REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject: "Christ the Surgeon."

TEXT: *"The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear."*—Matthew xi. 5.

"Doctor," I said to a distinguished surgeon, "do you not get worn out with constantly seeing so many wounds and broken bones and distortions of the human body?" "Oh, no," he answered; "all that is overcome by my joy in curing them." A sublimer or more merciful art never came down from heaven than the art of surgery. Catastrophe and disease entered the earth so early that one of the first wants of the world was a doctor. Our crippled and agonized human race called for surgeon and family physician for many years before they came. The first surgeons who answered this call were ministers of religion, namely, the Egyptian priests. And what a grand thing if all clergymen were also doctors, all D. D.'s were M. D.'s, for there are so many cases where body and soul need treatment at the same time, consolation and medicine, theology and therapeutics.

As the first surgeons of the world were also ministers of religion, may these two professions always be in full sympathy! But under what disadvantages the early surgeons worked, from the fact that the dissection of the human body was forbidden, first by the pagans and then by the early Christians! Also, being the brutes most like the human they were dissected, but no human body might be unfolded for physiological and anatomical exploration, and the surgeons had to guess what was inside the temple by looking at the outside of it. If they failed in any surgical operation they were persecuted and driven out of the city, as was Archagathus because of his bold but unsuccessful attempt to save a patient.

But the world from the very beginning had calling for surgeons, and their first skill appeared in Genesis, where they employed their art for the incisions of a sacred rite, circumcising surgery the predecessor of baptism; and we see it again in II Kings, where Ahaziah, the monarch, stepped on some wicked lattice work in the palace and it broke, and he fell from the upper to the lower floor, and he was so hurt that he sent to the village of Ekron for aid; and Esculapius, who wrought such wonders of surgery that he was deified, and temples were built for his worship at Pergamos; and Epimenes and Posidirius introduced for the relief of the world phlebotomy; and Damocedes cured the dislocated ankle of King Darius and the cancer of his son; and Hippocrates put successful hand to fractures and introduced amputation; and Fragoras removed obstructions; and Herophilus began dissection; and Erasistratus removed tumors; and Celsus, the Roman surgeon, removed cataract from the eye and used the Spanish fly; and Heliodorus arrested disease of the throat; and Alexander, of Tralles, treated the eye; and Rhazas cauterized for the prevention of hydrophobia, and Percival Pott came to combat diseases of the age, and in our own century we have had Dupuytren and Larrey in France, an Astley Cooper and an Abernethy in Great Britain, and a Valentine Mott and Willard Parker and Samuel D. Gross in America, and a galaxy of living surgeons as brilliant as their predecessors. What mighty progress in the healing of disease since the crippled and sick of ancient cities were laid along the gates that people who had ever been hurt or disordered in the same way might suggest what had better be done for the patients; and the priests of olden time, who were constant suffering from colds received in walking barefoot over the temple pavements, failed to prescribe for themselves, and fractures were considered so far beyond all human cure that instead of calling in the surgeons the people only invoked the gods!

But notwithstanding all the surgical and medical skill of the world, with what tenacity do old diseases hang on to the human race. Almost of them are thousands of years old. Within our Bibles we read of them: the carbuncles of Job and Hezekiah; the palpitation of the heart spoken of in Deuteronomy; the outcries of a child carried from the fields of Shunem, crying: "My head! my head!" Lot Ark's disease of the feet, which was nothing but gout; defection of teeth, that most for dental surgery, the skill of which, equal to anything modern, is still seen in the filled molars of the unrolled Egyptian mummies; the ophthalmia caused by the heat of the newly ripe fig, leaving the people blind at the roadside; epilepsy, as in case of the young man often falling into the fire and off into the water; hypochondria, as of Nebuchadnezzar, who imagined himself an ox, and going out to the fields to eat; the withered hand, which in Bible times as now, came from the destruction of a main artery, or from paralysis of the nerve; the wounds of the man whom the thieves left for dead on the road to Jericho, and whom the good Samaritan found, pouring in oil and wine—wine to cleanse the wound and oil to soothe it. Thank God for what surgery has done for the alleviation and cure of human suffering!

But the world wanted a surgery without pain. Drs. Parre and Hickman and Simpson and Warner and Jackson, with their laughing gas, came on, and with their anæsthetics benumbed the patient with mandrake as the ancients did with opium and mandrake, and quieted him for the time, but at the return of consciousness the pain returned. The world has never seen the surgeon who could straighten the curved limb, cure the blind eye or reconstruct the drum of a soundless ear or reduce the dislocation, without any pain at the time, or long after, and that surgeon was Jesus the mightiest, grandest, gentlest and sympathetic surgeon the world ever saw or will see; and He deserves the confidence and love and worship and hosanna of earth and hallelujahs of all heaven. The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear.

In this Surgeon had a fondness for cases. Many a surgeon, when he has a patient brought to him, has said: "I do not this attended to five years ago. You bring him to me after all power of recuperation is gone. You have waited until there is a complete contraction of the muscles and false ligatures are formed, and the mischief has taken place. It ought to have been attended to long ago." But Christ the Surgeon seemed to prefer inveterate cases. A hemorrhage of twelve years, and He stopped it. A curvature of eighteen years, and He straightened it. And he was a cripple of thirty-eight years, and brought out well. The eighteen-year paralytic was a woman bent almost double. If we could call a convention of all the surgeons of all the centuries, their combined skill would not cure that body so drawn out of shape.

Or if they might stop it from getting worse, perhaps they might contrive some way by which she might be made more comfortable, but it is, humanly speaking, incurable. Yet this divine Surgeon put both hands on her, and from that doubled up position she began to rise, and the empurpled skin began to take on a healthier hue, and the muscles began to relax from their rigidity, and the spinal column began to adjust itself, and the cords of the neck began to be supple, and the eyes, that could see only the ground before, now looked into the face of Christ with gratitude, and up toward heaven in transport. Straight! After eighteen years of weary and exhaustive years, straight! Oh, the gracefulness, the beauty of perfect womanhood reinstated.

The thirty-eight years' case was a man on a mattress near the mineral baths of Bethesda. There were five apartments in which these people were brought, so that they could get the advantage of these mineral baths. The stone basin of the bath is still visible, although the waters have disappeared, probably through some convulsion of nature, the bath, one hundred and twenty feet long, forty feet wide and eight feet deep. Ah, poor man, if you have been lame for these thirty-eight years, that mineral bath cannot restore you. Why, thirty-eight years is more than the average of human life! Nothing but the grave will cure you. But Christ the Surgeon walks along these baths, and I have no doubt passes by some patients who have been only six months disordered, or a year, or five years, and comes to the mattress of the man who had been nearly four decades helpless, and to this thirty-eight years' invalid said: "Wilt thou be made whole?" The question asked, not because the Surgeon did not understand the protractedness, the desperateness, of the case, but to evoke the man's pathetic narrative. "Wilt thou be made whole?" "Would you like to get well?" "Oh, yes," says the man, "that is what I came to these mineral baths for. I have tried everything. All the surgeons have failed, and all the prescriptions have proved valueless, and I have got worse and worse, and I can neither move hand or foot or head. Oh, if I could only be free from this pain of thirty-eight years!" Christ the Surgeon could not stand that. Bending over the man on the mattress, and in a voice tender with all sympathy, but strong with all omnipotence, He says, "Rise!" And the invalid instantly scrambles to his knees, and then puts out his right foot, then his left foot, and then stood upright as though he had never been prostrated. While he stands looking at the Doctor with a joy too much to hold, the Doctor says: "Shoulder this mattress! for you are not only well enough to walk, but well enough to work, and start out from these mineral baths. Take up thy bed and walk!" Oh, what a Surgeon for chronic cases then, and for chronic cases now!

This is not applicable so much to those who are only a little hurt of sin and only for a short time, but to those prostrated of sin twelve years, eighteen years, thirty-eight years. Here is a Surgeon able to give immortal health. "Oh," you say, "I am so completely overthrown and trampled down of sin that I cannot rise." Are you flatter down than this patient at the mineral baths? No. Then rise. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the Surgeon who offers you His right hand of help, I bid thee rise. No case of acute sin, but of chronic sin—those who have not prayed for thirty-eight years, those who have not been to church for thirty-eight years, those who have been gamblers, or libertines, or thieves, or outlaws, or blasphemers, or infidels, or atheists, or all these together, for thirty-eight years. A Christ for exigencies! A Christ for a dead lift! A Surgeon who never loses a case!

In speaking of Christ as a surgeon, I must consider Him as an oculist, or eye doctor, and an aurist, or ear doctor. Was there ever such another oculist? That He was particularly sorry for the blind folks, I take from the fact that the most of His works was with the diseased optic nerves. I have not time to count up the number of blind people mentioned who got His cure. Two blind men in one house, also one who was born blind; so that it was not removal of a visual obstruction, but the creation of the cornea, and ciliary muscle, and crystalline lens, and retina, and optic nerve, and tear gland; also the blind man of Bethsaida, cured by the saliva which the Surgeon took from the tip of His own tongue and put upon the eyelids; also two blind men who sat by the wayside. In our civilized lands we have blindness enough, the ratio fearfully increasing, according to the statement of Boston and New York and Philadelphia oculists, because of the reading of morning and evening newspapers on the jolting cars by the multitudes who live out of the city and come in to business.

But in the lands where this Divine Surgeon operated, the cases of blindness were multiplied beyond everything by the particles of sand floating in the air, and the night dews falling on the eyelids of those who slept on the top of their houses; and in some of these lands it is estimated that twenty out of a hundred people are totally blind. Amid all that crowd of visionless people, what work for an oculist! And I do not believe that more than one out of a hundred of that Surgeon's cures were reported. He went up and down among those people who were feeling slowly their way by staff, or led by the hand of man or rope of dog, and introducing them to the faces of their own household, to the sunrise and the sunset, and the evening star. He just ran His hand over the expressionless face, and the shutters of both windows were swung open, and the restored went home, crying: "I see! I see! Thank God, I see!"

That is the oculist we all need. Till He touches our eyes we are blind. Yea, we were born blind. By nature we see things wrong if we see them at all. Our best eternal interests are put before us, and we cannot see them. The glories of a loving and pardoning Christ are projected, and we do not behold them. Or we have a defective sight which makes the things of this world larger than the things of the future, time bigger than eternity. Or we are color blind and cannot see the difference between the blackness of darkness forever and the roseate morning of an everlasting day. But Christ the Surgeon comes in, and though we shrink back, afraid to have Him touch us, yet He puts His fingers on the closed eyelids of the soul, and midnight becomes midnoon; and we understand something of the joy of the young man of the Bible, who, though he had never before been able to see his hand before his face, now, by the touch of Christ, had two headlights kindled under his brow, cried out in language that confounded the jeering crowd who were deriding the Christ that had effected the cure, and wanted to make Him out a bad man: "Whether He be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

But this Surgeon was just as wonderful as an aurist. Very few people have two good ears. Nine out of ten people are particular to get on this or that side of you when they sit or walk or ride with you, because they have one disabled ear. Many have both ears damaged, and what with the constant racket of our great cities, and the catarrhal troubles that sweep through the land, it is remarkable that there are any good ears at all. Most wonderful instrument is the human ear. It is harp and drum and telegraph and telephone and whispering gallery all in one. So delicate and wondrous is its construction that the most difficult of all things to reconstruct is the auditory apparatus. The mightiest of scientists have put their skill to its retuning, and sometimes they stop the progress of its decadence, or remove temporary obstructions, but not more than one really deaf ear out of a hundred thousand is ever cured. It took a God to make the ear, and it takes a God to mend it. That makes me curious to see how Christ the Surgeon succeeds as an aurist.

We are told of only two cases He operated on as an ear surgeon. His friend Peter, naturally high tempered, saw Christ insulted by a man by the name of Malchus, and Peter let his sword fly, aiming at the man's head, but the sword slipped and hewed off the outside ear, and our Surgeon touched the laceration and another ear blossomed in the place of the one that had been slashed away. But it is not the outside ear that hears. That is only a funnel for gathering sound and pouring it into the hidden and more elaborate ear. On the beach of Lake Galilee our Surgeon found a man deaf and dumb. The patient dwelt in perpetual silence, and was speechless. He could not hear a note of music or a clap of thunder. He could not call father or mother or wife or children by name. What power can waken that dull tympanum or reach that chain of small bones or revive that auditory nerve or open the gate between the brain and the outside world? The Surgeon put His fingers in the deaf ears and agitated them, and kept on agitating them until the vibration gave vital energy to all the dead parts, and they responded, and when our Surgeon withdrew His fingers from the ears, the two funnels of sound were clear for all sweet voices of music and friendship. For the first time in his life he heard the dash of the waves of Galilee. Through the desert of painful silence had been built a king's highway of resonance and acclamation. But yet he was dumb. No word had ever leaped over his lip. Speech was chained under his tongue. Vocalization and accentuation were to him an impossibility. He could express neither love nor indignation nor worship. Our Surgeon, having unbarred his ear, will now melt the shackle of his tongue. The Surgeon will use the same liniment or salve that He used on two occasions for the cure of blind people, namely, the moisture of His own mouth. The application is made. And lo, the rigidity of the dumb tongue is relaxed, and between the tongue and teeth were born a whole vocabulary, and words flew into expression. He not only heard but he talked. One gate of his body swung in to let sound enter, and the other gate swung out to let sound depart. Why is it that while other surgeons used knives and forceps and probes and spectroscopes, this Surgeon used only the ointment of His own lips? To show that all the curative power we ever feel comes straight from Christ. And if He touches us not, we shall be deaf as a rock and dumb as a tomb. Oh, thou greatest of all aurists, compel us to hear and help us to speak!

But what were the Surgeon's fees for all these cures of eyes and ears and tongues and withered hands and crooked backs? The skill and the painlessness of the operations were worth hundreds and thousands of dollars. Do not think that the cases He took were all moneyless. Did He not treat the nobleman's son? Did He not doctor the ruler's daughter? Did He not effect a cure in the house of a centurion of great wealth, who had out of his own pocket built a synagogue? They would have paid Him large fees if He had demanded them, and there were hundreds of wealthy people in Jerusalem, and among the merchant castles along Lake Tiberias, who would have given this Surgeon houses and lands and all they had for such cures as He could effect. For critical cases in our time great surgeons have received a thousand dollars, five thousand dollars, and, in one case I know of, fifty thousand dollars, but the Surgeon of whom I speak received not a shekel, not a penny, not a farthing.

In His whole earthly life, we know of His having had but sixty-two and a half cents. When His taxes were due, by His omniscience He knew of a fish in the sea which had swallowed a piece of silver money, as fish are apt to swallow anything bright, and He sent Peter with a hook which brought up that fish, and from its mouth was extracted a Roman stater, or sixty-two and a half cents, the only money He ever had; and that He paid out for taxes. This great Surgeon of all the centuries gave all His services then, and offers all His services now, free of charge. "Without money and without price" you may spiritually have your blind eyes opened, and your deaf ears unbarred, and your dumb tongues loosened, and your wounds healed, and your soul saved. If Christian people get hurt of body, mind or soul, let them remember that surgery is apt to hurt, but it cures, and you can afford present pain for future glory. Beside that, there are powerful anæsthetics in the divine promises that soothe and alleviate. No ether or chloroform or cocaine ever made one so superior to distress as a few drops of that magnificent anodyne. "All things work together for good to those who love God." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

What a grand thing for our poor human race when this Surgeon shall have completed the treatment of all the world's wounds. The day will come when there will be no more hospitals, for there will be no more sick, and no more eye and ear infirmaries, for there will be no more blind or deaf, and no more deserts, for the round earth shall be brought under arboriculture, and no more blizzards or sunstrokes, for the atmosphere will be expurgated of scorch and chill, and no more war, for the swords shall come out of the foundry beat into pruning hooks. While in the heavenly country we shall see those who were the victims of accident or malformation, or hereditary ills on earth, become the athletes in elysian fields.

Who is that man with such brilliant eyes close before the throne? Why, that is the man who, near Jericho, was blind, and our Surgeon cured his ophthalmia! Who is that erect and graceful and queenly woman before the throne? That was the one whom our Surgeon found bent almost double, and could in no wise lift up herself, and He made her straight. Who is that listening with such rapture to the music of heaven, solo melting into chorus, cymbal responding to trumpet, and then himself joining in the anthem? Why, that is the man whom our Surgeon found deaf and dumb on the beach of Galilee, and by two touches opened ear gate and mouth gate. Who is that around whom the crowds are gathering with admiring look and thanksgiving, and cries of "Oh, what He did for me! Oh, what He did for my family! Oh, what He did for the world!" That is the Surgeon of all the centuries, the Oculist, the Aurist, the Emancipator, the Saviour. No pay He took on earth. Come, now, and let all heaven pay Him with worship that shall never end, and a love that shall never die. On His head be all the crowns! In His hands be all the sceptres! and at His feet be all the worlds!

Concerning Forests.

A recent writer presents some interesting points connected with the subject of forestry.

In the earliest times the first peoples of whom we have any historic account dwelt in the Asiatic highlands. That region in those days was very fertile, and was able to support a large population. It was well wooded, but in time the trees disappeared, and the land became almost barren, and great changes in climate took place. Coming down to a later period, we have abundant evidence of the climatic changes wrought by the destruction of the forests. The old historians tell us how great armies crossed the Rhone, Rhine and Danube on the ice, but after fifteen centuries it is plain that the climate in the vicinity of those rivers is materially warmer.

Our civilization is not old enough in this country to enable us to see the influence of forests upon the climate. But it is fair to assume that the proportion of rain and snow is much less in a treeless region.

Snow and ice remain longer in a forest country, and delay the advent of spring.

When the trees disappear the climate becomes more erratic. The winters are short, but the weather is fitful. Cold winds and hot winds blow unexpectedly, and drought is not uncommon. Water courses shrink at times to mere threads, and at others swell into the most appalling floods.

These general rules, according to the writer whose statements we have here outlined, are enough to awaken the people to the importance of the preservation of a large percentage of our forests. The wholesale and reckless waste of nature's upholstering means the destruction of human life and property. When we are warned against a coming evil we should lose no time in discovering and applying the remedy.—*Atlanta Constitution.*

A Young Lady's Marvelous Memory.

I know a young lady in New York, the daughter of a well-known editor, whose marvelous memory is literally her fortune. She is an omnivorous reader. No book escapes her, and, once read, is never forgotten. This extraordinary girl is as familiar with the literature of past ages as with the two-penny novels of to-day, and is employed by one of the leading publishers for the sole purpose of reading manuscript and pronouncing upon its originality. Not only borrowed plots, but borrowed styles, borrowed phrases, are instantly detected and their original source is noted down. She occupies a position which is unique in the history of great publishing houses. She is the real Nemesis of the plagiarist.—*The Epoch.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON FOR SUNDAY APRIL 27.

"The Parable of the Sower." Luke viii, 4-15—Golden Text, Luke viii, 18—

Notes and Comments.

According to the first three verses of this chapter, after bringing joy and peace to the poor women in Simon's house, He went through all the cities and villages showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, the kingdom foretold by all the prophets, when the Lord shall again choose Jerusalem, comfort Zion and restore Israel, never to be plucked up or scattered again (Zech. ii. 12; ii. 16-19; Jer. xxiv. 6, 7—that through them He may establish His Messianic kingdom in all the world. He was accompanied by the twelve and certain women whom He had healed and who now ministered unto Him. Returning, probably, to Capernaum, He healed the possessed with a blind and dumb demon. This drew forth from the Pharisees the accusation that He was possessed by the devil, and this did these mighty works. Jesus, in reply, warned them of the sin that can never be forgiven, whether committed in the age or the age to come. He also foretold His death and resurrection and pointed them to a coming judgment. They received not His teaching, but determined to kill Him (Matt. xii.).

1. "And when much people were gathered together, and were come to Him out of every city, He spake by a parable." Matthew says: "The same day went Jesus out of the house and sat by the seaside, and great multitudes were gathered together unto Him so that He went into a ship and sat, and the whole multitude stood on the shore." If the rulers would not hearken to Him the common people heard Him gladly (Mark xii., 37; and it is still true that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called" (I Cor. i. 26). In Matthew this parable is one of a series of seven spoken at one time, in Mark it is one of three, while here it stands alone. It is the only parable spoken at this time which is recorded by each of the three. The others had, no doubt, a particular reference to the respective objects which Matthew and Mark had in view in writing their gospels, while this one alone is sufficient for Luke's purpose. It is a foundation parable, and describes the treatment which the glad tidings of the kingdom will receive during the whole of this dispensation, the period of Christ's rejection, until He come again to bring the kingdom.

5-8. "A sower went out to sow his seed," etc. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." It is a simple story of what may have been taking place before the Saviour's eyes at that moment. On the hillside a farmer may have been actually sowing his seed, some falling on the beaten path, some thin soil beneath which was a great rock, some where the thorns had already preempted the ground, and some on good ground. The Saviour anticipates the harvest, and speaks of that which fell on the good ground as the only portion accomplishing anything. He was in the habit of using the most familiar things with which to illustrate His teaching. A candle, a woman baking, a woman seeking a lost piece of silver, a shepherd seeking a lost sheep, a good or bad foundation for a house, children playing, a hen and chickens, a door, a vine, each and all afforded Him a topic from which He taught concerning things eternal.

9. "And His disciples asked Him, saying, What might this parable be?" The Holy Spirit interprets spiritual things to spiritual men (I Cor. ii., 13, R. V., margin), and these men had not yet received the Holy Spirit in His fullness, therefore they understood not this parable.

10. "And He said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others in parables." By comparing Matt. xiii., 36; Mark iv., 10, we see that Jesus sent the multitudes away and went into the house, and that then He gave the explanation of this parable. That He was in the house when He interpreted the parable appears also from verses 19 and 20 of this chapter.

11. "Now the parable is this: The seed is the Word of God." Mark says: "The sower soweth the word." The business of every Christian in this whole age is to be a sower in the hand of the great Sower with which He may scatter the seed of the word.

12. "Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil." We have now four kinds of soil on which the word falls and will fall till the kingdom comes. There is the hard beaten heart of the so-called gospel hardened. He has gone to church all his life, perhaps is seldom absent on Sunday morning, but he is too weary in body to hear with profit, or, if not, the business of the week so crowds in upon him that while apparently he is listening to the sermon he is in his mind going over yesterday's business transactions or anticipating those of to-morrow. Or occasionally something that is said or sung in connection with prayer seems to take hold of him but lest he should believe and be saved the devil quickly takes it away. It is often called upon for a subscription for the work perhaps he gives cheerfully and liberally. Thus he takes credit to himself for his religiousness, which consists of hear, regularly in his place in church as to his body, and giving liberally of his means, but all the while he is a lost man and a step from time into eternity would place him with the lost rich man of whom Jesus told. And why cares where his soul goes if the church only gets his money? Do you care, and how much?

13. "They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy, and these have no root." Here is another class of churchgoers, for observe that each kind of soil represents those who hear, so that this parable does not touch those who have never heard the gospel. It shall be far more tolerable for them (Luke xii., 47, 48) in that day. This is a hearer who pays attention, and actually enjoys the public worship, or to talk of the things of God, when it does not cost much—that is when the weather is fine and there are no difficulties in the way, is one opposing. Such may probably make a profession of faith in Christ, and for a time give joyful testimony, but as soon as there is anything to be endured for the word's sake (Mark iv., 17) immediately they are offended and fall away. These, like the other, give us no solid encouragement.

14. "And that which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth and are choked." These hearers may possibly be saved; the seed has taken root well, and there is quite a growth, but the thing lacking here is fruit, ripe fruit, that which glorifies God. But can any one be saved who does not bear fruit, and who allows cares, riches, pleasures and lusts of other things to choke the word? We must stand on the word of God, even though it may seem to some a dangerous place.

15. "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." Matthew and Mark add "some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold." Thank God for such hearers. Even a few like these are an inspiration to any pastor, and what a comfort they must be to the Lord Jesus and to the Holy Spirit. The difference between these and the others is that these have truly accepted Jesus (not simply the truth about Him) and have firmly believed the truths concerning the kingdom and the glory to be revealed at His appearing. They are, therefore, weaned from present things, are not seeking to convert this world in this dispensation, but, believing this parable, are not discouraged if their labor seems largely in vain, content to have it turn out as He said for the present, sure that in His time and way the kingdom will come.—*Lesson Helper.*

RELIGIOUS READING.

SUFFICIENT UNTO THE DAY.

Because in a day of my days to come
There waiteth a grief to be,
Shall my heart grow faint, and my lips be dumb,
In this day that is bright for me?

Because of a subtle sense of pain,
Like a pulse-beat threaded through
The bliss of my thought, shall I dare refrain
From delight in the pure and true?

In the harvest-fields shall I cease to glean
Since the bloom of the spring has fled?
Shall I veil mine eyes to the noon-day sheen,
Since the dew of the morn hath sped?

Nay, phantom ill with the warning hand,
Nay, ghosts of the weary past;
Serene as in armor of faith I stand
Ye may not hold me fast.

Your shadows across my sun may fall,
But as bright the sun shall shine;
For I walk in a light ye cannot pall,
The light of the King divine.

And whatever He sends from day to day,
I am sure that His name is Love,
And He never will let me lose my way
To my rest in His home above.

—*Margaret E. Sangster.*

THE GOOD MINE.

A certain Spaniard had a gold mine of very great value, but instead of working it in a proper manner, he contented himself with digging over the surface, and removing a little of the earth, but never went half deep enough to get the gold, so that although he was the owner of a mine, he lived and died poor, never having got so much from his mine as to keep him from poverty.

Now, the Bible is more valuable than a gold mine; and the truth it contains, that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16), is more precious than the choicest gold. If, then we go deep enough into our Bibles to discover the Saviour, happy are we; but if we rest contented in reading the Bible without discovering this truth, we shall get no more profit from the Bible than the Spaniard got from his gold mine.

OPENING THE HEART.

I knew a little boy whose heart was touched by a sermon on the words, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." My mother said to him when she noticed that he was an orphan:

"Robert, what would you say to any one who knocked at the door of your heart, if you wished him to come in?"

He answered: "I'd say, 'Come in.'"

She then said to him: "Then say to the Lord Jesus, 'Come in.'"

The next morning there was a brightness and joy about Robert's face that made his father ask:

"Robert, what makes you look so glad and joyful to-day?"

He replied, gayfully: "I awoke in the night and I felt that Jesus was still knocking at the door of my heart for admittance inside. I said to Him, 'Lord Jesus, come in!' I think He has come into my heart, for I feel happier this morning than I ever was in all my life. How ungrateful and wicked in me to keep Him waiting outside so long!"—*Selected.*

PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD.

It is not necessary to be wonderful in order to be useful. "John did no miracle," his mission was to "cry in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord." He did his work in a common way, and was successful. Had miracles been necessary, God would have enabled John to perform them, but he did not. If you and I were to be extraordinary persons, God would have given us extraordinary endowments, but He gave us common endowments, hence we should be willing to be common people. This is the kind of people that do most good. Wonder-workers are not in demand to-day. The Master's cause wants workers, not wonders, not chemists, not prodigies, but common-sense men and women who will go about their business silently proclaiming, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Alas, that so many out large figures in religious circles who have no emphatic testimony for Christ as a personal Saviour of sinners. Is he a blessing to the world who by word or walk belies the character and power of Jesus Christ?—*Evangelical Messenger.*

HOLY LIFE.

The beauty of a holy life constitutes the most eloquent persuasive to religion which one human being can address to another. We have many ways of doing good to our fellow creatures, but none so good, so efficacious as leading a virtuous, upright and well-ordered life. There is an energy of moral wisdom in a good man's life, passing the highest efforts of the orator's genius. The very first short beauty of holiness speaks more eloquently of God and duty than the tongues of men and angels. Let parents remember this. The best inheritance a parent can bequeath to a child is a virtuous example, a legacy of hallowed remembrances. The beauty of holiness beaming through the life of a loved relative or friend is more effectual to strengthen such as do stand in virtue's way, and raise up those that are bowed down, than precept, command, entreaty, or warning. Christianity itself, I believe, owes by far the greater part of its saving power, not to the precept or parables of Christ, but to his own character. The beauty of that holiness which is enshrined in the four brief biographies of the man of Nazareth has done more, and will do more to regenerate the world and bring it to an everlasting righteousness, than all other agencies put together. It has done more to spread his religion in the world than all that has ever been preached or written on the evidences of Christianity.—*Dr. Chalmers.*

HENRY GEORGE ON LIQUOR.

Writing in the *Arena*, of Boston, Henry George says, truly enough, that "the rum power is a colossal villainy, and a fearfully dangerous factor in the politics of the country. It controls two great parties, runs their primaries, largely constitutes their conventions and furnishes large sums of money from its enormous business and great profits as a corruption fund." He is also correct in saying that the license system is what gives the traffic its power in politics. But we cannot agree with his statement that "there is only one way of eliminating it from politics, and that is by doing away with all restrictions from the Federal tax to the municipal license, or by permitting free trade in rum." There is another way, and the only effectual way, and that is to prohibit the traffic altogether. We are opposed to license because the traffic is a crime when it is a crime to license; and because license entrenches and perpetuates the traffic, and is the chief barrier to Prohibition. Nor do we agree with Mr. George's opinion that the removal of all restrictions would result in the destruction of the business by making liquor so cheap that there would be no profit in it. Liquor dealers are friendly to the license system, not merely because it increases their profits, but because they know that it is the only thing that reconciles the majority of voters to the existence of the traffic.—*Union Signal.*

The Mayor of Oxford, England, after hearing that in one district containing only 209 houses altogether, there were, within a radius of a hundred yards, ten licensed beer shops, besides four beer-houses, concluded that no "sufficient reason" had been given for refusing the renewal of all these licenses.

Elephants at Work.

Mr. Wood is a great lover of animals, and in his book I found more about elephants than I have seen anywhere else. I mean a greater variety of things, for he tells us how they are hunted and caught, and how they hunt for other elephants, and how they build stone walls for man, and take care of his babies, and save his life when danger threatens; how they, in fact, do everything that is almost too extraordinary to be believed. The famous elephant Jumbo once saved his keeper's

ELEPHANT ROLLING A LOG.

life, and on another occasion when a stampede of elephants took place he caught the man in his trunk and held him between his two feet until the danger was over. And I do not believe that many people know that when the sacred elephant is a baby he sometimes has twenty-four ladies to nurse him, and they all think it a great honor. But to have an elephant build a stone wall and another elephant trained as overseer! In Ceylon they pile the timber. And one actually made a dam. She carried the logs from the forest and put them in position. "The most extraordinary part of her performance," says Mr. Wood, "was the arranging of two immense logs of red keenar (one of the heaviest woods). They were about eighteen feet long and two feet in diameter, and were intended

ELEPHANT CARRYING A LOG.

to lie on either bank of the stream, parallel to the brink and close to the edge. These she placed with the greatest care in their exact positions unassisted by any one. She rolled them gently over with her head, then with one foot, and keeping her trunk on the opposite side of the log she checked its way whenever its own momentum would have carried it into the stream. "Although I," says an eye-witness, "thought the work admirably done she was not satisfied, and she presently got into the stream and gave one end of the log an extra push with her head, which completed her task, the two trees lying exactly parallel to each other close to the edge of either bank."—*Chicago Times.*

"Going to the Dogs."

—*Scribner's Magazine.*

TEMPERANCE.

MONEY SPENT FOR INTOXICANTS.

The actual amount of malt liquors consumed in 1888 was 707,587,059 gallons. This includes not quite 3,000,000 gallons of imported beer and ale. The manufacturer's price to the retailer is above rather than below twenty cents per gallon. At twenty cents the cost to the dealer would be $135,517,411. The retailers get an average of sixty cents per gallon, which makes the cost to the consumers $100,552,235, which the American people spend annually for malt liquor, principally beer. The most careful estimate puts the cost of wine to the consumer at $12,000,000, and of distilled spirits $879,226,809. This gives us a grand total of $992,139,129, nearly one billion dollars spent annually for liquor by the people of the United States. How few people realize the enormous expense the use of liquor entails on the people. Aside from the tax imposed by the General Government, the local tax on the trade is not five per cent. of the cost. The cost to Ohio is about $60,000,000 per annum; the local tax is $2,250,000, which is but a trifle over four per cent.—*Sandusky (Ohio) Register.*

RESULTS OF LIQUOR DRINKING IN BELGIUM.

The official journal of the Belgian Patriotic League against alcoholism gives a serious epitome of disastrous results arising from the expenditure in one year in Belgium of 135,000,000 francs on alcoholic beverages. Among these consequences are eighty per cent. of hospital inmates, from drinking, with prisons, asylums and mendicity depots filled with the drunken. Since 1872, taking into consideration the increased population, insanity has augmented 45 per cent.; crime, 75 per cent.; suicides, 86 per cent.; mendicity depots and vagabondage, 150 per cent.

A SAMOAN PROCLAMATION.

The King of Samoa is a prohibitionist, as witness the following proclamation: "No spirituous, vinous or fermented liquors or intoxicating drinks whatever shall be sold, given or offered to or bought or bartered by any native Samoan or Pacific Islander resident in Samoa to be taken as a beverage. Any one who shall be found guilty of the violation of this provision shall be punished by a fine not exceeding $100, or by imprisonment not exceeding six months, or by both fine and imprisonment, and the liquor not yet consumed shall be confiscated."