lie, they uttered it, as if it had been the truth about Jesus. For, did they not know, that no human being could, without power from God, perform such works. Did they not know, that no devil could be the author of such

an act of charity, kindness, sympathy and love? Did they not know, that only a supremely good being could have cured the sick man? Undoubtedly. Yet these stiff-necked, hostile Pharisees, were determined not to believe, no matter how great the proof, and to lie, no matter how evident the truth, and to shut their eyes fast, no matter how splendid and bright the light. Oh, how they hated Christ, the righteous One, the benefactor of the common people, whom they despised, and gathered up their skirts, not to be defiled by their vulgar touch. How they abhorred and reviled Jesus, the true light that exposed their deeds of darkness and deceit. How they grudged and gnashed their teeth against Him, whose brave voice thundered in tones of doom against their hypocrisy and cruelty to the orphan and the outcast. So intense was this enmity that they steeled their hearts against the rays of His melting compassion, armed their souls with weapons of vengeance against His tenderest appeals, and in the bitterness and madness of their hate, they flung aside all proof and argument and evidence of Christ's divinity, and blasphemed, *knowing that it was a blasphemy, a lie*, that had no excuse, a falsehood black as night. He, they said, is a bad man, the great demon is in His heart, and moved by him He does these works. He is not good, He is not kind, He is not our friend, cried they in rage, believe Him not, follow Him not. Depend on it, said the Pharisees, He is not the Son of God, but the son of

a—devil. Alas, this was the sad and awful climax of their shameless and dishonest rebellion against evidence as clear as the sun at mid of day. And when they persisted in their refusal to tell the truth, and repeatedly told a lie, they plunged their souls into the abyss of irredeemable disgrace, then they sold themselves to the devil. Jesus Christ, says to these Jews: "In your ignorance you may call me a Galilean, a Nazarene and a poor carpenter. Without knowing, you may call me, imposter, liar, ambitious; you may spit upon me and strike me in the face and nail me to the tree and say all manner of evil against me; but all this shall be forgiven you. When, however, knowing the truth, you wilfully believe in a lie, and call light, darkness, good, evil, and God, devil, and you do this *repeatedly, deliberately and knowingly*—then there is no hope for *you*."

"The deaf may hear the Saviour's voice,
The fettered tongue its chain may break;
But the deaf of heart, the dumb by *choice*,
The laggard soul that will not wake,
The guilt that scorns to be forgiven,
These baffle even the spells of heaven."

Having said this much, it is no longer necessary to define to you the unpardonable sin. You can see for yourselves that it consists in wilfully, knowingly and repeatedly resisting the truth, and believing in a lie. It consists in sinning against your best thoughts, your noblest impulses, and the "still, small" but forceful and clear divine whisper in your soul.

It consists in answering no, no, no, no, to every argument of truth, virtue, nobleness, saintliness and God. It consists in putting off, and putting off, an important duty, knowing it to be a duty. It consists in indulging, and indulging in sin, knowing it to be a sin. The unpardonableness is not in the sin, but in the state of mind of the sinner, brought about by a repetition of the same sin. In a certain sense no sin is unpardonable; if you repent you will be forgiven. Again, every sin may become unpardonable by being cherished, indulged in, and hugged to the very end. Let me illustrate this point—

Is theft an unpardonable sin? No. Yet, if a man knows stealing to be a sin, a disgrace, a crime and a shame, but knowingly chooses to steal, and steals until stealing becomes a second nature to him, is it not then unpardonable? Is slander an unpardonable sin? No. But when a vulture fastens his teeth to his neighbor's character, and out of envy and revenge tears it to pieces, ruins and disgraces a good name, and *persists* in his malicious murder, knowing that his victim is innocent, is it not then unpardonable? Is hypocrisy unpardonable? Will not God forgive the hypocrite? Certainly. But when a person, for the purpose of gain, devilishly puts on the garb of virtue and piety, plies a smooth tongue, and walks with a grim, gloomy, and sanctimonious face, who continues in this course, till hypocrisy extends to the core of his heart and becomes his meat and drink, is it not then unpardonable? And is there

not an answer in this explanation, to why is it unpardonable?

Human character at first, is tender and malleable like the soft metals; and you can put it in any shape you please. Gradually it assumes a fixity, a permanence, a hardness to such an extent, that to cast it into a new fashion becomes impossible. Like the tree growing out of the soil, character grows out of our life and becomes inflexible in the course of time. The process is gradual. "Vice," says an English writer, "is first, pleasing, then it groweth easy, then frequent, then habitual, then confirmed, then the man is impenitent, then he is obstinate, then he resolves never to repent." Step by step sin becomes natural to us, and one day, to our great horror, we find ourselves bound hand and foot by the iron of evil habits. If through carelessness, which is at the bottom of all sin, you suffer these vices to grow into monstrous proportions, then they will hold you a prisoner, denying you your freedom, in spite of all your prayers and tears. Oh, the tyranny and despotism of sinful habits!

"Habit at first is but a silken thread,
Fine as the light-winged gossamers that sway
In the warm sun-beams of a summer's day;
A shallow streamlet rippling o'er its bed;
A tiny sapling, ere its roots are spread;
A yet unhardened thorn upon the spray;
A lion's whelp that hath not scented prey;
A little smiling child obedient led.

Beware! that thread may bind thee as a chain ;
That streamlet gather to a fatal sea ;
That sapling spread into a gnarled tree ;
That thorn grown hard, may wound and give thee pain ;
That playful whelp his murderous fang reveal ;
That child, a giant, crush thee 'neath her heel."

Can you be forgiven without forsaking your sin? Can you forsake it after you have allowed it to feed on your heart and grow into a bosom companion? Can you break a habit of thirty, forty, fifty years standing? Take an habitual drunkard, to whose palate the intoxicating drug is sweeter than the cool, fresh water of the mountain spring; on whose cheeks burns the flush of drunkenness; who, for drink, gives his hard earnings, the sweat of his brow, his health, honor, and soul, his home and children, and the wife of his early love, whose womanly heart he has converted to a huge wound. Can such a one easily tear himself from the clutches of the monster and repent? That young man, from the day of his youth, began a career of sensuality, debauchery, and ambition; now he is old and gray, under the sway of his animal appetite. No advice reached his heart; no voice of God or of man could move his frame; wilfully he walked in this path and idolized the pleasures of the flesh. Can he, thus joined to his idols, begin a new life? My hearers, is it likely that an old miser, who has had no other God but his perishable monster of three heads, gold, silver and copper, who has ridden over his manhood

and the commandments of God to get rich ; who has all his life thought more of being a millionaire than of being a man : whose intense greed has elbowed out Christ from consideration, and made him a lover of gold more than of God : I repeat, is it likely that such a one, after years and years of slavery to the passion for gain, will say to himself, " I must be a different man for the rest of my life, and practice generosity, and charity, and piety ? " Can he be forgiven unless he repents of his sin ; and is it easy to repent of a sin that has lived with you for so many years and growing all the time ? For such a person to go back step by step, and with sincere tears of repentance, wash out the stains of his footprints through his long life of sin and shame, is such a huge task, that the immense weight of it will drag his enfeebled moral nature down, and *down*, and *down*, with accelerated speed, until a deluge of vices drown him forever. Unpardonable, because of the impossibility to repent and tear your false gods from your heart.

It is not because God is unwilling to pardon ; not because the infinite love of Christ Jesus is not sufficient ; not because the Divine heart is not large enough—No, no !—but because the sinner has grown so to love his sins that he cannot part with them.

Oh, that I could sink this truth deep into your hearts, my people ! Oh, that I could ring an alarm bell in the ears of those who are sinning against the light, duty and truth ! Oh, that I could bring

you this evening face to face with this naked truth ! Promise me you will think of it, even after you have left this place ! Promise me you will throw open your soul for a divine searching ! Promise *God* you will follow His lead and not suffer sin to build its nest in your heart.

Before you to-night is the path of virtue, holiness and piety, bright with the splendid light of God's shining, glorious with the immortal memory of saints. In the name of all that is divine in you, I urge you to enter into this path **NOW**. But if you will not enter now, *when will you*—**WHEN?**

“ There is a light cloud near the moon,
'Tis passing now, will pass full soon,
If by the time its vapory sail, hath ceased
Her shaded orb to veil ; thine heart
Within thee be not changed,
Dark will thy doom be ; darker still
Thine immortality of ill.”

A LECTURE ON THE TIMES.

A LECTURE ON THE TIMES.

SUNDAY EVENING, OCTOBER, 1884.

It was my privilege during the past summer to travel upwards of 15,000 miles, going through different countries and coming in close contact with various civilizations, at the same time enjoying the opportunity of now and then taking a peep into the numerous ecclesiastical and domestic institutions of Europe and the Orient.

We are often told that this life is a prophecy, and that man's present clearly mirrors forth his future. Is not the same true of collective humanity? The actual condition of mankind to-day, is the promise of what it shall be to-morrow. You do not think it a very hard matter to foretell the future of a young person, from the mental and moral signs he manifests in his youth. For what is youth but the superstructure of infancy; and what is manhood but the flower and fruit of youth; and what is old age but manhood at its maximum height, and blossomed all over with years? Thus it is with nations, thus with entire communities, and precisely thus with the great world. To-morrow sleeps on the

bosom of to-day. The "to come" is following hard on the heels of the everlasting "*now*." As the farmer, according to a certain science well understood among farmers, can, with precision, predict the coming harvest or famine; and the statesman, from signs in the political world, the nature of the coming dynasty; and as the father, looking in the face of his offspring, beholds behind it the full-grown man; in like manner we can take our stand upon the walls of the world, and with a little study and a little insight and farsight, read the signs of the times and unfold the blessings or curses they have in store for us. Our task this evening, however, is with the present; and I make haste to ask and answer, if I can, this one question—"What are the phases of our times?"

One thing which we see plainly everywhere, on either side of the Atlantic, is the rapid diffusion and extension of irreligion. To the traveller it often seems as if the world had no God and humanity no religion. Especially in large and populous towns this is the case—God banished from the homes of the people, from the schools, the counting-house, and their daily lives. The word of God is not studied; the churches are cold and empty; the clergy have lost their hold on the masses, and the masses have lost all reverence for religion. This irreverence, one of the sad signs of our day, is coarse and offensive. It is disgusting to a traveller to be brought in contact with this vulgar, low-bred

profanity of the masses. How disrespectfully this age speaks of the holy and reverend themes of religion! How it ridicules and derides the solemn and the sacred in life! It looks upon piety as the offspring of fraud and illusion; upon worship in the church or in the secret closet as a "contemptible sentimentality;" God is a reality, but only for the coward and fanatic; Jesus is a priest-invented myth; all religion is a stupendous fabrication! But worse than this is the practical godlessness of the age. It is bad to be a speculative atheist; it is worse to be a practical infidel. Theoretical skepticism is injurious, but three times worse is the downright, *practical* unbelief of the day—the unbelief proven by the worldly, low and sensual tenor of our civilization. This prevailing irreligion of our era is a very strange phenomena. Why should the multitudes of earth prefer the gospel of atheism to that of immortality and joy in the H. G.? But the sad fact remains—the irreverence and irreligious tendency of modern thought.

Again, as a natural outcome of this, another phase of the era we live in, is the intensity of the secular spirit. Given a creed that scorns and scoffs at even pure religion; that satirizes and jeers at the solemn verities of life, and you have a *secularism* which renders itself conspicuous in all the affairs of man. In England and in America this wordly reign is in the ascendancy. There seems to be one supreme wish in the

Anglo-Saxon breast of to-day. "Money." The one cry which is heard above every other noise, is the loud and long cry for "mammon." In all the earth there is no other idol, so gorgeously robed, and so highly exalted and so sincerely adored and cherished as this "calf of gold." One thing we do more than the Greeks, who worshipped "Beauty," and more than the Romans who adored "Valor," we "bow the head to copper, silver and gold, a monster of three heads" and call them our gods. Think not that I am opposed to riches, think not that I object to opulence and wealth. Nay! I am against this all-absorbing lust and greed and worship of wealth, which it pains me to say, is the dominating spirit of our age. You see men pushing, toiling, driving, employing every atom of life, mind and limb to get money; money first of all, money before manhood, money before a Christian character, money at the sacrifice of honesty and integrity, money by turning God out of the heart, and money by the sale of their souls. I condemn this greedy avarice of our times. I denounce this lust which hungers and barks after more. I despise this devilish secularism, which elbows Christ out of the human path, drowns all the whisperings of God's spirit in the soul, and makes terrible havoc of the individual, the family the community and the church. But cursed and despicable as it is, alas! this is another phase of our times.

Once more. A third threatening characteristic

of our age, is the increase of crime. The moral boundaries seem to have been swept away. The spiritual standards taken down and the great landmarks of virtue and justice and fidelity thoroughly washed away by the flooding torrents of human sinfulness. Just see, how many horrible deeds, how many bloody and ghastly crimes are committed from sunrise to sunset? How many peaceful homes are ruined; how many innocent characters covered with shame; how many human spiders catching and destroying the youth of the land? Faithlessness in the marriage relation, bringing in its train a host of curses. Infidelity at home, marring and disfiguring human society at every point. Faithlessness in business, commercial dishonor, sending a panic through the country. A certain bank explodes, then a line of banks give way. The great chariot of human energy trembles and comes to a standstill. The poor lose the little they have, and begin to distrust and look upon each other with a suspicious eye. All this by reason of faithlessness behind the counter. All this the result of the feverish excitement and desire to be rich, and rich right away, and by means fair or foul.

A bank like that on Wall Street failing, is a disgrace to our country and a reproach to our churches. The case of the Cincinnati clergyman, Archbishop Purcell, who received deposits from the poor members of his parish, and then failed totally, leaving

the poor, poorer, is an everlasting shame, an unpardonable crime against faith and honesty. It is such a deep blackness on the churchman's character, that all the holy waters of the Catholic Church cannot wipe it out. In the presence of all this wrong, unrighteousness, evil, crime and curse, one is apt to ask, where are the Christian churches? Where the thousands of ordained ministers? Where is the power of the Cross? Where is the transforming influence of our Gospels? Ah, but ours is the blame. We have slept in indifference, and our lack of faith and motive has suffered transgression to grow to such monstrous proportions. To-day it threatens to demolish our pulpits and overthrow our Bibles. There is dire need for us Christians to walk the world with downcast face and the sense of shame.

But to Almighty God be thanks, there are also glorious and noble signs manifested by our age, and let us now speak of them. I pray you, turn away your eyes from the sad spectacle of the shortcomings of our times, and look upon the bright promises, the brave prophecies and the achieved triumphs of the golden day wherein we live. Mark the silent, steady, sure growth of pure and undefiled religion. You may think that this statement is in conflict with my former assertion concerning the widespread of irreligion. But it is one of the clearest and most indisputable facts, that undefiled religion, pure and practical, has made more progress in Europe, than in any other period in the world's

history. Do you marvel at this statement? What if men tell you that Christianity is waning, that Germany and France have dropped God from their institutions; what if they tell you that its days are numbered, and is rapidly losing its hold. It is a lie, believe it not. That sun has never risen on a fairer prospect of the Christian faith than the one it has to-day. The vitality which enabled it to make glorions strides 1800 years ago, is still fresh. The old fires are brightly burning and the mighty influence moulding and carving the destinies of man. Listen! I am one of those who believe that the world is growing better, improving every day; I am one of those who believe that human nature on the wings of Christ is rising and brightening. I carry in me, this profound persuasion, that "God's truth" is forever gaining over error, and God's justice over iniquity, and God's love over hate, and God's religion over a blasphemous infidelity. Ah! I have this prophetic trust. You here may betray your Lord, and you there may sell him for silver pieces like Judas; you may deny him like Peter, and turn traitor and coward, but what of it? The kingdom of righteousness in a chariot of fire, drawn by steeds of flame, with Jesus Emanuel as its standard bearer, smoothly and gloriously glides on, with the Almighty God behind it, and pushing it on. We may all,—catching the spirit of the age, tear our churches down, burn our Bibles to ashes, cast before the winds our creeds, prove false; but what of that,

as the Lord God Omnipotent liveth, "not one grain of love, or of justice, or of goodness, or of nobleness shall perish." Great God, not one!

Listen again, ever since Christ died there has been a universal growth of the Christly in the world. I am confident there is a thousand times more of Jesus to-day than when He hung on the cross, outside the city gates, with a spear in His heart, a thorn crown on His brow, nails in His hands and feet and a deep sigh on His lips, "why hast Thou forsaken Me." To-day there are more successors to the Great Physician, more disciples of the Good Samaritan, more Marys, more consecrated Pauls, more brave soldiers than when Jesus entered Jerusalem amid the shouts of hosanna and the cheers of His friends. In this present era, Christ has more thrones, more influence, more weight than when He sat on the seashore with a band of Galilean fishermen about Him. Is it true that Christ is losing His hold on the world? Let us see. 1800 years ago, He was persecuted, tortured and nailed to the cross. To-day His ignominious cross is transfigured to a symbol of glory and life and the slaughtered Christ is robed with majesty and divinity. Is this the sign that Christ has failed in His mission? One hundred years after Christ, Christianity was but a seed in the ground, with all the powers of earth determined to crush its growth. This day, like a mighty Amazonian river of light, it girdles this globe of lands. Like the great and potent tide of

the Atlantic it washes every shore. Whose are the schools, colleges, homes, hospitals, asylums and benevolent organizations of the world? Whose the power and wealth that rule the earth? Whose the fleets that whiten every sea? Are these the proofs of the decadence of Christianity?

I am confident that religion will come out victorious. The existing unbelief is only a *temporary* phase of our times. It has not come to stay. Men can be atheists "in their studies, with their sleepers on," shut from the world; but in the great realities and verities of life, who can be one? In the sublime hour of philanthropy, when you lay down your life for an offering to humanity in the "holy sanctities" of home; in glorified moments when our ambition stoops to bind up a broken heart and our selfishness condescends to dry a tear from Sorrow's eyelids,—can you be an atheist? In the heroic hour when we knock down and put a firm foot on Passion's neck; in the "kingliness of conscience," when we take our stand with the minority, ready to fall under a "monument of darts" rather than deny the truth—tell me, in such times can one deny God? Verily, verily, Conscience, Love, Honor, Devotion—these are never doubters. To say that Truth and Courage, Love and Justice are infidels, is a lie. Believe me, the days of this infidel gospel are numbered. Eternal morning shall follow the midnight of doubt. Look! already the mountain-tops are red with its rising beams!

Once again, I invite your attention to another of the most pleasing phases of our times. It is the generous toleration and liberality and breadth of opinion in matters of religion. It is an eminently Christian duty to be charitable and broad in our views, Bigotry, narrow-mindedness, exclusiveness, are not in accord with the universality of the Gospel. Years ago men thought that *their* church was the true church, and that there was no truth elsewhere. Every other sect was of the devil, every other creed heretical, every other brother not a member of the true church, was lost. This was the spirit of the mediæval times—the spirit of the days of persecution, faggot, thumbscrew, iron and dungeon. This sectarian spirit, which still lingers in some quarters is a relic of barbarism and bigotry. I abhor it. I detest it. I shall vow to do my utmost to pull down these partition walls, and let men shake hands and exchange words of fellowship. I would like to minister in a church where all the denominations could feel at home and worship with freedom, and sit with me at the Lord's table and forget all the non-essential differences of opinion. I make it my business when I am preaching to make people forget that they are Presbyterians, or Baptists, or Methodists, but remember that they are Christians. I say to all, let there be no strife, for we be brethren, members of one another. I aim to persuade my hearers that Cristianity is not simply a creed, not an organization, not a collection of isms. Christi-

anity is the Spirit of Christ living in our lives. Once, when one differed from another in belief, the strong burned the weak. Now, no man is led to the stake because of his views. Perfect freedom of faith, of private judgment and a diffusion of Christian charity mark the spirit of our day in comparison with the past. Of course the Golden Age has not yet come. Still, here and there, we hear discordant notes. But these seekers of discord grow fewer every year. Our age is casting aside small ideas, is separating the incidental from the essential and waking up a brotherhood that has for its central figure and idea, one Christ, and for its temple,—righteousness. Out of the grave men will not rise, Catholics or Protestants, Calvinists or Wesleyans. Nay, but as Christians and children of the same Father. There is only one heaven, only one paradise. Let sectarian ministers quarrel about differences of vestment, or baptism, and widen the chasm. Let narrow and bigoted Christians build greater walls of partition. Let little minds and little hearts and mean souls, cast out the larger hearts and greater souls. The doom of sectarian bigotry is at hand. Its days are numbered. The tide of Christian charity is rising, and will soon sweep away all the barriers, and create one vast, boundless sea, for the great ship of humanity with its precious load of souls, to sail safely to the haven of rest.

Shall we have no part in this stupendous victory of right over wrong, of religion, over irreligion, of

goodness, over meanness, of charity, over bigotry, of freedom of conscience, over the tyranny and despotism of faith? Can we not bravely and hopefully throw all the weight of our influence, example, prayers and life on the side of Christ, who is the representative of " whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report?" Is there no heart that will fight to the very end, to maintain the purity of love? No conscience that will protect justice against all attacks? No mind that will adhere to the truth of God in the midst of doubt and denial? No soul that will make its bosom bare to defend our holy faith at any cost? Who are the valiant among you? Who of great faith in this large assembly? Who of strong will and invincible determination and moral courage?—let them come forth and join the brave band headed by the martyr Christ, and armed with love, truth, kindness and faith,—they shall win the world from unbelief, secularism and sin, to holiness, goodness and God.

Be of good cheer, my hearers, the tree of Christianity is growing fast. Its great roots are deeply set in the human soil. Its towering and ever fruitful branches are reaching up to Heaven, and not one leaf thereof shall fall to the ground. In the great battle of truth against error, " each one of us is a soldier placed in his own spot by the Commander-in-chief.

We know nothing of the plan of the whole campaign. That is not submitted to us; that is arranged by the Supreme Power. It is for us to stand where we are, shoulder to shoulder, with this man to the right and with that man to the left, never flinching, doing our part, peering through the smoke of battle, taking our share of the buffets and of the wounds, uncomplainingly until our particular fight is done." And the assurance that God will win, and truth will triumph, and virtue will reign, shall nerve our souls and thrill our hearts. On to the fight; God is the banner bearer, and it will never touch the ground.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Almighty God, our Father in Heaven! We come into Thy presence this evening to offer our evening sacrifice and psalm of praise and gratitude. Once again, we have gathered in this place to dwell upon the theme of Thy love and goodness towards us. This is the house of prayer, of inspiration and of communion with Thine Infinite Spirit. This is the day of gladness and rejoicing, of resurrection and ascension. In Thy Word is the power to make our hearts glad, to raise us from slumber and sin, and to lift us to the heights, where there is peace, joy, light and life.

We thank Thee, our Father, for Thy Gospel. It is full of consolation, of wisdom, of instruction, and of inspiration. It moves and touches the mainsprings of our souls. It stirs the depths of our hearts. It can transfigure and transform our nature. It makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus.

We thank Thee for Thy son, Jesus Christ, the life of the world, the light of men. Thou didst send Him to this world to live for us and die in our stead on the cross. We thank Thee for the heroism of His soul, the purity of His heart, the benevolence

of His life, and the sweetness and charm of His example. He is our righteousness, our hope of immortality, our anchor in the period of peril, and the rock underneath us in the day of danger. His riven side shelters our guilty souls. His pierced hand shields our lives from Satan's darts. His broken and wounded heart is our home. For such a Christ, we render unto Thee our deepest gratitude. Write His name upon our hearts. Breathe His spirit into our lives. Let Jesus Christ be our argument against doubt, our armor for the battle, and our comforter against the sorrows and disappointments of life.

Wilt thou put Thy hand upon our heads and bless us all in large measures. Wherein we are weak, make us strong; wherein we are timid and fearless, grant unto us moral courage and gallantry of spirit; wherein we are cold, careless and worldly, kindle within us the flame of love, devotion and sacrifice.

Oh! thou compassionate One, lift up the veil of thy face that we may catch a glimpse of thy beauty, glory and goodness. Draw us up to thy self and feed us from the unsearchable depths of thy kindness. May we realize, that thou art a just God, that thou hatest sin, that thou wilt punish the violation of thy holy law, written upon every fibre of our souls. May we realize that sin is an abomination in thy sight, a cursed thing. Inspire us with the love of holiness. Show unto us the beauty of holiness. Win our affec-

tions to everything that is Christly and well pleasing in thy sight.

Be with us at this hour. Fill this house with thy goodness and forgiveness. Give large replies to our supplications at thy throne.

Bless and help the young to begin early in the Christian life. Defend them, guide and guard them, and give them the victory over the world. Let their hearts be consecrated to thy service.

Remember in tenderness, the little ones in this flock, lift them up in thine arms of care and sympathy. Lead them, gentle Jesus, and when they are weary, carry them in thy bosom of unfailing affection.

Shall we not pray for all the sick, the afflicted, the mourning? Send unto them thine angel, to lift them up in His arms and wipe the tear from their eyes. Put a new song upon their lips, and a greater, braver hope in their souls.

Bless the strangers who have come to worship with us. Thou hast brought them hither. Welcome them to thy fatherly heart and make them feel at home with God, in thy sanctuary.

Hear us, thou Holy Father, pardon our sins and shortcomings, and fill us brimful with thy Self. Through Jesus our Lord we pray.—AMEN.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

“ If a man die, shall he live again ?”

JOB xiv.

I hasten to discuss the theme of the soul's immortality. This is one of the practical questions, for it is ever active in human thought. 'There is in man the inborn thirst and longing to know something definite of the future life. We struggle to catch a glimpse of the invisible world, far, far away. On either hand is an eternity ; the mysterious past and the unexplored future. Standing between these two cold, grim and voiceless peaks, we strive to look beyond the heights.

*“ Between two worlds life glitters like a star
'Twixt night and morn upon the horizon's verge,
How little do we know that which we are ;
How less what we may be.*

In this earnest and deep desire to know the hereafter, our hearts are always repeating the words of Job : “ If a man die, shall he live again ?”

Death is the great inevitable. Thousands to thousands added are dying every day. Something

in the dark draws their foreheads earthward, and they die. Ah! we shall all die. There is a day fast approaching, in the which, we too, shall bid farewell to this earth, farewell to our loved ones, farewell to all our hopes, aspirations and dreams, and descend into the gloom of the tomb—cheerless, rayless and silent. But when we are dead, shall we live again? When gathering darkness has shut us in the chambers of death, shall there be a resurrection morn, warming into new life our sacred dust? When night, midnight, has descended upon our noon, shall there be angels, in raiment white, waiting on the golden shores, and beckoning us to mount on their wings and fly away and be at rest? When these eyes have grown dim, these lips locked in death, and this palpitating heart is still—shall our immortality begin? Tell me; when this earth fades away, and grows fainter and fainter in the distance, and the last pulse beats—will Heaven's fair landscape, brighter than the sun, burst upon our vision? The mother, with sleepless patience, sits beside the bed of her dying son. He is all she had in this world, her support, joy and treasure; she sees his face growing pale, his eyes gazing into a vacuum, and the little flickering flame sinking into eternal rest. Bending over her dying son, her heart speaks: "tell me, my child, 'if a man die, shall he live again?'"

Are we not all, gentlemen and ladies, profoundly interested in this discussion? We hold the breath

of our breasts to gather all the whispers that contain a revelation of the future. We fix an ardent gaze upon the heavens for a sign, a token, a prophecy of immortality. But we are told that this deep thirst of the soul cannot be satisfied. In vain we pray and search for light. You lift your voice and weep bitter tears, when a particle of your soul is torn from you and cast into the grave, but there is no one to transfigure those tear-drops into telescopes, revealing the exceeding joy into which the departed has entered. You look into the grave, but there seems to be no door that opens into the eternal world of life. In the night of death, you raise your reddened eyes heavenward, but no star greets your vision; no soft tread of angels' feet, bringing the tidings of immortality. Annihilation is the goal of humanity. Eternal slumber under the sod, the destiny of the race. Death is a plunge into the abyss of oblivion. To die is to cease to be. Such is the gospel of atheism, throwing a dark shadow across the tenderest heart, blowing out the taper of the soul, and trampling in the dust the sweet flower of eternal hope. No! NO! we cannot love death; we long for life.

“ 'Tis life, whereof our newer are scant,
Oh! life, not death for which we pant,
More life and fuller that I want.”

It is in the structure of our souls to believe in immortality. Instinctively we widen the horizon

of our sight, so as to sweep in, God and immortality. All the works of creation, we resolve into a universal proof of eternal life. In the green blade of grass, holding the jeweled dew-drop in its cup; in the unfolding flower springing towards the sunshine; in the leaves of the rocks; in the fossils and shells of the sea; the stars and spheres of the sky—everywhere, we read in large letters the promise and prophecy of man's glorious to-come. Our desire for immortality is omnipotent; it overcomes every objection, answers every argument and never doubts.

If you kindly follow me with your attention, I will repeat a few of my arguments for a personal belief in immortality. I do not say, these arguments are conclusive, or that they will carry conviction to every heart, but they may help strengthen and develop the existing faith in the deathlessness of the individual soul. It is the immortality of man, not of mankind, which I seek to prove. There are men, who believe that humanity is immortal, though the individual shall perish. I believe in the immortality of the individual.

Let us begin with the historical argument. Almost all the principal and leading thinkers of the world, have given their vote for immortality. From the earliest dawn of life, this faith had a place in the human heart. At every stage of man's history, if some one could poll the world and record the "ayes" and "nays," nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand would give

their vote for immortality. To a certain extent, this proves the universality of the belief. To say the least, it is human to believe in the doctrine of immortality. The philosopher and saint Socrates, thousands of years ago, when cast into a dungeon, spent the twenty-nine days of his imprisonment in discoursing to his disciples on the excellencies of truth. On the last day, the thirtieth, he spoke to them on the immortality of the soul. Holding in his hand the chalice of death and pressing it to his lips, he looked in the face of death and decay, and in that Christless age exclaimed:—"I shall soon be in the company of the good." Plato, with his intellectual empire, thought it not unreasonable to believe in the same, and cherish this divine hope. "What we call the soul lives," wrote this immortal mind. Plutarch, Seneca, the Emperor Antoninus and the Orator Cicero, utter in unambiguous terms, their firm faith in a future existence. In his treatise on "Old Age," Cicero has written these words—"Oh! for the delightful morning when I shall be in the celestial assembly of the Gods." Come nearer to our day, and a mighty number of master-minds will stand forth and give their testimony in the affirmative. Bacon and Franklin, Emerson and Spinoza, Emanuel Kant and Stuart Mill, and a host of others, not members of evangelical Christianity, yet believers in immortality. The noblest and truest of mankind in every

age and clime, as well as the lowest and meanest,—the nakedness of the most barbaric included, love and cherish this dear belief.

“ Whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality ?
Or whence this secret dread and inward horror,
Of falling into nought ? why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction ?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us ;
'Tis heaven itself that points out an *hereafter*,
And intimates eternity to man.”

My second argument is the testimony of nature. Just at present, we are in mid-winter. The law of decay and destruction is forcibly at work. The ground underneath us is cold and fruitless; the sky is melancholy and gray; the trees are dry and naked, their bare, frozen branches rattle drearily in the air; the lovely flowers have withered and faded away; life, vigorous, handsome life, seems to have fled forever from nature's bosom. But we know that there is a warm spring-time coming, when life shall return to nature's veins and revive the sleeping woods with the invigorating breath of Summer. Death and life, decay and resurrection are natural phenomena, and are they without any significance? If there is a power in matter to raise rich and golden corn out of the rotten seed in the dust, and preserve a million germs under the cold Winter snow, and translate the refuse and black soil of the fields into lilies and roses, and violets, and daisies, and to

re-clothe the icy, frozen, dead branches with new green blossom and fruit at each returning harvest, if there is such power in nature, ever at work, is it unreasonable to believe that by some such method, by a similar law in the realm of spirit, when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, and these walls of flesh have succumbed, we shall have a "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Can it be deemed unscientific, unphilosophical to argue, that as in the case of natural life, so in that of spiritual life, a resurrection to a new creation will take place in the hour of death? To die is to rise. Death does not mean going down, descending into hades, but rising up, soaring to loftier realms and living in new fashion. Even as Summer is born on the bosom of Winter, and beautiful life in the arms of decay, so shall immortality spring up out of our mortality, and we shall be born out of the perishable body into the eternal spirit. I do not say these are mathematical demonstrations, leaving no room for doubt, I only ask if such reasoning is contrary to physical law and the phenomena of natural life?

Let us rise a step higher, and we shall see that the faith in immortality, belonging to the structure of our soul, is the indispensable inspiration of life. Tear this belief from the human bosom, and what can fill the void or bridge the chasm? Let us for a moment force ourselves to believe that life is a dream, immortality

a lie, and that we are mere bubbles floating aimlessly on the air of existence, soon to burst into nothingness; make yourself to believe that starless night is before you, wherein you shall perish utterly; and that your life is not more than the grass of the field or the creeping insects of land and sea! Believe in this creed of annihilation with all your heart. Believe in it as you believe in the certainty of your birth, and what inspiration is left to make our lives heroic, noble and divine? It takes great ideas, great thoughts, great aims and great beliefs to inspire man. Immortality, eternal duration in a larger, better, holier world, and with nobler powers, thrills the heart of man with the best of everything. Annihilation is repulsive, chilling,—it unnerves us and puts out the celestial fire of our souls. If I am to perish to-morrow and be like the unconscious dust under my feet, where, then, is the motive to love? Why clasp my fair blossoms to my heart and fasten, one by one, my purest affections on them, when it is only for a brief period, and then lover and loved shall sink into endless sleep and be trodden under the feet of future generations? Love, the sweetest flower of the heart, loses its divineness and charm when it becomes cognizant of its own mortality. But love will not believe in annihilation; *it cannot*. Argue with it philosophize with it, threaten it—it is all in vain. Love will hope, will aspire, will believe. Immortality is its food and drink. Then take the other

offsprings of the human mind, conscience, heart, and soul. Is not immortality the inspiration of all truth, justice, heroism, self-denial and piety? Why cultivate these virtues in the garden of my life if to-morrow a cruel, cold blast shall sweep them all out of existence, tear them by the root and scatter them to the four winds? Can I love justice, knowing that, imperfect as it is in this life, it will never have a chance to reach perfection? Can I love moral heroism if there is no heaven, where it shall be crowned on the forehead with the "well done" of the Master? Can I have the heart to fight for the truth, knowing that there is no Almighty God standing behind it and pushing it on? Can I fall in love with goodness and philanthropy, and purity if they cannot make me God-like, and prepare me for His enjoyment forever? Tell me, are these sublime and supreme attributes of man perishable as the worm of the dust and transient as the

" Snow-fall in the river ;
A moment white, then melts forever."

Is there no future for their greater growth and enlargement? No higher sphere where these shall ripen and glow with perfect beauty on our foreheads? Then, something within me breaks, my soaring spirit, aspiring energies, fall to the ground, and the stars that light me to the tomb, sink in a sea of despondency. I cannot help it, but I lose all inspiration. What folly to try and vindicate the truth ;

set the wrong, right; see that justice is done to all; care for the coming mankind, and suffer for the welfare of others; when all is a girl's dream, a deceitful show, a chaos, rudderless, and lawless! Let me look after my own body, feed my animal appetite, spurn my passions, and trample upon everybody else, for my own happiness. Is not the body all I have? Is not this the only world? Then "eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we are not." Such will be the inevitable influence of a creed that says: "This is a world without a God, a body without a soul, a here without a hereafter." Believe in this with all your might, and it *will bear fruit after its kind.*"

On the other hand, if I am to outlive the ages, and dwell in the presence of light forever, then is life full of meaning and inspiration, too. I love the good, the true, the divine, for the eternal years of God are theirs. They are imperishable and ever rising to nobler heights. Not one seed of goodness shall rot in the soil; not one particle of truth shall be lost in the hurry and confusion of ages; and not one jewel from the diadem of man shall fall to the ground. In the period of ambition, I shall think of that higher prize, and thus resist evil. In the hour of passion, I shall think of Heaven, the home of the pure in heart, and overcome the animal appetites. When tempted by greed and selfishness, I will think of the blessed hereafter, and deny myself for others. With this firm faith, I shall face everything in the shape of sorrow, temptation, disap-

pointment or death. Immortality is the living sap running through the veins of what is noblest and divine in man. May we not say, that in all this, there is an argument for immortality? Our hearts answer "Yes." Eternal life is the gift of God. Annihilation, gentlemen and ladies, is a lie.

Once more. The infinite perfection of God is an unanswerable proof in favor of immortality. By this we mean, that God in all His attributes, purposes and decrees is absolutely perfect. Imperfection, absolute evil, cannot exist in the Universe of a perfect Creator. And would a God, who is perfect power, perfect wisdom, perfect love, create man, endow him with supernatural capacities, give him a mind capable of immense growth, a heart never weary of love, a soul ever springing toward God and heaven; and then totally wipe him out in the twinkling of an eye? Can you believe of a perfect father giving birth to children, feeding them from His breast, bringing them up to manhood and womanhood, and then digging graves to thrust them back into nothingness? What mockery! Could an infinitely perfect Being create in our souls the thirst, the longing, the craving for more life, and then turn around and deceive us? It cannot be! Can you worship Him, who makes man, puts him in a world of sin, trial, sorrow, disappointment, heavy burdens, crosses, tears and thorns, and prepares no future, where all this shall be explained, and the cross changed into a crown;

the battle into a victory and the tears into jewels to shine on our foreheads forever? Is man created only for the cares, sins, sufferings and curses of this life? Then is God cruel; then He is not a father; then is infinite perfection a lie. God of heaven! if I had no faith in Thy perfection, I would curse the day that gave me birth, I would go weeping through life. Had I no faith in Thy perfection, I would never smile again. Life would be the greatest calamity to man. But not so; I believe in the absolute perfection of God, which whispers in my ears the evangel of immortality. Sure of this, I take my harp and in the midst of death, I sing

“ Light after darkness, gain after loss ;
Near after distant, gleam after gloom ;
Love after loneliness, life after tomb.”

In conclusion, let us hear the testimony of Jesus. In the Gospel of John He speaks the words of immortality when He says: “ I go to prepare a place for you ; In my Father’s house are many mansions ; *were it not so, I would have told you.*” Oh! transporting thought. Jesus busy over there preparing a mansion for my soul! A thousand years before Christ David sang: “ When I awake I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.” When Jesus had left the earth and was no more among men; from a dark dungeon in Rome came the words of Paul: “ Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,

which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." Who can believe in the Christian Scriptures and deny immortality. It is woven into the very texture of revelation; it is the discovery of the Christian religion.

I have said my say. Do you in your hearts believe in God and in immortality? Does this glorious hope warm your bosom and purify your life? Does it lead out the noblest in you? Behold an immortality of bliss, of glory and joy, and an immortality of shame and sin! Choose as you will, but heaven or hell, glory or shame, depends on *your choice*. There, is Jesus Christ with a crown in his hand for the victor's brow. There, is God standing at the shining gate to greet all with an individual kiss. There, are the angels, the prophets, martyrs, apostles, saints, and heroes of every land and nation, beckoning us to "come up higher" and enter into the exceeding and eternal joy of our Lord. Shall we lose that crown, that welcome kiss, that immortal joy? No! good God, *no!*

Let us begin to live nobly, to do bravely, and to breathe the Christian spirit, and the Son of Man, who brought life and immortality to light, will make death's bier the birth-bed of Life Eternal.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

“ Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning.”

LUKE xii.--35.

“ For our lamps have gone out.”

MATT. xxv.—8.

I have something to say this morning on the two-fold nature of human life. In the world of matter we have the handsome, sweet and luminous day; and the night, dark, dreary and damp. The world of spirit has likewise its day and night; its brightness and dimness; its sunlight and shadow. Our pilgrim path through the earth, runs now, along the mountain crest, high in the pure atmosphere, with nature's orchards and silver streams spreading before us and animating our spirits; and now again, along the deep and dark valley, walled in, and threatened with frightful and thunderous sounds.

Your life is made up of the two elements of joy and sorrow. Happiness and misery, gladness and gloom, go hand in hand through all the days of mortal existence. They are omnipresent. In the

palace of the prince and in the peasant's cottage ; in the heart of the millionaire and in the bosom of the penniless beggar. The philosopher with his empire of learning, and the ignorant, illiterate laborer—all have their share of weal and woe.

Can you not recollect those days of your life which were radiant with great joys, full of sparkling mirth, of profound satisfaction and rapture? Ah! then you loved life ; to be, was glorious ; even without a yesterday, or a to-morrow, the life of that one day seemed an exquisite gift to you. And then there is the remembrance of other days, when the sky was black, the heavens draped in mourning, and the cup of bitterness was pressed to your lips ; tears like a stream ran from your eyes ; your heart heaved and sighed like the troubled sea ; and life seemed to you an intolerable burden, a curse, and a torment. Gladly you would have leaped into the embrace of death to escape the pains and pangs of life. Such is human experience. One chapter, written in letters of gold and living light, murmuring melodious music ; the other inscribed in characters of gloom, and whispering a sad wail in our ears. It seems as if the two were in perpetual battle, the one chasing the other. Like winter and summer, the one slaying, freezing and destroying what the other warms to life and fruition. Light and darkness mingle in our life. The light is veiled with the thick cover of darkness, the darkness is girdled with a rainbow ring of light.

“Lamp of life, thy lips are burning
Through the veil that seems to hide them,
As the radiant lines of morning
Through thin clouds, ere they divide them.”

God sends the sunshine, man makes the shadow. The gifts of God are unmixed blessings. His goodness has no bitterness, His joys have no alloy, His love is pure affection. Like His own nature, His gifts are perfect. Whence then are our sorrows, our disappointments, our fears and failings! Not from above, but from below. God does not scatter thorns on your pathway, He does not wring tears from your eye-lids, He does not wound your heart with grief, nor does God hide from your soul the sunshine of the sweet heavens. You make your own life bitter and bruise your own heart, and stain your face with the tears of sorrow. I have heard of people, who hold God responsible for the long and lingering shadows in their lives. They are angry with Him, and call Him to task for the misery of their life, which seems to cling to their bones. “Oh,” they say, “God has been cruel to us, He has scourged us with a rod of iron. He has frowned upon us, and smitten us with His wrath. What have we done to deserve such treatment? Are our sins blacker than those of our neighbors? Is it just and kind in God to pursue us with his vengeance, tossing us hither and thither upon the tempestuous sea of life?” Hearers, God persecutes no man, with anger and malice. He does not go about,

to make this or that man miserable. He is only the author and source of every "good and perfect gift." I confess, there are some problems connected with the existence of pain, which I am utterly unable to solve. For instance, here is a poor persecuted, afflicted, wronged woman, she, as far as human judgment can go has been faithful, true and kind. In return she is smitten and beaten and tormented by the steel whip of want, hunger, wretchedness and desertion. Why should it be so? I cannot tell. And here is a man, wealthy, honored, comfortable, enjoying in great abundance the pleasures and luxuries of the world; who according to public opinion, has been mean, avaricious, selfish, tyrannical and deceitful. Is this fair? How do you explain this seeming partiality and unfairness of the Divine justice? I have no answer. To say that God punishes the good in this life, and the bad in the next life, cannot meet with all the objections. Yet a great deal of the mystery will vanish in the consideration, that the source of our troubles and cares and shadows is mainly human. On our shoulders rests the blame for the unhappiness and gloom, which like lead sit upon our hearts. Let us see:—

I believe that God created man for happiness. Our first home was in Paradise, the land of light and life. Joy is the law in nature, the great workshop of God. Every single fibre in the universe of matter, thrills with happiness. This globe of lands as it goes whirling through immensity, makes music

in the divine hearing. Yon celestial spheres, poised in mid-air, making a majestic arch of fretted fire, sing as they shine, "the hand that made us is Divine." Put your ear upon the soft heart of the earth, and you will hear the joyful sounds where-with the bud bursts into a flower, the soil cracks and ushers into existence a white lily, a purple-robed rose, or a mighty oak piercing the air and shooting its branches towards the skies. Even the cup of the little insect crawling in the dust and eating away your rose-bud is filled brim-full with joy. The butterfly, springing from flower to flower, is full of glee. All the works of God wear the crown of rejoicing and walk in the shining, glittering garb of happiness. I do not say that there is no suffering in the physical world, but I do say that it is the exception. The rule is happiness, health, sunshine.

Advancing a step higher we see that in the greater world of man, happiness is the law. Reasoning independent of all education and prejudice, I say that a good God seeks the welfare of His people and sincerely desires their happiness.

He has given you a *conscience*, tender, delicate, sensitive. You can render it a source of peace, courage and sweet calm, or of contention, cowardice, remorse and shame, a pandemonium in your bosom, a monstrous dragon, howling, hissing and tearing.

He has given you a *mind*, a kingdom in itself, an inexhaustible mine, a well of wealth, an ocean

of beauty and truth. You can reap the sweetest pleasures, the dearest joys; the clearest, purest light, from this realm of your mental organism. You can say:—

“ My mind to me a kingdom is ;
Such perfect joy therein I find,
That it excels all other bliss
Which God or Nature hath assigned.”

But you can also made it a waste, a barren wilderness, untilled, full of poisonous weeds, destructive and bitter herbs, bruising thorns, and vicious insects, which will torment you and force you to exclaim : “ Oh ! full of scorpions is my mind.”

The *heart* which the Heavenly Father gave you was so white and innocent and angelic! Do you see that little child playing on your knees, throwing his arms around your neck. On his rosy lips dances the sweet smile, in his eyes burns the living fire, with his merry laughter rings the household atmosphere. Ah ! Once your heart was like his, pure, free from guile, whiter than the virgin snow upon the heights. What a fountain of happiness, a heaven of sunshine, is a clean, pure heart! But you have driven nails into that innocence and softness. You have dried its mysterious springs of joy, gushing night and day, and falling with liquid plash; you have pierced it with the iron of discontent and of sin, and now it is torn, tattered, shrivelled and shattered, and as you hold it up in the light you see the holes

and scars and deep cuts whence your spiritual life is ebbing away.

Where is the immortal *soul* which God, like a spark of his divinity, lodged in that frame of clay? How warm and sweet is its sunshine when God, the supreme sweetness, is in the embrace of his arms; when pure, exalted thoughts and ideas, like white-robed priests, move around the altar and stir the sacred fire, that its flashing flames may arise to the highest heavens! Oh, what joy, what rapture, when the spacious halls and secret recesses of the soul are filled to overflowing with the fullness of God, shedding rays of sunlight "as fast as the Arabian trees their medicinal gum." As is yon huge burning mass of fire in the physical firmament, so is thy soul in the spiritual heaven. All your sunshine comes from the cloudless summits of your higher life. The nearer you live to God the closer to heaven—the world of light; the Christ-lie in spirit, the intenser will be the halo of glory and sunshine around your mortal existence. But, alas! the soul is too often torn from the heavens and cast into the mire and dirt, covered with the smutch of shame, dragged down and ridden over and crushed beneath passion's iron hoofs. O hearers! conscience, mind, heart and soul, are the ever-burning lamps in our life. If you sin against your conscience, the whisper of God in your bosom, you put out one lamp, and that diminishes the light, and if you put out by violence and ill

use the lamp of the mind, that will create a shadow on one side of your life. Blow out the lamp of the heart, burning so radiantly and so sacrificingly, and that creates a deeper shadow, thickens and lengthens it,—three of the lamps having gone out. And when you smother and choke the glorious lamp of the soul, then is your darkness complete; then midnight falls upon your noon. “How great must that darkness be.”

Have I succeeded to show you, that in yourself you have the lamps, first kindled by God, which if kept burning by diligently supplying them with oil, you will have light, you will move in a sphere of light, and be a child of light. But if through negligence, worldliness and the cold breath of doubt and scepticism, you blow out this flame in your spiritual nature, then your night will deepen and grow thicker and thicker. From light to darkness! from sunshine to shadow! oh! how horrible the change. You are walking through the fields in the month of June; the flowers have opened their cups to suck the honey from the soil, the sun and the shower; the birds chirp gaily, and steal the blossoms from the budding branches, the distant blue is exquisitely tender, not a cloud floats there, the sun walks majestically through the trackless heavens, and shakes down light, warmth and beauty from His golden urn. Glorious day! Most beautiful sunshine! To our raptured gaze,—

“ A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A deeper sapphire melts into the sea ! ”

Suddenly you come to the entrance of a valley. It is no longer Summer, you are in cold, damp December. From the same heavens that sent the sunshine, comes a heavy, almost tangible mist, the valley is filled with subterranean sounds, its rocks look grim and savage. Thunderous is the run of its water, rugged and slippery, and along the sharp precipices is your path, each step is fraught with danger, the atmosphere is suffocating, intense is the darkness, and grows intenser with every step. What a sepulchre ! What a night of rayless, joyless gloom ! What a change ! What tongue can describe its awfulness ! Yet greater is the change from the marvellous sunshine of God's presence in our conscience, mind, heart, and soul, to the total eclipse of faith, the blotting out of every gleaming star from the spiritual heavens. “ How great must that darkness be ? ”

If you bear with me, I will now go on to tell you how these lamps of life may be kept bright and burning. Feed your conscience with the oil of integrity, honesty, righteousness. Have a conscience void of offence before God and man. Do nothing which will cost your conscience a single pang ; nothing which will disturb in the least its delicate balance. If the integrity of your conscience is placed in one hand, and in the other, all the wealth and

ownership of the round world, take the former a thousand times over. Ah! did they tell you that you could be rich in a very short time if you would only put this one lamp out, or make it a little dim? They tell you, that by one single blow at your conscience you would rise in reputation and glory. Curse the advice, curse the allurements, curse the promise; cling thou to the integrity of your conscience; feed it with this sweet oil and you shall walk in light, and your bosom friend will be a soft pillow for your head in the hour of death. God of Heaven! give others wealth, give others honor, give others pleasure, give *me* the consolation of a faithful conscience.

Then feed your mind and heart and soul, with the truth, love and holiness of God. Wherever you find a pure thought, an inspirational idea, a constraining affection, a divine beauty of spirit, appropriate them, make them your own, and deposit them in the vessel that holds the oil of these burning lamps. Brighten the flame of your mind, by adding new truths, new desires, new resolutions for God, to your intellect. Be not idle, learn something every day. Trim the lamp frequently and supply it with fresh oil.

Can you not make the lamp of your heart burn a little brighter? Here is a candle burning on my table while I am studying, burns its self away in love for me, burns its life out to serve me.

“O humble and yet bright,
Making thy sacrifice so noiselessly.
Burning thy lovely life away to light,
Diviner light for me.”

Can we not make our hearts to burn so royally and generously upon the altar of mankind, that it may add to the happiness, comfort, blessing and sunshine of the world? Can we not pierce the night of sin with the warm beam of love, shed from the candle of our heart?

Then, again, let us see if we cannot purge and polish our souls from every stain and spot that, like a diamond on our forehead, it may flash its brilliant light and reveal the purity, holiness and sweetness of God to this sin-darkened world. Let us beautify, ennoble, sanctify and glorify our souls, through the grace of the Saviour and present it to Him, as a star, to shine in the firmament forever and ever. And perhaps a poor creature, seeing the kind light of your soul, may find his way to the heart of God and become himself an heir of glory.

Sin is the great shadow of life. Sinning leads to sorrowing. At the time it may give you pleasure, but there is a sting in it, and will give you pain. Remorse, shame, self-condemnation, loss of peace and misery follow hard on the heels of sin. Across this fair earth, lies the black shadow of sin. The immortal soul of man is disfigured by its touch. O, the curse of sin! O, the night and darkness of sin! Let it enter into your heart and it will carry gloom

and death with it. Let it grow in society and in the world and it will bring in its train a host of curses, destroying the good, slaying the truth, and casting a ghastly shadow upon the sunshine of life.

What the world wants is more sunshine. How much will *you* give, and how much will you? How many of your lamps are burning? Is the sunshine of your life greater than its shadow? The wise virgins took oil with their lamps, and when the foolish were left in the dark, their lamps having gone out, the wise with burning lights greeted the bridegroom and with him went into marriage. Soon the same cry may ring in your ears, "behold the bridegroom cometh!" Are your loins girded about and your lamps burning?

Is your conscience prepared to meet its God?

Is your mind prepared to stand before the "judge of quick and dead."

Is your heart washed, swept, and purged, ready to face the "searcher of hearts?"

Is your soul clothed upon with the beautiful robe of holiness and dwelling far above the corruptions of the world, the temptations of sin, the bondage and the darkness of the flesh?

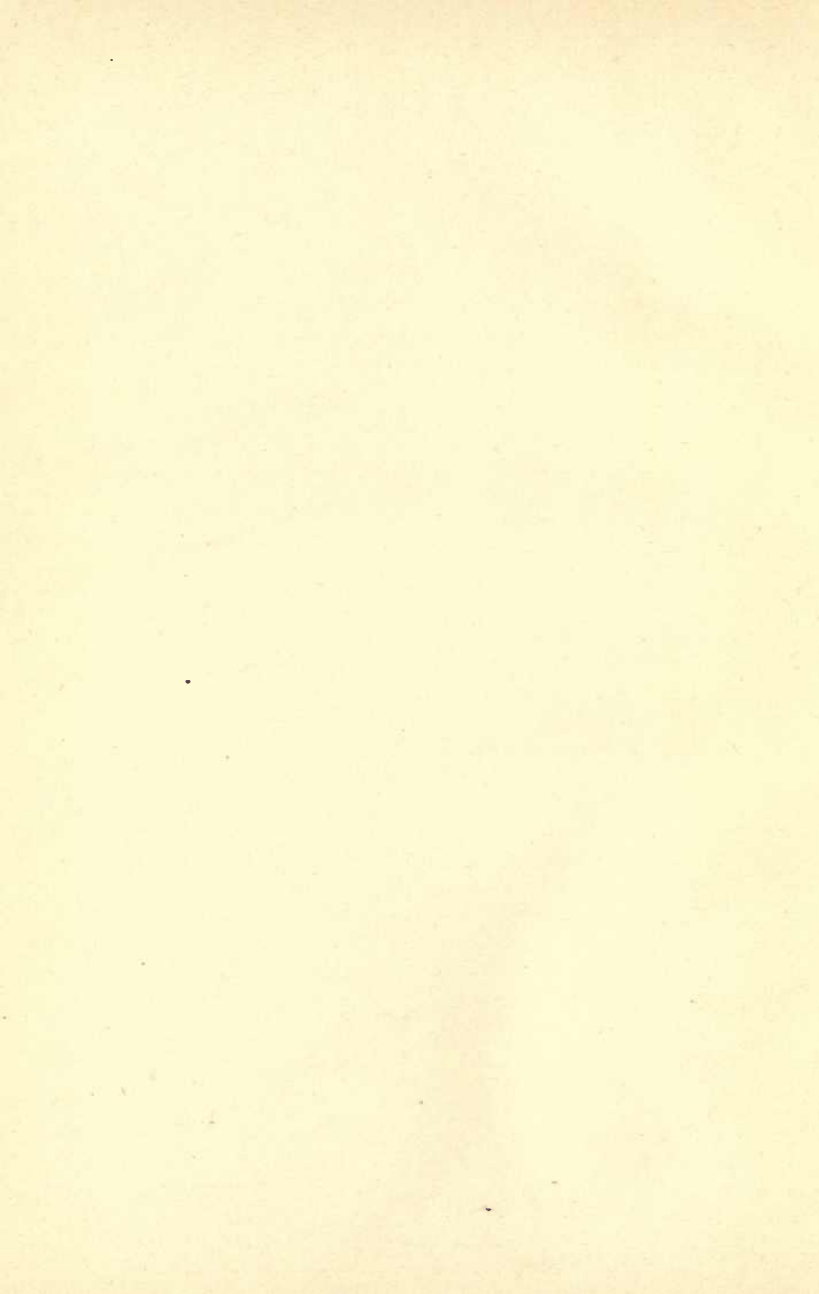
Is it ready to receive the summons and soar to the realms of perennial sunshine?

Are these lights trimmed and burning with splendid radiance?

Are you in the dark, struggling and groping in a night of sin? It is my mission and privilege to

take you by the hand this morning and lead you to Jesus Christ the "light of the world." He will lift His face and shine upon you. He will lead you out of your darkness into the marvellous light of His gospel. "The bruised reed He will not break; and the smoking candle, He will not quench." Oh! the power of His gentleness, the depth of His compassion. This Jesus I bring to your door. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and your sun will reach the noonday hight, illumining every corner and crevice of your life and all the shadow will be swallowed up in sunshine.

This morning, may we rebuild the fallen altar, rekindle the extinguished fire, strike sparks upon the lamps gone out, and begin a new life with all the glow and sunshine of heaven, fairer than the rosy morning that kisses the cheeks of the sky, and lovelier than the starlight night with a million jewels on its diadem.



REASON AND RELIGION.

REASON AND RELIGION.

“And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.”

I PETER iii.—15.

The eloquent Chalmers, of Scotland, has said:—
“No man, whether learned or unlearned, can have the faith to be a Christian without having a reason for it.” An equally eminent Christian philosopher has said, that “To believe in Christianity without knowing why we believe in it, is not faith but blind credulity.” God has made a revelation not only to the soul, but also to the head and intellect. The Divine Christ stands not only at the door of the heart and knocks for admission, but also at the door of reason. “Love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and mind,” is the commandment of the Scriptures. The foundations of religion are laid not only in the emotional and spiritual, but also in the intellectual nature of man. Reason has its own say in matters of religion. Reason and faith are twin sisters; there is no quarreling between them. I am sorry to think that some people separate the one

from the other and create a chasm, a fixed gulph between them. It is affirmed that religion is merely a matter of faith, and has nothing to do with reason. Argument and logic are said to be out of place in the domain of the supernatural. You may believe, accept, give your assent, but you must not reason nor argue. For centuries this has been the position of the Latin Church in the Occident and the Levant. Whatever the ecclesiastical heads said, was law and faith for the common people. They could not investigate; they could not reason for themselves. It was

“Not theirs to reason why,
Not theirs to make reply,
Theirs but to do and die.”

The masses had no conscience, no opinion of their own; no freedom of faith. St. Peter's chair ruled their *beliefs* as readily as their purses. To argue and apply the intellectual method was deemed blasphemous.

Science and philosophy could not enter the realm of religion without committing sacrilege. Hence, when a certain Gallileo, a student of nature, comes forth with a new truth in his hands, the Church puts her hand on the philosopher's mouth, crying, “Hush!” “Your discovery,” they tell him, “contradicts and overthrows our faith; therefore, you are wrong.” Says Gallileo to them: “Revise your

faith and make it reasonable. I cannot help it if it clashes with your theories of the earth; my discovery is a mathematical fact." "But," said the Church, "we will not reason; you must hush." So, they being in power, cast him into a dungeon, and put chains on his lips. Thus with every great discovery and movement towards the light, the Latin Church denounced them as hostile to faith and heretical and atheistic in tendency. She commanded her children to "believe." If anyone had the courage to say, "Well, I cannot accept that article of the creed, and think it to be unreasonable," the Church cried in his face: "Oh, you sceptic, you heretic, you rationalist! you want to reason before you believe, do you? Come with me!" and he was led to the stake and burned alive. Reason was cursed as carnal, and investigation and search held up as impious. The priest pinched the forehead of every Catholic and stamped their brains with religious bigotry. It burned Bruno, reduced Gallileo to silence, and spread the thick night of ignorance over all Europe. It excommunicated every man of genius, every master mind, every broad heart and head. It canonized and made a saint out of every mean bigot and filthy fanatic. In one word, so long as the dead hand of Pope Gregory, with an iron tyranny, ruled Christendom, reason was placed under the ban.

But the reaction came. Reason gathered her forces and rose in arms against the despotism of

church authority. King and priest were dethroned, the sceptre wrested from their grasp, and the purple torn from the shoulders of St. Peter's successor. Like a rainbow, Reason girdled the heavens with a luminous ring, and led in person the human forces to the field of action.

It, in turn, thrust her dagger deep into the heart of superstition, fear and blind credulity. It exposed the shame of fanaticism and every fabrication of man. It rang the death knell of witchcraft and priestcraft. Like an irresistible hurricane, it swept away every barrier and gave free course to the Amazonian river of human thought. It shattered to pieces the heavy chains that had bonded the mind for ages. Like an angel heralding a new day, she stood upon the gilded hill, her feet softly pressing the heights, and in her mouth a green branch. Thus the age of reason was ushered in.

Again it grieves me to think, that the mistake committed by the enemies of reason, has been repeated by her friends. Reason has been abused by forcing her to fight faith down. She has been armed to take vengeance, and return the blows dealt by the age of priestly misrule. Hence the cry of the present era, very often is: "Down with faith, down with church, down with religion." Thus history presents to us two extremes, dangerous and unreasonable, and with extremes we have nothing to do.

Our position may be summed up in a single phrase. Reason and faith, have each their proper sphere and render incalculable service to each other. I would like to say a word to those who have organized themselves against faith, and aim to banish it altogether from the world. I shall make an assertion, it is this: The moment you withdraw faith entirely out of the arena of life, that instant, quick as the flash of lightning, the great wheel of humanity shall come to a standstill. That moment the world's heart shall cease to palpitate; that moment all aspiration, lofty longing, hoping and prophesying shall come to an end. In all the spheres of thought, faith is indispensable. Let us begin with the world of science. Can scientific men afford to part with faith? Here is an astronomer who has built a telescope for the survey of the stars. He has faith, that the laws of nature will remain the same to-morrow as they were yesterday. He is not sure of it, for what man knows what a day may bring forth. But he has faith, in the honesty and truthfulness of nature. He has good grounds to believe that the shining stars will not run away, but be friendly and peep through his lenses. He has faith that in his calculations nature's faithfulness will help him. He predicts an eclipse, or the birth of a new star. "Twenty-five years hence," he says, "there will be a new jewel on the diadem of night." He studied the movements of the celestial bodies, and found that a certain planet, in its movements, was in-

fluenced by an invisible orb. He calculated that so many miles to the right or to the left of it, there must be some other body which, travelling at a certain rate, will be seen on a certain spot at a given date. His prophecy is fulfilled. Now this was not all knowledge, most of it was faith; not blind and unreasonable, but a rational, intelligent faith in the fixity and fidelity and trustworthiness of great nature.

Thus, in the commercial world, faith is more than gold, more than thrift, more than pluck. If you had no faith that certain causes will lead to certain results, could you have the courage to enter the arena of toil? Could you invest your money and throw your whole soul into an object without *believing* that the object was attainable? You believe that honesty, diligence, thrift, economy, will do to-morrow what they have done in the past. You are not sure, but you have the necessary faith to keep you in motion. Infidelity will relax the nerves of commerce. It will shut every shop in the land in the twinkling of an eye. It is faith's exhaustless breast that gives sustenance to civilization, and spurns our flagging energies.

Is it not so in the domestic world? What a large amount of faith is exercised under the family roof. You feel safe and happy because you have faith in the members of the household. Lose your faith and you will be the most worthless, miserable, wretched and unhappy being on earth. Lose your faith, and

your heart within you will fall with a thump. Lose your faith and you lose everything.

Is it not strange, then, that faith so essential elsewhere should be banished from religion, and its place usurped by reason? We are told that it is unreasonable to believe in the supernatural because we cannot see, handle, feel or taste, and because it does not fall under the immediate cognizance of our senses. I charge unbelief with superstition, bigotry and dogmatism. If in affirming a thing, one may be tempted to go to the extreme of fanaticism, so in denying a thing, there is just as great a danger of being unreasonable, narrow and superstitious.

Let us begin with the first article in the creed of Christendom. "*I believe in God.*" Is that an unreasonable belief? Does the belief in a supreme, spiritual being contradict reason? Can you reasonably deny the being of God? I tell you I have never yet seen an atheist. I have seen people who talk as if they were atheists, but no person can be one in real life. God is so rooted and grounded into human nature, that as David Hume, the champion of English scepticism says: "The human mind naturally believes in God." You cannot divest yourself of the overwhelming thought of the Divine existence filling all space and occupying all time. Invent a hypothesis of the universe without having recourse to a first cause. Say that there is no design in the world of matter and therefore no designer.

Let matter, dead, inert matter, take the place of mind. Let a germ of protoplasm, a speck of jelly, possessing the "potency and promise of life" stand in place of God. Then we will ask whence has that original matter, life and motion? You answer that, "life is the property of organized matter." Very well, but again we ask, "what organizes matter?" You answer again: "the play of forces in certain directions." Then in the language of science we ask you to tell us, "what directs these forces in one way for order, harmony, design and creation, rather than in another way for discord, chaos, confusion and ruin?" You hold in your hand the letters of the English alphabet, you throw them up in the air and when they fall upon the ground they spell great names, beautiful ideas, pure thoughts, noble precepts, an excellent advice. What directed these letters in their fall to perform such a task? "Chance," did you say? Which is more reasonable, to say that blind chance is at the world's helm and is the author of all the wondrous phenomena we see,—or infinite wisdom, power, will? God is the great cause of the life and light

"Of all this wondrous world we see,
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflections caught from Thee,
Wherever we turn thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine."

“I believe in God is the creed, not only of evangelical Christians, but of all men: of Sir William Hamilton and Hume, Bishop Butler and John Stuart Mill; Pascal and Voltaire; Massillon and Diderot; Spurgeon and Spencer; Luther and Hegel; Jonathan Edwards and Thomas Paine. John Newman, the great English catholic has said that—“of all things, the being of God is borne in upon our minds with most power.” Ernest Renau says, “God will always stand for the full expression of our supersensual needs.” Vacherot, a philosopher and thinker of the broadest school and finest intellectual grain, thinks that faith in a Supreme Creator is the only inspiration of life, and that when God is gone, all the fire and glow of the soul perish. Atheism, my hearers, is unnatural and *unreasonable*. What! give up the belief in a Heavenly Father, who cares for me, and follows me with an unslumbering eye, and lifts me up when I am fallen, and binds up my wounds, and treasures up my tears in His bottle to transfigure them into jewels on my forehead in that land of glory.—I would sooner tear my heart out than believe that I am an orphan, a child without a father.

Again. Let us now see if it be unreasonable to believe in a Divine revelation. I believe that God has spoken. I believe that the Infinite Mind has not always kept silence. I believe that in this book we have a revelation of the Divine Will. Before me is the Book that has made a marvellous history. It has turned the world upside down. It has created a new

epoch, and reared the most glorious civilization. Say what you will. Say it is a "cunningly devised fable." Say you do not believe in it, that it is of heathen origin, that it is the fabrication of priests and the work of a superstitious age. Take all that is good and immortal in the utterances of Jesus and fasten them on the cold lips of a Seneca, Antoninus, Cicero, Socrates, Buddha, Confucius or Zoroaster. With the sharpest knife of criticism, play upon its most delicate veins and take it to pieces. Still the indisputable fact remains that no other book has exerted the power and influence which have gone forth from the deathless pages of the Christian Scriptures. To-day it is translated into every human speech, murmured in a thousand tongues, repeated in a million pulpits, girdling the world with its divine music, and feeding the hunger and thirst of mankind. Oh, Word of God, what attacks have been made on thy pages! What cruel and bitter and malicious slander has been spoken of thee! What sharp and piercing arrows have been hurled at thee! But, oh! not one iota of thy charm or sweetness has been lost. At thy bidding, sorrow and disease and disappointment lose their sting. In thy presence the tears on our cheeks become telescopes of faith; the burden falls from our shoulders; the thorns weave a crown on our foreheads, and the cross of life becomes a symbol of glory and of immortality! What power there is in thee to sweeten toil, to rest the troubled breast, to strike

sparks upon the languishing soul, to light the path to the tomb, and thence to the realms of joy beyond!

“Holy Scriptures, Book divine—
Precious treasure, thou art mine!”

Is it unreasonable to believe that utterances such as those of Jesus, that have outlived the wear and tear of time,—which has swept away the words of other great men,—are the expressions of the imperishable, ever-throbbing mind of God? Is there no reason in the belief that Jesus Christ is chief among ten thousand, and peerless in the world of mind, heart and soul?

Thus with all the fundamental articles of faith in the creeds of Christendom, is it unreasonable to believe that man is more than perishable dust, more than mere mineral matter, more than bone and sinew and muscle? Is it unreasonable to believe in the immortality of the soul? I sit beside the dying, and I ask in earnest: “Shall we meet again?” You tell me I must not ask such a question; that it is unscientific, unphilosophical and unreasonable. I say, perish your science, perish your philosophy, perish your repulsive theory of annihilation! Let love have its say; let the heart prophesy; let my soul *believe* that, yonder is the Infinite affection; yonder the bosom of eternal love; yonder the exceeding great joy and eternal reward! To believe that “this is a world without a God, and man is a

body without a soul, and this a present without a hereafter"—can I say that this is more reasonable than faith in God, in spirit, and in immortality? No; not till I have lost all my understanding; not till my mind is divested of every bit of information, my heart a void; my soul sense-bound and passion driven; no, not till then. Unbelief is the egg of all sin. Curse on its head; the tornado's lightning shaft on its head!

Let us gather our courage this evening and exercise a larger, deeper faith in the reality of religion. My hearers, all truth is insured at the Bank of the Infinite, and it cannot perish. Jesus rides on the shoulders of mankind; and unbelief, doubt, and criticism, cannot cast Him off. The Divine Word is inscribed with the point of a diamond upon the walls of the soul, and no deluge of flood can rub it out. The irresistible gravitation of the universe is in the hands of religion. Infidelity is a lie! and no king, no philosopher, no judge, no supreme court, no army, can make it true. Fear not! God *is*, and not a sparrow falleth to the ground without His notice. Fear not! through eighteen hundred years of battle Christ has lost nothing. His cradle still sparkles through the ages of the world, and His cross still towers

“O'er the wrecks of time,
With all the light of sacred story
Gathering around its head sublime.”

The pierced hand is at the helm ; the feet nailed to the tree; fly with the swiftness of lightning to the rescue of what is noblest in religion. The heart broken by grief, is the inexhaustible source of inspiration, sweetness and love.

The curse of man is on this infidel gospel. The curse of God is on the powers of darkness. The *heart* is up in arms against atheism, and annihilation, and the heart will win the day.

“ If e'er when faith had fallen to sleep,
I heard a voice, ' Believe no more, '
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep,

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

Fast advances the day when reason and faith shall stand together at the altar of religion, “ and to the litany of their worship all the people shall say ‘ amen.’ ”

“ Through this dark and stormy night,
Faith beholds a feeble light
Up the blackness streaking;
Knowing God's own time is best,
In a patient hope I rest,
For the full day-breaking.”

“ Two angels guide
The path of man, both aged and yet young,
As angels are, ripening through endless years.
On one he leans ; some call her memory,
And some tradition ; and her voice is sweet,
With deep, mysterious accords ; the other,
Floating above, holds down a lamp which streams
A light divine and searching on the earth,
Compelling eyes and footsteps. Memory yields,
Yet clings with loving check and shines anew,
Reflecting all the rays of that bright lamp
Our angel reason holds.”

NOTES.

ARMENIANS.

Aram or Armen, was the first king of the Armenians, and his people after him, were called "Armenians." They are also called Haiks, after the great conqueror Haig, who forms the first chapter of Armenian history.

Gregory the Illuminator, was the apostle of Armenia. He was the son of wicked parents. His father assassinated the Prince and is despised by all Armenians. Gregory, however, is the greatest and brightest name in Armenian history.

The missionaries laboring among the Armenians, are sent by the A. B. C. F. M. Recently to the disappointment of the Congregationalists, the "Disciples of Christ" and Baptists have also sent their missionaries to this field.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

The missionaries do not directly preach to the Moham-medans. If a Mussulman chooses to come and hear the gospel, they are certainly made welcome. I have heard of one Turk who received baptism, but whether from conviction or other motives, am not able to state. The missionaries have failed, as far as the conversion of the Mohammedan is concerned.

Robert College, was founded through the generosity of Christopher Robert, a merchant of New York. About three years ago, this noble philanthropist died in Paris. Cyrus Hamlin is the father of the college, as it is the fruit of his earnest labors in the Levant. At present, under George Washburn, it is enjoying great prosperity and has even Mussulman students.

Robert College is not a missionary institution, as is the college at Beytout, in Syria. It compares favorably with the best American colleges.

WHAT IS GOD ?

In the old church at Amasia, Turkey in Asia, there is a ghastly picture of hell, before which candles are burnt, and men and women kneel tremblingly and pray to be delivered from such torment as shadowed forth by the picture. The motive is purely one of fear, dread of punishment, which is the meanest and basest motive one can have to serve God.

Calvin was not the friend of Servetus. We must remember the spirit of the age in which he lived, before we judge him too severely. Some people say, that Calvin had no part in the burning of Servetus. It is, however, beyond dispute, that he at least encouraged the execution of the plan proposed.

RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS.

“ There is a reaper whose name is death,
And with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

‘ Shall I have nought that’s fair ?’ said he—
‘ Have nought but the bearded grain ?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again.’

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves ;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

‘ My Lord hath need of the flowerets gay,’
The reaper said, and smiled ;
‘ Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where He was once a child.

They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care ;
And saints upon their garments white
These sacred blossoms wear.’

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love ;
She knew she would find them all again
In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The reaper came that day ;
’Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.’”

THE MISSION OF WOMAN.

“ I will go forth ’mong men, not mailed in scorn
But in the armor of a pure intent ;
Great duties are before me, and great *aims*;
And whether crowned or crownless when I fall,
It matters not, so that God’s work is done.
I’ve learned to prize the quiet lightning deed,
Not the applauding thunder at its heels,
Which men call fame.”

Florence Nightingale was the sweetest character that walked through the streets of Scutary, on the Bosphorus, during the war with Russia. The soldier barracks at Scutary, are her monument. How much good can a woman do inspired by love ?

“ Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turn dismay’d,
The generous champion stood ; at *her* control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul ;
Comfort came down, the trembling wretch to raise,
And last faltering accents whisper’d praise.”

“ It is not growing like a tree,
In bulk doth make man better be ;
Or standing long, an oak three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald and sere ;
A lily of a day,
Is fairer, far, in May.

“ Although it fall and die that night,
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we past beauties see,
And in short measures life may perfect be.”

REASON AND RELIGION.

- “ Yes, *Faith* will linger in this troubled world,
Till earth shall crumble into dust ;
Until hope hath her radiant banner furled,
Conscience resigned her holy trust.
- “ There must be *Faith*, while there are hearts to beat
With rapture for another's sake ;
While pulses hurry at the joy to meet,
And o'er one parting, pause and speak.
- “ While there are eyes to kindle and to weep,
Or sink beneath another's glance ;
Bright visions hover on the brow of sleep,
As if the soul lay in a trance.
- “ Where love still dwells, there must be holy *Faith*;
How could He watch the loved one die,
Without the fervent trust that shows him death
Is herald of eternity.
- “ Would'st thou reach the farther heaven,
Touch the coolness of the blue,
Would'st thou bathe thy weary earth-wings
In the love of distilled dew ;
- “ Would'st thou gather flowers unfading,
From the banks of Jordan's River ?
Would'st thou sip the sweet repentance
Which destroys the dark forever.

“ Cast aside the clogs and fetters from thy naked, shivering
soul ;
Throw away the rags which bind her, fear and hate and
all control ;
Past philosophy and science with their forked divining
rod,
Past the scavengers of reason with their searchings after
no God ;
Past the smoke and din, and clatter of the toiling, moiling
earth,
To the region pure and silent where the springs of truth
have birth.”



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