REV. DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

The Brooklyn Divine's Sunday Sermon.

Subject: "One Thing Lacking."

TEXT: *"One thing thou lackest."*—Mark x., 21.

The young man of the text was a splendid nature. We fall in love with him at the first glance. He was amiable and frank and earnest and educated and refined and respectable and moral, and yet he was not a Christian. And so Christ addresses him in the words that I have read to you, "One thing thou lackest." I suppose that that text was no more applicable to the young man of whom I have spoken than it is appropriate to a large multitude of people in this audience. There are many things in which you are lacking. For instance, you are not lacking in a good home. It is perhaps no more than an hour ago that you closed the door, returning to see whether it was well fastened, of one of the best homes of this city. The younger children of the house already asleep, the elder ones, hearing your returning footsteps, will rush to the door to meet you. And in these long evenings the children at the stand with their games, the wife plying the needle and you reading the book or the paper, you feel that you have a good home.

Neither are you lacking in the refinements and courtesies of life. You understand the polite phraseology of invitation, regard and apology. You have an appropriate apparel. I shall wear no better dress at the wedding than when I come to the marriage of the king's son. If I am well clothed on other occasions I will be so in a religious audience. However reckless I may be about my personal appearance at other times, when I come into a consecrated assemblage I shall have on the best dress I have. We all understand the proprieties of every-day life and the proprieties of Sabbath life.

Neither are you lacking in worldly success. You have not made as much money as you would like to make, but you have an income. While others are false when they say they have no income, or are making no money, you have never told that falsehood. You have had a livelihood, or you have fallen upon old resources, which is just the same thing, for God is just as good to us when He takes care of us by a surplus of the past as by present success. While there are thousands of men with hunger tearing at the throat with the strength of a tiger's paw, not one of you is hungry. Neither are they walking in pleasant friendship. You have real good friends. If the scarlet fever should come to-night to your house you know very well who would come in and sit up with the sick one; or, if death should come, you know who would come in and take your hand tight in theirs with that peculiar grip which means "I'll stand by you;" and, after the life is fled from the loved one, take you by the arm and lead you into the next room, and while you are gone to Greenwood they would stay in the house and put aside the garments and the playthings that might bring to your mind too severely your great loss. Friends? You all have friends.

Neither are you lacking in your admiration of the Christian religion. There is nothing that makes you so angry as to have a man malign Christ. You get red in the face, and you say, "Sir, I want you to understand though I am not myself a Christian, I don't like such things said as that in my store;" and the man goes off, giving you a parting salutation, but you hardly answer him. You are provoked beyond all bounds. Many of you have been supporters of religion and have given more to the cause of Christ than some who profess His faith. There is nothing that would please you more than to see your son or daughter standing at the altar of Christ, taking the vows of the Christian.

It might be a little hard on you, and might make you nervous and agitated for a little while, but you would be man enough to say: "My child, that is right. Go on. I am glad you haven't been kept back by my example. I hope some day to join you." You believe all the doctrines of religion. A man out under says, "I am a sinner." You respond, "So am I." Some one says, "I believe that Christ came to save the world." You say, "So do I." Looking at your character, at your surroundings, I find a thousand things about which to congratulate you, and yet I must tell you in the love and fear of God, and with reference to my last account, "One thing thou lackest."

You need, my friends, in the first place, the element of happiness. Some day you feel wretched. You do not know what is the matter with you. You say, "I did not sleep last night. I think that must be the reason of my restlessness;" or, "I have eaten something that did not agree with me, and I think that must be the reason." And you are unhappy. Oh, my friends, happiness does not depend upon physical condition. Some of the happiest people I have ever known have been those who have been wrapped in consumption, or stung with neuralgia, or burning with the slow fire of some fever.

I shall never forget one man in my first parish, who in excruciation of body cried out: "Mr. Talmage, I forget all my pain in the love and joy of Jesus Christ. I can't think of my sufferings when I think of Christ." Why, his face was illumined. There are young men in this house who would give testimony to show that there is no happiness outside of Christ, while there is great joy in His service. There are young men who have not been Christians more than six months who would stand up to-night, if I should ask them, and say in those six months they have had more joy and satisfaction than in all the years of their frivolity and dissipation. Go to the door of that gin shop to-night, and when the gang of young men come out ask them whether they are happy. They laugh along the street, and they jeer and they shout, but nobody has any idea they are happy.

I could call upon the aged men in this house to give testimony. There are aged men here who tried the world, and they tried religion, and they are willing to testify on our side. It was not long ago that an aged man arose in a praying circle and said: "Brethren, I lost my son just as he graduated from college, and it broke my heart; but I am glad now he is gone. He is at rest, escaped from all sorrow and from all trouble. And then, in 1857, I lost all my property, and you see I am getting old, and it is rather hard upon me; but I am sure God will not let me suffer. He has not taken care of me for seventy-five years now to let me drop out of His hands."

I went into the room of an aged man—his eyesight nearly gone, his hearing nearly gone—and what do you suppose he was talking about? The goodness of God and the joys of religion. He said: "I would like to go over and join my wife on the other side of the flood, and I am waiting until the Lord calls me. I am happy now. I shall be happy there." What is it that gave that aged man so much satisfaction and peace? Physical exuberance? No, it has all gone. Sunshine! He cannot see it. The voices of friends? He cannot hear them. It is the grace of God, that is brighter than sunshine and that is sweeter than music. If a harpist takes a harp and find that all the strings are broken but one string, he does not try to play upon it. Yet here I will show you an aged man the strings of whose joy are all broken save one, and yet he thrums it with such satisfaction, such melody that the angels of God stop the swift stroke of their wings and hover about the place until the music ceases. Oh, religion's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And if you have not the satisfaction that is to be found in Jesus Christ, I must tell you, with all the concentrated emphasis of my soul: "One thing thou lackest."

I remark, again, that you lack the elements of usefulness. Where is your business? You say it is No. 45 such a street, or No. 200 such a street, or No. 300 such a street. My friend immortal, your business is wherever there is a tear to be wiped away or a soul to be saved. You may, before coming to Christ, do a great many noble things. You take a loaf of bread to that starving man in the alley, but he wants immortal bread. You take a pound of candles to that dark shanty. They want the light that springs from the throne of God, and you cannot take it because you have it not in your own heart. You know that the flight of an arrow depends very much upon the strength of the bow, and I have to tell you that the best bow that was ever made was made out of the cross of Christ; and when religion takes a soul and puts it on that, and pulls it back and lets it fly, every time it brings down a Saul or Goliath.

There are people here of high social position, and large means, and cultured minds, who, if they would come into the kingdom of God, would set the city on fire with religious awakening. Oh, hear you not the more than million voices of those in these two cities who are unconverted? Voices of those who in these two cities are dying in their sins? They want light. They want bread. They want Christ. They want heaven. Oh, that the Lord would make you a flaming evangel! As for myself, I have sworn before high heaven that I will preach this gospel as well as I can, in all its fullness, until every fiber of my body, and every faculty of my mind, and every expression of my soul is exhausted. But we all have work to do. I cannot do your work, nor can you do my work. God points us out the places where we are to serve, and yet are there no people in this house who are thirty, forty, fifty and sixty years of age, and yet have not begun the great work for which they were created? With every worldly equipment, "One thing thou lackest."

Again, you lack the element of personal safety. Where are those people who associated with you twenty years ago? Where are those people that fifteen years ago used to cross South ferry or Fulton ferry with you to New York? Walk down the street where you were in business fifteen years ago and see how all the signs have changed. Where are the people gone? How many of them are landed in eternity I cannot say, but many, many. I went to the village of my boyhood. The houses were all changed. I passed one house in which once resided a man who had lived an earnest, useful life, and he is in glory now. In the next house a miser lived. He devoured widows' houses, and spent his whole life in trying to make the world worse and worse. And he is gone—the good man and the miser both gone to the same place. Ah, did they go to the same place? It is an infinite absurdity to suppose them both in the same place. If the miser had a harp, what tune did he play on it?

Oh, my friends, I commend you to this religion as the only personal safety! When you die, where are you going to? When we leave all these scenes, upon what scenes will we enter? When we were on shipboard, and we all felt that we must all go to the bottom, was I right in saying to one next me: "I wonder if we will reach heaven if we do go down to-night?" Was I wise or unwise in asking that question? I tell you that man is a fool who never thinks of the great future.

If you pay your money you take a receipt. If you buy land you record the deed. Why? Because everything is so uncertain, you want it down in black and white, you say. For a house and lot twenty-five feet front by one hundred feet deep, all security; but for a soul vast as eternity nothing, nothing! If some man or woman standing in some of these aisles should drop down, where would you go to? Which is your destiny? Suppose a man is prepared for the future world, what difference does it make to him whether he goes to his home to-day or goes into glory? Only this difference—If he dies he is better off. Where he had one joy on earth he will have a million in heaven. When he has a small sphere here he will have a grand sphere there. Perhaps it would cost you sixty, or one hundred, or one hundred and fifty dollars to have your physical life insured, and yet free of charge I offer you insurance on your immortal life, payable not at your decease, but now and to-morrow and every day and always.

My hope in Christ is not so bright as many Christians, I know, but I would not give it up for the whole universe, in one cash payment, if it were offered me. It has been so much comfort to me in time of trouble, it has been so much strength to me when I have been assailed, it has been so much rest to me when I have been perplexed, and it is around my heart such an incasement of satisfaction and blessedness that I can stand here before God and say: "Take away my health, take away my life, take everything rather than rob me of this hope, this plain, simple hope which I have in Jesus Christ, my Lord. I must have this robe when the last chill strikes through me. I must have this light when all other lights go out in the blast that comes up from the cold Jordan. I must have this sword with which to fight my way through all those foes on my way heavenward."

When I was in London I saw there the wonderful armor of Henry VIII. and Edward III. And yet I have to tell you that there is nothing in chain mail or brass plate or gauntlet or halberd that makes a man so safe as the armor in which the Lord God clothes His dear children. Oh, there is a safety in religion! You will ride down all your foes. Look out for that man who has the strength of the Lord God with him. In olden times the horsemen used to ride into battle with lifted lances, and the enemy fled the field. The Lord on the white horse of victory and with lifted lances of divine strength rides into the battle, and down goes the spiritual foe, while the victor shouts the triumph through the Lord Jesus Christ. As a matter of personal safety, my dear friends, you must have this religion.

I apply my subject to several classes of people before me. First, to that great multitude of young people in this house. Some of these young men are in boarding houses. They have but few social advantages. They think that no one cares for their souls. Many of them are on small salaries, and they are cramped and bothered perpetually, and sometimes their heart fails them. Young man, to-night at your bedroom door on the third floor you will hear a knock. It will be the hand of Jesus Christ, the young man's friend, saying, "Oh, young man, let Me come in; I will help thee, I will comfort thee, I will deliver thee." Take the Bible out of the trunk if it has been hidden away. If you have not the courage to lay it on the shelf or table, take the Bible that was given to you by some loved one, take it out of the trunk and lay it down on the bottom of the chair, then kneel down beside it, and read and pray and pray and read until all your disturbance is gone and you feel that peace which neither earth nor hell can rob you of. Thy father's God, thy mother's God, waits for thee, O young man. "Escape for thy life!" Escape now! "One thing thou lackest!"

But I apply this subject to the aged—not many here—not many in any assemblage. People do not live to get old. That is the general rule. Here and there an aged man in the house. I tell you the truth. You have lived long enough in this world to know that it cannot satisfy an immortal nature. I must talk to you more reverentially than I do to those other people, while at the same time I speak with great plainness. Oh, father of the weary step, Oh, mother bent down under the ailments of life, has thy God ever forsaken thee? Through all these years who has been your best friend? Seventy years of mercies! Seventy years of food and clothing! Oh, how many bright mornings! How many glorious evening hours you have seen! Oh, father, mother, God has been very good to you. Do you feel it? Some of you have children and grandchildren; the former cheered your young life, the latter twine your gray locks in their tiny fingers. Has all the goodness that God has been making pass before you produced no change in your feelings, and must it be said of you, notwithstanding all this, "One thing thou lackest?"

Oh, if you could only feel the hand of Christ smoothing the cares out of wrinkled faces! Oh, if you could only feel the warm arm of Christ steadying your tottering steps! I lift my voice loud enough to break through the deafness of the ear while I cry out. "One thing thou lackest." It was an importunate appeal a young man made in a prayer meeting when he rose up and said: "Do pray for my old father. He is seventy years of age, and he don't love Christ. That father passed a few more steps on life, and then he went down. He never gave any intimation that he had chosen Jesus. It is a very hard thing for an old man to become a Christian. I know it is. It is so hard a thing that it cannot be done by any human work; but God Almighty can do it by His omnipotent grace; He can bring you at the eleventh hour—at half-past eleven—at one minute of twelve He can bring you to the peace and the joys of the glorious gospel.

I must make application of this subject also to those who are prospered. Have you, my friends, found that dollars and cents are no permanent consolation to the soul? You have large worldly resources, but have you no treasures, no heaven? Is an embroidered pillow all that you want to put poor dying head on? You have heard people all last week talk about earthly values. Hear a plain man talk about the heavenly. Do you not know it will be worse for you, O prospered man, if you reject Christ, and reject Him finally—that it will be worse for you than those who had it hard in this world, because the contrast will make the discomfiture so much more appalling? As the hart bounds for the water brooks, as the roe speeds down the hillside, speed thou to Christ. "Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed!"

I must make my application to another class of persons—the poor. When you cannot pay your rent when it is due, have you nobody but the landlord to talk to? When the flour has gone out of the barrel, and you have not ten cents with which to go to the baker, and your children are tugging at your dress for something to eat, have you nothing but the world's charities to appeal to? When winter comes, and there are no coals, and the ash barrels have no more cinders, who takes care of you? Have you nobody but the overseer of the poor? But I preach to you a poor man's Christ. If you do not have in the winter blankets enough to cover you in the night, I want to tell you of Him who had not where to lay His head. If you lie on the bare floor, I want to tell you of Him who had for a pillow a hard cross, and whose foot bath was the streaming blood of His own heart.

Oh, you poor man! Oh, your poor woman! Jesus understands your case altogether. Talk it right out to Him to-night. Get down on your floor and say: "Lord Jesus Christ, Thou wast poor and I am poor. Help me. Thou art rich now, and bring me up to Thy riches!" Do you think God would cast you off? Will He? You might as well think that a mother would take the child that feeds on her breast and dash its life out, as to think that God would put aside roughly those who have fled to Him for pity and compassion. Yea, the prophet says, "A woman may forget her sucking child, that she would not have compassion on the son of her womb, but I will not forget thee."

If you have ever been on the sea you have been surprised in the first voyage to find there are so few sails in sight. Sometimes you go along two, three, four, five, six and seven days, and do not see a single sail, but when a vessel does come in sight the sea glasses are lifted to the eye, the vessel is watched, and if it come very near then the captain, through the trumpet, cries loudly across the water, "Whither bound?" So you and I meet on the sea of life. We come and we go. Some of us have never met before. Some of us will never meet again. But I hail you across the sea, and with reference to the last great day, and with reference to the two great worlds, I cry across the water: "Whither bound? whither bound?"

I know what service that craft was made for, but hast thou thrown overboard the compass? Is there no helm to guide it? Is the ship at the mercy of the tempest? Is there no gun of distress booming through the storm? With priceless treasures—with treasures aboard worth more than all the Indies—wilt thou never come up out of the trough of the sea? O Lord God, lay hold of that man! Son of God, if thou wert ever needed anywhere, thou art needed here. There are so many sins to be pardoned. There are so many wounds to be healed. There are so many souls to be saved. Help, Jesus! Help, Holy Ghost! Help, ministering angels from the throne! Help, all sweet memories of the past! Help, all prayers for our future deliverance! Oh, that now, in this the accepted time and the day of salvation, you would hear the voice of mercy and live! Taste and see that the Lord is gracious.

In this closing moment of the service, when everything in the house is so favorable, when everything is so still, when God is so loving and heaven is so near, drop your sins and take Jesus. Do not cheat yourself out of heaven. Do not do that. God forbid that at the last, when it is too late to correct the mistake, a voice should rise from the pillow or drop from the throne, uttering just four words—four sad, annihilating words, "One thing thou lackest."

The Big Trees of California.

The sequoias dominate among splendid rivals only by a magnitude that has no comparison elsewhere in the world. I think no one can anticipate the effect that one of these monarchs will have upon him. He has read that a coach and six can drive through one of the trees that is standing; that another is thirty-three feet in diameter, and that its vast stem, 350 feet high, is crowned with a mass of foliage that seems to brush against the sky. He might be prepared for a tower one hundred feet in circumference, and even four hundred feet high, standing upon a level plain. But this living growth is quite another affair. Each tree is an individual, and has a personal character. No man can stand in the presence of one of these giants without a new sense of the age of the world and the insignificant span of one human life; but he is also overpowered by a sense of some gigantic personality. It does not relieve him to think of this as the Methuselah of trees, or to call it by the name of some great poet or captain. The awe the tree inspires is of itself. As one lies and looks up at the enormous bulk, it seems not so much the bulk, so lightly is it carried, as the spirit of the tree, the elastic vigor, the patience, the endurance of storm and change, the confident might, and the soaring, almost contemptuous pride, that that overwhelm the puny spectator. It is just because man can measure himself, his littleness, his brevity of existence, with this growth out of the earth, that he is more personally impressed by it than he might be by the mere variation in the contour of the globe which is called a mountain. The imagination makes a plausible effort to comprehend it, and is foiled. No, clearly it is not mere size that impresses one; it is the dignity, the character in the tree, the authority and power of antiquity. Side by side of these venerable forms are young sequois, great trees themselves, that have only just begun their millennial career—trees that will, if spared, perpetuate to remote ages this race of giants, and in two to four thousand years from now take the place of their great grandfathers, who are sinking under the weight of years, and one by one measuring their length on the earth. —*Harper's Magazine.*

An association of hop dealers has just been incorporated at New York city.

RIVAL FORCES.

There are many mighty forces at work around us, and the effects of their operation are continually before us, though we see them not. Natural forces and artificial forces, physical forces and moral forces; we are conscious of them all, though we may understand them but dimly; we own their power, though often without comprehending it. But as there is to many natures an irresistible charm in the mysterious and unknown, these little-comprehended forces have a wonderful fascination all their own, which is denied to those whose power we more clearly understand. We see this in the natural world, and we see it quite as plainly in the moral or spiritual world; the force of public opinion, for instance, is none the less mighty because we are often at a loss to account for some particular expression of it; the force of circumstances is none the less impressive to the imagination because we cannot tell exactly how far it is irresistible, or at what particular point we may successfully make a stand against it. There is something of vagueness in our ideas of both these forces, if not in the forces themselves, which impresses us strongly; and thus their power over our minds and imaginations is increased a hundredfold. This is natural enough, and, though we may suffer for it, we can scarcely blame ourselves for the influence the unknown thus exerts over us. That it should exert this influence is in conformity with the universal law of our being—a force that we are powerless to resist.

But while we cannot but allow much weight to the force of circumstances, we must not at once make up our minds that it is irresistible, and that unconditional surrender is all that remains for us. "The force of circumstances" is the cry of all weak souls when they yield in the battle of life; a cry uttered before they have stood on hostile charge, or struck one blow for freedom and independence. But the strong man does not own himself defeated till he has exhausted all legitimate means of defence. When he has done all, and done it in vain, then he yields, but not till then. When he has proved the force of circumstances, and found it irresistible, he gives up an attempt which has ceased to be heroic, and surrenders to the inevitable; a very different thing this from the cowardly flinging away of his weapons before he has fired one shot, or struck one blow.

Again, those weak souls who most readily yield to the force of circumstance are usually the last to acknowledge that they are in any way responsible for those circumstances; that it is to some extent owing to them that they are what they are, and have that power. Yet in how many cases a little reflection would prove to us that this is absolutely true? The man who yields in a moment of temptation, and speculates with other people's money, may fully intend to repay it at a more convenient season; but circumstances are against him; instead of gaining more he loses all, and flies from his home a dishonored bankrupt. It is all very well for him to lay the blame on circumstances, but surely he is himself answerable for them; it was his action alone that gave them that irresistible power over him. It is easy enough to set a stone rolling down hill; a child may do it with a touch; but once set it going, a strong man cannot stop it in mid career as it rushes down with all the added impetus of its swift descent. So it is with the force of circumstances. We ourselves often set it in motion by some slight act to which, at the time, we attach scarcely any importance; but it soon passes beyond our control, and well for us if it does not crush us in its onward course.

And yet this is not always the case; there is another force which may sometimes be opposed to the force of circumstances, and successfully too; and that is force of character. Where the weak soul yields at once, the man with any force of character stands firm; he will not give way to circumstances; he will overcome them if he can. And it very often happens that he does so overcome them, for there is a force in his resolute will which is more irresistible than any that circumstances can bring to bear upon him. A man of this nature—ay, or a woman either—will never be the mere toy of circumstances, though he may be their victim; but defeat in his case will be almost as glorious as victory, and defeat with characters of this forcible type will be the exception and not the rule. Force of character will enable a man who has wandered from the straight path of rectitude and honor to stop ere it be too late; it will enable him frankly to confess his fault; to retrace his steps, though it may be with pain and difficulty, and make an effort—unsuccessful it may be so far as the object is concerned, yet surely not unsuccessful in its effect upon himself—to retrieve his forfeited position. Force of character will enable a woman who has been led into folly or extravagance to brave the ridicule of her thoughtless companions and turn back while there is yet time to save herself and those dear to her from the consequences of her rashness; it will enable her to deny herself for the sake of others, to dress more simply (no small sacrifice to the feminine mind); and live with more economy and less ostentation. For force of character will enable her to break with her past, and thus the force of circumstances will have no power to overwhelm her.

Let those, then, who are afraid of the force of circumstances assure themselves in the first instance that they really have no cause for fear, for by a blind spiritless surrender they may create the very danger they dread; but by a bold resistance they may escape the consequences they apprehend, and overcome the force of circumstances by their own greater force of character.

ACTION and care will wear down the strongest frame; but guilt and melancholy are poisons of quick dispatch.

The Emperor of Austria lives very simple in his palace in Vienna. He is very abstemious, and he is most happy when seated at the work table in his private study with a fragrant cigar in his mouth.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY, 15, 1891.

Elijah Taken to Heaven.

LESSON TEXT.

(2 Kings 2 : 1-11. Memory verses: 9-11.)

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: *Sinning and Serving.*

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: *Godliness is profitable unto all things.* - 1 Tim. 4 : 8.

LESSON TOPIC: *God's Servant Glorified.*

LESSON OUTLINE:
1. Honored of Men, vs. 2, 1. c.-6.
2. Helped of God, vs. 2, f. c., 7, 8.
3. Taken to Glory, vs, 1, 9-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: *And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*—Gen. 5 : 24.

DAILY HOME READINGS:

M.—2 Kings 2 : 1-11. God's servant glorified.
T.—Luke 9 : 28-36. Elijah reappears.
W.—Exod. 14 : 13-31. The sea opened.
T.—Josh. 3 : 1-17. Jordan opened.
F.—Isa. 43 : 1-7. God with us in the waters.
S.—1 Cor. 15 : 35-57. The final glorification.
S.—1 Thess. 4 : 13-18. Forever with the Lord.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. HONORED OF MEN.

I. Desired as Companions:

Elisha said, ... I will not leave thee (2).
Intreat me not to leave thee (Ruth 1 : 16).
As the Lord liveth, ... I will not leave thee (2 Kings 4 : 30).
I am a companion of all them that fear thee (Psa. 119 : 63).
Gaius and Aristarchus, ... Paul's companions in travel (Acts 19 : 29).

II. Revered as Teachers:

The Lord will take away thy master . . . . I know it (3).
The spirit of Elijan doth rest on Elisha (2 Kings 2 : 15).
They that turn many . . . . as the stars for ever (Dan. 12 : 3),
Who also honored us with many honors (Acts 28 : 10).
Worthy of double honor . . . . those who labor . . . in teaching (1 Tim. 5 : 17).

III. Trusted as Leaders:

And they two went on (6).
Whither thou goest, I will go (Ruth 1: 16).
He led them out . . . . over against Bethany (Luke 24: 50).
Many . . . . followed Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13: 43).
Be . . . . imitators of them who . . . . inherit the promises (Heb. 6: 12).

1. "As the Lord liveth, . . . I will not leave thee." (1) Elijah's proposal; (2) Elisha's refusal.—(1) A firm decision; (2) A solemn vow.
2. "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?" (1) The sons of the prophets; (2) Elisha; (3) Elijah.—(1) The pending removal; (2) The serious question.
1. "I know it; hold ye your peace." (1) Elisha's claim; (2) Elisha's command.

II. HELPED OF GOD.

I. Guided:

The Lord hath sent me as far a Bethel (2).
God . . . . led me in the right way (Gen. 24: 48).
I will instruct thee and teach thee (Psa. 32: 8).
Lead me in the way everlasting (Psa. 139: 24).
To guide our feet into the way of peace (Luke 1: 79).

II. Assisted:

Elijah . . . . smote the waters, and they were divided (8).
The Lord caused the sea to go back (Exod. 14: 21).
The waters . . . . rose up in one heap (Josh. 3. 16).
When he also had smitten the waters, they were divided (2 Kings 2: 14).
When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee (Isa. 43: 2).

III. Delivered:

They two went over on dry ground (8).
Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground (Exod. 14: 22).
The people passed over right against Jericho (Josh. 3: 16).
And Elisha went over (2 Kings 2: 14).
Straightway the boat was at the land (John 6: 21).

1. "The Lord hath sent me as far as Beth-el." (1) The guiding Lord; (2) The obedient prophet.—(1) From Gilgal to Beth-el; (2) From Beth-el to Jericho; (3) From Jericho to Jordan; (4) From earth to heaven.
2. "Fifty men . . . . stood over against them afar off." (1) Their purpose; (2) Their position; (3) Their suspicion; (4) Their conclusion.
3. "The two went over on dry ground." (1) The smitten waters; (2) The dry passage; (3) The triumphant prophets.

III. TAKEN TO GLORY.

I. The Parting Promise:

If thou see me when I am taken, ... it shall be so (10).
Thou shalt tread upon their high places (Deut. 33: 29).
Lo, I am with you alway (Matt. 28: 20).
I come again, and will receive you unto myself (John 14: 3).
This Jesus . . . . shall so come in like manner (Acts 1: 11).

II. The Chariot of Fire:

There appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire (11).
Horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha (6 Kings 6: 17).
The chariots of God are twenty thousand (Psa. 68: 17).
Who maketh the clouds his chariot (Psa. 104: 3).
His chariots shall be like the whirlwind (Isa. 66: 15).

III. The Triumphal Ascent:

Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven (11).
Enoch . . . . was not; for God took him (Gen. 5: 24).
While he blessed them, he parted from them (Luke 24: 51).
As they were looking, he was taken up (Acts 1: 9).
Enoch was translated that he should not see death (Heb. 11: 5).

1. "The Lord would take up Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven. (1) Jehovah's purpose; (2) Elijah's glorification.—Elijah's translation: (1) Its author; (2) Its means; (3) Its destination; (4) Its purposes.
2. "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." (1) Elijah's spirit; (2) Elisha's prayer.
3. "Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." (1) The lowly starting-point; (2) The exalted terminus; (3) The majestic transportation.

LESSON BIBLE READING.

WE SHALL NOT ALL SLEEP.

The fact affirmed (1 Cor. 15 : 51)
The fact assumed (1 Thess. 4 : 15, 17)
Illustrated by Enoch (Gen. 5 : 24; Heb. 11 : 5).
Illustrated by Elijah (2 Kings 2 : 11; Luke 9 : 30).
All must be changed (1 Cor. 15 : 51; Phil. 3 : 21).
Saints shall be glorified (1 Thess. 4 : 17).

LESSON SURROUNDINGS.

INTERVENING EVENTS.—Judgment was speedily pronounced by Elijah upon Ahab, who humbled himself, so that the full punishment was deferred (1 Kings 21 : 17-29). After three years' peace between Syria and Israel, Jehoshaphat visits Ahab, who proposes to take Ramoth-gilead from the Syrians. The former king wishes to know the word of the Lord, and an assembly of prophets bids the kings go to battle. But further inquiry leads to a prophecy from Micaiah, declaring that the others were allowed to entice Ahab to death. Going into battle, Ahab disguised himself, but was fatally wounded, and died in Samaria, the dogs licking up his blood when his chariot was washed (1 Kings 22 ; 1-40). In the narrative a description of the reign of Jehoshaphat over Judah follows (1 Kings 22 : 41-50) and a brief sketch of that of Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, over Israel (vs. 51-53). The Second Book of the Kings opens with an account of the message of Ahaziah to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, respecting his recovery from sickness. Elijah is sent by the Lord to meet and rebuke the messengers, who return to the king with Elijah's prediction of his death. The king sends to capture Elijah, but the band of fifty is consumed by fire from heaven. Another band meets with the same death, but the captain of a third band implores mercy, and Elijah is bidden to go with him to the king, to whom he repeats the prediction of speedy death, which was fulfilled. Jehoram, the brother of Ahaziah, succeeds him.

PLACES.—Gilgal, which is identified with *Jiljilia*, an elevated village eight miles north of Beth-el. This may have been the temporary home of the two prophets. (It is not the Gilgal spoken of in Joshua and 1 Samuel.) Bethel was on the direct road to Jericho, the prophets passing through both to some spot on the east side of the Jordan, probably not far from the latter place.

TIME.—Probably immediately after the death of Ahaziah. This, according to the usual chronology, was in B. C. 896. Lenormant puts it at 898, and Professor Davis of Princeton, in a recent article, places all the date from Rehoboam to Jehoram about forty-two years later, giving the close of B. C. 853 as the time of the death of Ahaziah.

PERSONS.—Elijah and Elisha; two companies of the "sons of the prophets," at Beth-el and Jericho respectively; fifty from the latter place in particular.

INCIDENTS.—Elijah and Elisha start from Gilgal, but the former asks his follower to tarry; he refuses. At Beth-el the sons of the prophets ask Elisha if he knows that his master will be taken away that day; he tells them that he does. Again Elijah asks Elisha to tarry, and he again refuses. In Jericho the same events are repeated. The two go unto Jordan, followed for some distance by fifty of the sons of the prophets. Elijah with his mantle divides the waters of the Jordan, and the two pass over. Elijah asks Elisha what he should do for him before he goes, and he answers, "Let a double portion of thy spiris be upon me." The prophet tells him it is a hard thing, but promises that it shall be so if Elisha sees him when he is taken up. A chariot and horses of fire part them, and Elijah goes up "by a whirlwind into heaven."

EVERYTHING that looks to the future elevates human nature; for never is life so low, or so little, as when occupied with the present.

HOWEVER rich or powerful a man may be, it is the height of folly to make personal enemies, for one unguarded moment may yield you to the revenge of the most despicable of mankind.

PAUL B. DU CHAILLU has definitely decided to make America his home for some time to come, and next year he will take to the lecture platform with a series of three lectures on "The Land of the Midnight Sun," "The Vikings" and another subject not yet determined.

THERE is an old schoolhouse at Pownall, Vt., in which President Garfield and Arthur acted as teachers.

THE British Admiralty engineers are conducting experimental ninety-six hour run of boilers under forced draught at Portsmouth.