

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1995 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

LIVING ILLUSTRATIONS

By Beverly Carradine

* * * * *

Digital Edition 01/18/95
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

TITLES--[With Corresponding Topics To The Right]

A Blunder Of Wise Men--[S-Topics]
A Bruised One--[A-Topics]
A Bullet Of Bread--[K-Topics]
A Change Of Opinions--[R-Topics]
A Coffee Revival--[S-Topics]
A College Recollection--[M-Topics]
A Cry On The Rack--[A-Topics]
A Female Shaker--[S-Topics]
A Forcible Hint--[B-Topics]
A Fountain Run Dry--[D-Topics]
A Human Pillared Tabernacle--[P-Topics]
A Locomotive Parable--[S-Topics]
A Man Who Looked Like Christ--[S-Topics]
A Mighty Poor Meeting--[W-Topics]
A Nocturnal Memory--[M-Topics]
A Persistent Organ Grinder--[E-Topics]
A Plea For Freedom--[F-Topics]
A Police Court Scene--[S-Topics]
A Serious Mistake--[M-Topics]
A Settling Sentence--[J-Topics]
A Silent Town--[S-Topics]
A Touching Epitaph--[H-Topics]
A Weak-Minded Little Girl--[P-Topics]
All Poor Critters--[P-Topics]

An Unfortunate--[S-Topics]
Bunsby In The Pulpit--[S-Topics]
Difference In Minds--[M-Topics]
Doing Nicely, Thank You--[T-Topics]
Don't Be Too Confidential--[C-Topics]
Doubtful Praise--[F-Topics]
Effect Of A Chant--[L-Topics]
Everything Is Quiet Bishop--[Q-Topics]
Facial Lying--[L-Topics]
Fretting--[F-Topics]
Garlands And Stones--[T-Topics]
Home Talent--[S-Topics]
I Saw Your Little Bird--[C-Topics]
I Will Have My Way Or Die--[S-Topics]
Ignorance Of Scripture--[S-TOPICS]
Impatience--[I-Topics]
Knocked Into The Kingdom--[C-Topics]
Let Him Have It--[L-Topics]
Lonely Young Men --[L-Topics]
Meaningless Prayers--[P-Topics]
Missing The Car--[J-Topics]
Misunderstood--[B-Topics]
Plagiarism--[P-Topics]
Puzzling Cases--[E-Topics]
Remorse--[R-Topics]
Saved Through Katy-Dids--[C-Topics]
Shifting Blame--[B-Topics]
Shouting By Proxy--[S-Topics]
Tarry At Jericho--[S-Topics]
Tenting By A Graveyard--[L-Topics]
The Absent Singer--[A-Topics]
The Aching Tooth--[C-Topics]
The Alarm Whistle--[F-Topics]
The Backslidden Tender--[W-Topics]
The Bannerless Building--[L-Topics]
The Battery--[H-Topics]
The Bird In The Tent--[H-Topics]
The Bitter Spirit--[B-Topics]
The Call Of The Pine Tree--[S-Topics]
The Cat Bird--[C-Topics]
The Clock Store--[R-Topics]
The Cut Dollar Bill--[E-Topics]
The Dead Engineer--[D-Topics]
The Denuded Rooster--[T-Topics]
The Discarded Music Box--[I-Topics]
The Disfigured Hand--[M-Topics]

The Ditch And Its Lesson--[P-Topics]
The Door Knob--[F-Topics]
The Elevator Man--[W-Topics]
The Faithful One--[F-Topics]
The Gateway Of Blue--[S-Topics]
The Graphophone--[E-Topics]
The Gray Wolf--[D-Topics]
The Horizon--[R-Topics]
The Ice Yacht--[C-Topics]
The Larger Building--[E-Topics]
The Mud Hole--[H-Topics]
The Old Shotgun--[H-Topics]
The Ostrich--[P-Topics]
The Power Of The Word Of God--[W-Topics]
The Power Of Kindness--[K-Topics]
The Prolonged Whistle--[L-Topics]
The Pullet And Ostrich Egg--[P-Topics]
The Quartette--[H-Topics]
The Red Check--[B-Topics]
The Red River Raft--[F-Topics]
The Red Wood Tree--[E-Topics]
The River Jim--[S-Topics]
The Round And Flat System--[V-Topics]
The Sickness Dodge--[R-Topics]
The Sky Piercer--[S-Topics]
The Skyscrapers--[S-Topics]
The Small Canine--[W-Topics]
The Tailless Fox--[W-Topics]
The Through Car--[E-Topics]
The Tiger Head--[D-Topics]
The Unbridled Tongue--[D-Topics]
The Vacant Chair--[A-Topics]
The Vision Of Faith--[V-Topics]
The Visit Of A Frog--[L-Topics]
The Voice Of The Sea--[H-Topics]
The Wasp--[G-Topics]
The Wire Fence Posts--[P-Topics]
The Yellow Jackets--[S-Topics]
They Say--[T-Topics]
Two Death Bed Scenes--[D-Topics]
Two Domestic Incidents--[E-Topics]
Unconcealable Joy--[J-Topics]
Untimely Singing--[E-Topics]
Where Art Thou--[B-Topics]
Where's Them Boys?--[W-Topics]
Workers Misjudged--[W-Topics]

Worrying--[W-Topics]

* * * * *

TOPICS--[With Corresponding Titles To The Right]

A-TOPICS

Abiding Of God And His Work--[The Absent Singer]

Absence--[The Vacant Chair]

Adoption--[A Bruised One]

Anguished Utterances--[A Cry On The Rack]

B-TOPICS

Backbone--[A Forcible Hint]

Backslidden--[Where Art Thou?]

Benefactors (Christlike)--[Misunderstood]

Bitterness--[The Bitter Spirit]

Blame--[Shifting Blame]

Blood Of Christ--[The Red Check]

C-TOPICS

Candor Marvelled At--[A Mighty Poor Meeting]

Carnal Discontent--[The Aching Tooth]

Cliches and Exaggerations Therein--[The Backslidden Tender]

Confiding In Others--[Don't Be Too Confidential]

Conversion Through Unusual Occurrences--[Knocked Into The Kingdom]

Conversion Through Unusual Occurrences--[Saved Through Katy-Dids]

Creation--[I Saw Your Little Bird]

Criticism--[The Cat Bird]

Cross Of Christ--[The Ice Yacht]

D-TOPICS

Dead Spiritually--[The Dead Engineer]

Death Of The Wicked--[Two Death Bed Scenes]

Decor In The Home--[The Tiger Head]

Discernment Of False Professors--[The Gray Wolf]

Disclosing Personal Matters--[The Unbridled Tongue]

Dried Fountains--[A Fountain Run Dry]

E-TOPICS

Entire Sanctification A Better Experience--[The Larger Building]
A Second Work Of Grace--[The Cut Dollar Bill]
An Available Higher Life--[The Redwood Tree]
Faithfulness To Proclaim--[A Persistent Organ Grinder]
Its Continuance Worth The Cost--[The Graphophone]
Misjudged--[Puzzling Cases]
Needed To Persevere--[The Through Car]
Unsuccessful Seekers--[Two Domestic Incidents]
Unsuccessful, Singing Seekers--[Untimely Singing]

F-TOPICS

False Goodness--[Doubtful Praise]
Fire Of Sin--[The Alarm Whistle]
Flattery--[The Door Knob]
Flow Of The Spirit--[The Red River Raft]
Freedom--[A Plea For Freedom]
Fretting--[Fretting]
Friends--[The Faithful One]

G-TOPICS

Getting And Regretting--[The Wasp]

H-TOPICS

Handiwork Of God--[The Voice Of The Sea]
Harmony--[The Quartette]
Helpfulness--[The Mud Hole]
Holiness Fighters--[The Old Shotgun]
Hope For A Future Life--[A Touching Epitaph]
Hoping--[The Battery]
Humbling--[The Bird In The Tent]

I-TOPICS

Impatience--[Impatience]
Instruments Used By God--[The Discarded Music Box]

J-TOPICS

Joy--[Unconcealable Joy]
Judgment Of Others Perilous--[Missing The Car]
When Also Faulty--[A Settling Sentence]

K-TOPICS

Kindness A Winning Weapon--[A Bullet Of Bread]
Its Conquering Power Needed--[The Power of Kindness]

L-TOPICS

Lack Of Grace--[The Bannerless Building]
Law Of The Lord--[Effect Of A Chant]
Learning--[Let Him Have It]
Life In This World--[Tenting By A Graveyard]
Light--[The Visit of a Frog]
Loneliness--[Lonely Young Men]
Loquacity Or Silence In Testimony--[The Prolonged Whistle]
Lying--[Facial Lying]

M-TOPICS

Marks Of The Lord Jesus--[The Disfigured Hand]
Memory--[A Nocturnal Memory]
Mental Freshness--[Difference In Minds]
Mixed Metaphors--[A College Recollection]
Money-Raising--[A Serious Mistake]

P-TOPICS

Pillars For Holiness--[A Human Pillared Tabernacle]
Pillars Who Truly Support--[The Wire Fence Posts]
Plagiarism By Preachers--[Plagiarism]
Its Certain Discovery--[The Pullet And The Ostrich Egg]
Pleasing God--[A Weak-Minded Little Girl]
Poor--[All Poor Critters]
Prayer--[Meaningless Prayers]
Preliminaries--[The Ditch and Its Lessons]
Pride--[The Ostrich]

Q-TOPICS

Quietness--[Everything Is Quiet, Bishop]

R-TOPICS

Regulation--[The Clock Store]
Rest In The Holy Ghost--[The Horizon]
Restitution--[A Change Of Opinions]
Revival Meetings--[The Sickness Dodge]
Rule Or Ruin Spirit--[Remorse]

S-TOPICS

Satisfaction--[The Gateway Of Blue]
Scientific Errors--[A Blunder Of Wise Men]
Scripture--[Ignorance Of Scripture]
Seasoning Of Young Preachers--[Tarry At Jericho]
Second Coming Of Christ--[A Man Who Looked Like Christ]
Self-Sacrifice--[A Locomotive Parable]
Self-Will--[I Will Have My Way Or Die]
Shaking--[A Female Shaker]
Shallow Professors--[The River Jim]
Shattered Minds--[An Unfortunate]
Shouting Mistakenly--[Shouting By Proxy]
Silence--[A Silent Town]
Singers For Revival Meetings--[Home Talent]
Singing Of Christian Songs--[A Police Court Scene]
Sky Piercers--[The Sky Piercer]
Social Gospel--[A Coffee Revival]
Soul Of Man--[The Call Of The Pine Tree]
Stature Thought To Be Great--[The Sky-Scrapers]
Straying From The Path Of Duty--[The Yellow Jackets]
Swayed Without Substance--[Bunsby In The Pulpit]

T-TOPICS

Talk About You--[They Say]
Testimony Ceases When Experience Lost--[The Denuded Rooster]
False--[*"Doing Nicely, Thank You."*]
Treatment Of A Faithful Preacher--[Garlands and Stones]

V-TOPICS

Vacillation--[The Round And Flat Systems]
Vision Of Faith--[The Vision Of Faith]

W-TOPICS

Word Of God--[The Power Of The Word Of God]
Workers--[Workers Misjudged]
Works--[*"Where's Them Boys?"*]
Worldly Reformers--[The Tailless Fox]
Worry Needless--[The Elevator Man] Over "Supposings"
Worrying Profitless--[The Small Canine]
Write-Ups For Church Publications

* * * * *

LETTER A TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Abiding Of God And His Work

SUBTOPIC: Contrasted With Transitory Humanity

TITLE: The Absent Singer

I am penning these lines from Omaha, on my way to my next camp meeting in South Dakota. I stopped off a couple of days here to rest before beginning the next battle.

A few years ago I held a meeting in this city. Each night after leaving the big tent, I would come back to my room at the hotel and sit down exhausted in a chair by the window at 11 o'clock, and remain buried in thought looking out at a star-sprinkled sky until midnight.

Just below me was a kind of summer garden, where men gathered, smoked and chatted, while a young man, accompanied by several musical instruments, sang a number of touching songs and ballads.

From the same lofty room window of the hotel I have looked down two nights. But the garden has been displaced by a large brick building. The audience that used to sit over there is departed. And the young man who sang is gone. I catch myself wondering where he is. The only things that have not changed and still abide are the solemn stars and the silent but eloquent sky. Men come and go; but God and his work abide forever.

TOPIC: Absence

SUBTOPIC: Realization of and Reasons for

TITLE: The Vacant Chair

Here is a piece of household furniture that is beheld everywhere. Other articles of the home furnishing may come or go, may be present or absent, according to the taste or caprice of the owners of the dwelling, but this strangely pathetic and all but ubiquitous thing called the vacant chair is to be found in palace and hovel, in club room and hotel, in legislative chamber and in business exchange. Wherever we go we notice the empty seat. The chair is left, but a face and form is gone that once being beheld there gives a meaning, interest and value to the piece of furniture that could never be expressed in dollars by the thousand or the million.

Whether the chair is made vacant by death, or by an absence of months and years, still its peculiar power is exercised. Its very emptiness has a voice and language; its silence pleads; its pathetic loneliness seems in a strange sense to atone for the mistakes and failures of the past, while at the same time it recalls the kind and beautiful things which the absent occupant once performed. So that we turn away with a swelling heart and filling eyes, all but overpowered with the feeling that some how the big, busy world has become wonderfully empty and that life is hardly worth the living--and all because of a single vacant chair.

When the absent one has been the soul of kindness, lived to make others happy and comfortable, the empty seat then becomes so powerful in its mute eloquence that it has to be moved out of sight to the garret or lumber room. Truly a person needs no better lawyer to argue in his behalf in the ecclesiastical, social, and home circle than his or her own vacated chair.

Those that have been emptied by unkindness injustice and wrong cannot be numbered. They are to be found in the church, both in pulpit and pew. Faithful men and women for no other reason than that they have been true to the Bible, to the Blood of Christ, and to the doctrines of Methodism have been invited out, frozen out, and legislated from their places. Other forms are thrust quickly into the forsaken seat to keep memory and conscience quiet; but the fact remains that "David's place is empty," a piece of history that is remembered on earth, and never forgotten in heaven.

The vacant chair is to be found also in the household. There are women today driven forth into a lonely, desperate struggle for bread, through the drunkenness, unkindness and unfaithfulness of their husbands. And there are not only women forced from home, but sons, husbands, and fathers.

We are not sure that Wesley deserved all the credit he obtained for his intense activity and multiplied labors. He had no home life.

We have known a son exiled from home by the perpetual faultfinding and petulant outbreaks of his parents. They were in financial trouble, and allowed this misfortune to make them inconsiderate, harsh and unjust. When the youth was in a far distant State, his lonely chair, sitting back against the wall, did some faithful pleading as well as rebuking.

We know men who have been slowly but surely pushed out of their own homes. King Lear is not an unnatural or impossible character. We have seen husbands driven out of their true places in the household by priests, preachers, society people, mothers-in-law, and female friends of the wife.

Sometimes it is none of these, but the woman has a loveless nature, and lives an intensely selfish life. Sometimes the wife is a kind of hermaphrodite in mental and moral constitution. This of course means shipwreck to the happiness of the family.

There is something very pathetic in the sight of men spending the entire day in city libraries, or sitting for hours in the lobbies and reading rooms of hotels. It is true that some are there for reasons that exculpate the family circle, but there are many others who frequent these and other similar places because while owning or renting a house, they have no home.

There are men today who, in leaving office and store, or jumping off from the train with satchel or valise in hand, do so with a thrill at the heart and in profound thankfulness to God for that section of Paradise left in the world, that sweet Asylum of Rest on earth--a congenial household, a home of peace and love.

But there are many other mansions, cottages and cabins where "David's place is empty." And he has been banished by some kind of injustice or wrong. Like David he endured long, but slipped away at last. The cold look was cast so often. The javelin of reproach shot so frequently. His presence seemed so to disturb and annoy. He was so often made to feel he was in the way; that one day his place was empty. Or others crowded him out, and there was nothing to do, but to go.

And now the gun, riding whip, book, paper, slipper and dressing gown are put away out of sight. The portrait is removed, for its face troubles. The chair is pushed back into the corner, and various efforts are made to remove all signs that another being ever belonged to the household.

But little things come back unexpectedly, a picture is found in an old trunk, and the abandoned, lonesome looking chair has a voice of its own, and above all there is a presence that strangely fills the absence and that will not down or depart.

The Bible informs us that David's vacant seat remained empty forever. He never came back. He was in other places, but never in this one again. He sat at other tables, but never more at the one from which he had been cruelly driven.

It is this feature which makes certain vacant chairs one of the most heart moving of spectacles.

The preacher cast out of the synagogue from preaching and pressing Full Salvation, never gets back to the pulpit from which he was flung. He may out-grow the seat, or get a better one, but history records the curious fact that he never sits again in the chair from which he was driven. There is a can not in the case, as well as a will not or shall not. According to what we see in life there is no backward path for such cases. The place they leave is never filled by them again.

So the boy driven from home by unkindness comes back no more. The daughter rushed into marriage to escape unpleasant surroundings, does not care to revisit the scenes of past wretchedness. The man outraged and wronged for successive years, at last turns his thoughts and pursuits into other channels for occupation and happiness, slips away from the unhappy environment and is gone. His place, like that of David, becomes empty forever.

The seasons come and go; people arrive and depart; the house is lighted up; the song floats out of the window; the table is set and has its guests; but some one is gone, who never returns.

One memorable hour the javelin was shot for the last time. Next day the seat was empty. Some one had gone. Another vacant chair had been added to that already great number, which are to be found all over the land, in church and State, in hall and home, each one standing for some melancholy chapter of life history, and speaking in its dumb but eloquent way of unrighted wrong, of unconsolated sorrow, and of some absent wandering one who never will return again.

TOPIC: Adoption

SUBTOPIC: From Satan's Abuse

TITLE: A Bruised One

There has always been something peculiarly affecting and heart appealing to us in the sight of that unfortunate class called the weak-minded.

Here are beings who are made to suffer heavily and carry life burdens and endure lamentable deprivations from no fault of their own, but through the sin, neglect, or culpable carelessness of others.

When they are born in this state, or pass into it in early childhood from some fall, blow, or sickness that could in almost every instance have been averted, the case becomes all the more pathetic.

Upon the face of these "bruised ones" usually comes a vacant expression, an absence of that fine facial handwriting of the soul, which the spirit impeded in some way cannot trace on brow or lip or in eye; and so a blankness instead is left that moves the heart to its depths over the contemplation of suffering innocence, and the remediless wrong of a lifetime.

Some of these afflicted ones wear a look of woe that goes like an arrow to the heart. Others bear a cowed, frightened expression which makes the tears gather swiftly as we gaze. The world looks so big and cruel unto them, and from that great world they have gotten nothing but an heritage of pain and trouble.

In one of our meetings we saw in the front pew one of the class we have been attempting to describe. The bruised one in this case was a lad of about eight years of age. The countenance bore that melancholy, unmistakable sign of an injured mind. The wistful, pathetic mien and appearance was there that is always observable in these cases, and that has never failed yet to bow down completely the heart of the writer.

In this instance the touching expression was in the eyes, although the face had pleading lines. It impressed us that the child had received many a rough word and cruel blow, and was expecting more.

Now and then, under an act of kindness, there would be something like a flash of light in the countenance, to disappear immediately the next instant, while the old half-fearing, half-expectant, wistful look that would puzzle language to describe, would settle once more on the poor, little, pinched, woe-begone face.

Each morning before entering the pulpit, we would sit a few minutes by his side on the front pew, where he had for some reason posted himself. Through repeated gifts of nickels and dimes we ingratiated ourself into his favor, and found him after that, nestling up to us when we took our seat by him.

With a heart that fairly ached over the boy, whose sad history we had learned as to his poverty, cabin home, rough household circle and their harshness to him, we could not keep from putting an arm about the little fellow and speaking tenderly and lovingly to him.

We understood afterward that the tableau we presented afforded considerable talk as well as amusement to some in the audience. It may have been so, but it was a matter of indifference to us, as we had no thought at the time for the people around us, who did not need our sympathy, but both mind and heart were on the stricken lad before us, who had received such a knock-down blow in his birth and life, and for no fault of his own.

One day we presented him with a handsome pearl-handled knife. His father, a low, coarse, selfish being, took it from him, appropriating it for his own use, and giving the boy a rusty, broken-bladed barlow that came nearer being nothing in the knife line than anything we ever beheld.

The child had accepted the robbery without a murmur, being accustomed to wrongs and ill-treatment of every kind all the time. But we said to him, "You must tell your father to return you that knife; I gave it to you, not him." He nodded his head with a kind of dawning intelligence or apprehension that he had been unjustly dealt with. But the light soon faded, and he seemed content with the barlow.

One morning after one of our small silver coin gifts to him, he nestled up to us, and, with a pleading look on his face, said,

"Ain't I your little boy?"

And with our eyes brimming over with tears and a voice we could command only with difficulty, we replied as we placed an arm around him:

"Yes, you are my own little boy."

And his face lighted up, and a patient little smile came on his lips, while he gazed at us with unmistakable love and gratitude in his eyes.

One day he told us, "I'm going up to the altar tonight to get saved."

He came, looked around wonderingly for some time; and then hid his face in his hands as he saw others doing.

The sight of the little, unkempt head bowed down on the altar rail, the bruised one at the footstool of God, was exceedingly affecting.

Each day after this he would say to us, "I'm coming back to the altar tonight. I'm going to get saved again."

Poor little fellow! Somehow we felt that the Good Shepherd would not let this injured lamb fail to reach the heavenly fold; but would bring him up and through in spite of every adverse condition and circumstance, and would see to it that the next life for the child would be better and happier for him in every way.

In addition to all this the lad furnished a lot of parable teaching to us. We said as we studied his case, that we were, in our unspeakable inferiority to God, nothing but weak-minded. That we were unlovely and unattractive and ignorant and all but helpless. That the divine pity and love manifesting itself in countless gifts and mercies, awoke our stupid slumbering souls, and won our love.

That, finally, we were that melted and moved by the goodness of God to us in our poor estate, that we nestled up to Him and said in a tearful, trembling, pleading voice:

"Ain't I your little child?"

And blessed be His name forever! His arms went about us, His face beamed upon us, while His own voice whispered with all the tenderness of Heaven:

"Yes, you are. You are my own beloved child."

TOPIC: Anguished Utterances
SUBTOPIC: Misused To Judge and Accuse
TITLE: A Cry On The Rack

Public characters in the political as well as religious would be often "dogged" and "goaded" by a host of people, many of whom are nondescripts. They snap at the heels and yelp at the progress of successful men. They throw stones at the life march. They bushwhack.

At times they imitate the Indian and light the fires of the torture stake. Perhaps they prefer the Dark Age methods and hunt for thumb-screws and body-racks of false accusations. They turn the wheel of insinuation, and begin the stretching of the joints and sinews of patience. At such times, when fagged, worn and exhausted, the overloaded and persecuted man has given a groan or cry, or let fall an expression of repining or complaint. Instantly it is seized upon by detractors to describe and prove the true character of the victim; when the same criticizing and judging parties had utterly failed to see the real being. They had only beheld a part of his life, and a very small portion of it at that. They failed to take in the months and years of patient endurance and silent submission to conditions that in themselves were simply intolerable. They judged a fellow-creature by a solitary cry of anguish upon the cross, as a fresh sponge of vinegar or gall was pressed to the lips or another spear was thrust into the quivering side.

* * * * *

LETTER B TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Backbone
SUBTOPIC: Needed In The Ministry
TITLE: A Forcible Hint

A preacher in this part of the country had recently given him what is called "a pounding." When the people had come and gone, and the pastor with his family went in to view and classify

the parcels on the dining table, they found one bundle in brown paper of a long and slender form. On it was pinned a white paper bearing the preacher's name. Opening the package the pastor's eyes were confronted with a most respectable-sized backbone that had been freshly dressed and purchased at the meat market. On the inside of the wrapper were the words, "You need this."

TOPIC: Backslidden

SUBTOPIC: Sad Indications Of The State

TITLE: Where Art Thou?

We once knew a lady who had a son, that as a lad possessed the best of morals and the most attractive of manners. Several years later he fell into the daily company of boys who were his inferiors in every respect. In a single year they hoodlumized him!

When still later we saw the lad with his animalized face, tobacco and beer habits, foul speech and rude, coarse ways, it was almost impossible to believe that he was the same bright-eyed, clean-lipped being whom we had met in earlier, happier years. His mother, in speaking out her heart agony over the life ruin, sobbed and wrung her hands as she cried, "Where is my beautiful boy of whom I was so proud? Where is my little gentleman--my little prince? Oh, they have ruined him! And he is gone forever!"

This is the kind of heartbreaking cry which God has in the question, "Where art thou?" when he looks at his soured, embittered, world-captured, sin-stained, backslidden child or servant. Once he was a prince and had power with God and men. Now he is a shorn Samson, fettered and blind, and grinding for the Philistines.

When spiritual energy has subsided into lethargy; and life into death. When love has changed to vinegar and gall. When humility has been swallowed up in arrogance and pride. When false doctrine has relegated the great saving truths of Christianity to the rear. When tongues speaking gibberish and nothing that the world or church can understand, are placed above the loving unctuous speech given in holiness, and which operates to the conviction of the sinner and to the edifying and strengthening of believers--when these things take place, it is time for God's telegrams to arrive to all such with the old question, "Where art thou?"

In a certain church the pastor delivered so many messages from Heaven to the congregation bearing the purport of the divine words, "Where art thou?" that the Board of Stewards petitioned the Bishop to remove the messenger. They evidently wanted a man to fill their pulpit who was not in touch with the skies, and whom the Lord did not use. They got him and were delighted with him.

In a camp meeting held by one of our evangelists, five grave sins and neglects of duty prevailed in the audience. He handed out as many telegrams from God to his backslidden people calling attention to their wrongdoing and lack of doing. Some stormed, some raged, some abused the preacher, and others retaliated by staying away from a meeting where such dispatches came from the skies, and God had servants faithful enough to deliver them. Every one of the pulpit telegrams seemed to have the dark, sad query in it, "Where art thou?" And without exception they all seemed to disturb and even infuriate.

Some years back, a preacher filled with the Spirit, and holding up the Blood of Christ, witnessed a mighty revival; one that among other things closed fourteen saloons, while thirteen of the fourteen saloon-keepers were converted.

After this came a fork in the road, and he took the wrong course. Today he denies the Divinity of the Son of God, is spiritually dried up and powerless, and has gone to lecturing for a living. He could easily say "God not only answers me no more, but uses me no more." He is but a shadow and wreck of his former self. And now as he stands on a platform talking platitudes and making shekels from his unspiritual, inoffensive deliverances, the old question, "Where art thou?" brings the light of revelation to his case, and the blackness of condemnation as well.

We have known men who at one time of their Christian lives were humble, sweet, prayerful and unctuous. In later years we found them completely changed, bitter, faultfinding, censorious, abusive and slanderous. We have felt that if the question came rushing from heaven to them, as they now pose as preachers, teachers, critics and judges of the church and its entire membership, lay and clerical, it would bring not only an overwhelming confusion to them, but a complete silencing and an utter life and character overthrow. Perhaps they would fall down dead before the question, as Ananias and Sapphira sank lifeless on the floor, when a similar query came to them from the Holy One through the lips of the Apostle.

TOPIC: Benefactors (Christlike)
SUBTOPIC: Misunderstood, Mistreated
TITLE: Misunderstood

Two brothers, cousins of the writer, owned and ran a cotton plantation each. They were much laughed at and even condemned by a thoughtless public for their needless economy and even stinginess. They wore hats until the brim left the crown. Their shoes were half soled repeatedly and clothes patched many times. The dishes had occupied the same places so long, as to wear holes in the tablecloth corresponding to their sizes. The old colored servant knew where to deposit the bread, meat and vegetable platter according to the dimensions of the apertures.

These two men never explained. And it was not for twelve or fifteen years that the public learned that a life sacrifice had been going on all this weary length of time, that should have commanded the highest admiration instead of the brutal laughter which had fallen from the jeering mouth.

These two young men were very much devoted to their father, who had become involved in an unfortunate business speculation as well as note endorsement, and his honor was at stake. His sons at once came to his rescue, and in the course of ten or twelve years paid the heavy debts, but did so by the bitter life struggles and severe economy we have mentioned. They accepted the false judgment of being close and stingy; being cheered all the while with the consciousness that they were acting nobly, and saving their father from a crushing dishonor and financial ruin.

In a Southern city a man who resided there was generally regarded and pronounced a miser, when his heart and life were diametrically opposite.

He had been cast on the world as a poor ignorant boy, and had been made to know the bitterness and almost unexceptionable hopelessness of such a lot. He, however, through remarkable talent and energy, pulled through, and was known to be a maker and layer up of money. He dressed in the seediest of clothes and lived on the plainest of fare. And yet he possessed a fortune and was acquiring more. What could all this mean, thought the world, but that he was a miser! Do not misers all act this way?

So the children threw rocks at him, and, taught by a mistaken public opinion, cried out "Miser!"

And yet he was a philanthropist! Nor was that all. He was laying up money to educate and fit for life the children of the very city where they cast missiles at him, and called him miser!

We have seen a statue of him in the same community, with children in a marble group looking up to him and reaching to touch his outstretched hands; and as we gazed we thought of the years that this man had walked unknown, misunderstood and misjudged in this very city, while the young people used their hands then to cast stones at their benefactor, who poorly dressed walked unrecognized in their streets.

Some one once laughed in our presence at the humped back of an old Southern lady. Others heard the laugh. Finally the circumstance came to her ears. Her eyes at once filled with tears, and she said to a friend of the writer:

"I was once as straight as an arrow when a young lady; but I have raised not only my own children but three sets of grandchildren, and my constant stooping over them to meet their wants, began and completed the stoop in my figure which I now cannot help."

The heart fairly ached as we heard of the speech, and thought of the unkindness and injustice of people quick to judge, ridicule and condemn in cases where they know literally nothing about the matter.

The word "Misunderstood" would make the truest of epitaphs on the tombstones of a company of people who have lived in every country, and died unknown in every age of the world.

TOPIC: Bitterness

SUBTOPIC: False Profession With

TITLE: The Bitter Spirit

Does the loud-spoken, quick-retorting, angry-browed, razor-tongued Joab-stabbing, Doeg-reporting, and Judas-plotting individual claiming salvation, remind any one of the patient, gentle, long-suffering, unresentful and loving Christ?

Who is likely to get under conviction through such a misrepresentation of the Saviour; whose heart will melt and break over the snapping and snarlings of this wolf who has pulled a sheep's skin over his brown hide, and would try to make an outward profession take the place of an inward condition and nature?

If the thirteenth chapter of I. Corinthians could be likened to a coat or dress, what a time some avowed Christians would have in getting it on and making it fit! How it would hitch up on the fourth verse; how it would pucker on the fifth, and what a tearing and rending on the 7th!

Suppose that I. Peter, chapter 2, verses 19-23 was a garment--"For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully;" "If when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no Sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." What a time some of God's professed people would have getting this character garment on. It would never fit them in the world. And if they do not wear it in this life, they cannot do so in the life to come. There is no alteration of doctrine at death. There is no cutting out of new patterns at the grave. A loveless, pitiless soul on earth is a loveless, pitiless soul in eternity. There is nothing in a bunch of death rattles to take the scold and hate and revenge out of a human soul. It takes away the power to indulge this spirit in this world any more, but in no wise changes the man himself--who enters Eternity as he left Time. The tree lies as it falls. He is unjust still. He is filthy still. He is bitter and hating and hateful forever.

We have read letters written by one professed Christian to another that reminded us of cupping glasses and mustard plasters. We have seen paragraphs and editorials in church journals, and full salvation papers where the sentences looked like uplifted swords and pointed bayonets, and where the periods created the impression of bullets. And these same articles were as pitiless as weapons of war. And they were oftentimes directed upon men and women who not only loved God, but were serving him faithfully years and years before the writer of the onslaught had gotten out of bibs and tuckers and long before they had ever tasted for themselves the grace of God.

TOPIC: Blame
SUBTOPIC: Shifting
TITLE: Shifting Blame

It begins very early indeed with the human family as we can see by studying the children. Only let there be a row or rumpus or some kind of misdeed among them, and then observe the father and mother step into the room to find out the cause of the trouble, and he will soon discover that he needs not only Pinkerton's Detective Agency, but a large number of Le Cocqs and Sherlock Holmes in order to find out who is the guilty one. From the noise that preceded the father's entrance into the apartment, where the commotion began, it seemed that a number of small Bengal tigers had gotten loose and were after each other; but as the paternal or maternal voice and foot was heard approaching, and the door opened, behold a little flock of peaceful, innocent looking lambs.

"O no! It wasn't me, mamma! I was just standing here doing nothing at all, papa! It was Brother John, or Sister Jennie that did this or that, and thus and so and the other! I told them not to do it! It was they who did it! I didn't do a single solitary thing! I was just standing here."

And behold likewise spake they all after this fashion. The only variety in the monotonous humbuggery of the scene is the change heard in names. Jimmie said it was Johnnie, Johnnie laid the blame on Jennie, Jennie shifted it to Jimmie. As for the rest of this piece of family disturbance, each one was just standing there doing nothing; in fact, they had not done a single thing but just "stand there."

As we have brooded over these domestic scenes we have been struck every time with the marvellous similarity to the occurrence in the Garden of Eden. Adam said it was Eve, Eve laid it off on the Serpent, and so they tossed the ball of culpability from one to the other.

Track this same practice of shifting blame into the realms of gross sin, and who will be able to get the exact truth if human judgment is based on the word of simply one of the parties. The woman throws the guilt on the man, the man casts it back on the woman. Society as a rule sides with the first case, but God pronounces that both are equally guilty. Excuse and argument and self-defense may abound and flow from lips and pen, but towering high above all language of crimination and recrimination, are the facts, that temptation is not compulsion, that every soul, be the person male or female, has a burglar proof door to the heart that neither man nor devil can break down, that this strange portal unlocks from the inside, and so there can never be outward sin until there is inward consent.

These immutable truths, however, do not prevent the guilty from trying to cast the responsibility on other shoulders, though the very self-defense does not agree with actual occurrence, and contradicts the greater facts of our moral and spiritual constitution.

Who is going to get the reality and certainty of the matter in these cases? Will we obtain it by listening to one party to the exclusion of the other? Behold their histories contradict. The man declares that the fault lies with the woman, the woman as warmly affirms the whole difficulty rests with the man. Both are snow white innocent lambs. Neither one had said or done a single solitary thing out of the way. He or she was just standing there with their arms folded, a crown upon their foreheads, and a harp within their hands! The other party raised the rumpus!

So the old Garden of Eden scene is continually being re-enacted before our eyes. We have only to listen and we will hear it a dozen times a day in the domestic and social life; or pick up the morning paper and there it is telegraphed, paragraphed, photographed and illustrated in every kind of mode and fashion. She killed him, but she was not to blame. He left her, but he was not to blame. O, no, of course not! He was just standing there doing nothing, and she was just standing there and had not done a single solitary thing. They were both lambs; would not have known a tiger if they had seen it. In view of their innocence and gentleness and general lovability, the Garden of Eden might be remaining to this day so far as they are concerned. It was the other one who had made the mischief, and wiped out the Paradise in the heart, home and social circle. They had nothing to do with it. Or they were led into it, or driven into it, and whether led or driven went in with a crown upon their foreheads and a harp within their hands!

And lo, as they tell the story that makes them lambs and everybody else wolves and lions, the frown is on their foreheads and a rolling pin is in their hands.

TOPIC: Blood of Christ
SUBTOPIC: Certifies Transport To Heaven
TITLE: The Red Check

I was on my way from New York to Boston. The Ticket Agent in the Central station informed me that it cost seven dollars to go on the Express which left at 10 o'clock. I gave him the money and he handed me a ticket.

Boarding the train which consisted of five or six-coaches, I took a seat, deposited my valise, and pulled out a book to read.

As we left the depot the Conductor came down the aisle collecting fares, and pausing where I was sitting absorbed in my volume, nudged me in the side with his hand and asked for the money due the Company.

I presented him my ticket, which he took and kept, and gave me a red check which I slipped in my hat band, placed in the rack above my head, and resumed my reading.

As the train was a Flyer, it made only six or seven stops between New York and Boston. The first was thirty miles distant, where on arrival, a number of the passengers got off, and a number of others got on. After a little the Conductor came down the aisle as before, collecting tickets, and stopping by my side where I was buried in my book, and not remembering me in such a crowd, poked me in the side again and demanded my fare.

I lifted my eyes from the volume I was reading, directed my finger at the red check without saying a word, and instantly he passed on.

The same scene occurred at the second and third town, where quite a crowd disembarked and an equally large one came aboard. Down the aisle again came the collector of tickets; again failed to recognize me in the throng; once more punched me in the ribs, and once more with his dry machine-like voice said, "Tickets!"

Each time I would raise my eyes, motion to the red sign in my hat, to see him just as quickly leave me, pass on by and vanish down the car.

Finally with the fourth stop, and the usual change of passengers, the conductor approached as usual, paused by me, touched me on the side, and said, "Tickets."

By this time I was becoming wearied of that conductor, and my side was getting sensitive and sore where he had punched me so often, and then I was interested in my book anyhow. So when I felt his shadow fall on me, I never raised my eyes from the printed page, but simply pointed with my finger towards the red check in my hat and kept on reading.

In an instant he was gone!

After that the identical proceeding worked like a charm. No machinery oiled and regulated could have done better. The man would come, stop, punch me, say "Tickets!" and I would read on, point upward at the red check with my finger, and then he would disappear like a flash! He had to go! I had the red sign which said I was paid up, was all right with the R. R. Company and could go on unmolested and protected to the end of my journey.

It seemed to me at this very time, that the above incident gave me a better conception and understanding of a certain verse in the Old Testament than I ever had before. The passage referred to is: "When I see the Blood I will pass over you."

The Devil is always after us with his nagging voice and irritating touch. Over and over he stops by our side and tries to collect tears, sighs, groans and everything else he can wring from us on our trip from Earth to Heaven.

But if we have the Blood of Christ on our souls we are exempt and secure. We need not be vexed, disturbed or affrighted at the worrying demands of men or every devil in Hell.

All we have to do is to quietly, smilingly and persistently point to the Blood of Jesus that was shed! To the Red Sign on our Heart! And keep on reading our title clear to Mansions in the Skies! when behold! Every foe of earth and imp in Hell must pass on and by us, and we in due time, safe and sound, will sweep triumphantly and exultantly into the great Union Depot of God's Eternal City in the Heavens.

* * * * *

LETTER C TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Carnal Discontent

SUBTOPIC: Not Caused By Others

TITLE: The Aching Tooth

A preacher friend of the writer told him once that he had a little grandson named Johnnie, who was about four years of age. One night he was crying bitterly from toothache. All the family were sitting in the library, father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, and grown-up brothers and sisters. He went from one to the other, and reached out his little arms first for this one and then for that one, until he had made the entire round and started on the second journey. He tried his father's shoulder, his mother's breast, his sister's loving embrace, while a strong, big brother walked him up and down, and the grandfather rocked him. But nothing would do, and nobody suited him. He in the course of ten minutes had been in the arms and sat on the lap of every one in the room, seeking rest and finding none.

After getting thus far in the story the preacher stopped a moment, fixed his eyes with an amused look upon us, and said, "The laps were all right; the trouble was with the tooth of our little Johnnie!"

This incident has a wonderful explanation in it of certain kinds of human conduct, and a tremendous application to those people whom nothing and nobody can please. They lay blame on individuals and circumstances, when the real explanation of their fault-finding and abusive speech is a morally diseased inward condition! God has a large family who are well, but He has some children who are unwell. They think others are wrong when--the trouble is with their own aching tooth.

TOPIC: Confiding In Others

SUBTOPIC: Using Caution and Restraint

TITLE: Don't Be Too Confidential

Some things that we have done we would not do again.

For instance, we would not show the riches of Jerusalem to every visitor that comes along. This mistake led a Jewish king into humiliation and defeat, and is as certain to bring mortification and regret to the soul who repeats the error in spiritual lines.

It does not pay to take every smooth-spoken plausible-tongued being who happens along into the treasure house of the heart and life. Benjamin Franklin's story of the whistle, and Miss Edgeworth's narrative of the gullibility of Frank on one occasion throws considerable light on what is referred to here, while the statement made about the Saviour that he did not commit himself to certain men, for he knew what was in man, is a perfect revelation thrown on the matter.

By this method, like the Saviour, our intimate friends would be fewer, but those we had would be truer, and we would escape many hours of needless suffering.

Again, could we go this way again, we would show "the sore finger" to no one but the Lord.

The unwrapping of the wound is always attended with danger, postpones recovery and actually invites inflammation, not to say mortification. Then there are so many wounded ones around who need sympathy, and it is so much nobler to endure silently than to be whining around in other people's ears, who, if we only knew it, had burdens greater than our own.

TOPIC: Conversion

SUBTOPIC: Through Unusual Occurrences

TITLE: Knocked Into The Kingdom

A lady who has attended many of the meetings was recently telling me of a couple of odd happenings that took place at some mission services. She said that a poor, lost sinner was standing just in front of the door while a meeting was in progress. He had never been in the hall, and had no idea of going. Through his sinful life he was empty in pocket and hungry. As a gentleman was passing before him, he made bold to ask him please to give him some money. The words were hardly out of his mouth, when the person he had accosted drew back his fist and struck him such a violent blow on the head that he knocked the poor fellow clear through the mission door and landed him sprawling in the aisle. At once a couple of the ushers, or brethren laid hold upon him

and, seeing he needed salvation, they carried him up to the altar and dumped him down by its side. In a few minutes he began to wail and cry to the Saviour for mercy, and in less than an half hour was clearly and powerfully converted. Truly this was being knocked into the kingdom of God, and it was a blow for which a man could be thankful for having received forevermore. The man who smote him evidently had neither silver nor gold, but such as he had, he gave freely to him, and it resulted in something far better than money.

On another occasion, when the leader of the meeting called for hands to be raised of those who wanted to come to the altar and be saved, a couple of ushers or workers made a mistake and got hold of a man who had not raised his hand. As they laid hold upon him to escort him to the altar as they often did at this mission, the man protested and told them they had hold of the wrong man. But they would not release him, and fairly dragged the resisting individual to the mourner's bench, and pulled him down on his knees. Strange to say, the deepest conviction came upon him, and in a few minutes he was crying out to God most earnestly for salvation. Before the meeting closed, he was blessedly saved, and the laugh which had been turned upon the ushers, was now directed in another way.

TOPIC: Conversion

SUBTOPIC: Through Unusual Occurrences

TITLE: Saved Through Katy-Dids

Quite a ripple and stir was created in my morning service by a man well advanced in years telling how he had obtained salvation. He said he had come to the meeting on purpose to be saved, but the services did not reach him.

He was put to sleep one night in a bed with a backslidden preacher. He was so miserable that he could not win slumber, and lay listening to the katy-dids that were chirping by myriads in the grove. Suddenly it seemed to him that they said, "Come to Jesus." He could not rid himself of the thought; turn as he would, the song or chirp kept ringing in his ears, "Come to Jesus" -- "Come to Jesus." The backslidden preacher was asleep; and so with a groan the man knelt down in the dark and did what the katy-dids told him to do, he came to Jesus and was saved.

It would be hard to describe the effect of this simple testimony on the audience. The picture of the tossing, convicted man, the sleeping, backslidden preacher at his side, and God's having to turn from a faithless messenger and use katy-dids to get the gospel message home, made a profound impression.

I could but think of the Saviour's words where He said to the Jews, "If these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out." God is going to get His message to the people in spite of backslidden ministers and church members, and Sanhedrin laws and resolutions. He who convicted Peter by the crowing of a cock, and rebuked one of his prophets through the voice of an ass is not straightened for means. He will make the "stones cry out," and commission the katy-dids to chirp full salvation, while men who ought to do it are slumbering on toward the Judgment.

TOPIC: Creation

SUBTOPIC: Required The Highest Intelligence
TITLE: I Saw Your Little Bird

We once read of a painting, by a gifted artist, that was on exhibition in an Italian Hall of Art. It represented a dense woodland, with interlocked boughs and thick canopies of leaves through which a few faint beams of misty light filtered and were lost in the deep shadows.

Many admired the picture as they strolled by, saying, "Beautiful," "Impressive," "Wonderful," etc. The creator of the work of art was standing near one day and could not but smile as he heard some of the pronouncements of the crowd as they glanced at this, his labor of years.

Finally another artist came and looked long and silently upon the canvas. Then as he turned to go, he laid his hand gently on the shoulder of his fellow painter and said softly, and with tears in his eyes,

"I saw your little bird."

The artist had placed this tiny bit of life among the dark tree trunks and shadowy branches, to intensify the loneliness of the wilderness. This crowning touch of the painting, overlooked by many, was recognized by a certain appreciative order of mind. It is said that the maker of the picture could scarcely utter a word in reply.

The point we make is that one class or grade of intellect can recognize certain literary beauties and excellencies when presented to it, but it requires a higher order of mind to create these same admirable things. In a word, Taste can appreciate, Talent imitate, but it takes Genius to create.

TOPIC: Criticism
SUBTOPIC: Of Critical "Come-Outers"
TITLE: The Cat Bird

The birds of my strip of woodland seem to be the children of the day. Full of song, flitting busily through the branches of the trees, and always true to the law of their being, they preach powerfully to the inhabitant of the tent. We readily distinguish them by their varied calls, from the bright-hued woodpecker applauding his own song most vigorously with his bill on some lofty dead limb, to the bright cheery whistle of the partridge as he calls "Bob White" down yonder in the field just over the fence. In addition I listen with a thrilled heart to the weird cry of the rain crow in a distant tree top, the fretting of a catbird in a thicket, the faraway coo of a lonely dove, and the musical trill of a field lark just before it takes one of its swift, dipping flights.

They all seem to be on good terms. We have not noticed a single row or misunderstanding among them up to the present writing, the last day of the meeting. No feathers have been pulled, no eyes pecked out. We hear no criminations or recriminations. The woods seem to be large and roomy enough for all, and the sunshine abundant for the whole winged community. All seem to have religion but the catbird, who fusses down the hollow in a little bush all to himself. He seems to be put out with everything, judging from his tones that are querulous and fault-finding beyond

anything heard or known elsewhere in the feathered tribes. The other birds say he is a "come-outer," and the woodpecker has been engaged to make his coffin. This, doubtless, was the hammering I heard on the dead limb. The dove has consented to Sing a dirge at the funeral.

TOPIC: Cross Of Christ

SUBTOPIC: A Means Of Rapid Spiritual Transport

TITLE: The Ice Yacht

It is a memorable picture in the winter season of the year, to look upon New England from a rushing Express and note in quick and charming succession, the whitened fields, the fences half buried in snow, the wind-swept hill, the glittering, ice encased clump of trees, the church spire looking down on the silent town, and the frozen river, with its long lines of skaters who are sweeping with graceful poise of body like birds before the wind.

Especially at this time a view of the Hudson River from the car window of a flying train is one not soon to be forgotten. The vast landscape, the big ice houses hard at work saving and gathering in the huge crystal blocks, and last but not least the scudding yachts dotting the surface of the broad frozen river form only part of an ever attractive picture over two hundred miles in length, and from three to twenty in width.

The ice-yacht is made of two transverse beams of wood arranged like a cross, resting flat on steel runners. A sail and rudder complete the outfit, and when the wind strikes the canvas the machine fairly flies. A mile a minute is nothing unusual as to speed, and so it leaves the ordinary methods of running and racing far in the wake and badly distanced.

We observed that the man who navigated the craft did not stand, or sit up, but lay perfectly flat on the wooden beam that held mast, sail and rudder.

As we looked, we got to thinking of two other transverse beams on which Christ died, and on which we are told by the Bible to stretch ourselves. We have tried it, and seen others do the same, and known from experience and observation that if we do so, and hoist the sail of faith and prayer, God will send such a breath or wind from heaven in the form of the Spirit, that we will not only haste in the race for heaven, but outsail and outstrip everything sent after us by earth and hell, and finally win by a million leagues of grace, sweep into the port of glory and take the everlasting prize.

But the ice yacht that had preached a sermon to me on the Hudson as it swept past, flung back a closing exhortation or warning,

"You must have your sail hoisted, and keep yourself prostrate on the wood."

And I said, "Bless God, I will do so."

* * * * *

LETTER D TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Dead Spiritually
SUBTOPIC: Church Leaders Who Are
TITLE: The Dead Engineer

Recently on a train in Missouri the conductor noticed that the cars were rushing at a fearful speed around curves, and through several small stations where they should have slackened speed and had not stopped at a place where a halt was required on the schedule. Hurrying through the smoking and baggage cars, and climbing over the tender, he saw the engineer sitting in the cab in his accustomed place with his hand on the throttle, while the fireman was shoveling in coal. Struck with the motionless figure before him, the conductor drew nearer rapidly and, looking around and into the face that was gazing through the window, saw that the man was dead!

A dead man had been running the engine for the last seventeen miles. The fireman, a raw recruit, and a thick-skulled fellow to boot, had in his attention to the furnace failed to observe the catastrophe; while the lifeless engineer, propped up by his seat and the wood and iron wall on either side, held his position, and looked like a living engineer with his hand on the throttle, and face fronting the window, and yet was a dead man all the while!

As we read the dispatch in the papers describing the above remarkable occurrence, the heart fairly sickened as the mind made a swift application of the circumstance to states and conditions of things as we see them here and there in the Field of Religious Work, and in the Church of God which we love.

The horrible sight is still beheld in the land. It can be seen in the council chambers of the church, in the pew, and even at times in the pulpit. It is the spectacle of a man with face at the window and hand on the throttle, and yet that man a corpse. The church machinery started years, and even centuries, ago, is rushing on with its load of freight and passengers, with a momentum received away back in the past, but the man in the cab is dead just the same. He himself is carried on by something outside of himself. He is propped up by customs, rules and observances, and as he is swept through the Sabbaths many fail to observe his lifelessness. The firemen, who shovel in the fuel to run the cause of God, deceived by the uprightness of what is merely an outward position; and the people in the church misled by a face turned to the front, and by a hand resting on the throttle of ecclesiastical power, dream not that a spiritually dead man is heading and guiding them in a swift rush to the eternal world.

What a shock it was to the people on the train that day, when they discovered that a corpse had been running the train for nearly twenty miles. Their horror was simply indescribable. And what a consternation would fill the hearts of thousands of church members today, could they see what God sees, a backslider in the pulpit, a dead man in charge of immortal souls, piloting and directing them to the grave and the Judgment Bar of God.

When we read of ministers of the Gospel defending dancing, card-playing and theater-going, we think of the Dead Engineer. When we were recently told of a preacher who, to raise money for some church or religious purpose, rented a hall and had three negro fiddlers to

play against each other, while he sat as the judge and decided as to the merits of the contestants -- we thought again of the Dead Engineer.

We wish our readers would order a little ten-cent pamphlet called "Dr. Starr and White Temple," and send it to men who correspond to the description given above. Mail it without comment, but pray much to God to send the message home. The train is so great, the passengers so many, their souls are so precious, and hell is so dreadful and eternity so long, that it is our duty to cry out, wave the danger signal, and do anything to stop the downward rush and avert the coming disaster.

TOPIC: Death of the Wicked

SUBTOPIC: Contrasted with Death of the Righteous

TITLE: Two Death Bed Scenes

We once witnessed the death of a traveling agent who came into the town, where I was stationed as a young preacher. He arrived a well man, and left it a few days later in a coffin. His young wife, summoned by telegraph, did not arrive in time to see him die, and departed, broken-hearted, the next morning with the body for her stricken home.

I think I never prayed or talked with a sadder man. It was all so sudden, so horrible to him that he had to die, and yet unprepared, that he seemed struck into dumbness, while a frightened, anxious look fairly burned in his eyes. Propped upon a pillow he would gaze for hours through the open window at the moving leaves of a grape arbor close by. He seemed to be looking far beyond at something, and when spoken to would turn a perfectly despairing glance upon the speaker, and again resume the silent, melancholy, fixed gaze out of the window.

Of course we prayed and talked with him, but no light ever came into his face, and we have always feared he died without hope, as he had lived without Christ in the world.

Very agreeably, by way of contrast, comes back the memory of the death of my singer, Professor R____. He had been delirious for days. Standing by his bed-side one morning and looking down in his face I said:

"Bro. R____, do you know me?"

He gave an inquiring look, and called me by the name of a gentleman in Kentucky.

Again I spoke and said:

"Bro. R____, do you know Jesus?"

Back instantly from the region of unconsciousness leaped the spirit of this faithful servant of Christ at the bare mention of his Lord's name, and with face all aglow, and tears running down his checks and voice choking with emotion he cried:

"Yes, thank God! Yes, thank God!"

TOPIC: Decor In The Home
SUBTOPIC: A Matter Of Taste, Or Grace?
TITLE: The Tiger Head

Can anyone explain to me the fondness that some women have for tiger and leopard skin rugs? We may not have cultivated tastes but the things are a perfect abomination to me. They are bad enough in parlors and libraries, but when we have to confront and endure them in a bedroom it is time for my long suffering sex to call a convention and pass a Declaration of Independence.

Recently I had to undergo this trial of patience for ten days. There on the floor was the unnecessary skin, and the round, uplifted head of the great animal, stuffed as hard as iron and with two glass eyes glittering in the light. I could stand the staring eye-balls, but I stumbled fifty times day and night over that perfectly needless head, nearly breaking my own at one time, and cracking and disjuncting my toes at another. Every time I fell over the skull of that animal, I thought of that woman. Oh how I wanted her to get full salvation and have the nonsense knocked out of her.

TOPIC: Discernment Of False Professors
SUBTOPIC: A Protective Spiritual Instinct
TITLE: The Gray Wolf

While in a large Western city lately, holding a meeting, I noticed in passing from the hotel to the place of preaching, what at first appeared as a very large gray dog chained in front of a livery stable. The fact which first struck me was that all other dogs that came around gave this big lead-colored canine a wide berth. Usually there were five or six of the species lying about, but I noticed that while they had their heads turned toward him, and regarded him with deep interest, they kept fully twenty feet between themselves and the central figure. This occasioned considerable wonderment in my mind, until one day I saw the gray animal, while sitting on his haunches, suddenly lift his head, point his nose in a straight upward line to the sky and give a prolonged, mournful howl, which made the blood fairly tingle in the veins, for the double reason of the weird, melancholy sound, and a memory which flashed like lightning over the mind. What I thought to be a dog was a wolf

How the recollection rushed to my mind of stories I had read of snow-covered Russian plains, or dark forests, with gallant horses flying along the road with a sleigh filled with precious human lives while a pack of wolves pressed on close behind with red mouths and lolling tongues, and giving forth the dreadful howl, which presaged death, and froze the hearts of the listeners with despair.

I understood now at once why the dogs around town would not have fellowship with the gray animal who was chained in front of the stable. I thought he was a dog, but he was a wolf. The dogs of the city knew him better than I did. They did not take to him. They heard his testimony through, long and mournful as it was, but there was no response on their part. I listened and not a single one said amen. I studied their faces closely, and I saw they did not believe one particle in him. By some strange instinct or intuition they saw there had been no change of heart or nature with him. They were ready to grant that the strange brother looked somewhat like them; but his voice

was against him, and his experience put forth in that high-sounding way, seemed to freeze every one of them up, and there was not the slightest indication of a hand-shaking being inaugurated or a brotherly kiss exchanged.

Who has not had something like this to occur in his life? Who has not listened to testimonies and been confronted with individuals who claimed to be one of us and one with us in the Christian life and holiness movement, and we found it impossible to fraternize or feel at rest with them. We battled with the feeling as being a senseless prejudice, unworthy of ourselves and unkind and unjust to the person in question. But the same strange shrinking from the individual remained. We prayed against the impression, but there was a kind of crawly feeling in the soul whenever the party testified in public or affected cordiality in private. There was something in the voice that failed to awaken an echo in our spirit. When he or she gave forth the public declaration, pointing the face upward to the sky, it did not have the genuine ring, and it did not sound exactly right. There was a certain confusion in the Canaan language. All through there was an approximation but never a culmination.

Some weeks, months or years afterward, we discovered that the individual was a wolf. He became not only a personal enemy, but an enemy to the holiness people at large with whom he had tried to train and run. Worse still, we have known some such to turn out perfect frauds, humbugs and impostors.

John's explanation of them is in his first epistle, where he says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

But the great lesson of this parable of the gray wolf is, will God give an instinct to dogs to protect them in their swift recognition of an enemy; and will he not vouchsafe spiritual discernment to his children to deliver them from false friends, religious shams, and all their soul adversaries? Whether they come from earth or hell; attack us in open fight from the world, or stand up as secret foes in meeting, and lifting the face to the sky, give an experience as long as the one hundred and nineteenth psalm; will not the Lord deliver and save us?

We for one believe God will thus help us, and has helped us; and this is the reason why, with nothing but kindness of soul to all men, and with pity and Christian love for the apparently right brother, we are strangely kept back by an inner restraint from opening up the heart life and home to some slick-tongued, smooth-mannered newcomer who points his face to the sky, and speaks out so well in meeting. God would by a spiritual instinct or moral intuition save us from the mistake, and even the lifetime disaster of getting up a gush, and falling on the neck of old Mr. Gray Wolf, who was trying to pass himself off among us as Brother Simon Pure Sheep.

TOPIC: Disclosing Personal Matters

SUBTOPIC: Failure To Exercise Restraint In

TITLE: The Unbridled Tongue

There are some people who take the rag off the sore finger and show the cut, bruise and inflamed place to all who will allow them. So great is the character weakness within that they can keep back nothing pertaining to themselves and to others.

The rule with most young women is that they only need to be introduced and thrown together about one hour, when in that time they have turned themselves wrong side out, as one would a sack, and nothing more is left to tell. A single night together, and now they are bosom friends. The home of each is invaded, every room vandalized with this confidence in a stranger, every page of family history offered to the eye of the twenty-four-hour acquaintance, every real or fanciful affair of the heart exposed, the speeches of every friend, lover and betrothed confided with wonderful additions--and all to be repeated by each to her own social and family circle later, and so the village tattle and the town sensation is born.

No one can count the times the following sentence has been uttered: "I tell you this secret, but whatever you do, you must never tell anybody else."

We marvel that this fact does not impress the mind of such speakers, that if they could not keep their own affairs private how could they expect and what right have they to demand that another person will do so? And yet they asked the individual to do what they could not do.

All these things evidence the absence of moral strength, a backboneless individual, the lack of that cool-minded, level-headed, sober self-control which belongs to genuine character.

We have seen two women meet, as perfect strangers on the train, occupy two seats near to each, open fire with the tongue, and in less than an hour or two they had thoroughly done up family history on both sides from the baby who was sick up to the grandmother who had rheumatism, had emptied each other on each other, had nothing but the skin left, and now looked like the Siamese Twins.

Recently on the cars we heard a nicely dressed lady ask a gentleman how long they would be delayed in entering a certain city. He replied kindly but briefly; whereupon she proceeded to inform him that she desired to catch a certain train going south, that she lived in Birmingham, that she had been in Wisconsin for her health, that she had undergone an operation, that she was anxious to get home, that she left a baby at home four months old, that she had another child six years old, etc., etc., etc.--until the head fairly swam, the heart got sick and there was a fervent wish that the dumb spirits once cast out in New Testament times would return and a legion of them possess this rattle-brained, clatter-tongued woman who was evidently born on the side of Tennyson's Brook, which he said "went on forever and forever."

TOPIC: Dried Fountains

SUBTOPIC: Unable To Satisfy The Thirsty

TITLE: A Fountain Run Dry

On the main avenue is a kind of stone pagoda covering a fountain; the pretty construction being the gift of a gentleman in the West to this city. His name is carved in large letters, with an

added sentence that he gave this water supply to the community. The four sides of the granite structure bear the words, Faith -- Hope -- Charity -- Temperance.

It all looks well; but the trouble is that something is the matter with the fountain. It has quit flowing. It is about the driest looking object and place on the avenue. So in spite of the doctor's self-laudatory inscription of "This is the gift of Dr. So-and-So;" and in face of the beautiful words, Faith, Hope, Charity, Temperance, the spring itself is dry.

We at once thought of religious denominations which have arisen in the world and announced themselves and their creed as a great gift to a famishing world, and yet have run perfectly dry. They had inscriptions of panels of faith and doctrine that were higher sounding than the four words we have cited attention to; have announced a "fourfold," and a fortyfold Gospel, but after that ran dry.

We have seen churches with the stone inscription in front, "The Church of the Redeemer," and yet nobody was ever redeemed within its walls. One in a certain great city of ours, is named "The Church of the Holy Innocent," and yet no one ever obtains Holiness there, nor will they allow it to be preached; and as for "Innocence," one glimpse of the faces gathered in its walls would make the most gullible smile with derision at such a title applied to such an audience. The fountain has evidently run out of Holiness and Innocence.

We have men both in past and present times who have, so to speak, announced themselves as the gift of Heaven to the children of men. In view of the assertions they made of themselves, and the general invitation they gave for everybody to come to them and drink, they might as well have lifted up in full view the startling words, Wisdom, Knowledge, Infallibility, Orthodoxy; Perfect Pattern in All Things; and No One Else But Me.

And yet all of us have seen these fountains run dry.

We have even marked the words, Third Blessing; Casting Out Devils; the Glory Blessing; and Tongues, lifted up conspicuously, boastfully and defiantly, and yet the Fountain, so-called, went dry.

How thankful we are that God has opened up in this world for every thirsty, needy, sin-sick soul a Fountain that never ceases to flow--it never runs dry. How men disappointed in institutions, brotherhoods, denominations and everything of human kind and character have turned to Jesus for deliverance, cleansing, satisfaction, happiness and blessedness, and never a single time have been disappointed.

The doctor's four words are really best understood, and generally experienced and practically lived, when the Fountain Christ Jesus is opened up in the heart. What a Faith we have now! What Hope for people and the cause of Truth! What Temperance in the very best and fullest sense of the word, in spirit, speech, conduct, as well as life habits! And what Charity that is not puffed up, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, but beareth all things, endureth all things and never faileth!

It takes the Living Water, Christ Himself, to bring the genuine experience and character into the life covered by the words Faith, Hope, Temperance and Charity. So as we studied the four high-sounding phrases carved on the walls of the little stone pagoda or pavilion, and observed the dried-up water supply, we had to do some smiling. It was all so suggestive, so mutely eloquent, so much like a first-class parable, that there was nothing that anyone could do but smile, unless it should be the doctor when he hears his spring has ceased to flow; or thirsty people drawing near for refreshment, would find only a dusty basin and a rusty, silent, empty spout before them!

* * * * *

LETTER E TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification

SUBTOPIC: A Better Experience

TITLE: The Larger Building

One day in a large city, we obtained a striking spiritual lesson in the study of a new City Hall building.

We had heard with regret that the former edifice, which covered a full block, was to be torn down and replaced with another. The first was quite handsome, and with its Corinthian columns and graceful architectural lines had repeatedly won our admiration as we passed by.

The city in the work of change removed half of the old, and erected half of the new structure. So that the two stand now side by side, and making a contrast so marked in favor of the new, over against the old, that it only requires a glance to see the difference. Then as we look at the recent building, with its majestic pillars, lofty walls, spacious chambers, broad windows letting in floods of light, we wonder how we ever could have been satisfied with the ancient structure.

The reason was that there was nothing better in sight, nothing to measure by, contrast with and over-top it. Now a glance shows the second to rank far above the first in every respect.

So we reasoned it only needs to place entire sanctification by the side of regeneration to reveal the superiority of the second work to the first work of grace. The strength, the bigness, the loftiness, the perfectness of the blessing is never seen to greater advantage than when placed in a church or a revival meeting by the side of those who are only regenerated. What a difference there is between peace with God, and the peace of God, between love and perfect love, between life and abundant life, between having a measure of the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit.

Let it be remembered that we are speaking of the genuine article; not the make believe, or mere say so; but the actual blessing of holiness and the faithful, devoted life which follows. The difference between the disciples after and before Pentecost is well shadowed both materially and architecturally by the new City Hall in Chicago. It should as well declare today, the superiority of the sanctified soul and experience and life over that of the regenerated.

Let the people take a look at it, and receive a hint, a sermon, an exhortation and an inspiration.

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification

SUBTOPIC: A Second Work of Grace

TITLE: The Cut Dollar Bill

At one of our camp meetings the Singer adopted a novel but most successful way of having himself served promptly and satisfactorily at the hotel table by one of the negro waiters. In the rush of the great crowd at the numerous tables, many failed to get what they wanted, and this song evangelist on the first day was one of that class.

But the second day he was ready, and calling a colored boy to his side he drew out a new, crisp one-dollar bill and with a pair of pocket scissors cut the bank note exactly in two.

Giving one part to the servant he said, "If you wait on me right, the balance of this camp meeting, then at its close I will give you the other half of this bill."

As he said this he deliberately returned his portion of the note to his purse, while the colored waiter, taking the other part of the severed greenback, fairly joined himself to my friend after that. He not only waited but ministered unto him. He not only abounded but superabounded in his attentions. He knew that the share of the note he held was perfectly worthless unless he obtained the other section, and so he out-did himself in his service, and my friend lacked no good thing of the table in all the remaining nine days of the camp.

On the tenth, day he was presented with the second or remaining part of the bill, and he immediately donned a smile which went from ear to ear.

So we thought, are the two installments of divine grace. Pardon is given first and Holiness next. They come separate and at different times. You cannot get the second until you first obtain the other. Moreover, if we lose the first we cannot receive the second. And still further, if we do not obtain the second the first will not be sufficient to bring us full salvation and secure entrance into the skies.

The Bible declares that without holiness no man shall see the Lord; that the pure in heart shall see God; that nothing unclean enters into the city.

Many overlook the fact that is most clearly taught in Scripture, that justification is a title to Heaven, but holiness is fitness for the glory world.

Any thoughtful person must see the difference. A man may have a title to a piece of land or property, but when it is proved that he has not mental fitness, or is in a word insane, he cannot take possession or enter upon the enjoyment and management of the estate.

So justification is a title to Paradise, but if a man fails to qualify for Heaven, or neglects that spiritual condition or fitness in holiness, without which he cannot see God, then he is certain to miss the Kingdom above.

In a word, we not only should see to it that we get the first or initial part of salvation, but we should never rest until we secure the second finishing work of God in the soul, the blessing of entire sanctification.

It is the man who is true to the first work of grace, careful not to lose it, hanging around the Lord and devoting himself to the service of the Saviour, who finally gets the other part of the celestial bank note of Full Salvation.

When he receives it, it is worth traveling many miles to hear him thank God, to see his smile of perfect peace, and to listen to his laugh full of a great overflowing joy and gladness.

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification

SUBTOPIC: An Available Higher Life

TITLE: The Redwood Tree

While at Santa Cruz I visited the famous Redwood forest, six miles in the mountains. Accustomed to the deep, dense woods of Mississippi, yet I could but feel, when I saw the California grove, that I had certainly beheld the "higher life" in the vegetable kingdom. Such was the profound shadow cast by the immense trunks and lofty interlocked foliage that at midday I seemed to be walking in twilight. As I looked upon trees over three hundred feet in height, and from ten to twenty feet in diameter, I wondered how anybody who saw these exhibitions of divine power could ever again doubt the blessing of entire sanctification. He who could do so much for a tree would certainly not withhold his enlarging, filling, glorifying hand from the soul. This was the divine argument they addressed to me. They furnished the major and minor premises and I drew the conclusion most naturally and easily.

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification

SUBTOPIC: Faithfulness To Proclaim

TITLE: A Persistent Organ Grinder

We recently heard of a gentleman who was attending a picnic and heard "Sweet Marie" for the first time on a hand organ. He was so carried away with the melody that, taking the musician aside, he told him he would give him ten dollars not to change the tune, but play "Sweet Marie" all the rest of the afternoon. This was a financial windfall to the music box man, and was far more than he expected for the whole day, so he readily fell in with the proposition and straightway persistently, pertinaciously and very contentedly made the woods and meadows ring with the strains relative to the excellencies and fascinations of the female called "Sweet Marie."

Another gentleman present liked the piece well enough to begin with, but after the fifteenth or sixteenth rendering, it became somewhat monotonous, and he told the organ grinder that he would give him a dollar to change the tune. The musician simply smiled and shook his head, while he took a new and fresh turn on the same old melody. What was one dollar to ten dollars!

An hour later some young men who were in turn tired out by the same composition, made up a purse of five dollars and informed the organ grinder that the money was his if he would change the tune and not play "Sweet Marie" again on the ground.

The only response the latest bidders received was a smiling negative shake of the head, while the crank-turner fixed his eyes with a faraway expression on a distant line of hills and pealed forth more praises about a party named Marie, who was said in the song to be of a saccharine nature.

He not only had respect unto the recompense of the reward, but saw that all the other pay and profit offered him to discontinue, did not come anywhere near the original offer made him by the first gentleman. Moreover, that same party, in anticipation of the very things which took place, told the organ grinder that no matter what emolument was extended him to be silent or change the theme, that he would still place his remuneration away beyond anything else which should be offered him.

And so the grinder ground on. And while many fled from him, yet he endured the loneliness as seeing him who was invisible. Then he had the best of reasons to keep on with his melody. It was not only a lovely song, but he was certain of his pay, and this reward would be far ahead of all other offers made by threateners and bribery to stop. So he ground on!

Behold we are in the midst of a parable. Is it not so that a number of God's, people have obtained the blessing of full salvation which fills the heart with melody, and overflows the soul and lips with praises all the day.

God's command to them is to stick to the tune. We are to praise the beauty of holiness. We are never to let up on the sweetness, blessedness and glory of entire sanctification. If we do this, our present and future reward shall be immeasurably and infinitely above all that time and sense and man and this whole world can give us. We are to pay no attention to threats and bribes to leave off, but must play on world without end, and to the ends of the world.

It is not long before all such fully saved people are waited on with the request that they would change their tune or testimony. That it is too monotonous. That it wears on the feelings of many on the ecclesiastical grounds.

Then comes the Briber. And some of the testifiers are promised very desirable and profitable things if they will vary or discontinue their everlasting affirmations about the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. The pay in some cases is increased, and stewardships, presiding elderships, general conference memberships, good fat salaries, fine appointments, the favor of Col. Masonic Lodge, vs. Grundy, Mrs. Dishrattler, and the Church Powers that be, are all freely held forth, if the offending party will only shut up about the Second Work of Grace.

Some go down under the bribes, and changing the Tune List, arrange the Reword and Regulator of the Organs of Speech so as to skip or leave out Holiness by the Blood or Sanctification by Faith.

This song follows in order the one called Justification By Faith, but by the rearrangement spoken of, there is a big skip over the second to such pieces as "Hold the Fort," "Deeper Yet," "I Saw the Moonlight On My Mother's Grave," with a lot of other hymns sung to old-time love songs and popular ballads called "Juanita," "Annie Laurie," "The Belle of the Mohawk Vale," and "Old Black Joe."

The Sweet Marie of Full Salvation or Sanctification has been dropped from the Tune List. The Organ Grinder who once delighted us with his sermon or testimony on Holiness has been bought out. He turned from God's pay to the rewards of man. Unlike "Moses, who chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," this man esteemed the pleasures and treasures of this world far more desirable than bearing the reproach of Christ with only a distant Heaven for a reward, and that, too, at the end of a long life.

There are others, thank God, like the man of our story who cannot be bought off or out. They stick to the declaration of Entire Sanctification by Faith in the Blood of Christ.

They often have to render their song alone. Many leave their company who do not like the melody or tune, and especially its continuous character.

But they remember the promise the Lord made them; the pay that is to transcend the value of a thousand worlds like this. And so, because of the recompense of the reward, knowing it is sure, knowing that it will be unutterably beyond all that individuals, families, churches, communities, nations and the whole earth itself can do for them, they play on without a break-- "Saved, sanctified and kept all the time! Glory to the Father, Glory to the Son, and Glory to the Holy Ghost forever, for a free, full and overflowing salvation!"

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification

SUBTOPIC: Its Continuance Worth The Cost

TITLE: The Graphophone

I wanted to send my children a Graphophone, but the cost of the instrument, coupled with a certain flatness of pocket-book, prevented what I desired. I felt unable to meet the price.

But one day while walking down Tremont Avenue in Boston, I saw in the show window of a Music store, one of the desired objects with a placard attached to it reading: "This instrument for ten dollars."

"Oh" I said as I stopped and looked at it, "I can spare ten dollars."

So I walked into the store and said to the merchant:

"I see you have a graphophone which you sell for ten dollars."

"Yes sir."

"Is it a good one?"

"Yes indeed. It renders ballads, operas, dialogues, oratorios, band pieces and everything in the music line."

"Let me hear it."

In response he brought out a number of records and I could not but be charmed with what I heard. Not until later I recalled that he only played a record once; that he did not make the instrument go twice over the same piece, but would take another cylinder and wind the machine afresh each time.

As remarked, this procedure was not remembered until hours afterward, but being quite pleased with the effect of a single rendering of each piece I purchased the graphophone and a number of records, and took it to my room at the hotel, to give it another trial before shipping it home.

But in the test in the room, with nothing to rush or hurry, I made the instrument play longer than the salesman at the store had done. Without rewinding, and without removing the record, I tried to make it go a second round, when lo! it broke down, or more correctly speaking, ran down in the middle of the second trip. I tried a number of records but it was the same with them all. To my intense disappointment I discovered that the machine in which I had invested could not pull through on a second journey. So rebundling the instrument and records, I went back to the store and interviewing the owner told him:

"I find on trial of your machine that it breaks down on the second revolution."

"Yes," he replied, "that is so. That is the way with all those ten dollar graphophones."

"But I want one that doesn't fail that way," I rejoined with anxious voice and eager face. "I want one that holds out faithful to the end."

"Oh well," returned the merchant, "if you desire an instrument like that, you will have to pay thirty to forty dollars."

"I'll do it," I cried. "Here's the other amount. Give me the machine that goes through without breaking down." And I threw several ten dollar bills on the counter.

The reader will observe in this double transaction that I was not finding fault with the music sent forth by the first instrument; that part was eminently satisfactory; but it was the feature of continuance we were after. We wanted the melody to be of an abiding character.

So we paid the higher price; got the larger, better instrument, and shipping it home, soon had a letter from the children, expressing their delight with the gift I had sent them.

Just so it is with the two blessings or experiences of the Christian life. Both have the sweet melody of salvation, but the first received has a way of running down, while the other plays on without a break through the years, indeed the lifetime.

But it costs far more to obtain Holiness, the second divine bestowment, than pardon, the first work of Grace.

If God had hung the second experience in the show window with the cost of its obtainment attached to it, none of us would have turned into the Store of Grace, but would have passed on down the street of life and landed in Hell, at last.

The prices, so to speak, of the two blessings are very different. We give up our sins to secure pardon, but we have to yield up ourselves to obtain holiness. We surrender or drop the works of the Devil in the first instance; we consecrate the works of God in the second. The Devil made sin; God made us.

That most of the Lord's people have never made this payment is evidenced in their withholding of talent, gifts, property, reputation, ambitions, imagination, affections and will. What a time the preachers have to persuade them to come to church; visit the sick; relieve the poor; hunt up the stranger; lead meetings and give as they should to the cause of God.

Such Christians of course know nothing of a steady spirit of praise; a constant strain of joy and gladness in the soul and on the lip, for they have never paid the price and do not own such a graphophone of full salvation.

Hence it is that if the Lord had placed the Second Experience in the window with the price of Holiness attached to it, few or none would have obtained the blessing.

But he caught us through the first Blessing or Pardon. The price was repentance, the forsaking of sins, and faith in Christ; when instantly we felt and heard the music in our souls. We never had melody and harmony in there before.

But behold! The song had a way of stopping. We would go hours without any joy or praise in the soul. Oh if it would only keep up and play on! We were disappointed in this feature of salvation. The music was lovely, but we were surprised and pained and bewildered at the way it would cease and the instrument run down.

So we reported to the Lord, and told Him we wanted perpetual gladness in the heart. We craved an abiding blessing.

And we were told that to secure such an experience as this, we would have to pay down all we had and were, and ever expected to be. That it took a great price to obtain such a freedom. That it required a perfect consecration, an unquestioning, implicit, eternal obedience to God, and a perfected faith in the Blood of Christ to obtain and own the experience of constant cleanness, gladness and glory in the soul.

The cost and condition would have utterly and completely frightened us away if beheld and encountered at the beginning; but God had managed the whole thing right; and now already in love with the melody of the First Blessing, and most ardently craving to have the music of Heaven in us all the time, we were only too glad to pay down and give up all we had, to possess the sweet, beautiful, joyous, upwelling, abiding blessing of Full Salvation.

The instant we paid the greater price, the Lord swung the larger music box into our soul, and with many of us it has been playing without a break for months and years.

Through weariness and painfulness, in toil and loneliness, in spite of misunderstanding and abuse, in face of false friends and open bitter foes, on flying trains and in the lonely hotel room, through the long, hard battles of protracted and Camp meetings, at home and abroad, on the land, on the sea, wherever we go, the sweet, glad music of Full Salvation sweeps, surges and rings on in the soul.

The Blessing, which cost us all we had to obtain, never leaves us; in a word the Music Box in the heart never runs down.

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification

SUBTOPIC: Misjudged

TITLE: Puzzling Cases

Last week I was called from the city to visit what was considered a peculiar case. The family and relatives of a certain gentleman thought he was going insane. They admitted that he was religious, and had claimed to receive the "experience of holiness," but they feared he was off his balance, and daily ripening for the lunatic asylum. Knowing the man's personal liking to me, and also knowing that I was a teacher of this "strange doctrine," it was natural that the family should desire me to see the "case." I thought before visiting the brother, that I understood the "case," as it was called. Still, on arriving at the town, I interviewed others before visiting him. The charges, among many were that he kept crying, "Glory!" all through the day, sung and prayed aloud in his room, and would not talk about anything but salvation.

I had not been with the much talked-about party but a few moments, when I saw that he was sound in body, mind and soul.

The incident recalled an occurrence quite similar in Virginia, when a gentleman received the blessing of sanctification, and for days did nothing but laugh, cry, shout and praise God. The family physician was called in, other doctors were summoned, and, after a reluctant consent from the sorrowing wife, papers were made out and the brother was landed in the lunatic asylum for treatment.

None of the proceedings in the matter quenched his joy. The holy rapture increased, rather than diminished, as, unresisting, he entered the gloomy abode. Here he talked religion to everybody, sane or insane, and with his laughing, crying, testifying and exhorting, got some souls saved, and others so convicted and troubled that the Board was glad to get rid of him and send him back home.

It really seems that men are as slow to recognize the work of the Holy Ghost today, as at Pentecost, when, though the Spirit had fallen upon one hundred and twenty, some "mocked," and others were "in doubt."

Recently in a night meeting the Spirit fell upon a number of souls during the sermon. Some broke out in that rapturous, holy laughter so well known to holiness people. A gentleman who was present went away indignant, and said,

"He could manage to stand hysterical women in every day life, but when it came to a man losing control of himself in the church, and laughing right out in meeting, he was done with all such people and places, and would come no more."

And so it happens in these very days, as the Holy Ghost works, some mock and some doubt. But thank God for that increasing number who are cut to the heart and cry out, "Men and brethren, what must we do?" The answer is still the same as Peter gave that famous day, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins--and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification

SUBTOPIC: Needed To Persevere

TITLE: The Through Car

There are some cars on railroad trains that do not "go through", as they call it. So if we happen to be in such an one we are told by the conductor to move forward into the coach just ahead. Of course this change is not very pleasant after having settled one's self for a three hundred-mile ride. On the other hand, when a person gets on board, takes his seat and settles down comfortably near a window with paper or book, it is quite agreeable to realize that there is to be no confusion, change and rush for another seat, but just as we are, we are to roll up smoothly and swiftly in due time to the Union Station of the city, to which we are going. We are on a through car. Regeneration is a car on the Gospel train to Heaven.

Through that grace we can have the ticket and title to come to Heaven. But this is not a "through-car" grace. There is one ahead into which all heavenly passengers must enter who come into the city. It is called entire sanctification or perfect love. The apostle says, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness (the sanctification, R. V.), without which no man shall see the Lord."

Whether the mass of Christians understand theology or not, they do feel that, regenerated as they are, something else must be done to and in them before they can see God. They know in their present condition, while they have a title to heaven through justification, yet they lack a certain fitness. They feel there is another car ahead. In their ignorance of the doctrine and experience they call it "Dying Grace," when that is not the name. The God-given title for the blessing is Holiness or Sanctification. In this we sweep into the Golden Paved City, and at Glorification depot. Passengers all along the Salvation Route are warned by the Holy Spirit, by conscience, by the pulpit and holy lives, by the heavenly conductor and earthly engineers, firemen and brakemen, that

the car Regeneration does not go through, that all passengers must "go on unto Perfection"--must be "sanctified wholly"--in other words, get on the through car just ahead.

Some Christians do not attend to this until almost in the suburbs of heaven. Some get the information early after boarding the Salvation train, make the change at a place called Kadesh Barnea, and settle down with clear brows and smiling lips to a life of real religious enjoyment and usefulness.

The writer traveled for fourteen years in the Regeneration coach. There was much getting on and off this conveyance by many, together with irregularity of meals and other discomforts we cannot now mention. One day a servant of God stood in the door and cried out that there was a better car or experience ahead, and it went through to Heaven without change or stop. He furthermore said that meals could be had at all hours, and there was no smoking room allowed. He said other things that were so grateful and blessed to the heart that we immediately arose, took up the whole cross, left our reputation on the seat, and went forward into the beautiful through car of Full Salvation. There we are, thank God, at this very hour.

Every day we go to the door and call to the passengers who will hear us, and tell them of the loveliness, comfort and excellence of the forward coach. We tell them that they had better change now than wait for the confusion which results when the dark river of Death is reached.

Some will not hear, being absorbed in the study of conference minutes, general statistics, college commencement sermons and Chautauqua lectures. But others heed, and numbers are entering and taking possession, with smiles, holy laughter, and shouts of joy.

Meantime, while the company increases, and full salvation songs and testimony float through the window, the train thunders along, and we all know that it will not be a great while before we will be at home at last and stand filled with endless life, thrilled with immortal joy, and forever blessed and satisfied in the presence of the King.

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification
SUBTOPIC: Unsuccessful Seekers
TITLE: Two Domestic Incidents

In a testimony meeting a German woman said in reference to the cleansing of the Christian heart, that when she got ready to dress her children in the afternoon, she placed the clean clothes on one chair, and a bowl of water with soap and towel on another. Then she called the little ones. She said that all of them wanted to put on the clean clothes, but not one desired the cleansing. It was in vain that she explained how badly they would look and feel with white clothes on dirty hands, necks and bodies; they all abhorred and dreaded the washing and giving the washbowl a wide berth, they stopped by the chair on which rested the pretty garments.

Her story, with its application, brought smiles from all over the house. Many knew how willing some of God's people are to put on the white robes of Heaven, but how pugilistic and pugnacious, how full of fuss, fume and objection they are, when told of a cleansing that must

precede the wearing of the white garment here or yonder. That it is not a question of birth at all; it is the washing of a child of God already born!

The second target-hitting allusion of the lady was that she once read of a boy, whom his father offered to give fifty cents if he would go with him to the river and learn to swim. The boy, at a distance from the stream, cheerfully promised, but when the cold water struck his foot, he looked up to his parent with a quivering lip and said: "Father, give me twenty-five cents, and I'll go home without learning to swim."

Again the smiles came out abundantly upon the faces of the audience. All of us knew the class of whom the lad was a type. We had seen them at the altar for a single night or two, beheld them make a weak effort, shiver all over and then limp trembling back to the bank or the back seats. There are the ones who start to build the tower and get tired. They begin the war, do not count the cost, and either surrender or make ignoble peace. These are the people who want the blessing, but can not stand cold treatment, either from the world, or the church. They start out with the full value and preciousness of the blessing in mind, but under the cool smile and icy demeanor of certain people, they give up the seeking, and dashing back to the old-time life and routine duties, try to content themselves with a half blessing, or the twenty-five-cent experience. It is true that they have something, but they might have had double, besides obtaining the cleansing in the river, and learning how to swim and float in the pure flowing, buoyant and uplifting grace of God.

TOPIC: Entire Sanctification

SUBTOPIC: Unsuccessful, Singing Seekers

TITLE: Untimely Singing

While talking one night with those bowed at the altar, I was in the act of speaking to a young lady who was one of those seeking a clean heart, when we found she was singing alto. Instantly, without a word, and without a moment's delay I turned from her and addressed myself to another.

One thing we have observed in years of revival work: that is, all persons who sing alto, tenor or bass while bowed at the altar never obtain the blessing they are after. It is quite rare to see an individual sweep into the light while singing at all, for the reason that when the soul is in agony and on the full stretch for pardon or purity, the condition of mind and heart is such as to banish all thought and desire of song. It was after the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and were happily delivered, that they rejoiced, danced, sung and struck the timbrels. Now, when it comes to persons singing alto, tenor or bass at the altar where they are bowed to receive the blessing of justification or holiness the very thought strikes one as absurd, and plainly declares the absence of that soul agony and that forgetfulness of surroundings, which we must have to enter upon and possess the deep things of God.

We once read of a man who sung bass at his wife's funeral. We never hear a penitent singing alto, tenor or bass at the altar, but we think of that man. Here is one supposed to be attending the funeral of himself, or the old man, and should properly appear in the character of chief mourner, when lo! he takes a place in the choir and assists in the singing.

In either of the above cases no one would suppose for an instant that any particular sorrow was felt, or profound feeling of any kind entertained.

It would not be amiss to say that the young lady, whose alto singing brought about the reflections just given, did not secure the blessing. Only the next day she went off on some kind of pleasure excursion, and we saw her no more at the meeting. All of which goes to confirm what we said in the beginning.

* * * * *

LETTER F TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: False Goodness

SUBTOPIC: Praised By The Undiscerning

TITLE: Doubtful Praise

I heard recently quite an equivocal compliment paid a preacher. The brother, who was overflowing with praises of the minister's liberality, said:

"Why, sir, he was that generous that once he gave his wife's shoes away to a beggar."

To this I replied quite dryly:

"So he gave away his wife's shoes and not his own?"

The brother suddenly became thoughtful, and said nothing more.

Somehow the incident reminded me of Rowland Hill, who was accustomed to bestow upon every mendicant who met him, the money that his church gave him for the support of his family. It was a strange kind of benevolence which relieved a stranger he knew nothing about, and brought distress and need to his own household.

This in turn reminded me of a type, and stripe of Christianity, which would scalp or skin a man for disagreeing doctrinally with the scalper and skinner.

And this last thought brought to mind a most remarkable expression of a celebrated French writer. The sentence was,

"The Wickedness of Good."

TOPIC: Fire Of Sin

SUBTOPIC: Its Fighters Resisted

TITLE: The Alarm Whistle

Recently, while in my room in the sixth story of a hotel in a large city, I heard the wail of a steam whistle. Its rise and fall, and protracted call, plainly declared distress. It was immediately

answered by the regular steam whistle used for fire alarms. I walked quickly to the window and over eight blocks away saw from my lofty perch the whole trouble. A factory was on fire, and frantically blowing its own alarm, and giving its mental shrieks for help.

Almost immediately I saw five or six different fire engines start for the place of trouble. With clanging bells, trampling horses, thundering wheels, and great clouds of smoke pouring out of their funnels, they flew to relieve the distressed tenement. In a few minutes they reached the spot and unlimbered amid the cries, shouts and jostling of a great multitude, the crackling of the flames, the crash of falling timbers, and the dense volumes of smoke that rose like a great black mountain to the sky. In another minute or so I saw six streams of water ascending, curving over, and falling upon the roof through which the red flames were now bursting. I could see men on their lofty ladders breaking out windows in the upper stories, to drag their hose through and have a hand to hand fight with the fire. Then I turned my eyes from them to watch with an indescribable fascination the white, slender columns of water as, bending here and there, they poured a steady stream of crystal help on the fire-wrapped building which now seemed undoubtedly doomed. It made me breathless to see the even fight for a while, and how, when the water got the best of the flame at one place, it would break out in another. Immediately, at the command of the captain or foreman, the streams would be turned in that new direction, and another fearful battle would take place.

Meantime the firemen were faithful on the street, the engines were in full blast and quivering with power, cisterns and plugs answered to the demands on them, men worked like beavers or, rather, heroes, and a vast surging crowd filling the streets, looked with deepest interest on the absorbing spectacle.

For a full half hour I leaned against the window sill gazing upon the distant scene with wet eyes and a profoundly stirred heart. It moved me because it was such a striking picture of Sin and Salvation; such a wonderful illustration of a faithful Church trying to save a World from the fire of an everlasting destruction.

No question about the present danger and coming ruin if we cannot put out the flame with the streams of salvation. No dispute about the multitude looking on, and the few working. No doubt whatever of Herculean labors performed and deeds of moral heroism taking place all the time in this terrific fight against Sin, and constant struggle to pull men out from this burning world.

Suppose that the clerks, bookkeepers and factory hands had marshalled themselves on the arrival of the Fire Engines and Ladder Corps and fought them off, saying they resented all interference, and wanted to burn up! Then! we would have the finishing touch, which, inconceivable in the first case, is true of the world. Men sinking into hell demand to be let alone. They get angry as we pull them from falling ruins. They insist it is nobody's business if they are damned, and so all infuriated at the rush of Heaven's Fire Brigade, and the streams of salvation turned upon their burning sins--they raise weapons of resistance against their best spiritual friends.

TOPIC: Flattery

SUBTOPIC: By False Apostles

TITLE: The Door Knob

While entertained at a small hotel recently, we endeavored one morning to enter the dining room through a narrow passage way, instead of by the office, which was filled with smoke and smokers of the tobacco order. But the door at the end of the hall would not admit us to the banqueting chamber, although we turned the knob to the right as all respectable and well behaved and orthodox door knobs should be manipulated.

The effort to get in was a firm and steady one, but the entrance was equally fixed and resolved, and so finally supposing the portal was locked, we turned back and took another route to the breakfast table.

As the meal proceeded we asked the waiter why the door in the hall was locked. He replied that it was not. We then asked why did it not open when we tried to get in. His rejoinder was, which way did you turn the knob? We told him, to the right. He smiled and said:

"If you turn it to the north it won't open, but if you turn it to the south it will."

We came near whistling aloud. We did smile. And certainly indulged in some thinking and applying of an instantaneous and correct order.

The Door Knob Family swept at once into recollection and before the view. We recalled that it was divided into two great branches.

First, those who will not respond to the right approach. We bring the truth to bear upon them, and they will not yield. The blank face, the immovable countenance, the unbarred heart and closed lips remain before us, although the right message, the correct manner and the proper speech were all observed in trying to bring them to duty and to God. They would not turn to the right.

The second branch of the Door Knob Family can only be opened by being approached, handed and turned a certain way. This is not necessarily the right way, but "their way." It may be a wrong mode both as to the human door and the human opener, but the fact remains, they have to be approached in a certain manner, or they will not open heart, purse or lips to God or man.

There are horses that will not allow themselves to be mounted except from a certain side. To come on the other side at them is to be rewarded with a snort, plunge, shy, kick and run away. There are other animals that if smoothed down one way seem highly pleased and will purr their satisfaction, but if their fur is rubbed backward, there is an immediate spit! scratch! and claw!

Like the door knob in the hotel these animate objects bring out with confirmatory clearness, the class of individuals of whom we are writing. No matter how true and just and righteous the subject is we bring such people, if we do not present it in a certain style agreeable to these aforesaid parties, they will have nothing to do with it or us who tell them about the theme. On the other hand if a person comes with what is not true or wise or righteous, yet if he manipulates their weakness, if he panders to their crankiness, bows down to their hobby, ministers to their pride and vanity, rubs the fur the right way, turns the knob to the south, then he can get immediate access to heart and purse, and enter into the room and about take charge of the whole house.

This is what Royal Favorites, Successful Politicians, Society Parasites, Family Flatterers and certain Popular Pastors do; they turn the door knob to the south instead of the north, to the left instead of the right, and walk in and take possession of the person, circle, congregation or party they have fooled.

They do not operate the human door knob right, according to God's Word and the best interests of our humanity, but they worked it successfully so far as to the accomplishment of their desire, purpose and plan.

We once knew a preacher who was without salvation, and yet who could do what he would with a large congregation, because he turned the door knob in a way that pleased them. Another pastor filled and led by the Spirit of God had no ascendancy over or favor with this audience to be compared with the backslidden preacher of other years.

Again we knew a pastor who could secure money and that in abundance out of wealthy people whom no one else could move a particle. Some of these individuals belonged to his church, and others were outsiders who attended without being members of any denomination. Among the latter were theatergoers, stock gamblers, lottery stockholders and open violators of the ten commandments.

He had a way of putting his hand on their shoulder, clapping them on the back, gazing admiringly in their faces and telling them they were noble hearted, princely fellows. He told them there was no place in hell for such men as they were; that he wished the world had ten thousand more like them, etc., etc., etc.

Of course, he got what he wanted for the different collections of the church; for naturally the smoothed down parties felt grateful to be told, contrary to conscience and the Bible, that they were not going to be lost.

He turned the door knob to the left instead of the right; to the scorpion in the south, rather than towards the polar star in the north, and so he got in, but he entered the wrong way.

How contemptible it is, and how blighting and blasting to character, to play on the prejudice, ignorance and vanity of an individual for the obtainment of certain financial and ecclesiastical ends. And how pitiful and despicable to the moral sight will be those at the Judgment who are found not to have labored and given to the Lord and His Kingdom as He has indicated and commanded, but contributed and acted because of a personal liking to an individual who soft-soaped and honey-fuggled and rubbed the fur of their egotism the right way, so as to make them feel good and purr out their satisfaction.

Instead of giving to God, the money which was said to be a gift to heaven, was really so much wages paid a man for swinging a censer full of flattery and praise under his swollen, distended but delighted nostrils.

TOPIC: Flow Of The Spirit

SUBTOPIC: Impeded By Spiritual Debris
TITLE: The Red River Raft

In the South we have a noble stream emptying into the Mississippi, and called the Red River. Tapping and penetrating wide regions in the West as well as the South, it was prior to the Civil War a great highway of travel, and means of carriage for vast crops of cotton and corn from the interior to the outside world. Hence a small fleet of steamboats plowed its muddy waves and their bells and whistles were sounds of ordinary occurrence.

During the war a raft formed in the channel, and from a temporary obstruction as first regarded, it grew in a couple of years to be forty miles long! It was such a pack, jam, tangle and choke that not only all boat traffic was stopped, but the very current of the river oozed through the clog of timber and obstruction of drift as though with pain and difficulty. Storms, floods and caving banks had all contributed to the raft, so that not only a mass of trash and brush abounded, but great trunks of trees were ranged in ranks, piled up in layers, and a number were pointing upward like telescopes.

The very sight of this forty-mile raft or river pack filled the heart of the State of Louisiana with despair, and so she appealed to the General Government for help and deliverance.

In due time it came, and the United States dispatched boats and workmen to the spot with great saws and axes, mighty lifting machines, and any quantity of dynamite.

They commenced operations at once, and began blowing up sections of the raft at a time with the explosive mentioned. A Methodist preacher witnessed much of it, and told the writer that he beheld every imaginable object and article come out of that timber and drift pack, from a knitting needle up to a gin wheel. He said he was kept in constant amazement at the things pulled up and out of that long, dark, winding, twisting Red River Raft.

His statement made us think at once of something more dreadful than the sight beheld on the Southern stream and that is a choke, jam, pack, tangle and clog in the soul and moral world. The Red River Raft is in the State and Nation today, in numerous churches, in thousands of families and in many an individual life.

It does not take long experience in the ministerial life to recognize the "raft" in the audience. The evangelist, by touching many communities and facing all kinds of congregations, becomes even more expert and correct in this strange knowledge. By intuitions, lightning-like impressions, and the operation of certain faculties of mind and spirit which we hardly understand, we know there is something wrong in the church and family life when not a soul has spoken a word to us. A blockade of trash and lumber and buried things in the life has no actual telegraph wires running up from that unseen world, with messenger boys to carry dispatches concerning its position and size; but for all that, its existence is as well known to the worker anointed with the Holy Ghost as though operators, reporters, artists, and a regular railway mail train had come up from the place itself and declared that the long, snaky, curling, twisted and deep thing was there.

An impeding something is seen to be in the man or felt to be in the church service. There is no rush of the River of Life with musical murmur through the soul or the congregation. The Old Ship of Zion with its exultant, cheering whistle, has not been heard on those waters for a long time. There was a period when she took on passengers for Glory, and discharged a cargo fresh from Heaven on the heart's landing place; but that has ceased to be. The Raft formed! The ship comes no more. The Water of Life barely oozes in some souls, and is utterly gone from others. The heart pack, life choke, soul clog, character blockade has been formed. The spirit has been literally filled with trash, drift, and lumber of all kinds. The man himself does not know all that is hidden away in him. He forgot to keep count. The logs came so fast that he got bewildered. The church has lost record of the different bickerings, jealousies, evil speakings, violations of discipline, and questionable worldly entertainments in and out of the sacred edifice; and that altogether makes a raft which hinders the revival and keeps back and out the grace and spirit of God.

All who have any spiritual discernment must feel that something is the matter. Figures and images crowd the mind to describe the situation. The wheel is in the mud and will not turn. The wing is clipped, and there is no mounting up. The sword has lost its edge, the salt its savor, and the air its ozone. The fog is all over the country, the fire dead in the furnace, the wind out of the sail, the channel dry, and the ship stuck fast in the mud. It takes all these metaphors to give some idea of the state of things when a "raft" is in the church.

Sometimes the church raft is forty years in extent. Sometimes it is that long in the life of an individual. The very length and thickness of it is paralyzing and would fill all concerned with despair, if we did not have the great General Government of Almighty God to appeal to, for the management of the matter. The thing itself is too great for us. All protracted meetings ending without a revival, convinces us of that fact. The strain, drag, emptiness, lifelessness and fruitlessness of the regular services prove the dreadful solidity and immovability of the "raft," so far as human power is concerned.

God, however, has saws, axes, lifting and pulling machines and any amount of dynamite by which he can blow up all such obstructions in the country, be they political, civil, ecclesiastical, household or individual. This is what is done in a real revival. This is what took place in the services held by the disciples, and in the meetings run by the Wesleys, Whitefields, Nelsons and Bramwells. It is what happens today, when a genuine, scriptural, Holy Ghost service comes to pass. At such times rafts suddenly rise skyward, and go to ten thousand pieces.

Here also comes in the nine days' wonder of the public over the, revelations made by the exploding or blowing up of these life packs, soul chokes, and spirit blockades. Things not dreamed of are found to have been hidden away for years. Animositities all unsuspected and undeserved are confessed to the astonishment of the victim. Wrongs are righted. Thefts, adulteries and murders are admitted. The burning down of one's own house, the bearing a false name, the existence of two wives or two husbands, are all matters of confession when the raft is really blown up, or a genuine revival has come. The writer has witnessed every one of these features in his meetings, with many other gruesome things he has not time to mention. In one place he beheld a half dozen reconciliations in ten minutes, and in another a merchant paid a poor widow woman six thousand dollars to reimburse her for a business wrong he had years before inflicted upon her, and of which she was suspicious but had no proof.

All these things made conditions that puzzled pastors and spiritual members of the congregation, who wondered what was the matter that services were so tied up in their church, and salvation at such a low ebb. The explanation was a raft, curled and twisted back for five, ten, and twenty years, and even longer, through which the grace of God could not flow upon the people, until confession was made, sin renounced, and restitution extended to the wronged. In other words, the raft had to be blown up.

The raft in Israel's case lay just under Achan's tent. It had only a few days to increase in size, but it was able from the beginning to dam up the grace of God, and keep victory from the whole nation. When it was dug up or blown up and finally burned up in the valley of Achor, then nothing and nobody could stand before the people of God.

It is for each man, or congregation, to find out where the trouble is; that is, to locate the raft. When discovered, the next thing is to pray for the dynamite of Heaven to come. Then will happen the explosion, or a genuine revival. Then the water of life will fill the ecclesiastical channel, the old ship of Zion will resume her regular trips, passengers for Heaven will be taken on every Sabbath, and cargoes of grace and glory will be rolled off on each landing place of the heart at every service.

TOPIC: Freedom
SUBTOPIC: From Conformity To Legalists
TITLE: A Plea For Freedom

The man or woman with Monastic conceptions of Christianity, who would hammer, saw, plane and shape every Christian down to some single earthly likeness or opinion of what is right; who would make us all wear long faces and dress alike, would not only cause the church to look like an Orphan Asylum with its checked aprons and hair parted the same way but also frustrate some of the most gracious and important purposes of God.

Heaven is to be the everlasting abode of the holy. May we become holy and remain so. But in it will be that endless variety of gift and grace which will add to its charm.

Let no one of a certain disposition feel shut out or at a disadvantage there. The King Himself has all the temperaments in his rounded, complete manhood. Otherwise He would not be such a satisfying Saviour to all kinds of men. The Lord Jesus was not the Son of Judea, nor Rome, nor Greece, nor even of a Continent. He was greater, broader, mightier than all that; He was the "Son of Man."

TOPIC: Fretting
SUBTOPIC: Its Adverse Effects
TITLE: Fretting

We once visited a family where the husband and wife had fumed and worked themselves into such a condition that they spoke continually in a whining, worried accent. She would ask him at the breakfast table, "Dear, will you have some coffee?" each word being pulled out and the

whole sentence sounding like a prolonged nasal, unhappy kind of chant. It seemed as if she was inviting him to take a cup of hemlock before being put to death. He with the same style of whine would reply, "No, I thank you, dear." Then would come his turn: "Wife, will you have a piece of beefsteak?"--the question sounding in its dolefulness as if he had just seen the hearse and undertaker drive up to the door for them both, and that there was no earthly use in his cutting or his wife eating that meat or any other kind of food he could pass her.

We leave the reader to imagine how long we tarried at this domicile.

We believe that thousands of women have been goaded to desperation and sin by a worrying man in the house, and as truly we are confident that tens of thousands of men have been driven from home and into crime itself by the cold, unfeeling speech or fretting, scolding tongue of a woman.

A house in a county of our native State stands empty today because of the evil just mentioned, where the wife and mother in her own unhappy, exacting, fault finding spirit, caused her husband and two sons to leave home forever. The dwelling is a large and beautiful one, but a woman sits there alone today in the midst of her pictures, mirrors, waxed floors and carefully covered furniture. She won her stubborn way at last. Her will is now supreme. There is no one to cross her way or differ from her. She is undisputed ruler over everything in sight. But the price she has had to pay is a lot of empty rooms, silent halls, hours and days of uninterrupted loneliness, and the unbroken absence of those who were nearest to her by the ties of blood and the sacred laws of God.

We thought once when paying her a pastoral call, that it would have been better for her to have had her way less, her will crossed, the floors tracked, and the furniture disarranged, than to sit in the center of so much tidiness and order, and yet surrounded, buried, and all but suffocated in such a dreadful, unchanging, unending silence and solitude.

Husbands and sons are not going to stay when things are disagreeable at home. They turn naturally to places and people where they find peace, congeniality, companionship, sympathy and affection.

The sight of men talking, reading and smoking together in hotel offices and club rooms, means volumes of unwritten history of domestic infelicity and misery. We do not believe that such persons take to these resorts by preference, but in innumerable instances, are exiles through failure to find at home what every man ought to have, and has a perfect right to possess.

TOPIC: Friends

SUBTOPIC: Who Are Faithful

TITLE: The Faithful One

Paul found and mentions him in his epistle to Timothy. The apostle had become old in the service of Christ; the scourgings and stonings and shipwrecks and mental anxieties of the past had told upon him, and he was now Paul the aged. Moreover, at this time he was confined in Rome and

daily expecting to be executed; so he was Paul the prisoner; and he was Paul the poor, as is seen in his writing for that faraway cloak at Troas; and he was Paul the lonely and forsaken.

If ever he needed friends and Christian companionship it was now; yet Demas, Titus, Crescens and Mark are all gone, he is entirely forsaken save by one person, and that the faithful Luke. So he writes to Timothy, "Only Luke is with me."

How much of tenderness, devotion, loyalty and faithfulness is conveyed in this expression. Hundreds whom the apostle led to Christ are dead and gone; hundreds more in distant active fields of labor, have forgotten him; but with the needy aged prisoner lingers one who proposes to stand by him until the last.

Every true evangelist makes the acquaintance of "the faithful one" if he preaches a true and fearless gospel. As conviction takes hold of the people, and Satan arouses antagonism, and the heart is sickened at beholding the spectacle of weakening and deserting members; like a beautiful soul-cheering gleam of light from a stormy sky is to the eye, so to the lonely proclaimer of the gospel is the sight of a faithful Luke who, separating himself from the crowd of opposers, declares with a warm grasp of the hand that he is with the messenger of God, and in His name bids him Godspeed, and that he will stand by him.

The pastor of many a church gets acquainted with this faithful character. He is not seen and recognized at first, but gets to be well known later. The rule is that it is not Luke who meets you at the train, or is first at the parsonage to greet you. Demas the forsaker, and Mark the deserter are generally on the welcoming committee. Luke, the calm-browed, level-headed and true-hearted one, comes on the scene generally when Demas has deserted the standard, Mark is running, and Crescens and Titus find it convenient to be in Galatia and Dalmatia.

The faithful one is seen again in the social circle.

We remember a gentleman who suddenly became the target of numerous arrows of scandal. The most dreadful things were said about him, and numbers of his old-time friends became cold and fell away. His suffering was intense and he became sad-looking and haggard under the general and pitiless assault. In the midst of it all, Luke appeared in the person of a friend who, learning of the situation in a distant city, went immediately to the telegraph office and sent the following message flying over the wires to the victim: "I still believe in you."

A lady was present when the dispatch was received and read. She said the slandered man's eyes filled with tears, while his lips tremulously uttered "God bless him." From that moment he became a stronger man and lived through, and lived down, all the false reports.

A merchant said that he went home to tell his wife the crushing news that he was a ruined man financially, and that his summer friends had, as usual in such cases, forsaken him. He said his wife had been like a hothouse flower, and spent most of her time in reading light literature and lolling on the sofa. He was afraid that the tidings would break her heart, and so communicated the information in a very gradual and gentle way. When he concluded, however, with the words

literally wrung out of him, "I have lost all," to his amazement she arose and threw her arms around him and said:

"No, my love not all--you have me. I will stand by you, and make up for the loss."

Most nobly he said she had fulfilled those words. Their first utterance had made him happy, but their complete reproduction in deeds had brought much deeper joy. In talking about it afterwards he said: "I lost a fortune, but gained another far more precious and satisfying."

We once knew a lady who had lost most of her children and all of her property. Her two sons and one surviving daughter were all happily married and absorbed in their own homes and duties. She was nearing three score and ten, and used to go about with a granddaughter of twelve years of age, who was her inseparable companion.

We often saw them together on the streets, presenting such a strange partnership of old age and childhood, of weakness and budding strength, of gray-haired sorrow and childhood's sunny-locked gladness and brightness, that the sight always melted the heart and filled the eyes with tears.

All the more pathetic was the thought that in this stripped and smitten life, when friends were gone and children neglectful and forgetful, the faithful Luke was personated in a little, fragile but not the less devoted grandchild.

Thank God for the faithful Luke.

* * * * *

LETTER G TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Getting And Regretting

SUBTOPIC: United In Sinful Obtainments

TITLE: The Wasp

We were reading some time ago about a spoiled, fretting child, and a patient nurse who was doing everything in her power, but all in vain, to pacify and satisfy him. The fashionable mother was taking her late morning nap before rising, and being startled by a frequent recurring shriek or scream from the window where the two were sitting, would ask the nurse with a petulant, exasperated tone--"What on earth is the matter with the baby?"

The replies would be, "He wants this," and "He is crying for that," or "He is pulling for something else." The sleepy directions of the mother would be, "Let him have whatever he wants." And one time, not hearing distinctly what the girl said, the mother said impatiently, "I tell you to let him have it."

In another minute there was a frightful yell from the window by the child, and the mother, now thoroughly angry over her frequent disturbance from slumber, cried out:

"Mary, didn't I tell you to let the child have whatever he wants?"

The quiet answer of the nurse was: "That's just what's the matter with him now, ma'am. He's got what he wanted!"

The thing the child screamed for was a wasp. He got it! And then he shrieked because he did get it.

Let the reader glance around him in life and see if this is not what is going on everywhere and all the time among grown up people. For what are men and women after all but grown-up children. They are taller and heavier, it is true, but what about the conduct so strikingly like that of a child.

Men reach, struggle, grasp at and cry for things they insist on having. They get them in many instances, and then the world is treated to gushes of tears, tearings of hair, groanings of spirit and sobs and cries because they got the very things they said they must have! It certainly must appear to higher intelligences looking down upon us from the skies, that there is and can be no pleasing some people.

The trouble is that when we have our way, we always get the wasp, and it is not less sadly true that the sting goes along with the wasp.

Poor, foolish children that we were, we only saw the pretty thing flying about and never considered a moment about the after consequences of silly actions, the human and divine judgments which follow transgression, and the injury done our own mental, physical, and moral nature by evil or a wrong course of any kind. So the land is filled with the cries of those who got what they craved, and also obtained something else that they did not desire, viz., the suffering which invariably attends or follows the having our own selfish, stubborn, self-opinionated way. The wasp is caught, but the sting goes along with the wasp.

We knew a preacher who after years of faithful service conceived it to be his duty to leave the work of saving souls and go into politics. He argued himself into the belief that the quickest way to save the nation and the world was to remodel the laws at the state and national capitals. Then commenced the struggle for nomination first and election afterwards. He soon began to wear the stereotyped smile and to manipulate the machine-like handshake of the office seeker. The Gospel was utterly dropped and politics, trade, taxes, and reform constituted the burden of his public speeches and private conversation. Friends remonstrated and warned; told him that he was making a ghastly mistake. But no! he would have his way. He was elected first to the Legislature, and afterwards to Congress. He got what he wanted. But it turned out to be a wasp, and the wasp had a sting.

The position and environments he found himself in stung him to death in the deepest, saddest sense of the word. We saw him a black-faced backslider in the midst of his successes. Later we met him as a defeated candidate for reelection to Congress. Later still a heart-broken life

wreck; the State did not want him, the Party was tired of him, and the Church had no work where she could station him. His wasp had stung him with a vengeance.

Quite an attractive young woman turning from a number of excellent suitors engaged herself secretly to a young man about whom she knew nothing. Fearing opposition from home she wedded the man without the knowledge of her mother, and carried the burden of deception in her breast for months.

Finally the divulgence came of the secret wedding, and the husband arrived and took her away to the far North. After that the revelation of the man himself slowly but surely took place. He was totally unworthy of the love she had royally heaped upon him. After a few weeks he became neglectful, then abusive, sold her valuables and jewelry, made a kind of slave and drudge out of her, and took from her the hard earnings she had made in various ways with her own hands, and had set aside to purchase a railroad ticket to visit the far distant mother. So by degrees her heart was broken, and she sank into an untimely grave in the very budding period of a lovely young woman-hood. She would have her way. She got the wasp, and it stung her to death.

In a town in one of our Middle States a couple were wedded with every prospect of a lifetime happiness. In a year a child was born, and the wife, who had been friend and companion to the deserving husband up to that time, now commenced drawing away from him and giving all the hours to the little one. This conduct did not end with the infancy of the babe, but went on year after year. The man saw his home change to a mere boarding place. He was not welcomed at the door, nor his companionship sought when he was in the house. His cares, troubles, business, seemed to have no place in her mind. Evidently he had become little more to her than a bill-paying machine, while the child was the real head of the house, the sun about which everything and everybody had to revolve.

We read once of a plant of the vine order that sprang up somehow in a dark cellar. There it drooped awhile, and then some one having accidentally knocked off a piece of brick or mortar, a little crevice was made in the wall and a ray of light entered. Towards this beam of light shining through the crack the vine began to work its way, and finally came through the aperture and up and out into the open day.

So it was with the man we refer to. He was not a Christian, but when in his darkened life, light fell on his social and affectional nature, he was unconsciously drawn to persons and places where he received the sympathy, help and spirit response that he craved.

One day the wife's eyes were opened to the fact that the husband had ceased to make any protest about her treatment of himself. Still later she was more thoroughly aroused on seeing that he was actually indifferent as to what she did or did not do. They came the shocking revelation that his love utterly weaned from her, had been given to a person who had neither legal nor scriptural right to possess it.

The interview was a stormy one on her part, while he sat almost as immovable as a marble statue under her wasp sting cries. Finally he told her that her own conduct steadily persisted in for years had slain his love for her. He informed her that what she had counted as worthless and

deserving no consideration or attention, others had esteemed valuable and picked up. He added that while he would be true to her so far as the laws of God and man were concerned, and that he would always see to her support, yet the fact remained that his love for her was dead, without hope of resurrection, and that she had slain it with her own hand.

Truly she had her own way. She got the thing she wanted. But what about the sting. As she looks today at a husbandless home, the question will come up, did it pay to so persistently have her way?

Nor is this all the sting that comes of such a course; for we have always observed that the children we do most for, and sacrifice ourselves and others for, are the ones that give us the deepest stabs in after life.

We never knew it to fail; we believe that it never will be otherwise; that whoever pushes on in life insistent on courses plainly declared against by the laws of God and man, withstood by good sense and sound judgment, and pleaded with by a protesting love and every tender spirit and emotion of the soul, is bound to come into lifelong trouble.

Men and women who will have their own way, like the child at the window, will obtain what they desire. But in getting what they want, the rule is that the thing captured is a wasp; and the trouble about the wasp is, that it always brings its sting along with it.

* * * * *

LETTER H TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Handiwork Of God
SUBTOPIC: Declares His Glory
TITLE: The Voice Of The Sea

The hotel is on the beach, and the windows of my room, not an hundred feet from the water, overlook the boundless Pacific Ocean.

Much of my time in the day I spend book in hand sitting or strolling on the strand. But I find it hard to read with the ever-changing beauties of the sea outspread before my eyes. Then the sight of the green billows suddenly breaking into waves of snow for miles as they dash with solemn boom and roar upon the shore, is enough in itself to take the charm from any book written by man, because of the greater spell cast upon the heart by a mightier work written by an infinite author.

Then there are wondrous sunsets on the sea; and there are visions in the dim distance, both north and south, of sloping mountains enveloped in a garment of misty blue coming down to the ocean site as if meditating a plunge, and then suddenly shrinking back as if in fear at the last moment.

But the voice of the sea itself, heard day and night in the wash, roll and tumble of the surf on the strand, is the sound after all that tugs at the heart and fills the soul with emotions that pen

and tongue cannot declare. Little Paul Dombey, with thoughtful face and fading life, heard voices in the billows, and trundled in his carriage by the sea, would listen to them in silence for hours. His sister Florence did not hear them, and when he spoke in his strange old way about what the wild waves were saying, she would hide her face from the child and burst into tears. Perhaps not all hear the tones and voices and whispers and messages that God has put in his works in the sky, afar on the mountains deep in the forests and especially in the dark blue waves of the solemn Ocean.

TOPIC: Harmony

SUBTOPIC: Its Drawing, Captivating Power

TITLE: The Quartette

On a steamer upon the Mediterranean we saw a quartette draw a great crowd from all over the ship to their neighborhood by their vocal and instrumental performances. In the faces lined and clustered out in the shadow of the night we beheld every variety of temperament, as well as character, both sexes, all ages, and a dozen different nationalities. Very manifest also were the impressions made upon the audience. Every countenance, whether coarse or refined, whether stamped with heavy browed ignorance or bright with intellectual light, yet showed the power of the melody upon them as the strains of "The Last Rose of Summer," "Auld Lang Syne," "Ben Bolt," "Sweetest Story Ever Told," "Home, Sweet Home," and "Sweet By and By" stole out upon the night and floated clearly over the vessel, in spite of the throb of the machinery and the solemn, deep-toned wash of the waves.

We believe that it was the harmony of the singing that held the crowd spellbound. A loud mouth discord might have first drawn a congregation in curiosity, but could not have kept them. Rather would the clamor have driven most of the hearers away. The melody drew, and then bound to their places the ever-increasing group of listeners.

We learned a lesson that night that we have never forgotten--viz., that it is the harmony of the Christian life and character, and the sweet melody heard and felt in Christian love that will draw the people to us and to the God who put the music in our souls.

If we lose the real Gospel strain the people will not seek to stay with us. A clamor, racket and noise may draw some in a kind of wondering spirit to see what is going on; but they will not remain to tabernacle with what is felt to be discord. Scolds are never reformers. Fussers and abusers are soon left without a following; and this holds good in every realm of life.

The world with an aching heart, burdened breast, distracted mind, and restless soul and life, will never be drawn from its misery by jangling and wrangling. It has already had its surfeit of vinegar and gall. It has had discord in itself in superabundance. If ever drawn and held a willing captive, it will be by the sweet music of a loving Christian heart and life. The melody of the Gospel is the only power we know of that can make the passengers of every age, color and social grade, leave every part of life's ship and stand thrilled, softened, melted and unified, shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart, as the machinery of the world clanks on, and the waves of the rolling years rise and fall in a solemn, deep-toned wash all about us. The company of hearers is a great one. How we wish the band of singers could be increased. There are so many scolders, fussers,

abusers, bangers and screamers. How we crave and sigh and pray for more singers. It is real Christian love, and genuine Gospel kindness and harmony that the world wants to see and hear.

TOPIC: Helpfulness

SUBTOPIC: By Mud-Cleaning, Not Mud-Throwing

TITLE: The Mud Hole

In our mail today came a letter from a young man, who among other things wrote the following paragraph: "Twice you have pulled me out of the mud. And for over a year I have been walking and rejoicing in the light. If ever you see me near a mud hole again, you may know that I am there trying to pull some one out, and not trying to get in again myself."

The letter and paragraph filled us with earnest thought; and we could but say, "How much better it is to be in the mud-cleaning rather than the mud-throwing business. How much more helpful to the human race to pry a man out of a mud hole, than to be striving to pull him into one.

TOPIC: Holiness Fighters

SUBTOPIC: Self-Destroyed By Their Writings

TITLE: The Old Shotgun

It is quite noticeable that the preacher who writes a book against holiness as a divine work in the soul, wrought instantaneously in answer to consecration, faith and prayer, never writes another.

Men who take the side favoring such a work find a perfect succession of volumes on the subject welling up first in the heart in thought matter, and then pouring out later from the point of the pen. But the denier of this great work of Christ is done for, and done up as well as undone in one book.

He has said all his say, shot off all his ammunition in volume one, and there is nothing left to put in volume two, so that production never appears.

One explanation we believe is that the gun killed the gunner!

We had in our home an old shot gun which was as dangerous at one end as at the other. The fact is that it did more damage at the butt end or breech than at the muzzle. It always kicked dreadfully, and once it put out the eye of a man who was shooting it. These peculiar features of the weapon finally led to its being left severely alone.

So with the books which we have been mentioning; they hurt the writer often more than the reader; the shooter more than the shootee.

We have known such authors to have lost their spiritual sight by writing and publishing such volumes. Moreover they got such a kick, such a spiritual recoil from shooting at God's truth that they were knocked clear out of public sight and worse still, out of their religious experience.

Can any one point to a single revival granted the three preachers from Alabama, Nebraska and Massachusetts since they wrote their books against holiness as an instantaneous work of grace wrought in the soul of the believer, subsequent to regeneration?

They were killed by their own gun.

TOPIC: Hope For A Future Life

SUBTOPIC: Common Even Among Unbelievers

TITLE: A Touching Epitaph

Recently we read a short epitaph that a husband had composed and caused to be carved on his wife's tombstone. As we noted the beauty and pathos of the simple lines, we thought who would believe that the author of "Huckleberry Finn" and "Tom Sawyer" could have written such a heart-touching, eye-filling little gem. Like a window suddenly opened, it reveals a room in the man's heart, if not the house itself, that we had not before been allowed to look into. We will never see one of his books again, or hear the man's name mentioned without thinking of these lines:

"Warm summer sun,
Shine kindly here;
Warm Southern wind
Blow softly here.
Green sod above
Lie light, lie light;
Good night, dear heart;
Good night, good night."

TOPIC: Hoping

SUBTOPIC: In Vain

TITLE: The Battery

A large, circular building on the right hand side of the Battery is pointed out as the place where Jenny Lind sang on her first coming to America. The tenement is now used for emigrant purposes, but one can never look at it without thinking of the matchless Swedish singer who charmed this country before the outbreak of the Civil War. It was a swan-song for the death of a million men, and a history of heartbreak and woe for many millions more who perhaps had rather died.

As a place where ships have been watched coming in or going away, we question whether there is another spot on earth that has had crowded upon its few acres as much of human hope, longing, grief, agony and despair,

Tennyson speaks of the beauty of the sunbeam that falls on a ship which is bringing our friends swiftly to us. But he also wrote of the sadness of the light "that reddens o'er the sail which sinks with all we love below the verge."

Both of these emotions have been experienced, and many more besides by multiplied millions who have paced, stood, or sat musing by the shore of historic Battery Park.

Here came Aaron Burr for years, and looked in utter heart weariness over these same waves for a sail that never appeared. After his political downfall, all of his life was centered in a daughter who was equally devoted to him. She lived in North or South Carolina and took ship to Charleston to join her father. The vessel was captured by pirates, and the fate of the young woman has never been known. The father refused to believe the dreadful tidings, and would come down to this very place and stand for hours looking seaward for the incoming of the vessel on which she had sailed. But it was one of the ships that never get home; and the watcher himself finally went down into the grave, yielding his place to another and still another. For there is no end to the expectant ones on the shore, and who can count the boats that never make a landing, and the ships which never drop anchor in the Bay.

In our visits to the Battery we have always been struck with the absence of noise and hilarity among the people who congregate there after the setting of the sun. There seems to be but little conversation anywhere. The spirit seems to be one of meditation. Many are wearied, doubtless, and do not care to talk. But there are others maybe waiting for the ship that never comes, and so cannot speak. We saw one young woman leaning against a stone pillar with the waves breaking at her feet, while for nearly two hours she never seemed to turn her eyes from towards the ocean. We could but think, as we marked again and again the motionless figure and the steadfast seaward gaze, that there was a ship in her case as well as with others; and that there might be a tragedy in her life sadder and darker even than that which came to the unfortunate Aaron Burr.

TOPIC: Humbling

SUBTOPIC: Required For Successful Seeking

TITLE: The Bird In The Tent

While lying in my tent resting one afternoon at a camp meeting, a bird flew in, and at once much frightened tried to escape. The agitated performance of an hour by the confused little flutterer filled my mind with reflections. I saw at once that the bird's theological education was all wrong. He had lost his liberty, and was in a lot of trouble about the matter, but was evidently seeking recovery and the beautiful experience and life of freedom, in a wrong way. The constant effort was to fly upward into it. But both corners and all the upward portion of the tent were tightly closed, and the only opening was a small triangular space near the floor in front. The bird did not even look down, much less fly down, but sought deliverance by the upward or growth route repeatedly, only to be driven back and sink with palpitating breast for a temporary rest on a nail high up on the post.

I spoke to the penitent and seeker as I lay on my bed and said, "You will never get the blessing that way. The way of your salvation is not up there. You will have to get down low if you would be free indeed."

The bird listened, but would not act on my advice. In fact he seemed worried over my interference, and said with a nervous chirp that he was a bird of peculiar temperament, and could not bear for any one to speak to him at the altar. That it confused him. That he felt better when he

was left to himself. And that he believed in working out his salvation alone, and with fear and trembling.

So we became silent, and witnessed fully thirty or forty failures in the next half hour. He beat his wings in vain against the thick cloth of the tent, while a sag in the canvass looking like an opening helped to deceive him. Into the sag, and round the pole he would come back to the same place, a nail in the top of the post. Here he would rest a few moments only to make another of his vain efforts for deliverance in the upward direction.

I saw it was no use to give any more counsel, that he was an out and out spiritual evolutionist, that my voice simply disturbed and distracted, and that I would have to let him work out the problem to a success, by heart-breaking defeats in the line he was pursuing.

At last, in sheer exhaustion, he fell upon my trunk, rested a few moments with open bill and throbbing throat, and then alighted on my valise. From this lower perch he dropped to the floor, looking bewildered and exhausted. He was at last at the mourners' bench, and now I felt sure that he would soon "get through."

Just then he lifted his head and saw the opening before him, when, with a movement like a bound, he sprang through into liberty and sunshine. As he fluttered through into the air he gave a glad exultant chirp that I knew stood with him for "hallelujah!"

It would be hard to tell who was the gladdest over the deliverance, the bird or myself. He had been a chronic mourner so long as to quite wear me out; so, when he disappeared with a musical hosanna, I turned over on my cot with a sigh of relief and said "Glory."

* * * * *

LETTER I TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Impatience

SUBTOPIC: A Cause Of Suffering

TITLE: Impatience

We knew a mother who was greatly given to scolding her sons and daughters. She not only was continually picking and nagging, but at times she would go into a perfect fury with them. She lost five of these children, and begged every one of them on their deathbeds to forgive her. After they were in the cemetery, she lived in memory over their lives again, beholding continually the wounds she had inflicted upon them with her uncontrollable tongue, and her agony was frightful to contemplate.

We know of a man who lived in a lonely country neighborhood, and when in absence of help had to dress the body of his son for the coffin. In turning the corpse he caught sight of great marks and stripes on the back which he had put there with a cowhide in one of his merciless whippings. His own suffering at the sight can be easily imagined.

Yet there are crueller blows than those which come from a whip. There are wounds made by the fretful, impatient and angry tongue which never seem to heal. The victim may be removed from sight. The face we shadowed and grieved may rest quietly under the sod of some country church-yard or city cemetery, but the recollection of the pained, suffering look that was cast upon us as we wielded the lash-like tongue, we can never forget. The marks were not only left on them, but seem to abide with us.

Not only then for our increased influence for good; and not only for the happiness of others with whom we are associated; but for our own soul's sake we see why the Bible tells us to "Be patient toward all men."

TOPIC: Instruments Used By God
SUBTOPIC: Needed, But Now Discarded
TITLE: The Discarded Music Box

We held a meeting once in a town, where in the office of the hotel stood a large cabinet-sized music box, five or six feet in height, and as many broad. It was a very fine instrument, and with its great disc wheels and deep melodious notes would fully repay the party who, dropping a nickel through the slot, listened to "Norma," "My Little Georgia Rose," "Sweet Fields of Virginia," "Ah, I Have Sighed to Rest Me," and other equally lovely pieces. We have known gentlemen, especially traveling men, to spend an hour or so listening in the office to this superior instrument; while the refining, quieting, cheering and oftentimes melting influence upon individual and company was unmistakable.

After an absence of several years we returned to the town, and to the same hostelry, and passing through the office at once missed the musical cabinet. We put no questions, but wondered what had become of our old friend.

Next day in the hallway of an outhouse building in the back yard, we saw it standing in the midst of a pile of boxes, rubbish and general litter. As we looked at its weather-stained, dusty sides, broken lock and panel, and forlorn disused appearance, we felt a pang of genuine grief and a thoughtful melancholy stole over our spirit. It had been such a fine instrument; and it had given so much pleasure and had done so much good to many hundreds of people, that the heart could not but grieve over its present discarded, forgotten, and useless state. The very good it had done in the past seemed to demand a different and better treatment; and then it hurt to see it silent, and unsought and unemployed anyhow.

Nevertheless we got some lessons from the music box. We remembered to have seen like things only on a larger scale in life itself. We have beheld men richly endowed with natural gifts and spiritual graces, and made a blessing under God to scores and hundreds. For years the music of their lives was a charm and the power of their deeds an inspiration to many.

And then, after all that, we have observed them become silent, and marked them set aside, banished and forgotten. Sometimes it has been their own conduct that has brought about this state of affairs. Sometimes it is the injustice, cruelty and wrongs of their fellowman that has led to the

silencing of the masterful voice and the wreck, ruin, and pitiful end of the once useful and victorious life.

Whatever may have been the cause, it is certainly a heart-breaking sight to see one once mightily employed of God, now overlooked, unsought and forgotten.

We meet with these discarded life music boxes everywhere we go. Some are in the insurance business. Some have become teachers and professors in colleges. Some are already in the rubbish and litter pile. At almost every one of our meetings we see one or more of them looking hard and gloomy, talking sourly or bitterly, or moping silently in a corner and giving no sign that once their souls were filled with holy melody, and that they had stirred, melted and thrilled thousands with their songs, prayers, testimonies and sermons. Alas for the silent music boxes of God; and alas for the world that so needed their music.

* * * * *

LETTER J TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Joy

SUBTOPIC: Its Infectious Influence

TITLE: Unconcealable Joy

A man got on the cars very much amused about something. His face was fairly covered with smiles of the deepest order. As he came aboard he tried his best to straighten his countenance, but the facial lineaments would not be regulated. The hand was applied in a rubbing and smoothing out movement all in vain. One set of mirthful wrinkles would only disappear to give way to another. The party did his best to look grave as he encountered the cold, speculative eyes and icy demeanor of the passengers. He pulled his beard and attempted a severe and thoughtful expression, but the failure was complete and absolute. He next sank back in his seat, turned up his coat collar, and pulled his hat down over his eyes, but even then we could see his shoulders shaking and felt that the smiles had arisen to the hat bands.

Evidently it was a good thing he had; there could be no question of that, and now to the point and conclusion of the matter; in less than five minutes everybody in the car was in a smile or broad grin. The man's spirit had permeated and metamorphosed the crowd. He had conquered without a word.

Of course I had to make an application, and said: O, that we all had an experience so bright and glad and overflowing that everybody could see it before we had a chance to tell them, that people would be made to hunger, thirst and fairly pine for the blessing just from what they would behold in us.

To do that, however, we must have a smile that ascends to the hat bands, and a joy that no cold critical audience can dampen, much less take away.

We have seen a few of the hat-band order; and a remarkable thing about them was that they had not gone into sidetracks. Their joy sprung from a clean heart and a constantly indwelling Christ. They would not allow themselves to be switched off on solitary features of the gospel, or on visions, or third experiences, but stayed on the "main line." Hence instead of becoming scolders, fretters, sourly orthodox, etc., they kept sweet and bubbling over with joy.

Lord, increase the smiling, level-headed tribe.

TOPIC: Judgment Of Others

SUBTOPIC: Perilous

TITLE: Missing The Car

The writer was standing on a corner recently in one of our large cities awaiting a street car. He was pressed for time, and needed to take the first one that passed. But suddenly he became very much interested in watching a gentleman who was trying to catch a car that was nearly a block away. The man certainly did put forth a lot of energy, but the distance was considerable, the public conveyance was about to turn a corner, and the racer struggled against the additional difficulty of having a cigar in his mouth.

We could but feel that to make a successful run he needed to lay aside every weight, the cigar which so easily beset him, and run with swiftness the race that was set before him. But he did not, and just as we feared, in spite of all our sympathetic movement of limbs, and gazing of eyes, he missed the thing he pursued.

But lo! and behold! while watching and mentally criticizing and wondering and even worrying about our unknown friend racing for his car, we missed our own! While absorbed in his case, we lost our own chance.

With a most decidedly foolish feeling as well as look, we leaned against a lamppost and got to moralizing.

We said, that is just what a lot of people are doing today. They are so taken up with fault finding and judging the characters and lives of other Christians; they are so absorbed in observing other individuals in their race for heaven and eternal life; they take up so much time in telling their brethren how they ought to make speed, and what to do as they race for the Kingdom, that they forget to run themselves. They see it is true, a number miss the Car of Salvation, but alas for it! they also miss it themselves! The man with the cigar in his mouth is in a bad fix; but the man who is absorbed in watching the struggles, weaknesses and failures of others is in as lamentable a condition. Both will miss the car!

A wrong practice will cause one to come short in making the heavenly run; but what of the buzzard eye, the jackal snout, the nature of the ghoul, and the handshake of a modern Joab who says, "Good morning, brother," and then runs the unsuspecting victim through with the sword of harshest criticism, judgment, and abuse.

Between a wrong personal habit, and a tongue "set on fire of hell," and dripping with malice, innuendo, misrepresentation, slander, falsehood, and hate, most of the world's inhabitants would lose scarcely a moment in decision and choice.

To a lot of people who live most of the time on the Judgment Seat, or rather the Buzzard's Roost, some most startling but excellent advice from the great Apostle might most profitably come; and that is--"Work out your OWN salvation with fear and trembling."

We honestly believe that if some who name the name of Christ, but who live in suspicion and, malevolence, could see how far they have drifted from the Spirit of Christ they would have need to "tremble!"

So the moral as well as exhortation in our Kansas City street corner illustration is, that the man who gets absorbed in watching a brother miss the car of salvation, had better be careful lest by another and yet as certain a way he fails himself to reach Heaven and Eternal Life.

TOPIC: Judgment Of Others
SUBTOPIC: When Also Faulty
TITLE: A Settling Sentence

We once knew a preacher who had the most expeditious way of silencing the tongue of criticism, gossip and detraction in his presence that we ever beheld. It was the utterance of a simple sentence of six or seven words; but short and simple as was the speech, we never knew it to fail.

One day several preachers were discussing an absent ministerial brother, and were reflecting on his lack of judgment, and mentioned several of his mistakes and blunders.

The brother with the aforesaid quieting sentence listened a few moments and then said, as if thinking aloud, "I am so glad I am perfect!"

To this day we recall the embarrassment, physical squirming and uneasy laughs of those critics. The speaker was contemplating the ceiling and rubbing his chin, reflectively and approvingly, and appeared to have forgotten the brethren's presence. But he had not, and he knew that he had every one of them not only hooked and hung but strung, and even broiled. The brother, as the reader will see, made no attack on Christian Perfection, or Perfect Love, but was disclaiming Human Perfection, which, in its completeness of resurrected body and glorified intellect, can only be attained in heaven.

To change the figure, this speech was a favorite weapon with the brother, and it always brought down his game fluttering at his feet.

No matter who criticized or what they began to judge and condemn in others--this man would simply say, "Thank God I am perfect," and one could almost hear the Goliaths tremble and fall with a crash before that smooth pebble aimed at the head.

Sometimes there would be loud laughs, but they were uneasy in spite of their noisiness, and we never knew it to fail that the criticizing stopped then and there.

One effect of the utterance was to bring up to memory at once in the minds of the critics and judges some most glaring inconsistencies of their own, with blunders and mistakes by the score. The convicting, silencing influence of such remembrances suddenly brought up, we need no argument here to prove.

It was by this very power that Christ utterly lock-jawed the condemners of the guilty woman. "He who is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone." The Bible says that, convicted in their conscience, they all went out, from the oldest to the youngest.

So, leaving out the actual sin question, for all Christians should keep the commandments of God; and coming to the matter of correct judgment, wise actions, treatment of people, conduct under certain trying circumstances, let the man who never did a regrettable thing in this line stand up and show himself. And if, as we all know, he cannot thus arise and claim Human Perfection, why should he be criticizing and condemning others for failing where he himself has broken down.

Thus it is that the simple sentences, "I'm so glad that I am perfect," "I never make a mistake," "I never made a blunder," "I am perfect," are rapid-fire gatling guns before which no man with any conscience or moral sensibility and memory can stand.

Usually Christians condemn a weakness, not sin, in their brethren and sisters in most vigorous terms, while they have blemishes just as glaring, only they are different. The weaknesses are wonderfully scattered down the ranks; no one man or woman has them all; and so the rattling fire of judgment we generally hear in conversation and in the columns of religious papers, is discharged by persons with infirmities, at others who have defects. The brother with his failing (not a violation of one of the ten commandments) shoots at a brother who has a fault different from his, who in turn fires away at another who possesses an imperfection distinct from both, and so the battle goes on. It is amusing to note an arbitrary man condemn the ruling, domineering spirit in his brethren. It is smile-provoking to hear a gossiping individual protest against talkativeness in others. It is rich to hear a preacher warn younger, unmarried ministers about their attentions to the fair sex during a revival service, when he courted his own wife during a protracted meeting.

* * * * *

LETTER K TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Kindness

SUBTOPIC: A Winning Weapon

TITLE: A Bullet Of Bread

Kindness is the best and surest of all ways to overcome an enemy.

It amuses while it grieves the heart to see men's ideas of dealing with and ending human hate and opposition. They fairly rack their brains for inventions of weapons of warfare that

possess still greater destructive power. So they turn out monster battleships that in death-dealing force equal many an army of former days. And they mount guns which, according to the report of the latest construction, can land a shell full of ruin and death twenty-five miles away.

Jesus, with profounder and perfect wisdom, told His followers to use bread upon their enemies; to confront evil, with good, cursing with blessing and hate and persecution with love and kindness.

Elisha showed that he had learned of this heavenly school and taken in this God-like spirit, in the way he treated the Syrian army which, by a remarkable happening, was placed in the power of the Israelites. The Jews wanted at once to strike and kill, but Elisha said No, let us spare them and feed them. The effect on the Syrians was amazing to earth, but not to heaven. It is God's way of doing. The alien army thus delivered and fed, went back to their country full of gratitude and kindly feelings. The Bible says they would not make war with Israel again. Truly, certain loaves of bread had proved more powerful than spears, arrows, horses and chariots of iron.

When will we learn that the soul is unbarricaded on the love side, and that kindness has always and will ever capture it in that quarter.

When will men also find out that, while a bullet or sword may kill an enemy, yet he remains a foe in the other world; while kindness or shooting such bullets as loaves of bread, bank notes, loving words and patient, sympathetic letters, sees its adversaries not simply fall to the ground, but suddenly change to friends. The miracle of miracles is that the same strange weapon or missile which slew an opponent, made at the same instant a loving ally.

TOPIC: Kindness

SUBTOPIC: Its Conquering Power Needed

TITLE: The Power of Kindness

When the writer was a pastor in New Orleans, one of his stewards had a long, protracted sickness and finally died. His loss was generally regretted. The funeral was large, and floral offerings many and beautiful. But one of the most touching things took place the night of the steward's death.

The wife, bereaved and lonely, sat at a window opening upon a street, when her attention was called to the sobbing and crying of a boy out in the darkness. It was the voice of a lad who was the lamplighter for that part of the city.

For months as he passed at nightfall on his rounds, Mr. M_____, the steward, always had a pleasant and kind word for a child that no one else seemed to care for or remember. So now in grateful remembrance, each evening the lad would stop to ask how the invalid was. And this night he suddenly saw the black crape on the door, when, leaning against a lamp post but in the gloom, he burst into tears.

What a pity we could not get men like Mr. M_____ elected chief superintendents of our churches, presidents of our theological colleges; and the little lamplighter to be a professor in one of our Bible Training Institutes.

Surely if it was the love of God for us that has bound us to him in ties indissoluble and eternal, pulled us away from sin to righteousness, and from disobedience to godliness and well-doing; ought we not to try the effect of Christian love on enemies as well as friends, and see if it will not work as happily and blessedly in the melting of stony hearts and the redemption of human lives.

If we ask a man the secret of his devoted love to his mother, he might answer she is the best woman on earth. But all of us know that she is not; and that oftentimes she is not a bit smart, nor socially or intellectually attractive. Even when she is gifted and as good as any other woman, back of the reason of the son's attachment is found her affection for him. She loved him and took care of him, nursed him in sickness, watched over him in helpless infancy, saved him from many a whipping from father and teacher, was a sympathetic listener to all his sorrows, trials and failures, believed in him when others doubted, and clung to him when others cast the prodigal off. These countless manifestations of devotion aside from every natural affection, has bound the child to the parent, and causes him to say "she is the best woman in the world."

Let the reader try to account for the strong friendship he bears some very ordinary, unattractive individual. Or some uncle or aunt whom they knew in boyhood. Or some favorite sister now in heaven. And in every instance the secret will be found in their tenderness, affection, considerateness and repeated acts of kindness toward the party himself.

Dickens speaks of the poor London waif saying with his dying breath about one who had befriended him: "He was werry good to me." While the child to whom Bella Wilfur had been kind said in his feverish ramblings before death, "A kiss for the boofer lady."

It looks to the writer as if God conquered individuals and is going to subdue the world itself by persistent kindness. But many professing to have His Spirit seem to be on another line altogether in their life, home, social circle, church or denominational work. They are on the track or road of persistent unkindness.

Somehow no one seems to be in an ardor of gratitude and love over them when living; no one seems broken-hearted when they are dying; no one is heard crying out in the dark under the street lamp; no one buries their face in their hands and sheds scalding tears over the news of the death in the paper; and no one seems to miss or regret them when they are gone.

Alas for it. They did not learn the great lesson that God taught us from the skies. They failed to see the marvellous power of Christ over men. They utterly overlooked the beautiful character he drew of "the Good Samaritan" who had a way of lifting up and helping wounded men whom he found by the roadside. They became instead by constant unkindness, brother to the invisible and unmentioned man who wounded the traveler found by the Good Samaritan.

The greatest tamer of human brutes was Captain Pillsbury of England. He did it by a persevering kindness.

At a certain prison a most hopeless case was sent him. For months he could see no alteration. Finally the man, after four attempts to escape, broke his ankle in the last effort. Captain Pillsbury, always gentle and quiet, had the white-faced, suffering but silent victim brought to his own pleasant, breeze-swept room, and laid on his spotless white bed. If he had been a gentleman of rank, he could not have been treated with greater tenderness and care. But a dark scowl on the brow and silent, thankless lips were all that the noble-hearted manager of the prison received.

As the captain, after having, through physician, nurse, as well as himself, done all that could be done for the sufferer, turned to leave the room for the discharge of other duties in a distant part of the building, he observed an expression of pain on the prisoner's face. Glancing quickly towards the injured foot he saw that the nurse had not placed it in the best position for comfort. Stopping at once and retracing his steps, he took one of his own white pillows, and with the tenderness and gentleness of a mother, placed the poor broken limb in perfect ease on its soft, downy resting place.

As the captain turned to the door to leave, there was a sudden burst of tears from the bed, and glancing around he saw the prisoner with one hand stretched out to him, and another covering his face streaming with tears, while he said with choking accents:

"Forgive me, Captain, you shall have no more trouble with me after this."

He was conquered by a steadfast kindness.

Alas for the cutting and slashing; for the criticizing and faultfinding; for the judging and slandering, going on among those who are in the family of God, and even claim the possession of Perfect Love. What advancement can we hope for, and what results are certain to come if this be the spirit and conduct of God's children.

Gladly would we see a spiritual university, so to speak, spring up and absorb the others, as Christ's kingdom is to permeate and fill all other kingdoms; this university being run on the line of persistent kindness. A man like Mr. M_____ could be president, the little lamplighter a Dean of Theology, and all of us might enroll as students.

* * * * *

LETTER L TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Lack of Grace

SUBTOPIC: Apparent, But Unnecessary

TITLE: The Bannerless Building

One day in a walk down Pennsylvania avenue we noticed that every department building of the government had a great United States flag flying over the roof of the big structures but the Treasury building. Not a banner floated over it. Only bare poles were in sight.

This absence of the bright-hued pennon of the country might have been accounted for by the sickness of the Secretary. But seen, or rather unseen, as it was in the present time of financial depression and money lack, and bank closing and breaking, it was quite significant and suggestive to the, musing mind.

We could not keep from moralizing to the effect that when there is an inward lack and depression in the soul, the flag of testimony is not seen fluttering over the life fanned by the breezes of Heaven. Just as when Uncle Sam has seen brighter and easier days financially in the land over which he rules, and was consequently and proportionately happy, with fluttering flags and banners; so the soul instinctively hoists up pennons of gladness, real conscious fullness, and pulls them down when things inside become lean and low. When something gets the matter with the Divine Deposit in the heart; when something interferes with the spiritual currency of the soul, the flag on top of the house droops and is taken down from the pole.

How glad we ought all to be that God's Bank never suspends or breaks. His Treasury is always full. He honors every check in the words "I Promise You" when it is presented at a window or door called the Mercy Seat, and the Throne of Heavenly Grace. He invites customers who are flat broke. He is delighted to have a Run on His Bank, and it is a matter of record in the Bible, and a fact of human experience all through the ages, that He never turned a single soul empty away, who came properly, as laid down in the Word of God.

Over the great center dome of the Bank is the inscription, "Ask largely that your joy may be full!" In lower lines is the statement, "He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that you can ask or think!"

The idea of our spirits ever falling, with such a Bank to check on! The superlative folly of our pulling the bright flag of testimony and joyous experience down when our Heavenly Father has an inexhaustible Treasury, and declares that we who love and follow Him are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ!"

TOPIC: Law Of The Lord
SUBTOPIC: Resolve To Keep
TITLE: Effect Of A Chant

In a certain California city I attended one morning a Congregational church. In addition to a capital sermon that edified the head and blessed the heart I was much moved at one of their features of worship. The pastor and congregation read alternately through a chapter in the Word of God. While doing so the organ played softly a touching accompaniment.

In another California city I went to service in what was called a High church. The building was constructed in the form of a cross, so that the choir and the congregation sitting in the transepts or arms of the cross could not be seen. The service began with distant singing which came nearer

and nearer and finally materialized before our sight in the persons of twenty berobed boys, two surpliced curates and the Rector also in white bringing up the rear. They marched two by two, the first lad carrying a large crucifix. Farther on in the service while the Rector was reading the Ten Commandments and the people were responding the invisible organ kept playing a faint, faraway and most touching strain. As I listened to the Commandments and thought how men had broken them and how they were still being violated, that plaintive air was in strange sweet keeping with the hour. The effect on the heart was to confirm it in the resolve that was being murmured all over the house "Help us to keep this thy law, O Lord, and write all these thy laws upon our hearts, we beseech thee."

At the conclusion of the service the uniformed choir of boys and curates moved away singing while the congregation remained standing awaiting the benediction, and listening meanwhile to the lessening strains of the closing hymn as the singers disappeared down the transept into remote corridors and halls of the great cathedral building.

Somehow we recalled the angel song over the fields of Bethlehem, the singers vanishing in the sky, while the melody died away in the night over the slumbering homes of Judea.

And then we thought of the Church at the Last Day caught away from the doomed world, and ascending with rapturous hymns of praise the steep blue height of the heavens on their upward way to the soul's eternal home, the beautiful City of God.

How glad the singers will be, for their toil is over, pain is no more, and sorrow ended forever. And yet how heart-breakingly that same glad song will fall on the forsaken desolated earth. The world is left at last to itself. While the Church which strove so long to save, and to bless it in ten thousand ways disappears singing in the distant sky.

As I walked away from the Sanctuary of God that morning with the congregation, the song and singers taken from us, and the hard dry pitiless streets left us, I could not keep from thinking of the vanishing angels over Bethlehem, and the Church of God singing and disappearing in the heavens at the Last Day.

But one of the chanted responses followed me as I walked away, as I pray it may sing itself into the soul and abide in the memory of all--

"Help us to keep this thy commandment, O Lord, and write all these thy laws upon our hearts, we beseech thee."

TOPIC: Learning

SUBTOPIC: By Painful Experience

TITLE: Let Him Have It

We have often observed boys gazing through the window of a confectionery at the dainties and sweet-meats within. We have also marked them with their faces pressed close to plank, rail or picket fence, looking with all their hearts in their eyes at the golden apples in the orchard, or the big watermelons turned up so invitingly to the gaze in a neighboring garden or field.

We today smile at the spectacle, but the day was when we longed for the fruit and there was no smile in us. The amusement felt now comes from having taking many trips over there in the Boys' Eldorado. The apples were sour many times. The watermelons were overripe and feverish and made us sick. So somehow the enthusiast has been greatly chilled in regard to such territories and objects.

What are men and women but grown-up children? We have seen the same gaze in older eyes directed through restraining fences at fruit out of reach and which did not belong to the gazers.

"Oh for that watermelon!" said the longing look. "Oh for that pleasure that I see afar off."

Suddenly something in life happens. A rail is displaced, a picket knocked down, or the fence is climbed over by divine or human permission. A voice within says, "Pull the melon. Plug it. Cut a slice and eat." You do so, and lo! it was not what you expected. It was feverish. You grew sick at heart over the disappointment, but oh, how wise in head you became.

Ruskin in a sketch of his life tells us that when he was a baby in the arms of his nurse he saw a bronze tea urn. It was glittering hot with the boiling fluid in it, but it was quite pretty with its shining polished surface and so he wanted it. The nurse held him back, but he still screamed and reached for it. Finally his mother said quietly to the nurse,

"Let him have it."

He grasped the vessel and instantly let go with a howl of anguish.

From that early age he learned not to reach for everything that was pretty and attractive. The lesson of letting some things alone was fairly burned into him.

So the education goes on. "The patience of Immortal Love outwearies mortal sin." Wisdom streams into the mind from many different directions. The frost is seen to nip the flowers, sunsets fade in spite of all their beauty, the earth sounds hollow to the tread, and Heaven, pure, true, satisfying and eternal, wheels into view. This disenchantment of one world and enthrallment of another should occasion no soreness or bitterness, but bring about proper conditions of the soul, and the true attitude of life to man and God, while the garments of time are worn as one would the apparel of the body, ready to be laid aside when the hour for disrobing arrives.

Thank God for the wonderful schooling we obtain outside of colleges and universities.

TOPIC: Life In This World

SUBTOPIC: Its Vanity and Brevity

TITLE: Tenting By A Graveyard

The meeting here is being held in a quiet sylvan spot, just beyond the suburbs. It is quite a pretty place, with its wooded valley and green hillsides dotted with trees. I had my tent moved up from the dale to the top of one of the broad, low hills, and find that my nearest neighbor is a family

cemetery, filled with gleaming marble slabs and pillars. I visited it this afternoon, being surprised at its presence on the hill. I found it to be the burial lot of a single family. The father, mother, sons and daughters were all here, making a dozen mounds in all. Each grave had a marble head-piece, showing the family to have been one of means; while the dates revealed that all had been dead quite a while. The large size of the cedar trees, the utter destruction of the original fence, and two of the slabs lying upon the ground corroborated the statement of the dates. Formerly the public road had run by it, but a new highway had been opened years ago to town and the old road was now washed in gullies, unfenced and growing up with elder bushes and golden rod. The melancholy picture my eyes looked upon was a forgotten family lying in a neglected spot, by the side of a forsaken road.

Truly we do not have to go far to get the most solemn lessons of life! And so many of them seem to teach the vanity of everything but Heaven. How soon we are forgotten on earth. How quickly our places are taken in life, and we are scarcely missed. How the heart yearns as we grow older, to have the journey of life over. How we envy sometimes the pale-faced sleepers in these quiet burial grounds! Their battles have been fought, their toil is over, and, if saved, their sorrows are ended forever. I came away from the place with a strange sensation, as though I had seen a mile-post close to heaven.

TOPIC: Light

SUBTOPIC: Hatred For

TITLE: The Visit of a Frog

In a certain camp meeting, my tent was placed in a neck of timber looking down into a valley covered with woods. With a desire to have a homelike appearance I lighted a little brush fire in front of my canvas shelter, knowing that even the Indian wigwam is made attractive by this addition, while the hunter's camp would be minus its charm if without its fire. But the small flame, which I nursed with dry sticks and sat before, making out like I had a home when the big tabernacle duties were over, was not without its drawbacks. My lamplight and firelight together drew strange small denizens of the forest up from the shadows to investigate and form acquaintanceships. So one night a lizard manifested a desire to share my bed with me, to which I put in a most vigorous protest. Another night a large spider, the size of a silver dollar, concluded to spin a web near my pillow; and on a third, when the entire camp was asleep and quiet and I was writing at my table past the hour of midnight, I suddenly raised my eyes and saw a large toad frog sitting on the rug in the middle of the tent, blinking his eyes and apparently studying me with great interest. He, with his preceding brethren, were evidently puzzled over the gleaming of my lamp and fire, and had come up to see "what meaneth this," and why the long-standing darkness of their forest should thus be disturbed and broken into with such a painful thing as light.

I took my lamp, sat it down right before the frog and turned the wick up higher, and he never bugged. He was flooded with light, but seemed to be blinded by it. That which was a blessing and comfort to me was a mystery and profound discomfort to him. The higher the flame, and stronger the radiance the more stupid and stolid was the toad. It was only when we removed the light that he seemed relieved, jumped out of the tent and went hopping down the hill into the darkness. He doubtless assembled his friends that night in a damp and musty hollow log and told them of his late sufferings in a tent where a preacher turned something called light on so strong that

it was simply unendurable, both to the eyes and general feelings of any frog; that with the sun by day and lamps and fires by night, all frogs, bats and owls were bound to have a hard time, and would be unable to prowl around as of yore. That for his part he did not believe in light at all, and if it must be had, then let it be for only half the time and not interfere with the twelve hours of night, in which he desired to follow his nocturnal pursuits. And all the frogs and toads and bats in his audience, and an old owl listening in a hollow tree said--Amen.

TOPIC: Loneliness

SUBTOPIC: Its Sad Effect On Young Men

TITLE: Lonely Young Men

In my travels and observation of people, two things often appeal to me in a strangely pathetic way. One is the sight of a line of men at the general delivery of the post office, turning away disappointed, heartsick and gloomy browed under the cold, metallic, mechanical utterance of the clerk: "Nothing for you." Many of them are young men, and not a few middle aged, with every appearance in a large proportion of the number that life has been a sad journey as well as experience to them. We could not tell who they were expecting a letter from, or who should have written to them, but we could not keep from observing their sorrowful, dejected manner in turning away, and going out on the hard, crowded and yet lonely pavement again, nor could we keep back the gush of pity and the sudden prayer to God in their behalf.

Another scene is constantly beheld in a new kind of restaurant or luncheon hall that is springing up in the large cities. We saw the first in Baltimore a few years ago. We found one in the city of Indianapolis, and it carries the name of the first metropolis.

The room is large enough to contain an hundred chairs. These have a wooden arm sufficiently wide to answer for a table. The floor and walls are handsomely tiled and are spotlessly clean. A dozen small palm trees are distributed about among the seats, so as to give a garden like air to the place. Two or three short marble pillars at equal distances sustain a bowl made of the same material that holds fully a half bushel of lump sugar. The large lunch counter is loaded down with an appetizing array of ham, tongue and cheese sandwiches, while towering silver urns hold gallons of fragrant Java.

The customer comes to the counter, gets his roll and cup of coffee; sweetens the drink to suit himself at the marble pillar; and then going to a chair with his plate and cup makes his ten-cent breakfast under the shadow, so to speak, of one of the little palm trees.

We have marked hundreds of young men in these luncheon halls, and rarely saw one go beyond ten cents in expenditure for the morning meal. Their clothing and manner showed they had known a superior home life, and so the cleanness, tidiness and homelikeness of the place had operated as a great pull on their tastes and feelings. But the cheapness, also, was not to be disregarded, and here, silently and far away from those who knew and loved them, they contented themselves with a breakfast, costing a dime.

As we watched many of them, we saw from their faces and bodies young, strong and healthy, that they could have dispatched easily a half dozen rolls and several cups of coffee, and

yet they could not for financial reasons best known to themselves, and would walk away silently, with none of the gayety and outbursts of laughter peculiar to youth. Loneliness, friendlessness in a big city, and penniless days in the future staring them in the face, had conspired to make boys and young men look and act like old men.

TOPIC: Loquacity Or Silence In Testimony

SUBTOPIC: Both Extremes Should Be Avoided

TITLE: The Prolonged Whistle

On another morning, while on my way down town, the "Elevated" sounded forth its electric shriek for a crossing at one of the streets. For some reason the whistle got out of order, and the engineer could not stop it. For minutes it blew and wailed, the train was brought to a standstill, there was considerable speculation upon the part of the passengers, confabulation and running about by the brakemen and conductor, and at last we heard one say that the engine was out of fix and would have to be switched off and sent to the repair shops. This was done, a new motor car was sent flying down to us, and we were soon bowling again through the city on a line with the third story windows.

But I thought, as we sped along, that I had seen some people who on various protracted and campmeeting occasions had sounded the whistle too long. There are two extremes here as elsewhere; one where a man will not testify at all, and another where, after the dumb devils are cast out, he talks too much. Satan is responsible for both cases.

We have all heard the prolonged whistle, the jumping to the feet on any and all occasions, the verbal threshing over and over of the same little handful of wheat, while the train stopped and the passengers who wanted to get somewhere fumed and wondered.

Graver still, we have heard in meetings a talkativeness that was not only not of God but plainly declared to the thoughtful, of unmistakable mental dislocation, or some strange cerebral excitement superseding the ardent but always level-headed and perfectly regulated utterance of the sanctified experience. In prayer they became incoherent and apoplectic; in testimony wild, visionary and disconnected; and in exhortation violent, abusive and self-contradictory. The length and character of the whistling declared that some of the internal works were out of order. Something was one-sided; something had become unbalanced; steam was escaping not only to no profit but to the distress of the hearers.

Perhaps no one said anything, but many thought at once of the repair shop. That repair shop may be a sanitarium, a trip to the mountains or seaside, or a correcting, steadying blessing from the Lord. But surely some have need of the Round House of Grace into which they can run to get doctrine and experience to agree, and the whistle of testimony to harmonize with the truth of the Bible, with sanctified common sense, and with the inward spiritual life of the whistler.

My singer, Prof. R_____, was once conducting a testimony meeting. He asked a silent lady member of the church why she did not say something as did others. She replied that she was still because she had no gifts to express herself. His blunt rejoinder was, "The real reason is that you have nothing to tell, you have no experience to talk about."

A few days after that the lady in question sought and obtained a great blessing at the altar. Immediately her tongue began to fly. Hardly any one else could get in a word because of her loquacity. She became garrulous instead of unctuous and edifying. Whereupon Prof. R_____ fell upon his knees in the midst of the service and cried out in prayer:

"O Lord, several days ago we asked Thee to start this woman's tongue; we now have to beseech Thee to please stop it!"

The conclusion we draw from all this is that, if a Christian has no testimony, or does not whistle at all, he needs steam or the baptism of fire. If he whistles or talks too much, he needs the repair shop. May we all be guided into the middle ground of truth, and speak always right, and just enough on every occasion, to receive upon our souls the unclouded approval of God, and bring the most good to the greatest number of people.

TOPIC: Lying

SUBTOPIC: With Facial Expressions

TITLE: Facial Lying

We have been treated lately to a sight of facial lying which confirms more than ever the Bible statements concerning this fearful phase of depravity and result of the fall.

Just as the sin of profanity can be indulged in without the use of the tongue, and the slap of a child, the kicking of a domestic pet, and the slam of a door, and behold the curse has been given which the mouth was ashamed or afraid to utter; so lying is not at all dependent upon the lips and other organs of speech. Men can tell falsehoods by an uplifted hand in a religious meeting, by a jump, by a forced shout, and by positions of the head and expressions of the face.

Once while preaching our eyes fell suddenly on a young man who, resting his chin on the top of the pew in front of him, was making the most extraordinary grimaces to excite the amusement of some ungodly boys and girls around him. He had not calculated on a sudden turn we made in the pulpit, and by which our eyes fell full upon the writhing countenance before us. Like a flash he tried to wipe off the harlequin and clown look as one would figures from a slate with a wet sponge, and assume the appearance of thoughtfulness, seriousness, devotion and even piety. But it was too great a leap from the physiognomy of a buffoon to the rapt features and uplifted gaze of a Titian's angel, and the youth was too young, and had not had sufficient experience; and so while it was an awful facial lie he tried to tell, and he did his best to deceive, yet the hypocrisy was too evident, the mendacity too transparent, and the effort to fool and hoodwink us was an inglorious failure. He was caught so to speak in his falsehood,-- for still be it remembered that he falsified. And he lied with his face.

We know a presiding elder who from special attention to facial lines, gravity of manner, a steady gaze upon the preacher in the pulpit, and the use of a large yellow, bone-handled walking stick did some of the tallest lying that was ever entered in the Great Ledger Lie Book that will be brought out on the Day of Judgment. This volume is one of the "Other Books" mentioned in the Bible, and which will be opened.

The position in the audience of this man, seated in a nest of preachers who were tobacco users and Masons like himself, was one of the most profound outward respect. His eyes never left the face of the speaker in the pulpit. His face bore the appearance of interest, and agreement with the preacher; but with the large handle of his walking cane hiding his mouth, and pressing his lips a little to one side, he kept up a merciless criticism, ridicule and faultfinding of the messenger of Christ in the pulpit to those of his crowd seated on his right hand, and so distinctly that others not in his following heard the bitter, cruel speeches and could hardly contain their indignation. Here was facial lying with a vengeance.

Recently we were treated to another sight of this most sickening spectacle. This time it was an old, gray-headed member of the church. He sat with his wife, who was also white-haired, on the front pew, and paid apparently the most respectful attention to the preacher. But as the sermon cut across his cranky, fanatical and false doctrinal views, he would take advantage of the preacher's movement in the pulpit, and with his head immovable, and face turned to the speaker as if held spellbound, he would twist his mouth around toward his wife, and pour out the most venomous criticisms. In this unnatural mode of articulation the words had necessarily to be propelled with unusual force, and so, all unwittingly to himself, his tirade could be heard by people back of him in the next pew. Here was the double mind indeed. Here was division between the head and heart, and between the face above and the mouth below. On which side of the line did the man really live? If the Day of Judgment had suddenly come, as he believed and said it was near; what kind of person would the Lord have found! With his head and face he was looking like the aged Simeon in the Temple, and with his lips and tongue he was playing the slanderous, gossipy, tell-tale Doeg in the Sanctuary. With all his appearance of brotherly regard, friendly interest, unity of heart and spirit of worship, he was an enemy in the camp. He, claiming to have the truth, and be filled with Him who said, "I am the truth," and was too religious to wear a necktie and too holy to eat pork, lied with his head and face for a whole hour at a time.

Truly the Lord knew what he said when he inspired the words, "The heart is deceitful above all things -- who can know it?"

* * * * *

LETTER M TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Marks of the Lord Jesus

SUBTOPIC: Evoke Love From The Saved

TITLE: The Disfigured Hand

When a youth we read of a man who had a frightfully disfigured hand. It was so scarred and twisted, so repellant in shape and color that the eye gladly turned from it as an object of vision. And yet the daughter of this man, a beautiful girl, as she sat by her father would steal her own shapely, beautiful palm to the disfigured member before her, and sometimes pat it, smooth it, and at times hold it in a warm, loving clasp.

Once when sitting on a sofa and thinking herself unobserved, she pressed the poor, bent fingers to her lips, while she turned such a look of fondness and admiration on the quiet, thoughtful man beside her, as many would have given much to have received.

Some one unable to repress their curiosity found out at last the truth. Several years before, their home had burned up. The daughter then a girl of sixteen was in an upper room cut off from relief. Asleep in a remote apartment, and every staircase on fire, and not a ladder in her suburban home that could reach the third story where she was, isolated and unconscious at that, of her danger, she was given up as lost even by the fire department of the town. When suddenly the father broke away from the detaining grasp of friends, dashed through the flames, burst into her room and wrapping a wet sheet about her form, bore her back to safety, but at the cost to himself of a badly burned body and the fearfully disfigured member which we have mentioned.

So the hand that was so frightful to others, was very beautiful to her; and she could not look upon the poor maimed fingers, the silent witness of devotion to and sacrifice for her, without the tears leaping to her eyes, and the love touch and caress we have described.

Somehow when we have recalled that circumstance, we have been made to think of a countenance that Isaiah said was "marred"; and of "a man of sorrows" to whom that countenance belonged. The prophet goes on to say, however, that the cruel stripes this man received should justly have fallen upon us. That he was bruised for our iniquities, that he carried our sorrow, and there had been laid upon him the sins and transgressions of us all. The whole career of humiliation, pain, grief, and the shameful, awful death that followed, all of which caused so many to be "offended in him" and turn away from him represented a life given up for others, and the most marvellous sacrifice ever made in the universe.

Perhaps we had all better go slower in our quick criticisms and judgments of people before us. The sad face we behold may not have a shadow because of personal iniquity, but through the transgression of others. The lonely life that we think misanthropical may be the results of the cold, unnatural feeling of others and the exile and solitariness may not be the consequence of choice or a true manifestation of disposition. The seedy looking clothes may be worn not from preference, but that others might possess better garments. The white hair might have been bleached not so much from time as from agony of mind.

Figuratively speaking, the stoop we do not like in certain people may have been brought about by the bending over and lifting up of very many hearts and lives that were found cast down desperately wounded, despairing and dying on the roadway of life.

TOPIC: Memory

SUBTOPIC: Quickened By Association

TITLE: A Nocturnal Memory

The power of the associative faculty is very wonderful. There are scenes and sounds that instantly bring back occurrences of the long ago, and we are made to feel acutely and live over again most sensibly and powerfully events of a forgotten past. The smell of a jasmine flower invariably brings me to the grave of my sister, who died when she was sixteen. The sight of a new

moon gleaming through the trees always recalls the evening when walking along a country road I told my love to my wife, now in heaven.

Last night another association was suddenly flung in upon me. I was lying wakeful in my tent near the hour of midnight, when I heard the baying of a dog deep in the woods. The echo was cast from a forest wall, over a field, and into my tent, and in an instant the sound had conjured up a scene from the past.

When the yellow fever in the "seventies" left New Orleans and invaded the smaller cities and even the country, I, as a young preacher, determined to remain with the few people who stayed in a depopulated town where I was pastor, but I took my young wife and children, Reed, Maude and Guy, into a safe place in the country. The whole land was filled with gloom, and no one knew what would be the end of the scourge. Communities had been vacated, streets were silent, while fugitives were everywhere.

The next morning I was to leave my family, who, with every member of the household, were wrapped in slumber. I could not sleep, but spent the night on the front gallery, sitting or reclining on a settee. My only companions were the stars. The broad cotton field stretched away in a misty light to the distant woods, in whose depths a dog was barking. He had treed something and his bay echoed from the dark forest and reverberated over the fields.

It was a simple thing, but that scene and sound has never been forgotten. I have never heard a dog bark in the woods since but that lonely, melancholy night with the dark, uncertain future to follow it, comes back to me. Half of my little family that were under the roof that night are now in heaven. The "Martyr" and "Guy" are both with the angels. So, last night, as I lay wakeful in my tent after the night sermon at the Tabernacle, and while I was watching the far-away solemn stars through the open canvas covering, the baying of the dog, with its distant mournful echo from the woods, brought back the past with a rush upon me; twenty years were wiped out, I was a young preacher again, and my dead were alive and with me once more.

TOPIC: Mental Freshness

SUBTOPIC: Its Value and Its Loss

TITLE: Difference In Minds

What a difference there is in minds. Some men never say anything worth remembering; others are continually coining fresh, original thought into expressions that, like standard gold, passes into instant usage, a mental currency that never loses value.

Recently I met in my reading the following remarkable utterance of Joseph Cook:

"Man's life means: 'Tender 'teens,

Teachable twenties,

Tireless thirties,

Fiery forties,
Forcible fifties,
Serious sixties,
Sacred seventies,
Aching eighties,
Shortening breath,
Death;
The sod;
God!"

I repeated the lines to a gentleman who gave a yawn before I got half through. I am sure he heard nothing after the "forties," for, with a face that would have answered for a page in a blank book, and failing to see how he impaled himself with his own remark, he said:

"All my family died in the forties; none reached fifty."

And yet I had just quoted that "Forcible" was a predicate, if not a synonym, of "fifty!"

TOPIC: Mixed Metaphors
SUBTOPIC: Avoiding The Use Of
TITLE: A College Recollection

When I was a lad at college, L. Q. C. Lamar, one of the famous men of Mississippi, gave an address to the Literary Society of which I was a member. In warning us against conflicting figures and imagery in speeches, he spoke of an orator who once said in a flaming address:

"Mr. President, the apple of discord is rolling in our midst; and it must be nipped in the bud; or else it will burst forth in a conflagration that will inundate the world."

The boys all laughed, and some of them went forth, I doubt not, to be preeminently successful on the very line our speaker was warning us against.

It is delightful to both mind and heart to hear a preacher take up some figure in prayer and present gospel truth through it, not lingering too long upon it, or leaving too soon. Dr. C. K. Marshall of Mississippi, now dead, and Dr. Joseph Parker of London excelled in this regard. To hear them was; similar in effect to seeing one unlock a casket and for minutes pull out beautiful,

sparkling, precious stones; or taking a rosebud in hand in shape of a text, open and spread its folded petals of meaning, and then leave us with a full blown flower in our possession forever.

Sometimes we listen where the figures do not harmonize, but we take the will for the deed and say "hallelujah anyhow" and get a blessing in spite of the present assault of the Devil and the missing work of the school master.

Recently we heard a brother say in testimony, "I am on the Rock of Ages steering for glory."

The metaphor was mixed, but we said "Amen" and felt as good as the brother.

Later still we heard a good brother pray God to "Multiply His people like the frogs of Egypt; pour on them the oil of gladness; until they became like cities set on a hill, and finally be transformed into soldiers of the cross warring a good warfare."

Here was a decided and woeful mixing up of ideas, as well as of figures, but I saw that he meant well and responded with the word "Glory" most heartily. Moreover I saw that the Spirit came down and blessed the earnest and honest, though incorrect utterances. But oh what profound blunders we all commit; yes, the wisest of this earth make, as they stand affirming, declaring, reasoning, and arguing with the silent, omniscient God listening in the heavens. What do men know anyhow? The truly wise man, the one who has studied most, and pored over the works of God, will say, that what men have learned seems mainly to show how little they know and how much there is to be acquired.

Truly! the smartest men ought to talk low, lest the angels overhear and laugh at their ignorance.

TOPIC: Money-Raising
SUBTOPIC: To Be Accomplished God's Way
TITLE: A Serious Mistake

When will the church wake up to the fact that God has never asked it to make money for him? "Who," says the Bible, "goes to war at his own expense?" This is the Lord's battle, and if we will do the fighting, go into the soul-saving business, God will send the shekels. Truly he never intended the church to be a money-making association, but a money-giving institution! If we attend to the one work he set us to do, saving the souls of men, he will open pocket-books in every direction and send us all we need in financial lines. If the church will obtain the Baptism with the Holy Ghost, that same scene beheld in apostolic times, of the people pouring out their gold, silver and treasures to God at the disciples' feet will be witnessed again.

* * * * *

LETTER P TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Pillars For Holiness

SUBTOPIC: Steadfast Through The Storms
TITLE: A Human Pillared Tabernacle

I told the congregation one night that ever since the Deluge, sinners have been afraid of storms; and that the quietness, serenity and even joyfulness of the holiness people under these circumstances of rushing blasts and rocking tents ought to convince them that something had happened to their souls in lines of grace.

I was peculiarly affected one night at the sight of fifteen or twenty men, each standing by one of the side poles, endeavoring to hold down the flapping, heaving tabernacle, which was threatening every moment to go off through the air from us in spite of all we could do. The spectacle of these men standing all around the tent, their dark suits outlined against the white canvas, and still listening to my sermon, while struggling with the upright poles, and trying to hold the tent down and steady, has made a picture in my mind that I can never forget; and will never recall without my heart growing warm and eyes becoming misty with tears.

Of course we saw something else in the scene that had to us a declaration of present faithfulness, and a prophecy of future devotion. In the storm-shaken tabernacle we saw the assaults of earth and hell against the holiness movement; and in those loving, quiet, but determined looking faces and hands of the men around the tent, we saw in allegory the people all over the land that are banded together for the defense and victory of full salvation, and who not only are resolved to win, but who under the smile and blessing of God will succeed in spite of men, devils and everything.

TOPIC: Pillars Who Truly Support
SUBTOPIC: Few and Far Between
TITLE: The Wire Fence Posts

In coming West, we were struck with the almost endless lines of wire fence on either side of the railway track. By and by we noticed that the support consisted of a number of very slim looking and weak strips or staves of wood, while at intervals of twenty to thirty feet stood a strong, stout post. There were six to ten of the former to one of the latter.

Of course we got a lesson. How could it be otherwise, when we see the church, and the holiness cause itself appearing in like manner before our eyes. All interwoven in the movement of our Holy Christianity we find a great number of people. They look like they are holding up the cause; but they really do not. They shake in every wind of ridicule and persecution; and if certain strong supports were removed here and there, down the whole line would go. They attend meetings, sit on the benches, join in the singing, help to swell the congregation; but the great pressure is not on them. They keep the wires apart, but they do not hold up the fence!

A closer investigation reveals here and there, all across our broad country, devoted, godly men and women that are truly enduring the trials, and bearing the burdens connected with a pure and full salvation. Brother and Sister Post, patient, loving, liberal and strong are in the human sense holding up the fence across the continent. They are not numerous like the other class spoke of; but they keep up the fence.

It is a long one, running from Maine to California; and the storms great, and snows deep along the line. Then there are many weak slats interwoven among the wires. Few of them seem to be in the ground. But we have marked the Post Brigade, upon whom God in his providence has nailed the wires and with whom connected the scantlings,--and having beheld them, we have had a "Three Tavern" experience like Paul, who when he met certain of the brethren, "thanked God and took courage."

We believe that this human fence, long as it is, and thin looking as it is in certain places, yet is going to stand!

TOPIC: Plagiarism

SUBTOPIC: By Preachers

TITLE: Plagiarism

Recently in a college debate on the Pacific coast, the first reward was given to a preacher of a certain denomination, on account of the forcible matter in his speech. A few days later a sharp-eyed reader called the attention of the public to the fact that a gross plagiarism had been committed, and an address of the gifted Senator Vance of North Carolina had been purloined to shed glory on the youthful literary robber. The "deadly parallel" appeared in the papers, proving beyond any question the fact of the theft, and the indignation and condemnation of the press in Washington and Oregon was unqualified.

As I read from day to day the outspoken censure of the guilt, I could but wonder that the conscience of the public and newspaperdom could be so much healthier than we find oftentimes in ecclesiastical realms.

It is a common thing to hear some men take the striking points and illustrations, and sometimes the entire sermon of a brother preacher and reproduce them as his own mental production in some distant community.

Of course there is such a thing as the gathering of knowledge in a general way by reading and study. But to take a man's own mental work, with the peculiar stamp of his mind upon point, argument, imagery, and illustration, and use it without giving credit to the real author and owner is to be guilty of plagiarism or literary theft according to the decision and judgment of proper authorities long years and centuries ago.

Lately we heard an evangelist deliver a striking allegory that had been coined in the brain of another preacher, and which we had heard the latter deliver several times with most powerful effect. The plagiarizing minister repeated it capably, taking ten minutes and over to do so, and never gave the credit where it was due. The audience thought it was his own intellectual child and gave forth a storm of amens and hallelujahs, beaming and smiling on the speaker all the while. He meantime sniffed up the incense and received the adulation with the air of the owner and a kind of pleased yet wearied look as if he was accustomed to throwing off such finished work as had just aroused a storm of enthusiasm in the congregation.

In the sight of God, and in the judgment of the literary world, he was a thief; and yet preacher as he was did not possess the tender conscience of the newspaper correspondents and editors of Oregon and Washington.

Esop tells of a jackdaw who got hold of some peacock feathers and attached them to his own humble and ordinary tail, hoping thereby to dazzle beholders and be taken for a peafowl. The fable declares that the effort was a failure and the bird had a melancholy end. There was too much of jackdaw left to make the act a successful delusion.

The language of a parrot is necessarily limited. Then his accent is against him. As for the jackdaw, his normal size is out of proportion to his abnormal pretensions. The cheat is certain to be found out, and the thief bound to be caught at last.

And so it came to pass that a catbird, dissatisfied with its general proportions, short feathers and sober tinted plumage, extracted a plume from an ostrich while he slept, stole some long golden-eyed feathers from the peafowl, a brilliant comb and collar from the pheasant, and went forth with these rich-attachments to astonish the denizens of the forest. He did so, for a while. But it transpired that after their first admiration and amazement, the different birds recognized their own property and that of their friends, and pouncing upon the aspiring biped stripped him of his borrowed and purloined glory and left him in his littleness the center of general and highly amused criticism. Since that time the catbird has retired to bushes and obscure thickets, and does nothing but fuss and scold all day. If any one doubts the veracity of this last statement, let him go into the woods and listen to the bird of which we speak.

TOPIC: Plagiarism

SUBTOPIC: Its Certain Discovery And Judgment

TITLE: The Pullet And The Ostrich Egg

Recently we read a little allegory that brought out a succession of smiles. The parable said that once upon a time there was a young hen that got hold of an ostrich egg somehow, and immediately began cackling over it to produce the impression that she had laid it. Her master was thoroughly deceived and delighted as well, and taking the pullet sold her to a man owning a museum at a very great price, assuring him that small as the fowl was, she laid eggs equal to an ostrich. But the history declared that no more ostrich eggs appeared, but simply those of a bantam order, for our plagiaristic fowl was a poultry yard bird of a very ordinary type. The fable went on to say that the original owner of the hen was so outraged and disgusted with the deception and fraud practiced upon him, that he took the feathered biped to the horse block and chopped her head off. Here was the fall of pride in the barn yard world.

The teaching is that it does not pay for a bantam mind to be passing off ostrich eggs in the pulpit. It is not required to understand natural history, but simply to have good sense, to know that if a man has an ostrich intellect he can be giving forth ostrich eggs so to speak both on the platform and off the platform, and not simply once, but frequently and continually. Because of this fact, the Bantam is certain to be discovered. An ostrich sermon followed by bantam prayers, conversations, exhortations and a kindred agreeing intellectual life sets the people to thinking and is bound to

expose the ecclesiastical pullet. There will come the horse block of public opinion, and the inevitable decapitation at the hands of a pitiless but just judgment.

If a man has ordinary gifts, he had better not attempt the role of the extraordinary. If an ostrich egg is laid the people insist that you keep on laying just such big beauties. And they have a right to demand and expect this if an ostrich is on hand. Alas, then, for Bro. Bantam. He cannot do this thing. And now what awaits him but the hatchet of public judgment, and the flopping of his own mutilated form around in the dust of mortification. The axe and block is the certain goal or end of the literary or ministerial thief and plagiarist.

The writer had a young cousin who when a youth published as his own, a very remarkable poem in the county paper. We were all as proud of him as we could be. We were delighted as well, for we thought we had an ostrich in the family. Poor Willie, he never laid another egg. We listened, looked, and ran to the nest, but nothing of the ostrich order was ever again seen. One day a book worm member of the family connection in his rummaging over the library, ran across a little volume of poems written by a gifted grand uncle over fifty years before. In this volume was Willie's poem written thirty years before Willie was born. The bantam had stolen the ostrich egg. Child as we were at the time, we can still remember the laughter of the household, and the profound mortification of Willie as he found himself suddenly discovered, and collapsed from the imposing size of an ostrich to the diminutive proportion of a pullet, and an ordinary one at that!

TOPIC: Pleasing God

SUBTOPIC: Perfectly from Imperfect Ability

TITLE: A Weak-Minded Little Girl

We heard a preacher friend once tell of a family of his acquaintance, where there were three little girls aged ten, twelve and fourteen. The middle one was weak-minded.

The father had been absent a week from home on a business trip when the mother, opening the mail at the breakfast table one day, said, "Your father writes that he will be here at eleven o'clock this morning."

Instantly the children in great glee commenced clapping their hands, crying out:

"Papa is coming today! Papa will be home today!" Soon after the morning meal the two sisters of ten and fourteen went out into the flower yard to gather bouquets for the father. The smitten one went with them, and as her sisters culled the roses here and there, forming them into lovely nosegays, and overlooking her and her helplessness in their excitement and anticipation, she, thus left to herself, began to pick up pieces of stick and bits of wheat straw, which she found on the ground, and tied them together with a rag string.

At this very moment the father appeared, approaching the gate, and immediately all three ran down the long garden walk to meet him. The first two of course outstripped their sister in the race, who was slower in movements of body as she was in mind.

The father, stepping from the carriage and entering the gate, was met by the two brightfaced daughters, whose cheeks rivaled the hue of the flowers they held up as a gift to him. He embraced and kissed them both and received the roses from their hands with expressions of pleasure and gratification.

Just then, looking up, he saw his little afflicted daughter looking appealingly at him and holding up her bundle of sticks and straw for his admiration and acceptance. His eyes gushed with tears, and taking the little one to his heart and kissing her repeatedly, he said with a choking voice:

"Your bouquet is perfectly beautiful to your papa, my precious child."

And he bent over the dry twigs as if he was inhaling the breath of lovely blossoms, while at the same time he hid the fast-dripping tears behind his hand.

Oh, how gratified and pleased she was! And how they all went up the walk to the house happy and loving together.

Coming into the library the father placed the two nosegays in glasses of water at the ends of the mantel, which proceeding the bruised one watched with evident anxiety and fear.

What would the father do with her bouquet? was the unmistakable query in her pleading eyes and wistful face, when lo! he took a handsome cut glass vase, filled it with clear, sparkling water, and then gently and carefully deposited the bunch of sticks in it, and, wonder upon wonder! placed the glass vessel right in the center of the mantel between the other two bouquets. Then turning to the open-eyed, wondering, happy child he said:

"Papa puts your bouquet right in the middle, because it is so lovely in his eyes."

And the little one, clapping her hands, danced about him in her happiness, crying out:

"Papa put my bouquet in the middle."

When we heard this story we did not say anything for quite a while because of a big lump in the throat that would not go down, and because of an aching swell in the heart that prevented the utterance of a word.

But we thought then and since, that we had beheld a vision as well as explanation of our own spiritual case before the Lord. As compared with the deeds of angels and works of the gifted of earth, we felt that our best performances were as bunches of sticks and straw beside clusters of beautiful plants.

But we also got a sight of the marvellous pity and love of God in the same scene in His acceptance of our labors for Him, though marked with imperfection and ignorance and failure.

It is a poor work compared to others, but it was all we could do, and so the Lord may take us to His heart at last and praise our poor little bouquets of sticks and straw.

And who can tell but that because of our deep love for Him, and in view of our ignorance and weakness, and because of our natural inferiority to others, and because we did the best we could, who can tell, but He may place our poor collection of sticks which He has watered with His tears, and sanctified with His blood, right in the middle of the mantel piece of glory.

TOPIC: Poor

SUBTOPIC: In God's Sight

TITLE: All Poor Critters

I read once of an old lady, who, with every report of human blunder, sorrow or frailty, would say, "We are all poor critters."

Truly it is so with us, even after the pure heart has been given us by the Son of God by the Baptism with the Holy Ghost; yet still such are the intellectual errors, mistakes of judgment, shortsightedness, and often one-sidedness among us, that the sentence applies to the highest and best in the land, "All are poor critters."

As we go on through life and see the efforts people make to overthrow and hurt one another; as we observe cases of "sulks" and "spells;" hear the "you did," "I didn't," "you're another," witness the "tell-tale" and "strike-back," etc., etc., we feel that grown-up people after all are but tall children. It is the same old life with many, only projected on a larger scale.

Truly, if God was not our Father and infinitely pitiful, what would become of the race--yes, even of Christians!

Verily, we are all poor critters.

TOPIC: Prayer

SUBTOPIC: Recited Perfunctorily

TITLE: Meaningless Prayers

In a recent meeting held by the writer a series of prayer services had taken place beforehand asking for the outpouring of the Spirit. Two of the brethren who supplicated most vociferously for an old-time revival were the first to leave, or rather run, when the Gospel battle opened.

All of this convinces us that there is a lot of praying done on earth where not only the heart is not involved but the head is also unemployed. Sentences are uttered memoriter. They have been spoken many times before. The brother praying heard somebody else use the words and adopted them. And now it is a memorized speech to the Almighty from the knees. The man going through the motions of this means of grace is "saying his prayers."

Who wonders when the genuine work begins; when the Holy Ghost convicts; and the power of God falls upon mind, heart, and conscience, that such puppet figures of real soldiers of the cross

go down before the roar of the first Gospel gun, or tumble over each other in their flight from the battle field.

The same cannon, however, that makes some run brings a lot more to the front, and the ranks of God's army are not weakened, but sifted and strengthened by the two movements of the goers and the comers. It so proved in this meeting, and every other meeting that we held since we have been an evangelist.

TOPIC: Preliminaries

SUBTOPIC: Mismanaging

TITLE: The Ditch and Its Lessons

We once read of a man who in the course of his walk had to jump a drain. In order to make a sufficiently big leap he went back to get a start of one hundred yards. This he did, but when he reached the ditch, he was so tired that he could not jump at all, and had to sit down and rest.

This same thing taught in allegory what we have seen take place a number of times at our camp meetings. The people as a rule are easy to set off. A rousing hymn, a yell or so, a jump or two, a few hallelujahs, and here they come, and here they go. The trouble is that when they arrive at the real work, the place where all the faith, strength, vitality, freshness and force that can be summoned is needed, behold they have used it up in the preparatory service. They exhausted themselves in a skirmish. They are seen resting, drooping, languid and worn out on this side of the ditch.

The man who thus precipitates the fight; the leader of a congregation, no matter whether he is preacher or singer, who in a studied, predetermined way works on the feelings of the audience and gets up a whoop and hurrah scene in the very beginning of the service, has done the meeting as a whole a serious injury. He has checked out the capital stock of the audience before the real run was made on the bank; he wore the energies of the workers out beating the air, thereby prevented the gracious results which would certainly have been under a wiser course and leadership, and, in a word, ended the hour with the ditch unjumped!

We have only to call the attention of evangelists and thoughtful laymen to scenes in the past, where a storm had been worked up by some preacher or generally by some singer, and where the sermon and after service fell perfectly flat. This invariable outcome, or rather failure to come, would be charged by the unthinking and unobservant to a poor sermon or weak altar work. But we have seen the noblest discourses and strongest of altar workers fail on these occasions, and so frequently as to call attention to the true source of the trouble, and we have found it at such times to be as described--the Gospel army was so prostrated by the skirmish that they could not stand up in the hour of battle. The race to the ditch was so fast and furious that when the runner got there he could not jump at all, but had to sit down and rest.

The trouble was not that the Holy Spirit was grieved about anything, but the flesh was weak. It was not that God's people did not have religion, but we lacked sense!

Let it be understood that we do not allude to those wonderful outpourings of the Holy Ghost which fall at any time of the service as God sees fit, and which always strengthen and renew the powers of God's people, and never weaken worshiper or worship. We refer to the worked-up, whooped-up affair that comes like a dry wind over the congregation, bringing no rain from the skies, leaving no dew on the soul, and causing a strange limpness and prostration in the audience after the blast has died away.

TOPIC: Pride

SUBTOPIC: Its Great Plumes and Small Head

TITLE: The Ostrich

In going down into Southern California I visited an ostrich farm, containing one hundred of those long-necked, altitudinous-legged birds. Standing in their sock feet their mild, simple-looking, flat heads were poised from seven to eight feet above the ground. Some of them had not been stripped of their plumes, and were walking around perfectly satisfied if not delighted with themselves, and doubtless feeling they were greatly impressing all beholders, when the combination of those luxuriant feathery ornaments and that silly-looking little head was such as to keep a number of us continually in a broad smile.

We found it simply impossible to keep certain lines of seriousness and gravity straight on the countenance. We had seen the big plume and the little head go together so often that Brother and Sister Ostrich that morning brought in remembrances of the past like a flood.

Once, in approaching a castle in Scotland, we saw a soldier standing guard before the main gate, or portcullis. The thing that impressed us as we drew near was the tremendous shako on his helmet. It was three times the size of his head, towered high, drooped low and covered one-third of his face. I almost trembled as I got nearer to this fearful military spectacle, and was expecting to behold a fierce, iron-like front, with bronzed cheek and grizzled moustache, when, glancing timidly upward, I encountered one of the mildest, emptiest-looking countenances I had seen in many a day. The fierce appearing soldier was a smooth-faced boy of about eighteen!

Who of us have not felt an awe stealing over the soul as we beheld the uniformed officer of the militia company, or regalia attired, grand mogul of some fraternity, both crowned with a feather duster, walking backward and giving fierce commands to the tramping battalion or procession, suddenly turn and reveal a meek, adolescent-faced baker or prescription clerk of the town, who never was in a battle, and, what was more, had no idea or intention of ever being in one.

Then, upon the street, in the shopping time of the day, we again see the ornamented skull apparition; and that unbroken combination, the big plume and the little cranium is still beheld. Nor is that all; a strange law seems to be at work pushing some fact or principle farther along, so that the smaller the head the bigger always is the plume!

When a boy we saw a third lieutenant bedecked with gold lace, brass buttons, and a plumed hat, whom we thought to be a general. A few minutes afterward we had our attention called to a person dressed in a plain gray suit, who brought an armful of wood from the porch of the hotel

and threw it upon the fire in the office, and was told that this man commanded twenty thousand cavalry, and his name was N. B. Forrest.

The marshals of France used to fairly glitter with their decorations and orders, and looked about their occiputs like the feathery top of a palm tree; but the man greater than them all put together, stood in their midst wearing a gray overcoat and a three-cornered hat that had not a single mark of ornament or description about it.

We have a little girl at home who in preparing her Sunday school lesson, was asked, "How God made the world?" She dropped her eyes in reflection a moment, and then raising them with a bright expression, replied, "Nobody knows."

There was a burst of laughter in the room over the answer for reasons that need not be given.

After visiting the ostrich farm we do not think that anybody with a pair of thoughtful eyes need to puzzle over the question, "Why did God make ostriches?" The answer might not have in it the unconscious wit of Josephine, but it would possess the merit of being more definite. Indeed, several replies could be given. One is that the ostrich is made to give a full length view of a being whose wealth is on the outside and not the inside, A second answer is that it is a picture of a person making up in dress what they lack in brains. A third definition is that it is an object lesson of a little head tolerated because of a richly-clothed body. A fourth explanation is that the beautiful, bushy, waving plumes and the diminutive cranium were put together that men might see and understand what is meant by the words, "the power of contrast."

* * * * *

LETTER Q TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Quietness

SUBTOPIC: Accompanies Deadness

TITLE: Everything Is Quiet, Bishop

When in the pastorate and in attendance upon the annual conference, there was a stereotyped phrase used by many of the brethren in giving their report to the Bishop which has become lithographed on our memory. The expression was, "Everything quiet, Bishop." This speech seemed to give great satisfaction to the conference in general, was met by a smile or beaming look of approval from the chairman addressed, and was uttered evidently in a tone of triumph and self-endorsement by the speaker.

The impression made on the assembly was that a sensible, level-headed man had just finished speaking, and one who could be entrusted with the largest and most difficult appointment in the whole connection. In fact the presiding elder said so, after Brother Level-Head had retired to have his character and report voted on; the approval coming in the form of a waved hand, commending look, and an oily affirming sentence, "Safe case, Bishop."

And yet there had not been a single revival in Bro. Level-Head's work for the entire term of four years. Nor had there been a solitary conversion; only some accessions by letter, and a lot of church entertainments. So the words he had spoken about his appointment in which he said, "Everything is quiet," meant "Everything is dead." And the man, the presiding elder called a "safe case" was in fact a "metallic case" if he was not the "undertaker" himself in the midst of an ecclesiastical graveyard.

If the Bible is true, and the war is still on between Heaven, Earth and Hell, then things ought not to be "quiet." A mere glance at the Gospels and the Book of Acts will show the reader matters were anything but "quiet" in the time of Christ and the disciples. Nor was there peace in Paul's day, nor in the days of Luther or Fox or Wesley. Or in these present years, unless church and pastor have surrendered to the world, and now led into spiritual captivity far from the Gospel battlefield, say from the midst of an idle, inglorious exiledom "Everything is quiet!"

* * * * *

LETTER R TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Regulation

SUBTOPIC: By Christ

TITLE: The Clock Store

We stood in a large jeweler's store and noticed the counters and shelves loaded and lined with timepieces of every description. There were clocks, handsome and plain, large and small, alarms, chimes, gongs and cuckoo; there were one day, eight days, two weeks and a month's timekeepers until the eye was fairly bewildered with the variety, and the ear distracted with their different sounds.

The great regulator, fully six feet in length, hung in the clear light close to the broad and lofty show window. It struck no hour, made no ticking sound, but kept time for all the other clocks in the store, and for everybody in town besides, with a solemn, steady swing, whose regularity nothing in the shop inside and nothing on the pavement and street outside in the least disturbed or affected.

We noticed that the timepieces nearest the regulator were accurate in their pointing and striking. They also seemed ready for service and delivery, looked bright, seemed to be oiled up, and appeared all right every way. Their inner and outer life agreed. Their outward testimony did but reflect and declare the correctness and faithfulness of the internal machinery and hidden life. It was delightful to see how they agreed with the regulator, and when the greater machine lifted its hands in a certain position, they did the same; and when the larger pointed to a certain hour, the faithful little band nearest the light, all sounded out the true time without a disagreeing voice.

But the farther down the store we went, and the greater distance from the regulator, the more we were impressed with the inexact pointing, wrong striking and general disagreement among the congregation of timekeepers. Made to be helpers and directors, and needing to be true

and accurate, they were wrong and did not even agree among themselves. According to their testimony, it was every hour of the day.

It was really 12 o'clock, and yet suddenly one with a deep, solemn note that admitted of no contradiction, insisted it was three in the afternoon. That testimony had scarcely died away when a round-faced, fiery, little fellow in a corner, as if in a perfect fury at being overlooked and differed from, whirred forth, and rattled off at a two-forty rate the hour of ten.

This was promptly disputed a moment later by an old eight-day wooden affair that with rumbling wheels and tin pan accent affirmed that it was as late as seven in the evening.

So the divergent and discordant experiences went on with the additional grotesque feature that some struck one way and pointed another!

Still farther down the aisle the clocks were all silent. Some had run down, some had never been wound up, and so a profound stillness prevailed in that part of the store. The farther the time indicators and declarers were from the regulator the worse seemed to be their condition.

In a room back of the store was a sight still more gruesome, of clocks in every stage of disintegration and dissolution. Springs, hands, pendulums, dial plates, wire coils, strikers, sounders, and every kind of brass, wheel and iron mechanism lay on the floor, while the wooden and metal frames were heaped up in corners as so much tinder, or refuse and scrap piles.

We hardly need to declare this parable to the reader. It is self-evident.

We have only to look around to behold the differences, divisions and distractions in the religious world. Men and women on every side are clamoring and insisting that they are right, and every one else wrong. That they have the only true machinery, and keep the only correct spiritual time. You have to come to them to know who you are and where you are. They know exactly the periods and seasons of the world itself. Non-essential doctrines are pointed to, and false teachings are held up. The strangest, wildest experiences are beat, banged, screamed, screeched and cuckooed all over the country. Listen to the clocks!

Meantime no two of these manifold divisions agree. Hands diverge, voices conflict, testimonies war, statements contradict, and the medley and confusion is mind-distracting, ear-deafening and heart-sickening beyond words to describe.

Then there are some who once pointed right, and sounded the true and correct spiritual note, who are now cold, silent, and dead.

Still others have utterly gone to pieces, and lie forgotten in the Devil's Scrap Shop.

We might well despair if we did not have the great Regulator of Heaven in our midst. Christ is left. He still points out the way and declares the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Around him are gathered some who, regulated, oiled and wound up, are in doctrine, life, word and deed, in harmony and faithful agreement with Him.

And yet in these days of wrangling, jangling and general confusion and discord in the religious world, our comfort, strength and inspiration are not derived from the sight of the faithful few in the land who are true to God; but from the knowledge that the great Regulator, Christ, has come into the world. He has been lifted up in our midst. He is never to be taken down until his work is accomplished. He himself will not faint or be discouraged until his labor has been performed and redemption achieved. And it will be done. The day is coming when the church will have her glory to come upon her. She will arise and shine. The nations will wait on the Lord for His law. The devil with all false prophets will be overthrown and cast into hell. And the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

TOPIC: Rest In The Holy Ghost

SUBTOPIC: After Earthly Things Are Dropped

TITLE: The Horizon

For a great part of my life a sky vista has exercised a strange influence upon me. A horizon of clouds tinged with scarlet and gold, or a wavy line of blue or purple hills or mountains in the distance set my mind to dreaming and my heart to yearning and aching. The sight of a broad, majestic river winding away, and disappearing in a remote landscape had a similar effect. The feeling was that something or somebody was down that river, or beyond that cloud bank, or mountain range, whom I wanted. O, how I craved certain unmet earthly conditions, and the gratification of certain unspeakable hungers of the heart.

As the years pass away these peculiar heart-breaking longings seem to leave. We look upon the same scenes, but are no longer moved as of yore. What is the reason?

Perhaps it is because we have been down the river, or far beyond the mountain range; and found that what we desired was not there. Or, worse still, likely the opposite of what we expected greeted us. Anyhow, a great change is seen to come over the soul.

There seems to be a silent education going on in the life more important than that which we obtain at schools and colleges. From observation of men and events, from all kinds of experiences within, and occurrences without, there goes on an appropriation and rejection, a mental sifting and assimilation, together with such knowledge and obtainment of heart conditions and personal character that out of it all a new man seems to have been formed. And it was all done so gradually and silently!

We read once of a little orphan girl who lived with a family who provided her food and clothing. She had been so unkindly and unjustly treated, so many things had been rudely snatched from her hands by other children, that even when she had anything given her she held it with a loose grasp, as if she did not expect to keep it long, but that it would be soon taken away.

We doubt not that the soul comes into this condition; the life falls into this kind of pose. The attitude is indeed full of pathos, but it is also full of inspiration and power. The man who

holds earthly blessings with a loose grasp has received a marvellous education. He has a knowledge which the universities can never impart.

We once saw a picture which carries the idea still farther. The painting represented a young woman standing with upturned face on a terrace. At her feet on the ground lay bunches of roses which she had evidently dropped from her hands. The explanation of the sacrifice was seen in the form of a beautiful white dove flying toward her outstretched hands. She had given up the flowers to get the snow-white bird.

In other words, we grow weary in looking down the river and towards the sea for a ship that never comes. We quit building castles with the clouds on the horizon. We bid our hearts to cease beating themselves into an agony against the rim of the horizon. To cease looking earthward. But to gaze heavenward.

Verily, it will come to pass that, when the blossoms of this world lie forgotten at the feet, the Holy Ghost, like a dove, will come fluttering into the soul, and the spirit of the often disappointed man or woman will find rest.

TOPIC: Restitution

SUBTOPIC: The Effect Of

TITLE: A Change Of Opinions

We had the usual cases of restitution, as indeed always happens when the Spirit of God comes in power. One instance with its effect upon a third party we mention.

An elderly gentleman belonging to the Methodist church was in attendance upon the meeting to get light upon the subject of holiness. He reported to his wife his favorable impressions, but she, being full of prejudice, refused to come, saying,

"There was no good in such meetings."

One afternoon this elderly gentleman, convinced of the truth of sanctification, arose and came to the altar. A few minutes after another gentleman came rushing from the audience and fell on his knees not far from him, and after some crying and groaning came over to the older party and said:

"I wronged you out of twenty dollars years ago. Here is half of the money, and you shall have the balance with interest straightway. Please forgive me." A few minutes after this the younger man obtained salvation, and the older one sanctification, and at the conclusion of the service the latter went to his home up town. Coming into the presence of his wife he told her with a radiant face how God had blessed him, and she was about to repeat what she had said before, "That there was no good in the meeting," when the husband, interrupting her, told how God had gotten hold of a man who had formerly wronged him and made him restore the money. Whereupon he drew out the bank bill and made it a present to her.

The woman took the money, looked thoughtful awhile and then smiling graciously, said,

"It is a good meeting."

TOPIC: Revival Meetings

SUBTOPIC: False Reasons For Not Attending

TITLE: The Sickness Dodge

Many are the excuses and pleas put up for the sudden discontinuance in attendance on the services held in the church. Sometimes anger is counterfeited. The party was shocked at such fanaticism; could not stand to hear the church abused; was sick of hearing regeneration so belittled; did not believe in riding a hobby, etc., etc.

But the most generally practiced rule of the Jonah fraternity is the "sickness dodge." The church was too hot, or too cold, or there was such a draft, and they caught such a dreadful cold! Hack! Hack! Hack! O my! O dear! They did not dare to go back to the meeting! They felt that they would run such a risk in doing so! It would be tempting Providence!

Neuralgia, rheumatism and bad colds are the most popular diseases with most church members during a genuine Revival. People who are interested in statistics need only to study the health question in a community just before, during and after a full salvation meeting to be struck with the fact how certain diseases fairly rage during the ten days' services and instantly disappear when the meeting is over.

In a town in a Western State where God was honoring the services by putting great power on the Word, it was remarkable how many church members were taken sick and took to bed. We heard the words neuralgia, pneumonia, rheumatism and bad colds mentioned so often in connection with people who shot by the truth, fled the meeting, that it was difficult to keep from smiling. We knew that it was not so much neuralgia as it was the old-ralgia that was the matter. Not pneumonia so much as the old-monia. Not bad colds were the trouble, but the phrase properly divided, thoroughly described the condition--viz bad and cold.

A preacher sent us word in explanation and apology for his absence, that about three o'clock every afternoon, (this was the hour of our day service) his feet always got cold, and the coldness ascended at such times as high as the knees.

We heard the excuse with a smile, and felt firmly convinced that the coldness had gone higher than the brother's knees, and had reached his heart.

We also recalled the well known fact in the medical world that when a man gets cold to his knees he is counted as good as dead.

By the tenth day it looked as if an epidemic had come to the place. On the eleventh day we left the place before daybreak to get an early train. A few days later we received a letter from a friend in the town we had left, stating that all the sick were well. That they were up and about and on the street as usual Monday morning. That they regained health the instant the meeting closed and we had departed.

Of course, this letter made us marvel over heart hypocrisy and Satanic delusion; but we were especially caused to wonder at our undreamed of power to heal folks. In our case ahead of anything now going on. For, according to the different schools and teachers of healing the presence of the healer is needed to bring health, but in our case, our absence made the entire town well. We left and the community was instantaneously restored to health.

Why should we not inaugurate a new system of physical recovery? And why not call it "Healing By Absence?"

TOPIC: Rule Or Ruin Spirit
SUBTOPIC: Its Final Desolation And Remorse
TITLE: Remorse

We once knew a woman who had the rule or ruin spirit so painfully and insufferably dominant in her life, that her large, beautiful home was deserted first by her stepchildren and later by her own sons and daughters. She was left in the midst of empty rooms and silent halls and lonely porches, without a soul to cross her will. She had everything her own undisputed way now with a vengeance. But how still the house was! How empty were the chairs! How reproachfully the portraits of the absent ones seemed to gaze upon her from the walls! They appeared to be saying, you drove us from the house of our father, and from the home God intended we should have.

Finally she moved to a dwelling two miles away. On pleasant summer evenings she sometimes walked to the brow of a range of hills which commanded a beautiful far away view of the old home and plantation. There she would stand silently gazing in that direction without a word falling from her lips, but for all that we believe with a breaking heart. Her husband and two children were in the cemetery, and the rest of the household were scattered over the broad land never to return. And they never did return. Meantime what had this solitary woman to live for?

One day at sundown, while standing on the hill looking, as she often had done before, at the faraway mansion and the grove surrounding it, the great plantation bell that was always rung at sunset, and which she had so often heard in happier days, commenced ringing in the distance and came softly pealing over the fields to her ear. She was a woman of few words and possessed an impassive, almost stony face, so that it was difficult to tell often what she thought and felt. But on this special occasion, as she turned suddenly from the lofty outlook, we saw her before she could school or mask her features, and if ever we beheld anguish in a countenance we saw it in hers. It seemed to us that her agonized soul was standing in her eyes wringing its hands with a wild regret over something in the past that could not be spoken of, and that never could be remedied.

She had her own way, but in that way she lost her own happiness, her influence for good, the affection of husband and children, while the home itself had been as thoroughly wiped out and destroyed as by the hand of a Goth or Vandal.

* * * * *

LETTER S TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Satisfaction
SUBTOPIC: Found Only In Christ
TITLE: The Gateway Of Blue

The scene is that of a thriving city, built on a declivity, with a background of lofty hills, and fronting a broad and beautiful bay, while still farther west lies the mighty Pacific Ocean. A great semi-circular range of snow capped mountains glitter far away in the north, while southward another range, purple by distance, comes down to the edge of the bay and with a gentle terminal slope makes a blue gateway to the sea beyond.

As I look from my window, or from a lofty hillside, at this misty, purplish gate in the distance opening and leading to the ocean still farther away, I recall the sensations of earlier and hopeful years, when at such a sight my heart would fairly break with longings almost indescribable. Whether it was a line of blue mountain domes on the horizon, or a great river winding away and losing itself under the horizon, or the ocean itself spreading before me until its far distant wave-marked boundary seemed to touch the opalescent border of the sky, each separate scene awakened in the heart a great ache and yearning to get past the mountains, follow the river, and sail far beyond the sky and sea line to some land or shore, to some place or circumstance where the something or somebody or somewhat that the spirit craved would be found.

The imagination of youth, and the restless, feverish, unsatisfied state of the unsaved soul has much to do with these day dreamings, and sweetly miserable longings of early life.

Time is a great revealer and undeceiver; experience brings us better sense with the flying years; and salvation does even more.

Many of us have climbed the hills, passed over the mountains, gone to the end of the river, sailed over the broad sea, and walked the streets and shores of far distant cities and countries. And we never found by travel what the spirit dreamed about, and the heart longed after. We met restless people like ourselves wherever we went. They had the same anxious, troubled look that we had, and seemed like ourselves to be seeking something. They appeared to think it was over the mountains, up the river or across the sea, but we had just come from there and knew they were mistaken. And so the great currents of life pass each other in the fruitless quest.

Right here many become sour and bitter, wreck the life with opium or liquor, commit suicide or otherwise plunge into everlasting ruin.

But we thank God that many others, after bitter disappointments up the river, over the mountains and beyond the sea, sank with tears, sighs, consecration and faith at the foot of the cross, and had something breathed upon and imparted to the soul that has kept it sweet and steady ever since. And so it happens to them who have taken deep lessons from the Son of God, that their hearts are kept from breaking in a heartbreaking world. Spiritual condition is found to be better than earthly circumstance. They have ceased looking to the river, or beyond the mountains or across the ocean for happiness. They have found rest, peace and blessedness in the possession of an indwelling Christ. His voice has hushed the storm, his foot has leveled the wave, and deep

within them is a great calm. And behold all such like the disciples "find themselves where they wanted to be."

So the blue gateways of Nature change in their significance as time rolls by and grace comes in. They lose their power to beguile and deceive us with their beckoning, but unrewarding hands. We have sailed past them too often on fruitless voyages. We cannot go again. Their very shape and form have become to the mind like a monument to the buried hopes and past failures of life.

But we have still a gateway of great beauty and attractiveness left us in this life to look upon. It is distant like the others, and also blue; but it is much larger. It is above us, and for lack of a better name we call it the Sky; but it is nothing else but the sun-lighted, star-gemmed Portal of Heaven standing wide open for every yearning, longing soul of earth.

And certain it is that if we go through this gate into the heavenly country beyond, there will be no disappointment nor regret forever. The King of the Land will welcome us. And the Book says we will hunger no more, neither shall the sun light on us or any heat. We will not grow old, or become sick, or suffer any more pain. The Lamb will lead us to living fountains of waters, and God himself will wipe away all tears from our eyes.

TOPIC: Scientific Errors
SUBTOPIC: Discovered Too Late
TITLE: A Blunder Of Wise Men

The papers tell us that on Monday Mt. Pelee destroyed several vineyards with streams of red-hot lava, and showed such signs of disturbance that the Governor of the Island appointed a commission of scientists to visit the volcano, inquire into its present condition, and future intentions, and report back promptly to headquarters, or as it turned out to be, tail quarters.

One of these printed reports was found after the eruption; and but for the dreadful fate that came upon the reporters themselves, as well as the whole country, it is enough to make every one who reads it smile; even the celebrated Henry of England could not have preserved straight facial lines after its perusal, and would have "smiled again."

The Commission, or Committee of Doctors of Science, had been requested to look in the eye, feel the pulse, take the respiration, examine the heart, and probe well into the eternal economy of Mt. Pelee. What an imposing sight those half dozen human specks moving up the side of the trembling mountain must have presented to the onlooking world. Perhaps the arrival of all this incarnated prodigious learning increased the agitation of the volcano itself. Anyhow, the men of science arrived, investigated, understood the whole thing with a few sapient glances, and reported. So did Mt. Pelee three days later!

The written declaration of the Solons was,

"That there would be no more disturbance, that the worst was over, and that such was the position of the crater and the formation of the valley at the foot of the mountain, that St. Pierre was especially safe," etc., etc.

All this was very soothing and gratifying to the frightened people of the city, but, like certain famous Diagnoses of prominent men in the medical fraternity, the case was not at all understood, and so, on Thursday morning Mt. Pelee suddenly made a report of its own, and vomited out a hurricane of fire, cubic miles of cinders, ashes and lava, and swept multiplied thousands to death in three minutes' time. Among the destroyed were the men of science who wrote, and the Governor who signed the learned paper wherein was testified the amiable nature and good intentions of Mt. Pelee.

The whole sad circumstance, aside from other teachings, looks like one of the ironies of the divine providence, and there are many. The wisest men are met so frequently in nature and life with flat denials of their statements and utter failures in fulfillment of their prognostications, that it would seem to be enough to convince all of the ignorance as well as the helplessness of the race.

The word "science" is taken from the Latin "scio," which means to know. Who gave this name to these men? Was it done innocently or in satire? For after saying all we can about human knowledge of God's works, how inconceivably vast and profound is the ignorance which remains.

Already we have had four different theories about earthquakes. Numbers of times we have been told that the world is rapidly cooling off, when Mt. Pelee breaks into the conversation with its hoarse voice, crying out,

"Certainly--but after this fashion."

TOPIC: Scripture

SUBTOPIC: Ignorance Of

TITLE: Ignorance Of Scripture

When Mr. Ingersoll was on the Pacific coast lecturing against the Bible, some twenty years since, he encountered at the close of one of his addresses a Methodist preacher of a clear head, quick wit and forcible speech.

This minister was stationed on the coast then, and is still living, though now superannuated. He attended the infidel's lecture in order to get his points, and at its close was introduced. Mr. Ingersoll asked him how he liked his address. The preacher begged to be excused, saying that his reply would certainly not please the speaker. But the skeptic insisted, saying that he really wanted to know what people thought of what he said, and he desired especially to be informed in this instance.

The preacher looked steadily upon the degenerate son of a Presbyterian pastor and replied:

"As I heard your garbled and incorrect quotations of the Bible, I was, and still am, undecided, whether to put you down as a knave or fool."

Mr. Ingersoll was both nettled and discomposed, and quite a heated controversy followed.

Finally the preacher asked the privilege of relating an incident of his own personal knowledge, which he said would throw more light on Mr. Ingersoll's position.

He said that at one of his protracted meetings held when he was a presiding elder, a woman arose during the testimony service and said, "I have a great many trials and tribulations as I am journeying home. But through all my trials and sorrows along the way I have had for my strength and comfort this blessed verse of Scripture, "Grin and bear it!"

After the laughter of the surrounding group had died away, the preacher solemnly shaking his finger at the infidel said:

"Mr. Ingersoll, you show as profound ignorance of the Bible as did this woman, and yet have not one-millionth part of her piety."

TOPIC: Seasoning Of Young Preachers
SUBTOPIC: Should Precede Their Promotion
TITLE: Tarry At Jericho

There are two commands in the Bible to "tarry." One was from David to certain of his servants to wait at Jericho until their beards were grown; the other from the Savior to the disciples not to leave Jerusalem until the Holy Ghost came upon them. As we go on our way down the years, we see more and more the need of compliance with the first command, as well as the second. There is a greenness, rashness and ignorance shown in quarters where the fault lies mainly in beardlessness or youth and inexperience. These adolescent would-be teachers have come out as teachers, reformers, critics and judges, without having remained long enough in Jericho. How certain and positive they are upon matters about which there have been differences of opinion among the best and wisest of people for generations and centuries back! How ready, too, to expound the most difficult and mysterious Bible passages! How confidently they will sit in judgment upon men who have borne the heat and burden of the day, and led thousands of souls to God.

To this day, the writer groans at the recollection of certain persistent appearances of himself in the streets of Jerusalem without a beard, when he should have been in Jericho waiting for it to grow. In other words, before he was qualified by age, wisdom or experience, he was explaining unexplainable passages in the Bible, had torn to pieces three bishops' sermons, or thought he did, counseled a college president how to run his school, and felt from the bottom of his soul that he could edit a leading church paper better than any one who had ever sat upon its tripod. It was true that three of these editors had been elevated to the office of a bishop, but that, in his heated state of mind, meant nothing, and not susceptible of any disparaging application to himself.

When a ministerial friend of the writer told him, with a peculiar smile, that he had once ridden one hundred miles out of his way just to thank a congregation he had formerly served, the smile was so remarkable, as if something was being kept in the background, that we asked him

what he wanted to express his gratitude to them for. His reply was, with one of the most amused expressions we ever saw on a face:

"They listened to my preaching the first year of my ministry."

In other words, he felt he had trodden the streets of Jerusalem ahead of time. Jericho had been sadly neglected. Beard, and that which is supposed to go with it, had been sorely lacking.

In a certain circuit in one of our Southern Conferences, a young preacher was sent who had neither spirituality, education or natural brightness of mind. A pious and cultured lay member of the church was asked how he was standing the appointment; his reply was, "We have accepted it as an inscrutable providence."

The above reflections were inspired by a pulpit circumstance which occurred in the southern part of this city recently. The young preacher gave the remarkable information to his audience, in talking about the vine and branches, that "We are the vine and our sins the branches, which we must be continually cutting off."

What a flood of light must at once have been poured on the minds of the listeners! How at once it became clear that the branches were purged or trimmed, that we might bring forth more sin!

Verily, Jericho, rather than Jerusalem, is the proper habitation for certain people; anyhow for a while.

TOPIC: Second Coming Of Christ
SUBTOPIC: His Awesome Appearance
TITLE: A Man Who Looked Like Christ

A few years ago we read in the newspapers of a strange occurrence which took place in a court house in a California town.

A chancery case was in progress, and a lawyer was speaking, when suddenly the judge became conscious that the attention of every one in the room was leaving the speaker, and was becoming fastened on an individual who was standing by himself in a remote part of the house. The lawyer himself noticing that his words were not heeded, followed the general gaze, and as his eyes fell on the man, became silent and fixed in his look like all the rest.

The individual exciting the interest, drawing the attention of the whole audience, and stopping the entire proceedings of the court so that a death-like silence prevailed, and that too without speaking a word, was a Greek priest, who was connected in some way with the case in chancery.

The remarkable fact that drew every eye upon him was his startling resemblance to the Saviour, according to the most generally approved likeness of the Lord as seen in Fleetwood's Life of Christ, and the pen picture said to have been written by a Roman hand at the close of the Saviour's life on earth.

The man had dark auburn hair parted in the center and falling upon his shoulders. The face was oval. The brow and eyes gentle, tender, serious, almost melancholy. The beard golden brown and parted. The manner thoughtful and abstracted. While the form was clothed in a white robe that descended in an inch of the floor.

And this man, without speaking a word, for fully ten minutes completely locked up the proceedings of a large court and brought the entire business to a dead stand still! And all this was produced because he happened to look like Christ!

From the time we read this occurrence in the papers, we have understood better what the Bible says about the effect of Christ breaking through the clouds at the Last Day upon the vision of an astounded, horror-stricken and despairing world.

We are not left in doubt at all about the returning person and presence of the Son of God to this earth and its effect upon the nations.

"Behold he cometh with clouds!" said John, "and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." And Paul adds, and "every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

TOPIC: Self-Sacrifice
SUBTOPIC: The Spirit Of
TITLE: A Locomotive Parable

An evangelist, in conducting a testimony meeting one day in a large Southern city, said to the audience, "If the Christian life was to be described under the figure of a locomotive, which part would you rather be?"

There were a number of prompt answers which elicited smiles and laughter, and some deep responses of approval. One wanted to be the whistle and let the people know the Gospel train was coming. Another wished to be the bell, and warn souls of danger. A third would be a coupler and join the churches together; a fourth was willing to be the cowcatcher and save people who were in peril and a fifth desired the office of a brakeman, to slow things down if they got dangerously fast.

Finally after many answers of this order, one of the best laymen in the city arose to his feet and fixed his eyes on the leader of the meeting. Felt and known by all to be a thoroughly good man, his testimony was waited for in profound silence. But owing to some kind of deep, inward emotion that was evident to all, he did not speak for fully thirty seconds. He then, with a husky voice said, "I would like to be the black coal thrown into the furnace and there burn for the glory of God."

He sat down, and for a whole minute there was not a word heard in the assembly. But there where many wet eyes and swelling hearts in the crowd. All felt instinctively that the most beautiful

and forcible speech of the morning had been uttered in that simple sentence. A true and Christ-like sentiment had been uttered, and it had been spoken by a true and Christ-like man.

A window of heaven seemed to have been opened for a moment just above the heads and hearts of the audience and a flower of the skies pure and beautiful had been dropped. An angel flying past shook something from his snowy wing upon the souls of the people, and it was of a tenderness and sweetness beyond anything that earth could manufacture. A Sacrifice of God had stood up in the congregation, and the spirit that was burning in his own heart and life had warmed and melted and fired the souls of scores of his fellow Christians. The symbolism of the Levitical or Old Testament Dispensation was again vindicated; and the possibility, actuality and perpetuity of the Burnt Offering shown that very morning, in the fact that one of them was even then standing in their midst.

TOPIC: Self-Will

SUBTOPIC: Fatal Results Of

TITLE: I Will Have My Way Or Die

In the town of our childhood and boyhood, a great muscular man of thirty or forty, became offended with a silversmith about a trifle. Wrought into a kind of frenzy he walked into the jewelry store and slapped the face of the gentleman referred to. He had been begged by friends beforehand not to do so. Men knew that the silversmith, although a small and frail-looking person, had the heart of a lion as to courage. But the enraged man was bent on having his way. In fact he said "he would have his way or die."

The silversmith, realizing that he had no chance in a fisticuff, deliberately armed himself, and sending word to his insulter and attacker to prepare to meet him, as deliberately set his own feet in the same fatal road in which his antagonist had entered. In thirty minutes they were both dead men. Each had received from four to five pistol balls in their bodies before falling lifeless on the brick pavement of Yazoo City. We saw the ghastly sight when a lad, and have never and can never forget it. Each one had his way and died.

We have known so many distressing occurrences to take place on this melancholy thoroughfare of which we are writing, that we actually get sick and faint at heart when we hear a person saying, "I am determined to have my way or die." We know in the double light of revelation and history that the speech really means, "I am resolved to have my way and die!"

Who can doubt this a moment who credits the statements of the Word of God, and studies certain biographies in the same sacred volume? Scores of lives held up in the Scripture can be perfectly covered and described by the sentence as amended. And Absalom had his way and died. Samson had his way and died. Baalam had his way and died. Judas had his way and died. All died while in the midst of their own way. And the death was peculiar in being premature, calamitous, tragical, dreadful and hopeless.

If we come to history it reads the same. It matters not what age or country the individual lives in; if his way is not God's way, but is a life contrary to the Word of God, and to the Spirit of Christ, there is nothing but death in a disastrous sense to be looked for.

Then there are deaths resultant from this course which are more heart-breaking and calamitous than a mere dissolution of soul and body.

The self-willed, perverse course often means the destruction of happiness to other people. It is a dreadful thing to behold the light and joy go out of the eyes of innocent members of a household through the selfishness and obstinacy of a single individual in that same family circle.

So the course of self-will not only ends the peace of the home, but effects finally the ruin of the home itself.

Who wonders that such a person is finally left to rule over a desert; or to sit as king on a throne of straw with a crown of straw in a life dungeon whose walls are loneliness, and whose atmosphere is one of unbroken silence.

The burial ground or lot of such home destroyers could very properly and suggestively be ornamented, with such shrubbery as flame scorched trees, and such monuments as a group of fire-blackened chimneys standing like ghastly sentinels in the midst of twisted rusty iron, charred beams and piles of gray ashes.

TOPIC: Shaking

SUBTOPIC: The Need Of

TITLE: A Female Shaker

Recently in one of our meetings a woman suddenly filled with the Spirit, laid hold of a man at the altar and gave him such a shaking as we doubt not he had not experienced since his mother got hold of him when he was a child. The person had been a seeker at the altar for days, and the woman doubtless in her heart agony wanted to bring him through and over into Canaan by physical means.

We thought the individual would never come back to the services, and that only harm would result from the way he had been handled. But that very night he ordered fifteen of our books, and sought what he was after in spiritual lines more diligently than ever.

We know that right now some of our readers are saying that it would be a good idea for that Shaker sister to be employed to go around in our various meetings, give the men a thorough hand manipulation, and thereby help them spiritually and increase the sale of our literature. But we are not certain that all would act like our good brother.

We do believe, however, that a great many people need a thorough shaking, and some a regular whipping. All of us recall how the discipline of the peach switch improves children, and how chastened, subdued, well-behaved and obedient they are for days after this domestic application has taken place.

What are men and women but grown up children? And we all know a number that means of grace, courtesy, forbearance, sacrifice and love have alike failed with. They need a whipping.

We know others that show themselves so coarse, insulting, so bereft of every instinct of true refinement and gentility, that we are forced to believe that nothing but a genuine dressing down, a regular old-time thrashing, will ever make such people behave themselves.

We have today in our midst men of ruthless pens and tongues, who scruple not to attack and slander the people of God on every occasion. Their safety in doing so thus far, lies in the Christ-like spirit of the persons they have abused and traduced. If they had said of worldly, unconverted people, only a small part of what they have spoken about the servants of God, these same people of the world would have caned and thrashed them. And we doubt not this kind of castigation would have done them a world of good.

TOPIC: Shallow Professors

SUBTOPIC: Prominent, But Useless

TITLE: The River Jim

While out in the Northwest we made a very interesting new acquaintance. It was not a person, but a thing. It is the River Jim.

This remarkable stream is twelve hundred miles long, and is not navigable in all that tremendous length a single yard!

This would indicate that Brother or Mister Jim is somewhat shallow! In addition to this, Jim is not broad! You can get across him so soon--oh, so very soon. No, he is not broad.

Now, just to think of the Jim going so far, passing through so much territory, seeing so many people, touching numerous localities, meandering around a distance equal to that between New Orleans and Chicago, or between St. Louis and New York--and yet in all that great length perfectly unnavigable from beginning to end. Jim is a complete failure as to Commerce.

I say plain Jim, for I have lost respect, in fact, have become disgusted with my new acquaintance, and so dropping his baptismal name, say Jim, for short.

This same Jim is a failure in Manufacture as well as commerce, for he has not volume or force enough to turn a wheel or run a mill of any kind. There is not enough of him to make a "falls," and so he just meanders about everywhere, going to all the meetings, doing nothing, and in the true sense of the word getting nowhere.

The River Jim is to be at the meeting in June. It is this stream which curves and winds around the City Park of Elms, where the Camp is to be held. So all who attend next June will see Jim.

When we first saw "The Jim," and was told of his character and his life peculiarities and how long he was and how far he went, and how little he did; and, in fact, that he was such a failure in what is expected of a river, that he didn't amount to a hill of beans--we were much moved. We realized that we had met with an old acquaintance in the West whom we had known intimately in

the East, as well as in the North and South. We could have wept. We came near collapsing with a variety of emotions which we have not time to mention much less enlarge upon.

However, we felt like telling the brethren they had introduced us by mistake to an old friend. And we said in confidence to the River Jim that we had seen his family lately, and a whole lot of his kin folks whom we found almost everywhere scattered on both sides of the Mason and Dixon line.

Knowing how it would gratify him, we informed him that a number of his relatives had been elected bishops, and editors of our church papers, quite a number were presiding elders, and still others occupied what were called the leading pulpits of the land. That also many of his kindred were principal members of the church to which they belonged, and held prominent positions wherever we had met them.

Moreover, we told him that the family resemblance was so striking that anybody could see that they were his near and dear relations. That like him they were far from being broad, were unmistakably shallow, could not float the Old Ship of Zion or any craft that had deep drawing, genuine salvation in it. That the resemblance still continued in that they were so big in one respect and so little in another; that in spite of all their going around they got nowhere, and in place of being something and doing something, they were exactly like him in doing nothing and being good for nothing.

Of course we did not stay long in the neighborhood of the River Jim when we said this. We went back to the hotel. Some would think this was a wise and safe step with us, that the River Jim might have become offended and might have taken vengeance on us. But no! there was no danger. Jim cannot hurt anybody.

P. S.--We have been informed since penning the above that the River Jim is not only a failure in the commerce and manufacture point of view, but is equally a non-success and breakdown in meeting the demands of Agriculture. There is not enough of our meandering friend to irrigate the fields around him. He has no fullness of blessing. He has nothing to spare. The least effort put forth to make him overflow and bless the surrounding country, seems to run him dry. He has just enough experience to go around and see how others are prospering and getting along; but he has nothing himself to give or to spare. He says he is moving on in his poor weak way, and hopes that he will hold out faithful to the end. He adds the touching request, "Pray for me."

Jim will be at the camp meeting in June; but all the other camps in the land will have delegations from and representatives of the Jim family. Look out for this interesting household and connections: City Jim, Country Jim, Preacher Jim, Professor Jim, Ragged Jim, and Dandy Jim, Church Jim and Come-Out Jim, as well as the River Jim will all be at the camp meetings this summer.

Pray for the camp meetings!

TOPIC: Shattered Minds

SUBTOPIC: The Fleeting Opportunity To Help Such

TITLE: An Unfortunate

In passing through Tennessee on my way to Georgia, as the train rolled into a small station, I was struck with the appearance of a plainly dressed, forlorn looking man peering eagerly into the car from the side of the road. A second glance convinced me that he was an imbecile.

Several gentlemen, one of them living near by, gave me the history of the unfortunate being.

It seems that when he was a boy his mother took the cars to Nashville, promising to be back on the morning train, and to bring him a present of some kind when she came. But she never returned, as the express on which she went was wrecked and she was killed. The catastrophe bore upon the heart of the child and he lost his mind.

This was twenty or more years ago, but every morning the witless creature comes to the depot to meet his mother and get the present she promised to bring him. He only goes to the morning train, paying no attention to the others. He recollects that this was the one upon which she was to arrive. He gazes eagerly for the mother's form, is disappointed for the ten thousandth time, and returns quietly to the home where some relatives care for him.

How many sorrowful histories this old world has. And how strange it seems to us that people so completely undone and wrecked by the miseries and calamities of this life should be allowed to live on for years and scores of years. How much happier it seems the mother would be with the child, or this son with his mother. And yet here is this lonely, pathetic figure in threadbare garments, peering into car windows and wistfully looking for one who never comes.

Perhaps it is all allowed of God as a means of grace to others in caring for such helplessness. Or perhaps it is one of the many life pictures showing up additional features of the woe that has come upon this world through the entrance of sin. Anyhow the bruised and afflicted are all over the land, and what we do must be done quickly or they or we who could relieve and cheer will soon be gone.

TOPIC: Shouting Mistakenly

SUBTOPIC: Before Seekers Have Real Victory

TITLE: Shouting By Proxy

One afternoon I heard a great shout from a tent. A single voice made the outcry and kept it up. From occasional words of the rejoicer I judged some one had been saved, but I observed that another person was doing the shouting. I could not help but think that here was a misfit. Some one had put on some one else's shoes or garment. Moreover, the individual seemed to keep them. I put questions which revealed the fact that the rejoicing was all on one side.

It brought back a period in my life as the Pastor of a city church, when a revival went on continuously and many souls were saved. But sometimes all were not converted who got the credit of being born again. I had a woman full of the Holy Ghost, who had shouts for herself and plenty to spare for those who possessed none. Just the sight of a relaxing muscle on a sinner's face, or a promise to amend his life, or a stepping out by faith was more than sufficient to set this good sister

off. I would be engaged at the altar working with the seekers when I would hear a rapturous cry, "Glory to God," etc., and looking up, would see the aforesaid female with radiant face, loud cries and clapping hands, bending over some man or woman whose face looked like a piece of sole leather, as they sat or stood stolidly listening to the shouts of the blessed woman of God before them, who had in her honest but mistaken heart attributed a salvation to them which they did not possess.

Again I saw the shoe was on the wrong foot, the garment had gotten on one to whom it did not belong. Evidently there was some kind of mistake. And yet it was certainly refreshing to look at the two parties and observe that one whose face should have been illumined, and lips overflowing, all gloomy and silent; while the other, our good sister, supplied every deficiency and lack of joy, smiles, shouts, liberty and utterance, and did it after the completest manner.

My mind was next made to revert to the oriental custom of hiring mourners, who carry on tremendously, while those who would naturally be expected to be grief-stricken, save their own dress, manners and composure, together with their strength and vitality, by this judicious expenditure of money on the employed lamenters. There was no question but that the hired grievers did the thing to perfection, and swept ahead of everything that the family and relatives of the deceased could possibly have done.

By an easy transition we thought of the necessity of a corps, or trained band of rejoicers and shouters, to be used for and by that class of people now being swept into the church through card-signing revivals, who have not the slightest conception of what real salvation is, and who could no more praise God in spirit than a dead man could sing, walk, or run. What a relief it would be to the dumb-tongued, heavy-hearted set of joiners to have some one feel, speak and do everything that is usually expected of the saved. By all means such a body of hired singers and shouters will be needed as the Holy Ghost is more and more grieved, and withdraws his quickening, lip-opening, and soul-gladdening presence from those churches which refuse to honor His converting and sanctifying power and be led into the full salvation of God.

TOPIC: Silence

SUBTOPIC: The Reason For Pondered

TITLE: A Silent Town

It is the stillest, most grave-yard-like town I ever saw. The houses are all white, many fences are of stone, the stately elmtrees stand like sentinels in the yard, the tapering cedar and spruce whisper of the cemetery, while the cawing of the crows or rooks from the distant fields, add to the melancholy, and even to the silence of the place. For hours this "caw--caw" from the far away fields, has been all I have heard.

One afternoon I walked through the town and never met a soul on the street, nor saw a face at the window of a single house, nor beheld a child in the yard, nor heard a dog bark nor a rooster crow. As I pushed on into the country for a walk, and left the dwellings behind me, I thought of the Arabian Nights, and the stories of enchanted islands and cities, and people put to sleep for an hundred years.

Just at this moment I met an old woman in a short red cloak coming up the road, and I said: "Here she is at last, this is the old witch or fairy that has done this; and now she will take that stick of hers which is a wand, and touch me and make me a Prince or turn me into her coachman, I don't know which."

But she did neither. She hardly looked at me and passed on. Perhaps she was not a fairy. Maybe she was just a good old soul going home after a gossipy visit to a neighbor!

Nevertheless I went on a half mile farther and looked on a field where our troops drilled during the Revolutionary war, and got ready to meet the British. After leaning on an old stone fence, looking at the silent field a little while, and a long while at a range of lofty hills in the dim distance, I came away.

On returning to the hotel I was informed that Gen. Washington had slept one night in this old New England settlement during the Revolutionary Times.

Then we wondered if this was the matter with the community. For we gathered that it had never grown a particle since that eventful hour. Perhaps the General in casting off his slumber, let it fall on the town!

If so it is certainly well for our country that the Commander in Chief in those days did not generally distribute his sleeping favors. It would now have been a Land of Nod, inhabited by Rip Van Winkles.

TOPIC: Singers For Revival Meetings
SUBTOPIC: Detraction From Home Talent
TITLE: Home Talent

We do wish that all the preachers and communities calling us to hold meetings for them would have wisdom and faith enough to say, bring a first-class singer with you. Some of them do, but the majority write, "We do not need a singer; our home talent is amply sufficient."

O that "home talent!" At first we were quite impressed with the expression or phrase. We saw masters and mistresses of song, Jenny Linds in disguise, all tuned up and waiting to burst forth in floods of melodious praise, that would fairly transport the audience, and be as well a profound inspiration to the evangelist.

In some cases the home talent, taking no stock in full salvation, or any other kind of redemption would present a line of frozen figures and icy faces on the Sabbath, and be seen no more until the following Sunday.

In other instances, the home talent could more properly be called the home talons, the way their discordant and out-of-tune voices tore and rent the hearing of the ear and the sensibilities of the soul. In one of our meetings, while several nasal voices were yowling like a certain domestic pet that we shall not name, a poor little kitten, evidently attracted by the sound, came in from the

street and walked down the aisle in the direction of the home talent. We had a lively suspicion at the time that the kitten labored under a mistake and thought it had heard the voice of its mother.

The home talent confines itself to hymns that have been sung out of all their freshness and force for ten or twenty years. The leader, or preacher, will sweetly announce to the audience that they will sing pieces that everybody knows. Whereupon the well-worn, often-threshed melodies are rendered in connection with certain "flat" or falsetto accompaniments, and the effect--mental, moral, physiological, psychological, neurological and craniological--can well be imagined.

It stands to reason in this age of specialties, that a man who puts his all in the work of conducting the singing of a religious gathering or meeting, will do far better than a cluster of young or old folks who know little of music and nothing about revival work. Then we should never forget that the Spirit is giving new songs continually to the church, and that in addition to the power the Holy Ghost bestows to the hymn there is another force still which arises from its newness and freshness.

TOPIC: Singing Of Christian Songs
SUBTOPIC: Conviction Brought Thereby
TITLE: A Police Court Scene

Speaking of things of moral beauty, we were deeply impressed a few days since by reading in a paper the description of a recent occurrence in a police court in one of our largest cities. We scarcely ever read anything that affected us more profoundly. We give the paragraph entire as we saw it in the morning journal.

"Thirty men, red-eyed and disheveled, lined up before the judge of the court. It was the regular morning company of drunks and disorderlies. Some were old and hardened, others hung their heads in shame.

Just as the momentary disorder attending the bringing of the prisoners quieted down, a strange thing happened. A strong, clear voice from below began singing:

"Last night I lay a-sleeping,
There came a dream so fair."

Last night! It had been for them all a nightmare or a drunken stupor. The song was such a contrast to the horrible fact that no one could avoid the sudden shock at the thought the song suggested. It went on:

"I stood in old Jerusalem
Beside the Temple there
I heard the children singing,
And ever as they sang,
Methought the voice of angels
From heaven in answer rang."

The judge had paused. He made a quiet inquiry. A former member of a famous opera company, known all over the country, was awaiting trial for forgery. It was he who was singing in his cell.

Meantime the song went on.

"And once again the scene was changed,
New earth there seemed to be;
I saw the Holy City
Beside the tideless sea.
The light of God was on its streets,
The gates were open wide,
And all who would might enter,
And no one was denied."

Every man in the line showed emotion. One boy at the end of the row, after desperate effort at self-control, leaned against the wall, buried his face in his folded arms and sobbed, "Oh, mother, mother!"

The sobs cutting the weary hearts of the men who heard, and the song still welling its way through the court room, blended in the hush. At length one man protested.

"Judge," said he, "have we got to submit to this? We are here to take our punishment, but this--" He, too, began to sob.

It was impossible to proceed with the business of the Court, yet the judge gave no order to stop the song, The police sergeant, after a surprised effort to keep the men in line, stepped back and waited with the rest.

The song moved to its climax:

"Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
Sing for the night is o'er;
Hosanna in the highest,
Hosanna for evermore!"

In an ecstasy of melody the last words rang out, and then there was a silence.

The judge looked into the faces of the men before him. There was not one who was not touched by the song; not one in whom some better impulse was not stirred.

He did not call the cases singly--a kind word of advice, and he dismissed them all. No man was fined or sentenced to the workhouse that morning. The song had done more good than punishment could ever have accomplished."

TOPIC: Sky Piercers

SUBTOPIC: Versus Sky Scrapers
TITLE: The Sky Piercer

It verily seems that the spirit of building a tower that should reach the skies has come down from the plains of ancient Babel to the Island of Manhattan. Already it has a brigade of tenements that are over twenty floors high, and one is even thirty-four. Now another has been started that is to reach the amazing height of sixty stories.

We can but think of the Day when the Lord shall appear in the heavens, time shall be no more, and this old earth begin to stagger around in the air like a drunken man.

In the San Francisco disaster God made the ground to move about an inch back and forth for several minutes. And this one inch swing made a desolation of a great city. But at the end of the world, the Bible says the Lord will arise to shake the earth terribly! We are told that the mountains will flow down at the presence of the Lord, and the hills skip like lambs. What chance will there be for edifices of human construction at such a time of dissolving nature as this? And what hope for the "skyscrapers," as they are called, in that dreadful hour of reddened moon, blackened sun, falling stars and shaking world. For a single moment we see their lofty summits waving like treetops in the lurid air, and then all going down, together with a general and final crash.

Somehow we do not take to skyscrapers in buildings, in the pulpit, and in the character realm. We prefer the Sky Piercer! It is possible to live in a one-story, one-room house, and yet all in it belonging to God, and loving and serving him devotedly. Any one at once can see it is more than a skyscraper; and is really a Sky Piercer. The Lord of heaven lives in it: this puts even the lowest step above the clouds and stars.

As for the preacher in the pulpit, and Christian in his Life, all can take the Sky Scrapper who will, but give me the Sky Piercer!

The man who scrapes the sky, simply, as the words plainly indicate, gives us the scrapings from the outside of the sky. But the hungry, needy souls of men want what is INSIDE the heavens.

So the best wish we could make for the world, the truest prayer we could utter for the ministry and the church is, that God will send quickly to us a body of people who first will "go down," and then never stop praying until they "go through," and finally become, in the highest, best sense of the word, Sky Piercers.

Such men with their conversation or citizenship in heaven; with their face to face life and walk with God; and with their ability to bring heavenly things down to the needy children of earth; such men are Sky Piercers, and are truly as far above the sky-scraper in the pulpit as a Norwegian pine is above a toadstool, or the palace of a king above a dirt-dauber's mud abode or the nest of a mole in the ground.

TOPIC: Social Gospel
SUBTOPIC: A False Gospel
TITLE: A Coffee Revival

In my Sunday afternoon meetings I often find that speakers and lecturers are dividing the crowd with me in other halls, or churches, in the same city. Sometimes their subjects gladden me, and again I am disappointed and grieved. But at one of my late appointments I had a rival at the 3 o'clock hour in a neighboring church whose subject and mission astonished me. He was trying to start a "Temperance Coffee Society." Not temperance in coffee drinking, but coffee versus liquor.

So the notices had been duly read from church pulpits, and the church members of different denominations gathered to hear a minister of the Gospel preach the Gospel of Coffee. It was a coffee meeting, intending to lead up to a Coffee Revival.

In another part of the city I was holding up the precious Blood of Christ as the great and only remedy for any and all sin, for any and all habits, and for any and all people. We had great liberty, Heaven smiled, the Spirit fell upon the Word, and about fifty souls were saved and sanctified.

As we thought of the preacher around the corner, holding up coffee and pointing to coffee as the hope and deliverance of the drunkard; then asking for funds to start a coffee shop down town to deliver men from strong drink, we had another view of the times, in the looking of the people in every direction except the right one for help and deliverance; and in the taking up of false Christs, and no Christs rather than the true and only Redeemer for the rescue and salvation of the soul.

We would like to have seen some of the sermon notes of our Coffee Preacher. Doubtless the leading heads were: (1) Chicory, (2) Rio, (3) Java, (4) Mocha, with subdivisions of (a) sugar, (b) milk, (c) cream. Then would come the exhortation and altar call, "Come to Coffee." His musical instrument should not have been an organ, but a Coffee Mill.

TOPIC: Soul Of Man

SUBTOPIC: Testified Of In Nature

TITLE: The Call Of The Pine Tree

If a man is developing the animal in himself, growing hard, and is doubtful whether he has, a soul, let him go in the pine woods and listen to a sound that is sigh, sob, dirge and song all in one, and he will discover that he possesses something besides a body. And that this something wants something--a great Some One--far mightier than itself, to live in it and love it. I hate to see the pine woods go. It will remove one of the distinctive features of our Southern landscapes. Some writer has strikingly described certain Southern localities in the sentence

"A line--and a pine."

The simple sentence brings up at once a wonderfully familiar scene. We have all beheld the far-reaching field of horizon-touching prairie with here and there the solitary palm of the Southland. "The line and the pine." Taken singly each one affects us and when in conjunction there is at once felt a peculiar added force; the heart swells and the eye fills.

TOPIC: Stature Thought To Be Great
SUBTOPIC: Compared With True Greatness
TITLE: The Sky-scrapers

I obtained some lessons from observing the sky-scrapers in New York City.

As they rise from a height of twenty to forty stories, it is marvellous how the other buildings in the neighborhood shrink into insignificance. Tenements that six and seven stories high were considered gigantic a few years ago, but now in the vicinity and presence of the lofty modern structures look as pigmies would appear standing in a group of giants.

Of course they were great when there was nothing greater around, but when something really large and lofty came on the scene, how little these formerly imposing houses now seem.

With the parable in brick, iron and stone before us, I had at once the explanation why some pastors and evangelists are regarded as great in certain remote districts and sections of the country. The people are immovably convinced that these men are big, and that there are none in pulpit and on platform that are greater.

The explanation is that they themselves never saw greater men. There are immeasurably superior thinkers, reasoners and speakers, but not having beheld them in their village and settlement, they are to that community as though they were not, had never been, and could never be.

It is really amusing to behold these same overestimated individuals at a great camp, or in a General Conference, where real pulpit giants are present. The several story building finds itself in company with a number of forty-story intellects; men whose heads touch the sky, whose minds, souls and lives are full of great purposes, mighty activities and tremendous achievements. We stand amazed at their loftiness of character; the upper floors of thought; every mental room full, and the elevators going all the time. The cottage is in the presence of a neighborhood of sky-scrapers!

My, how little some of us look at such a time! And how small some of us feel!

Then how glad such individuals are to be overlooked on such occasions. Not one, in spite of his fame in Persimmonville, would dare to cross swords with one of the polemical giants of the great ecclesiastical gathering.

A brim or goggle-eye perch is a whale among minnows, but is itself less than a sardine when thrown among whales. And so the pulpit wonder of Raccoon Hollow, and O'Possum Bend is simply nowhere in the crowded camp meetings of two hundred pastors and preachers; or at a mighty assembly where the greatest thinkers, writers and speakers of Christendom have been drawn from all the nations.

The overrated brother is all the more content to be unnoticed, and not called on to preach at the camp or conference, inasmuch as the sermons on which he got his fame in Persimmonville and Goose Pond P. O. were taken from some of the leading preachers and evangelists at different camp

grounds. In fact he took five from one evangelist at a single camp ground. "Alas, Master, it was borrowed!"

So it was with a smile I contemplated the five and six-story buildings in New York City and noticed how small they appeared in the midst of the Skyscraper District. They used to look big, but now seem to be shrinking in on themselves in the presence of the really great and colossal in architecture.

And the smile deepens when we see the same thing reproduced in life, and observe how the self-inflated, and the self-overvalued shrink and fade when thrown in the company of those who tower far above them intellectually and spiritually.

Just so we have seen the Moon put on a sickly smile and take a back seat in the West, when the Sun, from whom it borrowed all its light, appeared in its strength and majesty on the platform in the East.

TOPIC: Straying From The Path Of Duty
SUBTOPIC: Its Tragic Consequences
TITLE: The Yellow Jackets

As we have observed, talked and prayed with broken-hearted men and women at the altar in our meetings all over the country, we have been reminded again and again of a circumstance happening in our early ministry.

A gentleman mindful of the suffering of a poor family in the town where he resided, filled up a basket with substantials as well as comforts, and prevented by engagements from going himself, sent the relief by the hand of his nine-year-old son.

The home of want was not over four or five blocks distant, but the lad, according to human nature, and true to the proclivities of a boy, took a road which was three times as long, and that in its windings led by a yellow-jacket's nest in a clump of trees back of a large public building.

He had been absent two hours longer than was necessary, when just as the father and mother were becoming exceedingly anxious, he put in a woe begone and almost unrecognizable appearance at the back door. He had met the enemy and he was theirs. He had been stung all over the face, his eyes were mere slits, while his countenance red and swollen from the poisonous stings and from weeping, presented such a spectacle that at first the parents scarcely knew their own child.

His explanation to their wondering, sympathetic and shocked questions was, that he had heard of the yellow jackets, and thought he would go the long way around in order that he might see them.

He saw them!

They also saw him!

From all indications the visited got more out of the visit than the visitor. The yellow jackets went on with their business as though they had never been disturbed, but the little boy was put out of both business and pleasure for days, his duty remained undischarged, his playmates laughed at him unmercifully, and he was mortified and heartbroken beyond words to describe.

This occurrence is but a figure or parable of the life of a sinner. God has a straight way for us to go in the discharge of the duties of life. If we would only follow the course he has marked out, his angels would be charged to keep us in our earthly march and journey, and what a happy, useful, blessed existence would be for us all.

But there is the strangest disposition in the human heart to take the long, crooked road, hunt up the yellow jackets of sin, establish an acquaintance, and get a profound, bitter personal knowledge of the poisoning, maddening, defacing and destroying power of iniquity.

It does not take the devil and sin long to use up a man. And the history of the case of the transgressor, is but a repetition of what took place with the boy, only on a larger, sadder and more ruinous scale. The duty of life of course is not discharged. The basket is not delivered. Hearts and lives have not been cheered, relieved, benefited and blessed. While the wanderer himself, stung, poisoned, swollen, blinded, agonized, weeping presents himself to the eye of God and man at the back door of life, ruined and undone.

Some of these character wrecks are beheld in charity hospitals, some at the jail and penitentiary, some loll on street corners, and sprawl around in livery stables and saloons, and many we find kneeling at the altar, and clinging to it as though washed up from the ocean of life and flung on a shore of hope and salvation. How changed they are since the hour they started out in the morning of their days! How they weep! How sorry they are that they did not go the straight road, and do what their Heavenly Father told them. How full of self-reproach that they have not delivered the basket, and have helped nobody. How full of shame and sorrow that they have been stung and poisoned out of all moral shape and human semblance by the yellow jackets of hell.

There is a story told of two pictures that were painted by a famous artist, one representing Innocence in the person of a joyous-faced, smiling-lipped, open-eyed child, and the other symbolizing Guilt or Vice as seen in the dark-furrowed countenance and bestialized features of a hardened criminal. There were forty years between the painting of the pictures. And it is said that to the amazement of the artist, it was discovered that the same subject sat for both paintings! The two portraits proved to be taken of the same person!

The yellow jackets of sin had gotten hold of the boy!

TOPIC: Swayed Without Substance
SUBTOPIC: By Ambiguous Pulpiters
TITLE: Bunsby In The Pulpit

As we go around we are made confident more and more that the favorite pulpit and platform Occupant and Adorner in the eye, mind and heart of High Steeple Cathedral and the

recognized Sanhedrins of the land, is the individual who can say with a fine presence and an eloquent roll of words, "We are all doing nicely indeed," and "Everything is quiet, Bishop."

If in addition to this he can pay a glowing tribute to the Old Flag, speak of the brave boys in blue at the front, compliment the lodges, brotherhoods and sisterhoods in the land, and conclude tearfully with the moonlight falling on his mother's grave, then his name is made, his salary and liberal remuneration secure, his popularity unbounded, and he becomes a star of the first magnitude in what we call the Terrestrial Heavens.

Taking rank with this kind of preaching, if not out-ranking it in some quarters, is what we would term the Bunsby style.

This famous pen creation of Dickens had a way of expressing himself that left the hearer much impressed, but also mystified, and really just where he was before Mr. Bunsby had delivered himself of one of his sapient utterances.

Being asked whether he thought a certain person would return who had been reported drowned, Mr. Bunsby said: .

"If so be he is dead, my opinion is he won't come back no more. If so be he is alive my opinion is he will. Do I say he will? No! Why not? Because the bearings of this observation lays in the application on it."

Oh! the Bunsbys all of us have heard in the pulpit and on the platform. And how deeply impressed some people were with them! And how certain little shallow heads went away saying, How profound! How deep! How scholarly! When really one of Bunsby's descendants had been standing before us, and had been paraphrasing if not repeating the words of the original head of the tribe: "For why?" "Which way?" "If so, why not?" "Therefore!!"

When a pastor in the South we once attended the widely known sea shore camp ground located between New Orleans and Mobile. Great preaching by true men of God had been delivered and without much visible results at the altar in the way of penitents and seekers. And still not only good men had preached, but men who had given us new and strong thought, as well as Gospel food.

One night a preacher was put up who for fifty minutes kept a goodly company of us wondering what he was saying. He had an imposing presence, and a ringing voice and appeared to be delivering mighty thoughts when he was really saying nothing.

On self-evident propositions that not even a boy would think of disputing and that were equivalent to saying that "two and two are four" he would redden in the face and fairly foam at the mouth, and hit the pulpit board with his fist, and thunder forth that "he asserted without fear of successful contradiction and disputation that such and such was so"! In other words "that two and two were four"!

Then wiping his heated brow after this great victory, he would sweep forth in a flood of words, sonorous, high sounding and multitudinous when we could not conceive what he meant and at what he was aiming or driving. But the people listened breathlessly, and when the call was made for penitents, the long altar was crowded!

Christian, the eldest son of Bishop Keener, a keen-eyed observer, fine reasoner and splendid preacher was sitting by us. He had never taken his eyes off the preacher, and throughout had only indulged in a slow, thoughtful downward stroke of his moustache and short chin beard.

Turning to him in amazement we whispered under our breath: "What on earth brought the people to the altar?"

Just then a large yellow dog came trotting up the aisle regardless of parasols, umbrellas and walking sticks that were pointed at or thrust towards him. But just as he was drawing near us, Christian Keener stooped down quickly and scooping up a handful of sawdust from the aisle, threw the light, harmless stuff at the saffron colored canine.

To this day we can never forget the panic that seemed to possess the dog. To say he fled would be to place the occurrence entirely too mildly and tamely before the eyes. If ever a four-footed beast flew, the aforesaid quadruped took an aerial excursion. He seemed to land only a few times on the earth in his frantic effort to escape, and looked like not only the Adversary but the whole universe was after him.

As the confused and frightened animal disappeared in the distance, Christian Keener turning to me with a peculiar smile, said: "You have my answer in allegory form. Like the dog, the people did not know what was thrown at them. They thought it was something when it was nothing. They went down before sawdust."

* * * * *

LETTER T TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Talk About You

SUBTOPIC: Dealing With Such

TITLE: They Say

A philosophical nobleman, a man of the world, had three sentences written on his castle gate. Misunderstood by his neighbors, and shunned by a large part of the community, the three lines on the door naturally bore some reference to that fact.

When he started to ride out over his estate each morning, he would first rein his horse up in front of the big portal with its prominent lettering, and read aloud:

They Say!

What Do They Say?

Let Them Say!

And then, with the last word, he would laugh, put spurs to his horse and gallop off.

It would be a pity if Christians should allow a man of the world to outdo them in the obtainment of victory over the onslaughts of men and devils.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" And lo, the answer that some would be compelled to give would be so representative of nothing, that smiles and laughter would have to come.

Somebody had talked about you! But everybody is talked about.

Some one has misrepresented you! But who has escaped here. And was not the Lord Himself discussed, slandered, and accused of saying things that He never uttered?

TOPIC: Testimony

SUBTOPIC: Ceases When Experience Lost

TITLE: The Denuded Rooster

I was entertained very kindly at a pleasant country home, a half mile from town, and was much interested in the farm yard, and studied daily the history and habits of the domestic fowls and animals with which it abounded.

I particularly observed a rooster who had lost his handsome tail-feathers. They had been torn out by a hog. This chanticleer was cut by all the hens, and spent most of his time in a kind of box, looking out silently, mournfully and perhaps bitterly, on the world. He had quit crowing. He seemed to have lost his voice when he parted with his plume. In other words his testimony went with his experience. He also was evidently soured, and doubtless spent his time railing at everything and everyone in the chicken line.

Poor fellow! I have seen his human mate in a good many places. When the waving plume of a beautiful experience goes, then the joyous, rapturous crow of testimony departs. Now then for the box! And the silent, glum, grum, look at every one who dares to do anything outside of his wooden retreat.

Brother, have you lost your glad, old-time crow? Are the feathers gone? If so, then never rest until you get a new plume and a fresh crow. He who makes all the birds in the woodland and barnyard, has an abundance of feathers and plenty of songs and clarion calls: These are to be had for the asking.

One thing I feel sure of, and that is, as long as we keep the plume of a beautiful experience and the crow of a joyous testimony, we will not have to mope alone in a box, and look out soured and fault finding on the world. Some old superannuated fowls may criticize and find fault, but we will always have plenty of calls to crow, will be on a box instead of in one, and ever have a

profound listening and a good following given us no matter what ecclesiastical yard or field we are called upon providentially to enter.

TOPIC: Testimony

SUBTOPIC: False

TITLE: "Doing Nicely, Thank You."

An expression used continually at the telephone by nurses and other attendants of a hospital is strikingly similar in its significance and suggestiveness to the phrase we have just mentioned [in another illustration], "Everything quiet, Bishop."

If the reader doubts it, let him call up some clerk, nurse or hospital functionary who is allowed at the telephone, and put the query relative to some patient in one of the many wards, when back without a moment's hesitation will come the cheery response, "Doing well, thank you."

This as will be readily seen is an easy way of getting rid of a troublesome questioner, and also of the imputation of not knowing everything that is going on in an Infirmary of a thousand inmates.

One day a gentleman anxious about a friend and acquaintance in a large hospital, called up the institution by phone and put the question:

"How is Mr. S_____ getting along?"

Back came the prompt reply in a chirpy female voice:

"Doing nicely, thank you."

Much relieved the interlocutor hung up the receiver, and turned back to his work at his desk. Later in the afternoon he met the brother of S_____, and said cheerily:

"I am so glad your brother is doing so well at the hospital." When the grave, shocked reply was:

"Why, Charles has been dead and buried three days!"

Let the reader apply the words to some preachers' reports of their churches; and to some people's testimonies concerning themselves; and to certain creed statements of religious bodies in our midst; and while we hear the parrot like utterance, with the sickly smile attending it "Doing nicely, thank you;" yet in addition to it all and over all sweeps upon us a higher voice which announces,

"They have been dead and buried lo these many days, months and years."

TOPIC: Treatment of a Faithful Preacher

SUBTOPIC: Two Extremes From Carnal Hearers

TITLE: Garlands and Stones

Garlands and stones are about as unlike as it is possible for two things to be. One a wreath of roses intertwined with green sprays and vines is a fragrant, lovely object, attractive and desirable to all. The other a hard, angular substance, cold, lusterless, odorless and painful, brings blood, bruises, intense anguish and even death itself.

In the pastorate the first procession is the Flower Parade. Roses are in profusion. Smiles, well wishes and congratulations abound. Everybody is so glad to welcome the new preacher. They had often heard of him, and were now so delighted to have him. The newly-appointed is fairly yoked up with garlands. The collars, traces, indeed, all the harness is made of wreaths of roses. The whip is a honeysuckle vine loaded with blossoms.

But later there is a change. And it was not long in coming. A few faithful sermons, and the flowers disappeared as by a deadly frost. Certain pews were significantly and ominously vacant. The very people who gushed most over the new preacher, are busiest now in the rock business.

The way stones rattle about that same individual would cause the figurative mind to say that Vesuvius had blown up, and hot lava, scoria and boulders of all shapes and sizes were descending toward and falling upon that particular part of the earth where this unfortunate minister of the Gospel resided.

This kind of treatment is so well known to the faithful evangelist that he expects nothing else. He who understands human nature, and the power of God's Word, knows that it is impossible to deliver the messages God would have us speak, and escape what we call "stoning." So when the Gospel Messenger is garlanded from the beginning to the end of his meeting, we are compelled to believe that he has not been true to God, to the Word, and to the souls of the people.

Once in a meeting we arrived before a committee, composed of the Mayor and two other prominent citizens of the town, could greet us at the depot and extend us the public welcome they thought we deserved. The Mayor and all were chagrined. But the disappointed feelings were mollified somewhat by a carriage drive given us around and over the town. The Negro driver wore a beaver hat, the horses were high steppers, the vehicle stylish, and the committee did well and nobly.

But all the time we felt inwardly sad. We knew that they had made a mistake in the man. The prince they wanted to crown was not in the chariot. They did not have the public speaker they expected or desired. Another fellow was in the carriage. So we were sorry for them all that afternoon hour in which they took so much pains to please and honor us.

It only required a couple of days to completely disenchant the congregation. A few sermons on Sin and Salvation, that went to the bottom of the former, and to the top of the latter, created a wide chasm. The Mayor, we are convinced, would gladly have been one of a number to have seen us safely but speedily out of town; while the original committee, if they had been allowed to treat us to another hack drive, would have chosen a hearse for the vehicle and an undertaker to have conducted the proceedings.

* * * * *

LETTER V TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Vacillation

SUBTOPIC: In Declaring The Whole Counsel Of God

TITLE: The Round And Flat Systems

For years we have observed that we have four classes of what are called religious teachers in the ministerial and evangelistic field. One is propagating doctrinal error; a second division teaches a half truth; a third declares the whole counsel of God; while a fourth veers between the last two, according to times, seasons, places and personages.

The individual whom we now refer to proclaims the whole truth at a holiness camp meeting, but is evidently so affected by a certain atmosphere of an annual conference, or formal fashionable city church, that he acts, expresses himself, and preaches like another man. So this brother is known in two different ways. Two distant classes of people claim a perfect knowledge of the party, when the truth is they are acquainted with only one-half of him. He is Brother Whole on the camp ground, but is Doctor Half at conference and that aforesaid dead city church.

The case reminds us of a story related by Gov. Taylor of Tennessee. He said quite an ordinary man had filed an application for the position of teacher before the County School Board. One of the examiners having a suspicion of the candidate's lack of a great deal of general information, asked him whether he taught that the world was round or flat.

The applicant's reply was, "That is according to the place where I teach. If my patrons desire it, I teach the Round System; if they prefer the other, I teach the Flat System."

We certainly did a lot of smiling when we read this. And then the smiling gave way to a good deal of thinking. And the more we thought the less we felt like being amused. We well know that our pedagogue aspirant has a large body of imitators in the pulpit and on the platform today. They teach two systems according to the church or congregation they confront. They boldly proclaim the eradication of the carnal mind, the death of the old man at a full salvation camp ground, but growth in grace and enduement for service is the mild, conservative utterance at the Conference Pentecostal service, or in the protracted meeting at High Steeple Church. The Round System for the holiness camp, the Flat system, and it is indeed Flat, for ecclesiastical bodies that do not care for heart purity through consecration, faith in the Blood, and a patient waiting and dying out at the altar before the great congregation.

Such men are trimmers; man-pleasers; and moral cowards. Like the Tennessee school teacher, they "suit their patrons." We have heard men in the pulpit preach sermons lauding the heroism of Peter, the independence and fearlessness of Paul, the indifference of the disciples to the threatenings and persecutions of men; and yet go down with a crash at the very points they admired and commended in the apostles.

Such men quote approvingly and commendatorily from the Gospels and the Book of Acts, but would never do so again if the Saviour and the fire-baptized disciples and the great Apostle to the Gentiles did what they and the readers and praisers of these wonderful lives are doing continually.

After the Baptism with the Holy Ghost the disciples taught the Round System at all times and places, and in face of every changing condition and circumstance. If we would be God's true ambassadors, Christ's faithful followers, we must do the same. We must declare the whole counsel of God. We must obey God rather than men. If we please men we are not the servants of Christ.

TOPIC: Vision Of Faith

SUBTOPIC: Its Delivery From Spiritual Perils

TITLE: The Vision of Faith

The father of the writer, was moving his slaves in the Yellow Fever Epidemic of the "Fifties" to a place of health and safety. He was compelled to pass through a town that was scourged with the dreadful disease. As a measure of security he caused his servants to place sponges of vinegar over their nostrils while the wagons conveying them were made to go through the streets in a swinging trot.

As they passed along the almost deserted thorough-fares, they observed quantities of bed clothing and even excellent wearing apparel evidently thrown aside and away upon pavements and streets. It was too much for one of the negroes named Nat. Leaping from the wagon he picked up several blankets, and some clothing which especially tempted his cupidity.

At once my father cried out to him to cast them down; whereupon Nat, with the greatest earnestness replied that "nobody wanted them," and that "they were as good as new," and continued to gather them up, when my father galloping up tore them from his hands and exclaimed,

"Don't you know that the Yellow Fever is in every one of them and they are certain death to you!"

In this actual incident, Nat well represented the life of the senses, while the writer's father, with his superior knowledge, warning voice and delivering hand, as clearly stood for the action of faith. And just as the ignorant Negro was saved from an awful plague and death through a perception and wisdom profounder than his own, so the soul is rescued and delivered from even greater perils by that vision of faith which pierces the outer attractive semblance or covering, beholds the danger in the beautiful garments, the poison in the golden cup, and the poisonous reptile, coiled up underneath a mass of gorgeous flowers.

The natural man only notes the physical and temporal which may be grasped by the five senses of the body. The trouble, calamity and horror of this kind of life, is that the man is attaching himself to, and living for things that are soon to pass away and be destroyed. It is as if one embarked in a sinking vessel; or took flight in a balloon that was on fire.

Faith looks through, and past, and far beyond the body, flesh and time, and gazes with a vision of its own upon a viewless soul, an invisible God, and a Heaven out of sight.

Faith sees a bed of roses, but stoops over, parts the leaves and blossoms, and marks the pitfall beneath studded with sharp spikes to accomplish the ruin of the falling victim. Faith observes the bait cast toward the human life, but lifting its eyes travels up the fishing line, then down the whole length of the fishing rod, and notes that it is resting in the hands of the devil who is the fisherman in the case. Beholding these startling things, Faith refuses to bite, and swims steadily and rapidly away. All this explains why the man living for the senses is caught, and the man of faith goes free, though confronted by the same temptation and danger, and angled for by the same great tempter.

* * * * *

LETTER W TOPICS ILLUSTRATIONS

TOPIC: Word Of God

SUBTOPIC: Its Divine Power

TITLE: The Power Of The Word Of God

In Congress a few years ago, a speaker desired that a certain passage from the Bible should be read aloud by the clerk. An eye witness of the occurrence affirmed, that prior to this request there was the murmur going on peculiar to large assemblies of men, various individuals moving about, lead pencils and pens at work here and there, but the moment the secretary opened the sacred volume and began to read, a perfect hush fell on the entire body, no one moved from his place, and every eye was turned upon the reader, and every ear bent to catch each word as it fell upon a listening audience of over three hundred lawmakers of the land. That perfect silence declared in its mute but eloquent way the power of the Word of God.

Oftentimes in the sick room we have been made to remark the strange influence of the Scripture to soothe the sufferer, and produce temporary forgetfulness of pain. Even the sound of the reader's voice has been known to affect others who were in adjoining rooms, as they heard the reverent tone and knew that the words of the Almighty were being repeated by human lips for the consolation and help of troubled hearts who were not more dependent upon God than themselves.

We have been in homes where sorrow had come of the most poignant and overwhelming character, and as we opened the Bible and read, we saw the billows of agony subside and a great calm and peace steal into and fill the aching hearts of the entire household circle.

In the native State of the writer tidings came one morning to an aged Christian of eighty that his son, a most promising young man of twenty-five, had been murdered by a Negro in a dense swamp in the neighborhood; that the youth had lain mortally wounded for three days and nights in the woods, living only a few minutes after his discovery by a hunter. The motive of the murder was a few dollars which the Negro had seen in the young man's hand when he was in town.

The instant the crushing news was given, the old father fell on his knees gasping out, "The Book--the Book!"

The family knew well what he meant, and brought him the Bible. Opening with trembling fingers the volume that had been his stay and comfort ten thousand times, he turned to the fourteenth chapter of John and began reading with a choking voice in the midst of the weeping household, the incomparable words of the Savior, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

With every successive sentence his quivering voice grew stronger, when suddenly as he read the words, "I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also," he uttered a shout of such rapturous, unearthly joy, that every hearer was electrified, and strong, unsaved men standing near the door wept like children.

We have marked the power of the Bible in the lock-jawing, dumbfounding and utter silencing of gainsayers and men who endeavored to advocate false doctrine, or press wrong ideas of duty and life upon individual and congregation. We have actually been startled at times to see the immediate effect produced on the sinful arguer and the perverse disputer in matters where good common sense should have been sufficient, without the statement of Revelation. These sudden silencings have repeatedly reminded us of one smitten voiceless and motionless by a lightning bolt from the sky. The truth of God seems to strike like the electric flash from the clouds, and who wonders, when it is the same God who sends both.

A single passage of the Word of God written upon the wall of a palace brought to a wicked king and a thousand of his sinful companions an immediate and overwhelming consternation and despair.

Men may wrangle as they will with their different views in regard to the Scripture and its measure of inspiration, and yet it remains a fact that there is no other book like it on earth in its strange ascendancy and power over the human mind and heart.

When the great author of Scotland was dying and said, "Give me the book," and some one said, "Which book?" his reply was, "There is but one," and in that response he voiced a colossal and eternal truth.

TOPIC: Workers

SUBTOPIC: Misjudgment Of

TITLE: Workers Misjudged

The spiritual condition of a community can alter when there has been no change in the heart of God's messenger and ambassador. For instance, every Christian worker, preacher or evangelist knows how easy it is to secure a revival in a place where there has never been one. Wonderful are the results of that meeting, but what of the second? The pulpit victor goes away and returns in a year, and it is as though he was bombarding a Gibraltar. He is the same man--a spiritual Samson--but things have taken place in his absence, an opposition developed, and a mental and

moral condition reached which made Christ Himself turn from certain localities because "He could there do no mighty work."

Conditions change. We once held a meeting in a large city, and in a Methodist church where holiness as an instantaneous second work had never been preached. We had from seventy-five to one hundred at the altar at almost every call, the power came down, and lions were being slain and quartered every day. From that meeting we went directly to another large city to a church where they had had every kind of evangelist, and every kind of revival. We looked around for a lion. We waited to kill one. We had come prepared. But behold, there was before us nothing but bleating sheep. So we hid the jaw-bone with which we had expected to kill a thousand Philistines, and a jungle of lions thrown in, and taking some good gospel meal, moistened it with the Water of life, and crying out "CoNanny," quietly fed the sheep.

Cheer up, my brother. Don't listen to the croakers who never killed anything larger than a mosquito in the religious life in all their days. They would have you make brick, and at the same time furnish both mud and straw. They would have you kill the lion before it was born, or God had allowed it to come down the road to meet you. When it does come, I believe you will rend it as one would a kid, and have nothing in your hands. As for the skin, you can send it as a kind of rug to the person to sit and think upon, who said you had lost your power.

TOPIC: Works

SUBTOPIC: United With Faith

TITLE: "Where's Them Boys?"

One afternoon, while walking from the camp ground into town, two lads of twelve or thirteen years of age passed me in a rush and disappeared over a swell in the road. A minute afterward a much smaller boy came running around a street corner with great blubbering and lamentation, and looking up the street as he rubbed his eyes with the back of his hand, cried, "Where's them boys?"

In reply I motioned with my hand up the road. Immediately the little fellow, breaking into fresh out-cries, started in pursuit. As I stopped a moment and viewed the vanishing scene, I said, There is the human side of salvation in a nutshell, so to speak; and as for an illustration of the necessary compound and beautiful agreement of repentance, faith and works, it could not be surpassed. As for the lad's pungent grief, there could be no doubt in his broken voice and streaming tears; as for the faith, the way the youngster took up the road and looked up the thoroughfare it was evident that he fully believed he would overtake those from whom he had been separated, and whose companionship he longed for; as for works, that feature was unmistakable in the manner in which the boy's feet struck the ground. It was a movement both rapid and continuous. The case was clear that, while the little chap fully trusted in obtaining the desire of his heart, he nevertheless felt it was imperative to do the very best he could under the circumstances--and he did so.

Twenty minutes later, in returning from town and extending my walk up the highway, I came upon the three boys. They were together at last. The little fellow had overtaken the other two, and when I saw him he was perched on the back of his brother and looked perfectly radiant, while he pointed his fingers at something he saw in the fields beyond and jabbered away in the greatest

glee. He looked like he had been at the altar and received a blessing. In fact, his appearance indicated that he had obtained what he had come after, and was now clear through. I quietly framed the whole picture, hung it up on the walls of memory and named it Repentance, Faith and Works, or the Price of the Goods.

TOPIC: Worldly Reformers

SUBTOPIC: Out Of Place In The Church

TITLE: The Tailless Fox

Every now and then the papers report that another preacher has declared for the theater, dancing, card playing and other kindred things. We can but wonder why such men stay in the church and pulpit who have drifted so far from spirituality and true holiness. If they have become sinful why not go back at once to their crowd? Why try to bring the world into the church to suit their depraved and backslidden tastes. If they prefer to be degenerated instead of regenerated, and walk with men instead of God, let them "go to their own place," as Judas did to his.

There is a great multitude of Christians in the land who cannot be persuaded that Jesus would attend a theater, a dance ball or a card playing party; and they want to be like Him in all things. Why should they forego a heavenly example for a worldly standard because every now and then some shorn Samson in broad cloth and beaver hat bids his congregation to follow him instead of the immaculate cross-bearing Son of God.

Aesop tells of a fox that in some manner had the misfortune to lose his tail. But being a fox and quite adroit in mental matters, he framed a fine argument and glowing speech in praise and defense of a tailless body. He urged it was cool to begin with, and such a restful deliverance from a burden in that part of the physical frame. There was nothing to carry, etc., etc. He then begged his brethren to cut off their caudal attachments and enter into the like freedom and advantage which he enjoyed.

The foxes assembled in convention, listened gravely for a while; but as they took in their unfortunate brother's "bobbed off" appearance, and noted his agony in fly time, there was a general smile in the assembly, an incredulous look in every eye, and a unanimous vote passed that they would not part with that plummy appendage which a beneficent Providence had bestowed upon them.

The moral of all this is that when a man loses his religious experience, and gets spiritually sheared, denuded or "bobbed off" by the world or the devil, at once his cry is heard in the land against the severity of church rules, and pleading for what he calls toleration, broadness and liberty which is only another name with him for license in the ways of worldliness and sin. He has become a sinner and wants others to follow. He may have kept the form of godliness, but has lost the power, and craves his brethren to be in a like condition with himself.

The newspapers give him credit for being an advanced thinker, when he is a retrograding doer. From being a Convert he became first a Divert! then a Pervert, and is now a Subvert, posing as a teacher of ethics or morals, and applauded by worldlings in and out of the church as a Reformer and a kind of second John Wesley. But God will show him up at the Judgment Day, and

perhaps even here this side of the grave as a spiritual fraud and humbug, a travesty on a Gospel Ambassador, and a downright backslider in heart and life, and that too, all the while he was attitudinizing, in the pulpit as a teacher and leader of immortal souls.

TOPIC: Worry

SUBTOPIC: Needless

TITLE: The Elevator Man

In our travels lately we have become indebted for some profitable suggestions and lessons to that individual in the hotel known as the Elevator Man.

Sometimes this personage is a boy, and then we miss what we now refer to. The elevator of the hostelry we speak of has to be a middle-aged individual to represent the spirit or spirits of which we write.

In the first place they are almost without exception gloomy men, and seem to be soured. This may be accounted for in part by the confined atmosphere they breathe, the monotony of the service they perform, and the awkwardness, ignorance and unreasonableness of many of the passengers they have to deal with, year in and year out, in their long, narrow, vertical box called the elevator shaft.

Then it must not be forgotten that they live an up and down life, and this must necessarily affect the spirits. And still again, in the true sense of the word, they never get anywhere. They are always coming back to the point from which they first started. This must in time produce a kind of mental gloom.

Among our sad elevator friends we recently met one who, in addition to woes that properly belong to his class, was very much burdened about the weather outside.

Now, as he roomed in the hotel, and when he was not in the elevator was in bed, and hardly ever out doors, it seemed to us that he had a needless load on his spirit.

But the worry was there on his mind and heart just the same. And no matter when we put foot in the little iron barred cage he would open up on us with a series of anxious questions about the weather, or indulge in a flow of lamentations over the state of things outside, if there happened to be rain, sleet, snow or mud.

He would ask every one who entered the elevator "how the weather was doing now," with the accent on the word "now," as if it was cutting up and misbehaving because he was not outside to regulate it.

When told it was raining or snowing, he would groan and say he did not know what would become of us. He seemed to feel as if he was responsible for it all; and also dreaded a kind of general ruin if a change from present conditions did not speedily occur.

When we would report that it was bright and sunshiny without, he would sigh and say that he was confident it would not last long. That he never knew it to fail, that if things cleared up at that time of the day or the month, they would not stay cleared up, but we would have an awful spell of weather following.

We soon saw that there was no use in trying to cheer this Doubting Thomas, this Hervey's Meditation Among the Tombs kind of man. But he did us good, in that he furnished a type and illustration of a lot of people who are worrying themselves and everybody else to death, about things which they never did, never originated or brought about, are powerless to remedy or change, and concerning which things God has never dreamed of holding them responsible.

There are some conditions of life that can no more be altered by our will and way than the weather itself. It takes the almighty hand of Him who controls winds, waves and clouds to make the transformations we crave to see.

Meantime our business is in the elevator. We are to help everybody we can to reach higher floors and the upper story itself in Heaven. God will see to the material and spiritual realm outside.

One day if we are faithful; if we have made many trips helping others and stood to our post, without getting soured with the passengers, and jumping our job; we will be called to the window of the Observatory, and there looking up we will behold a carriage and horses of fire coming for us. We will step in with tears of grateful joy; a happy, restful smile will steal over the dying face, and suddenly we will be caught up above all kinds of earthly weather, and find ourselves at home and at rest in a country where the flowers bloom forever and the sun is always bright.

TOPIC: Worry

SUBTOPIC: Over "Supposings"

TITLE: Worrying

A lady relative of the writer found a servant weeping on the back porch one morning. Asking her the cause of her grief, she said she had seen a snake in the garden, and got to thinking what if that snake had been in the back yard instead of the garden, and suppose the little boy of the family had been there, and suppose the snake had seen him, and suppose the snake had bitten him--and off she went into another gush of tears. And yet neither the boy nor the snake were in the back yard!

The cause of the servant's grief, silly and needless as it was, was better grounded than that of some heart burdens and mental harassment we have observed in life; because the woman did see a snake that morning, while others have created their serpents and vipers with their own lively fancies.

A popular book published several years back, mentions a character who had the following sentence written in big letters above his mantel: "The greatest troubles I ever had; never took place." This was only another way of recognizing the spirit and practice of which we are writing.

The writer had a grand-aunt who fairly abounded and overflowed with worry. When a new barrel of flour was bought and rolled into the store-room, she immediately looked to the end of it and not its beginning. Invariably she would say to her husband on that very morning: "Mr. G. the flour is out." He got to know her so well, that he knew that this strange speech of hers properly translated meant that the barrel had just been opened.

One of her Monday morning speeches to her cook and washerwoman was:

"Kitty, here it is Monday morning, tomorrow is Tuesday, the next Wednesday--half the week gone, and nothing done."

It was curious as well as amusing to see how she got wrought up and highly irritated over her own fancy deliverances.

The habit indicates most unmistakably an utter inability of self-control; and he who cannot master himself need not expect to manage others. The great political, military and religious leaders of men, were famous for their power to be calm and silent under criticism, abuse, slander, failure, defeat and every kind of catastrophe.

When Washington saw the Battle of Monmouth turned into defeat from victory, he was perfectly silent. When Robert E. Lee beheld Gettysburg lost through the failure of one of his corps commanders to follow his orders, he quietly removed his field glass from his eyes, and rode off without speaking a word or showing a sign of the crushing disappointment which had come to him through another hand.

He who would lead men and succeed in life's work, must eliminate the spirit of worry, and altogether eschew the language of whining lamentation.

TOPIC: Worry

SUBTOPIC: Profitless

TITLE: The Small Canine

We have seen certain animals of the canine genus and terrier and pug species rush forth from a sheltering verandah and bark most vociferously at everything that passed by, and which did not belong to or come out of the lot and residence where the little excited yelper lived. It was both amusing and wearying to behold this diminutive scene of needless excitement, wasted Lilliputian energy, and resultless endeavor. Everything and everybody went on up the street and road just the same as though no little barker and snarler was left behind, all hidden in a cloud of dust made by wagon wheels it could not stop, or was trotting sideways back to his rug on the porch to lie down and wait for something else at which to precipitate its tiny clamor, all unheard by the objects themselves.

Life is full of such scenes in higher planes, and few of us have not rushed out and clamored at great and misunderstood things, at bigger lives and characters than our own, found we failed to stop the procession, went back to our own little humble rug, and noticed that the only thing we had

gathered for our pains was a lot of grifty dust which got into our angry eyes, and and went down our open vociferating mouth.

We have observed other animals of big form and watchful eye, stretched on the ground in a side yard, that commanded a view of both front and back gates. This quieter looking canine did not use his strength in needless barking and rushings out upon the street at things that must be and that he could not alter or prevent; but he reserved his power for real danger and genuine service, and so the family silver remained secure, and the household was kept safe and undisturbed both day and night.

This second scene also became a parable, and found higher fulfillment in the lives and achievements of many in the church of Christ today who are not up and out rushing after everything that comes down the road, but all the same their watchful eyes, steady lives and noble characters keep matters wonderfully safe and protected where they are.

Experience then teaches that it is good to move from the mat on the top step of a profitless worry, and take a position midway of the premises where the critical, important and essential are to be watched, guarded and preserved.

TOPIC: Write-Ups For Church Publications

SUBTOPIC: Candor Marvelled At

TITLE: A Mighty Poor Meeting

In a Southern trip I met an evangelist who said that he had lately held a meeting with his son as his singer. That at its close the youth wrote an account of it to one of the religious papers published in the State. The description was very brief, being not over a half dozen lines; but it was very true and quite forcible. He said:

"We had a mighty poor meeting."

There was quite a burst of laughter around the fire-side at this unadorned narration. There was something so refreshingly plain, honest, direct and simple about it; it savored so of correctness in statement, and of character in the writer, that it struck every mind and heart present as a golden sentence and one to be treasured. Then it was so remarkably original. None of us remembered ever to have heard or read such words before. All the reports we had ever perused relative to revival meetings described the services as being "Gales of Glory," "Cyclones of Power," "The City Stirred From Center to Circumference," "Hundreds at the Altar," "Hundreds Converted and Sanctified," "Hundreds Turned Away from the Door Unable to Get In," "The Devil Sent Howling Back to Hell," etc., etc.

But this ecclesiastical bulletin said, "we had a mighty poor meeting!" So we studied it;, and pored over it as a great curiosity, and felt it was every way worthy of being placed in a glass case in the National Museum, and labeled,

"The first and very likely the last of this remarkable species."

TOPIC: Write-Ups For Church Publications
SUBTOPIC: Cliches and Exaggerations Therein
TITLE: The Backslidden Tender

A delay of a couple of hours took place in Georgia as we were coming on to Kansas. There was a sudden stoppage of our train, when, looking out, we saw an engine in trouble just ahead of us. It was a regular case of railroad backsliding. The tender was off and badly off. It was not a sidetracked case, but a derailed condition.

Services were immediately held in behalf of the erring one. There were no chairs or pews for the people, as we were in a field; so many stood. The interest was deep. The Brothers Brakemen were there helping all they could, putting props and inclined planes under Brother Tender in order to get him back.

Brother Fireman shoveled in the coal to get up more steam and Rev. Mr. Engineer with whoops, yells and at times shrieks did his best to shove Bro. Tender back on the track of safety and duty. The congregation constantly increased; people came from a great distance; the interest of the meeting steadily grew; men whooped and jumped around; and the oldest inhabitants say they never saw anything to compare to it.

Finally, after many backsets and failures, and after great opposition from Judge Crosstie, Colonel Mud and Mrs. Sand, the Rev. Dr. Engineer threw open his throttle, put on all steam, and, assisted by his singer, Mr. Fireman, and the Brakemen Brothers, pushed old Bro. Tender up, and clear through and safely on the main line again. The first thing Bro. Tender did was to get right with Bro. Box Car from whom he had violently parted; and when he coupled on to him, it sent a movement that was felt all along the line until it struck old General Caboose and brought him into the path of duty and activity with the rest of his brethren, though at first he was far away from the meeting, took no interest in it, and looked for awhile as if nothing could or would move him. But all saw him jump and stagger when Brother Tender got right; and so he came along all right, with his flags flying. In fact, everybody got through. Everybody felt good. And the oldest inhabitant etc., etc., etc.

The reader must not be surprised at the allegory above with its vivid style; the writer has been reading lately some reports or letters from the "Field," and has been affected, if not inoculated, somewhat by the aforesaid epistolary fashion.

By the way we are becoming more and more interested in that mysterious personage called "The Oldest Inhabitant." We heard of him when a boy, and he was very old then, and yet he is still living. We would like so much to see him. His photograph would be such a valuable possession. How lonely the old brother must feel. All his friends and kindred must have passed away by this time and he is only living from a strict sense of duty, and that solitary task is to tell the evangelist that his meeting is the greatest that has ever been known in all that part of the country.

Precious old man! It may be the "Old Man" after all. Or, it may be that he is so old he has forgotten past meetings with other dates, personages and numerical figures. Or, it may be that "The Oldest Inhabitant" is the writer of the report or bulletin itself. So the mystery thickens. Still the old

gentleman is held in high regard; and, judging from numerous letters from the field, we cannot get along without him. No magistrate in the court, no timekeeper in races, can surpass him in dignity of person and influence in decision. We have no recollection of ever having quoted him in any of our many letters in the past. But we meant no disrespect to him by this silence. We have been taught from childhood to honor the gray head. But we plainly see our mistake in previous reports. Instead of saying what our opinion was about our various meetings, we should have hunted up the oldest inhabitant and allowed him to speak. And though he might be laboring under such trifling infirmities as a wandering mind, failing sight and be stone deaf at that, yet the paragraph would read just as well in print to the uninitiated public, to wit: that he, the oldest inhabitant, did not remember to have ever seen or heard anything, in all the country, that surpassed the present meeting in the singing, in the praying, in the shouting, in the preaching, and in all the particular, general, and combined results.

And it must be so, for he has been saying the same thing for many years. Nor is that all, for it is going to be so next year. Even now the oldest inhabitant is getting his bulletin ready for the camps of next summer. Of course this constant wonderful advancement over all other preceding preaching and laboring in the different camp grounds leads to some honest questioning and genuine embarrassment, but we have nothing to do with such grave difficulties and embarrassments--we are dealing with the oldest inhabitant.

* * * * *

THE END