

GOD'S LOVE.

It is Freely Given to All Who Ask It.

Reasons We Should Learn From The Story of The Return of The Prodigal Son to His Father's Home.

In his most recent sermon Dr. Taggart chose for his subject the return of the prodigal, using as his text the words found in Luke xv, 22: "Put a ring on his hand."

I will not rehearse the familiar story of the fast young man of the parable. You know what a splendid home he left. You know what a hard time he had. And you remember how after that season of vagabondage and prodigality he resolved to go and weep out his sorrows on the bosom of parental forgiveness. Well, there is great excitement one day in front of the door of the old farmhouse. The servants come rushing up and say: "What's the matter? What is the matter?" But before they quite arrive, the old man cries out: "Put a ring on his hand."

What a seeming absurdity! What can such a wretched mendicant as this fellow that is tramping on toward the house want with a ring? Oh, he is the prodigal son. No more tending of the swine-trough. No more longing for the pods of the carob-tree. No more blistered feet. Off with the rags! On with the robe! Out with the ring! Even so does God receive every one of us when we come back. There are gold rings, and pearl rings, and emerald rings, and diamond rings; but the richest ring that ever flashed on the vision is that which our father puts upon a forgiven soul.

I know that the impression is abroad among some people that religion begets and begetteth a man; that it takes all the sparkle out of his soul; that he has to exchange a roistering independence for an ecclesiastical strait-jacket. Not so. When a man becomes a Christian he does not go down, he starts upward. Religion multiplies one by ten thousand. Nay, the multiplier is an infinity. It is not a blotting out—it is a polishing, it is an arborescence, it is an efflorescence, it is an irradiation. When a man comes into the kingdom of God he is not sent into a menial service, but the Lord God Almighty from the palaces of Heaven calls upon the messenger angels that wait upon the throne to fly and "put a ring on his hand." In Christ are the largest liberty, and brightest joy, and highest honor, and richest adornment. "Put a ring on his hand."

I remark, in the first place, that when Christ receives a soul into His love, He puts upon him the ring of His adoption. While in my church in Philadelphia, there came the representative of the Howard Mission, of New York. He brought with him eight or ten children of the street that he had picked up, and he was trying to find for them Christian homes, and as the little ones stood on the pulpit and sang, our hearts melted within us. At the close of the service a great-hearted wealthy man came up and said: "I'll take this little bright-eyed girl and I'll adopt her as one of my own children." And he took her by the hand and lifted her into his carriage, and went away.

The next day while we were in the church gathering up garments for the poor of New York, this little child came back with a bundle under her arm, and she said: "There's my old dress; perhaps some of the poor children would like to have it," while she herself was in bright and beautiful array, and those who more immediately examined her said she had a ring on her hand. It was the ring of adoption.

There are a great many persons who pride themselves on their ancestry, and they glory over the royal blood that pours through their arteries. In their line there was a lord, or a duke, or a prime minister, or a king. But when the Lord, our Father, puts upon us the ring of His adoption we become children of the Ruler of all nations. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It matters not how poor our garments may be in this world or how scant our bread, or mean the life we live in, if we have the ring of Christ's adoption upon our hand we are assured of eternal felicity.

Adopted! Why, then, are we brethren and sisters to all the good of earth and Heaven. We have the family name, the family dress, the family keys, the family wardrobe. The Father looks after us, robes us, defends us, blesses us. We have royal blood in our veins and there are crowns in our line. If we are His children, then princes and princesses. It is only a question of time when get our coronet. Adopted! Then we have the family secrets. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Adopted! Then we have the family inheritance, and in the day when our Father shall divide the riches of Heaven, we shall take our share of the mansions and palaces and temples. Henceforth let us boast no more of an earthly ancestry. The insignia of eternal glory is our coat of arms. This ring of adoption puts upon us all honor and all privilege. Now we can take the words of Charles Wesley, that prince of hymn makers, and sing:

Come, let us join our friends above,
Who have obtained the prize
And on the eagle wings of love
To joy celestial rise.

Let all the saints terrestrial sing
With those to glory gone.
For all the servants of our King,
In Heaven and earth, are one.

I have been told that when any of the members of any of the great secret societies of this country are in a distant city and are in any kind of trouble, and are set upon by enemies, they have only to give a certain signal and the members of that organization will flock around for defense. And when any man belongs to this great Christian brotherhood, if he gets in trouble, in trial, in persecution, in temptation, he is able to show this ring of Christ's adoption, and all the armed cohorts of Heaven will come to his rescue.

Still further, when Christ takes a soul

into His love He puts upon it a marriage ring. Now, that is not a whim of mine; (Hosea ii, 19.) "I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies." At the wedding altar the bridegroom puts a ring upon the hand of the bride, signifying love and faithfulness. Trouble may come upon the household, and the carpets may go, the pictures may go, the piano may go, everything else may go—the last thing that goes is the marriage ring, for it is considered sacred.

In the burial hour it is withdrawn from the hand and kept in a casket, and sometimes the box is opened on an anniversary day, and as you look at that ring you see under its arch a long procession of precious memories. Within the golden circle of that ring there is room for a thousand sweet recollections to revolve, and you think of the great contrast between the hour when, at the close of the "Wedding March," under the flashing lights and amid the aroma of orange blossoms, you set that ring on the round finger of the plump hand, and that hour when, at the close of the exclusive watching, when you knew that the soul had fled, you took from the hand, which gave back no responsive clasp, from that emaciated finger, the ring that she had worn so long and worn so well.

On some anniversary day you take up that ring, and you repolish it until all the old luster comes back, and you can see in it the flash of eyes that long ago ceased to weep. O, it is not an unmeaning thing when I tell you that when Christ receives a soul into His keeping He puts on it a marriage ring. He endows you from that moment with all His wealth. You are one—Christ and the soul—one in sympathy, one in affection, one in hope.

There is no power on earth or hell to effect a divorce after Christ and the soul are united. Other things have turned out their companions when they get weary of them, and sent them adrift from the palace gate. Ahasuerus banished Vashti; Napoleon forsook Josephine; but Christ is the husband that is true forever. Having loved you once, he loves you to the end. Did they not try to divorce Margaret, the Scotch girl, from Jesus? They said: "You must give up your religion." She said: "I can't give up my religion." And so they took her down to the beach of the sea, and they drove in a stake at low water mark, and they fastened her to it, expecting that as the tide came up her faith would fall. The tide began to rise, and came up higher and higher, and to the girdle, and to the hip, and in the last moment, just as the waves were washed her soul into glory, she shouted the praises of Jesus.

Oh, no, you cannot separate a soul from Christ! It is an everlasting marriage. Battle and storm and darkness cannot do it. It is too much exaltation for a man, who is but dust and ashes like myself, to cry out this moment: "I am persuaded that neither height, nor depth, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature shall separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus my Lord?" Glory be to God that when Christ and the soul are married they are bound by a chain—a golden chain—if I might say so—a chain with one link, and that one link the golden ring of God's everlasting love.

I go a step further, and tell you that when Christ receives a soul into His love He puts on him the ring of festivity. You know that it has been the custom in all ages to bestow rings on very happy occasions. There is nothing more appropriate for a birthday gift than a ring. You delight to bestow such a gift upon your children at such a time. It means joy, hilarity, festivity. Well, when this old man of the text wanted to tell how glad he was that his boy had got back, he expressed it in this way. Actually, before he ordered sandals to be put on his bare feet; before he ordered the fattest calf to be killed to appease the boy's hunger, he commanded: "Put a ring on his hand."

Oh, it is a merry time when Christ and the soul are united! Joy it is to feel that all is right between my God and myself. What a glorious thing it is to have God just take up all the sins of my life and put them in one bundle, and then fling them into the depths of the sea, never to rise again, never to be talked of again. Pollution all gone. Darkness all illumined. God reconciled. The prodigal home. "Put a ring on his hand."

Every day I find happy Christian people. I find some of them with no second coat, some of them in huts and tenement houses, not one earthly comfort afforded them; and yet they are as happy as happy can be. They sing "Rock of Ages" as no other people in the world sing it. They never wore any jewelry in their life, but one gold ring, and that was the ring of God's undying affection. Oh, how happy religion makes us! Did it make you gloomy and sad? Did you go with your head cast down? I do not think you got religion, my brother. That is not the effect of religion. True religion is a joy. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace!"

Why, religion lightens all our burdens. It smooths all our way. It interprets all our sorrows. It changes the jar of earthly discord for the peal of festal bells. In front of the flaming furnace of trial it sets the forge on wheels. Scepters are hammered out. Would you not like this hour to come up from the swine-feeding and try this religion? All the joys of Heaven would come out and meet you, and God would cry from the throne: "Put a ring on his hand."

You are not happy. I see it. There is no peace, and sometimes you laugh when you feel a great deal more like crying. The world is a cheat. It first wears you down with its follies, then it kicks you out into darkness. It comes back from the massacre of a million souls to attempt the destruction of your soul to-day. No peace out of God, but here is the fountain that can slake the thirst. Here is the harbor where you can drop safe anchorage.

Would you not like, I ask you—not perfunctorily, but as one brother might talk to another—would you not like to have a pillow of rest to put your head on? And would you not like, when you retire at night, to feel that all is well, whether you wake up to-morrow morning at 6 o'clock, or sleep the sleep that knows no waking? Would you not like to exchange this awful uncertainty about the future for a glorious assurance of Heaven? Accept of the Lord Jesus to-day, and all is well. If on your way home some peril should cross the street and dash your life out, it would not hurt you. You would rise up immediately. You would stand in the celestial streets. You would be amid the great throng that forever worship and are forever happy. If this night some sudden disease should come upon you, it would not frighten you. If you knew you were going you could give a calm farewell to your beautiful home on earth, and know that you are going right into the companionship of those who have already got beyond the tolling and the weeping. You feel on Saturday night different from the way you feel any other night of the week. You come home from the bank, or the store, or the office, and you say: "Well, now my week's work is done, and to-morrow is Sunday." It is a pleasant thought. There is refreshment and reconstruction in the very idea. Oh, how pleasant it will be, if, when we get through the day of our life, and we go and lie down in our bed of dust, we can realize: "Well, now the work is all done, and to-morrow is Sunday—an everlasting Sunday."

Oh, when, then city of my God,
Shall I thy courts ascend?
Where congregations never break up,
And Sabbaths have no end.

There are people in this house to-day who are very near the eternal world. If you are Christians, I bid you be of good cheer. Bear with you our congratulations to the bright city. Aged men, who will soon be gone, take with you our love for our kindred in the better land, and when you see them tell them that we are soon coming. Only a few more sermons to preach and hear. Only a few more heartaches. Only a few more tears. And then—what an entrancing spectacle will open before us!

Beautiful Heaven, where all is light,
Beautiful angels, clothed in white,
Beautiful strains that never tire,
Beautiful harks through all the choir;
There shall I join the chorus sweet,
Worshipping at the Saviour's feet.

And so I approach you now with a general invitation, not picking out here and there a man, or here and there a woman, or here and there a child; but giving you an unlimited invitation, saying: "Come, for all things are now ready." We invite you to the warm heart of Christ, and the inclosure of the Christian church. I know a great many think that the church does not amount to much—that it is obsolete; that it did its work and is gone now, so far as all usefulness is concerned. It is the happiest place I have ever been in except my own home.

I know there are some people who say they are Christians who seem to get along without any help from others, and who culture solitary piety. They do not want any ordinances. I do not belong to that class. I cannot get along without them. There are many things in this world that take my attention from God, and Christ, and Heaven, that I want all the helps of all the symbols and of all the Christian associations; and I want around about me a solid phalanx of men who love God and keep His commandments. Are there any here who would like to enter into that association? Then by a simple, child-like faith, apply for admission into the visible church, and you will be received. No questions asked about your past history or present surroundings. Only one test—do you love Jesus?

Baptism does not amount to anything, say a great many people, but the Lord Jesus declared, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," putting baptism and faith side by side. And an apostle declared, "Repent and be baptized every one of you." I do not stickle for any particular mode of baptism, but I put great emphasis on the fact that you ought to be baptized. Yet no more emphasis than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Head of the Church, puts upon it.

Some of you have been thinking on this subject year after year. You have found out that this world is a poor portion. You want to be Christians. You have come almost into the kingdom of God; but there you stop, forgetful of the fact that to be almost saved is not to be saved at all. Oh, my brother, after having come so near to the door of mercy, if you turn back, you will never come at all. After all you have heard of the goodness of God, if you turn away and die, it will not be because you did not have a good offer.

God's spirit will not always strive
With hardened, self-destriving man:
Ye who persist His love to grieve
May never hear His voice again.

May God Almighty this hour move upon your soul and bring you back from the husks of the wilderness to the Father's house, and set you at the banquet, and "put a ring on your hand."

A Patient Quaker.
A Quaker driving a single horse chase up a narrow lane happened to meet a young man who was also in a single horse chase. There was not room enough for them to pass each other, unless one of them would back his carriage, which both refused. "I'll not make way for you," said the young fellow, with an oath. "I think I am older than thou art," said the Quaker, "and therefore have a right to expect thee to make way for me." "I won't," resumed the first. He then pulled out a newspaper and began to read, as he sat still in his chase. The Quaker, observing him, pulled out a pipe and some tobacco from his pocket, lit his pipe, and sat and puffed away very comfortably. "Friend," said he, "when thou hast read that paper I should be glad if thou wouldst lend it to me." The young man gave up the contest.

PROFESSIONAL CARDS

IRA C. MITCHELL, Attorney-at-law.—Office in Crider's Exchange. Prompt service and careful attention to all legal business.

J. H. WETZEL, Attorney-at-law.—Office in Crider's Exchange. Special attention given to surveying.

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N. B. SPANGLER, Attorney-at-law.—Office in Crider's Exchange. Consultations in German and English. Collections a specialty.

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S. D. GETTIG, Attorney-at-law.—Office in Crider's Exchange. English and German. Legal business promptly attended to.

WM. G. RUNKLE, Attorney-at-law.—Office in Crider's Exchange. German and English. Practices in all the courts.

J. C. MEYER, Attorney-at-law.—Office in Crider's Exchange. Ex-district attorney. German and English. Prompt attention to all business.

SPANGLER & HEWES (J. L. Spangler - C. P. Hewes), Attorneys-at-law.—Office in First building, opposite the court house. All legal business promptly attended to.

WM. J. SINGER, Attorney-at-law.—District attorney. Office in court house.

ORVIS, BOWER & ORVIS, Attorneys-at-law.—Offices in Crider's Exchange. German and English. All forms of legal business given prompt attention

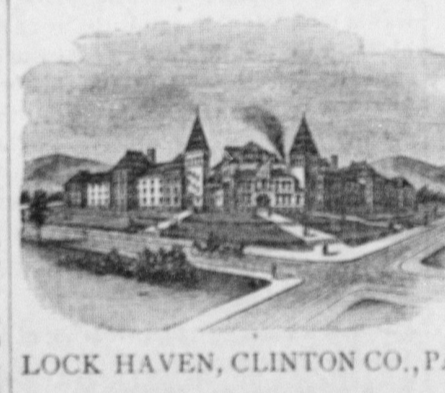
W. C. HEINLE, Attorney-at-law.—Office in Woodring building, opposite the court house. Consultations in German and English.

D. P. FORTNEY, Attorney-at-law.—Office in Woodring building, opposite court house. Prompt attention to all legal business.

JOHN M. KEICHLINE, Attorney-at-law and Justice of the Peace. Office in Opera House block, opposite the court house.

JAMES W. ALEXANDER, attorney-at-law—office, High street, near Court House. Practices in all the Courts.

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The Faculty of the Central State Normal School is composed of specialists in their several departments. Five leading colleges are represented.

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We shall be glad to correspond with any who are interested. Send for free catalogue and secure rooms for next term.

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Central State Normal School, Lock Haven, Pa.

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LEGAL NOTICE

EXECUTOR'S NOTICE.
Estate of Samuel Gilliland, late of College township, deceased.
Notice is hereby given that letters testamentary on the above estate have been granted to the undersigned. All persons interested in the said estate are requested to make claim to the said estate as requested by the immediate payment, and those having claims to present them duly authenticated for settlement to
J. C. GILLILAND, Oak Hall, or
H. SECHLER, Bellefonte, Pa.,
Executors.

PUBLIC HALL.
Walker Grange, No. 345, desires to inform the public that the lower room in their Hall, in Hubbersburg, is now ready for rental. Any person desiring to rent for holding entertainments etc., call or correspond with
J. H. MEADLEY,
Hubbersburg, Pa.
Oct. 8-2m

BUILDING LOTS.—About 150 desirable building lots located in and adjoining Bellefonte, Pa., the north east, being a portion of the Armist farm. Will be sold from \$25 to \$700 according to location. For further information call upon or address
MONROE ARMOR,
Bellefonte, Pa.
2-9

RULE ON HEIRS.
I, George W. Rumberger, Clerk of Court, Orphans' Court of said county of Centre, Pa., do hereby certify that at an Orphans' Court held at Bellefonte, on the 25th day of November, A. D. 1895, before the Honorable the Judges of said court, on motion a rule was granted upon the heirs and legal representatives of Andrew S. Zimmerman, deceased, to come into Court on the fourth Monday of January next to accept or refuse to accept of the valuation, or to show cause why the real estate of said deceased should not be sold. Same notice to be given as in Inquisition. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Court at Bellefonte the 25th day of Nov. A. D. 1895.
GEORGE W. RUMBERGER, C. O. C.
John P. Condo, Sheriff

TAKE NOTICE.—Assigned accounts.
All accounts due Samuel Lewis, recent assignee, are hereby respectively requested to call at the store and pay same at once.
LOUIS FABIAN,
Bellefonte, Pa.
Jan. '96.

FOR SALE.—A good Store Room and dwelling for sale at Hubbersburg, Pa. It is an excellent business point. Will sell at a bargain. Apply or address, MRS. MARY C. THOMPSON, 1-11
Millheim, Pa.

FOR SALE OR RENT.
A House and Lot with Store Room, located in Hubbersburg.
The property known as the Henry Brown, deed, dwelling and Store Room, located in the town of Hubbersburg, Pa., will be offered at private sale or for rent as may be desired. Good frame dwelling and all buildings in excellent repair. This property is desirably located and is one of the oldest and best known mercantile stands in that valley. For further information call on or address
SOLOMON PECK, EXP.
Nittany, Pa.
1-9-2m

NOTICE.—Notice is hereby given that on Wednesday, the 25th day of January, A. D. 1896, the first and partial account of The Commonwealth Guaranty Trust and Safe Deposit Company, trustee of James A. Beaver for the benefit of creditors of James A. Beaver and the Bellefonte Iron and Nail Company, will be presented to the court for confirmation, and unless exceptions thereto be filed on or before the 2nd day of term, the same will be confirmed.
W. F. SMITH,
Dec. 24, '95. Prothonotary.

EXECUTOR'S NOTICE.—Letters testamentary on the estate of A. J. Thompson, late of Half Moon township, having been granted to the undersigned, all persons having claims against said estate are requested to present the same, and all persons indebted to said estate are requested to make payment without delay.
MRS. MARY C. THOMPSON,
Ira C. Mitchell, A. C. THOMPSON, Executors.
Atty., Bellefonte, Pa.

NOTICE.—Notice is hereby given that on Wednesday, the 25th day of January, A. D. 1896, the first and partial account of The Commonwealth Guaranty Trust and Safe Deposit Company, assignee for the benefit of creditors of the Bellefonte Iron and Nail Company, will be presented to the court for confirmation, and unless exceptions thereto be filed on or before the 2nd day of term, the same will be confirmed.
W. F. SMITH,
Dec. 24, '95. Prothonotary.

COURT PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS the Hon. John G. Love, President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of the 4th Judicial district, consisting of the county of Centre, and the Hon. C. A. Faulkender, Associate Judge, having issued their precept bearing date the 30th day of Dec. 1895, to me directed for holding a Court of Sessions and Quarter Sessions of the Peace in Bellefonte, for the county of Centre, that they be then and there in the proper persons, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of said day, with their records, inquisitions, examinations, and their own remembrances, to do those things which to their office appertains to be done, and those who are bound in recognizance to prosecute, or to defend the prisoners that are or shall be in the jail of Centre county, be then and there to prosecute against them as shall be just.

Given under my hand, at Bellefonte the 30th day of Dec. in the year of our Lord, 1895 and the one hundred and nineteenth year of the Independence of the United States.
JNO. P. CONDO,
Sheriff.

CARMAN HOUSE.
High Street, opposite the Court House. Entirely new. New Furniture, Steam Heat, Electric Light, and all the modern improvements.
A. S. & C. M. GARMAN,
1-9
Proprietors.

REGISTER'S NOTICE.
The following accounts have been examined, passed and filed of record in the Register's Office for the inspection of heirs and legatees, creditors and all others in anywise interested, and will be presented to the Orphans' Court of Centre county for confirmation on Wednesday, the 25th day of January, 1896.
1. The second partial account of M. D. Roeke and John Yearick, executors of, etc., of Adam Shaffer, late of Miles twp., deceased.
2. The sixth partial account of Geo. Bower and Samuel Evert, executors, etc., of Jacob Evert, late of Penn township, deceased.
3. The account of James Harris, administrator of, etc., of Samuel Foster, late of Bellefonte borough, deceased.
4. The first and final account of Angeline McBride, guardian of Caroline McBride Summy, (now Dale).
5. The first and final account of Calvin Bisher, administrator of, etc., of Michael Bisher, late of Gregg township, deceased.
6. The first and final account of Katherine Shaffer and Mary J. Erhard, administrators of, etc., of Geo. Bower and Samuel Evert, deceased, as filed by Mrs. Katherine Shaffer.
7. The account of Wm. H. Bressler, administrator of, etc., Rebecca Bressler, late of Haines township, deceased.
8. The first and final account of S. H. Bannison, guardian of Nellie Johnson, minor child of Walter Johnson, late of Marion township, deceased.
9. First and final account of Henry Brown, administrator of, etc., of John Divil, late of Walker township, deceased, as filed by Solomon Peck, his administrator.
10. The account of Mary J. Odenkirk and W. A. Kirr, executors of, etc., of John H. Odenkirk, late of Potter township, deceased.
11. First and final account of Martha S. Packer, executrix of, etc., of J. W. Packer, late of Curtin township, deceased.
12. First and final account of Jacob Smith, administrator of, etc., of Jacob Smith, late of Potter township, deceased.
13. First and final account of James Harris, trustee of Sarah E. Shaffer and Mary Grace Shaffer, under the will of Mrs. Clarissa Awt, late of Bellefonte borough, deed.
G. W. RUMBERGER, Register.

BUILDERS' SUPPLIES.

STONE for building purposes, furnished at our quarry or delivered in Bellefonte and vicinity, as well as loaded on the cars of the Bellefonte Central and Penna. Railroads, as customers may require.

FLAG STONES, manufactured from the very best quality of Blue Stone, the strongest and most durable stones for the purpose of the various sizes and thickness, ranging from one inch to six inches in thickness or more, to meet the wants of customers for street crossings, pavements and other walks, as well as window sills, lintels, door sills, steps and curb stones, dressed to order will be furnished at short notice, and at low prices for the quantity considered. After a thorough examination of the Flag, Paving and other stones, which we propose to add to our already extensive line of Builders' Supplies, we can assure our patrons, that they are the best that can be obtained for the purpose, ever offered for sale in this community.

BRICK for building, brick for paving sidewalks and streets, as well as fire brick of every description will be furnished on short notice. We carry a limited stock on hand at our Yard Warehouses.

SAND of the very best quality for building purposes. We make a specialty of Mt. Eagle sand for building purposes, on the principle that the best is the cheapest. We also furnish fine sand, washed, for building purposes.

LIME for building purposes, of our own make.

CALCINED PLASTER and hair for plaster's use.

PATENT WALL PLASTER. We are agents for the sale of the Paragon Patent Wall Plaster, which has proven by actual experience to be the best wall plaster now offered for sale in this community. After mixing it with water, it is ready for use.

ALUMINITE CEMENT PLASTER. This is a natural product which comes from the far west, and has the advantage of requiring two parts of sand to one of cement. It is easily mixed and makes an excellent wall plaster for less money than the average patent wall plaster cost. The advantages in the use of these plasters is that they can be put on the wall immediately after mixing—the old mortar of lime and sand, after mixing, requires from four to six weeks in the mortar bed "to season" before being used; in other words, it does not make a good job—hence the advantage of the patent wall plasters for immediate use.

HYDRAULIC CEMENTS. We sell the Cumberland, which is one of the very best standard cements produced in this country; also the Hoffman Brand of the Rosendale Cements, which has the highest reputation for good quality. We also keep a large stock of English Portland Cement for special use, which comes to us highly recommended from the best sources. We invite the patronage of those in want, with the full confidence that we furnish the best articles for the least money. A share of public patronage is solicited.

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