

HOME-TALKS

THE COMMUNITY PRESS
ONEIDA, N. Y.
PUBLISHED BY THE COMMUNITY
1875

9781
8

JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES.

EDITED BY

ALFRED BARRON AND GEORGE NOYES MILLER.

VOL. I.

ONEIDA:

PUBLISHED BY THE COMMUNITY.

1875

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J. H. Noyes

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PREFACE.

The familiar discourses contained in this volume were spoken in the free atmosphere of home without any formality or pre-arrangement. It would not be a correct imagination to connect them with anything like a pulpit and a formal and solemn assembly. They should rather be associated with irregular social groups, bright evening lamps and a ruddy hearth. They began in Putney, Vermont, a village clustering around a waterfall and looking down into the valley of the Connecticut. They were afterwards continued at Oneida when there was nothing there but a saw-mill and the rude block houses of the pioneers and Indians; then in a Brooklyn parlor close down by the ships; then again at Oneida in the "Hall" of the "New House;" then at Wallingford, Connecticut, on the side of Mount Tom, looking out from among the orchards to the Quinnipiac below, and to the sharp village-steeple beyond; and last of all at Joppa, a lonely station on the Oneida Lake, where the west winds roll in the waves and pile up the sand.

They have been quite irregular in their intervals of

delivery, but really continuous with one exception. From the beginning of 1854 to the latter part of 1863, Mr. Noyes was silent, but not inactive. Those were ten years of great endeavor, when the Oneida Community was laying its social and business foundations. In that time it was learning music and industry. Then came science and literature, and the "Talks" went on again, in a little different key.

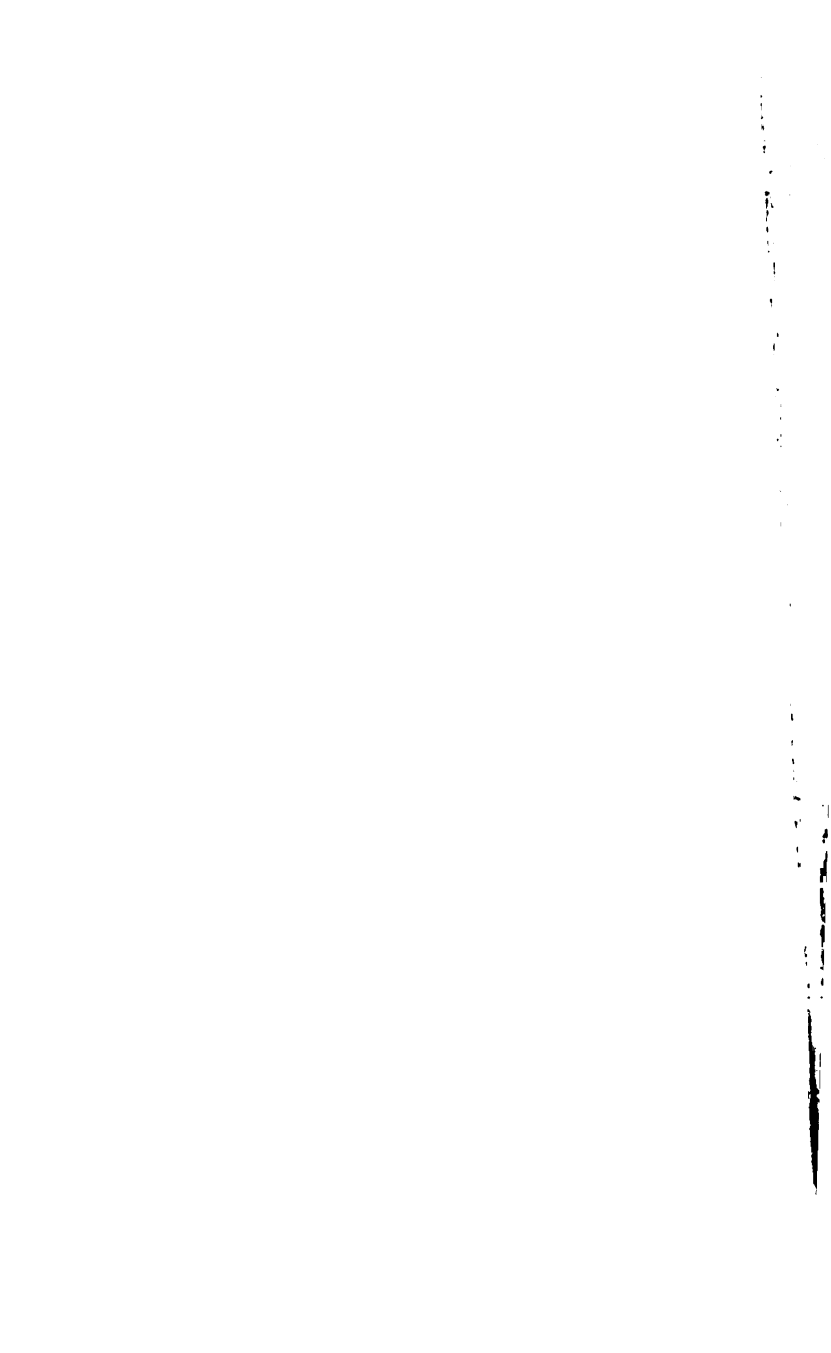
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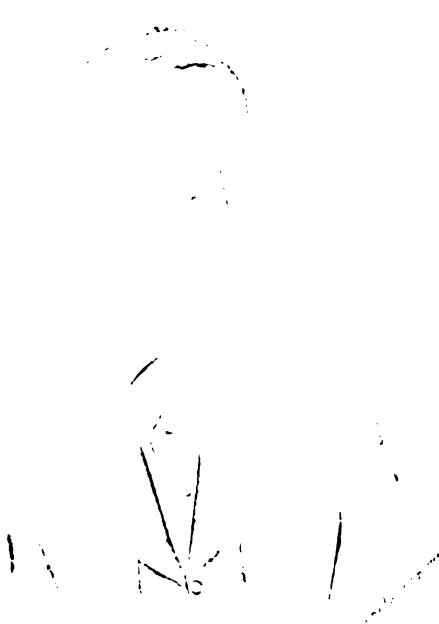
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EDITORS.

Oncida Community, February 20, 1875.



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HOME-TALKS.

TWO CERTAINTIES.

EVERYTHING persuades me to humility and docility and communism of heart. Looking over the whole field of intellectual survey, I inquire of myself, What do I most certainly know—what is the surest thing of all others to me? And the answer is, Of all things that I know, this is the surest, that *I know but very little*. When I dig to the bottom, I find that to be the hard-pan upon which my individual wall is built; I am sure that I am a very limited, ignorant creature, and most of the things above that layer of truth I am not so sure of. A *negation* of my own wisdom is at the bottom of all my capacity for wisdom. I know that I am inexpressibly ignorant, a good deal surer than I know that the earth goes round the sun.

Then the second surest thing which I know, is an excellent complement of the first. I know that some other being besides myself is infinite in knowledge. Of course I cannot see infinite distances, but I can see enough around me to be

certain that the universe is full of somebody else's intelligence, which, compared with my intelligence, is as the ocean to a drop.

Here is the true recognition of the *me* and the *not-me*. The recognition of the *me* is the negation of all absolute intelligence; and the recognition of the *not-me* is the acknowledgment of infinite intelligence out of *me*. Both of these certainties are reasons for humility and docility. They persuade to communism. The *me* must subside into the *not-me*; and then by virtue of the partnership it knows all things: but the moment it relapses into itself it knows nothing.

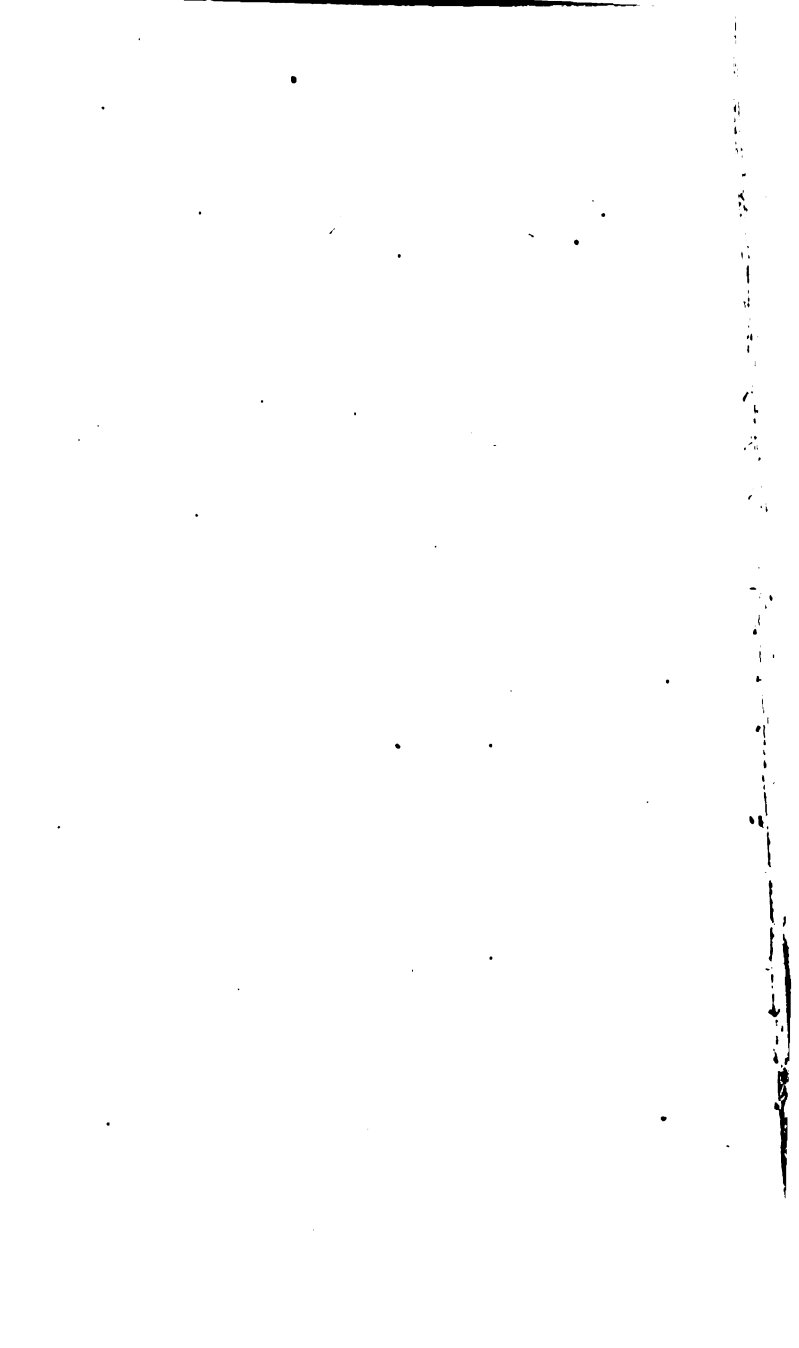
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parties. There has been, on the one hand, an administration party with its unitary divine policy of governing the world and guiding it to salvation, as disclosed in the Bible and in the history of the Jewish people, commencing with the covenant of God with Abraham and continuing to the time of Christ's appearance and second coming, and through the subsequent history of the Gentiles. Then, on the other hand, there has been all the way through an opposition party. It has existed extensively in the form of idolatry, but its substratum is worldliness and unbelief; and these are as virulent in modern civilization as ever they were in heathenism. The same great division of the world into two parties, exists substantially even now in Christendom. There is the administration party and the opposition party. Now every one of us should be able to say, "I am an administration man; I go for the government;" and every one should have an ambition to understand the course and policy of the administration; and to show his activity and loyalty in defending it, justifying it, and supporting its measures. In that sense I count myself a politician, a party-man. I am wholly devoted to the administration. That is really what is meant when we confess our loyalty to the Bible. We call ourselves Bible men; and the sum and substance of that confession is that we are devoted to the great government of the world that has been at work in all

nations from the beginning, and which has developed its policy to a very considerable extent in the Bible. That is the value of the Bible to us.

We must not be party-men in the usual sense of the word; that is, supporters of candidates without reference to truth: we must find a way to become partisans of the truth itself, which really is God. God is light; God is truth; and if we know who our leader is, in supporting the administration we shall become partisans of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. There is no danger of excessive zeal for that. In fact, the very thing above all others that God desires, is that we should become thorough-going partisans of the truth and throw our whole souls into its service. We need not be afraid of being too enthusiastic in that direction, because the love of truth is a self-regulating principle.

My purpose is to be loyal to the administration. I desire to take large statesman-like views of God's dealing with the world, and learn to justify and defend the policy that has been pursued in training the Jewish nation; in sending Christ into the world; in sending the Bible into the world; in giving the Bible to the Gentiles; in allowing the Catholic Church to become such a powerful organization; and then favoring the Reform churches which now rival that church in influence. I desire to be able to trace the policy of the heavenly administration through all his-

tory, and understand and justify it; not in a man-worshipping or even a God-worshipping spirit irrespective of the truth, but in the love of truth, and with rational, scientific zeal. Thus alone can I help the administration and forward its interests.

The history of the world everywhere reveals the purpose of God going forward. The marks of his policy are always visible. The history of the world is vertebrate—it is a connected, organized system, and the purpose of God is its backbone.

It is the true distinction of an administration man that he is in favor of organization, and sees an organic plan in the whole history of the world. The opposition man is in favor of individualism, and sees nothing but chaos in the history of the world. The really intelligent administration man is one who knows in his head and in his heart what are the great objects of the administration, and goes with it and for it. He is in more or less personal communication with it; and in proportion as he becomes known as a faithful and intelligent administration man, he will be trusted with the secrets, purposes, business and policy of the administration, and set to work for them. He will rise in the party just as persons do in minor politics. The administration above is glad to find men whom it can trust. This is the way to inspiration and "the honor that cometh from God only."

WHERE IS GOD?

“DRAW nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.” This is a very simple injunction, and many people think they know what it means; but it raises the question, “Where is God?” for in order to know how to draw nigh to him, we must know where he is. Children are generally taught to believe that he is up in the sky; but in the Bible we find many expressions which turn us to the inward part of man as the place where God dwells. Christ said that the Father was in him, and he represented himself as being in believers: “I in them, and thou in me.” In the times of the Old Testament, the common idea which represents God as being in the sky, was tolerated, perhaps favored; but in the New Testament he is always represented as being *inside of men*. “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”

The theory thus propounded, though startling at first, is sustained by all the analogies of nature. We can turn to multitudes of examples where one thing is contained within another and where the interior thing, being the more valuable and

refined of the two, is that for which the other exists. Here before us is the water in the tumbler, the oil in the lamp, and the juice in the apple. In the human body the veins are within the flesh, the blood within the veins, and so on. The egg is a still more perfect example of a series of things existing one within another, and each more important and vital as you go inward. First is the shell, then the white, then the yolk, and within the yolk a nucleus, and within the nucleus the nucleolus, which is supposed to be the final germ and center of vital action. From all such examples we are led to conceive that God is, in relation to human beings and to all life, like the juice in the apple or like the vital germ within the yolk of the egg.

There is every reason to believe that the universe, in the largest sense, has this concentric plan of organization. The signs are these: The heavenly bodies act upon one another by gravitation, by light, by heat and by electricity. Now for the conveyance of these forces there must be a common medium extending throughout the interstellar spaces and connecting all worlds. It is impossible to conceive that one body should act on another without the interposition of some such connecting and conducting element. In the stellar system this element is of a nature so subtle as to be beyond our present powers of perception; nevertheless, a rational idea of the

planetary relations requires us to imagine all these worlds as floating in a common element, and pervaded by a common medium; and according to the New Testament theory which we are considering, still within this infinite and infinitesimal element is God.

With such a conception of the universe, it is not absurd to think and speak of God as being up in the sky. The old theory comes into some proximity to the new. Wherever the interstellar principle exists, there, as its interior content, is God. He is thus anywhere and everywhere—up in the sky as well as in the nearer spaces. Perhaps we can better conceive of him as in the entire universe around and within us, than as merely interior to ourselves or to the earth.

Some Spiritualists assert that the heavens are connected with the earth and move with it. I dare not go into that sort of speculation; but I feel safe in going in the general direction that I have indicated, to find God, that is, from things visible to things invisible; from those which are coarse and fixed to those which are fluid, refined and subtle; from things which *contain* to those which are *contained*. That is certainly the general direction in which we are to seek God. We find one thing within another as a visible fact, and following on into the invisible, we must assume that the series extends indefinitely, not

to say infinitely, beyond the cognizance of the microscope. There must be matter as much more refined than those atoms which limit the power of the microscope, as those are smaller than the globes of the solar system. There is absolutely no limit to the series. The heavens, as related to the earth, are in that direction, and occupy, in their infinite tenuity, all the central spaces of matter, as well as of the soul.

From this view, what help shall we get for drawing near to God? In one way I certainly get help. It leads me to fasten my attention on the smallest things, instead of the greatest. It teaches me that bulk, in the common acceptance of the term, instead of being the measure of power, is the opposite; it is the measure of coarseness and inertia. By seeking the seat of power in the direction of what is central and refined, we get into a habit of mind which helps us toward God. The carnal mind turns toward bulk; the spiritual mind, like the Homœopathic philosophy, sees that attenuated things are the strongest. Perhaps that is the reason why humility is of so great value. Meekness and lowliness, when thoroughly analyzed, consist partly at least, in getting rid of slavery to the idea of bulk.

It is only when reduced to the smallest condition, that we are nearest right. "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth

unto life, and few there be that find it." It is easy to look abroad into the great spaces of the universe: but to turn back into the fine interior of things is to find a narrow way—a straight gate. "It is easier," said Christ, "for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." That could not be if the kingdom of heaven were one of those great local spheres, such as the Spiritualists describe as being within a certain distance from the earth. A rich man can go there as well as a poor man. But if the kingdom of heaven is in the direction of the *smallest* things—the *interior* of all elements—then I can imagine how a rich man, whose mind is engrossed and identified with his possessions—his houses, barns, farms, cash, safe, and such bulky things—should not be able to enter into it. He can have no conception of the inner spiritual existences: the more his attention is confined to those external things in which his wealth exists, the less is the possibility of his finding the straight gate, by turning back into the infinitesimal elements which lead to God.

If the universe is formed on the concentric principle, with God and the spiritual heavens at the center, there is without doubt a corresponding formation in humanity. Man is the image of God, a microcosmic copy of the universe; and the series of interior contents in him,

beginning with the blood which is in his flesh and the life which is in his blood, undoubtedly goes on until he matches in himself every element in the universe, even to the divine.

The whole series of principles that are in the universe being in man, it follows that he is capable of communicating with any of the heavens and all the interiors of the universe up to God himself. It is not necessary for him to go somewhere out of himself to get into communication with heaven. Christ said of himself, "The Son of Man is in heaven." He lived in heaven while in this world. The same privilege is open to any man who will retire within himself and seek for the central life.

WOMAN'S POWER.

WHO first preached the gospel? I am inclined to answer, Mary Magdalene. She was the first to find that Christ had risen from the dead; the first to whom he spoke after that event. He directed her to go and tell the disciples that she had seen him, and to say to them from him, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." That message was the Gospel—glad tidings of the event by which salvation came—and it was first announced by a woman.

In the organization of the church Christ appointed twelve apostles, who were strong men and important officers. This was the conspicuous part of the organization. What was the dynamic? Was it a feminine apostleship? We may safely assume that the most important facts in this matter are not on the surface, but must be ascertained by esoteric examination. The fact that Mary preached the gospel before the apostles—in fact preached it *to* them—and stood between Christ and them in the most important message that ever went forth from heaven, warns us to inquire carefully as to the place that woman occupied in that organization.

We have some hints showing an essential connection between the women who were attached to Christ, and his mighty works. For instance in the case of his first miracle—the turning of water into wine—the agency of a woman was notably present. The affair is recorded with minuteness, as the beginning of the glory that was manifested through Christ in his miraculous career; and we are told particularly that the *mother of Jesus was with him* when that work was done, and that she summoned him to it. She found that the wedding party at which they were guests was lacking wine, and she spoke of the want to Jesus. Why did she interfere in this way? What reason had she to expect that he would help them? Did a mysterious understanding exist between him and her about the matter? Evidently some element of the work in hand, whatever it was to be, had a commencement in her as well as in him. Her inspiration it would seem ran before his. He answered her suggestion by saying, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." But it appears that it had nearly come, and that she was not much ahead of the clock. She did not answer him, but assuming again the existence of a secret compact between them, said to the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it;" and, as if in obedience to her, he went right on and performed the miracle.

Christ once said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven;" and in this he announced a wonderful principle. It was illustrated in the case of the wedding miracle. There were two persons who were agreed, and one of them was a woman. Every natural birth is, in fact, a miracle resulting from and illustrating this principle. Perhaps all miracles require the co-operation of male and female.

Study the story of Mary of Bethany and you will see how great an agency a woman had in the performance of Christ's last and greatest miracle, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Jesus knew that he should raise Lazarus, and went from a distance expressly to do it; but it seems that on the spot Mary's presence was a necessary preliminary to his work. Martha first met him, but she did not bring the needed element. The Master called for Mary; and it was only when *she* had come that "he groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him?" A mysterious sympathy with Mary seems to have perfected Christ's power. Certain *quasi*-chemical elements combined, and the tremendous force was evolved that raised Lazarus from the grave.

Thus in Christ's first miracle, which "manifested forth his glory," in his last miracle which

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led to his coronation and crucifixion, and in the burst of his own spirit from death on its ascending flight to the Father, the presence of the other sex seems to have been an important part of the dynamic agency. These hints, together with such as may be found in the fact that women were assembled with the disciples in prayer before the miraculous manifestation of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and that Paul had "yoke-fellows" of the same class in his colossal labors, should make us wish to go deeper than we have yet gone in our understanding of the constitution of the Primitive Church, and to ascertain, beneath its outward show, the currents of life and affection which vitalized its organization. The national corporations of the world are composed by men and for men. The Kingdom of Heaven, it may be, is a nation whose power consists in a duality, of which woman is the essential, if not the better, half.

HEALTHY APPETITE.

THE best idea I have of good health is that it is a state in which we have a good appetite. Whenever a person begins to be sick, he begins to lose his appetite. That principle, extended on a large scale, I understand to be true in regard to the health of the soul as well as the body; in fact it is the principle of true health in the absolute and universal sense—the health which makes us partakers of God's immortality. A healthy life, whether of the soul or the body, has a good appetite. That means that it has good digestion—that it has a hearty strength to take hold of all things which are presented to it, and can analyze and digest them, and appropriate the good and cast off the evil. If we desire to nourish our life, so that it shall become assimilated to God's life and partake of God's immortality, we must know how to train ourselves to this universal healthy appetite. When we ascend into the realm of divinity, we shall necessarily be related to the whole universe as God is; and it will be required of us to take the same interest in the universe that He does.

We have had experience, become diseased and

finally die, by one simple process—a process that can be easily described and understood. Some one of our passions gets the supremacy, and we devote ourselves to some particular enjoyment which precludes the healthy, natural action of other faculties, and absorbs our life so that we lose our appetite for other good things. A man who loves ardent spirits, has a great loss of appetite in all other directions. The same thing takes place in a person who becomes absorbed in any special object, giving it the entire wealth of his affections. Whoever abandons himself in this way to any natural love or even to any science, special or general, thereby loses his appetite for other things, and is diseased in the same way as the drunkard is.

I maintain that a really healthy man is omnivorous in the largest sense of the word. He has an eager desire for every thing—God included, and God principally. So you can judge what is your state of health by finding out what your appetites are. I hold that it is a real sinking of health in me when I have lost my attraction for even so small a thing as fishing. As we lose our appetite for one thing after another, we grow old, and really lose our health. That is the very process by which we pass along toward death.

A healthy appetite is not merely an attraction inherent in our natural life, but it is an inspiration—a breeze of the life that breathes through all

existence. As long as our desires are natural, the great spirit of the living God himself dwells in us, and breathes through us, and makes us desire good things; but so far as we lose desire for good things, it is an indication that we are diseased and the inspiration is departing.

It is just as erroneous, and I might say just as displeasing to God, that we should cultivate exclusively our spiritual natures, and neglect material things, as it would be to devote ourselves wholly to material things. God's will concerning us is, that we should love everything that is good, and all things in their due proportion. The nearer we can keep ourselves to the standard of appetite we had when we were children, the better it will be for us. There is no sight in this world more melancholy than that of a man who has worked all appetite out of himself and is sick of everything. He is weary of the sun, and has no pleasure in the singing of the birds, in the flowers of the field, nor in anything else that is naturally pleasant to man. He has burned his appetite out, and is in a sense dead while he lives, and damned.

"Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." I take that to mean, that we must go back to the natural, pure, simple life that we had at the beginning, before we were perverted with feverish, false appetites for

specialities. I shall always hate tobacco for the simple reason that it is an enemy to all natural appetite.

THE GREAT HOPE.

IT is a very great attainment to become reconciled to God's method of saving us by trial. It is evident from the New Testament, that salvation does involve a great deal of suffering on our part. Peter went among all the disciples after they were converted, with the special message to them, that they "must through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God." In the book of Revelation, when John asked who they were who stood before the throne in white robes, the angel said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Our tendency is, of course, to try to escape tribulation as much as we can, and to think evil of that part of our education which involves temptation and suffering. We are afraid to really quarrel with God about it; but when tribulation comes upon us, though we do our

best to endure it well, we hardly know what to make of it; it seems very perplexing and unintelligible to us. But it will please the Lord to have us look deep enough into the matter to see that suffering is a part of our education; that it corresponds to the nature of the school we are in; that it is the discipline that we must have. It will be an excellent thing for us to become reconciled to suffering; to justify God in it, and be thankful for it; and not to chafe and worry against it, and be under constant temptation to think evil of it. Let us go over to God's side, and heartily rejoice in his way of dealing with us. Let us glorify God in the midst of the fires. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."

I confess that I do most heartily approve of God's way of handling me. Though the flesh is weak, the spirit is willing. I want God to make the most of me, and give me just as much work to do, and just as much suffering, as he sees will be profitable to me. I am not going to barely endure it. I am going to become thoroughly reconciled to it, and rejoice in it. Paul says, "We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." And James says, "My

brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

We must get by the stage of quarreling with God and grumbling against him, and by the stage of bare endurance; and come clear over to whole-hearted rejoicing in this method of salvation which involves a large amount of suffering. There is undoubtedly a great deal of tribulation in the Community. A mere pleasure-seeker would find many signs of what he would call hell; but they are what Paul would call evident tokens of salvation. If the Community were sailing along "gay and festive" without tribulation, I should say it was going straight to hell. It is a sign of God's mercy to us, that he keeps us under judgment; and under just as much as we can bear, while at the same time he gives us enough good experience to encourage us.

We are in suffering, but it is not caused by quarreling among ourselves. Everybody sees that we live in peace with one another, to a very remarkable extent. The tribulations that we have are that deep kind of discipline of spirit by which God is refining, purifying and perfecting our characters. It would be very pleasant if we could hold up to the world a picture of unalloyed happiness; but until we are perfected it is a

great deal better for us to have hard times. We ought not to wish to deceive people with the idea that it is nothing but child's play to save our souls and go to heaven.

"Our light affliction," says Paul, "which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." It is almost inconceivable that we are sometime to be full of God, and unspeakably happy forever—on and on, for millions of geologic ages; but it must be so. God is not trifling with us. He is an eternal being himself; and if he is drawing us into himself, it is to make us eternal—and eternal in happiness. Get a conception, if you can, of a million years, which are only a drop in the bucket compared to the ocean of eternity; and then think what an insignificant affair it is for us to suffer twenty or thirty years to attain this eternity, and to become prepared for the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." You may say that if you could clearly see that weight of glory ahead, you could stand the suffering put upon you; but that your temptations and trials arise from the fear that you shall not get the glory. Paul tells you to "take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day—and for a helmet the *hope of salvation*." It is not a mere privilege, it is a duty, to put on that helmet. You want to be a good soldier for Christ; but

you can not be one with your head bare and exposed to the strokes of the enemy. Put on the helmet! Put on the hope of salvation! Then you will rejoice in tribulation.

Christ said to his disciples, "Rejoice because your names are written in heaven." He would have them fix their attention on the hope of salvation, and rejoice more in that than in miracles or anything else. If you are where you can rejoice in that, then truly it is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." That is what Paul calls it. It is a hope founded on the oath of God, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

I feel that it is not only my privilege, but my duty to appropriate the hope set before me in a vigorous, sure way; for then I shall have my head covered, and shall be able to stand in the evil day. Let tribulation come as it may, the hope of salvation is a helmet to me. That salvation is not *bare* salvation — a small affair; it is an eternity of unspeakable blessedness in the bosom of God.

LIMITS OF THE KNOWABLE.

SEVERAL of the later philosophers of the materialistic school have undertaken to lay down the law on the possibilities of scientific attainment, and to declare in general what can be known of the universe and what can not. The conclusion of their teaching is, that there is a fixed limit to the reach of the human mind; that within this limit everybody can learn the truth of things who will take the necessary pains to do so; but that beyond this certain boundary nobody can go. More specifically, they affirm that all we can do in our investigation of nature is to ascertain *facts*; and that of *causes* in their subtler forms we can know nothing.

I venture to propose a different theory of the limitations of human knowledge. Our relations to the universe and the acquisition of truth about it, seem to me capable of being represented by a familiar illustration.

Suppose the case of a fine house, the owner of which dwells in it with his family. Now a stranger standing outside may undertake to investigate the house, and he may actually learn many things about its exterior. He can see how

many stories it has, how many windows it has, and what its style of architecture is; but he can not, without asking permission of the owner, go inside and examine the interior arrangements of the house, or learn the habits of the family.

I regard that as a fair illustration of our relations to the great whole of truth. The popular doctrine that nature is open to universal investigation and invites everybody to find out all about her, is true of the *externals* of her domain, and no more. While there is a department of truth that is open to everybody, as there would be in the supposed case of the house, yet this department is but a superficial one; and the part of truth which is infinitely the most important—that relating to God and the beings who are at the center of the vitality of the universe—is not accessible to the merely scientific mind. It cannot be got at by mere painstaking investigation. It cannot be attained without asking leave. God has the same right to privacy that any other living being has. A man would resent it as an intrusion if a person should undertake to go into his personal secrecy without leave; and if man can protect himself from such intrusions, God certainly can do as much.

Concerning, therefore, the most important and largest department of truth in the universe, it takes two to make a bargain. Interior truth can be got at only by asking and obtaining leave;

only by establishing personal relations with the party who lives in it and owns it. If we choose a superficial education, we can go to work as scientific people do, and be content with undertaking to force nature to yield up her secrets. That process will give us a diploma at the schools; but a thorough education can hardly be acquired in that method. The secrets that are in possession of the rocks, the earth, the stars and the chemical materials, you can get by grasping and squeezing; but you cannot get secrets out of living beings in that way. You cannot squeeze angels as you would an orange. You can obtain knowledge of them only by being a righteous man and suiting the taste of heaven.

My conclusion about the accessibility of truth is, that it is subject to no such fixed limitations in the human mind as the philosophers set up. While certain strata of truth lie on the surface and are open to all, the most important region of truth is not on the surface, but is accessible or not accessible, according as persons secure, or fail to secure, the key to it; and that key is a true social relation with God.

REALISM OF CHRISTIANITY.

JESUS CHRIST was distinguished from most of those who claim to be his disciples, by his careful adhesion to substance and reality in all his theological views. His discourse continually savors of what would be condemned in these days as *materialism*. He has certainly been mistaken and misrepresented, by those who pretend to be his followers, more on this point than on any other. The religious world has arisen into a great scheme of sentimental fancies that are as far as possible from the solid matter-of-fact realities of Christ and true Christianity.

For instance, the word *spirit* in common parlance has come to mean something that can not be defined or conceived of except by negatives. All you can say about it is that it is not *matter*; and by that is meant that it is not anything. The moment you talk of it as an actual existence you are accused of *materialism*. In Christ's mind the word *spirit* meant a real substance, which was just as palpable to him as water. "In the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the Scripture hath

said, *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." There is *materialism!* "Out of his *belly* shall flow rivers of living water." This was a very "gross" conception according to the sentimental fancies of this world, both of the Spirit itself, and the place where it operates.

Trace the matter further, and you will see how certain it is that Christ and all his followers had this materialistic conception of spirit. When that Spirit that he was talking about finally came on the day of Pentecost, it came in a very substantial form. It did not appear as a mere imperceptible, diffused influence. It was not that kind of spirit which we are told nobody can feel or conceive of, and that manifests itself only by its effects. It came like a mighty rushing wind from heaven, and filled the whole place where they were sitting, and produced not only intellectual, moral and spiritual changes in men, but also great *physical* effects. The ideas of spirit-substantiality that pervaded primitive Christianity, and that were illustrated on this occasion, are all gone from modern theological teachings.

Our faith will be true or false, firm or futile, in proportion as it fastens on or neglects the real and substantial view of spiritual matters. Because a thing is very refined, we must not

imagine that to be a reason why it is nearer to nothing. In case of two pieces of the same substance—one of great bulk, and the other as small as a pin-head—you may say if you please, that one of these pieces is a great deal nearer to nothing than the other. But in comparing the reality of spirit with other things, we are comparing, not bulks of the same substance, but things that differ from one another in the fineness of their ultimate particles; as for instance, the particles of water may be finer than those of sand, and the particles of electric fluid finer than those of water. If you go in that direction, instead of finding that the smaller and finer the particles are, the less real they are and the nearer to nothing, you will find the contrary to be the fact. As you pass to things that are finer and finer, you are going toward the most powerful concrete realities, and receding further and further from nothing. And by this rule, a man's soul is further from nothing than his body, and God is further from nothing than the great globes we see in the world of astronomy.

If you study Christ and Paul and the Primitive teachers generally, you will find here is their great distinction—they hugged *realities*; they did not deal in nonentities; they grasped things which they could see and feel. John says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which

we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life, declare we unto you." This is the way they all talked, as though they would beat it into us by repetition that they were not talking about nothing.

Paul says, "Fight the good fight of faith; *lay hold on eternal life.*" Let us understand what that means. If there is any injunction in the English language or any other that is important to us, it is that: "*Lay hold on eternal life.*" Does it mean anything real, or is it a mere formula to express the idea that you must be good, and go to meeting, and work by sentiment? I believe it means something just as real as though Paul had said to a man who had fallen overboard, "Lay hold of that rope!" The thing for us to lay hold of is a reality, and the laying hold is a real act of taking hold of something—not indeed with the hands, but with the heart, which dwells in the solar-plexus. Paul says, the "*things* that are seen are temporal, but the *things* that are not seen are eternal." Eternal life is one of the things that are unseen; but it is a *thing* as real as money or blood.

The Spiritualists, with all their falsities and failings, are doing good service in this matter. Their materialism is nearer to the truth as held by Christ and the Primitive Church than the sentimentalism of the popular churches. I would rather that people should believe in ghost-

rappings and talk of spirits as coarse as puddings, than that they should tell me as Dr. Taylor did and as Coleridge wrote, that the Spirit of God is by its very nature superperceptible and can be known only by its moral effects.

A WHOLE MAN.

IN a model character there must be a combination of the *contemplative* with the *practical*. These are two qualities that are commonly regarded as antagonistic to each other, or at least incompatible in the same person. The world has its monks and philosophers and students on one side, and its merchants and engineers and generals on the other. The faculty of contemplation is not expected to be combined with practical business energy in the same character. But that is the true standard of excellence; and it is the attempt of our school. We have undertaken to combine the fondness for contemplation that monks and transcendentalists have, with the spirit of enterprise and active business habits that belong to the merchant and engineer. We believe that the two principles can be harmonized in the same character, and work together better

than apart—that the contemplative will find its true scope and fullness in the practical, and the practical its true basis and resources in the contemplative.

There are many men who would be called wise and indeed great thinkers, who are not contemplative men in the highest sense. A thoroughly contemplative spirit is *devout*. We do not rise to the highest reach of transcendental thought without prayer and worship. The mere intellectualist or theorist can not claim to be a contemplative man.

We find this combination of the contemplative and practical in Paul; and he aimed to make Timothy an example of the same, and to impress that type of character on his whole school. Look at him on the ship in its perilous voyage—on the one hand he was in communication with the angels, and on the other he was the most efficient sailor and adviser for the circumstances. This is the old *Jewish* type of character. All the model characters of the Bible history are more or less combinations of the contemplative and practical. Abraham walked and talked with God; yet he became rich. Jacob, David and Daniel are good illustrations. Moses was a splendid example. In this combination consists the superiority of the Jewish character.

THE SUPREME LESSON.

THE power of God is certainly the prime element in our experience. He has power to lift us up and to cast us down; to bind and to loose, to kill and to make alive. He has power over spirit and body, sensibility and personality. He has power to send us down into the dark places of the spiritual world, where we feel oppressed with gloom and suffering; and he has power to lift us up into his presence, and fill our hearts with peace and joy. These changes of experience, I am certain, are not, in many cases, necessarily connected with any sin or wrong doing on the one hand, or with any righteousness on the other. I see that for purposes of education and in benevolence, God may send us down into the darkest places, lead us through the valley of the shadow of death, and give us a cup of suffering to drink which may make us groan with the burden of life. He did that with Christ. You can not say that Christ was under criticism or punishment for wrong-doing; yet he went down into utter spirit-darkness, and drank the dregs of the cup of trembling. So also God has power to lift up the soul suddenly

into light and happiness, by a change that is miraculous, and full of splendid contrasts. Though it is right in the long run and on the large scale to connect good with righteousness, and evil with unrighteousness, still there may be something legal and narrow in our immature views about the matter. We may connect these things in a small way that is not true or edifying; we may fail to see that the connection between good and righteousness and evil and unrighteousness, instead of being a necessary, mechanical connection, is one which involves the will and power of God. In order to prove to us that it does involve his will and power, and is not a mere natural connection, it may be necessary for God to disconnect these things, and give us the full cup of suffering, when there is no unrighteousness in us to call for it, or give us blessedness and raise us up to sit with Christ in heavenly places, when there is no special well-doing on our part to call for it. We must be made to know the power of God, and feel that our happiness and our misery depend on him, and not on our well-doing or evil-doing. We must see and feel that it is not our good behavior which lifts us up, or our evil behavior which casts us down, but it is God who lifts us up and it is God who casts us down. He has reasons for what he does that belong to his deepest purposes and longest foresight, and we must not

substitute mere natural reasons for his power, nor forget that it is he who rules over us.

- If I find myself laboring and suffering under the power of men or evil spirits, I say to myself, "It is good; God doeth all things well. I am willing to labor and suffer; but I know that it is not in the nature of things necessary that I should; that is, I know that none of my own doings hold me here, and I know that no devil holds me here; I know that God can lift me up if he pleases, and can make me happy in the midst of this distress."

I see that God's dealings with the Community in good and evil are systematic and continuous, and have a rational end in view. There are times when he is evidently intending to give us a persistent course of hard experience, like Job's troubles. One messenger comes after another, from day to day, with tidings of calamities. Our camels and our asses are killed, the robbers have come down and taken our sheep, our children have gone to destruction, and finally the small-pox comes upon us. These things came one after another on Job, and it was of no use for him to change his ways. He might stir about and be very righteous on the spur of the occasion, but the calamities kept coming one after another. The Lord was not giving him that experience because he was unrighteous; he was giving him a course of lessons. When

events take such a turn as that, make up your mind that they are guided by a systematic purpose and that you will take them as they come. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Do not think to change the current of events by some sudden reformation or change of your own course; it is God who is at work upon you. And when the tide turns, and good luck and prosperity come in your affairs, as in one thing after another Job's luck turned at last, then you may say to yourselves, "This is not our doing, and this run of luck will not stop or change because we eat a little too much, or do some other foolish thing; God is acting on a larger motive than that and on a higher scale of things." You need not try to change the course of things or think that it will be changed by any of your little actions. God has an object in view, and the course of things is managed by him. He may carry things first one way and then another, on purpose to produce magnificent contrasts, like those in music. There are a thousand reasons in the matter which we know nothing about. His ways are as far above our ways as the heavens are above the earth; his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out.

We need to know not only that God has the power to make us miserable and to make us happy, but that there is really no other being

or thing that has that power. "Fear not them which can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." It is not in the power of any of the forces of Nature, or of human beings, or of all devils, to make us miserable. We need not trouble ourselves about them. "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." He knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and how to raise them up, and cause them to sit with Christ in heavenly places. This is what we need to know—that our happiness and misery are in his hands and in no other. When we thoroughly learn that lesson, when we remove all secondary things from between him and us, and recognize him as the arbiter of our destinies, we shall then be like little children; and we shall cling to him and make it the business of our lives to love him, know him and please him.

There is a vast amount of unbelief on this point. People look about for almost any other cause than God, when they are happy and when they are miserable. The last and best lesson we have to learn, is that happiness comes by the presence of God in our spirits, and that misery comes by his absence, and that aside from these conditions, it is comparatively of little conse-

quence what our circumstances are, or what we do. If the presence of God is not in our souls, no matter what we do or what our circumstances are, we shall be dark and miserable. But if God is present in our souls with the sunshine of his love and grace, it is of very little consequence what our circumstances are or what we do; we shall be happy. Happiness and misery depend on these conditions, far more than on any other. This is a lesson above all others which we must learn, and God will give us alternations and contrasts of experience under all sorts of circumstances, until we do learn it and get thoroughly reconciled to it, so that it will be an everlasting presence and certainty within us. If we have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, we can not be anxious or gloomy: but if we don't have that, we can not help worrying and foreboding evil.

Christ says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." It is vastly important that we should know that God is the arbiter of destiny on that great scale, as well as on the scale of our daily experiences. If a person is tempted to quarrel with that view of things, and think it arbitrary and fatalistic, we may ask him this question: This power over you and your happiness and over all men and their happiness, must reside somewhere; where would you choose to have that power

deposited? Would you like to have it in your own hands, or would you like to have it deposited in any collection of human beings or devils, or in the laws of nature or chance? Where would you like to have the final sovereignty deposited—the power to say what shall be done with you and all men? For my part, I would like to have it deposited exactly where it is, in the hands of a God whom I know to be thoroughly good and merciful, tender-hearted, wise and mighty. I am glad it is deposited there. I would not have it changed on any account. I would not like to take the responsibility myself; I would much rather that the choice should be in God's hands as to me and mine and all beings in all worlds. I think the arbitrament is in the very best hands, and that the very best thing will be done. My belief is insured by what I know of the heart of God. It is the supreme thing for us to know where this power over all happiness is, and become reconciled to it, for then we shall be most likely to court the good will which has control of our destiny; we shall turn our attention in the right direction, and get into friendly relations with that good will, thus making it possible for it to lift us up and render us happy. Until we do know where that good will resides and turn our attention to it, we are groping blindly and are sure to miss our way.

GOD'S CONTENTMENT.

IF we desire to be contented, there are two things with which we must be thoroughly reconciled. First, we must be reconciled with the original constitution of the universe, whatever that is. If it is a combination of good and evil, if there is a God on one side and a devil on the other, and chaos between, no matter what, the original constitution of the universe is as it is, and can not be helped, and we must be contented with it. If we are discontented with that, there is no contentment for us. We must cease to wish that the great whole were otherwise. We must not long for a universe that is free from evil. It can not be. It is not so, and, we may say, God can not make it so.

The next thing is to become reconciled to God — to recognize him as the supreme personality in the universe, one whose purposes cover everything, and be contented and satisfied that he should manage the destinies of men; believing that he manages all things well. If you become contented with the universe as a whole, including good and evil, and with God as the representative of good and the supreme con-

troller, you will have a sure foundation for comfort and happiness; but life will be dark and gloomy in any other state of feeling.

Reconciliation with God is the sum of the whole. Be reconciled to God and you will be reconciled to the universe. All you have to do in order to be reconciled to him is to open your heart to his Spirit, and feel as he does. There is no doubt but that God is contented with himself and with the universe. He is happy. I can surely see and feel that. Everybody can who knows anything about him. But he would not be happy if he were not contented. And with all that he knows, if he is contented, he has reason to be contented, and we need not trouble ourselves to find out why he is so. It is enough that he knows why he is happy and serene. He is the God of peace, he is the blessed God, the God of all consolation and hope, the God of glory. All that could not be in any sense true of him, if he were not thoroughly satisfied with himself and the universe around him. With all the wisdom and knowledge that he has, he would not be contented if evil were predominant. So then if we can come into union with him, and take in his feelings and faith, we can be perfectly and eternally contented—happy at the bottom of our hearts, and I may say, happy at the bottom of our hearts in the midst of all manner of tribulations.

It is on this basis that we can carry out Paul's exhortation, "Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks." Paul evidently did that. No man in this world ever went through such persecutions and tribulations as he did; but he was cheerful and exultant in them all. It was because he was contented with the eternal conditions, and had touched the heart of God, and found him happy.

THE HIGHER HYGIENE.

THERE is an idea lurking in the world, propagated by the devil, that the grace of God and the devotion necessary to get the grace of God, are *unhealthy*—that a life of prayer, though it may make us very good, will make us feeble and sickly. The superstition prevails, that if a person becomes perfectly holy, he will die—he is "too good for this world;" and in accordance with that, there is a notion that seeking relationship with God, is opposed to the external activity, exercise and amusements, that are necessary to health. Now in the teeth of all such opinions, I fully believe that the grace of God is the healthiest element in the

universe, for body and soul; and that, with the grace of God, we can even do without exercise, amusements, or activity of any kind. I believe that the grace of God, really taking possession of body and soul, will make us independent of all the laws of the physiologists. I believe that this old idea that in order to be healthy we must give ourselves up to diversions and forget God, is *totally false*. I believe that the way to get health, diversion and amusement of the best kind, is to follow hard after God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." So health—physical profit and comfort—is coming from the very opposite quarter to that in which the world seek it. It is to come, not by turning from the grace of God toward outward things; but by turning toward the grace of God and away from outward things.

The fear is common in the world, that if a person is very devout, he will become crazy. I am not afraid of it at all. I don't believe that there is any danger of it, and I shall do my best to drive that fear out of the Community. If you have much to do with the devil you will be crazy—there is no doubt of that; but I have not any fear of your being crazy by having too much to do with the Spirit of God. On the contrary, if you can get into good relations with the Spirit

of God, I know that it will save you from being crazy. His grace will be better than exercise, amusement, or anything of the kind. We shall never take the citadel of evil and conquer death, until we quit seeking health from the sources that the physiologists recognize, and really trust God for it.

A great change of theory about hygiene will have to come. We have been taught hygiene by infidels, by the mere wisdom of this world, that has no faith and knows no God. We shall have to fling that hygiene overboard, and adopt the doctrine that recognizes the Spirit of the living God as the great and only indispensable element of health and life.

I have no doubt that the principle of physiologists in relation to Graham bread, exercise, amusements, and all such things, are good for animals and for the animal state. But I believe that there is a higher system of hygiene, that we shall have to discover and act upon, if we are to have anything better than a mere animal life that passes away.

There is an external method and an internal method of prolonging life. The first method takes life as it is, a certain limited amount, and endeavors to make it last as long as possible, relying chiefly on certain rules of diet and exercise. It does not attempt to increase the amount of life by establishing any connection

with the eternal source. The other method relies on establishing this connection—on having the life of God enter into the heart, and work there, and purify and transform soul and body. If we follow the internal method, diet and exercise, instead of being means that we are dependent on, will become means that are to be used according to the monitions from heaven; and our inward monitor will certainly be jealous of them, if we become dependent upon them. God will give us these external means when he can do so without interfering with our dependence upon him. When he has taught us to put the first thing first, and really take in his life, and become dependent on it, so that nothing will interfere with it, he will give us external activity and diversion. But till then, our care about diet and exercise and the laws of physiology, will be worse than nothing.

FULL GROWTH.

WHEN a child comes into the world, it appears to have no idea of anything but *eating*. It has a clear instinct for that immediately; and for several years that is the main business of existence. What shall we think of such a state? Is it wrong that the little creature should be a mere animal? Shall we call it gluttonous and brutish, and imagine the Lord is displeased with it? I think not. In order to understand the divine plan in regard to the development of human beings, we must consider a child in that state as in *embryo*—not yet born; it is only a presage of what is to come. The Lord values the child not for its present existence and state, but in reference to its subsequent growth and productiveness.

When a kernel of corn is planted, its first operation is to throw out its roots and seek nourishment from whatever comes in its way. If the process were to stop there, it would be a useless thing; but it is planted and cultivated with care, because it is expected, after it has established its connection with the ground so as to feed itself plentifully, that it will "put forth

the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Looking at the whole process, we are pleased with the initial state, though in itself considered it is a kind of gluttony. So with infancy, though by itself mere animalism, it is yet the germ which is to grow into a man.

There are three stages after infancy in human growth, which seem to me to be quite distinct, and to correspond substantially to the three after-stages of the plant, namely, "first the blade; then the ear; after that the full corn in the ear." In other words, as the plant begins by establishing the nutrimental process and has three growths beyond that, so in the case of human beings, from the stage of mere eating infancy to a perfect man, we may distinguish three distinct stages of development. In tracing these stages allowance must be made for the lapping of one stage on to another, and for exceptional precocities or failures in the several periods of growth. The theory I am about to propose holds good only on the large scale and in a general way.

The next stage after infancy is what may be termed the period of friendship or general companionship. This companionship is based chiefly on the general physical relations of children and has no reference to sex. Boys even prefer the companionship of boys, and girls that of girls. From infancy till children are ten or twelve

Years of age, their attractions run almost entirely toward persons of their own sex, who can be their best companions in sport. This is the next stage above eating, and it is to be observed that it is really an important advance. Brutes can hardly be said to ever rise into this second stage. An infant and a calf begin the world alike, both with hungry mouths; but the calf never gets beyond that. Doubtless there are traces of friendship among animals; yet everybody can see that eating and drinking is the main business of life with them all their days. But a boy of seven or eight has got beyond that; he will go without eating to slide down hill with his companions.

The third stage begins from the age of twelve to fifteen, when a higher social instinct is awakened and the attraction of the sexes commences. This may be called the period of love. It is quite distinct from the period in which our companions are of the same sex. The passion for fellowship with the opposite sex will again be found to be a positive advance on the previous stage, in which fellowship was based principally on animal sympathy. In this third period the faculty of sympathy becomes in some sense spiritual. It is magnetic. It is not founded chiefly on the animal part, but on the inner life. Love between the sexes is a mystery of the heart. Every one who has experienced it, knows that it is something more than being fond of one another

because both are interested in the same pursuits. There is an actual mingling of life with life—of heart with heart. This is indeed a great advance on the previous stage. Still the question may be asked as in the beginning: Is this the true state? Is God pleased with human beings when they have arrived at this stage of growth? Is the expected corn in it? We justified the stage of eating and drinking, because we were expecting something better to grow from it; so we accepted the stage of friendship as the necessary prelude to that of love: and now on faithful reflection we must say that this third development is no more the real object for which God planted the seed, than were the previous growths. The third stage is one which we recognize as necessary for the growth of the plant; but if the growth should stop there, there would be no harvest.

We come now to a fourth stage, which may be called the period of *religion*. My theory is that in the intention of nature and of God it is just as much a matter of course that after the love-stage the period of religion should follow, as that the previous stages should come in their succession. If nature had its course, I hold that somewhere between the ages of thirteen and twenty all human beings would become religious. That would be the natural growth of the plant. Beginning with mere eating, the life expands

and shoots forth its rootlets and branches, till it finds pleasure in general fellowship; after that its senses and faculties still further expand into the intense magnetic affection between the sexes; and finally, its natural growth unchecked would end in the great spiritual affinity for God. We admit that it is natural for man, at a certain period, to fall in love with woman; and we affirm that it is just as natural that he should finally fall in love with God.

This view of human growth I am fond of putting before young men and women. While on the one hand, we should not quarrel with them for passing through and enjoying the first, second and third stages, on the other, they should not quarrel with us for wishing to help them through into the fourth.

According to the husbandman's care will be the success of his fruit and harvest. If corn is planted and left to grow among weeds, it will spindle up and fail to bring forth anything of much value. All degrees of care may be bestowed upon it, producing all degrees of fruitfulness. So human beings may grow up in a state so wild and weedy that the fourth stage will scarcely manifest itself at all. And then people may begin to think, because they do not generally see the full corn, that it is unnatural for it to come. That is the way of the world. Men give up expecting ears, and

see nothing more in human nature than *green fodder*.

I expect that in the best state of society, such as Christ will finally establish in the world, the home influences, the true nurture of fathers and mothers in the heavens and below the heavens, will carry children regularly through all these stages. Just as friendship grows out of the eating stage, and love out of friendship, so will religion grow out of love, and God will secure his harvest with perfect certainty.

This is a good subject for meditation and turns many ways. I recommend very heartily and earnestly to our young people that they give no quarter to the idea that they are to be nothing more than green fodder; but that they establish their ambition for a *full growth*. A person who goes no further than love, but stops there, is a failure.

There must be restraint and a disagreeable state of things to a certain extent, in all the first three stages. Any one can see in the case of an infant, that it is in no condition to take care of itself, and must be under guardianship. It is just as necessary in each of the two succeeding stages that persons should be under the care of others. And it is only when they reach the fourth stage, and become spiritual beings that they are prepared for absolute freedom.

Therefore I should say that human beings are

not really born till they come into fellowship with God; they should be considered in *embryo*, till their religious character is developed. Christ says: "Except a man be born again, he can not enter into the kingdom of heaven." It would be equally appropriate to say we are not born at all, till we reach the religious stage. In an important sense we may deny that we were born when we were infants, and say that becoming children of God is our real birth. So we may consider those who fail of becoming religious, as *still-born*.

THE BIBLE A LIVE BOOK.

THE great question about the Bible is not whether it *was* inspired when it was written, but whether it *is* inspired now. We know that material things convey spirits. The Spiritualists are strong on this point. They hold that a letter or a lock of hair carries with it the spirit of the person it came from, so that a seer or a clairvoyant can by it discern and describe character. We hold that *The Circular* carries with it the spirit of the Oneida Community; so that any person reading it is affected, not merely by the ideas it presents, but by the living *aura* of the

body from which it emanates; and this influence is to a certain extent independent of the character of particular articles. Some pieces may convey more of the Community spirit than others; some may be wholly destitute of it; and yet the paper as a whole, represents the Community, and carries its spirit, so that persons reading it anywhere, in proportion as they are spiritual and clairvoyant, see and feel the Community. Now consider the Bible a lock of hair, or a letter, or a circular sent to us from somebody. The great question is, What spirit comes with it? and the main thing we have to do, is to put on our clairvoyant spectacles, and look into the spiritual character of the persons or body of persons, or the invisible principality or sphere or Community which is breathing into the world through the Bible. It is not all-important that we should know who the individuals were who wrote the Bible thousands of years ago. We want to know who they are that live inside of it now and use it as their medium or charm to influence the world. It is not essential that we should settle the question as to the divine inspiration, plenary or partial, of each writer who contributed to the Bible. It will be enough if we find out that it is now, as a whole, recking with the inspiration of God. There may be mistakes in it. Whole books, for aught I know, may be out of place in it and worthless, as many an article gets into *The*

Circular which does not represent the Community. Still the Bible, like the paper, has a character as a whole, and carries a spirit that is independent of all questions of details. Its power and the evidence of its inspiration are not dependent on the uncertainties of historical research. They are present facts. If the Bible comes from God at all, it comes from him *now*: it is his present word to us; not a report of something that he said to somebody thousands of years ago, but a voice now sounding in our ears from him that liveth evermore. My language is, "*if* the Bible comes from God at all." It is not necessary to assume that yet. The point I am now making, is, that the Bible, like everything else, to the eye of a clear-seer, is the medium of a spirit present in it, and the main question about it is, not as to the character of its literal contents or its history, but what is its spirit-character? Who speaks through it now?

If the main question about the Bible is as I have stated it—a question as to its present spirit-character—it is evident that the first qualification every person needs for judging the Bible, is intuition. None but a clairvoyant can make anything of a lock of hair or an indifferent letter as a test of character. So say the Spiritualists; and so, they being judges, nobody can read the soul of the Bible and tell where it comes from and who speaks through it, but one whose spiritual eyes are open.

THE WORK THAT PAYS.

PAUL talks about "laboring in the Lord." What does he mean? I do not suppose that he means preaching. To the Corinthians he uses this expression: "Of whom I travail in birth again, that Christ may be formed in you." That was not preaching to them; it was a work in his own heart. That kind of work requires the strongest nerves and most determined will. The work of drawing near to God and resisting the devil for ourselves and for others—fighting the good fight of faith—is the hardest kind of work. That is the work to make a man sweat. It made Christ sweat blood. It is work which will take away a man's appetite. That is the work which Christ set before the Jews, when they asked him what they should do to "work the works of God?" He answered, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

We must do a great deal of this work, if we hope to get rich spiritually. It is the kind of work which brings income to the heart. If we do not labor industriously at this business, and stick to it until we "work out our salvation with

fear and trembling," no matter what good intentions we may have, or how wise we are, or how much we read the Bible and study our course of life in an external way, we shall be wrong and go wrong, and find ourselves in the possession of the devil. They who don't work this work, are in the possession of the devil as a matter of course. It is by working at this work that we shall find the truth and walk in the light and know what we are about. We shall find no light anywhere else that will keep us right. The light of this world will not save us.

There is a wide difference between this kind of work and the dreamy meditation of the quietists and Brahmins. A man who engages in the work that Christ and Paul gave themselves to, though he has no bodily exercise, will find that he has an opportunity for a great deal of real, energetic, practical, heroic industry. Turn inward and find out what eternal life is, and what eternal death is, what your soul is, what it wants, and what it is capable of enjoying and suffering, and you will find that you have, in that internal sphere, a *business*, like getting a living. Many people in the world have their hands full to get a living for their bodies. Turn in, and you will find lively business to get a living for your souls. To see that your accounts are square, that your income exceeds your expenses, will keep you doing. It is a matter which requires work and

calculation. A prosperous balance does not come by chance.

Our working for one another avails to a certain extent; but we can not absolutely save one another. I may say that God himself can not save us, except as he can wake us up to go about this work ourselves. The way Christ saves us, is to help us to save ourselves.

WEAR OUT THE DEVIL.

AS it is the tendency and sometimes the effect of disease of body or mind to "wear out" those who are afflicted with it, so on the other hand it is the tendency, and may be the effect, of patience, faith, and sound spiritual life to "wear out" disease. Life and disease wrestle together in the sick, and they may worry each other for a long time before either is decisively prostrated. It must not be imagined that the fight is all on one side—that disease worries life, while life lies passive under disease. The vital energy of every person's constitution, and especially of one that is upheld by the grace of God, is a powerful and active antagonist to disease.

The suffering which attends the combats of

life with disease, must not be taken for an index that disease is conquering. Life may be the stronger of the two forces, and yet not strong enough, either to throw off disease immediately, or to escape suffering and wrestling with it. In that case the victory of life will be gradual. It will be constantly worrying disease, till it wears it out. The disease will be *chronic*; but the conquering power of life also will be *chronic*, and more *enduringly* chronic than the disease. Good is naturally stronger than evil. God is stronger than the devil. It is the devil's wish and aim to "wear out the saints of the Most High;" but we may well make it our purpose and expectation to wear out the devil.

GOD ON BOTH SIDES.

ALL events are God's facts; and the graduating attainment of the believer must be, to be able to welcome all events as God's facts; not to be disturbed or afraid under any circumstances; but to accept everything as it comes, as foreordained by God in wisdom and goodness and mercy. I see just as surely as I see the sunshine, that God rules in everything that is evil, as well as in everything that is good; and I see

that there is no evil that goes a hair's breadth beyond his permission.

Wherever there is a conflict going, there you may be sure God is helping both sides. Although he may be in a final sense on one side, yet he is managing the opposite side also with reference to the greatest benefit to all. So if we find ourselves in a conflict with evil, we may settle it in our hearts that God is not only on our side in the conflict, but he is on the other side too. If he is on our side in the highest final sense, then he is managing the other side with reference to improving us, disciplining us, drawing us out; and making the most of our faculties and patience. If we think we are on the Lord's side, and are fighting for him in any given case where there is a struggle going on between us and an enemy, we must take care in fighting for the Lord, not to fight against him too. If we don't recognize in the enemy also, a power that is controlled by the Lord, but take the egotistical view that we are on the Lord's side and the other party is on the devil's side, then we may be fighting, not only *for* the Lord, but also *against* him.

That brings to view very clearly the necessity of our getting clear above the fight, into a place where we feel as God does, who "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust;" where we

can pray for our enemies and bless them that curse us; where we can take opposition as serenely as we take assistance. The work of righteousness is so complicated, so composite, that we have to know how to fight heroically, and still recognize this principle that God is on the other side. Christ did this. He was not disturbed at all by opposition and persecution. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb, dumb before his shearer, he opened not his mouth" but to say, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." He felt that the Lord was handling him, notwithstanding that Pilate and the chief priests and scribes were the agents in the case. His faith rose above it all. In that fight the Lord was on both sides; but he was, in the final sense, on Christ's side; and Christ had the comfort of knowing that fact.

PROVOKING TO LOVE.

THE world is well skilled in the art of provoking to wrath and strife and revenge; but to provoke one another to love is a thing almost unknown. Indeed we are so accustomed to associate wrong with the word "provoke," that its use in this connection seems a misuse. But it is the good fortune of our nature that all its susceptibilities to evil can be turned to account for good; and strength of passion, which in common life is so uncomely and disastrous, under divine impulses may become beautiful and glorious. We have only to use the proper stimulus, and love can be provoked as certainly as wrath. Devise occasion, and we shall see it *flash out* and retort like a burst of anger. We shall see it kindle with excitement and grow passionate and frenzied, and acquire all the intensity of revenge. And as revenge in its vehemence stops at nothing, but follows its bent through fire and water, so love, sufficiently provoked, will overcome incredible difficulties and perform exploits of heroism unknown to the tameness of common life.

The art of provoking love is unstudied in the

world, because love is little valued. Men will sell love for almost anything; a sixpence is sometimes consideration enough for losing another's friendship; and the most pitiful triumph of opinion or will compensates a man for the dislike and hatred it brings upon him. His own perquisites of property and will are more to him than all the warm affections of his kind. But to believers who are not conformed to this world, love is a treasure beyond price, and acquisitiveness is put on its sharpest scent to procure it. It has orders to sell everything for love.

The apostle says, "*Consider* one another, to provoke unto love." The art of provoking to wrath seems to come by nature; men practice it without forethought; but some consideration is required to make us successful in provoking love. We are to consider not ourselves, but *one another*. It is natural for men to consider themselves and inquire what is agreeable to their own tastes and constitutional peculiarities, and what will advance their own interests; but it is according to heavenly wisdom that we should find happiness, not egotistically, but in the love which will be the return for our consideration of others. We miss happiness when we pursue it too directly. When we would pour it into another's cup it overflows into our own. In the science of music we have melody, an agreeable succession of single sounds; and harmony, the tasteful combi-

nation of a variety of sounds. Mere melody is comparatively insipid; it is in harmony, the concord of many melodious sounds, that music displays its power of charming. Isolated happiness is like melody, feeble and tasteless compared with the music of union, the blissful concord of hearts. So that if we seek the highest gratification of our own tastes, we shall consider others, and learn the skill of producing chords in exquisite variation; in other words, the art of provoking love.

Of general things, *cheerfulness* is a great provocative of love. One who is uniformly happy and bright-eyed, whose presence is like a May morning, sunny, musical and enlivening—such an one will provoke love whether he tries or not—whether he says much or little; and there is no surer way to repulse love than to be sad and moping—devoured with private speculations and the canker of egotism. Love flies not a homely, but a downcast face. Cheerfulness is diffusive—it shines for others; but melancholy begs for itself. The testimony of our tongue will give great advantage to the spirit of cheerfulness; confession is always one of the weapons of love's conquest.

Facility of yielding and suppleness of manners will always provoke love. When there is truth or essential interest at stake, we are bound to be as inflexible as the oak; but this seldom occurs,

compared with the thousand little daily occasions when unimportant things bring up a question of difference, and we have a chance to provoke love by giving way and promoting with alacrity the contrary side. Perhaps our judgment is better than the other's; yet the love we provoke by compliance is worth more than the difference. Very often the real advantage on one side or the other of a disputed point amounts to nothing; it is pride of opinion that must be maintained. But if we are wise, pride of opinion will be utterly contemned for love; we shall rejoice in the chance to be generous, to give rather than receive the favor of compliance: for in this case as in all others, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." And if we would be eminently successful in provoking love, we should not only acquire a facility of yielding, but a facility of entering into another's plans with all our heart — of showing zeal and becoming enthusiastic in carrying out his schemes. "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." Add to your compliance cheerfulness and goodwill, and be happy in seeing others enjoy themselves in their own way.

We may take a hint for our purpose from the way the world provokes to wrath. The most frequent cause of quarrel is evil-speaking; and hatred is embittered and infuriated by abusive personalities — by taunts and impudent sallies.

Twitting is a favorite method of inflaming passion. If two men want to get up a strife they begin to twit each other, and we have their characters overhauled and every little meanness each ever committed dragged to light. Well, believers may innocently reverse this performance, and twit each other of beauty and goodness and the graces of character which God has liberally bestowed. Everybody is conscious of the love of praise, and there is no passion in nature more innocent. Its gratification is one of the delights of heaven. If we can confess our salvation without boasting, we can praise good people without flattery. Paul's epistles are full of praise to his children. His censures are more sparing than his commendations. The effect of praise on believers is doubtless to strengthen their justification, to second their own word of testimony and enliven their faith. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be *any praise*, think on these things;" not abstractly, but as they are actually exemplified in persons around you. Skillfully using this provocative, we shall see the contrary effect of evil-speaking, in the love and mutual delight which will be excited.

We should not be ashamed to let others know we want their love. Considerable importunity in this plea would not disgrace any one. Love

generally waits to be asked, and does not bestow itself on indifference or the appearance of indifference; and yet there are many who desire to be loved very much, whose dignity and self-esteem are so chary of confessing it by word or action, that they starve in the midst of plenty. To such we would commend this saying of a good man—"The foolishness of love is better than the dignity of egotism."

SOLDIERS OF THE DEVIL.

THE practice of indulging in little disparaging remarks on people around us, without any intention or possibility of doing good by it, is so common that it may seem a trifling evil; but if we consider it in the light of true spiritual philosophy, we shall find it to be a very serious injury, not merely to those who are evil spoken of and to society at large, but more especially to the persons who give themselves up to such indulgences. The Bible teaches us that the devil is the special patron of accusation, as God is of justification. In the book of Job Satan makes his *debut* on the Bible stage as a slanderer, talking to God about Job's weaknesses, and

predicting - his downfall; and the malignant character there brought out is sustained in all that we find about the devil in the New Testament. His very name—ὁ διαβολος—signifies "*the accuser*;" and in the apocalyptic drama which closes the New Testament, he figures as the "*accuser of the brethren, who accuses them before God day and night.*" Whether we take the testimony of the Bible or of our own experience, we can not doubt that there is a mighty spirit of evil, worthy to be called the devil; and that its special character is just what these Bible-hints point at. It is the spirit that is forever busy in the work of evil-thinking and evil-speaking, discouraging all righteousness by detraction, fastening self-accusation on some, the itch for evil-speaking on others, and discontent, which is really evil-thinking of God, on all. Christ is laboring to justify, and the devil, his adversary, is squarely pitted against him, laboring to *un-justify*; and so the issue is made up between them. Surely it is not a trifling thing to take the wrong side on this great issue and enlist to fight for the devil. But this is just what they do who give themselves up to evil-thinking and evil-speaking; they are soldiers of the devil, and the worst of their case is, not the evil they do by shooting at their neighbors, but the miseries they bring on themselves by associating with the Evil One and living in his camp.

REVERENCE AND LOVE.

IN the right order of things there can be no quarrel between reverence and love; but on the contrary, when reverence fulfills its proper function, it must be the breath of life to love. The difficulty with most persons is, that they have not discovered the true reconciliation and equilibrium of these two forces. The tendency is to feel that reverence is an enemy to love; and people accordingly rush into love without it; or else, on the other hand, let reverence dominate to a degree that suppresses and chills love. These two mischiefs are continually at work—love without reverence, that ends in corruption, and reverence amounting to fear, that prevents love. The problem we have to work out is, how to reconcile reverence with love.

Let us see if we can not prove that reverence is the truest friend to love, and the only element in which permanent love can exist. What is it, I ask, that makes people enjoy courting better than the state which comes after it? If you look closely, you will find that in courting there exists great reverence for one another; there is a sense of unfathomed mystery, and a feeling on each side

of vast superiority in the other. If a man loves a woman, he feels that he is not worthy of her—that it is heaven's condescension that gives him her heart; and the woman feels just so. Each thinks more highly of the other than of self. Paul says, "Let each esteem others better than themselves;" and in everything like genuine heart-love this is the fact. Each feels that love is generous condescension in the other. Is that feeling in them false? They finally approach one another, and as they come in contact they meet many disagreeable things; their imaginations collapse; and then they conclude they were mistaken in each other. Is that the fact? Are their second thoughts best? I say their first thoughts were best. Each is an unfathomable mystery to the other still, if they did but know it; each is not a mere human being, but an image and medium of God; and both make the great mistake of thinking that they know the whole of each other; when the fact is, they have stopped at the show, and forget that the Godhead is behind. While they are approaching there is a feeling of sacredness amounting to worship—a feeling of depth which reaches sublimity; and in that attitude of mind each has an instinct that perceives God behind the human being. But after they have sensualized themselves by familiarity, they lose their respect for each other, because they lose their perception of the God-

head. What is required, then, in order that they may regain their first love and perpetuate it, is, that they stand back far enough to recover their clairvoyance; for if they get close enough to spoil that, they spoil the very beauty of love. Clairvoyance in the case sees and worships the Creator; and that is the unfathomable mystery of love. You admire a picture if you stand far enough off to perceive the *idea* of the painter; but if you go close enough to perceive only his brush-marks, you will find yourself looking at very coarse work. So with the painting of God; if you stand far enough off to get his idea, it is beautiful; but you must not get so near as to see the brush-work. Sentimental people talk of finding their ideal; but there is no ideal to be seen in the gross way of ordinary familiarity. Beauty is God, and can be seen only while we have reverence and worship. That is what gives us eyesight. Let us then renounce forever the idea that reverence is at war with love. We know that must be the opposite of truth, and it is only because we are coarse that we can not put love and reverence together.

All things are bathed in the glory of God. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." There is infinite depth and mystery in everything, if we only have discernment to see it. And from this it follows that knowledge of the truth, and faithfulness to the truth, will make

us respectful, not to certain persons and things, while we despise the rest, but toward all things. Everything which exists will be to us a shrine of the mystery of God.

You will say, perhaps, that it is right for an inferior to respect a superior, but not for a superior to respect an inferior. I say, Not so. There is no person for whom we have not infinite reason to feel respect; and a feeling of reverence is an element which should come in to lubricate our relations to all men and to everything.

Our liability is to have too much reverence in some directions and not enough in others. If a lady sends a lock of hair to her sweetheart, he feels great respect for it. He would consider it a sort of profanity for him to throw it down and tread on it. Why so? What is there about it that is so precious? You say, it is the spiritual magnetism of the thing that he values. But all things come to us bathed in God's magnetism, as really as that lock of hair is a vehicle of the lady's magnetism. The Bible says that God has counted all the hairs of our heads; and if he took pains to count them, he is certainly interested in them, and they deserve respect from us. If the sparrows do not fall to the ground without him, then the sparrows deserve our attention and respect.

The only thing that is really contemptible is

contempt. And when we come to search into the character of damned spirits, it will be found that they are the dregs of the universe by virtue of the fact that they are contemptuous spirits, and have no reverence in them, no respect for God's universe; that is the essence of their vileness.

The idea of being respectful to our superiors only, is like serving the Lord on Sundays. If a man does not serve the Lord all the days of the week, he does not serve him on Sundays. A man who does not respect everybody and all things, does not really respect anything. The apostles insisted even upon respecting the devil. Jude says that ' Michael the archangel durst not bring against the devil a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee;' and Peter, speaking of those who are "presumptuous, self-willed, and not afraid to speak evil of dignities," says that "angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord." To be contemptuous is considered a mark of loftiness; but it is a mark of lowness. Angels are above being contemptuous; they are too lofty to despise even the devil. The being which is capable of the most respect is the loftiest. Respect implies insight, clairvoyance, perception of mystery and depth; and the being who can see the deepest, who has the most far-reaching insight, is capable of the most respect. Contempt implies ignorance. The greatest man will be the most respectful man.

THE GREAT WANT.

WHAT the world most needs, is **GOOD MEN**. Good *institutions* of all kinds are in themselves quite desirable; but experience proves that they avail little or nothing without good men to administer them. Good laws are impotent without good judges. Governments, however free in form, and however wisely provided with all the checks and balances which the jealousy of liberty can devise, are engines of oppression without good officers. The doctrines and forms of Christianity are almost as much a curse as a blessing without good professors. Even the Bible is worse than a sealed book without good interpreters. The results of all human arrangements depend so much more on the character of men than of institutions, that we cannot conceive of a social, political, or religious system so good that it may not be made a nuisance by corrupt administrators; nor of one so bad that it would not be tolerable and even valuable in the hands of men fearing God and eschewing evil.

The first requisite for the manufacture of good men is the power of God. A bad world,

however it may be arranged, cannot produce good men. A holy and mighty spiritual energy from above must begin the reformation of mankind. The first attainment, then, to be sought by radical reformers, is that faith which opens free communication with God and gives access to his righteousness and power. It is metaphysically impossible that this faith should coexist with continued sin, or with unbelief in regard to the accessibility of the primitive baptism of the Holy Spirit. We must first seek out for ourselves, and then communicate to others, the gospel—that spiritual, divine word, which in the days of Christ and the apostles brought those who believed into open intercourse with God, and saved them from all sin. And this attainment must be independent of all physical conditions. It must be able, as it was eighteen hundred years ago, to maintain itself, not merely in prosperous circumstances and good society, but against tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, and every other creature. Life indestructible, hell-proof, is the first indispensable element of a good man.

When this is attained we may turn our attention to the next requisite. And here we approach the subject of socialism. Eternal life in the heart is the foundation; but a superstructure

remains to be built. The external character is to be molded into the beauty of perfect morality, before a good man can be considered a finished article. What then is the second thing needed for the manufacture of good men? We answer — *a good social machinery*. The external character of the mass of mankind is, and must be, to a great extent, molded by the society in which they live. The propensity to imitation, the contagious influence of disposition and manners, and the constancy of the action of society upon the individual, are agencies of character-manufacture, more powerful than abstract laws, moral precepts, and private resolutions. Next to the good influences of God, the good influences of men are needed to perfect holiness. Good society surrounding individuals, and receiving into an atmosphere of wisdom and love the rising generation, is the second blessing to be sought by true reformers.

This is the legitimate intent of church organization. They who have obtained eternal life, the root of heart-righteousness, separate themselves more or less from the world, and form a Community for the purpose of establishing good society as the nurse of external character. This is a church: and this completes the machinery for the formation of good men.

DEEP SOUNDINGS.

I HAVE found, in all my experience, that faith and reflection are nearly equivalents of each other. My acquaintance with God and spiritual union with him have always been proportionate to the amount of my meditation. It is true that meditation is not necessarily faith; in the world there is a great deal of meditation under unbelief; but meditation of a peculiar kind—meditation of the heart and intellect combined, which has in it the nature of prayer (though it is also a highly intellectual exercise), is the indispensable condition of faith. By meditation of this peculiar kind, we obtain that communication with God which is described in the Bible as an ever-springing well in the heart: "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

By this we obtain free communion with the Spirit of Truth. The promise of the Comforter which is given to lead us into all truth, attaches to us as reflectionists; not as men of business, or professors of certain external doctrines; but as men given to reflection. We must go back into the interior of our being to meet the Spirit of Truth. It necessarily addresses the deepest

part of our nature. Its principal dealing, according to the name which Christ applied to it, is with our *rational spirit*. In calling it the *Spirit of Truth* we comprise in it the two ideas of life and intelligence. Its contact is not with our intellect chiefly; it is with our spirit; but it touches that side of our spirit which is the seat of intelligence. It is a rational spirit; and as such addresses a corresponding element in us. To have free communication with it, we must have our rational spirit, which is concerned in true meditation, awake to its impressions.

Full communion with the Spirit of Truth, according to the conditions of it which I have described, is not possible to persons who are immersed in worldly business, reading, or external occupation of any kind. I do not say it is impossible that there should be any kind of profitable intercourse with God under such circumstances. There is doubtless a superficial operation of the Spirit of Truth on persons who have not time nor taste for meditation. Sympathetic communication between believers, by which spiritual influence is diffused from individuals through the mass, may give some participation in the Comforter; but I can not see how more than this sympathetic baptism can be gained otherwise than by reflection, or giving one's self up to deep spiritual meditation.

Evidently there are two classes in reference

to this matter. One class receives the Spirit of Truth sympathetically. These can hardly be said to have faith of their own and to be "rooted and grounded" in communication with Christ. They are under his influence by connection with others; are perhaps yielding to it more and more, and will ultimately have the eternal fountain opened in them. The other class are those who already have in them the "well of water springing up into everlasting life." They have not only received the word of God, but have digested it, reflected upon it, and entered into affinity with it. They are more than passive material for the Spirit to work upon; they are in a state actively to cooperate with it. They do this by reflection, closing their eyes to external things, and searching the center of their being for illumination.

The distinction between the art of reflection and the ordinary process of thought is seen in the acts which follow. By meditation you get access to a fountain of pure inspiration, and necessarily become original in your ideas and movements. You find in yourself continually new purposes, that can not be traced to any connection with other people, or to the influence of ordinary motives. I always know when a man has been holding central converse with God, by his coming forth with some new glowing enterprise fresh from heaven. As fast

as you become reflectionists you are emancipated from the spiritual direction of others. The more original and independent you become in this way, the better; there can be no clashing of purposes or beliefs that are derived from the same author.

Between the two spiritual and mental conditions that I have defined there is naturally a transition state, in which the person has intervals of deep meditation, occasionally touching bottom in the ocean of truth, and finding there new and needful stimulus. It is a principal benefit of suffering that it throws us back on deep meditation. In the common routine of affairs, and especially in the sunshine of prosperity, the tendency of men's thoughts is centrifugal; but in a time of terrible temptation and trial, when they are cornered by suffering, the life is driven inward, and they find out the profit of meditation. When their thoughts have thus been driven inward, and they have had a good season of reflection, they reappear in new beauty and vigor. Every such period of reflection is a point of departure in the believer's course. He takes a new start; and the impulse he gains carries him forward until his thoughts and actions become superficial again, when he is again driven back by suffering to central search after God. There is thus great benefit to be derived from temptation; and God

repeats the chastening again and again, until we form a chronic habit of turning inward. This habit constitutes spirituality. The difference between a spiritual and a worldly man is not in their natural faculties or constitutional powers, but in the bent and direction of their attention. The spiritual man exactly reverses his natural aim of thought; the current of his attention is centripetal. He has been plied with suffering in the school of God for the very purpose of turning his mind from the superficial to the central. Conversion is inversion.

Nothing is so satisfactory to my heart as to see people fond of spiritual meditation; not the idle, luxurious meditation of the quietist, but that earnest recurrence to one's own center, which is in fact recurrence to God. As God is the most active being in the universe, engaged in unremitting beneficence, the kind of meditation which connects us with him makes us also active, and furnishes us unto every good word and work.

There has always been some method provided for consulting God. The patriarchs had a way of laying their projects before him. David asked counsel of the Lord against the Philistines—"Shall I go up?" Having obtained an answer, he knew he should succeed. The ark of the covenant was long the place where the people of Israel consulted God. What was then locally true is now a universal principle. The external

type is superseded by the spiritual substance. You will find in your own nature a sanctuary—a holy of holies, an ark of the covenant, a place where God reveals himself; and it is your privilege in all transactions to ask counsel of God and talk with him about your purposes. We must search out this central sanctuary—must know where the ark of the covenant rests—and be in a condition to recur to it. It should become the habit of our lives to turn to God for consultation and assistance in all affairs; and when the flesh most calls for activity, when conflicts and emergencies are most pressing, and everything is whirling with excitement, then is the time to fall back and commune with God; because then we have the least ground of hope in the efficiency of our own wills. Much as we have to do, there is still no hurry; and we need not recklessly drive on for fear our work will get ahead of us, or think we have no time for reflection. Even in the hurly-burly of battle, if you do not see your way clear, your safest course is to lie down and reflect. In meditation you have at all times a quiet, safe refuge; and when you have got counsel from God you will go forth to action with a sure heart.

HYGIENE FOR THE HEAD.

IT is a notable fact that the American people are peculiarly subject to nervous disorders engendered by too much headwork. There is a strong tendency among us to epidemic insanity and paralysis. As the country advances in civilization this danger becomes more and more apparent. A disorder so universal deserves universal discussion, and I will present what I think about its cause and cure.

The head is made a great *sinner* by overwork, and its troubles are the penalty of this excess. It is worked many ways greatly out of proportion to its actual merit and place in the general scale of our faculties.

We must not think of the head as merely the seat of the brain—the organ of the intellect. There are in the head, not only the organs of the mind, but all the organs of the senses; the mouth, the nose, the eyes, and the ears belong to the head. Here is the seat of our sensations. in eating and drinking, and it is a question whether the strength of the passion of alimენტiveness does not lie here more than in the stomach. Amativeness has also a place in the

head. A great part of the electric fire of love passes by means of the eyes and the lips. A person is quite as likely to get love-bedeviled by his head as by his heart; and I have no doubt that many people think themselves in love when really only their heads are bewitched.

The head, more than all the rest of the being, is in communication with external matter. It is in constant intercourse with worldly things—seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and imagining; for here are the thoughts and imaginations which play the greatest part in the game of reciprocal dealing with things material. The head, we may say, is the mediator between the heart or internal life, and “all out doors.” In consequence it gets very much involved, and can only be redeemed and brought into a state of health and peace by being cut off and withdrawn from the world, from time to time, by the influence of the heart.

Our health and peace depend, not on communication with the external world, but on communication with the internal world. Thus we see that the overworked head gets into a false spiritual position, and the true order of our faculties is inverted. The world prevails over the head, and the head prevails over the heart; which is the same thing as having the children rule the woman, and the woman the man. The heart should have a firm hold on God; then God

would rule the heart, the heart would rule the head, and ultimately the head would rule the external world. But until the head has found its strength in its subjection to the heart, it ought to be withdrawn from the poisonous influences of the external world. Yet we can not expect the head will take the true attitude until the heart leads off in the reform, by yielding itself in loyal devotion to God.

What do physicians commonly prescribe as the remedy for overtaxed brains and nervous systems? They say that the right equilibrium must be established by more exercise of body. You must set yourself hard at work chopping wood, or walk five or six miles a day, or go into some very active business. That is, you must restore the balance by exercising the muscles—the animal part of your system. It is true that you will partially remedy the evil in this way; but don't you see that this method seeks to restore the balance by setting at work a part of the nature that is really inferior to the head? You will find, in the long run, if you are following this course *for the sake* of getting life so as to go on again with brain-work, that you are only taking another method of exalting the head.

I have no confidence in keeping the balance, nor in regaining it when lost, by mere exercise of the limbs in work. The real loss of balance is not between the head and the external, muscu-

lar life; but between the head and the inner life; and it must be restored by an increased action of the heart toward God, until that organ is able to take possession of the head and lead it in moderation. Boating, ball-playing, wood-chopping and so forth, only increase the outward expansion, and can never therefore really overcome the tendency to over-expand the head. This can be done by nothing except the grace of God, which shall so regenerate our hearts that they will take care of our heads, and draw them out of the hurly-burly of sensation.

What we want, is not more exercise of the muscles, but *wise hearts*. A wise heart was Christ's peculiar characteristic. He had a great head, but he had a greater heart. He did not make great account of exercise; he does not exhort us to go boating and ball-playing, nor does he advise us to cultivate the intellect; but nearly all his precepts are directed to the right working of the heart. His scheme of education for himself and others is, that a wise heart will make a wise head. Let us be patient, and subdue the head to the heart, for by so doing we shall have in time wise heads. A wise heart and a wise head, will make a wise and happy body.

THE ART OF GLANCING.

IN old times when we used to make trap-springs by hand at the forge, there was a great liability to injure the eyes by looking at the bright hot steel under the hammer; and a number of our men had sore eyes. I talked with Mr. Newhouse about the matter one day, and found he had a theory that one who hammers heated steel should not look at it constantly, nor even fix his eye steadily upon it at all; but get in the habit of *glancing* at it. By coquetting with the fiery ingot in that way he got along without having any difficulty with his eyes. I tried the plan, and found there was good practical philosophy in it.

Since then I have found many ways of applying this glancing philosophy of the old trap-maker to higher matters than hammering steel. For instance: the eyes of the *mind* are liable to get sore by looking too fixedly at subjects that are hot with interest. Even questions of ordinary business sometimes assume a fiery glow that makes continuous attention to them painful and dangerous. Insanity generally comes by too long gazing at some one subject that is

absorbing enough to hold and compel thought, till the brain gets sore. The way to keep a healthy mind in the midst of complicated businesses and mighty issues, is, not to gaze long and fixedly at any one thing, but to do the looking that is indispensable to action, by swift, well-directed glances.

I find, too, that it makes my spiritual eyes ache, to pore over the popular newspapers. With their murders and hangings and shipwrecks and car-smashings and man-roastings, they may be said to be all the time in the white heat of hell-fire; and the only safe way for me to go through them, is by skipping glances; taking whole paragraphs by their first lines, and keeping my eyes puckered to their smallest capacity, to keep the sparks out.

Then again, a man who attempts to keep informed in scientific matters, will find himself dealing with a dazzling, sparkling mass of conjectures and colliding hypotheses, which will worry him into intellectual ophthalmia, if he stares long at them. All the old workers in the speculation-shops learn, perforce, the art of glancing and eye-puckering, and those who don't, generally go crazy.

Above all, the glancing philosophy is indispensable in the love-business. There is a blinding radiance in magnetic beauty which can not be stared at steadily without heart-disease. The

sexes in their prime are like white-hot steel to each other. Whoever would keep his heart for God and for all, must learn to practice an honest kind of coquetry, which withdraws the gaze before it goes into bondage and idolatry.

In short, we must practice the art of glancing in all our dealings with external objects, if we would keep healthy eyes for things internal and eternal.

It seems to me that in a true system of education, the ability to withdraw the attention will be as important as the ability to fix the attention, and as worthy of systematic training; because the way for us to make the most of ourselves for God, man and the universe, is certainly to keep our freedom; that is, to save our minds, imaginations, and hearts from all seizure and bondage to specialties. I see plainly that this has been God's way of training me. He has taught me always and thoroughly to coquet with all things below himself. By his grace I am master of the art of glancing. For that, above all things, I am ever thankful.

GOD'S BARGAIN.

THE doctrine that God has a general care for all, but a special care for none, is the perfected form of unbelief. The Bible view is that God is the "*rewarder of them that diligently seek him*" — that he is "the Savior of all men, *specially of them that believe.*" This idea runs through the whole Jewish dispensation, and is perfected in the New Testament. The Bible teaches from the beginning to the end, that God specially attends to those who attend to him, and that those who pray to him and seek him get into a different relation with him from that of others. If you fall in with the philosopher's doctrine, that God is the "All-Father," and makes no difference between those who draw near to him and those who do not, you might as well throw away the Bible, for that book is made on a wholly different theory.

The theory of the Bible may be reduced to a mathematical formula, thus: If there is any practical meaning in those terms, "He that cometh to God," "Draw nigh to God," etc., then it is necessarily true that there is a different relation established between God and those who do what

those terms imply, from that which exists between him and persons who do not. Suppose we accept those terms as having a meaning substantially like that we have when we talk of drawing near to a visible object — to the lamp on the table, for instance. We know that its radiating power affects us inversely as the square of the distance we are from it. At two feet its light is only one-fourth as much as at one foot. The same law of proportion governs gravitation and all radiating forces. Conceive now of God as the center of a radiating influence which is governed by that law. This radiating influence is one of love and care and providence; it manages the machinery of the universe. Then, if there is in reality any such thing as drawing near to him, which the language of Scripture supposes, we shall find ourselves affected by his love and care and providence according to the universal law of radiation, that is, inversely as the square of our distance from him. Nearness, instead of counting for nothing, multiplies intercourse and affection in a rapidly increasing ratio.

The philosophical theory that God makes no distinction between those who draw near to him and those who do not, is a miserable comforter. To tell persons who want help and guidance and strength, that they can not draw near to God or attract his notice—that he

works by general laws and is far out of their reach—is as false in theory as it is wretched in consequence. The natural world is arranged exactly for the purpose of making this distinction between the general fatherhood of God and his special outlook for those who seek him. He invites all to come to him, and his purpose is that those who accept his invitation shall be treated differently from those who do not. This is a just and rational arrangement.

I should say to every one, Don't be contented with being obedient to the "natural laws;" don't be contented with wanting to be good, loving holiness and moral perfection; don't be contented with Communism even in its best estate. Desire earnestly TO KNOW GOD. Be contented with nothing less than such an acquaintance as will enable you to speak with him and hear him speak to you. Don't believe the devil's philosophy which tells you that there is a system of great natural laws that interposes between you and God. Believe that God is a personal, intelligent, sensitive being, who is as much above mere arbitrary law as you are; as much a personal, affectionate agent as you are, and a great deal more so. We can know him as such, and approach him and have intelligent connection with him, not by letter merely in a distant way, but by receiving his Spirit. We can know him for ourselves, and come where we feel that he

loves us better than we love our children or father or mother. There is no sham about it; it is reality that will manifest itself in facts.

This is "the faith once delivered to the saints." There is a terrible opposition to this faith in the world—no doubt of that. And hence it is necessary to "fight the fight of faith." There must be a tremendous struggle to get this simplicity of faith and keep it. There are legions of devils and legions of philosophers who are teaching the contrary of it to mankind.

This doctrine, to be sure, may be abused. Persons may hold it as a charter of favoritism before God. They may be deluded about it, and think that they are drawing near to God when they are getting away from him. They may think that they are having fellowship with God when they are having fellowship with devils; and a thousand fanaticisms undoubtedly may be worked up by perverting this truth. Yet the doctrine itself is none the less necessary. And this doctrine, as held by Christ and the Primitive Church, had no favoritism in it; it was a doctrine of exact justice and righteousness. It is a true and righteous thing that God should reward those who diligently seek him. It is a law, as I have shown, as rational as geometry.

THE GEOLOGIC DEVIL.

THE doctrine of eternal evil, or the uncreated origin of the devil, as taught in the Bible, is to some rather distasteful. Suppose we try to shift the ideas on this subject from the line of theological teaching to the teaching of geology. In speaking of *eternity*, as related either to good or evil, one can hardly be said to know what is meant by the term. It is a word which conveys to us really no comprehensible idea. Leaving, therefore, that word out of the account for the present, we will keep within limits of what we can comprehend. As instructed by geology, we can think of a lapse of time that seems nearest to eternity. We can think of millions and millions of ages that have certainly passed away.

Now taking the periods recorded in geology for eternity—the best eternity we can get any account of out of the Bible—what do we find? We find there were animals existing back, apparently at its very beginning. We trace them in the rocks, until they are lost in the obscurity of primeval matter. What kind of animals were they? Well, they were in many respects like the animals found now, of the fish and reptile tribes.

But the most certain thing about them is, that they were savage, murderous creatures, who devoured one another more mercilessly even than their corresponding types do now. We therefore know that as far back as we can see into the eternity that is past, wherever there was life there was *war*. The fishes found in the earliest rocks with their bristling spines and terrible teeth and thick scales, suggest to our imagination the old armor-clad robber-barons of the middle ages. There is every sign of their having been terrible ruffians. The animals of later times have comparatively a much milder appearance.

Now the question arises, What is this animal life which we find existing thus from the beginning? What shall we call it? It is most indisputably selfishness, and that is exactly the nature of the devil, as I understand it. It is carnality armed with scales and teeth — "pure cussedness," as a Yankee humorist would say. Among such animals, there could be nothing but war. Gouge and be gouged, kill and be killed was the law. It was hell; what else can you make of it?

Now I understand that salvation consists in being saved from the spirit of such animals. That is precisely the hope of our race. Men in the flesh are confessedly like animals selfish and predaceous; their relations to each other are of the saurian character. They are saved to a certain extent from gross manifestations of brute

ferocity by the external influence of civilization. But after all, look at trade, and what is it? It is like the immemorial predacity of animals—one eating the other—the strong robbing, persecuting and abusing the weak; it is a tempered form of misery and destruction. Its spirit is one which seeks its own, and in order to get its own destroys whatever intervenes, without regard to right or conscience. Now that is what I think of as the devil. The spirit of heaven—the spirit of the day of Pentecost—is the opposite of all that.

With this definition of the word devil, understanding by it the brute spirit that robs and devours its neighbors, we are sure that it has existed from the beginning of the geologic periods at least. We see distinctly the traces of it at work during all the epochs this side of the Plutonian fires. Evil in this form presents itself to the eye through the whole of the geologic eternity.

If this is true of evil, it is also not less true of good, though the latter has not always been so manifest. The signs of good must be sought deeper. I fully believe that there has been in existence side by side with evil through all those ages, not only a Good Being, but a family of beings, with a spirit opposed to that of the brutes—a spirit of Communism. They were God's angels. That is a fact that the exclusively

scientific will not perhaps receive, because they can not see it. But a miserable outlook its denial gives them; they have all the evil without the good. While the infidel can see that there have existed from a *quasi* eternity, living personal beings, full of a selfish, murderous spirit, on the side of good he can not see any real being, but only an abstract principle. He can see the devil, and is obliged to see him: but to see God, is a matter of faith. The devil, as the rocks declare, has been incarnate from the eternal ages; but we are only beginning in these last periods to discover and talk about the reality of God. I believe that God and the communistic family which are co-eternal with the serpent, have been brooding over the whole creation, have guided it, and made it serve progress and improvement. They have worked the evil principle into forms that have made it useful, causing the sheep to succeed the shark, and the cow to displace the crocodile. Thus evil, if endless, is limited by the presence of all-surrounding, persistent good.

THE INTERNAL TEACHER.

LET us consider these sayings of Christ: *"The Comforter whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you: He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you."* The idea under these words is, that the Holy Spirit, coming from the Father, passes through the Son, and the experience of the Son, being photographed, so to speak, on that Spirit in its passage, is thereby transferred to believers and becomes a sort of memory within them. The very essence of all Christ's history is taken into that Spirit, so that it comes to us charged with his character and deeds. It enters into the pith of our spirit, so that it is the life of our life, and standing there, as we may say, in the pulpit within our very heart, it becomes our ever-present teacher, preaching Christ to us day and night. The disciples heard the external words of Christ while he was present with them; but this was a superficial operation, only preliminary to the final and real teaching which he was to give them. Their salvation was to come by a spiritual infu-

sion, that had in it not only the same truths that he taught by word, but all his unspoken wisdom and all his hidden experience. By a double photographic process, the things of Christ were first to be received in the mediating Spirit, and then to be shown to the disciples and transfused into their life, so that all his sayings should come back to them in the secret chambers of their consciousness; and all that he had done should reveal itself to them as in the glass of an omniscient memory.

It is very beautiful to think that such a Teacher is present with us, watching all the motions of our spirits, all our thoughts and feelings, waiting to seize the lucky moment when some sympathetic point rises within, to bring the fitting word of Christ to our remembrance, and infuse his thoughts into our thoughts, his experience into our experience, and so by ten thousand fibers of connection weave our spirits into unity with his. It is very beautiful to think, that besides our personal memory, we have, in that good Spirit that whispers within us, a great transferred memory, or, we may say, an opening of our memory into the great memory of Christ; that, as by personal memory we can recover all that we have ever experienced, however distant it may be from our present consciousness, so by this spiritual memory we have access to all the experiences that are in the memory of Christ—in

fact, to that vast reservoir of words and deeds of which it is said, that if they had been recorded, "the world itself would not contain the books that should be written." Surely this is the wealth that we have in Christ.

And we may go a great deal farther: for Christ has, besides his own personal body, a great spiritual body that comprises the whole Primitive Church. Peter and Paul and all the apostles and all their followers, and the patriarchs and prophets, thousands and thousands that gathered to Christ from this world and from Hades during the apostolic age, all that had part in the first resurrection, now go to form one great spiritual organization, which is the body of Christ, as really as was the body in which he first arose from the dead. And as the Holy Spirit, coming from the Father through the Son, takes into itself all the human experiences through which it passes, so it permeates every member of this great complex spiritual body, and assumes by photographic process all the experiences of the apostles and prophets and the multitude that no man can number that were taken into identity with him at his Second Advent; and thus comes to us charged with the essence of that vast accumulation of human life which was gathered into the first resurrection. Every iota of the history, not only of Christ, but of Peter and James and John, and Moses and Elijah, and every

apostle and every prophet, and every one of their followers, is now printed in the Holy Spirit, and is open to the reading of those who receive that Spirit in their hearts and understand its language. Countless volumes of biography, such as we need to study in working out our own salvation, are as accessible to us as our own memories, if we know how to enter into the closet of our hearts, and learn the lore that the Comforter teaches there.

In this study, it is essential that we should never forget that the least things have the most in them—that the infinitesimals contain the infinite. The microscopist will show you a gray speck as big as half a pin-head, that you can make nothing of with the naked eye; but place it under his instrument, and, behold, it contains in clear letters the whole of the Declaration of Independence! This is but a faint illustration, on the one hand of the elusive delicacy of that wonderful Spirit that is busy within us, and on the other of the volumes and libraries that can be found in it by any one who has the proper microscope in his heart.

SLEEP WITH A WILL.

ALL our natural wants create corresponding institutions. For instance, we have the natural want to eat and drink, which creates the institution of regular meals three times a day. The want to eat and drink is one thing, and the institution by which that want is supplied is another thing. A man's desire to eat and drink might not take a periodical form; he might want to eat at irregular times if his appetite only were concerned. But the whole business of eating and drinking has become an institution of three meals a day, and men go to their meals whether they are hungry or not, and thus get in bondage to habit.

In this way our institutions generate our vices. The habitual form tempts to excess oftener than the normal want. The sexual vices of the world probably come as much from the institutions which are created to supply the demand of amateness, as from the passion itself. And so of all the other passions. The operation may be seen in the case of a village store. The demand of a neighborhood for goods is a natural want. But that want creates a store, and the merchant

(going to work for his own interest) practices upon the passions of the people around him, and often makes them buy more things than they want. The institution reacts and increases the demand and inflames the desire.

I am disposed to apply this philosophy to sleep. We have a natural demand for sleep, which has created an institution of going to bed at a certain time and giving one's self up to dreams for six or eight hours. I can not but judge from my own experience, and from what I see and hear of the experiences of others, that the evil powers take advantage of this institution to oppress us. People often sleep when they do not want sleep, in consequence of being in bondage to the institution. They sleep many times under a bad influence, so that their sleep is worse than nothing. They sleep in a kind of lethargy, and have bad dreams, nightmares and semi-paralysis, so that they arise in the morning more tired than when they went to bed. I very much doubt whether it is absolutely necessary that we undergo all that.

- My faith is that Jesus Christ can help me, on the one hand, to sleep when I want to and get refreshment; and on the other hand, *not* to sleep when I have no appetite for it, or when sleep is a lethargy from which I awake feeling as though I had been hard at work. I believe that Christ can help me to escape from the devil's sleep, and to have sleep only as God gives it to me.

People think that insanity comes from loss of sleep. Doubtless loss of sleep precedes insanity; but I am by no means certain that insanity may not be caused by a wrong kind of sleep as well as by the loss of it.

I think we ought to get power over sleep, both positively and negatively; power to sleep when we choose, and power to refrain from sleeping when we have no need. We ought to have the power to sleep *on purpose*, with a view to recuperation, and not with a view merely to pleasure. We ought to have power to use sleep as a means of the highest efficiency in our business — that of seeking the kingdom of God and its righteousness.

I have an idea that if we could get the right kind of sleep when we do sleep, we should need but little of it. I am satisfied that a very short time of really good sleep does me more good than a whole night of narcotic sleep. I frequently just touch the edge of sleep, hardly losing consciousness for a second, and wake up as refreshed and bright as though I had slept all night. On the other hand I sometimes sleep all night, and then awake more tired than when I went to bed, and feeling as though I had been at work all night in the devil's tread-mill.

We hear a great deal of exhortation to people to be regular in their habits about sleeping — to sleep enough, and all that; but I never hear any

exhortations to people to avoid bad sleep. I believe there is as much distinction between good sleep and bad sleep as there is between good sleep and being drunk. People sometimes awake refreshed, and then are tempted to sleep longer, and wake up a second time feeling bad. When that is the case they have certainly slept too much.

The working of a healthy mind is an alternation between healthy sleep, on the one hand, and healthy thought on the other. A man to be really healthy must have freedom in both directions. There must not be any compulsory sleep, and there must not be any compulsory thought. You must have liberty to think or refrain from thinking, and to sleep or refrain from sleeping, as it is good for you. Any other state than that must be partial insanity. If your mind is subject to compulsory thinking, on the one hand, or compulsory sleeping on the other, it must be more or less diseased. It is a sound mind that can vibrate with perfect liberty between sleep and thought.

DIVINITY OF THE WILL.

THE thoughtful observer can not but notice that there is in the very constitution of human nature, a sharp jealousy for freedom of the will. Children, from the earliest dawn of their individuality, show a spirit of contrariness. Tell a child to do something, and even if it is that which he chooses on the whole to do, he will very likely stop and look you in the face till he has settled a controversy with his own spontaneity. The meaning of this is, that he does not love to work under *your* influence, but must stop till he can balance himself, and do the work because *he* chooses to. We may call this perverseness, but there is something in it that compels one's respect. It is certainly not a civilized state, but it is the natural force of individuality as it shows itself before having worked out the problem of its connection with the individuality of other beings; and respect for God's construction of human nature teaches us, when we find a phenomenon that is uniform enough to indicate a constitutional principle, not to be blinded to the value of that constitutional principle by its perversions, but to set aside those perversions, and

look directly at the principle, and see what it was made for. We are sure in advance that there is good in it, that God's plan is in it, that it deserves to be respected, and when it can be turned into the right channel, to be encouraged.

There is abundant evidence of the fact that it is a constitutional part of human nature to wish to act for one's self. There is something in us that revolts at being used by others and pressed into what we do involuntarily. That principle often takes the perverted form of stubbornness and willfulness, which sometimes ends in blind insanity of will; but in spite of all this, the original principle itself is good, and must not be suppressed, but must be put to right use, and developed to its fullest strength.

What is this principle? If we can go back into the essence of it and find out whence the force comes that expresses itself in jealousy for freedom of the will, we may learn to respect it. What then is the essence of it? My answer is, We are the offspring of God, who breathed into us the breath of life, and we are an essential manifestation of his life, by nature, as well as by virtue of our gospel union with him. God certainly is an immense force of will, as well as intelligence and love. We inevitably conceive of him as a supreme power, doing his own pleasure. There must be in the very essence of his life a consciousness of self-sufficiency. The more you

study his character the more you will find that he has great delight in having his own way, and carrying out his own plans. That is the reservoir of life which manifests itself at the center of our individualities. It is thus inevitable that there should be a constant, subtle evolution from the human center of the divine self-sufficiency and delight in free-will. The offspring are like their parent. If a father is what we call spirited and high-strung, we expect the children will be of the same stamp.

We are bound then, as loyal subjects of truth, to respect free-will as a God-given force, and to see to it that we have no desire to domineer over any body's will. Our skill in directing the will of human beings, if we have any, must not be an indefinite scheme of control; but it must distinctly recognize and respect the will-force that is in human nature by virtue of its divinity; we must propose to it only that kind of direction which is compatible with spontaneity, and we must carefully avoid not only all purpose, but all desire to quench that force and make people act from our will and not from their own. This defines the essence of all tyranny. A tyrant is one who does not recognize the God-like force of will there is in man, but wishes to control and even to suppress the will of others, and to make them act from his own will. He does not look favorably on that trait of independence which

developes itself in children and is so universal, but would control it in a way to paralyze the central force of human beings. Where there is a long-continued, systematic attempt to hinder people from willing for themselves, and to train them to act under constraint of another's will, all genius must die. A true system of control, is one which, recognizing the supremacy of the will as a divine endowment, will look favorably on individuality and the revolt at control that is in human nature, and will set itself to guide the actions of men, not by suppressing their individual wills, but by insuring their right direction through right spiritual influences and good circumstances. In other words, a true system of control is one in which the man who seeks the control of others, becomes their servant. He recognizes, in those he seeks to guide, the central will as supreme and his master so far as it is divine, and it is his function to wait on it, not to control it—to serve it by surrounding it with genial influences, and presenting right motives to it, that shall invite it to take the true direction.

This is the essential meaning of Christ when he says, "They which are accounted to bear rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you; for whosoever will be great among you shall be your

minister; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be the servant of all." He certainly did not mean that the greatest should be servant in the usual sense of the word, in the way of performing menial offices. We interpret him thus: The man who knows what man is and recognizes him as a manifestation of God, will discern in every man the central divine principle, and will respect and serve it as his master; and since all that part of two persons which constitutes them separate beings, all which is subsequent in the order of growth to the central vital principle which is divine, is properly secondary, and subservient to the divine principle in both of them; so the greater any one is (considered separate from God), the more there is of him that is properly servant to the other.

This amounts to precisely what Jesus said: "He that is greatest among you let him be your servant;" that is, you can not have any greatness separate from God that is not a servant principle, and if you wish to be considered great, by just so much you must enter into the relation of servant to the divine in every other man. All that two persons present to each other is this outward, servant life, and of course the greatest one will be predominantly the servant of the other. It is for every one of us thus to recognize the divine principle in every man as our master. We are bound to wait on it—to give it the benefit of

our power and wisdom in providing for it good influences—to feed, comfort, and honor it with the royal attendance it deserves. We must not think of suppressing it, but endeavor to always surround it with such attractions that in the perfection and even delirium of its liberty it will act right.

NOT OUR OWN.

WE shall always find relief from temptation and darkness just as soon as we can raise a sincere consciousness that God owns us. The power of Satan has full sweep over us when we get out of that idea; but it can not follow us beyond a simple acknowledgment that we are not our own, but are the property of God. For if we are not our own, we have nothing of our own to care for: if we are God's property, he has placed us in our present circumstances to look after his affairs, and we have no concern with anything else. In this position, taken with right spiritual apprehension, the accuser can not touch us. Suppose he comes with the suggestion that we are in difficult circumstances, surrounded with evil that we can not cope with; or even if he approaches nearer, and attacks us with accu-

sation, and blackens everything in our inner experience as well as in our circumstances; our answer to him is, "If this is all so, I can not attend to it; I am not my own, but belong absolutely to another; and I have no power to leave my owner's business. Your questions would be exceedingly pertinent if I belonged to myself, and I should feel bound to look at them; but as it is, they are no more to me than they are to any body else; you must go to my owner."

This acknowledgment of God's right in us turns every way against selfishness, and raises us into the liberty of seeking only the things which are Jesus Christ's. It is as valid and effectual against discouragement and accusation, as it is against pleasure-seeking. If God owns me his interest is pledged to take care of me. I know that he will not place me in circumstances that are too hard for me, and so endanger his own property. "No man shall pluck them out of my Father's hand." And the consciousness of this relation to God, while it narrows my responsibilities to the simple one of doing his will, also invests me with perfect assurance against all vicissitudes that would interfere with this end.

Further, my owner has a right to give me such experience as he pleases; and I have no more occasion to turn aside and occupy myself in adjusting that matter, or disputing with the devil about it, than I have to do any other private

business. The devil's object is gained, if under any pretense he can call us away from our business, and make us resume possession of ourselves. The egotism in which he works this result, frequently takes the form of conscientiousness and improvement-seeking; but even our own improvement is subject to the great principle that God owns all things, and must be followed in the spirit that seeks the things that are Jesus Christ's. Otherwise it is a disguised effort of egotism to maintain itself, while it is God's purpose to cast it down. A person who is in a perpetual fret about his own state, as well as one who is self-satisfied, will make no improvement. Both are seeking their own, and forget that they are owned by another. The highest assurance that we have of perfection and eternal rest, lies in knowing that God owns us; and to always realize and understand it is a sure way out of trouble.

POSITIVE VIRTUE.

ANIMALISM in the sexual department works in the two extremes of action and reaction. On the one hand, it is sensual and fiery, and on the other, dead. Both these forms are equally disgusting. The second form of animalism, that of amativeness in its reactive state, is considered a high state of grace in the world. There is a seeming continence in it, which actually passes for virtue. But it is repulsive to real purity. It is antagonistic to the spirit that makes truth supreme. A person under its influence is virtuously horror-struck whenever sexual matters are alluded to. His mind revolts from the study of an important branch of human nature, and the Spirit of Truth can not be at home with him.

This reactive form of amativeness, so much commended, is really a disease. A person can not be in health who has lost the natural activity of amativeness. The devil's oxidation is at work in him.

Fix your attention on animalism, and don't be deceived with regard to the identity of these two forms of it, but learn to hate it in both

forms. Abhor this touchy kind of virtuosity that the world is so full of, as much as you abhor the sin of harlots. It is the same thing in another form. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." We are apt to think of this passage as referring to our spirits; but in the verse before Paul beseeches believers to present their *bodies* a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. The trouble is that we can not talk on sexual matters without making the waters turbid. We must be able to think on this subject and speak of it in a way that is really natural. We can judge what is natural by little children; their minds are full of curiosity about sex. This subject is the vital center of society. It is the soul of the fine arts. It will be foolish for us to undertake to cultivate music or poetry or painting or sculpture, until we set the center and soul of them in its place.

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All our capability of serving God acceptably in anything, depends on our being magnetic. I take it as a universal principle that our usefulness will be in proportion to our magnetism; that we are dead and barren except as we are charged with electric life. It is true that we may be full of life inwardly, and yet be dead outwardly to a certain extent. The soul may be in one state

and the body in another. But still there is action and reaction between the two, and a constant tendency toward identification. Now what precisely is it to be magnetic? It is to be *porous*, so as to admit the infusion of the life of God and a chemical combination throughout between his life and our life. That is what is meant by *softness of heart*. When a heart is spoken of as *hard*, the meaning is that it is *compact*—that cohesion exists between its own particles, so that there is no room for another life to come in. Cohesion in chemistry is opposed to new combinations. So in heart-science the attraction between particles of the same life is egotism. The porous state, admitting other substances into the combination, is what makes us magnetic, charges us with love and life, and so makes us fruitful.

You will ask, What has all this to do with the subject of love between the sexes? It has a great deal to do with it. To be in a condition to be permeated by another spirit is much the same thing, whether that other spirit is human or divine. A soft heart in relation to the attraction between the sexes, and a soft heart toward God, are so nearly alike that they often coalesce and run into each other. And though I should say that a person might be capable, to a certain degree, of love without being inspired, I should say the converse can not be true; a person can

not be inspired, that is, charged with the Spirit of God, without being magnetic toward human beings. In Paul's philosophy, to be without natural affection is as damnable a thing as to have inordinate affection.

GOD'S RESERVE.

THERE are many spirits in the world, and there is much need of discrimination in regard to them. Let us learn to know the difference between the Spirit of Truth and all other spirits. The Spirit of Truth is also called the *Holy Spirit*; and that means that it is separate and peculiar; not to be classed with other spirits. It must have special characteristics by which it may be known. Let us try to understand its distinctive character.

The main characteristic of the Holy Spirit evidently is, that it is *chaste*—that is, reserved and conscientious in its fellowships. It hates promiscuous intercourse. We know what is meant by promiscuous intercourse of the sexes; but have we considered that there is such a thing as promiscuous intercourse of spirits? Unseen fellowships of the heart and life may seem to be

innocent enough, when really worse than promiscuous intercourse of the sexes. The Spirit of Truth is holy because it keeps aloof from such intercourse and *hates* it. It is in the midst of all other spirits as oil in water. However it may seem to be mixed with them, it always rises and comes off clear.

When it is said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters," we are only asked to rise into sympathy with the Holy Spirit—to come out of promiscuous intercourse of spirits into the reserve and chastity of God. In this way only we can become his sons and daughters. Our attractions must be reserved for him if we would have fellowship with him. We must have a continence of heart that will keep us pure in the midst of all temptations to promiscuous fellowship; so that, mix as we may with the world in external affairs, the moment we have time to settle and withdraw ourselves, our motion shall be toward God.

The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Truth are equivalent appellations, because nothing but chastity and reserve are truthful and rational. A thoroughly rational character like God's is and must be reserved. God is full of love, but it is a love that stops short of promiscuous intercourse. Its limit is the line of rationality.

It is true love because it never goes beyond the light. Blind love is its opposite, and that which it hates most.

In one way or another we are all desiring to be blessed with the fellowship of spirits. All religionists are seeking spiritual influences; all spiritualists are seeking spiritual influences; all lovers are seeking spiritual influences. Love is itself a spiritual phenomenon. Persons in love are baptized into each other spiritually. The greatest blessings of life are all of the nature of spiritual fellowship.

If we want lasting happiness we must see to it that we get the baptism of good spirits. We must not accept every baptism that offers, and think that we have obtained something good because we have received a new and wonderful influence. "Try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false spirits are gone out into the world."

Those who seek spiritual baptisms will get them; but the main thing is to be sure that they are of God. Other kinds may produce wonderful sensations; but there are some very delicate tests to be applied, to make sure that a baptism is from God.

I recommend to all to *study* spirits that come to their hearts, and the baptisms they come under, and to cultivate discrimination. Love the Spirit of Truth. Withdraw from all other

spirits. Resolve that every thought shall be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

God will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask. That is his promise, and there need be no difficulty in availing ourselves of it. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," These promises expressly refer to the Holy Spirit. Christ still more emphatically and bountifully promised to his disciples that the Spirit of Truth should come into them, and dwell in them, and lead them into all truth. John, at a later period, testified that this anointing from the Holy One had come, teaching them all things, and proving itself to be "the truth and no lie."

You can not get a better test of the Holy Spirit than the one I have given, that it is a spirit of chastity. It loves not blindly, but wisely; and it is only as our spirits are leavened by the Holy Spirit that we shall love wisely. Our experiences with seducing spirits will be profitable if they teach us the importance of reserve. Christ was separate from sinners, and the Holy Spirit will separate us from sinners.

There is nothing more characteristic, on the other hand, of the spirits of darkness than the love of promiscuous intercourse. Their fellowship is of the nature of prostitution without discrimination. The O. C. is charged with

promiscuous intercourse, while I suppose it is the only body of people on earth that is in earnest to keep clear from this iniquity.

GO HOME.

WE talk a great deal about *concentration*. By this we mean a coming together at this central Community of the members scattered abroad; but another and more important concentration is a gathering together of hearts, so that our spirits shall be present to one another in the unity of Christ. We all need this kind of concentration far more than we do to meet face to face in the flesh. We need to gather our spirits, thoughts and affections, into communion with God. This is the best kind of going home.

It is a good rule, on the corporate and on the individual scale, when we have finished our work abroad and have nothing else to do, to go home and take a fresh start from there. Home is our goal. We are sure to find nourishment and rest there, and so get ready to go out again.

How can we have real-quietness and a contented home-feeling in this great Community?

Many people, I suppose, think there must of course be a feverish atmosphere where so large a number of persons live together. But I believe if we reach the true source of harmony, our serenity will be in proportion to our numbers, and that there is a way for us to make the O. C. the quietest place in the world. I expect to show that numbers, when rightly disposed, instead of generating confusion and feverish excitement, will produce the peace of God, serenity, and everything that makes home beautiful and delightful. I will tell you how this is to be realized.

Let every individual go home into his heart many times a day, and seek to know God for himself. Let every one have a place where he can retire from the confusion of external business, and reflect and watch in his heart. We shall never have a concentration that will be worth any thing until each one knows the value of going to God and learning how to make a quiet, heavenly home in his own heart. I am sure if this practice becomes a fashion among us, we shall, each one of us, contribute to the quietness and serenity which flow from fellowship with God; and when we put our contributions together, our peace will be like a mighty river.

I hope all will give this principle a fair trial, and see if it does not insure them purer, evener

lives. When you find yourselves with nothing in particular to do, go to your rooms and turn into your hearts. Go home and talk with God. He will give faith and peace.

We shall soon commence the business of the year, and we are likely to have a great deal more going on than ever before. The political world is full of excitement, and the newspapers will doubtless report agitating things.* So if we allow ourselves to be at the mercy of external events, there is every reason to believe that great confusion and distress are before us. Let us be wise in time, and establish a purpose in all hearts that we will go home to God and stay there. I wish we might carry this purpose steadily through the season, so that, if every thing around us is going with the rush and roar of chaos, the Community may abide in peace and quietness. It is a great attainment to abide serenely with God, let outside distractions be what they may. When we have learned to do that, we can pass unhurt through the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds. Dwell deep. Live in your hearts, where the world can not come; for then the Lord who is your shepherd will lead you by the side of still waters.

* This was said in war-time.

IMPERFECTIONS OF THE BIBLE.

BUT what shall we do with the *imperfections* of the Bible? The infidel will point you to multitudes of mistakes and contradictions in it. The astronomer and the geologist will tell you that its accounts of heaven and earth are utterly unscientific. The literary critics will show you interpolations and signs of doubtful authorship. What shall we say to all this? In the first place we will answer—We know by plenty of monuments now standing, that the main *facts* of Bible-history, namely, the growth of the Jewish nation, and the birth of Christianity out of it, are *true*. The very existence of such a people as the living Jews, with their rite of circumcision, demonstrates the general truth of the Old Testament; and all Christendom is a witness of the general truth of the New. In the next place we answer—The main *doctrine* of the Bible, which runs through the whole of both the Testaments, and underlies all its other doctrines and all its histories, is that the living God is present in human affairs by special inspiration and by special providence;

and this doctrine we know to be true *by our own experience.*

So we snatch the substance of the Bible away from the infidels and the critics by a very summary process. Let them pick it to pieces in detail; we are sure that, as a whole, it is true, and that it is an enormous mass of truth, worth more to the world as a history and as a doctrine than all other books put together.

And now having secured the main point, we will take a general view of the imperfections which trouble our unbelieving friends. To get the very largest view, let us go back to what may be called the *a priori* stand-point. Suppose the living God, who carries on his plans in the world by special inspiration and special providence, had determined to give men a Bible, and was considering what kind of a Bible he would make or cause to be made for the greatest benefit of mankind. If the infidels and critics had been his counselors, they doubtless would have advised him to make a book absolutely perfect inside and out, without a mistake in it, or a possible doubt about it. But let us canvass this advice. The very fact that it occurs so readily to first thoughts, may make us suspect that it is crude.

The objection to it that first strikes me is, that the great danger connected with such a book as the Bible, is that men will worship *it* instead of

the God who gave it, and that the perfection of its external form would increase this danger. We see on all hands how difficult it is for men to pierce through forms and reach the inner life of things. There is an inexpugnable propensity to stick in the letter and come short of the spirit. What better way, then, would there be than to give men a Bible full of real inspiration, but very imperfect in externals? I see plainly that Paul held this philosophy in regard to God's instruments of communication. He says to the Corinthians, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling; and my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; *that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*" And again, speaking of the glory of God shining in the heart, which was his gospel, he says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, *that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.*" And still again: "Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, *that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; *for when I am weak, then am I strong.*" Paul's advice about making a Bible evidently would have been, *to stuff it with power, but let it go ragged in externals.* This is exactly

what we have in the actual Bible. According to Paul's philosophy, which I assuredly believe is the true one, the very imperfections of the Bible considered as a mere book, are essential to its perfection as a medium of God's spirit.

WHICH WAY IS REST?

THE common idea is that rest is cessation from labor—a state of inactivity, whether of body, or brain, or heart. Its natural expression is to lie down and doze in dull, weary passivity. The Turkish siesta represents rest in this sense. You have gorged yourself, you have had your opium, and now for a doze. I think that is just the opposite of true rest. Indeed, it must be the most tiresome state a person can get into. This theory of rest is based on the assumption that our life is turbid and gross, and that exertion is wearisome, heavy business. Its idea is that we are bound, like the brutes, toward total inaction in death, and the nearer to death the more rest.

That is not the doctrine of faith. Faith teaches us that we are not bound for death, but

for life, and a totally different kind of life from this dozing, sleepy kind. The life that faith is bound for is found only in God, who never slumbereth nor sleepeth. If you adopt the brute theory of existence, that you are bound for death, your dozing may be rest; but if you take for the theory of your life that you are a child of God, you will find dozing and stupidity to be the opposite of rest. The brute's paradise is no paradise for the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

The theory of life that belongs to us as believers in Christ, will lead us to seek rest in just the contrary direction from that of the brutes. What is faith? We may define it as an energy that sets its face right up a steep hill, that balks at nothing, but perseveres until it accomplishes whatever it undertakes. We call the opposite of faith, unbelief; but practically it is *laziness*; it is cowardice; it is the spirit that loves the Turkish kind of rest. The soldier-spirit is an essential quality of faith; and this is the spirit which secures health and all the benefits of life. Laziness is the mother of all diseases. It is itself the worst kind of disease. If a person is possessed with the brute life, which seeks rest in inaction, he has the virus of death in him, though he may be apparently in perfect health.

There is a positive and negative state in regard

to disease, one state inviting disease, and the other repelling it. The negative state that invites disease, loves the do-nothing kind of rest. It is fond of sinking down into a doze. It feels that exertion is a bore. It is this superannuated feeling that winds up in death. This is a disease that begins to work very early in life. The young begin to be old just as soon as they feel that leisure is the great desideratum. That feeling is the germ of old age and death. Our prosperity is not going to bring us this doleful destiny. We are never going to retire on wealth, and sink down into a Turkish doze. When we come to the end of one great enterprise God will offer to us another of greater magnitude, that will again tax our powers to their utmost. God has called us to rest in his eternal energy, and I shall seek rest in no other direction. In that course we may expect to escape all diseases, old age and death.

The spirit of laziness can not rest in any circumstances; but the spirit of faith can find rest in all circumstances.

The difference between those who work by faith, and hirelings, will be found perhaps in the fact that the latter have got old age at their hearts; that is, they are deep in the idea that rest is to be found in dozing or having nothing to do. Faith seeks *more life* and *better life*, the life of God, and expects to outdo itself year by

year. I suppose that this Community, with new life, taken in by heroic faith, could do four times as much work as it does now, and get more rest too.

UNITY COMING.

I WISH every man and every woman would believe, as I do, that there are loving and lovely beings in the spiritual world whom they can have fellowship with and turn their hearts to and perceive drawing near to them. They would feel rich, if they could believe that; rich in all they are fond of, and very independent of any other love. To be sure, in approaching this invisible sphere, there is danger of the intercepting of evil spirits. But we are certain that the kingdom of heaven is coming on earth; which means that there will be open communication between this world and the angelic world. Men and women in this world will commune with men and women of that world. Nothing less than that is coming, and we must open our hearts to that fellowship. Love in that direction connects itself with our highest aspirations and hopes, with our loyalty to God and hope of eternal life.

It is nothing but unbelief really that is between us and the spiritual world. Unbelief is indeed a tough bull's-hide that interposes an almost impenetrable veil. Still the power of a magnet will work through a bull's-hide; and so the power of love will work through unbelief and finally destroy it. Unbelief, which is the devil himself, the great tormentor of the universe, is to be destroyed by *love*. The coming together into absolute unity of the visible and invisible churches will cut unbelief in pieces, as anything is severed with a pair of shears. When God's time comes, the unity of his family will dissolve all other obstructing unities. Wherever his children are, in Hades or in this world, in Swedenborg's hells or in the insane hospitals, they will forsake every other combination for combination with one another. Time is nothing to them and space is nothing to them. They will come together from all ages and from all spheres; nothing can keep them apart; but whatever gets between them will be cut asunder.

IMPROVEMENT OF CHARACTER.

THE idea prevails generally in the world, that character can not be radically changed—that the peculiarities of mind and spirit that persons have received by chance or inheritance must be retained through life. In this theory unbelief has one of its terrible strongholds. If it were true there would be little hope for humanity. The whole theory of Christianity is based on the assumption that character can be improved, yea, radically changed. The denial of that assumption is a denial of the power of the gospel and a death-blow at all the hopes that cluster around the word salvation. It is an excellent thing to encourage faith in regard to improvement in character, and for that purpose to look for illustrations of it. Real improvement in character is very likely to make itself known; and where it exists it ought to be recognized and appreciated. It is the miracle of miracles, the wonder of heaven and earth; it is a rising above nature—an ascent into the resurrection; it is the very blossom and fruit of faith. Do we fully apprehend it? We have perhaps a better idea of the possibilities of improvement in character

than many others; but have we such an idea as Paul and the Primitive Church had? Do we fully appreciate the old doctrine of salvation from sin by the grace of Christ? The Lord will be patient with us; but sooner or later we must approach his standard, and think his thoughts on this subject. There is certainly an opportunity for more faith than we now have in the possibility of improving and changing natural character. In it lies the great hope for us and the world. Deliverance from all the evils that afflict society must be sought in the improvement of character. There can be, for instance, no permanent security from the official corruption which is the growing curse of the nation, except in radical improvement of character. A change of officials may bring temporary relief; it can not effect a thorough cure of the evil. If men hunger and thirst for improvement in character they will obtain it, and find an easy path to harmony, purity and full salvation. Deliverance from sickness and death itself will come in connection with improvement of character.

If you believe in the possibility of such improvement and act upon it, calculating that if the character of people around you is not good it will become good, you can do many things that you would not otherwise attempt. I should never have tried to form a Community if I had not had great faith in the possibility of such

improvement. Communism is possible only on the hypothesis that people can constantly improve—that rough, crooked sticks can be made smooth and straight.

People generally believe in the possibility of improving the mind by discipline, the means of locomotion by new inventions, horses and sheep by careful selection and breeding; but these are inferior matters. Do they believe in radical improvement of human character? This is the important question. Do they believe in improvement, not merely by taking advantage of the principle of hereditary transmission, but by the power of the grace of God operating on the individual? Individual improvement must be the basis of improvement by inheritance. Persons must themselves improve, before they can transmit improvement to their offspring. If there is a rigorous law that people must be like their progenitors, then there is no hope for the improvement of humanity. But there is no such law. All the attempts to improve the lower animals are based on the principle that individuals can be improved, and can transmit improvement to offspring. That principle has made our Short Horn and Ayrshire cattle, Cotswold and Southdown sheep. Push the rule that "like begets like," and it becomes an iron rule of despair.

Persons, I am sure, are acceptable to God in

proportion as they sincerely believe in the possibility of radical improvement of character and earnestly seek it. Let that idea gain access to a person's heart and mind, and it will continue to work, until he hungers and thirsts after righteousness; and then the devil's power is broken, and he has no further control; the person passes over to God, and begins to work out his salvation. But he must see to it that his improvement is radical and central, not merely an improvement of manner or sensibilities. The central life must be changed, so that the person can say, "I am a better man than I was; I can please God better than I could; I am nearer to him; I understand him better, and feel more like him."

For myself, for the Community, and in fact for the world, I look to such experience for comfort and deliverance from the power of evil. We find ourselves from time to time in the midst of difficulties, like the man who stood on a rock in the ocean and saw twelve sharks pointing their noses at him. We are surrounded with extortioners, defrauders and evil-doers of all kinds; and our true way of seeking deliverance from them is not by increasing the power of law, but by improving the character of men. We can never rest—never be able to lie down in peace and security—until we are surrounded by honest men, men who love peace and will do no harm in any circumstances.

This theory in respect to the improvement of character should be a controlling one in all educational institutions and with all who have charge of the young. Children can not be reared in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, unless their instructors and guardians believe in the possibility of great improvement in character. No matter how troublesome the disposition of a child, he should be surrounded with influences encouraging him to expect improvement. Faith, patience and attention will produce marvelous changes in the worst cases.

• What are the limits of improvement in respect to character? Some might allow that the young are susceptible of radical improvement, while affirming that the old must remain as they are; that characters once really formed must continue unchanged. I see no ground for such a distinction. According to my observation and experience it is about as difficult to change the young as the old. The twigs are not so easily bent, I find. It takes almighty power to satisfactorily change the characters of either young or old; and I should not dare to say how old a person must be in bad habits to be beyond the reach of change and improvement. My faith in the power of God and in Christianity reaches beyond this world into Hades itself.

THE ANCHOR RULE.

THE alternations of our spiritual experience are like the changes of the weather, or like the ebb and flow of the tides. We have at one time a clear perception of the truth, and are justified, cheerful and fruitful; at another time, without any known cause of change, our minds are beclouded with doubts and condemnation, and all our being is deranged and unsatisfactory. We know that these changes have connection with the movements of invisible principalities; and yet, as in the science of the weather and the tides there is a great deal that is yet unexplainable, so we have to admit that we are not enough advanced in spiritual wisdom to account for all the phenomena of our inner life. But like those engaged in navigation, we can learn how to take advantage of the currents and counter-currents that we meet with. The mariner watches the tide and knows when to set sail in a given direction, and how to anchor when the current changes. A man can manage even a raft so as to work his way up the North River without sail or oar. Let him start when the tide is running up stream, and he will make headway at a good rate for six hours. Then let him cast anchor and hold still the next six hours while

the tide is setting back. After that he can go on with the tide another six hours; and so on. In this way, by moving when the tide is in his favor, and anchoring when it is against him, so as not to lose what he gains, he will float up to Albany by the bare flow of the river, without working at all.

Apply this to our spiritual experiences. When we are cheerful and bright, seeing God and good in all around us, with minds clear and apprehensive, then the tide is setting up, and we have nothing to do but to let the raft float. But suppose that by and by we find the tide turning and all our feelings going wrong; then what we have to do is to cast anchor and lie still; which we can do by fastening ourselves to the truth that we have seen, in such a way that we can not deny it when our feelings are opposed to it. There are many measures that an ingenious mind can take to fasten itself to truth that it has once seen clearly. One essential thing is to make no provision for giving it up—not to leave in our minds the lurking idea that perhaps in a time of temptation we shall forsake it, which will make us hold back from committing ourselves to it, for fear of contradicting ourselves. If we keep loose in this way, we shall be sure to find ourselves soon floating back. Let a person make up his mind, when he sees truth which has the seal of God upon it, that he does not want

any loop-hole by which he may ever get away from it, but chooses to be committed to it irrevocably. His object is to cast anchor, so that in time of perturbation and darkness, he may not lose what he has gained. For this purpose let him confess the truth by word and deed; let him embody it, if possible, in some practical expression; let him throw it out like an anchor into the circumstances around him.

There is no better rule of life than to confess in darkness what we saw in the light. There is a great deal of needless suffering for want of this anchoring rule. In many cases a person's experience is just like running up with the tide six hours and falling back almost as much the next six hours. In all the darkness of mind and temptation to evil-thinking that we are subject to, let us never cease to confess and regard as truth what we saw in our best state; let us stick to it through the darkness just as firmly as if it were before us in all the brightness in which we first saw it; then we shall not fall back.

We must not expect to get into still water, where we shall not be subject to the ebb and flow of the spiritual tides—certainly not until the principalities of evil are cast down; but it is possible to praise God in these alternations, and to get wisdom from him to take advantage of the tide when it goes right; and to know when to anchor and how to be contented and happy when it goes wrong.

THE CENTER OF SCIENCE.

SCHOOL-TEACHERS sometimes teach geography by setting their scholars to study the localities immediately around them, commencing at their own door. They work out from home as a center. They go from farm to farm, from town to town, from state to state, from nation to nation; and so learn the geography of the world, starting from home. I think that is the best way to learn all sciences. Start from home. Begin with what you know in your own experience as a center. Now I *know* there is a God, who is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. That I know in my own heart—at home. I know that more surely than I know that the earth is round, or that the Copernican system is correct. Sure as I am of those facts, I am still more sure that there is a God, and that he rewards those who diligently seek him. That is a truth that is close to my heart. I call it a scientific truth—the first and best of all scientific truths. I shall start from that center, and work out from it into the domain of science as fast as I can.

That central truth of science may be ex-

pressed in another way. It means the existence of God and special Providence. These are the two great items of faith. That God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, means special Providence. It means miraculous power. It means that God treats those who seek him, differently from those who do not. These two items put together, constitute the sum and substance of theology, and to me are the center of all science. I am not obliged to wait until I can prove these two facts to somebody else; they are the center of all science to me, whether I can demonstrate them to any one else or not. After having seen and known the ways of God long enough to be sure that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him, are we obliged to wait, before we accept this discovery as scientific truth, till we can prove it to geologists for instance? Science is what we know, and there are many ways to knowledge. We discover some existences by the senses, by seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling; and we get at others by testimony, and others still by reasoning. Last of all there is such a thing as heart-perception. I can see and feel and hear God and his kingdom in my heart. That is a matter of science to me just as much as any thing which is discoverable with the microscope or telescope. If other people say they have not seen nor heard nor felt God, and do not

know there is such a being, I say to them, I am certain of it, and your ignorance don't hinder me from seeing and knowing it. I shall take what I know as a part of science, and this fact I regard as the post in the middle of all science. The scientific world, without the power of heart-discovery, must be very circumscribed in its domain of research—quite as limited as though it had no telescope.

Special providences are facts which we have just as much right to report as people have to report experiments in chemistry or philosophy. If you should see a man fire a gun in a certain direction twenty times, and afterwards find a target in that direction, pierced with twenty bullets within a few inches of the center, you would conclude that there was intelligence and design in the matter; you would know the hits could not have come by chance; you would say it was the special providence of the marksman. I can report many a series of facts in my experience as completely demonstrative of intelligence and intention, and proving the special Providence of God as certainly, as that. People who have had no such experience may say everything is managed by law or by chance; but *we* know that God manages the universe with reference to rewarding those who diligently seek him. That is the law by which he works.

WHO IS YOUR SWEETHEART?

YOU say you love a particular woman, and you think that you can not love any body else; but if you analyze your feelings closely, you will find that you do not love *her*, you love **HAPPINESS**; you love something that is inside of yourself. The delectable feeling that you have, is within you. "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," and so the kingdom of love is within you. Is it certain that that woman is even the cause of this delectability of your heart? I say no; God causes it. She is only a *medium*. You love *happiness* in the first place, and in the second place you love *love*, as the means of happiness. Now God is love; so you must love God as the means of happiness, if you know what you are about. One might as well think of loving some particular tune and no other, as to think of loving some particular woman to the exclusion of all others. What we love in the particular tune, is *music*, and what we love in the particular woman, is *love*,—and love is God.

HID TREASURES.

WE should never forget that our feelings or lack of feelings are not sure tests of our spiritual condition. Strong affections often exist in us without making any sensible manifestations. Ask C. whether she loves her mother, and I venture to say that if she should test the question by introspection, that is, by endeavoring to discover some feeling in herself, and should reply according to her present consciousness, she would say that she did *not* love her mother. At times, doubtless, especially when her attention is very much absorbed in other matters, she does not think of her mother for days together. And yet no one doubts that she does love her mother, or that the latent love in her heart would, under suitable circumstances, manifest itself in her consciousness. So all of us have various affections that we are unconscious of, but which certain occasions would draw out into intense emotion. Under ordinary circumstances perhaps we can not tell whether we love certain persons and things or not; but if we have for good reasons once loved them, and the same reasons still remain, we may be sure that we do love them,

though our feelings do not all the time tell us the fact.

But this philosophy has a deeper application. Not only affections, but *spirits* that are the fountains of affection, may be latent within us, unrecognized by feeling. We know that Christ saves us by dwelling in us. If we believe in him and confess him in our hearts, we have a perfect right to reckon, not only that he is in us, but that the *germs* of all righteousness are in us. The fact that we do not realize this in our feelings does not in the least disprove it. The same spiritual law governs in this case as in that of latent affections. Though C. might have no present feelings that she could call love, yet we know there is in the deep recesses of her being a strong affection for her mother; and we know that it is an *active* principle, though latent, just as we know that the internal organs of our bodies are always at work, though we are not conscious of their existence. A person does not *feel his liver*, but it is nevertheless in his body, and is constantly performing a very important part in the economy of his physical life. So Christ is in us, and the fact that we do not feel and perceive him is no evidence to the contrary. And if Christ is in us, the germs of all good are in us; and all that remains to be done is to develop them in our conscious experience. Do you wish to love God with all your heart? Do

you desire meekness, temperance, true affections, and whatsoever is good? Certainly these treasures are all in Christ, and Christ is in you. The way to realize what you want is to believe that you have all in having Christ, and to expect that his righteousness will show itself in you when it is called for.

Even Christ's righteousness was at first latent and had to be "perfected," that is, brought out into consciousness and manifestation. "Though he were a son," says the apostle, "yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and *being made perfect* he became the author of eternal salvation." As the Son of God he possessed all righteousness of course. Why then was it necessary for him to suffer? For the same reason that we have seen in the case of latent affection—the need of development. Though C. has great love for her mother, it may still be very desirable that that love should be called into action—that circumstances should be so arranged as to put her to trial on that point, and make her conscious of the deep feeling that is hidden in her heart. On the same principle it was necessary that Christ should pass through all experience, in order to give expansion to the meekness, love and beauty that were in him. And so we may think of Christ in us as like the bud of a flower before it has blossomed; and it is very desirable that this latent good in us

should, by our experiences, have opportunity to bloom out in word and deed.

Every believer in Christ may, in a valuable sense, claim to be *perfect*. He is perfect in the sense of having in him the germ of all righteousness; but he may at the same time be very *imperfect* with reference to the expansion of that germ into actual experience. Paul, in the third chapter of Philippians, calls himself *perfect*; and in the same chapter he says, "Not as though I had already attained, *either were already perfect*; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." On the one hand, he boldly testified that Christ, the essence of all righteousness, was in him; and on the other, he realized his lack of development, and was willing always to forget the past, that he might "reach forth unto the things which are before." This is the true attitude for every believer. In confessing Christ we receive him as the germ of all righteousness; but this must be expanded in our experience before we can fully realize its benefit.

We may be certain, not only that whatever is in Christ is in us, but that all the truthful experience we ever had in connection with Christ is still in us. It is important that we always bear these two certainties in mind. With them we can repulse the worst temptations of the devil. If you feel barren or tempted with dis-

couragement, fall back on the certainty that all the good you ever received is still in you. God will not do his work twice. If he has once given you a truthful experience on any point, he will never repeat it; and there is no necessity that he should. It is still in you, and proper circumstances will expand it into your consciousness.

A great temptation that believers are subject to is of this kind: They look at their present feelings and then suppose the case of very trying circumstances in the future; and putting their consciousness of infirmity with those circumstances, they imagine their faith would fail. But this is false logic. The wise man will reason thus: "Christ is in me, and therefore there is that in me which would enable me, if necessary, to go cheerfully to the cross." We have all found that Christ is "a present help in every time of need." Difficulties which once seemed insurmountable have vanished before faith in him; and this experience should lead us to expect that his omnipotent power will manifest itself in us when our trials come. Present weakness is no measure of the power that will carry us through future troubles. Forebodings, begone! "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

SCIENCE VS. SENSE.

THE question may be asked, how Christ can be in us and how it is legitimate for us to confess the fact, without the evidence of direct consciousness. We reply, there are facts in physiology connected with every motion of our bodies, that are as destitute of sensual evidence, as the fact that Christ is in us. In moving an arm we do not *feel* the muscle that contracts and causes the motion. We can not believe and confess its existence on the ground of *feeling*; we have to believe and confess it on the ground of *science*, because anatomists have ascertained and described the fact. On similar grounds we can believe and confess that Christ is in us. "The life is the light of men," though they "know it not." Ignorant feeling is no evidence against it. Before the discoveries of science people did not know that the blood circulated. Science is surer evidence than feeling in respect to the interior processes of our bodies: so is the Bible a surer witness of what is true in our hearts, than any self-inspection can be. Unbelief stubbornly persists in taking the testimony of ignorant feelings, instead of being instructed by the God who made man and knows all about him.

The scientific are constantly calling on the

common multitude to quit believing their senses, their outward perceptions, and believe in things invisible. The outward senses tell us that the sun goes round the earth; but science calls upon us to deny those senses, and believe that the earth goes round the sun. This requires faith — we must believe the testimony of those who have got at the truth in the matter by other means than outward perceptions, instead of believing our own senses. That is precisely the revolution that all the sciences make.

The whole warfare of the believer is between sensations and science; between feelings and the word of God. In giving ourselves to faith we are the true devotees of science, and carry it beyond the philosophers of this world. They tell people that they must not believe their own senses, but believe the testimony of learned men. We go further and say, You must not believe your own senses nor the testimony of men, but the testimony of God. Common science after all is only a more subtle and complicated product of external sensation.

If we are faithful to the truth, it will work into us till our feelings will conform to it. But we must learn to be faithful to the truth, without stipulating that it shall make itself felt. Sensation must stand aside, and we must deal with the truth as it is by itself; and not be drawn hither and thither by the contradictions of feeling.

PATHOLOGY OF THE HEART.

THE most radical of all diseases is "hardness of heart;" this is the very center and summing up of all the bad conditions of life; and it is a much more common disease than many people suppose. A change of the heart from hardness to softness is the special thing accomplished by a true conversion. On the one hand hardness of heart and impenitence are classed together in the Bible, and, on the other hand, the tender heart is the special gift of the gospel covenant. "A new heart will I give you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."

Many of us who have seen revivals, know, to a certain extent, what is the phenomenon of a broken and softened heart. It accompanies a spiritual discovery of God. "The fool," that is, the man of hardened susceptibilities, "hath said in his heart, There is no God." He recognizes no invisible superior. A change on this point is the beginning of wisdom, and takes place when people are truly converted. They discover the existence of God as a Spirit,

and they discern enough of his nature and character to see that he deserves reverence and obedience. They perceive that he is an infinite Father, and that they, through neglect and ignorance, have not only failed to honor him, but in manifold ways have abused him. Thereupon they are convicted; their innermost life is stirred with new motion; the fixed insensibility of the heart is broken up, and they come to feel like children. In that state it is easy for them to weep and to love. This is softness of heart.

My impression is that the old revivals failed in permanently breaking up hardness of heart and establishing the true, wise heart in the world, in consequence of the theory held by the churches, that if a person was once converted he was *saved*, and thenceforth had nothing to do but to preach to sinners; while the truth is that a single conversion is only a *beginning*, that should be followed up by an endless series of conversions, until softness of heart is established as a chronic state. The end to be gained being permanent softness of heart, if the effect of one conviction and conversion on a man fails to produce this and he falls back into hardness of heart, he needs to have the same process enacted again as much as at the first. Many of the converts of those old revivals secretly became harder after their first conversion than

they were before. We can see reasons for this result. A man while he is a mere sinner—so understood by himself and others—knows, if he has any sense at all, that he is in a dangerous condition, and hence he is exposed to the hammering that will soften his heart; but if he has gone through that process once and had a conversion which he thinks has insured his salvation and given him a through-ticket to heaven, with liberty meanwhile to go about his worldly business, he is more thoroughly protected from conviction than the so-called sinners.

As representatives of the new revival movement, the only thing that we can be at all satisfied with is such a course of experience as will make softness of heart a permanent thing. The continuation of that state in the new convert must be insisted upon as the object for which he was converted. It was not that he might escape future judgment, but that he might become a child of God here and now; and his conversion is only an incidental means to that end. If one conversion does not effect this condition we must have two, and if two don't answer we must have three, or if necessary a dozen. At all events, we must produce softness of heart, and continue it until it becomes a chronic state. "The fear of the Lord," present in the heart, will keep it soft continually. A man who realizes that God is his ever-present Father,

will have a constant reference to that fact, and it will keep him considerate and tender in his feelings and behavior, and will make him careful to do, think and feel aright.

Hardness of heart is coupled with unbelief. They are identical, and together form the essence of cruelty. When the disciples manifested their unbelief, Christ exclaimed, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" They were not conscious of causing him suffering by their hardness. They were no more sensible of hurting him than a knife is when it enters your flesh. Yet the spirit in them pierced his heart. This same cruel spirit is still pressing on us, ready to steal in at every opening; and though it conceals itself, and appears almost too refined for identification, it is yet as sharp and steely as a knife. I beg of you to believe there is such a spirit busy around us. If you do not see and feel it yourselves, take my word for it till you are wide-awake. Make up your minds that you are going to have a tender heart forever, whether anybody else has or not, and that you will be converted as many times as is necessary to keep it.

Hardness of heart is the same thing, carried up into our highest spiritual relations, that we know familiarly under the name of indelicacy and coarseness in the manners of ordinary life. We see occasionally persons whom we call

coarse and indelicate, who do not readily perceive what is pleasant and what is unpleasant in social intercourse, who are willing to hurt people's feelings by making sharp remarks, and rather enjoy doing so. That same coarseness, acting in the center of the life and in our relations to God, is what we call hardness of heart. It is that which we must be saved from—that which all the thunders of Sinai and all the attractions of the Cross are intended to break up. Only as we become refined in our perceptions and delicate in our feelings toward God, shall we be delicate and tender in our feelings toward our fellow-men and treat them fairly.

The hammer which God prepared to break hearts in the Primitive Church was Christ's crucifixion. On the day of Pentecost Peter just told the story how, in the first place, God had raised up Christ and made him the Prince of Righteousness, giving him all manner of good gifts, so that he deserved to be the King of Israel; and then he told them that they had crucified this noble person—they had done their worst against the man who had done his best for them. The contrast thus presented of their hardness with his goodness, broke them down, and they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" That was the hammer for pulverizing egotism; and Christ, in view of the effect which was to be produced by it, just before his

crucifixion claimed the victory: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the Prince of this world be cast out." How? He saw that the hammer was being uplifted for the blow which would break hearts. The devil lives and reigns in men by virtue of their hardness of heart. His heart is hard as the nether millstone, and as long as he can keep his place in men he makes them hard. Christ in view of his crucifixion understanding the spiritual power that through it would be brought to bear on men, foresaw that it would bring on a softness of heart that the devil could not live in, and that the end of his kingdom had come.

That mighty conversion that came into the world 1800 years ago, is yet in the heart-depths of human nature, and it is for us to participate in and realize the softness of heart given to the Primitive Church through the cross of Christ. That is the experience that all should set before them as the "hope of their calling." That is the righteousness of heaven, to which all other good things shall be added.

PAUL'S VICTORIES.

PAUL was a very fruitful, successful man. His life was brimful of effort and production. I want to get at the secret of his fertility, because when I look deep into my own heart I see that there is nothing I like so well as to be fruitful. What is so pleasant as to be doing something that is going to tell on all good interests and be successful, victorious, and glorious forever? Paul did that all the time. I want to know how he did it.

I see very plainly two things in him that were great causes of his fruitfulness. The first thing was humility. He had his mental and spiritual machinery so arranged that he could keep down and not be proud of what he did. He got beyond the liability to swell and be puffed up with self-complacency in view of his achievements. I learn from him to say in my heart always and everywhere, that I will not be proud; because I know if I am, God will not let me have anything to be proud of. If I want to be always doing something successful and victorious I must learn not to glory in it; so my very love of victory

and success will work humility. The other thing was, that he kept his face always toward God; he did not believe in dead works at all, but in inspired works; he was determined always to work for God and with God. I learn from him to say, I am so fond of being fruitful and victorious that I am determined I will live by faith. I will not have any dead works about me. I will keep my heart toward God all the time, because I know that is the only way to be successful and victorious. God will not give me fruitfulness while my heart is turned any other way. If I have unfeigned, simple faith, he can fertilize me; the pollen of his Spirit can make me fruitful; but he will not give it to me except as I turn my face toward him and open myself to him. I am determined to keep my heart open to him and be humble for the sake of being fruitful, which is the joy of my life.

"I delight to do thy will, O God," said Christ. He had some good reason for delighting to do the will of God; there was something sweet about it which he could taste and feel; there was marrow and fatness in it which he could enjoy. In what did that fatness consist? Evidently in doing the will of God he was always realizing the accomplishment of some noble, useful thing. Paul says, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory." It would be glorious if a man could always live in the state of feeling a General

is in when winning a battle. That is the eternal state of God, and that is the state he will put us into if we will set our faces toward him and put down pride. Victory, *victory*, VICTORY, everywhere and in everything, until death itself shall be swallowed up in victory!

There is a wonderful pleasure in being successful, even in small things. We were mightily pleased with "making a round" on the croquet ground. We can get into a state of partnership with God where we can have that kind of experience all the time, in small things and great.

For a specimen of success in great things, look at Christ's capture of Paul. What a victorious thing was that! Christ's heart must have leaped with joy at the accomplishment of that feat—heading off a great persecution by capturing the very man who was foremost in it, and making him his most brilliant champion. So the beginning of Paul's victories was Christ's victory over him.

THE HUMILITY OF GOD.

THE fact that Christ was "meek and lowly" demonstrates that meekness and lowliness have no necessary connection with sin and unworthiness. Christ was without sin; and if he was humble it was not because he had been a sinner or had done anything to be ashamed of or that needed criticism. What then was the exact nature of his meekness and lowliness? If we examine his record we shall very easily discover that one of the main points of his testimony both by word and deed—the point that was with him one of the greatest practical importance—was his subordination to his Father. He would not stand in any position that implied independence. He was jealous of any manifestation of honor given to himself that did not recognize the Father as above him and the source of his power. When a young man said to him, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" he said unto him, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." The young man might have said to him, "You certainly *are* good;" but he would not tolerate any mention of his own goodness addressed directly to him-

self. His subordination to the Father was his manifestation of humility.

We may, however, go farther back in analyzing humility, and assume that the Father himself is truly meek and lowly. Here there is not only no sin to be humble for, but no subordination. On what ground is the Father meek and lowly, who is above all? We answer, that the very essence of meekness and lowliness is *the love of the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about ourselves*. And we may be sure that the Father, who is the source of truth, is in himself the final and perfect representative of the love of the truth in regard to himself, and is therefore the most meek and lowly being in the universe. The love of the truth about ourselves will make us meek and lowly in all conditions. If we conform ourselves to the truth, not desiring to be greater than we are, so far we are on a level with the Father and the Son and the heavens, and with all that have ever been meek and lowly in heart. The Father is in one situation, the Son in another, and the angels and the Primitive Church are a great way above us in holiness and knowledge; so in the visible church there are gradations of experience and spiritual attainment; but all, from leaders to the smallest child, can have love of the truth, and can conform themselves to the truth, and not seek to be greater than they are—and this is humility. But when children forget

that there is anybody wiser than themselves and choose to be independent, that is a refusal to recognize the truth—they are thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think—living and acting a lie. That is pride, the opposite of the meekness and lowliness of God. The great Father himself is more like a little child than those children that love to be independent. He could truly say to them, "I am more humble than you are, and if I were in your place I would submit. There is nothing in my heart that would make me set up my will against a superior; I would submit and love to do it." That is what the Father could say sincerely, and that is what the Son really said and did; and that is the only noble thing to do.

ECONOMY AND TASTE.

TRUE economy is based on an entirely different motive from the love of money or the fear of poverty. Our economy, for instance, in regard to fires, ought to be about the same as it would be if coal cost us nothing. The fact that our coal costs us so much money should not determine how much we use. That should, on the contrary, be determined by a *true*

taste. A true taste would demand that we have just what fire we need and no more—making a clean, intelligent matter of it. If the coal cost us nothing, we should still recognize it as God's coal, which he packed away some millions of years ago for our use and benefit. And it is evident, on the most universal principles, that he does not like to have anything wasted.

In reference to spending money our view should be that all things are God's, and that we are dealing with him and his property. He will not put us under law, but he will demand that we train ourselves to love of the truth, that is, to a true taste. Thus the matter is made like a question in music. To a good musical ear a very slight variation often makes an unpleasant discord. The discord is not measured by its magnitude, but by the esthetic, spiritual results produced. So, though it might not be a matter of great importance whether we burned more or less coal, with reference to its value, still it is very important that we have a wise perception of truth and beauty in regard to this matter as well as everything else—that we be not slovenly and careless. It is a mean thing to love money, but a noble thing to please God; and God is pleased with generosity and freedom on the one hand, and with chastity and prudence on the other.

I mean to form such a character that millions

of money would not increase my wants. Generally the appetites and wants of men increase as they grow rich—the amount of money they have determines their expenses. But it will not be so among us. Thus far the Lord has given us a medium fortune, so that our appetites have been developed in about the right proportion. We shall form such a standard as will last us and be universal. Poverty will not cramp us; wealth will not bloat us. As a matter of personal convenience I should not want any more clothes than I now have if I were ever so rich. An old pair of shoes are *easy* things, and a new pair are often disagreeable. As a general rule the more I can escape new things the more comfortable I am. This taste is becoming stronger and stronger in me, so that I know money would not change it. I recommend this kind of taste to all our people, as being rational, and not because it saves money. The truth is, that the whole matter of dress is a "*scaly*" concern, and the less capital we invest in it the better. Under the influence of the spirit of heaven all fondness for display and for useless change in dress, such as commonly prevails, will die out. Greenough's doctrine about beauty will carry the day with all rational minds. That doctrine is that beauty has no independent existence, but that all beauty is to be secured by strictly conforming to what is useful. He don't

believe that there is any thing in nature constructed merely for the sake of being beautiful, but that everything is constructed with reference to its use — beauty being incidental to use. This principle will ultimately rule in the department of dress and be the cure of extravagance.

FAITHFULNESS.

A TALK TO CHILDREN.

A LESSON that God has often taught me came into my mind this morning with new clearness; and I want to teach it to these boys and girls, and I want them to teach it to their children, if they ever have any; so that it may go down to their children's children and reach all generations of Community boys and girls. I will begin as the folks that talk to the children generally begin, with asking some questions:

1. What is a *promise*? The children will be able to answer this. When a boy or girl says I will do such a thing — get a certain lesson or go on an errand for somebody at such a time — that is a promise. Every child knows what a promise is.

2. What is a *resolution*? This is the same thing

as a promise, only it is not made to other folks, but to ourselves. When we say to ourselves or think to ourselves, that we will do so and so at such a time, we make a resolution. Sometimes we only *think* resolutions; sometimes we *speak* them out to ourselves, and sometimes to other folks; and very good folks frequently *write* out their resolutions. President Edwards made seventy written resolutions, the first of which was that he would read his resolutions once a week. The main idea of a resolution is the same as that of a promise. When we promise anybody to do a thing, if we are sincere we also make a resolution, that is, promise to ourselves to do it; and when we make a resolution to ourselves, we also promise to anybody that knows of it, and certainly to God who knows all things, to do what we resolve to do.

3. What is a *vow*? It is the same thing as a promise or a resolution, only instead of being made to persons around us or to ourselves, it is made to God. When we are thinking of God or praying to him, if we say in our hearts that we will do so and so we make a vow, that is, we promise God or we resolve before God to do that thing; and that is a vow.

You see that these three things—a promise, a resolution and a vow—are very nearly alike. You can not make a sincere promise without making a resolution; and you can not make a

sincere vow without making a resolution; and you can not make a promise or a resolution, if you think of God as you ought to, without also making a vow.

4. What is *faithfulness*? It is keeping your promise; sticking to your resolution; fulfilling your vow; it is doing what you say you will do, whether you say it to other folks, to yourself, or to God. *Unfaithfulness* is breaking your promises, forgetting your resolutions, and neglecting your vows. If a boy or a girl promises to do a thing and does it not, he or she is unfaithful in respect to that thing. If they promise to do it *at a certain time* and do it not at the time promised but afterward, they are unfaithful. If boys or girls get in the *habit* of breaking promises, so that they can not be relied upon to do all that they promise and at the time promised, they are called *unreliable*. When they get to be very unreliable they are called *shiftless*; and when they get to be very *shiftless* they are called *worthless*.

So it is with resolutions. If we resolve, that is, promise to ourselves, that we will do a thing and do it not, we are unfaithful. No matter whether anybody else knows it; we know it, and we accuse ourselves of being unfaithful. If we get in the habit of breaking our resolutions we come to think of ourselves as unreliable; and if the habit becomes very strong we feel that we

are shiftless; and finally, if we do not break the habit of breaking resolutions we come to think that we are worthless.

So it is with our vows. If we promise God many things in our prayers and do not fulfill them he sees that we are unfaithful; and as the habit of unfaithfulness to our vows increases he thinks of us as unreliable, then as shiftless, and finally as worthless.

Now consider what a dreadful thing it is to sink down into this shiftless and worthless state. In the first place it is bad to lose the confidence of persons around us by breaking promises; then it is worse to lose confidence in ourselves by breaking resolutions; and it is worst of all to lose the confidence and approbation of God by breaking vows. How miserable and mean any one must feel who has come to be considered a worthless fellow by all around him, by himself, and by God! That is hell; that is damnation.

On the other hand, how good it is to have the confidence of all around us, so that those who love us can feel sure that we shall do even more and better than we promise; so that we ourselves expect to keep our resolutions and have the praise of our own consciences; and so that God knows we will keep our vows and can trust us and justify us. This is heaven; this is salvation. The thing, then, that we ought to wish for above all things, is, that we may be *faithful*. Look in

the New Testament and you will find that is the name that is given to Christ and to true Christians and to the saved in heaven — THE FAITHFUL.

Now I will give you some advice that will help you to be faithful :

In the first place, you must be careful how you make promises, resolutions and vows. The Bible says, "It is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay." Don't make a promise unless you are very sure you can fulfill it. Don't make a promise unless you are very sure you shall *remember* it. Don't make a promise unless you are very sure you shall *want* to fulfill it. Good-natured people frequently promise to do more than they can do ; more than they have time to do ; they promise to do things to-morrow or next week, and the time is so far off that they are almost sure to forget them ; they promise to do things that will be hard and disagreeable, so that they will be tempted to postpone them or shirk them altogether. In this way they get into bad habits and get a bad reputation ; and in breaking promises they learn to break their good resolutions and to neglect their vows to God ; and so go down, down, till they lose everybody's confidence and lose their own self-respect and lose the approbation and blessing of God. This is the end of that kind of good-nature that makes promises without making sure of fulfilling them. Consider all promises, resolutions, and vows, as

debts, like notes of hand, and take care to issue only so many as you are sure to pay promptly.

In the next place, when you promise to do any thing, if it is something that can be done *now* and if you have nothing else to do more important, go and do it *right off*. Pay your debt promptly. Pay it before it is due if you can. Get it off your mind. The very time to do a thing is when your mind is warmed up with thinking and talking about it and promising to do it. So of your resolutions. As soon as a good resolution is fairly formed in your mind, if it is something that can be put into deed at once, jump and run to the fulfillment. Don't wait till the devil has time to steal away your interest in it.

Another rule is, Don't think there is little harm in breaking promises about *little things*. The harm is in the breaking of the promise; and that is a great harm, whether the thing promised is great or small

But all these rules will be dead and useless without something else that I am now going to tell you: *Faith is the root of faithfulness*. God only is eternally faithful, and he only can make us faithful. If we are going to live with him and be his children *he will certainly make us faithful at any cost*. He can not live with the unfaithful, the shiftless and worthless men and women who break promises, forget resolutions, and neglect vows. Whenever you make a

promise or a resolution consider it a vow to God, and ask him to make you keep it, and believe that he can and will. He does not forget anything. He keeps his own resolutions for ages and ages, and he can help us to do so. He has not forgotten one of the promises and resolutions that you have made in all your life. If they were good promises and resolutions he holds them as notes to be paid yet. You may trust him, not only to help you keep all the resolutions you make hereafter, but to bring to your mind all the good resolutions and vows you ever have made, and enable you to fulfill them. Somebody has said that "hell is paved with good resolutions that men have broken." I say that heaven is paved with good resolutions *kept by the grace of God.*

SPIRITUAL DIGESTION.

EVERYTHING we do is of the nature of a spiritual *ordinance*; that is, it becomes the condition of spiritual effects, either good or bad. The Lord's Supper in the Primitive Church, if eaten in a special manner, that is, "discerning the Lord's body," was an ordinance of life; but otherwise it was an ordinance of death. "For this cause," said Paul, (that is, because the communicants ate and drank unworthily), "many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep;" thus the holy supper, taken without spiritual digestion, became an ordinance of Satan, communicating disease instead of health. What is here set forth in respect to a special transaction, is substantially true of all outward things. There is a way to use this world as not abusing it—to use it as God's ordinance. There is a way to use every form of external enjoyment as a method of worship and interchange between us and the divine. On the other hand, there is a way to use the world and its pleasures as a medium of interchange between us and the diabolical. So, while we insist on keeping our freedom *to use all things* as a constitutional right never to

be given up, at the same time we can pray, "Lead us not into temptation," and be vigilant in finding out where temptation comes in; and when the use of things good in themselves is becoming an ordinance of the devil, it is part of our liberty to abstain. The wisdom of Christ will manifest itself in our experience by teaching us to proportion our use of this world to our spiritual strength. "One believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth."

The right use of the things of this world depends on our *digestive* power. We do not give to an infant strong meat that we can digest with perfect safety ourselves. Its food must be proportioned to its digestive power. There is a digestive power that can spiritualize and sanctify everything. "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." The best part of our wisdom consists in the discernment of what we can bear. When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," we pray to know how to proportion our use of this world to our digestive power—to be kept from using any more of this world than we can thoroughly assimilate.

We can not regulate ourselves by reference to

others; for one can digest more than another. Neither can we make any general rule for specific conduct. We must have instinctive discernment for ourselves.

OUT AND BACK.

"NOTHING VENTURE, NOTHING HAVE."

WE had a play when I was young, in which we used to give what were called "*outs.*" A boy would leave his station and go as far as he dared toward his adversaries, and then run back. If a boy had a good deal of courage he would perhaps go quite round the enemy, thus provoking him to a chase, and making an opportunity for his own party to take prisoners. The law of *profit* required the boy to make as daring an out as possible; and the law of *safety* required him not to go so far that he could not be sure of a return. That play was an illustration of a great universal principle, not only in human affairs, but even in God's administration. Let us call it the law of *Out and Back* and see how far we can trace it.

In commerce all the great fortunes are made by men who well understand this law of Out and Back. A ship is loaded with home goods

and sent to China. That is an *out*. After an absence of months or years it returns with a load of tea or silk and a great profit on the venture both ways. If the ship stays at home there is no profit. If it gives an *out* and is caught by rocks, storms or pirates there is no profit. But if it makes a clean circuit out and back under good management, it brings its owner a fortune.

So it is in all the operations of trade and manufactures. You invest your capital in goods to be sold or in material to be manufactured; you pay for transportations; you hire men; you build warehouses and shops and machinery; and so for a long time you are giving an *out*: your money is gone from you, perhaps without much apparent promise of return. But by and by you get your goods to market and the money begins to come back. In most cases the longer and more daring the circuit the greater the profit.

Christ showed his appreciation of the law of Out and Back, in the parable of the talents. He criticised the servant that hid his talent in a napkin, for not knowing enough to "put it to the exchangers." The foolish man was too prudent to give an *out*, and so in the end lost all.

The law of Out and Back is all important in war. The finest studies the newspapers gave us in the war of the rebellion were the "raids"

of such men as Kilpatrick and Stoneman. Their way was to ride swift and far into the enemy's territory; crossing whole states and perhaps making a circuit clear round some stationary army; striking sharp and rapid blows at exposed points; and then get back with as little loss as possible. A daring out and a safe return made a splendid raid.

These illustrations (which are but a few of many that might be given) will help us to see what God has done. The mission of Christ, his death and resurrection and his return to heaven, constituted a great circuit, like that of a ship or a raid. God sent him out and brought him back. His raid destroyed the works of the devil. His voyage brought back for treasure the souls of men. He "descended into the lower parts of the earth" and then "ascended far above all heavens." If he had staid in heaven there would have been no salvation. If he had staid in the "deep" there would have been no salvation. But giving an *out*, even to death and the verge of hell, and then making his way back by the resurrection to the bosom of the Father, he surrounded us and re-captured us from Satan.

The race-course is a circuit, out and back, and it may furnish us with convenient terms, as the stadium did to Paul. They talk of the "quarter pole" and the "half-mile pole" and the "home stretch." Christ was evidently at the "half-mile

pole" of his circuit when he reached the grave. With his resurrection *commenced* the "home stretch." But we must not imagine that he got back to the judges' stand immediately after he disappeared from earth. He said to Mary, "I have not yet ascended to my Father." He appeared to the disciples from time to time for forty days. He had a work to do after he disappeared from them, for he said to them, "I go to prepare a place for you." He had to "ascend above all heavens;" and doubtless his ascent was a part of his work and his race. It was in ascending through the various heavens and displacing them, that he did his work of preparing a place for his disciples. Indeed we may as well assume that the "home stretch" was as long as the "out;" and in that case, since we know that he was more than thirty years in his descent to the grave, we must conceive that he was also more than thirty years in his ascent through the heavens to the bosom of the Father. This reckoning brings us to his Second Coming in A. D. 70, as the terminus of his circuit. His Out and Back reached from his birth to his Second Advent; and his death and resurrection were at the turning point of his career.

Our moral from all this shall be that of Paul—"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." He descended that he might ascend. He and his Father loved the law of

Out and Back. We will follow them. Christ tells us, and Paul tells us, that "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." This is the universal law of profit—Out and Back. We will commit ourselves, our friends and our fortunes to it. If we fall into suffering we will reckon that God is sending us down that he may bring us up. If our friends leave us by death or even by folly or sin we will comfort ourselves with the assurance that God knows their ways and has appointed their circuits. If he sends them to Hades he will bring them back. If they go away like the prodigal into wickedness and misery they will find a turning point and a "home stretch." If we have an only son, or any person or thing as dear as an only son, we will do as God did for us—send our treasure, at his bidding, out on the farthest circuit of absence and suffering, for the joy that is set before us in the coming back. We will study this great law of Out and Back, as worth more than all the laws of Astronomy—as the law of spiritual gravitation, which brings us to God and binds us to God, and assures us that whatsoever and whosoever goes out from God shall be brought back to God with increase and joy.

GOD IN ALL THINGS.

WHEN we speak of special providences, let us see that we get the right meaning of that word *special*. It should not mean that God's management of things around us is peculiar, or that he affects and arranges affairs here and there in a special way, while other things are regarded as under the control of material laws. We *discover* God's providences in a way that is special to us, because we are able to read them only in that special way. We see the hand of God in certain events, and our recognition of those events requires faith. We may properly call them special providences, because they are recognized by us in a special way, different from other events that we do not understand. But I suppose the truth is, not a sparrow falls to the ground without his care, and all the hairs of our head are numbered; and so, whether we understand things or not, God's providence is over and around us always and everywhere. In that sense it is not special, but general and universal.

If we believe in this general principle that nothing happens without God's intention, this faith, whether we understand things or not, will

make us feel respectful toward whatever occurs. If you watch your experience probably you will find that you are thankful for some things that happen to you, and perhaps a little cross about other things. I think you will find that to be a wrong way of receiving events. Paul says, "In everything give thanks." The next time any thing happens that tempts you to feel cross, why not bethink yourself of this principle, and ask whether it is not God that is approaching you behind the disagreeable event; and if it is, be respectful, whether you understand or not. If it is God that is approaching you, be sure it is for some good, and that you had better yield him your attention and not quarrel with him.

I think if we had faith enough we should meet all events that come to us as we would meet God, respectfully, cheerfully and thankfully, instead of feeling cross and thinking we are hardly dealt with. If it is true that God arranges all things, then it is perfectly certain that there is a sense in which all things are good; and there is a sense in which we ought to be thankful for all things and meet them with cheerfulness and respect.

The particular fault that I am criticising exists, I should say, in all cases where persons allow themselves to get cross and are worried and fretted by things that happen to them. There may be a place for resistance and severe

criticism in dealing with persons. There may be, under certain circumstances, cause for strenuous contention with events around us. God's inspiration may set us to work in a certain direction, and then his providence may present persons and things in opposition to us, that require to be resisted with contention and severity. Even here his inspiration and providence are not inconsistent. If he brings to us a person that is in a bad state and needs criticism, and on the other side gives us an inspiration to criticise sharply, then the inspiration and providence match each other. But this is a very different thing from being cross. The trouble is, when a person approaches us in a bad, provoking spirit, instead of our having wisdom to deal with the case as God does, we are tempted to feel cross, and think ourselves hardly used, and so grumble.

For my part I am going to take all things as coming from God, and feel respectful toward them, let them come in what shape they may.

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

HOW WE RECEIVE GOD.

THE quality of spirit which God delights to meet and enter into loving relations with, is that of childlike receptivity. We shall find by watching our experience, that at those times when we feel the least strength in ourselves, we are always surprised by some manifestation of Christ's power in us. And the reason is obviously this: we are then more likely to be divested of pride and self-sufficiency, and have more of that quietness and confidence that *attracts* strength. When the mind is filled with its own thoughts and plans, there is no room for the Spirit of God to flow in. But in a state of perfect abandonment to his will, without a thought or care for anything but to be a medium of his Spirit, then—when we least expect it—we are made conscious of a new life working in us, giving vigor and efficiency to every part of our nature. To be receptive, to wait on the Lord, and to be pure in heart, are nearly synonymous expressions. To wait on the Lord is to be in an attitude to receive his Spirit, and none ever wait in vain; "but they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." And to be pure in heart, is to be free from double-mindedness, and this too is the only state in which we can be open to God's Spirit.

QUENCHING SPIRITS.

“**Q**UENCH not the Spirit.” Every one should seek to understand the various ways in which the Spirit may be quenched, that he may avoid them. I will mention one way in which the Spirit is often quenched. Christ says, “What I tell you in darkness that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear that preach ye upon the house-tops.” From this and other scriptures and from many experiences and observations, I conclude that God in general wishes those he deals with to be outspoken and have no secrets. What he communicates to us is with the understanding that we shall not hide it in our hearts, but give it expression. What we hear we must speak. If a person for any reason does not like to utter what God says to him in his heart—if he does not like to confess the truth about himself and speak the truth to others, he is in a state to quench the Spirit. In order to please the Spirit of Truth, which is daylight, we must have a readiness to utter its thoughts and obey its impulses. If we allow fear or shame or sensitiveness of any kind to make it difficult for us to confess the words of

God as they come to us, we shall grieve the Spirit and it will stop communicating with us.

A habit of silence must be opposed to the free circulation of the Spirit. A person may get into a habit of talking too much; but that is no reason why we should justify a silent habit. God's words in our hearts require to be uttered and brought to light. If we desire to learn to walk in the Spirit we must educate ourselves in habits of free speech and to very thorough sincerity and truthfulness. We must get our freedom from fear and shame and everything that hinders utterance. I watch my own heart and listen for God's words in it, and I count it very essential, that I be prompt to utter what I hear when there is occasion for it; that I keep in swift sympathy with God about the matter, so as not to suppress the word, but let it have free course. If I give it free course it will come freely into me. If God finds that I will be sincere and will speak his words and will not forbear, he will give me his words to speak. The waters will flow in if they are free to flow out.

Paul says to the Thessalonians, "Despise not prophesyings;" and another of his injunctions upon them was, to become "the oracles of God," that is, to watch their own hearts, and, as God spoke *to* them, to let him speak *through* them, making them mediums of his word. The first requisite for becoming a medium of the word of

God is very thorough sincerity and honesty. We must have just as much policy as God has and no more. In many cases we shall find that what would generally be called policy is foolishness, and that deep sincerity is the best policy in the world. If I were to educate a class of law students, in order to bring them to the very highest degree of sharpness and diplomacy I should enjoin on them to be very truthful and simple, and not have any more policy about them than God has. Go straight to the gist of the matter, and speak the truth right out, bluntly and plainly—that is the best policy for lawyers and everybody else.

But while we are thus to avoid quenching the Spirit of God, on the other hand we are positively enjoined to quench the fire-brands of evil. Paul says, "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to *quench* all the fiery darts of the wicked." There are spiritual ideas and words coming in upon us from God on the one side, which we are told not to quench; and then there are suggestions from the Wicked One on the other side, which we must quench as fast as we can. We must find out how to quench spirits as well as how not to quench them. I suppose in quenching we shall apply the same rule that I have given for not quenching, only in an inverse way. Not to quench the Spirit is to give it circulation, be ready and quick to report

what we hear ; and on the other side, to quench the fiery darts of the Wicked One is to suppress them and give them no vent. Faithfulness to the truth is the rule of action in both cases. Truth is to have vent and lies are to be smothered. The more one thinks about evil and talks about it, the more he encourages the father of it. If you love the truth you will smother what the devil says and not let him speak through you. The devil has his prophets and mediums, and you will have to know how to stop their mouths and quench their spirits.

Many people think that free speech is something sacred by itself, and extends to the words of the devil as well as the words of God. That philosophy will not stand the final test. In the end God will have the floor and do the talking, and stop the mouths of all wicked spirits. Whether this is American doctrine or not, it is the doctrine of the Bible, and it is the only doctrine of perfect liberty.

SEEING IS BELIEVING.

I DOUBT whether anybody was ever convinced of the truth of immortality by argument alone. We may assent to that doctrine intellectually and in a general sense; but to have it fixed in our consciousness as a fact of *our own existence*, requires something besides reasoning. I have reasoned on that subject from my youth up; have weighed evidence concerning it *pro* and *con*; and if I am now a firm believer in immortality it is not because of my conclusions from any of the usual *data* presented by theologians and others on the subject, but because I find myself in sure communication with a personal being who is at least 1800 years old. If we should see a man who had actually survived on the earth for 1800 years, and we were certain of the fact, it would go far towards proving that men might live forever. Now, by communication with Jesus Christ we have just that kind of personal evidence. I know that one man who lived on the earth 1800 years ago is alive now; and not only is alive, but is in as youthful, growing and active condition as he was at thirty. This proof of the possibility of con-

tinued existence is, of course, to the person who has it, far more satisfactory than anything to be derived from abstract reasoning. We come to it by intuition. If we have this being who lived 1800 years ago for a friend, if we seek for interior fellowship with him, he can make us *feel* the truth about himself. He can give us a participation in his consciousness, such that we shall be as sure of the facts about his existence as we are of our own. We may come into such relations to him that the whole of his past life shall be open to us, with the memories belonging to it; so that whatever proofs of immortality exist in him may be ours.

I think this transfusion of consciousness from one who has an experience of immortality, is the only way in which we shall get a satisfactory state of feeling on the subject. We may raise plausible theories about it, but theories do not control the feelings or satisfy the heart. We want the evidence of a living sample.

Our hold on the great facts of Christ's personal history comes to maturity and completeness in a somewhat similar way. If I am asked why I believe that he rose from the dead, why I accept the New Testament account of his resurrection, I have to answer, I believe it because I have found that he is alive *now*, and therefore I know he must have risen from the dead. Though I began to believe from

testimony of the Scriptures and thus got a superficial theory of the truth about the matter, yet the paramount proof in my mind now is derived from personal knowledge.

This was precisely the ground of belief in Paul. At his first contact with Christianity he did not believe in the resurrection of Christ, though it was preached by inspired apostles: but when on the plain of Damascus he was smitten to the ground and a light like the brightness of the sun shone around him, and he heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" he was convinced. From that time forth he believed Jesus had risen from the dead, not merely because others said so, but because he knew that the crucified one was alive. He had met and seen him and felt his power. His evidence of the resurrection was in himself.

To one who has the same or similar grounds of faith the argument of immortality is a sure one. Seeing and feeling and knowing that Christ arose from the dead, that he has been alive since, that he is alive now, and, if we may so speak, is more alive now than he was 1800 years ago, we know the inference is a safe one that he will live forever. And the conclusion that love makes is, "Because he lives I shall live also." This line of evidence is worth more to me than Paley's demonstrations, or all the reasoning on immortality that I have ever seen or heard.

COMPOUND ACTION.

I HAVE described the state of heart produced by conversion as one that is sensitive, sympathetic, loving. But we must distinguish between the soft heart thus described, and mere indiscriminate benevolence. The right state of the heart undoubtedly is one in which extremes meet—in which there is unutterable delicacy, sympathy and benevolence, combined with ability to endure and to inflict suffering far beyond that shown by surgeons and soldiers. In other words there is a perfect combination of softness and hardness. And if any one asks how such opposites can be found together, I answer that the hardness which is necessary to qualify a person to be thoroughly and cruelly faithful, is the very means of giving effect to the pity and benevolence of a soft heart. You love your child and your heart yearns over it with unutterable longing for its good; yet if you are wise in your longing you will be ready to inflict on it any amount of temporary suffering which will do it good. Benevolence short of this is cruelty.

Christ teaches us the practice of hard-hearted faithfulness to ourselves in the most tremendous

terms. "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out. . . . If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off." "He that loveth his life shall lose it." A sublime cruelty to ourselves is made the indispensable condition of faithfulness and benevolence to ourselves. Certainly the same principle defines our duty to our children and to all those on whom we turn our benevolence.

Softness of heart, which comes by true conversion to God, does not disqualify us either for suffering criticism ourselves or for inflicting it upon others. On the contrary it is the best possible qualification for those very things. In God the two attributes of pity and severity are perfectly combined. God is love; but he is also light; and for the reason that he is light, his love knows when to assume the form of maternal kindness, and when to assume the form of sacrificial execution. It is love in one case as much as in the other. It is the soft heart using the necessary steel.

In the work of salvation there are always two spirits to be regarded, namely, the spirit of the person who is to be saved, and the evil spirit that he is to be saved from. In many cases these are intimately blended. We want to know how God faces that combination—what kind of feelings he has toward it. We want to know how Jesus Christ felt when he encountered the maniac. How did he cast out devils? What was the

attitude of his spirit toward evil in humanity? How can we become mediums of God's power of ejection? We see men's souls and bodies all around us in possession of the devil by sin and disease; and we know the possession is fraudulent and unrighteous. The devil has no right to these bodies and souls. It is certainly a righteous thing that ejection should take place and that we should assist in it. But it takes a skillful lawyer to carry through an action of ejection; and so the work of salvation is an intricate affair. It won't do to look at the combination of man and devil with merely natural mercy and kindness; for the devil in it does not appreciate kindness and would only abuse it. You will not cast out the devil by mere mercy. And on the other hand it will not do to face that combination with mere combativeness. In that attitude you are treating the whole combination as though it were the devil, and ignoring the human part, which is to be saved and to which mercy is appropriate.

How are we to treat the case? What is to be the state of our hearts? We must learn *compound action*. There must be most intense love and hatred acting together. God's method is to let loose love and wrath at once — to send bread and bombshells into the same citadel. That is the art we are to learn of him.

The art of casting out devils seems to have

been lost to the world since the time of Christ and the Primitive Church, from a mistake about this matter. You see plenty of action in one or the other of these modes. There is a great deal of soft, sentimental benevolence at work on the one hand, and a great deal of wrath and sharpness on the other; but their true combination is rarely seen. It is easy to fight on one of these lines at one time, and on the other at another time; but what is wanted, in order to knock the devil out of a man at one stroke, as Christ did, is the compound action that will love and hate at once.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE.

IT is a great help to me in breaking up evil-thinking and stopping the temptation to it, to consider that God sees a great deal more evil than we do or can see, and yet he is happy. He certainly sees all the evil there is; he sees an inconceivable amount which is entirely hidden from us; and yet he is the ever-blessed God. How can he be perfectly happy while seeing so much evil? It is because he has a self-protecting faith which turns evil into good. We see in our own experience that evil may be turned

into good in particular instances; as, for example, when trouble befalls us that results in softening our hearts and finally making us happy. But God has a faith that turns *all* evil into good. Consequently to him there is no evil. He sees all evil or what we call evil, but to him it is all converted into good. And strictly speaking, all evil is and must be *relative*, not absolute. We see in small matters that what is evil to one being may be good to another. To put a trivial instance: when you catch a fish it is evil to the fish, but good to you. In some such sense all evil is good to God. Not that he is responsible for the original existence of evil, as you are for the sufferings of the fish; but he gets benefit and joy out of all evil, though it exists in spite of him. There is evil to the devil and to those who partake of his evil-thinking, but there is no evil to God. And it is the greatest possible comfort to believe that in this respect we can come into full sympathy and union with him, so that all evil, visible or conceivable, shall vanish in everlasting good. Paul certainly had reached a height where he conceived of things in some measure as God does. In the midst of the unspeakable tribulations that followed him for forty years he could call them "light afflictions which are but for a moment," and could see distinctly that they were working out for him a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," so

that to him they were not evil, but good. His faith had thus come into unison with God's faith. He turned evil into good on the same great scale as God does. We can do the same. And let us be sure that evil will never leave us alone until we do thus convert it all into good. We must not try to get rid of it in any other way. It will torment us until we learn to dispose of it as God does. Instead of dividing the universe into two distinct halves, one good and the other evil, and trying to run away from evil by getting out of the bad half into the good, we must turn round and claim the undivided whole as our inheritance, and insist that it is all good. Paul's theory was "that all things are ours, whether life, or death, things present, or things to come," and that all is good property, death as well as life. This is the good lesson of existence — to learn the faith of God. This is the philosopher's stone that turns all things into gold. In God the transmutation is always going on, leaving no space for evil to show itself. We must follow hard after him, till there is no interval between the presentation of evil and its conversion into good. Then our peace will be the peace of God.

THE LAW OF FELLOWSHIP.

WE understand by the ascending fellowship, a state in which a person's companionship is with those who are above him in spiritual life, so that the *drawing* of the fellowship is upward; and by the descending fellowship, a state in which a person loves those who are below him in spiritual life, so that the drawing of the fellowship is downward. Every one will say at once that the ascending fellowship is preferable; it is best of course that all should associate with those who will draw them upward. But still, in order that there may be ascending fellowship, there must also be descending fellowship. If I love a superior, then that superior in loving me must love in a descending direction; so that descending fellowship must be legitimate; and where is the limit? How shall we set this thing exactly right in our minds? I set it right in my mind thus:

The ascending fellowship—that which draws us upward to God and the Primitive Church, to persons more spiritual than ourselves, visible and invisible—is always in order. It does not need to be limited by us, because those with

whom we seek fellowship in that direction will take care that the right limitation is made. We can not get into more fellowship with God than he chooses to give us. We may always send our hearts freely in the ascending direction. That branch of the matter is thus disposed of.

Now for the descending fellowship. In what cases is that legitimate? How far is it to be allowed and how far limited? How much can we have and still maintain the principle of unity? My answer is this: *We may have just so much descending fellowship as the ascending fellowship directs and allows.* Christ set his heart wholly toward the Father. His law was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart and with all thy soul, mind and strength." He went just so far into descending fellowship as the Father sent him. In this way the descending fellowship comes into line with the ascending and is identified with it. If the Father sends down the Son to love the world, in loving it he obeys the Father and there is no separate interest in the case. The Father can not be jealous of him, because he sent him to do it. Christ's obedience to his Father was the very essence of his descending fellowship. The only principle on which the descending fellowship can be justified is, that it is sanctioned by the superior, that it is identified with the ascending fellowship and gets its authority from it. All

true, legitimate descending fellowship carries with it the inspiration of the superior. This is pretty stringent doctrine, but it is as fair for one as for another.

This is the principle which shall take the place of all law. Give it full sweep and you don't want any law in this or any other world. With this principle you have God all in all, God directing all your fellowships. This is the principle which the Community was built to carry out; and sooner or later we shall establish it as the constitution of the Kingdom of Héaven. So far our path is clear. Now I will go a step farther.

While in the ascending fellowship there is no self-limitation, because you are limited by your superior, in the descending fellowship you must be prepared to limit both yourself and those with whom you associate. Self-limitation is the principle which qualifies one for the descending fellowship. In the fellowship between man and woman, for instance, man is naturally the superior and his business is self-limitation. We hold that the male is not only responsible for his own limitation, but for that of the female. This simple principle runs through the whole line of fellowships; between the Father and the Son, between the Son and the church, between man and woman, and so on. In all the degrees of fellowship between the superior and inferior, the

principle of self-limitation belongs to the superior.

Look now at the application of this principle. In the first place children and young persons who have not developed a spiritual character are in a position where their fellowships ought to be almost exclusively in the ascending direction. The attainment of a position where a person is qualified for the descending fellowship is a later thing. It must in the nature of the case come when a person has attained such inspiration and such fellowship with those above him that he can receive and transmit true self-limitation.

Now it is easy to work out the whole problem. Any one can tell for himself whether or not he has reached a spot where the inspiration of a superior being works through him in a way to make descending fellowship safe for him. There can be no law made about it; but we can see that those who are not established in the ascending fellowship, with the circulation unobstructed between them and God, are unfit for the descending fellowship and must wait until they can grow to that position. They must wait until inspiration turns them downward and gives them freedom by giving them self-limitation.

This principle being settled, we can distinguish false love from true. Here, we will say, is a man who has no hold on God and the heavens, and

in whom inspiration has no circulation; he may be ever so wise and yet his fellowship must inevitably be descending. A young person may love an old person in these circumstances and yet it will be false love, that is, descending fellowship for both. It is man's business to take hold on Christ before he descends into woman's love at all. But suppose the man does not take hold on Christ and that the woman says, "It is my duty to seek the ascending fellowship; so I will take hold on this man." Is that the ascending fellowship? If the link is broken between man and Christ can the woman's love for that man draw her upward? Surely not. There is a seeming ascending fellowship which is really descending; and here is where false love enters.

If we can get love working according to this rule—ascending fellowship first and then descending fellowship as much as the ascending fellowship sanctions—no matter how much love there is going. I would not set up a distinction of right and wrong between general and special love, except that special love, when false, makes more mischief. I insist that all love, whether general or special, must have its authority in the sanction and inspiration of the ascending fellowship. All love which is at work in a private corner, away from the general circulation, where there are no series of links connecting it with God, is false love; it rends and devours, instead

of making unity, peace and harmony. There is a great deal of that kind of fellowship which is to be tolerated; for God is merciful. He waits on prodigals, reaches after them, follows them and brings them back from unfathomable depths of idolatry. But he will have to bring them out of it and make an end of it, cost what it will, or else there is nothing but perdition for them.

Christ came into the world and gave himself for it; he poured out his love like an ocean upon the world. Yet it was not because he wished to do it himself; it was because the Father sent him. He went just so far as the Father bade him and no farther. He stopped just when the Father called him back, and his whole manifestation of love to the world, from beginning to end, was pure obedience to the Father. That is the example for us. There is no safety in following any other in the descending fellowship. Paul states this principle in so many words, as the law of love between the sexes. He says, "Husbands, love your wives *even as* Christ loved the church." Christ's object in manifesting his love to the church was to save and purify it and make it fit for his Father's fellowship and so bring it to the Father.

This is a principle which turns every way. It is one of the universal truths. It is the principle which will finally have to regulate the relation between our souls and bodies. The soul

must go down into the body and have fellowship with its pleasures just so far as God and the heavens send it and no farther; and the body must go down into the businesses and pleasures of the material world just so far as the soul sends it and no farther. The superior sending and limiting the inferior is the principle that starts from the example of the Father and the Son, and runs through all the descending links of celestial and terrestrial love.

THE WAY TO HEALTH.

WE know what actual disease is; but do we understand *liability* to disease? That certainly is a bad thing. Next to having a disease is the discomfort of living in fear of it and in the weakness that keeps us on the verge of it. What then is the physiological state which makes us liable to disease? It is, in the most general terms, what the pill-peddler called a "debility of weakness;" it is the opposite of ruggedness; it is the state of impressibility which steals upon one who lives too luxuriously and treats himself too tenderly; it is the feebleness that assumes a chronic and incurable form in ordinary old age. The liability to disease,

then, is a *delicate* kind of health. In this *nidus* all the various diseases lay their eggs. By a conjunction of some positive disorder with this negative health we are brought to our death. So much for physiology.

Now let us look at the matter in the spiritual way. We believe diseases to be unclean spirits or devils preying upon our flesh. But what shall we say of this "delicate health," which is the receptive of all disease? Is that a mere negation? Nay; that also is an unclean spirit. It is certainly one of the diseases, though it is called a low kind of health; and as a disease it must be referred to the influence of the devils that haunt human nature. Indeed this must be the subtlest and strongest devil of all; the central and generic demon into whose hands all the other devils play. In this view we should not wait for some virulent disorder to press on us before we begin to struggle and pray for health, but should consider ourselves possessed of the devil till we have the positive, unassailable health of heaven—the ruggedness of the death-tried resurrection.

And again, in this view we should not rely on exercise, diet, ventilation and all that, to give us that positive health which repulses disease, but should betake ourselves to the divine mysteries of exorcism and baptism into Christ. True ruggedness, like true righteousness, does not come

by self-works, but is a gift from God. Diet, ventilation and exercise are at most only assistants of divine health. They have never saved anybody from old age and never will. A man may regulate them to perfection and yet be full of devils; and a man may live where it is impossible to regulate them and yet be full of God. If we attend to them in connection with our labor of faith we must do it with the distinct understanding that they are only auxiliaries and that what we want comes not up from them, but down from God. True health is in heaven and comes out from heaven and can not be got by any kind of bodily exercise. It is the ruggedness of God.

And in seeking the ruggedness of God we must understand the order in which he works. Our nature is like a nest of four boxes. The inner box is the spiritual part, the next is the intellectual, the next is the moral, and the outer box is the physical. God will begin to renew us by giving us ruggedness in the spirit, which will enable us to face all devils without fear and live in contact with them without contamination. Then he will give us ruggedness of understanding, which fears no argument and overcomes all delusions. Then he will give us ruggedness of moral nature, which is strong enough to keep its resolutions and submits to no condemnation. And finally, through all these mediates, he will give us ruggedness of physical health.

THE BIBLE OF THE FUTURE.

THERE are many signs of an inversion of the process by which the Bible has hitherto prevailed in the world—an inversion that is necessary to complete its influence. Hitherto the Bible has been held up as sacred and as it were forced down upon the people by teachers and authorities of church and state. Men have felt themselves *bound* to believe it. This part of the process, which mainly covers the history of the past, has answered good purposes in disciplining the world to thought and reflection and setting things going in a right direction.

But an advanced part of the world are now seen throwing off the Bible and launching forth on their own speculations. Infidelity and free-thinking seem to be the order of the day; and yet you will find there is, rising out of all this free-thinking, a returning tendency toward the Bible. The liberation of mind, instead of weakening this book, increases its power and in the end multiplies its proof. So that the world will at last receive the Bible, not from authority, but from intelligent discovery of the truth that is in it. That is the only way in which it will be

of any use; it is the only way that God wants to have it finally received. Parents make their children read the Bible mechanically; but that is not the end; and the Lord will never be contented until his children get free from law in the matter and take up the Bible as intelligent beings, because they find truth in it. And this infidel spirit that is having such scope in the world is just fitted for that purpose, to train the world to freedom, that it may turn round and take hold of the Bible in the right way.

That first kind of loyalty to the Bible which comes from authority and teaching, is not secure, but is always liable to rebellions, heresies and insurrections. But when people return from their circuit of free-thinking and place confidence in the Bible as free, intelligent beings, their loyalty to it will be secure. The first kind of loyalty takes the form of *sectarianism*. The last will be simple love of truth.

DIETETICS OF THE SOUL.

ONE of the most important distinctions between the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error, lies in the difference of *intensity* with which the two spirits believe what they perceive as truth. In other words, the Spirit of Truth is essentially the spirit of *certainty*—of full assurance—and fastens upon a fact or principle with a degree of earnestness that leaves no room for doubt—its hold is complete: while on the other hand the spirit of error or the spirit of Satan is essentially a spirit of *doubt*. Its faith in what it perceives as truth and professes to believe, always has in it a drawback of uncertainty.

Persons who are accustomed to doubt on all subjects and to deny the possibility of certainty, undoubtedly have a kind of satisfaction in this twilight perception of things—in feeding upon probabilities, suppositions and approximations to truth. But such food of the mind and heart, used exclusively or in large quantities, is dreadfully unhealthy; and life must inevitably become diseased and pass into a chronically morbid state while such food is the main aliment of the system.

The Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error or the spirit of certainty and the spirit of doubt are the two great principalities that brood over us. One is the spirit of life and the other is the spirit of death. One is the spirit of health and the other of sickness. One is the spirit of light and the other of darkness. It is all-important that we should understand our own nature and manage ourselves so as to shun the spirit of doubt and attract the spirit of certainty. We are receptive beings; the whole machinery of our nature is carried on by influx. We should consider every action of our hearts and minds as of the nature of an *ordinance*, that invites the influx of the spirit of good or of evil. Paul brings to view the nature of ordinances in two notable passages. In one, referring to the Lord's Supper, he says, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." In the other he extends the same principle to all eating and drinking: "He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Eating in doubt may not be necessarily injurious in itself; the difficulty is that it throws us into affinity with poisonous influences; it opens the pores of our spirit to the miasma of doubt—to the great principality of condem-

nation. "He that doubteth is damned if he eat." Why? Not because God quarrels with him, or because the act of eating in doubt, in itself considered, is sufficient to damn him; but because it opens a leak in his spirit that floods him with the great universal spirit of darkness and condemnation. So we see it is a matter of unspeakable importance that we should find a way to put a stop to doubt and center our souls upon the spirit of certainty. If we want health and strength, if we want to be built up, and "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," we must free ourselves from doubts and lay hold on certainties.

It is profitable to withdraw our minds from time to time from speculations, reasonings, doubtful disputations and all such unhealthy food, and fix our attention on some certainty, one of God's eternal facts, and hug it—separate it from these everlasting doubts and speculations and abandon our life to it. The value of such an act lies in its being an ordinance. In such a healthy action of the mind and heart the spirit of darkness and doubt is dispelled and a positive influx of good is invited.

Salvation will come by laying hold of certainties, especially the certainty of God's goodness and power, and by simplifying our minds—freeing them from the murky element of doubt. If a person would strengthen his soul and grow

up "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," let him seize hold of absolute certainties — of *great* facts and truths, if he can perceive such; if not, let him accept of small ones and feed upon them, meditate upon them and delight in them.

There are plenty of certainties around us that we can feed upon and make seeds of greater certainties, showing the goodness and power of God in regard to spiritual life and health of body. There is no end to such certainties; and by dwelling on them the spirit of doubt will be excluded.

PAUL'S FEAT.

IF a man sets his face toward the world and gives himself up to business with no other object in life than to gain riches and power, he has a very simple and easy task. All he has to do is to make the most of his opportunities, push straight for his object and care for nothing else. On the other hand if a man turns right round, with his back to the world and his face towards God, obeying thoroughly the injunction to "seek first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness" and to be "careful for nothing," that also

seems to be a simple course of action. A person in that position has at any rate but one thing to do, and that is to please God, caring for nothing else. Here are the opposite life-purposes of mankind, in their simple, unmixed form. But we may conceive of another position in which pure devotion and high business activity are combined; and this introduces a system of motions more complex. For a person to set his face toward God and his back toward the world, and at the same time attempt to do business in the world for God—*that* requires compound action. It is not so simple or easy as either of the other courses, in which the man is traveling in the direction toward which his face is set. To set your face one way and work the other, is difficult. It is like running backward; yet it can be done.

Of all the men I ever saw or heard of, the one who could best perform that feat was Paul. I wonder at him as I study his career. I admire and almost envy the facility with which he learned to run backward—to keep his face toward God and yet be full of outward activity. There never was a man who made such a sensation in the world, never one so busy in all kinds of mighty deeds, traveling and working with his hands, preaching from house to house and going through all manner of tribulations. Yet all this outward work was really running

backward. His face was toward God all the time and never toward his business. This is the greatest praise that can be given him. It may be said of Paul that he could run backward faster than other men can run forward.

There is no reason why any one else may not learn to do what he did ; but it requires peculiar training and we have but poor examples of it in modern times. We must learn the art from Paul himself. He can teach the secret of living in the inner and the outer world at the same time and yet keeping a thorough unity of purpose, which shall make all that is done in the outer serve the purpose of the inner life. The case with most persons is, that when they turn their face toward God and determine that they will have nothing else before them but him and the doing of his will, they are crippled in the direction of business and tempted into what may be called *quictism*, the spending of all their time in contemplation, inward striving and prayer. Paul had no such difficulty, but was a saint in the midst of business. He probably had not a thousandth part of the opportunity we have for sitting down and giving himself up to the study of internal truth. He studied theology in circumstances as distracting as a traveler finds himself in while climbing the Alps, or a soldier in the chaos of battle. He subdued everything within him, "casting down imaginations and

bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" without losing his external activity. That is a good thing to be able to do; and his example shows that it can be done.

SALVATION FROM SIN.

THE way to realize salvation from sin is explained in the sixth chapter of Romans. The main idea there set forth is that we are saved from sin by being baptized into Christ. The believers in the time of the Primitive Church were by some means made sensible of the presence of the Spirit of God. We find in the book of Acts and all through the writings of the apostles, that the Spirit came upon those that believed; sometimes it fell upon them like a shower; sometimes it was transmitted by the laying on of hands; and sometimes it came in connection with preaching. But without considering specifically the immediate method of transmission, we can see that, in one way or another the Holy Spirit (which is the same thing as the Comforter or Spirit of Truth that Christ promised them) came upon the believers of the Primitive Church and they were baptized

into it. That great fact being established in their imaginations and heartily believed, Paul proceeds to evolve from it certain consequences. Unexplained and undeveloped that fact did not necessarily involve salvation from sin; that is, believers had the baptism of the Spirit before they realized salvation from sin. But Paul goes on to show that the full understanding of that fact does involve salvation from sin. If we argue clearly from that fact, if we give up our thoughts and imaginations to it until all its bearings become clear to us, we shall see in it salvation from sin; because if we are baptized into Christ, then we are baptized into his death and he that is dead is free from sin; and if we are baptized into Christ's death we are baptized into his resurrection, and the life of God has begun in us. On this basis Paul exhorts believers to *reckon* themselves dead unto sin. He proves that if they are baptized into Christ his resurrection is in them though they have not discovered it. Christ has died and risen and is eternally justified, and they are identified with him. "Therefore," says he, "reckon yourselves dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God."

You may ask, What change will it make in me if I give up my imagination to this reasoning of Paul until I believe myself justified? What effect will it have? Now it is not a matter of indifference what you *think*. A man's thoughts

are important affairs, especially in such a matter as this, where you are dealing with the Holy Spirit. They are important in this way: if you project an imagination from your mind and brain which is in accordance with the truth, you will find that there is something going besides your own thinking. The Holy Spirit will seal that thought and make you feel that God sympathizes with it. You will have a thrill of God's presence in you responding to the right thought. When you really think as Paul tries to make you — that you are dead unto sin and alive unto God — you will experience something more than the vibration of your own brain; you will feel God helping and confirming your thought and making you know that it is true that Christ is dead and risen within you. When thoughts come in that way and are sealed by God they are deeds; they have the vital force of miracles; they will change your character and you will realize in your spirit what you think. Your life and salvation are in such thoughts and in reckoning yourself according to the truth.

The act of producing a true imagination may be compared to fishing. You throw your line into the water and if you throw it skillfully something more than the mere cast of your line takes place; you have a "bite." So if you cast your imagination skillfully in the right direction the good Spirit will seize it and make you feel

the joy of getting a "bite" in the heavenly deep.

Paul's doctrine of salvation from sin may be re-stated thus: Believers are baptized by the Holy Spirit; they are thus brought into spiritual identity with Christ from whom the Holy Spirit proceeds; being thus vitally identified with him, they are set upon discovering what is true in Christ and in the Spirit which has thus taken possession of them; they find the great facts of Christ's death and resurrection in that Spirit; and by reckoning themselves partakers of those facts they realize them in themselves. They are baptized into Christ and no longer think of themselves as individuals but as members of Christ; and what is true in him passes down to them. His death is theirs and his resurrection is theirs. By conforming their imaginations to the truth and reckoning aright they receive the witness of the Holy Spirit. In all true imaginations there is a double action—an action of our minds and of God's Spirit with our minds; and consequently miraculous results and changes of character. That is Paul's doctrine as I understand it.

Now there seems to be only one difficulty about our accepting and realizing in a practical way salvation from sin on these principles; and that is this: How are we to get the baptism

of the Holy Spirit? That is the first link of the chain. You may say, I see the theory; that is all right. If we have the first fact all the rest will follow. If we have identification with Christ by the baptism of the Spirit, then it will follow, as has been said, that Christ's death is ours and his resurrection is ours, and we may go on and reckon ourselves according to these truths and expect to be carried along into full realization of them. But the great question is, How are we to get at the first fact, the baptism? I will try to answer that question.

I am satisfied that the baptism of the Holy Spirit which was given after Christ's death, commencing from Pentecost, was a baptism not merely of those who were immediately conspicuous in it, but of the *whole human race for all time*. God poured out his Spirit "on all flesh," and the great at-one-ment then took place which reconciled the whole human race to him, and which brought all men then living and all generations which have since existed into the substantial benefits of that baptism. Christ died, rose and went to the Father, and becoming a medium of the Holy Spirit, poured it on the whole world. The apostles and spiritual believers of the Primitive Church were only the touching points and mediums through which the Spirit passed into the whole life of humanity, both in Hades and in this world. The leaven was put into the whole lump.

The Holy Spirit was transmitted to the primitive believers in various ways; by "the laying on of hands," by the preaching of the word and sometimes by showers from heaven. There were, undoubtedly, phenomena connected with the passing of the Holy Spirit at that time which it is not necessary for us to expect now. Suppose that a sluice-way should be opened from our Willow-Place pond and that the water should flow out and cover the whole adjoining meadow. The spectacle of the outbreak would be peculiar; the water would rush with noise and fury, carrying driftwood and stones before it; but as soon as it had covered the flats its noise and motion would subside and we should see nothing but a quiet lake. Something like that undoubtedly should be expected in such an operation as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon mankind. We should expect there would be special phenomena attending the first rush of it, but that it would continue its spread through humanity by more quiet processes.

We must conceive that there was a great universal change in the condition of humanity at the time of the outpouring of the Spirit; a change not confined to the individuals who were the first receivers. We must understand that God made an at-one-ment then for all mankind, and that that atonement was an effectual one. It was not formal; it was not a dramatic exhibi-

tion; it was an actual reconciliation of God to man by the outpouring of his heart. If we understand it in this way then we must conceive of ourselves, every one of us, as being from the beginning and through all our lives baptized with the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit which then came forth from the Father has pervaded all humanity from that time till this; and it has placed all humanity in a different relation to God from what it was in before. It has brought us all nigh to God; and it has brought God nigh to us.

If you ask how we are to understand the history of humanity since, my answer is this: It is true that the gospel of salvation from sin was effectual only in the generation of the Primitive Church. But when Christ at his Second Coming took away that first church two things were left: the Bible and this gift of the Holy Spirit. That visible church was withdrawn into the heavens, but the Bible was not withdrawn and the Holy Spirit which was poured out upon all flesh was not withdrawn. The world has not apprehended them; it has not understood the Bible and it has not felt and realized the Holy Spirit; nevertheless they have been in the world and have been working good there in one way and another ever since the Second Coming. Wherever they could find a church which would favor them they have worked their way into

the hearts of men. Wherever the Bible has gone the Holy Spirit has gone; and wherever the Holy Spirit has gone the Bible has gone. God has kept them at work together, until he has finally sent them all over the world. I know from my own experience and from all that I can see and hear of others' experience, that whenever persons get in love with the Bible and study it the Holy Spirit is present to help them and show them the things of Christ. They don't need to have somebody lay hands upon them or to have the Spirit fall upon them like a shower; but whoever understands and believes the external word finds the Holy Spirit present to witness and establish it.

I confess that this great doctrine that the Spirit has already been poured out on all flesh and entered into all humanity for all time, is new and strange; and it is natural to look and ask for evidence of it on the largest scale. One would think that so great a fact as that of the reconciliation of man to God by the outpouring of God into man, must have manifested itself in conspicuous ways; that the subsequent history of the world must have been essentially changed by it; that all men must have since enjoyed closer relations to God and more favorable conditions for salvation. That is just what I believe. It is clear to my mind that since the day of Pentecost the leaven of the Holy Spirit, fermenting in the

whole mass of humanity, has made a new world. If our minds were large enough to grasp the whole subject we should see that a warmth from God that was unknown to the generations of the pre-Christian world, has come upon mankind, and that our civilization and all that we call modern improvements are the results of that effusion. All that makes Christendom differ from heathendom should be traced, not merely to the Bible, but chiefly to the brooding of the living power that came with the Bible. I do not think we have recognized the agency of the Holy Spirit as we have that of the Bible. They should be recognized together. "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder." The same spirit which made the Primitive Church hold all things common on the day of Pentecost built our Insane Asylums, our Bible Societies and our Missionary Boards. That same spirit has brought men to a condition of approximation to Communism throughout all Christendom.

You see now where you must begin your reckoning—where you must start your first right imaginations. You must believe that God has reconciled the whole world to himself by pouring out his Spirit upon all flesh. That is the atonement, and it is not to be repeated. He has done it once and forever—sprinkled the world with his blood; and it is present in every

one of us and watching for us to recognize it. You are all baptized with the Holy Spirit, whether you know it or not and whether you will or not. It is a universal fact; and if any escape salvation it will be because they get out of the Holy Spirit and not because the Holy Spirit has not come on them.

The great general doctrine of salvation from sin, then, is very clear. There is no difficulty in understanding that we are baptized with the Holy Spirit and so baptized with Christ's death and resurrection, and that in order to be saved we must realize in our imagination and confess with our mouth the truth as it is in Christ and as it is in the Holy Spirit, and therefore as it really is in us.

The question may be raised still, *How* is the power of the Spirit and Word of God, even if it is in our hearts, able to save us from sin? We think of power as something which can turn a wheel, which can lift a load, or even as something which can work a miracle like healing a disease; but what precisely is the application of the power of God to set us free from sin? This is a very interesting question; but you need not wait for the answer before believing. You must begin to believe without any explanation. "Let God be true and every man a liar." Let your imaginations and feelings be liars. When he says, "If you believe that Christ is raised from

the dead you shall be saved," jump all explanations, take God's word, and believe that it is so. The power which raised Christ from the dead is certainly a mighty power, and in one way or another God can apply it so as to save you from sin, whether you can see through it and understand it or not.

But an answer is not difficult. The truth is, the reason why you can not abstain from sin is that you are *weak*. You have not moral strength to do what your conscience tells you to do. Your inmost life is too feeble to keep you doing right, just as the life of a dyspeptic is too weak to digest food. You may be able to digest food, but *not* able to do something which is just as natural and true as digestion, that is, to keep the path of duty against all temptation, to satisfy your own conscience and live as you will wish you had a thousand years hence. You have not strength to do it. Well, the power which raised Christ from the dead is able exactly to meet that want and put that strength into you—to stiffen the main-spring—to give you moral courage, so that you will feel that you are master of the situation, triumphant, well able to do what you wish to and what your conscience tells you to do. "Through Christ which strengtheneth me I can do all things," says the great apostle. He behaved well in all circumstances and kept a good conscience. It is a great miracle to be able

to do that; but it is just *the* miracle that the power which raised Christ from the dead is able to effect.

The beauty of this gospel is that it fixes the attention on *power* and not on law. We don't want inducements. There are inducements enough to do right, if they could save us—hell on one side and heaven on the other. But these never save anybody. This gospel turns us away from inducements and laws toward power—toward the exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God, working in our hearts, giving us strength and making us new creatures, putting us in a condition where inducements will find something to work upon which will make them effectual. So it is really believing in miraculous power which the gospel calls you to. It is believing in the same power which wrought Christ's miracles. All his miracles finally culminated in his resurrection; and the gospel calls you to believe in the power that did that; to believe that God is able to raise you from the dead, not at some future time, but *now*. What you want now is a resurrection which will emancipate from the power of the devil and make you free to do right. The whole question of salvation is a question of strength. It is not a question of motives and inducements, but a question of power; whether you can get life enough to effectually resist the devil and over-

come him. Our strength comes from Almighty God, and it comes by our believing that the Holy Spirit is in us and brings with it into us the resurrection of Christ.

Power is the principal thing which you want in your machine-shop. You may arrange all manner of contrivances for using it and bringing it to bear; but if you have not a good wheel in the wheel-pit and plenty of water your contrivances will amount to nothing. So *power of heart* is what you want for salvation from sin; and the love that raised Christ from the dead is the power of an almighty heart. Believe and gear onto that and you will find yourself well able to conquer the world, the flesh and the devil.

HOW AND WHERE TO PRAY.

I AM tempted to tell a little of my experience in regard to a particular matter, not with a view to make my case an example to others, but to set others thinking on their own experience. It is in relation to the subject of prayer. By prayer I do not mean talk; I mean the exercise which I have sometimes called watching and waiting on the Lord; turning the attention from natural to spiritual things; true meditation in the spirit. Going to the Lord with petitions I do not consider to be the main idea of prayer. It is labor and meditation in heart and mind, working toward the spiritual world, and watching as for the Second Coming. That kind of prayer is a large part of my regular business, as I think it was of Christ and Paul and all the Primitive Church.

I consider prayer in the spirit, as I have defined it, to be my *home* and everything else to be away from home. As I said about concentration at Oneida that we should adopt the principle that when we are on an *out* and find we have got through our business we should close up and *go home*, so I now propose that as a

general principle. I have come to use that principle in reference to prayer. When I find that I have finished one duty and that there is a break and nothing especial before me, then instead of reading the newspapers or sitting down and doing nothing, *I go home*, by which I mean that I go to praying; that is to watching and waiting on the Lord in my heart. It has come to be a law with me to do it, and it is a comfort and a relief to me to have something to turn my attention to just as soon as I get through a job. There is no chance for a dawdling, irksome, do-nothing state. I know what to do next always. I go home and take a new start. By reflecting and meditating in the Lord I put myself into the best attitude for finding out what is the next thing to do. Instead of going from one thing to another on the circumference, I go to the center and take a new view and make a new *out*, fresh from the center. Even though I go out right, if I *stay* out too long I lose my inspiration; the best and safest way is to go back to the center and start out again.

Now just one step further in regard to our outward arrangements and facilities for prayer. I think I have discovered the true *physical* method for doing this thing; and my *closet*, according to my personal habits and after some reflection according to my best judgment, is my *bed*. My impression is that when one wants to give him-

self up to reflection without formality the best way is to go and lie down. I think that is the best attitude for prayer, physiologically and every other way. When the heart has to labor the best way to help the heart is to make the body perfectly quiescent; unless you are liable under such circumstances to fall asleep or to get into a lethargic state, when it would not be good. I have no difficulty in that respect. I know the best way for me to pray is to lie down. I have many times met the temptation and accusation in regard to this, that it is unmanly and lazy to lie down in the day-time; but it has ceased to have any force. I would just as lief lie down in the day-time as go in my closet in the day-time. So far as the formality is concerned I do not think one is any better than the other. If persons can keep free from lethargy and laziness, I recommend, from my own experience, the bed instead of the closet for prayer. Let the body get into a perfect state of rest, as it is on the bed, and you are free for your work. I recommend to any of you who are under any pressure that requires you to pray and to search for light, to lie down in the day-time if necessary and not be tempted about it. I believe that we can redeem that thing from the imputation of laziness. I do not go to bed to sleep. I go to bed to work. There is where I am getting my education more than anywhere else, and where I do and always

have done the hardest part of my work. I know that is the true way for a spiritual man to work, and I am not going to be ashamed of it.

I have often thought that I was like a dog on the watch. He goes out and barks and runs around when duty calls, and then goes back to the door-step and lies down and curls himself up until the next duty comes along. His home is to make himself into a circle and put his nose between his fore legs and lie still and reflect. He keeps one eye open, but holds quiet until something requires his attention; then he is up and lively. That is my method of life. If I were commander on a battle-field, in the greatest confusion and emergency I should want a bed where I could lie down and have a good *think*. I can labor in mind and spirit in that position better than I can on my knees or sitting or standing.

The churches have always tried to get their converts into the habit of spending considerable time every day in prayer; and it is certainly an object to relieve the matter of prayer from all disagreeable accompaniments and make it as attractive as possible. There is no better way to do so than to make it an exercise in which the body goes into a state of perfect rest.

You must give yourself up to this luxury of interior reflection with the understanding that as soon as your reflection comes to a point where

you can see a thing to be done, you are to go right off and do that thing. I lie down many times a day; but often before I have been on the bed five minutes or even two, I see something to be done and I jump into action as if there were a house on fire. That is what I meant when I said, we are going to have a great deal of activity, but it is going to be based on quietism. As far as external things are concerned, I should recommend this as the form of a true life: Lie down if necessary twenty times a day, and when you find out what there is to do, do it swiftly and with all your might. This is my principle of conservation of force.

It is to be understood that I may follow this way until I find some big job on my hands, and then go to work like a beaver for weeks and months without lying down at all. There is no rule that we can go by as to how long we shall stay out; the only rule I find for myself is to go home when a job is done. I suppose that the best livers in the world would say, "When you get through your business, go home and enjoy yourself." What I propose is only taking that rule into a higher sphere and making our real home not in any external place, but in the presence of God and in fellowship with him.

WAITING AND WATCHING.

WE obtain salvation from sin by thoughts or reckonings which are not simply acts of our own, but take hold on responses of God's Spirit within us. We throw out a line and get a bite. But this experience is not confined to the first act of faith; it constitutes in fact the interior and most important experience of the whole Christian life. The business of a true believer, one who has begun to get hold of the resurrection of Christ, is to watch and wait and study and look for that experience constantly. When we have once found that we can throw our line and get a bite, our business is thenceforth to become fishermen in the heavenly waters—to be always on the watch for a bite. We should count it the most profitable business of our lives to watch for the responses of the Spirit to our thoughts, feelings and imaginations, so that we shall act more and more from internal influences and monitions. We must let God speak to us in that inward way and become, not only a comfort to us in our hearts and a guide in matters of theory, but a practical director of our lives, so that we shall walk as Christ walked, not by the light of the external world but by the light of God.

This sphere of spiritual operations is our substitute for the rappings of the Spiritualists. They have noises, table-tippings and other manifestations which they think wonderful and make use of as oracles of divination. We have better oracles than these. We can have responses, teachings and messages going on within us without table-tippings or rappings. The true God does not resort to these external methods, but manifests himself in a more interior, edifying way. Telegraphing is an illustration of his way, better than the rappings. You go to the right spot in yourself and pray, that is, make a signal, and you get a response from God himself instead of the ghost of a man. Our most valuable business as Christians will be to perfect ourselves in this kind of telegraphing and keep signals constantly going back and forth between us and heaven.

This is the only way to get rid of the miseries of a divided life. The great difficulty in living a Christian life is that you seem to be under the necessity of having two sets of acts; one set of this interior kind and another set of a mere external nature. That is the deficiency of the religion of the world, and it is the temptation with us to separate our religion from our external acts. The only way to get rid of this tendency is to bring all our common actions under the control of this internal monitor. If I

watch in my heart and discover the will of God concerning any external thing which I am about to do, so that I feel sure that I get a vibration and response and am acting under his direction, then my external actions become a part of my internal experience. The most insignificant exterior acts may become the sweetest and most beautiful parts of my life, just because of the connection formed between them and this internal oracle.

It is a perfectly feasible thing, as well as a true theory of Christian life, to do *all* things in the name of the Lord Jesus; and that means to bring all our common actions into the sphere of the internal reckonings. There is a great deal of entertainment in this way of living. To get a bite from heaven is better than anything we call sport. This waiting and watching is true prayer. Praying with the mouth is nothing. We are told to "pray without ceasing." It is a great thing to pray without ceasing, that is to make it the business of our lives; and there must be some way to do it or Paul would not have given us that injunction.

By following this principle, instead of attending to business with an idea that you are playing a strain of your own alone, you will find that you are playing a second to another melody which is vibrating in your heart; and it then becomes a matter of great interest to you to

keep in time and tune with that melody, so that you lean on it and help it. Your life then becomes significant and melodious. It requires the same kind of watchfulness, fine taste and discernment to carry your second along in good unison with the melody in your heart, as is required in two-part music. You must be watching another while you are about your own work.

FORGIVENESS.

WE may see how much we have to rejoice in by observing the wide difference in the character and permanence of the results which follow our good or bad actions. "Whatsoever good a man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord." God, we may see, is a sure paymaster. There is no end to the results of a good deed; God will reward it forever. But he stops the results of an evil deed with forgiveness. The rule of exact payment is not carried out on that side; that is, God has found a way to limit the consequences of a bad action. It is said, "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." The results

of these two acts would here seem to correspond, though they actually do not. The payment stops on one side if we repent and turn back to God. Sin, we may say, bears but one crop and then dies if we commit ourselves to the mercy of God; but our good seed brings forth crop after crop to life everlasting.

If the universe were governed by what the ancients called fate or by what the moderns designate as "fixed laws," then the consequences of evil would be just as inevitable and interminable as those which follow good; there could be no forgiveness. The idea of remission of sins is entirely foreign to any theory of natural laws and fixed machinery; it belongs to God—to a being who has a soft heart. People do not believe in the miracles of Christ because the natural laws seem to prove that a sick man can not be cured until his disease has run its course; he can not get his discharge until the whole debt is paid. But Christ said to a suffering man, "Thy sins be forgiven thee: take up thy bed and walk." He put an end to the results of the man's previous sin. We may here see the difference between having a loving God over us and having a great machinery of natural laws. It is just the difference between giving a child tender parents to care for it and leaving it to the chances and cruelties of orphanage.

THREE KINDS OF LABOR.

COLLEGE students are in the habit of calling their daily routine *work*. When they have learned a hard lesson or solved a difficult problem they say they have done "a good piece of work." The idea suggested in their language is, that study is not merely an intellectual effort, an operation of an invisible, intangible part of a person, but that it involves actual exertion of the brain, and that this is as really physical work as the exercise of the arms in chopping or of the feet in walking. This view corresponds with the latest physiological discoveries. My own experience and observation lead to the same conclusion—that the brain is as capable of voluntary labor as any part of the human system. A man can work with his brain until he sweats as well as with his arms; and if he gives close attention to his sensations he will perceive an action going on in his brain when he attempts to study, similar to that which takes place in his arms when he works with them. In the latter case the will, nervous force, or whatever you please to call it, occasions an increased circulation of the blood to the arms, causing them to feel strong and to

grow, if their exercise is continued under certain normal conditions. So the voluntary application of the mind increases in the same way the circulation of the blood in the brain and makes it vigorous; and if this voluntary action is kept up as in educational institutions, it not only makes the brain active and flexible, so that it will do good work at whatever it is set about, but it actually increases its size—makes the head grow.

That is one view—the student view—and an interesting one. But it must be considered in connection with it that a special or exceptional development of one part of our nature is almost necessarily accomplished at the expense of some other part or parts. For illustration, if we are engaged mainly in chopping and such manual labor the blood is directed away from the brain, which of course is impoverished. You cannot expect that a man who works most of the time with his hands will be a very fine scholar. A man may work moderately with his hands—enough to keep his physical powers in good condition—and yet seek scholastic fame; but he must not rob his brain. On the other hand, if a man works his brain habitually his general system will suffer; the muscles of his arms and legs will grow weak and flabby; and he will not be able to accomplish much in the way of ordinary labor—will be unable to make much headway in felling a forest or quarrying stone.

We may now make a higher application of the principle under consideration. Human beings are capable of other and more important work than that of the body or of the brain. Paul talked about labor in prayer. What did he mean by that? An animal does not know what is meant by labor of the brain; and perhaps some students have hardly an idea of what Paul meant when he spoke of "laboring in prayer," "laboring in birth" and in "travail of soul." But he had a clear conception of it. I am satisfied that that kind of labor is as real and intelligible as farm-work or student-work. It is an action of the heart, a willing of the central life—a willing that does not consist or necessarily result in thinking or in any particular action of the brain. It results in spiritual changes in ourselves and in those around us. Labor of heart is that by which we progress from material things toward God; for there is locomotion in the spiritual world. We have power to pass from one sphere to another and from one spiritual condition to another; and it is by labor—such labor as is described by Paul—that we make the transition. And the same law governs in this as in other cases. As the brain is robbed and weakened if the circulation of the blood and life is directed away from it, so we may devote ourselves so exclusively to brain-labor that the heart—the most important part of us—will be

robbed of its life and power. A person may labor hard with the intellect at the expense of the heart, and become in consequence of such labor weak in heart. We may in that way reduce the circulation in the heart to a minimum. My own experience has been constantly teaching me in this respect. I was brought up to mental labor; and there has been a long, long conflict in me between the force concerned in brain labor and that which is concerned in spiritual labor. It has been a constant effort with me to understand the true relation between these two kinds of labor and be able to reconcile them in my own experience. Integral health—the health of the whole man—is dependent upon this reconciliation of the different kinds of labor; and first of all, and most important of all, reconciliation of the action of the mind and heart. And I am specially thankful that I have finally reached a very satisfactory state in this respect. I see that the highest and best function of the brain is not a muscular one, not a function of labor, but one of receptivity—one in which it watches for and receives and acts upon suggestions that come to it from the heart and the spiritual world; that the best and highest action of the brain partakes more of the nature of *reverie* than of hard work. Student work is essential, but it is not the superior kind of mental labor. That is found in a state in which the mind is as quiet as when a per-

son is asleep; and yet it is not asleep, but is quietly watching for and receiving impressions from the inner world. It is certain that the different kinds of mental action may be harmonized, and that the best of all conditions is one in which they are harmonized. And in that condition there is no exclusive devotion to one kind of labor, and therefore no robbery — no working of one part at the expense of another — all will work in order and in harmony. The first thing to be settled in seeking this state is, that the heart is primary and supreme and ought to lead and control all subordinate departments of our nature.

WHAT HAS BEEN WILL BE.

I ACCEPT the doctrine that what has been will be; but I affirm that the controlling experience of human history has been progress, improvement, discovery and novelty, from day to day and from year to year since the foundation of the world. What is now going on around us is the same that has been; and what is it? Why, it is continual investigation; the production of novelty; new developments constant and endless. The doctrine that what has been will be, is there-

fore very radical and revolutionary, because revolution and development have always been going on.

Look back and see what has been. In the first place there has been a complete revolution of the world by Jesus Christ. Heathenism was broken down and a total change of the condition of nations came on in consequence of his appearance. Who knows but that something of the same kind will happen again? Luther and the Puritans conquered Popery in spite of its vast empire and antiquity. Very likely there will be more such overturns. It will not do for conservatives to comfort themselves with the doctrine that what has been will be. It would be entirely out of the ordinary course of events for mankind to settle down into a stationary state. There are no signs of these portentous novelties stopping or diminishing in wonder; but there is every sign that human history will be more and more marvelous.

What has been will be. Let us have the full benefit of this doctrine. There has been an age of miracles; then there will be another. What has been will be. It would be an entire innovation on the past to have miraculous power disappear from the world. It is the original condition of things and we ought to expect that it will continue. It is the experience of all past ages of the world. God has managed things

personally in this world and interfered most splendidly from time to time. The argument from experience is in favor of the continuity of this state of things.

If you start from the idea that there is a living God at the foundation of all things, then uniformity will be out of the course of nature; but if you start with the idea that matter is at the foundation of everything, then novelty is out of order. All depends upon what power is at the center of all things—what the foundation is. If the living God is the foundation, then look out for novelties, for he is a mighty force and full of originality. If the frogs have got nothing but a log for king, things will go on in the old-fogy way; but if they have king stork, there will be splashing enough.

I am mightily pleased with this formula—what has been will be. It is an affirmation of conservatism that we may well take for our motto. Let us repeat it as often as we can. The heavens did rule in old times. What has been will be. The age of angelic appearance has been. What has been will be. The Christian religion has increased from the time it started. What has been will be. There has been more good in our experience than evil. What has been will be. Our experience has proved that God's resources are not limited; he brings us out of every difficulty. What has been will be. We

have in our past experience marched up to stone walls that seemed impregnable, but a way has been opened and we have gone straight through; this has been our experience over and over again. What has been will be. Christ raised the dead. What has been will be. The blood of Christ in the Primitive Church cleansed its subjects from all sin and gave them full justification. What has been will be.

THE DEATH OF UNBELIEF.

A TIME must come when there will be no such thing as unbelief; when everybody will be intellectually convinced of the power of God and the reality of his kingdom. There are many symptoms in the present state of things that old-fashioned unbelief is coming to an end. In fact it has pretty much died out among the infidels themselves. The domain of a certain kind of intellectual faith in miracles and inspiration has extended itself a great way beyond the boundaries of Christianity. It has spread all through the regions of old-fashioned infidelity. Many a man now-a-days is lauding Thomas Paine on the one hand, while on the other he

is believing in more wonders than all the Bible miracles together. Spiritualists not only believe in the existence of another world and in the reality of inspiration, visions and miracles, but a very large class of them are even expecting that the politics of this world will soon be governed by the spiritual world. Many who were once infidels have gone over to this belief. The elder Owen became a Spiritualist in his old age and before he died believed that the heavens do rule. Robert Dale Owen, who like his father was originally an infidel, is now claimed by religious people as a believer in Christ. He began by believing in the marvels of animal magnetism, which led him to believe in the spiritual world, and now he has more or less faith in the miracles of Christ.

A passage in Revelation relating to the second resurrection occurs to my mind: "Death and hell delivered up the dead that were in them; and they were judged, every man according to his work; and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." What exactly is meant by death and hell we cannot perhaps say; but we know that they are prisons which hold the souls of men in darkness. And we are told that these prisons of souls are going to give them up. That promise is equivalent to saying that unbelief will pass away and that men will become convinced that there is another world, a God and a judgment.

Christ said the time was coming when all that are in their graves should hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. There we have an intimation of the power that will compel death and hell to give up their victims. The agent that is to bring about that surrender is the voice of Christ, which is the word of God. That word is described as the very strongest decomposing element in the universe. Paul says it is "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow." The intent of that remarkable passage evidently is to represent the word of God as operating in the spiritual world like a galvanic battery, whose decomposing power is universal. The idea is plainly a chemical one. This tremendous decomposing agent, the word of God, is finally to penetrate clear through into all the envelopes of human souls in this world and the world of the dead, producing decomposition and precipitation, separating the souls of individuals from the great spiritual menstruum in which they have been held. That is to say, there will be a complete elimination of unbelief everywhere, through all the regions of the dead and the living. The word of God as an irresistible decomposing agent and con-

troller of all affinities is competent to effect this elimination.

I suppose that the conversion of a soul from its sins and the healing of diseases by spiritual power are chemical operations in which primary unions are broken up and others established. The final giving up of the dead by death and hell and the resulting judgment and resurrection will be chemical operations of the same kind on a larger scale.

Fire, we know, is a chemical operation. And the Bible says that God is a "consuming fire," and again that "fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." The day of judgment is represented as a time of burning "wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved." God is certainly the finest and most powerful of all substances; and we may well believe that he can penetrate all other substances, can break up all other attractions and affinities, can summon all beings into his presence, and can produce reactions that will destroy the power of unbelief in all worlds.

The judgment will be a grand time of liberation. "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." People are in their graves in many different ways. Those who, being good at heart, are yet buried in their sins, in seventh-of-Romans experience, are in their graves. People who are insane are in their

graves. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." According to that saying, all those who have not received regeneration by the word of God are in their graves. Some are in their graves in this world and others are in their graves in the invisible world. It will be a great jubilee of emancipation when the word of God is sent forth calling death and hell to deliver up their victims. We ought not to dread that event; we ought to wish for it and hope for it. In fact our only hope of peace and comfort is that the resurrection and judgment may overtake us and call us out of our graves.

It is a legitimate object of prayer that the judgment and the resurrection may come. It is really the best and only legitimate object of prayer. If we want to be delivered from evil we should pray for the judgment. The same apostle who says, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life," says in another passage, "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One," by which he certainly means nothing less than that the whole world is prostrate in the grave. Sin and death are one, and if we want deliverance from either or both, we must ask for the almighty word that works judgment and resurrection.

OLD AGE PLAYED OUT.

OLD age should not be considered a thing to be revered without question, more than any other disease. I will reverence souls and persons; but the condition we call old age does not belong to souls or to any being who believes in Jesus Christ. Old age is, in my imagination, something entirely separate from anybody I call my friend or the friend of Christ; and I desire more and more to see it separated from the alliances which make it respectable. It must be indicted and brought to trial. Let us have witnesses examined, that its character may be brought to light and understood; let it have a fair trial before God and man and receive its final verdict. If it is a thing which we are bound to reverence and bow down to, let us bow down; but if not, let us raise an insurrection and turn it out. Many things get to be very respectable merely by virtue of a long continued position in the public mind. Slavery has existed for so many ages that it is almost impossible even now for many people to think of the institution with other feelings than those of respect. The greater part of the institutions of mankind are in the

same position of false respectability. Old age is very likely to be found among them.

Old people ought not to grumble at this conclusion. The very best thing which can be done for them is to start a crusade against the spirit of old age. They should be specially interested in such a crusade. If the spirit of old age has taken such hold of them that they find it almost impossible to get free, so much the more do they need the help of the young and strong and of all the faith which can be brought to bear to help them escape from that terrible disease. Instead of grumbling at this movement and envying the young, they should stand in the attitude of the poor negroes at the South when they saw the North coming down with its armies to help them. What kind of policy would it have been for them to envy those who came to free them, and wish that they would let them alone? Everybody can see that that would have been a foolish course for the negroes; and so it is for old folks. If they can do nothing themselves, they ought to be hopeful and cheer on the work of others because they themselves are to be emancipated by it.

I love my mother; but she is sinking into the nightmare of old age and will probably die in that condition. What then? That shall not hinder me from fighting the principality and doing my best to destroy its power. That same

power will hold her when she passes into the invisible world. Hades, old age and death are all one; so, whether she lives or dies she must be delivered from the power of old age. We may as well go about this work, no matter where we are; for this same principality which oppresses us here, will oppress us in the other world until God shall deliver us from it through the resurrection.

I know for myself that I am married to one who does not grow old. I have no distinct perception how he is going to get along with such a mate as I am; he knows best. But if he has taken me for a bride, I expect he will not have me grow old. Folks don't like old wives, and I calculate that he saw his own interest, or else he would not have married me.

It is quite common for people at a certain age to make up their minds that they have seen their best days. This idea becomes to them a continual undertone, or what one of our writers calls the minor mode in music, "the everlasting wail." I know that I have not seen my best days. I expect to do a great deal more work during the twenty years to come than I have done during the twenty years past, and so on forever.

GRACE BETTER THAN SUFFERING.

PAUL speaks of desiring to "know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." The Primitive Church at the Second Coming attained to that experience. We need not go through all that they did; because if we can be "made conformable" to them, we shall have the benefit of their sufferings. Paul says, "I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, *for his body's sake, which is the church.*" His own sufferings were reckoned with Christ's for the benefit of the church; and the sufferings of that whole first church were also for our benefit. We need not expect to pass through all their sufferings and martyrdom. It is not God's object to make us martyrs, so that we shall have great stories to tell. He prefers that we should appreciate those who have gone before us. He says, "Listen to the stories of those who have fought your battles for you, and let them show their wounds."

It is a great mistake to suppose that all must necessarily pass through the same judgment and suffering in order to come into fellowship with God. Suffering is of the nature of law; Christ

suffered under the law; but he made an end of the law. We may suppose that God says to us, "If I can not make you apprehend that for which you are apprehended in any other way, I will put you through suffering; but if you will believe it, that dispensation is past; the Primitive Church have filled up the measure of suffering." This may be considered one of the great deeds accomplished at the Second Coming. Antichrist was consumed, death destroyed, the fashion of this world passed away, and *the dispensation of suffering came to an end.*

This is a present truth as it is in Christ, and it is important that we apprehend it. We should consider ourselves in a childish state so long as suffering is necessary for our improvement. A child may need to be chastised again and again to make it choose what is best; but it does not necessarily follow that we must always learn in the same way. We should please God better without suffering; and it is best to learn to set our faces accordingly, and hope to advance rapidly into a different order of things. Let us train ourselves to an appreciation of the experience of the Primitive Church, and count it egotism for any to remain in their own individual experience. The experience of the church as a whole is our ground of faith and hope, and we shall apprehend the faith of that church just in proportion as we pass out of our-

selves and look at what has been done in them. Hence the importance of finding out their experience in relation to the Second Coming and appreciating the results of it.

Let us look into this matter of suffering and see what purpose it answers, and whether the same good cannot be accomplished in some other way. This appears to be the philosophy in the case: Our spirits are in affinity with evil spirits and intermixed with them, and a separation must take place. There must be a dissection or decomposition of the union. This is obtained in the way of suffering, by God's bringing this mixture of our spirits with the devil's into a strait that carries it to desperation; so that one of the elements shall die without hope. The other element, our own spirit leavened with Christ's spirit, dies into the resurrection and in the crisis of death the separation takes place. The desperation of a *squeeze*, as we call it, brings about these two results, a new opening into the life of Christ and a death to the evil spirit which has been mixed with us and embarrassed us. Now the question arises whether we cannot bring about this solution and separation from evil and a new opening of the spirit into Christ in regard to any point in which we need faith, without being put into a strait; and whether it is necessary that we ourselves should be reduced to despair along with the spirit from

which we desire deliverance. Is there not some way in which the evil spirit can be brought to despair and death without our being brought into desperate circumstances ourselves? I answer, that in the nature of things the spirit of faith, which is immortal life, is a growing principle, one that grows by its own motion and without suffering. But admitting that our faith does grow in this natural way, you may say that when dissection takes place and the evil spirit goes forth and there is an enlargement of hearts, there must be suffering. I reply, that in the element of perfect life, the solution of affinities and driving out of evil spirits that are within us, will cause at most but momentary pain. It will be bodily pain, a pain that our minds and hearts are free from; and the pleasure of growth in Christ will so far transcend the suffering, that in the whole process "death will be swallowed up in victory;" and there will be on the whole a balance of pleasure.

It is true that in order to make us look at Christ, God has seen it necessary to place us in distressing circumstances, where, as it seemed, we could but just exist; but let us not compel him to deal with us in this way any more. There should be a spirit in us which will volunteer in the pursuit of truth, and "run and not be weary and walk and not faint;" and give Christ as little trouble about it as possible. We should seek new

openings of our spirits into Christ as a natural, healthy, happy growth, and not necessarily conditioned on the presence of desperate suffering. So far as the intellectual part is concerned, that is, the discovery of truth, we know that it may become a natural, healthy, happy process. It is true that we are forced into the discovery of truth by difficult circumstances; that is one method of quickening the perceptions of our intellects; but that is not the only way; and in fact everybody knows that it is only an initial and childish way, to get the intellect into action by suffering. It is the way that children are dealt with. In taking hold of any new science, the first lessons and enlargements of mind in that direction are irksome; but ultimately the exercise becomes a pleasure; and the student is able to make greater advances than he did at the beginning without any forcing. This is as applicable to faith as to any other branch of knowledge. We can go on in the studies of faith without compulsion. Our hearts can come into the habit of following our spiritual judgment, not from the pressure of suffering, but from rational delight in the truth.

Thus it is clear that there is a better way of "growing in grace and the knowledge of Christ" than by being brought into desperate straits: it is not necessary that apprehension of truth and enlargement of faith should always come as the

result of great distress. Our life can become charged with the life of Christ, till it is magnetic like his life. In the first stages of the process, the operation of Christ's life upon ours is like shocks of the galvanic fluid which are of momentary duration. The object of suffering is to bring on these shocks; but each leaves its effect; and as the number of them increases they are accumulating chronic magnetic power in our life, and assimilation to Christ. So that if we have been brought into faith and the discovery of Christ there is a permanent quality of life established in us, tending to qualify us to pursue the truth naturally and from attraction. It is the object of God to have as soon as possible, that part of our life that has affinity with the truth, become voluntary under the permanent attraction of the truth; so that there will be no need of suffering.

It is the spirit of Antichrist that values suffering as though that were Christ. There is no Christ in it. It is only a John-the-Baptist dispensation at best. The truth is, the way of salvation is a pleasurable process. Pleasure is more valuable than pain in its results; and the way that Christ proposes to save us, on the whole, is not by suffering, but by making us happy. The happiest man is the best man, and does the most good. It is a blessing to the universe that God himself is happy, and utterly refuses to suffer.

MORAL FORCE.

THE most radical change of character and that which works the greatest results in every direction, is *increase of moral force*. This is distinct from increase of knowledge or intellectual force. It is an increase of heroism in regard to ourselves and our productiveness, an increase of conscious power of the inner man over the outer man. It turns every way. Moral force will make a man a student when study is the business before him; and it will make him industrious when manual labor is his business. If he turns his heart toward God it will make him faithful in that direction. It will make him strong and persevering in whatever he undertakes to do. Moral force enables persons to overcome everything that is weak and foolish in themselves — to march on in a strong, courageous spirit to do what God has set before them, untrammelled by self-indulgence. Let us get a clear conception of the distinction between intellectual force and moral force. Our moral force must grow till it rises into identity with that of Christ and Paul. We shall not get increase of moral force except as we get faith to connect ourselves

with the great fountain of moral force, which is God and the heavens. Life will be a burden to us till we get the moral force that will support us in anything that we ought to do ; that will make sport of all kinds of labor, however arduous, all kinds of self-denial that God and our conscience call for. We cannot have true rest till we get the kind of moral force that Christ expressed when he said, "It is my meat and drink to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." We can have that. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," is the true motto for every one. No matter what duty calls us to do ; every opportunity should be accepted joyfully which enables us to do or suffer for God.

HELP YOURSELF.

IF we would not make a mystery of salvation and find fault with our lot without good reason, we must understand the principle that makes it impossible for God to give us salvation in any other way than by enabling us to *save ourselves*. We shall be saved not by his coming down and snatching us away from the Wicked One, but by his making us strong to overcome the Wicked One for ourselves. There are mighty principalities of wickedness over us enclosing us as in a net. God is above the net and entirely free from it; and he is able, by the arrangements of his providence and good influences of various kinds, to protect us from being destroyed by it. Undoubtedly he might sweep away with a stroke the evil powers that hold us. Now we may imagine that we have a sort of claim on him that he should not leave us, feeble beings as we are, in such a situation, but should interfere between us and our oppressors and ward off their machinations and destroy their net. That is, we want he should save us just as we are, poor feeble nurslings. This is a false wish and God will not do any such thing. He will exercise a

certain care over us in the application of providential spiritual influences, and will guard and interfere and rebuke the power that holds us, sufficiently to let the experiment go on; but what he will achieve at last which we shall call salvation, will be to make us a principality ourselves, and mightier than any of the principalities of evil. We are capable of becoming spiritual potentates, and God will not deliver us by treating us like children. He wants to put himself into us and develop in us the mighty resources which are in himself. Then we shall not stand saying, "I am a poor victim, but God is strong." That is not the attitude of salvation. This is the final attitude of the redeemed: "God is strong to destroy my enemies, and God and I are one; I can put them down; my own spirit is mightier than any of them; the same power that raised Christ from the dead is in me; the *exceeding greatness* of that power is sufficient for all emergencies."

As Christ is the head of all principalities and powers, far above them all, at the right hand of God, omnipotent over death itself, the thing to be done is not to make his spirit a mere outside protection, but to give it entrance into our hearts and let it work there till we become almighty in ourselves. Our faith must take hold of this purpose of God, and we must cease to depend on outside protection. The exhortation to us is,

not so much to trust in the Lord's strength, as to *BE strong in the Lord*. Let your heart be enlarged and emboldened, till you feel there is in you almighty power. If you ask too much of this outside protection, you will be apt to complain of God that he does not take care of you; for it is his very plan to let you suffer till you turn to this inward salvation and so become almighty with Christ.

We shall find ourselves continually summoned to that enlargement of heart which makes us bold to say, when evil presents itself, not only that God above is stronger than this evil, but that we are stronger ourselves. And none should be afraid of exercising their hearts in this faith, even if it appears to be presumption. Perhaps the first experiment will seem like cant; but there is power and salvation in that exercise of heart by which you willfully identify yourself with the almighty power of Christ, confessing it boldly and blazing it in the face of evil. There is no possible combination of circumstances or influences that can make that confession of Christ inappropriate. You can say to the worst evil that comes, Christ is not too feeble for this thing; he will not fail before it; and Christ is in me; the same power that makes him almighty against it, makes me almighty. Expect salvation to come in *your own heart*, and not that it will come as an outside protection.

There is very great advantage in this method of fighting evil. While we fight not with flesh and blood but with principalities and powers, at the same time we join ourselves to a principality that is above all other principalities; we become a part of the almighty principality, and are able to destroy the works of the devil by the same energy that is in Christ, and by which he destroyed the power of death. If you take the outside view and conceive of any evil that oppresses you—the spirit of covetousness for instance, or the spirit of death—as a great army, a power embodied in the whole world, so that you have all the world to fight—if you think of the vast multitude that are generating that spirit, and constitute the strength of it, and then conceive of yourself as a puny individual set to conquer it, you take a discouraging view of the case and a false one. No matter how large may be the constituency of any given spirit, that spirit is a single power, a unit, which your single spirit is capable of facing. You have not as a single person to face millions of other persons, but your one spirit is to meet that one spirit in single combat; and all that is wanted is more courage, faith and power in you than there is in that spirit. “One shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.” No matter how great the number, your single spirit is sufficient to cope with the whole. All that is necessary is

that Christ should be your strength. It seems to be a fight of a thousand against one. It is not: it is one against one. Let Satan himself take the field, who holds the whole world in his spirit, and you against him; it is one against one; and if you have more nerve, more spiritual energy than he, you will beat him.

Or even if you go by numbers and count the constituents of the principality that threatens you, it is all the same if you will look at both sides. Say that your enemy is backed by the whole world; then, by the same reckoning, *you* are backed by all heaven, by the hundred and forty-four thousand who reign with Christ and by an innumerable company of angels. If you put millions back of your adversary, you must claim as many for yourself and mightier backers by far, because good is stronger than evil. You must not give the enemy the advantage by taking a more favorable view of his forces than you do of your own.

Whichever way the victory turns in the conflict of two spirits, it determines the victory for all that are behind them. There is important spiritual philosophy to be learned from the fight between David and Goliath. The armies of Israel and the Philistines were drawn out against each other in battle array, and Goliath came up defying the armies of the living God. He was the touching-point and representative of the

spirit of the Philistines, the fighting champion of that principality. David with the inspiration of a better and stronger principality, slew him with a stone. Now the Philistines when their champion fell were, as to visible force and numbers, just what they were before; yet they fled before the children of Israel as though their strength were gone. It was a perfect rout. What had happened? They had lost but a *single man* among their thousands; yet that was the end of the fight; the whole battle was decided by that single combat. To explain the rout it is necessary to understand that the *spirit* of the whole army of the Philistines, which was embodied in Goliath, lost its heart when he fell. The strength and pride that animated it were dead. David's sling, like a stroke of lightning, sent the fire of God into the heart of the whole organization, destroying its inner life. Here is an instance of one chasing thousands. David alone put ten thousand to flight. Matched against them individually in visible person, he could do nothing; but matched against the spirit that was the whole element that made them one, he could conquer the whole at a single stroke. We can conquer the world in the same way. As a single spirit it is no bigger than we; outside numbers of persons is no measure of power.

It was in this way that Christ overcame the

Evil One for us. He met the spirit that is the life of sin, and slew it as David slew Goliath. The principality of all evil was destroyed in a single combat — just one struggle between Christ and the king of this world. "Now," said he, "is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." His eye was on the crisis of his crucifixion, and that was the stone that he sunk into Satan's forehead which shall at last carry away his whole army with a rout. It takes time for word to go through the army that their champion is fallen; but the victory is decided against them.

Meanwhile in escaping from the world which "lieth in the Wicked One," we have, each one for himself, to repeat on a smaller scale the single combat of Christ. Otherwise we should remain members of the defeated army and be carried away in its rout. Our part in the fight is to identify ourselves with Christ and in his strength realize the victory he has won. In doing this you will find, as he found, that it is not the wicked million but the Wicked *One* that you have to conquer. All evil is summed up and concentrated in one single spirit, and your own spirit in the power of Christ is a match for that. You can say, "I am able to overcome for myself; I don't want outside help." Here is the place for godly egotism. You need not be afraid to use the word *I*, when it is fortified with faith and al-

with the great fountain of moral force, which is God and the heavens. Life will be a burden to us till we get the moral force that will support us in anything that we ought to do ; that will make sport of all kinds of labor, however arduous, all kinds of self-denial that God and our conscience call for. We cannot have true rest till we get the kind of moral force that Christ expressed when he said, " It is my meat and drink to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." We can have that. " I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," is the true motto for every one. No matter what duty calls us to do ; every opportunity should be accepted joyfully which enables us to do or suffer for God.

HELP YOURSELF.

IF we would not make a mystery of salvation and find fault with our lot without good reason, we must understand the principle that makes it impossible for God to give us salvation in any other way than by enabling us to *save ourselves*. We shall be saved not by his coming down and snatching us away from the Wicked One, but by his making us strong to overcome the Wicked One for ourselves. There are mighty principalities of wickedness over us enclosing us as in a net. God is above the net and entirely free from it; and he is able, by the arrangements of his providence and good influences of various kinds, to protect us from being destroyed by it. Undoubtedly he might sweep away with a stroke the evil powers that hold us. Now we may imagine that we have a sort of claim on him that he should not leave us, feeble beings as we are, in such a situation, but should interfere between us and our oppressors and ward off their machinations and destroy their net. That is, we want he should save us just as we are, poor feeble nurslings. This is a false wish and God will not do any such thing. He will exercise a

mighty power. This is the true confession of Christ.

All who are saved will have to know something of the terrible experience expressed in the words which Isaiah puts into the mouth of his righteous hero. "I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore *mine own arm brought salvation unto me and my fury it upheld me.*" When his outside gazing ended in wonder that no help came, he turned inward to his own resources, and behold there was nerve enough in his own arm to save him. So we shall find that the wonder of despair is the very crisis in which God's omnipotence breaks forth.

FIRST LOVE AND TRIED LOVE.

“**I** HAVE set the Lord always before me.”

I That is the expression of a model lover; his beloved is always present to his imagination. The sweet singer of Israel chose the Lord for his sweetheart and was always thinking of him. This upward-looking love is the best. The most exquisite of all feelings is found in the fellowship of God. We attain the very highest degree of rosy attractiveness for each other, only when we turn from each other to our lover in the heavens. The young convert just learning to confess Christ is the loveliest as well as the happiest of human beings, simply because the glow of God's love is in his heart and shines through his whole being. He has set the Lord always before him.

Why can not we always be young converts? How is it that we drop down from that high place where we dwelt in the presence and the glory of the Lord? Let us try to find the secret of this obscuriation. Our spiritual experiences depend almost entirely on the state of our *attention*. In some great crisis of our lives when we are emerging from sorrowful conviction, God persuades us to turn our eyes to him, and sud-

denly we find ourselves in the sunshine of his love. Afterward in the course of worldly changes, some external attraction or the fellowship of an inferior spirit, in the flesh or out of it, seizes our attention, and the feeling of God's presence is lost. This is the whole story of our gladness and our sadness. A man with health, wealth and friends may seem inevitably happy; but let a jumping toothache seize his attention, and health, wealth and friends are obliterated. How can he keep the comfort of the good things around him, right through the importunities of the toothache? That is the question for him and for us. How can we keep our attention on God through all the changes of external sensations and attractions? How can "we set the Lord *always* before us?"

The problem is a complicated one. We have a multitude of sensibilities that are constantly lying in wait for our attention. The series extends in regular gradation from the lowest feeling of the body up to that preëminent sense by which we feel God. We are like a piano with many strings sounding high and low, and the question is how to keep our attention on the keynote? Or we are like a choir of singers in which many voices are sounding at once. We are tempted to listen to all of them combined, but we can, if we choose, single out one of them, even the lowest, and concentrate our attention on that.

Let that low voice be the voice of God in the heart. Surrounding it and sounding with it are the voices that address our bodily senses, the voices of the world of thought, the voices of the world of affection, and the voices of the world of spirits. Can we in the midst of this crashing chorus hear distinctly that one still small voice? Yes, if we are skilled in the attentiveness of love. And that is what we were made for and what we must do if we would be happy. The low, sweet voice of God caught our ear when we were first converted, and if we wish to have forever the joy of a young convert, we must learn to hear that voice at all times, in spite of the vast uproar of its accompaniments.

Yet we need not condemn ourselves as apostates when we find ourselves weak and confused, unable to keep the glowing sensations of our first love. The circumstances in which God first caught our attention were doubtless peculiar, arranged by him with consummate tact for that end. Now those circumstances have given place to others more distracting. We have had a taste of the joy of the Lord and that taste has left a hunger which will never cease. We are now to be disciplined in controlling our attention by graduated trials. The same consummate wisdom that arranged our first interview with our heavenly lover, is now going to surround us with all the temptations to lose sight of him that we can

bear, on purpose to call us back again and again from all other attractions to his love, and so form in us a chronic habit of attention to him that will finally enable us to set him *always* before us.

It is a great mistake to think that we have really fallen back because we are tempted. If God has once won our hearts and made us hungry for his love, we may rest assured that he understands the rest. of the process and will bring it to a good issue. Our faith, instead of being weaker, may be stronger in the time of sadness than it was in the time of joy. Peter well understood that "the course of true love never does run smooth," even though God is our beloved. See how closely he connects the sadness with the gladness: "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; [this is first love; then he adds] though now *for a season*, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; [and then he gives the reason,] that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." What is this trial of faith? Manifestly the heaviness that comes by temptation. Faith is the wide-awake state of that deepest sense by which we perceive God. It is tried by our being placed in circumstances where our atten-

tion is seized by other things and we are almost compelled to look away, and yet are just able to hold on to our remembered love. God thus tries our faith to strengthen it. As a man by lifting weights strengthens his arm, so our spirits grow strong in faith by turning, against all opposing forces, toward God. Such evidently was Peter's philosophy of the growth of faith.

A thorough understanding of this philosophy will help us in the season of trial to exercise our good sense and self-control so as to cooperate with God in his discipline of our faith. When we are first born into the love of God, we know not how great a thing salvation is. We find ourselves trustful and happy and we think we have got the whole. But afterward we discover that much greater blessings are in store for us and greater evils are to be cured than at first we could imagine. Then we learn not to blame ourselves for our sufferings, but to regard them as marks of our progressive salvation. And at last we can even *ask* God to tax our powers by graduated trials, up to the utmost capability of our endurance, so that we may get through the sooner.

In all these needed trials our weakness comes first, and then God's strength in the last extremity. After we have gone through them, we find that experience has steadily wrought hope; and then at last we can say with full assurance, in

view both of the past and the future, "I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved."

GENEROSITY BEFORE JUSTICE.

THE common idea that *justice* is the fundamental principle of the universe is false. It is not *justice* but *generosity*; that is the ruling principle and ground plan. If any man says, "We live in a universe of law and it is to be hoped justice will be done sometime," we reply, The supreme power in this universe is not law—that belongs to inexorable dead machinery—it is the *love* of the living God; therefore we look for something far better than justice.

A mere justice-relation of one toward another in which we talk about rights, is like that between strangers, a very cold relation; but the relation that we hope to come into with God and with one another is a very warm relation, like that between kindred and lovers. Generosity, not justice, is the rule of family affection.

Between God and man the rule of justice is illogical and impracticable in two ways: Suppose, on the ground of right, you make out a

bill of what you consider as due to you from God. He will say to you, "In respect to what you *deserve*, that bill is a great deal too large; but in respect to what I intend to give you, it is a great deal too small. Nothing is your due, but I mean to give you vastly more than you claim." So the bill is twice condemned. In this way the whole of what is called justice will be cut in pieces; and it will be found in the long run that nothing is due as of right anywhere; and every good thing must issue from the generosity of love. The superior, in all right relations, will be able to say to the inferior who claims favor, "Your bill is too large, considered with reference to your right; and too small considered with reference to what is in my heart to give you."

The doctrine of the world, "justice first, generosity afterwards," is to be reversed. Love is what comes first from the heart of God and covers the whole central field of the universe; and so far as there is any such thing as cold justice, it is exceptional and belongs to the enemies of God. If persons are too proud to receive God's generosity, perhaps he will give them justice.

The old theologians have inverted the truth completely. They teach that God's justice is the great manifestation of his character in his everlasting kingdom; that his mercy and love

manifested in Christ is exceptional, coming in to eke out what he attempted to do on the principle of justice, but was not able; that the atonement is a piece patched on to the law — not the fundamental expression of the character of God, but a device got up to outwit himself—to save men by cheating justice! They teach that the law is the great platform on which all things proceed, and the atonement is a side-show played off for a special occasion. Now the fact is the reverse of all this; the real truth is that the law, instead of being the main thing, is nothing but the plowshare going before the gospel to break up the ground. The law was sent to help Christ, instead of Christ being sent to help the law. God's true character is developed in the love and mercy of Christ's death; and the law was only designed to prepare men to appreciate Christ. God was not acting in an exceptional, extra-benevolent, supererogatory way in sending his Son into the world. He was just acting out his heart, expressing what is the very essence of his character.

From the case of the prodigal son we can see how much justice there is, and how much generosity, in God's dealings. The justice was all in the mind of the prodigal. He called for his deserts: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more *worthy* to be called thy son; make me as one of

thy hired servants." His father did not mind what he said ; and when the elder brother called for justice too, that did not take any better. The prodigal's bill was much larger than he deserved, and much less than his father intended to give him. That is true of any bill that we can bring against God and will be forever

FAMILY COMMUNISM.

COMMUNISM, dreadful bugbear as it is on the large scale, is the fundamental principle of every family. The man keeps no account with his wife, but cares for her as for himself. Man and wife keep no account with their children, but regard them as their own flesh. This is the theory, at least, of the family compact. Thus all children are born in Communism, and for the sweetest part of their lives are nourished and brought up in Communism. They come in contact with the opposite principle of trading selfishness, only when they begin to leave the family circle and mingle with the world.

Communism is really the very essence of Home. The man who turns back in imagination from the desert of common life to the oasis of his

childhood, and sings "*Home, sweet, sweet Home,*" is unconsciously thinking of Communism, and longing to return to it.

The Communism which begins with marriage, does not stop at the first generation, but reaches the grandchildren, and like a light shining in a dark place, is reflected back to parents and grandparents, and glances far and wide among uncles and aunts and cousins, till it is lost in distance.

And we must not imagine that this family-feeling which thus radiates unity in little circles all over the world, has its seat and cause exclusively or even chiefly in consanguinity. On the contrary its very beginning is in the love that arises between man and woman as such, without blood-relationship. Husbands and wives are related to each other only as members of the human race; and yet their love is the source of the love between brothers and sisters and cousins and all kindred. They are the real founders of the family Community. So, if the old saying is true that "blood is stronger than water," we must add to it that "love is stronger than blood."

Thus it appears, not only that we are all born and brought up in Communism, but that one of our very strongest natural proclivities in adult life is for *Communism with non-relatives*, and the founding of small Communities. With such germs in our nature and education, it can not be so difficult as many imagine, for us to fall in with

the spirit of progress (which is really the spirit of Pentecost) and allow science and inspiration to organize family-Communism on the grandest scale. It will be but returning home; only we have to give up the old one-horse wagon for two, and go by the great railroad-train that carries a meeting-house-full.

THE RIVAL OF FAITH.

CASTING my eye over the New Testament in search of the antagonist of faith, I stop at this saying of Christ: "*How can ye believe who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?*" As we are always sure to find deep meaning in everything that Christ says, I am confident that he has there pointed his finger at the mischief; and that in some way it is *attention to the thoughts and opinions of men* that hinders faith. And I would recommend a thorough inquiry into the state of all hearts in respect to the principle involved in that text. I see plainly that genuine faith is the current of our life setting out from social environments into the divine sphere. Instead of our life and its thoughts and feelings circulating

around among ourselves into each other and to and from each other, in true faith the heart turns away from all human beings, inward and upward toward the living God; and faith in that view of it, is an individual act—an act I may say, of isolation—it is an act in which each heart leaves all human surroundings, all social connections, and goes off alone with God. It does not *terminate* in isolation, because in God we find each other, and the perfection of unity and sociality must be the result. But the gospel calls us at the outset to an act of faith that isolates us—that admits of no partnership, no sociality; or if there is any human sociality in the case, it comes in as a help and stimulus; the essential thing to be done, is the leap of our heart out from human life into God. And the language of the heart in this act is, "Let God be true and every man a liar." It is a renunciation of the thoughts and spiritual influences of all human beings, and an acceptance of God in their place. An exclusive relation is formed between us and God; we choose God for our husband with that desperation which is encouraged in the world by novelists, between lovers; we accept union with him to the exclusion of all other spirits; and we are willing that he should be a jealous lover and claim every thought.

It is evident that that act of faith can not be performed as long as we are impressible to social

influences — the feelings, thoughts and opinions of people about us. Hence the gospel actually demands of every one who accepts it, an abandonment and withdrawal from the spirit of the world; and such abandonment destroys all reputation with the world. Abandonment to God is as surely the end of a person's reputation in such a world as this, as abandonment to crime. This was true in the Primitive Church. Christ said, "When men shall persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, rejoice and be exceedingly glad." It is a cause of joy because it is a sign that you have abandoned human surroundings and taken this love-leap for the living God. "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad" that you have accepted the terms of a union with God and thereby have lost your reputation in the world.

But the abandonment of the world and the dismissing of all care for the thoughts and opinions of men, is not all that is necessary to disentangle ourselves from the obstructions to faith. If a body of us come out from the world, and so far as that matter is concerned, cease to seek the honor that comes from man, and then form a little world of our own and allow ourselves to live, as it were, by the sympathies of each other; if we silently settle into a sort of mutual insurance, and keep ourselves satisfied with our faith because we are among those who

have faith, and by a sort of reflex influence support each other in a reputation of faith, we may in such ways entangle ourselves again with the same obstructions that we originally came out from.

This is the danger that attaches to our intimate union with one another. If we are not aware of the devil's devices we may allow our intimacy of life and social unity to become a snare to us by withdrawing us from this independent, individual hold on God, drawing us into a sort of sympathetic, generic, corporate faith. I hope the grace of God will enable us to detect any snare of this kind that may be upon us, and that we shall be enabled to keep ourselves clear of that reference to human life which obstructs our access to the divine. I trust God will teach us not to allow our organization or social compaction to become a substitute for faith. Social and human influences are good servants but bad masters. They may help us, but they can not save us. It is the divine life that must save us. The glory of the Father that raised Christ from the dead must find its way into each of our hearts. We must every one of us open a separate account with God in regard to that matter. Every one must find God for himself, and all must see to it that they are not hindered from rising into communion with the divine life by lateral attractions.

And I will go a step further to make thorough work. You may hold yourselves withdrawn from the influence of the world, and you may hold yourselves clear of the social influence of the little world into which we have retired, and still there is a third influence which may take the place of genuine faith in God, and that is your attention to me and my words, and the truth I bring you. My words can not save you. "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." If the seeds that I sow in your minds ever germinate and grow, it will be because you find, each one for himself, actual communication with God.

It is plain that there is insuperable difficulty in the way of believing so long as persons receive the honor that comes from the world; but a closer application of Christ's saying to us would be, How can ye believe, who receive honor of each other *in the Community* and seek not the honor that cometh from God only? If you substitute a good name in the Community for the honor that cometh from God, the difficulty will be just as great as in the former case, and more subtle and deceptive. And then, thirdly, How can ye believe who rely on any teacher and substitute your relations to him for genuine faith in God?

These are principles which, if carried out

among us thoroughly, will destroy sectarianism; we shall never be justly chargeable with sectarianism or with following a leader, if we earnestly seek true faith, and each one of us opens an account for himself with God and clears himself from all human influences.

I feel myself bound to disclaim and refuse to have any such influence over people as will interpose between them and God. If it is false and wrong to *receive* honor from men or to be under the influence of men in any way, then it is false and wrong to exert an influence on men that intercepts their communication with God. Christ was quick to refuse honor that was directed toward himself personally: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." The angel in Revelation showed the same jealous refusal of reverence: When John was about to fall down and worship him he said, "*See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant. Worship God.*"

The curse of all the sects that have risen above the level of the world and one after another attempted a reformation with new religious fervor, has been, that though they commenced with losing their reputation in the world and for a time lifted up their hearts to God, they soon formed another little world of their own—a world within a world—a system of mutual insurance and mutual support. Thus they lost

their free and fresh communion with God, and their religion became a communion one with another—a human instead of a divine communion—and they finally came to have as much regard for their standing and reputation within their own sect as they previously had for the honor of the world. But I know there is no need of our falling under that curse. We can get such clear ideas of faith as will forever preclude the interposition of human influence between us and God.

We abhor unbelief; and now let us conceive of unbelief as *godless social sympathy*. That is as generic a statement of what unbelief really is as we can get. It is sympathy of mankind one with another, withdrawing their hearts from God. Unbelief is not a direct refusal of God; it is not a mere negation. It is a *positive attraction*—the attraction of mankind for each other. All that goes to condense men into a compact mass tends to unbelief. "He that loveth father or mother more than Christ, is not worthy of him;" and the same principle applies to the whole round of human attractions. Sum up all those attractions that bind people together and put them under fear of each other, and they constitute the great web of unbelief that holds men away from God. As much as we abhor unbelief, so much we should abhor the suction of human sympathies that holds us away from

God: it is cruel as death. It is this that hinders our faith, our growth and fruitfulness, our joy and peace.

WHAT SPIRITUALISM IS DOING.

ONE good that is coming from the spiritualistic dispensation is this: the Kingdom of God is finally to be developed by the union of heaven and earth — by men joining themselves in loving spiritual communication with the word of God as it was understood in the Primitive Church. Now the Bible is not the word of God in the original best sense of that expression; it is a servant and accompaniment of the word of God; but the true word came from heaven to Christ and Paul and the other apostles in a manner similar to that of spiritualistic communications. Their minds were not turned to books or to reasoning and laws, but to *spirits*. And so it is and must be forever; men who want to hear the word of God must turn their minds beyond their own reasonings and even beyond the Bible, to invisible spirits. The effect of the spiritualistic "procedure" is to school men into that general attitude of mind — to get

them looking up and in, toward the spiritual world. No matter if they do not at first hear the true word, they will at any rate get their hearts open to hear *voices* from that quarter. The object of Providence is to get the idea circulating through the world that there is information and benefit to be obtained in that quarter above and beyond all the facts, reasonings and combinations of the human intellect; and that is being done. The whole world is being lifted a step toward communication with the heavens; the idea is getting fast seated in the public mind, that actual communication with the invisibles is not foolishness and fanaticism, but a practical thing. Let men become free and receptive in the direction of spirits, and by and by will come *discrimination*. The object at first is to simply throw open communication, without any particular inquiry into the character of the spirits that are entertained. Let the spirits in at any rate, and the one that can make its voice heard above the rest shall have the floor. Simple receptivity is a good beginning; discrimination will come in time. As people begin to find that they are deceived, they will inquire their way from all quarters toward the true word of God.

CONFESSION.

“**W**ITH the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Let us have a protracted meeting on the subject of *confession with the mouth*. It seems to me that we want conversions more in reference to the second part of this saying of Paul’s than the first. I think our people understand the theory of faith a great deal better than they do the subject of confession; and their hearts are better prepared to act upon that theory than they are to embody faith in confession. The difficulty about the matter is, they think the latter is a small affair. The devil persuades people it is of no great consequence how they confess or what they confess, if they only believe the truth. Paul, however, does not put it in that way; “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Here he presents two things necessary to salvation; and confession is put first, if there is any difference in the dignity of the two points. Then in a passage that follows, the order is reversed: “With the heart

man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." We can not tell by Paul's language which of the two things is most important. He does not seem to make any difference between them. He does not put confession with the mouth as a little thing to be tripped over the best way you can. He sets his great platform of salvation on those two pillars. For aught I can see, one is just as necessary as the other.

What is it that makes confession so important? "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." This is as much as to say, you do not really reach salvation until your faith has brought you to confession with the mouth. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness," and yet there is a lack of full salvation in that; salvation is not complete without confession with the mouth. Why is this? It seems to me it is capable of a very simple solution. The heart is a spiritual organ—the organ of the soul. The mouth is a material organ—an exponent of the body. Salvation is salvation of the soul and body, not merely salvation of the soul. The common idea that salvation is salvation of the soul alone, is not the doctrine of the New Testament. You do not find it there. Christ did not come in any such capacity as Savior of the soul alone. In fact he made salvation of the body, to a certain extent, more prominent in his ministry

than the salvation of the soul. He went abroad through all Judea, healing diseases, casting out devils and raising the dead. First of all he was a doctor for the body, and only afterward became prominent as a preacher and teacher of theology and Savior of the soul. I do not undertake to say that is the order of importance of the two things. No doubt it is much better to lose the body if we can not save the soul but by doing so, as Christ himself taught; but the prevailing doctrine of the New Testament, as exhibited by Christ's practice and theory was, that soul and body both are to be saved, and he offered himself to us as a Savior of both soul and body.

Now then in the terms of salvation which Paul propounds, you have something that touches both. You have faith in the heart for the soul, and confession of the mouth for the body. And it may be said that the faith of Christ in the heart reaches the body through confession. I believe there is a natural channel—whether the anatomists have found it or not—for God's life and spirit to flow through from the heart to the tongue. There is a close connection between those two organs; and if you want salvation that is a whole thing, that will reach through body and soul, confession is the connecting agency between the two.

The faith, the life and the resurrection of Christ that are in the soul, work out from the

heart into the tongue and so through the whole body. That connection is one that a child can understand, and one that we ought to understand well enough to put in practice. We are told to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. How? "With the *mouth* confession is made unto salvation." Go to work with your mouth; that is the way to do it. Perhaps the churches would tell you to go to distributing tracts and doing good to the poor. But these things, if they come at all, come afterward. The first thing is to begin to work with your mouth. With the mouth, not with the hands, the feet, or any other part of the body, confession is made unto salvation. Begin there. Understand this is not working with the mouth in the fashionable way. You are not told to go to work preaching to sinners, laboring with men to get them to attend to the truth and be saved. Paul says the way to work with the mouth is to confess the Lord Jesus. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." This is the work to be done; not to save others, but to save ourselves. Let loose all the faith in the resurrection power of Christ there is in your heart by confessing it with your mouth. By such a confession it will be manifest that your body has access to the same salvation that your soul has.

Always keep in mind the Pentecostal model. That was the great seed-revival. That is the model on which all revivals that are right and true are fashioned. The first feature of that revival was freedom of the tongue. The Spirit came upon them as tongues of fire; an actual, visible representation of a tongue sat upon them. They were all tongue. The Spirit of God had free flow through them in all languages. What wonderful control the Spirit then took of the brain, nervous system and muscles of the mouth, to make men talk in different languages as it did! God played on their physical systems as one of you would play on the organ or piano, and made them speak for him. The most prominent feature of that great model revival was the surrender of the tongue to the Spirit; and the second feature of it was Communism. "They said not that aught they possessed was their own, but all that believed were together and had all things common. They did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people." That shows that they had salvation of the body. They had no dyspepsia. The salvation of their souls had come into their bodies too. They got their tongues free, and the Spirit of God flowing out through their tongues acted on their whole bodies. They had good appetites and ate their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

Selfishness was all gone out, so that it was just as natural for them to distribute their goods to one another and live as one great family or Community, as it was to breathe. There is a model that will not pass away. If we have any revival, let us have it on that plan.

THE LAW OF MIRACLES.

THE miracles of Christ and the Primitive Church have one feature that brings them all within the sphere of what may be called natural facts, that is, facts which are subjects of law and invite scientific investigation; and that feature is the principle of *CONTAGION*. The communicability of diseases and other conditions of life by contagion is considered a law of nature. We do not regard it as a miracle, in the lawless sense, when the small-pox makes its way from one to another, though the process is mysterious and invisible. We account for it on the principle of contagion. The same principle appears everywhere in what are called the miracles of Christ and the Primitive Church. Christ healed diseases by laying his hands on people, and his disciples did the same. The power of life in

him rose to a pitch where it was contagious like a malignant disease, enabling him to communicate health by a touch. His own health assumed the "malignant type" (to use the phrase by contrast and with reference to his power against disease instead of life), and passed by contagion from him to others. The little circumstance told about the woman who touched the hem of his garment, is simply an indication of what took place in all his miracles. She felt in herself that her malady was stayed, and he felt that virtue had gone out of him; though there was evidently no volition on his part. In most cases, doubtless, he communicated the contagion of his health intentionally and by appropriate acts of spirit and body; but in this case the woman caught health from him as one man takes the small-pox from the garments of another.

In the history of the Primitive Church we find this principle of contagion working in the transmission of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the "laying on of hands" was a prime doctrine in that church. Paul says, "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of *laying on of hands*, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." Thus he classes the doctrine of the "laying on of hands" with

that of repentance and of eternal judgment. It was the doctrine of the contagiousness of the Holy Spirit. In the later stages of the church the laying on of hands became the means, not chiefly of communicating health to the body, as in the beginning under Christ's personal ministration, but of transmitting all spiritual gifts. Persons were ordained to the ministry by this ordinance; and it was not a matter of mere form, but by it the gifts of prophecy and edification were communicated. The working of miracles, in the special sense of the word, ceased to a great extent in the Primitive Church, as it went on toward perfection; but this doctrine of God's Spirit passing from one to another by the laying on of hands continued to the last.

Finally, Paul's doctrine of transmutation, the "change of body" which he expected at the Second Coming, was evidently to be realized by this same principle of contagion. His expectation undoubtedly was that when the conditions were all ready and the church had reached the necessary stage of preparation, then Christ's personal presence would instantly change them; that is, a contagion would pass from his spiritual body which would change their natural bodies into bodies like his own.

If Christ's miracles were performed in the absurd inconceivable way generally supposed, by his bidding them to be done and bringing them

to pass without a cause, there would have been no occasion for his laying his hands on the sick, touching the eyes of the blind, and putting his fingers into the ears of the deaf. The fact that he used these means shows that the principle of contagion was just as essential in the cures he performed as it is in the passing of disease. In fact what we call miracles, to Christ, were no miracles. He worked by law, and in a way he could have explained scientifically.

We need not confine the principle of contagion to the form of laying on of hands, nor to any one particular method of contact or intercourse. The contagion of God's life and righteousness passes by word of mouth as well as by laying on of hands, and in some respects it undoubtedly passes better in that way than in any other. By word of mouth it may pass to a great congregation at once. And undoubtedly by a book or paper it might pass to a nation or a world almost instantly. No principle is more extensive and universal than this of contagion—not even gravitation. We see this principle not only acting in all life, both good and evil, in this world, but we are sure it extends through the other world up to God himself; which we do not know to be true of gravitation.

THE WORK OF GOD IN US.

I SUPPOSE the great secret of justification is this: *God justifies himself and nothing else.* "There is none good but one, that is God." He knows where his own life is and the souls in whom his righteous works are, and he will follow them to the infernal depths and bring them up and justify them; he will recover them from all snares, imprisonments, temptations and besetments. When a good man is taken prisoner by an evil spirit and carried into actions that are wrong and evil, he is always either asleep or struggling in some secret way against the spirit that is abusing him. Now that life which is thus asleep or ineffectually struggling against evil, is God's life; and God will find it out and justify it, wherever it is, and deliver it.

Salvation may be compared to the process of waking from sleep. When you have a stupid lethargic sleep upon you, you know how hard it is to throw it off. You are semi-conscious, perhaps; you try to rouse yourself; but it is almost impossible; you feel an irresistible temptation to yield yourself to the drowsy spell; to really straighten out your brain and

become wide awake is hard labor. Salvation is something like that; you are under a magnetism, a nightmare of the devil that darkens your mind and the imaginations of your heart, so that you do not know where you are or what you are. Salvation is hearing the voice of God deep down in your spirit, calling you to awake to the knowledge of God and the knowledge of yourself as the child of God. There is nothing short of almighty power that can wake us and keep us awake. We are in such circumstances, for instance, as people are in who are nearly frozen to death; it is almost impossible to keep them awake. You remember that affair on the lake several winters ago, when some of our youngsters got off so far with their skates that they almost froze. Mr. B—— had great difficulty to get T—— off the ice, because he wanted to lie down and sleep. It is so with the influence of the devil upon us. There is a temptation to give ourselves up to the impressions and workings of the senses and lose all feeling of God and eternal life; and that is sleep, the sleep of death. Christ comes to us as Mr. B—— went out after T——, and gets hold of us and shakes us and perhaps whips us to get us to wake up and escape.

The thing that we finally wake up to is God's work in us: One of the prophets says, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for *thou hast wrought all our works in us;*" and Christ says,

"He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that *they are wrought in God.*" Deep down in that part of us where Christ comes and where the ear is that hears him, the work of God is going on; and a life is working there that wants to come to the light: it is not afraid of the judgment, but covets and delights in it, and is glad to come where the whole truth can be seen about it. What God works in us he will follow and justify, and he will ordain peace for us because he has wrought our works in us.

People make great account of free agency and think it is degrading to act under another's prompting or influence; but let us not fear any such taunt. Let us not be ashamed to have God work upon us and in us. Let us submit ourselves to the righteousness of God. Let us be willing he should criticise and suggest and draw us and brood over us till we do his will and not our own and act upon his wisdom and not ours. Let us heartily accept the position of acting under another's influence and let God work his work in us. That is a good, wholesome, rational position. It is a position in which we shall improve, and become sane and wise, and behave well.

If we let God work in us he will make us work so wisely that we shall be thoroughly justified. Step by step it will be seen that we do the right

thing, and nobody can find fault with us. We shall have justification and peace just in proportion as we let God work in us. In the judgment it will come to this: Anything that we have done that can be proved to have been our own work, will be condemned; but anything that can be proved to be God's work in us will be justified. If you can look back anywhere and say, "There is a work that I did by inspiration; there God moved me and worked in me," then you may be sure that that work will have blessed results that you have not imagined or calculated. That was a work that had in it the wisdom of God; and that wisdom is omniscience that sees through eternity. You can say, "*There* was a work that will entitle me to demand everlasting profits; *there* was an investment not according to my foolishness, but according to God's wisdom, that will give me dividends eternally."

THE RIVER OF LIFE.

ONE singular expression of Christ's shows that the Holy Spirit is to be given to us, not in any niggardly way, but in bountiful supplies. It is said that he stood in the last great day of the feast and cried aloud to the multitude: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." It is not to be some thin, indefinite influence; it is to be copious and sensible, refreshing and powerful. "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water!" I do not know what we can ask more than that.

Christ did not talk "gas." When he said a thing, he meant it; and he meant a good deal more than his words express. A river of living water running out of a man's belly is a large idea. This gift is not for certain particular persons, but he that *believes* shall have it. "If *any man* thirst let him come unto me and drink." The language is almost indetical with the invitation of the Spirit and the Bride in Revelation:

"Let him that is athirst, come. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This "water of life" is the river previously spoken of, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. Whosoever thirsts is invited to come and partake freely of that river.

I have always been inclined to understand Christ's meaning in that passage as very much the same as where he says, "Whoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him *shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*" The idea is not that the well of water shall flow from him abroad, but that it shall spring up in him out of the center of his being. He that believes on Christ shall have the satisfaction of a river of life in himself, in his heart or spiritual center. He will have a fountain or well there, and can drink all he wants of it. Of course, if there is a river of water springing up in him that he drinks of himself and has perpetual satisfaction in, it will flow out from him to others. You may take it in that sense if you like, for that must be the result. But my impression is, that the main fact which Christ had in view in that language, was the individual's own satisfaction. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." And this is the way he will drink; not through his mouth; but a well of water shall spring up in his heart.

This gushing fountain of the water of life in the heart, was not given till Jesus Christ was glorified. The Spirit had been given in many external ways, and persons had been inspired by its influence before that ; but this peculiar spring of living water within had not been given, and was not given till after Jesus had been glorified.

This is the fullness of the doctrine which I have been presenting, of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That Spirit came like a mighty flood on the day of Pentecost, and is now a river of life in the center of the whole of humanity, accessible to all. Almost the last thing the Bible says to mankind is, "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The idea manifestly is, that the water of life has got into its channel ; a great river of it is flowing in humanity ; and whosoever will may drink of it as he pleases. It is not something that is yet to be sent — that we are to wait for and expect in the future — it is a river of life that is now running within easy reach of every one of us.

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT.

IN regard to the gifts of the Spirit, our difficulty is that when we get an impulse from God, instead of holding on to that impulse and letting it act continuously upon us, we are apt to take that impulse as a ball does a stroke and run away from the impelling power. God starts us upon a good course, and then we run off in that course far out of his sight; we keep straight on because we started right, stopping only when obstructions and failure compel us to stop. This is not the way to walk with God. When we get an impulse from him we should be thoughtful and cautious and say to ourselves, God may want us to go to a certain length and then call us back. An unlimited course in one direction may not be the the right thing. Perhaps "out and back" is the word.

We do not please the Spirit of Truth by taking only a single impulse, but by continuous obedience; by holding on to the impelling force, so that when it stops we shall stop and turn back and not go on without it. Here is our difficulty in receiving inspiration. It is compara-

tively an easy matter to get into communication with God ; but we must learn how to retain the impulses he gives us, so that we shall not be liable to run off into folly. The old revivals began with an impulse from God, but they were carried on in the wisdom of man and soon came to an end. The people did not know why, and thought perhaps that God was capricious and changeable, and not ready to bless them continuously.

THE HOME-SPOILERS.

“**B**EHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” “Home, sweet home! there is no place like home.” So the poets sang three thousand years ago, and so they sing still. Everybody remembers, away back in the beginning of life, a brief paradise that was good and pleasant and sweet, because it held a company of brothers and sisters together in unity. Communism of interests is really the charm of “home, sweet home,” and the world is dotted with little Communities that are the fountains of all good lives and fragrant memories.

But the sore trouble is that these Communities

are so short-lived. They are always being broken up. They exist in most persons' minds only as memories that increase the sadness of exile. The breaking up of the Fourierite Communities, which was bemoaned so much twenty years ago, was as nothing to the breaking up of families that is going on all the time and all the world over.

The terrible agencies that are always busy in this work of baffling men's attempts to rebuild Paradise, are *Marriage* and *Death*. These are the twin fatalities of human existence, as every newspaper bears witness by coupling them in standing records. Christ most emphatically coupled them as alike in their antagonism to Paradise when he said, "In the resurrection they neither *marry*—nor can they *die*." Strange as it seems that events so contrasted—the best and the worst—should be coupled and branded as twin disintegrators; yet nothing is easier than to show that they work together always and everywhere in the breaking up of families, making any permanent "sweet home" impossible.

While it must be admitted in favor of marriage, that it has an agency in *creating* the little beginnings of Communism with which the world is dotted, still the stern truth is that it creates only to destroy. The same attraction that starts the family, finally pulls it in pieces. This is a paradox, but test it by facts. Old man, what has

become of the little Paradise in which you were born — your father's family? It is gone. How did it come to its end? In the first place the children, one after another, fell in love with strangers and forsook their parents and brothers and sisters. They broke away from their original home by *marriage*, and undertook to make, each one for himself or herself, another home. So the old family dwindled down, till perhaps the pair that began it were left alone or took in strangers to help them. Still the desolation was not complete. The Adam and Eve of the family Paradise were now "grandpa" and "grandma," and kept house for visits from children and grandchildren. The brothers and sisters, though scattered abroad and separated in interests, held on to some remnant of the family feeling and sometimes met at the old hearth-stone. And their children for a while loved one another in the distant and occasional way of cousins, and haunted the houses of their uncles and aunts so long as the house of grandpa and grandma remained as a common center. But by and by came the other disintegrator—*death*. The old pair disappeared. Their house went to strangers. The center of unity was gone. The cousins gradually lost sight of each other. The uncles and aunts saw *their* children passing from them by marriage and began to play grandpa and grandma to new circles; and death following after extinguished

these secondary centers one after another: till perhaps in the fourth generation scarcely a tradition of the original family remained; and the second cousins were as far apart as though they had had no common ancestry.

This is the way of the world. Every middle-aged man, in the midst of his family Paradise, can see such wrecks all around him. Behind him is his own father's family thus falling in pieces, and before him is the certainty that his own family is going to the same fate. "How good and how pleasant" is the beginning! How sad is the end! Is there no help—no antiseptic in heaven or earth to stop this everlasting decomposition of the elements of Paradise?

Thank God we have in the gospel of Christ two *organisers* that confront the two disintegrators—Communism facing Marriage, and Resurrection facing Death. Christ has begun a family, the members of which love him and their first-loved home-circle with him, more than all strangers. A glimpse of that family was seen on the day of Pentecost; but its principal mansion was then and is now where he is. It is eighteen hundred years old. The number of its members we know not, but they are very many. It has fenced out marriage and death. That family owns this world and is going to take possession of it. Communism is already seen confronting marriage; and the Resurrection will soon be

seen confronting death. The will of God *shall* be done on earth as it is in heaven. Let all who have ever prayed that it may be (even if they did not know what they meant), say Amen.

HEAVEN COMING.

HOW AND WHERE.

IT is a universal law of force that it will move in the direction of the least resistance. We might find a thousand illustrations of that principle; such, for instance, as this: If a gun is over-loaded and bursts in firing, we shall find on examination in most cases, and, if we could examine close enough, in all cases, some imperfection at the point where the bursting took place, showing that the force of the powder found the weakest spot in the barrel, where there was least resistance. I suppose there is no law more universal than this, nor one for which you will find more illustrations, if you choose to look them up. With this law in mind, let us suppose that the spiritual world is pressing on this world, seeking to manifest itself to mortals; and then let us consider where, according to this law, we should expect that spiritual manifestations would

first present themselves; that is, where they would find the least resistance. We may certainly assume as self-evident that the class of minds which are most inclined to receive and believe in spiritual impressions offer the least resistance to the spiritual world. We should therefore expect *a priori* that the spiritual world would first break through into this world among people who are inclined to credulity and superstition. The question is often raised, "Why don't these great spiritual manifestations come among the wise and scientific?" It seems to me that a plain and rational answer is that the spiritual world, in endeavoring to make an entrance into this world, finds among scientific people, not the least, but the greatest resistance. For instance, this Dr. Beard that we hear so much about, is a learned man, writes for the *Popular Science Monthly*, and is posted in everything that appertains to modern philosophy on the materialistic side. But anybody can see that there is in him a spirit of desperate resistance to spiritual manifestations. He is not in a quiet, hospitable state of mind, in which he is willing to see and hear what the heavens have to present; but he is in a state of fierce determination to shut them out and cover them with confusion and ridicule. And it is to be noticed that in his letter to *The Graphic*, which he considers a triumphant exposure of the Eddy brothers, he

world very unreliable. The light passes through them, but it is colored and distorted. You can get a glimmer of light through a junk bottle, but you can not tell what is behind it. So it is with the manifestations that come through credulous people. We must keep these two sides of the subject in view together. We must expect that spiritual manifestations will come primarily in close connection with the same conditions in which we find and expect to find great delusions and immense nonsense.

So far our view has been directed to spiritual force and the spiritual side of human life; now let us take a view of the social side in somewhat the same way. Assuming that the very center of heaven is love, that the Godhead itself is a marriage duality, that the distinction of male and female is in the life that never had a beginning, that the manifestation which we see throughout the living universe of sexual love, is a manifestation of what is in the cause of all things, that heaven is a honey-moon of hearts and spirits and bodies; and then assuming that this great force of love at the center of the universe is pressing outward to manifest itself in this world; we have substantially the same scientific problem as before, namely, to determine where this force will find its channel; and we have the same great law to guide us—that force always moves in the direction of least resistance. And where

does common sense teach us will be the least resistance? I should say that this great social force will first find its way out through persons and classes that are very prone to sexual feelings: for those feelings constitute the weakness in which such a force will find the least resistance. This is according to Christ's saying, that publicans and harlots shall go into the Kingdom of heaven before the Pharisees. And it is notable that his own associations with Mary Magdalene and other such women point in the same direction. He described his choice and tendency when he said, "The Son of man is come eating and drinking, and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." We see indications of the drift which I am pointing out in the fact that wherever there have been revivals they have been followed by socialisms and sexual outbreaks; and in the fact that the most decided manifestations of intercourse with the spiritual world, in whatever sects, are always complicated with social novelties. The Mormons are full of revelations on the one hand, and of a strange sexual theory on the other; and the Spiritualists are just as much distinguished by their free-love tendency as by their intercourse with the spiritual world. Thus it is evident that the two problems I have been discussing are one, and we may as well combine them into one question thus: Where will the

takes a great deal of pains to show up the *excessive credulity* which he found among the Eddys and all their adherents and visitors. His object is to show that it is absurd to expect anything but delusion among people who are thus besotted with easy belief in spiritual things. Now I should say that, according to the law that force takes the direction of the least resistance, the spiritual world might be expected to break out first among just such people as he describes. After getting a strong hold among them it might go on ascending to higher classes and so overwhelm the scientific aristocracy at last. But as a matter of course it would find the least resistance at the beginning among simple-minded, credulous people. Such seems to be the actual history of Spiritualism.

This view agrees substantially with the history of Christianity. Christ gives us the germ of that history in these words: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." And we may add, not only did this "seem good in the Father's sight," but it was rational, philosophical and just what might be expected from the law that force will, in all cases, take the direction of the least resistance. The revelation of the things of the Kingdom of God certainly did find its way into

the world through fishermen and such as Christ called babes in understanding, rather than through those who had hardened themselves in self-conceited wisdom. Paul gives us the same idea when he says, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are." And another apostle asks, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, *rich in faith?*" That means rich in credulity, rich in easy belief, which manifestly presents to the spiritual world the least resistance.

This is one view of the matter; here is another: At the same time that easy belief constitutes the weakness through which the spiritual force finds its way first, it is also true that this same weakness is liable to infinite delusions. Credulous minds easily become superstitious, and superstitious minds are easily overwhelmed with deceptive fantasies. We see that the easy belief which lays the various Spiritualist sects of modern times open to the advent of supernatural phenomena, is also easy acceptance of illusions, which make their representations of the spiritual

spiritual and social forces that constitute the central fire of the universe first find vent into this world? The answer is, Where there is the least resistance, and the least resistance will be where there is the most credulity and the most salacity.*

But is this all, or is it the best that can be said about the matter? Must we look for heaven to manifest itself among the superstitious and licentious? This is my answer: We see that credulity, taken by itself, is overwhelmed with falsehood; not only heaven presses on it, but all the devils this side of heaven press on it too, and they will come out first. We see also that salacity, taken by itself, is overwhelmed with falsehood; not only the heaven of God's love presses on it, but all the devils this side of God's love press on it too, and they will come out first. Where then lies safety in this longed-for meeting of heaven and earth? Here is the way: Credulity and salacity are balanced and tempered by the *love of the Truth*, and by nothing else.

* I use this word, salacity—perhaps improperly but for want of a better—to signify, not actual licentiousness, but the strong passions which usually tend to licentiousness. There is no word that I know of that designates those passions without the same evil significance that we find in the word salacity. The feelings and imaginations that inspired Solomon's song ought not to be called licentious; but let anyone try to find an epithet for them that will fairly express their intensity and he will find it must be some such word as obscene, libidinous, erotic, etc., all having some taint of baseness. I should call them salacious, with the proviso that I mean nothing bad; and that is the way I use the words salacious and salacity in the above talk. The salacity that I mean, bears the same relation to licentiousness, that credulity bears to superstition.

It is only as there is a supreme love of the Truth combined with our credulity that it is honest faith; and it is only as there is a supreme love of the Truth combined with our salacity that it is honest love. The great force that is coming to us out of heaven, is not only a spiritual force full of wonders for the credulous, and a social force full of love-delights for the salacious, but it is also a truthful force, full of instruction for the teachable, but full of terror for hypocrites and seducers; it is in fact the Spirit of Truth, and can manifest itself integrally only among those who are as honest as Jesus Christ.

And here the Scientists and Positivists may come into the circle that is getting ready for the outburst of heaven on earth. Their drill has not been in vain. They are needed in the combination that is to meet and draw the central fire. They are the representatives, to a certain extent, of the love of the truth. Their love of the truth is, for the present, separate from, and even hostile to, the passional elements of credulity and salacity which are first inviting the heavenly force. They have the love of the truth by itself, that is, purely intellectual truth; and that kind of truth is just as false as either credulity or salacity by itself. Their function in these great manifestations is to cultivate the intellectual side of human nature—the dry love of truth—and that function is important. If we

take what they contribute and combine it with the credulity and salacity of average human nature, we shall form a spiritual compound that will admit the whole spirit of heaven into this world. Mere credulity never will do it; mere salacity never will do it; and mere love of truth certainly never will do it; but if we can get these three together anywhere, *there* heaven will break through and the Millennium will begin.

THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

THE world and the world's doctors say that death is *natural*. Yes, I answer, and so is life natural. Indeed if there were no life there could be no death: so that life is natural first and death only afterward. It ought to be presumed, therefore, that life is *more* natural than death. They are exactly opposite to each other, and yet both are natural: therefore nature fights itself and antagonism is natural. The fact that a thing is natural, then, is no sure sign that it will prevail or has a right to prevail. It has a right to fight, but so has its antagonist; and the question which shall prevail must be determined by a higher power. It is natural for the cat to kill the mouse; but it is just as natural for the mouse to escape the cat with all its might, and a little more so, because life to the mouse is worth more than meat to the cat.

The statement, therefore, that death is natural, is not quite half of the truth: the whole truth is that a fight between life and death is natural, and that life being primary and better than death, has the right to prevail, and is most likely to in the long run, if there is a good God that manages the world.

Throughout the animal creation there is a universal and everlasting fight against death. Every living being, from the infinitesimal insect to the elephant and the whale, is striving with might and main to keep itself alive and stave off death as long as possible. But this fight, so far as brutes are concerned, is carried on by mere instinct and momentary struggles without concert or foresight or science.

Man, on the other hand, though an animal, is quite distinct from all other animals by the fact that in the fight with death he foresees, calculates, lays plans, uses science and combination; and even hopes in one way or another for immortality. It must be that man hates death far more intensely than the brutes can, because he understands its horrid character, can reflect upon its details, foresees and dreads it from afar. In fact man's life, unlike that of the brutes, is made miserable almost from birth by the fear of death. So that the universal revolt against death is immensely fiercer and stronger in the human sphere than anywhere below; and with this intensified hatred of death, man's foresight and invention go to work and organize all the results of experience and science into a vast system of strategy against the destroyer. With thousands of educated men for leaders, the millions are forming themselves into one great army of resistance to disease; and as disease is the cause

of death—nay, is death itself in its beginning—the courage and enthusiasm of this army must at last rise to the encounter with the central foe under whom the whole creation groans. Now must we believe that man, with all this advantage of power and reason, will have no better success in the war with death than the brutes have? Are we to be stopped in our plea against the king of terrors by the allegation that death is natural, when we know that this allegation only means that death has been natural to brutes and to men so long as they were like brutes, too ignorant to combine and fight the enemy scientifically?

What is the difference between man and the brute? The popular answer is, Man has a soul, and the brute has none. Very well; but is man with a soul amenable to death, just as if he were a brute without a soul? Must man, with the consciousness of an immortal, inner life, submit to the law that governs the brutes that perish? Reason demands that there should be a difference of bodily destiny between soul and no-soul. If the soulless brutes do die, that is no reason why immortal souls should have nothing but mortal bodies. Let like go with like. If we are immortal beings, I say it is natural that we should have immortal bodies.

SELECTION BY SIGNALS.

THE exact methods by which spirits operate on mortals in the various phases of what is called inspiration, is a very interesting subject of inquiry. Judging by my own experience, I should define one of the most important methods of spirit-leading as *selection by signals*. This may seem rather a blind formula, but I will make it clear by a very simple illustration. The ordinary method of receiving communications in Spiritualist circles has been by calling the alphabet and getting raps at the letters required. Here the thing done on one side is the presentation of twenty-six symbols to be selected from, and on the other an indication of the one symbol selected, by a sound. This is *selection by signals* in the crudest form.

Now compare with this the following more complicated process: In some emergency of life I am at a loss what to do; I close my eyes and turn to heaven for guidance; then I begin revolving in my mind all the possible methods of action that might be taken; when I come to a certain mental proposal I feel a thrill of assent and see a flash of fitness that makes me sure instantaneously

that I have found the course heaven has chosen for me. What is this but *selection by signals*? My revolving the various possible courses is the equivalent of calling the alphabet, and the thrill of assent is the equivalent of the rap.

Now I have to confess that this process has been the habit of my life for forty years. I have found my way in this manner through all vicissitudes. In this way I have chosen my beliefs. This is what I call "waiting on the Lord." This is what I principally mean when I claim inspiration and talk about being "led by the Spirit." And the more I reflect the more I am inclined to believe that all the processes of inspiration, in the Bible and out of it, are resolvable at last into this simple operation—*selection by signals*. The things done on one side and the other may vary infinitely. Instead of the slow calling of the alphabet there may be successions of thought swifter than lightning flashes; and instead of the audible rap at the right thought there may be internal signals known only to the heart; and signals and selections may mingle and alternate so rapidly and continuously that inspired action, though really compound, may seem to be simple and merely spontaneous; but after all these allowances for variations in details, I think it will be found that even such complex phenomena as speaking in unknown tongues, are reducible to the general principle of *selection by signals*.

THE SUPERIOR AFFECTION.

THERE is in the world a form of affection which is at least a shadow of the communism of life that exists in heaven; and that is *friendship*. It is generally too feeble to be called love, but like the heavenly love, it is universal in its nature. It is not limited to one's own family, or to the opposite sex, or by any considerations of age or rank. A man of genial heart has a circle of friendship that extends in every direction—towards those that are better and wiser than himself and those that are less so—to persons of both sexes and to all that are good; it transcends all family connections, and even national distinctions; it is as wide as humanity.

This affection is so weak and rare in the world that it is not regarded as very essential. While a man is held under the most imperative obligations to be affectionate to his family, it is not considered a matter of duty that he should cultivate friendship. Parental and matrimonial love are the affections that are regarded as sacred and all-important; but this matter of catholic friendship is left to take care of itself.

Our belief is that an affection very similar to friendship, and in substance the same thing, only far more intense, is considered in the Kingdom of Heaven the all-important affection. The Bible name for this affection is *brotherly love*; sometimes it is designated by the simple word *love*; but the thing intended by both these expressions is best illustrated, so far as we have any shadows of it in the world, by the affection between friends.

The generic condition of love is the mingling of life with life; and this has no limits whatever. Our life is as capable of pleasure in mingling with the life of God as in mingling with the life of women or men. The distinctions of sexes, of superior and inferior, of old and young, are, in the thorough analysis of this Bible affection, all obliterated; and the simple condition is, life mingling with life.

Certainly it would be a serious revolution in the world to set up on high as sovereign above all other affections, simple *friendship*, and to cherish and expand it until it should become the very bliss of life for both sexes and the whole family of man. Objectors say, in the first place, that according to the Bible and nature, attachment between parents and children is sacred above all other affections, and must take rank above this universal friendship. But we reply: God himself has provided in the Bible and in the funda-

mental arrangement of nature, for the supplanting of attachment between parents and children, and the substitution of another affection—that between man and wife. Man is expressly commanded by the Bible to leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife. Observe what a peculiar change it is that is here enjoined. The first relation is that which comes by blood, the family relation; but marriage must not take place in families; it must be between those who are strangers by blood. So it is necessary for a man to leave the family in which he was born and go into a foreign connection. The design evidently is to cause a man's *general* relation to the race—his connection with any possible foreign human being—to become paramount to his relation to mere kindred.

“But admitting this,” says the objector, “you must at least stop here; if God has prescribed that the matrimonial affection shall take the place of the original relation between parents and children, that is the end of his encroachments on family affection.” But our answer is, he has made provision also, both in nature and in the Bible, for the ultimate displacing of marriage; the terms of the marriage contract pledge the parties only “till death shall part them.” “The woman is bound by the law to her husband only as long as he liveth;” and death is sure to come. Death is a change

arranged by God for good purposes; and what are those good purposes—what is the meaning of this universal, separating agency? We answer, one object plainly is to dissolve the matrimonial connection. This second attachment being a limited and partial affair, God will not allow it to come to immortality. After it has accomplished its end of displacing the original family relation by a new partnership, then comes death and dissolves that. And what comes next? Why, the man passes into general circulation, into a form of society which embraces the dead and living; into the resurrection where there is no marrying nor giving in marriage; and he must find a way to dispose of his heart on a more liberal scale than marriage allows. So says nature, and the Bible follows its teachings.

Christ, who takes the place of death, says distinctly, not only "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me," but, "If any man come to me and *hate* not his father and mother and *wife*, he can not be my disciple." So one of the conditions of following Christ, is the displacement of the marriage connection by turning of the heart to God. A man must not only leave father and mother and cleave to his wife, but he must leave father and mother *and wife* and cleave to the Lord. "The time is short," says Paul; "it remaineth therefore that

*** they that have wives be as though they had none; *** for the fashion of this world passeth away." The weaning which is the end of both marriage and death, is consummated in the faith of Christ.

It is plain then that God, in training the human race, has provided for successive enlargements of the heart. The great object of the gospel of the cross is to complete this training by procuring a full surrender of the heart to God himself. We find final and permanent rest to our hearts only by devotion to God and communism with all. This communism of hearts is friendship, love without reference to sex or family ties. It is to expand until it becomes the all-controlling element of our life, the superior affection. A person might just as well stop in the childish state of filial love as to stop in marriage exclusiveness, which succeeds it. Most persons will allow that it is a great advancement to cease to be a child and become a man and husband; but it is equally as great an advancement to have the heart enlarged so as to cease to be a husband, and become a *universal lover*.

But sexual love evidently exists as a powerful element in human nature. What part has that to play, if we set catholic love on high as sovereign of the affections? The answer plainly is that amativeness must come in as the servant of catholic love. The present order of the affections

must be completely reversed. The acute love that the novels make so much of as being the primary affection, to which friendship is only an accessory, must itself subside into an accessory to friendship. Love that turns in all directions, toward God himself first, and then toward all mankind, must occupy the middle of the picture, and the specialities of amativeness must come in as accessories.

SELF-SURGERY.

THE difficulty in regard to judging evil in ourselves is, that it is too near us. We can not see things that are in our very eyes. They must be a little distance off, that we may get a clear view of them. It is comparatively easy for us to see other folk's faults. We can criticise others, when we can not criticise ourselves; and it is one good feature of our system of criticism, that it exercises us in sincerity and sharp-sightedness in judging character at some distance from us. But thorough self-judgment is possible and necessary, and sooner or later we

shall have to inspect ourselves just as we inspect others.

Besides the mechanical difficulty of seeing things in our own eyes, there is a difficulty in our sensibilities; they gather round to confuse and hinder when we undertake to judge ourselves. To deal truthfully with our faults in the midst of our sensibilities is almost impossible. But that is just what we must learn to do. We must learn to fight manfully in a battle with an enemy who has got nearer than our household, and nearer than our dearest friend, nearer than hand-grips or throat-grips, an enemy in the very presence of our inmost life

We all know how hard it is to be thoroughly sincere with a friend; but it is infinitely harder to be thoroughly sincere with ourselves. God can enable us to do it, and that is what we must pray for. God stands far enough off and is clear enough from the confusing sensibilities of the case, to be able to see us clearly and judge us truthfully; and if we submit ourselves to him, he can put his perceptions and his power and will into us, and so enable us to fight the closest of all battles—self-judgment. "The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. All things are open to his eyes." That is our hope. It ought to give us hope, that there is one who can look our enemy right in the

eye. Even if we could see our enemy we should not dare strike, for fear of hurting ourselves. Here comes God to help us. He can see our enemy and just where to strike him, and he is not afraid to do it. Let us put ourselves into his hands.

The enemy I am talking of is what Paul calls the "old man." "Put ye off the old man," he says. What is the "old man?" It is yourself—it is your old life. And how are you going to put it off? That is a harder problem than that of the butterfly breaking out of its chrysalis, or the snake shaking off its skin. It is a sharp dissection, and we shall want sharp eyes and sharp knives to do it with. Let us invite the surgery of God.

REPENTANCE.

THE word of Jesus Christ and the apostles to the people was, Repent. And there can be no doubt that the old-fashioned road of repentance is still the way of salvation. We enter the gate now as of old, by refusing superficial righteousness, and turning the heart toward God in true sorrow for previous neglect, ingratitude and obtuseness. It is by this that our spirits are refined and harmonized to love; by this that they are made meek and lowly enough to enter into the circulation of Christ. By repentance his life takes effect upon us, breaks down our egotism, and assimilates us to his body, making us accretions to himself.

Repentance may be defined to be the feeling of grief and humility, and the action consequent on that feeling, arising from the discovery of debts owing by us that we were not aware of; debts which instead of paying as we ought to have done, we have repaid with abuse. A really honorable, sensitive heart, such as God's spirit inspires, can not bear to be ungratefully in debt. It longs to pay its obligations, and especially must be in agony when it discovers that instead of doing so it has abused its creditor.

This operation of repentance was illustrated on the day of Pentecost, when the Jews whom Peter addressed found out the character of him whom they had slain. When they were made to see that Jesus was the best man among them, that in crucifying him they had destroyed one who was an example of righteousness and who had done them nothing but good, they were pricked to the heart. The conviction of ingratitude was overwhelming and their conversion was complete.

Now it may not be easy for us to bring home the facts which produced repentance in the Jews with the same vividness of application which they felt. We have not personally crucified Christ as that generation did, and it may be difficult for us to make out a practical connection between us and those who did crucify him, such as to give us the force of their conviction for the crime. Yet since we know that the sin of the world is a unit, the work of a common spirit of evil, mankind must hold themselves partners with the Jews in the debt of Christ's wrongs and death.

Aside from this, however, there is a way in which repentance may be brought to bear in this age, in a manner almost as powerful as it did in the apostolic time. Let it be demonstrated, as it may be, that the personal influence of Jesus Christ is the cause of all this great development

of civilization that is going on around us; that he is, silently and secretly, the great Master who is unfolding the sciences, who is the inventor of railroads and telegraphs and all the improvements in which the modern world glories; let it be shown as it will be shown, that he is the originator of this grand march of progress, and then the prophets of the time may turn upon mankind and say, See what you have been doing in your unbelief! See what neglect and contempt you have thrown upon your instructor and leader! See how you have gloried in the attainments he gives, as if they were your own; and how your petty schools of science have distinguished themselves as much for their infidelity as for their discoveries! Suppose this and more to be said, with such proof that men could not escape the edge of it. The effect would be, I think, a great repentance and a mourning for Christ, as a mother mourns for her dead first-born. The world would thus see that it has crucified its best friend by unbelief, as cruelly now as was done by the Jews and soldiers in ancient times.

I have no doubt that the very man (if we may so speak) whom the scientific world has fought, for instance, with their theory of geology, has been the teacher of geology, the discoverer to men of all the truth there is in it. It is his spirit that has been modestly illuminating the world with reference to this science, and patiently teach-

ing men, while they did not recognize it, but turned his very teaching against him. The same facts are true in respect to medicine. He has taught whatever is valuable in the medical schools, and then the science he has communicated has been used to cast ridicule on his spiritual theory of the cause and cure of disease.

The method of God in bringing men to repentance, is to do them good, and continue patiently to do them good, until at last they discover who is their benefactor, and realize that they have been evil and unthankful to the Being who brooded over them in mercy and kindness. Those who attain repentance are taught by Christ to co-operate in this method with God; that is, to do good themselves to all classes, that they may be like their Father in heaven, "who maketh the sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." We are to go on showing mercy, seeking the good of men, and thus making materials for conviction, and wait patiently till the truth is disclosed and people find to their astonishment that they have been abusing the hand that blessed them and was stretched out to save them. That will make repentance. Then people will be pricked to the heart, and a softening of the spirit will come on, by which they will part company with the hardness of the devil and join themselves to the softness of heaven. That transition is "repentance unto life."

SELF-LIMITATION.

THE diabolic element in desire is *impatience*. Desire of itself is a normal element of life; but one kind is patient and conscientious, and another kind is impatient and ruthless; and here is the distinction between good and evil beings.

We need not restrict this conception to the human and animal kingdoms, or even to the vegetable: we may go down to chemical attraction, the attraction of gravitation, cohesion, or any other of the forces of nature. The same craving element possesses them all, the tendency to seize and appropriate to themselves other things. These lower attractions have no conscience, no self-restraint. Gravitation and chemical attraction assert their right to things without any reference to other claims. The same is true of vegetable life; it is eager and remorseless in getting all it can, no matter at what expense to the rest of creation. So of animals; they have desires and some degree of skill to gratify those desires, but no conscience. They take what they want without troubling themselves about the wants of other beings. So it is with men in the natural state, that is, under the influence of the devil.

The whole wickedness of Satan and of all who

sin, consists in desire that is willful and reckless. They want a thing and will have it; they have no conscience about it; no patience, except for the sake of finally accomplishing their object; no respect at all for others' rights. The devil is wicked because he draws into himself everything that he possibly can without remorse. Desire in him is a raging will that is not controlled by principle, nor restricted and directed by conscience. Such desire is as cruel as death. It is like oxygen which has a ferocious attraction for everything, and is a principle of universal destruction. Satan is described as going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and this is a good description of all forces of attraction that have no conscience in them. We are not accustomed to think of the attraction in oxygen as wicked; but every form of attraction that has no conscience to circumscribe it and make it patient, is destructive in its very nature, and would devour the universe if it were left to take its own course. This ruthless desire for appropriation is no worse in Satan than it is in oxygen, except that he has a power of supplying himself with what he wants in a way far more effective than any impersonal form of desire can have. The power of destruction, which is the thing to be hated, is carried to a vastly higher degree in him, because he has the help of intellect and will.

On the other hand, the Divine spirit and all who are assimilated to it, while they have desires and attractions not less active and powerful than those of the diabolical spirit, have also proportioned to their desires, *conscience*, a disposition to do what is right. They not only inquire, What do I want, but, What do others want? and, How can these wants be reconciled? And with that deliberation, desire is *patient*, commands itself, and waits till it can get what it wants legitimately.

If you have ever witnessed a terrific fire, you have seen the merciless character of oxygen; how reckless it is of the misery it creates, burning bank-bills as unscrupulously as rags, and men and women as quick as either. Now "*God* is a consuming fire," as powerful and intense as that of oxygen; but with this difference: he is a *self-regulating* fire — what the oxygen-fire would be if it could thrust out its flame here and there intelligently, and burn up useless stuff without touching anything that is good. God is a fire that has discrimination and prudence in it. It can consume or let alone. It has an intelligent will, and does not work from mere propensity or blind attraction.

We shall learn at length to distinguish between good and bad spirits by this test: namely, a good spirit has self-restraint, but all bad spirits, when fairly tried, are found impatient. All of

them act greedily, in the same way as fire does. The fact that they want a thing is reason enough for them to take it.

In being made partakers of the divine nature we are taught patience; patience, negative and positive; patience in enduring evil, and patience in the pursuit of good. We must appreciate and drink in that element in God's spirit. He is called the "God of patience." This is a feature of his character which the devil can not imitate.

The spirit of patience is very different from legal restraint.. There is plenty of restraint operating on all these forms of voracious attraction that have no conscience. Oxygen can not get all it wants: it is under restraint, but not patient. Suppose you have an acid that has a voracious appetite for all organic substances and will destroy and consume whatever it can get at. If you put it into a phial, that does not alter the nature of the acid at all; it only keeps it from destructive operations. So the law simply keeps the voracious spirit within bounds. It does not change it or put any self-restraint into it.

What is wanted is a property in the acid itself that will make it voluntarily harmless. You must have a re-agent that is mighty to dissolve anything, and yet has in it a conscience and discretion that will prevent its acting anywhere except where it is wanted and ought to act.

Then you will not have to take care of it. You may set it anywhere, and it will not touch anything that it should not. That is the characteristic of all good spirits, and is what all bad spirits lack. They are bad *because* they lack self-limitation.

THE BEST NOVEL.

WHEN the novel-reader is half through his book, though he knows not how the story is coming out, he is sure that everything is conducting to some interesting conclusion, because he sees that the course of events is arranged by intelligence and not by chance. Belief in special providence gives the same dramatic interest to the book of experience. In proportion as we recognize God's superintendence, daily life becomes to us a regular story of the highest interest. Everything that takes place is seen to have concinnity, helping on a plot of skillful conception. The greatest amateur of the arts must be very deficient in taste if he can not appreciate the genius of God exhibited in the drama of special providence—if he is not an admirer of the "Great Unknown," whose conceptions are

written in events. No man can find his way to the soul of art, who ignores God's personal superintendence of human affairs. Poetry pleases because it indicates intelligent design of harmony. A writer may make a rhyme now and then accidentally; but if he makes a succession of rhymes, we are attracted by the evidence of intention and deliberate application of skill. In prose there is no intention to produce regular verbal harmonies; but in poetry, the measure and the rhyme delight us as the artful expression of genius; it would be absurd to suppose their symphonious arrangement a freak of chance. Yet such a supposition is no more absurd than is the conception of those who do not recognize special providences. Events might chime occasionally by chance, but a person of nice observation will see harmonies in his life and in life all around him, which are not prose but *poetry*, that is, the manifest device of intelligent genius. We see from time to time combinations of events which rhyme as curiously as any poetry we ever read; and we could as soon think that Poe's "Raven" was written without any intention of rhyme, as that these events have no author who designed them. To the spiritual eye every event is significant, harmonizing to carry out a divine pre-conception. The believer has a study in events and life-history infinitely more interesting than the lore of dead languages and ancient phi-

losophers. He finds in the works of God a universal language, that all may understand—books older and better than Homer, that all may read.

“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; let not the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; *but let him that glorioth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth God.*”

LIBERTY.

THERE are two kinds of liberty, and they look in exactly opposite directions. One is the liberty of *independence*. “Hands off, leave me alone!” is its language; “I want to do as I please without interference.” The other is the liberty of *unity*—the liberty of fellowship—liberty to approach one another and love one another—the liberty of Communism. There is but little conception, generally, of this second kind of liberty; and yet it is greatly superior to the first. If I were called upon to say what is the greatest conceivable blessing, I should have to reply that it is a genuine love feast—a flowing together of hearts. This is possible; we may

enjoy perfect communism of life, and so realize that "we sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Now which liberty will you choose—the liberty of independence, or the liberty of union?—the liberty of an insect to fly off into darkness and isolation, or the liberty of children of God to come into Communism with him and with one another—the liberty to be alone, or the liberty that makes a happy home? I have chosen the liberty that makes a happy home, and the liberty to enjoy that home with all who love God. There is but one way to make such a home, and but one way to obtain the liberty of its highest enjoyment, namely, by all receiving Christ into our hearts and each becoming, as he was, "meek and lowly" enough to live with others in peace and harmony.

There is a great deal of talk about the right to freedom. What is that right? And to whom does it belong? It is evidently not a right that attaches to mere animal life or personality. No one will affirm that animals have a right to unrestrained liberty; for they would abuse it and make it a curse to themselves as well as to others. If our cattle were all let loose and allowed to go wherever they please, they would ruin our interests and finally ruin themselves. Then there are certain classes of men—thieves, murderers, lunatics, etc.—who also have no

right to unrestrained liberty, because they would abuse it. Then as we rise in the scale of beings, where shall we stop and say, "Here is a class that may have perfect liberty; here are men and women who can be trusted with liberty, because they will use it without abusing it?" I answer, Only those who have the meek and lowly heart of Jesus Christ, and who have been saved from selfishness; for they only know how to rightly use that liberty. I am certain that sooner or later, in the ages to come, it will be regarded as the very climax of absurdity to imagine that a sinner—a man governed by selfish passions—deserves liberty. Christ uttered a philosophical and scientific truth when he said, "Whom the Son maketh free is free indeed." "Whoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," and cannot be a freeman. Christ, as a Savior from sin, is the liberator, and can make us free by setting us free from selfishness and giving us meek and lowly hearts. When our hearts are purified, so that we can live in harmony without envy or jealousy or grabbing, then we are prepared for true liberty and not till then. Then we shall have liberty to enter heaven itself—to range through the palaces of God—to enter into full communism with one another and with all the good—become one with Christ, with all his angels, and with God.

That is what I mean by perfect liberty: and

no one can gain it except as he gains the meek and lowly spirit and has his heart purged of all selfishness by Christ. He is the door and the only door leading to perfect liberty.

A person may ask, "Don't you desire other liberty than that you have described? Don't you crave centrifugal liberty, the liberty of independence and isolation?" I answer, No. I don't think I ever appreciated that kind of liberty as some do; but if I did, that appreciation is now gone from me. I have no taste for it. My prayer now is that God will restrain any tendency of that kind that may exist in me; that he will clip my wings, if I undertake to fly in that way, and put me through any experience necessary to purge out of me any remaining desire for that kind of liberty. The liberty of isolation and war I would hate; it is the liberty of death and destruction. I love the liberty to be good, to draw nigh to God, to be married to Christ, to love him supremely and be faithful to him through life and death. That liberty will lead to all other liberties worth having.

The kind of liberty first mentioned, the liberty of isolation and independence, is false and deceiving. It promises what it cannot perform. It promises to make men free by sending them away from God into the darkness of unbelief. That kind of liberty proves in the end to be horrible bondage. In praying for liberty we ought

first of all to pray for deliverance from the false liberty of infidelity, from the temptation to doubt our immortality and the integrity of Christ. Our cry should be, "O Lord, bind us to thyself; shut us up to faith; force us, if need be, into the liberty of heaven, the liberty of unity."

We all know there is such a thing as having exquisite happiness in the heart; we know that the love of God can give us infinite joy. It is offered to us; and why should we not demand it as a right—the liberty to have all the time that religious experience which gives unspeakable happiness. That is according to the promise of Christ: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." It is a possible thing for us, as it was for the Primitive Christians, to bore till we strike this water and have a flowing and unfailing well in our hearts. Read the epistles of Paul and Peter and James and John, and you will see that they had "struck oil;" that they had in their hearts a flowing fountain of joy unspeakable and full of glory. Let us conceive of such experience as the greatest privilege of true liberty. All our Communistic arrangements, all our enterprises and labors, if we rightly understand them, are intended to give us just that liberty—the liberty of good religious experience, the liberty to have in our hearts

an overflowing fountain of joy and peace, the liberty of faith, liberty to walk in the light of heaven. This is the liberty that makes a happy home.

OUR CONTRIBUTION.

WE are making a great present to the world at great cost to ourselves, and that present is, the liberty to think and speak about marriage as about other subjects. Hitherto marriage has been considered beyond the reach of discussion; it has not been allowable to think that there could be any serious wrong in it. There has been the same kind of feeling about its sacredness that there is in the old countries about kings. And what is curious, this idea of the unapproachable sacredness of marriage is kept up in full force among people who are practically disloyal to it. How many do we know that are fighting behind the fortifications of that institution, firing away at us with ammunition belonging to it, and yet practically are utterly disloyal to marriage — more so than we are.

The really good object of marriage may be stated as the production of family blessings. There is a certain amount of courting, kissing,

embracing, amatory conversation, sexual intercourse, begetting, bearing, nursing and educating children, all of which come under the general head of family blessings. I accept it as the natural, legitimate business of human nature to produce these blessings. But the question is, how to produce them of the very best quality and in the greatest quantity. Can they be best produced by families in pairs, or by larger partnerships? We will assume that in each case the object is the same, and that the estimation and appreciation of the object is the same; and then the simple, practical question remains, Which is the best way to secure this object; by dotting the world over with little families consisting of pairs, or by larger associations?

Perhaps there has not been experiment enough in larger associations to settle the question; but people assume that it is to be done in pairs. I consider that as unwise as it would be to say that all the business in New York city must be done in firms of two. As human happiness depends in a great measure on these family blessings, I believe that a vastly greater amount of happiness could be produced by large corporations than by individual pairs. The world must have liberty to test this question; it must have liberty to try all sorts of families, and not be confined to what may be called the one-horse family. It is just such a problem as that of the

railroads. We have got beyond thinking that a one-horse wagon is all we can ride in; we have conveyances now-a-days that will carry six or seven hundred people at once; and the world must certainly have liberty to find out which combinations are best for producing family blessings.

We are presenting the world with that liberty at our own cost—the liberty to think, try experiments and discuss this great subject of the production of family blessings, without any holy horror of new inventions. We shall have to stand and take the thrashing of the whole world in this matter until we get that liberty and can present it to mankind. A very malicious whipster can get up and give us a castigation for heresy, corruption, licentiousness and all that sort of thing. But we will not be discouraged; we shall have this liberty and shall give it to the world. It cost Paul a great deal more than we shall lose to present to the Gentile world the liberty of the gospel and of being saved from Judaism. He had to be whipped and stoned for daring to give the world the liberty to believe in Christ.

THE DAY-STAR.

TO believe on God is undoubtedly the great duty of all duties. But a mere sense of duty, in this case as in many others, may urge us into legality that will defeat our object. Persons who are under concern of mind about salvation, and of course very anxious to do their duty in regard to seeking and finding God, may get in a sort of hurry to believe, and so try to push their faith, not only beyond their sight, but beyond their insight, which is as bad as swallowing things utterly indigestible. God, we may be sure, does not want us to believe what is not true; he is not demanding of us anything irrational; he only wants us to be faithful to what we do see and know to be true.

God is a Spirit, and we are semi-material: that is, have bodies as well as souls. The instinct of natural reason should tell us that our spirits ought to have the principal attention, and that things pertaining to our spirits are the most valuable. Therefore we ought to form spiritual acquaintances; and if God is a Spirit, it is our first duty to become acquainted with him and his ways. It is just as possible for us to cultivate

acquaintance with God as with one another. We know that two persons living in the same house may go along for years in a state of mutual indifference, just because they have never paid any attention to each other; whereas if they choose to look into each other's hearts, it becomes a very simple thing to get acquainted and have a mutual interest. The case between our souls and God is parallel to this. We may go along in a state of indifference to him and his works, and easily keep our attention on outward things, forgetting him and living as though there were no God. And we may, on the other hand, consider that it is of the utmost importance that we should get into fellowship with the living God; and with that view we may watch for his providences, and when we discover any movement that we know comes from God, we can fix our attention on it and make the most of it, and get into the habit of doing so. Thus we can become skillful in discovering God's movements toward us. This is something we can train ourselves to and improve in by practice.

We can in this way approach God. If we are vigilant, every discovery we make, every good feeling it awakes in us, every voluntary excitement of the attention toward that discovery, improves our acquaintance with God and carries on the process of blending with him. He does not require us to believe things that are not true

or that we do not see. He simply wishes to have us wide awake to discern the leadings of his Spirit and to discover his providences in the events that are going on about us. This is a simple and practical thing — one that a child can understand; yet it is a work, and in some respects it is a hard work, which requires a determined purpose and a very firm control of the attention. In some cases it requires a mighty effort to see what we *ought* to see, and give it the attention it deserves, when the devil and all his agents are endeavoring to divert our attention.

If we are faithful to our convictions and go on in this work day after day and year after year, fighting the good fight of faith as we know God wishes to have us, the time will come when the day will dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts. We shall see God and cease to grope in the dark. We shall have the sensation of God himself in our hearts all the time.

Peter says, in reference to the sure word of prophecy, "Ye do well that ye take heed thereto, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts." That is a text that every one ought to think of a great deal. Avail yourselves of the Bible and every external help that you can use to get an acquaintance with God; and the end of all this work will be that the day-star will rise

in your heart. Peter's meaning in this text is a reality almost literal, and he points to a feeling that is a great deal better than any you ever had in looking at the brightest star.

Our hearts were fashioned with reference to seeing God. We perceive matter in many ways, by smell, by sound, by taste, by feeling and by sight—sight being probably the brightest and most satisfactory perception of all. Our spirits have the same variety of perceptions, and we may be said in a certain sense to feel after God before we see him. Our hearts are blind to begin with. A blind man goes feeling around with his hands—using all the senses he has. So we may feel after God; and the beauty of the case is, that if we use what senses we have, and do the best we can to find God by groping, the time will come when our hearts will be purified and we shall see him. To know God in this way is eternal life. The heart opens itself to God and becomes purified and the day-star of his love rises in it. It is then immortal and can not die because God can not die.

We may be certain that God will meet us if we seek him. "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you." We are not at work alone; he is feeling after us; and we may be sure of this, that the feelers will meet. He cares but little about being worshiped with words and show, but he is feeling after hearts that will take

him in and worship him in spirit and in truth. "Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with me." We must not aspire to anything less than getting the permanent presence of the living God in our hearts. We must not be content to have it for a moment and then let it go, as they used to in the old revival times. The sun is not going to rise a little above the horizon and then go down again. We must have a day-dawn that will last forever. The dawning of God in our hearts is really the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the daylight of eternity.

THE END.