REV. DR. TALMAGE.

UNDAY'S SERMON IN THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

Subject: "Tongues of Fire."

Text: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost." Acts xix., 2.

The word ghost, which means a soul, or spirit, has been degraded in common parlance. We talk of ghosts as baneful and frightful and in a frivolous or superstitious way. But my text speaks of a Ghost who is omnipotent and divine and everywhere present and ninety-one times in the New Testament called the Holy Ghost. The only time I ever heard this text preached from was in the opening days of my ministry, when a venerable old Scotch minister came up to help me in my village church. On the day of my ordination and installation he said, "If you get into the corner of a Saturday night without enough sermons for Sunday, send for me, and I will come and preach for you." The fact ought to be known that the first three years of a pastor's life are appallingly arduous. No other profession makes the twentieth part of the demand on a young man. If a secular preacher prepares one or two speeches for a political campaign it is considered arduous. If a lecturer prepares one lecture for a year, it is thought to have done well. But a young pastor has two sermons to deliver every Sabbath before the same audience, besides all his other work, and the most of ministers never recover from the awful nervous strain of the first three years. Be sympathetic with all young ministers and withhold your criticisms.

My aged Scotch friend responded to my call and came and preached from the text that I now announce. I remember nothing but the text. It was the last sermon he ever preached. On the following Saturday he was called to his heavenly reward. But I remember just how he appeared as, leaning over the pulpit, he looked into the face of the audience, and with earnestness and pathos and electric force asked them, in the words of my text, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost?" The office of this present discourse is to open a door, to unveil a Personage, to introduce a force not sufficiently recognized. He is as great as God. He is God. The second verse of the first chapter of the Bible introduces Him—Genesis i., 2. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"—that is, as an albatross or eagle spreads her wings over her young and warms them into life and teaches them to fly, so the eternal Spirit spread His great, broad, vast wings over this earth in its callow and unfledged state and warmed it into life and fluttered over it and set it winging its way through immensity. It is the tip top of beautiful and sublime suggestiveness. Can you not almost see the outspread wings over the nest of young worlds? "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Another appearance of the Holy Ghost was at Jerusalem during a great feast. Strangers speaking seventeen different languages were present from many parts of the world. But in one house they heard what seemed like the roaring of a cyclone or hurricane. It made the trees bend and the houses quake. The question was, "What is that?" And then a forked tongue of fire tipped each forehead, and what was the blast of wind and the dropping fire phenomenon took place, until Peter explained that there was neither cyclone nor conflagration, but the brilliance and anointing and baptismal power of the Holy Ghost.

That scene was partially repeated in a church when Rev. John Easton was preaching. There was the sound of a rushing, mighty wind, and the people looked to the roof to see if there were any signs of a storm, but it was a clear sky, yet the sound of the wind was so great that horses, frightened, broke loose from their fastenings, and the whole assembly felt that the sound was supernatural and pentecostal. Oh, what an infinite and almighty and glorious personage is the Holy Ghost! He brooded this world into life, and now that through sin it has become a dead world He will brood it into second time into life. Perilous attempt I make a comparison between the three persons of the Godhead. They are equal, but there is some consideration which attaches itself to the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, that does not attach itself to either God the Father or God the Son.

We may grieve God the Father and God the Son and be forgiven, but we are directly told that there is a sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall never be forgiven either in this world or in the world to come. And it is wonderful that while on the one hand you hear the name of God and Jesus Christ used in profanity you never hear the name of the Holy Ghost. This hour I speak of the Holy Ghost as Biblical interpreter, as a builder-up, as a solace for the broken heart, as a preacher's reenforcement.

The Bible is a mass of contradictions, an accumulation of impossibilities, unless the Holy Ghost helps us to understand it. The Bible says of itself that the Scripture is not "of private interpretation," but "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"—that is, not private interpretation, but Holy Ghost interpretation. Pile on your table all the commentaries of the Bible—Matthew Henry and Scott and Adam Clarke and Albert Barnes and Bush and Alexander, and all the archæologies, and all the Bible dictionaries, and all the maps of Palestine, and all the international series of Sunday-school lessons. And if that is all you will not understand the deeper and grander meaning of the Bible so well as that Christian plowman who, Sunday morning, after having shaken down the fodder for the cattle comes into his cabin, takes up his well thumbed Bible, and with a prayer that stirs the heavens asks for the Holy Ghost to unfold the book.

No more unreasonable would I be if I should take up The Novoe Vremya of St. Petersburg, all printed in Russian, and say, There is no sense in this newspaper, for I cannot understand one line of all its columns" than for any man to take up the Bible and without getting Holy Ghost illumination as to its meaning say: "This Bible insults my common sense. I cannot understand it. Away with the incongruity!" Not but the Holy Ghost, who inspired the Scriptures, can explain the Scriptures. Realize that, and you will be as enthusiastic a lover of the old book as my venerable friend who told me in Philadelphia last year that he was reading the Bible through for the ninth time, and it became more attractive and thrilling every time he went through it. In the saddlebags that hung across my horse's back as I rode from Jerusalem down to the Dead Sea and up to Damascus I had all the books about Palestine that I could carry, but many a man on his knees in the privacy of his room, has had poured upon him more vivid appreciation of the Word of God than many a man who has read all the scenes of Christ's birth, and all the eloquence, and Peter's imprisonment, and Joshua's prowess, and Elijah's ascension. I do not depreciate any of the helps to Bible study, but I do say that they all fall infinitely short without a direct communication from the throne of God in response to prayerful solicitation. We want many interesting things about the Bible without especial illumination, as how many horses Solomon had in his stables, or how long was Noah's ark, or who was the woman whose full name is given in the Bible, or which is the middle verse of the Bible, and all that will do you no more good than be able to tell how many beanpoles there are in your neighbor's garden.

The learned Earl of Chatham heard the Rev. Mr. Cecil preach about the Holy Ghost and said to a friend on the way home from church: "I could not understand it, do you suppose anybody understood it?" "Yes," said his Christian friend, "there were uneducated women and some little children present who understood it." I warn you that the English soldier had under the influence read the book, for after the battle of Inkermann was over he was found with his hand glued to the page of the open Bible by his own blood, and the blood flowed to his hands as they buried him, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though dead, yet shall he live."

Next consider the Holy Ghost as a human reconstructor. We must be made over again. Christ and Nicodemus talked about it. Theologians call it regeneration. I do not care what you call it, but we have to be reconstructed by the Holy Ghost. We become new creatures, hating what we once loved and loving what we once hated. If sin were a luxury, it must become a detestation. If we preferred bad associations, we must prefer good associations. In most cases it is such a complete change that the world notices the difference and begins to ask: "What has come over that man? Whom has he been with? What has so affected him? What has ransacked his entire nature? What has turned him square about?" Take two pictures of Paul—one on the road to Damascus to kill the disciples of Christ, the other on the road to Ostia to die for Christ. Come nearer home and look at the man who found his chief delight in a low class of clubrooms, hiccoughing around a card table and then stumbling down the front steps after midnight and staggering homeward, and that same man, one week afterward, with his family on the way to a prayer meeting. What has done it? It must be something tremendous. It must be God. It must be the Holy Ghost.

Notice the Holy Ghost as the solacer of broken hearts. Christ calls Him the Comforter. Nothing does the world so much want as comfort. The most people have been abused, misrepresented, cheated, lied about, swindled, bereft. What is needed is balsam for the wounds, lantern for dark roads, rescue from maligning pursuers, a lift from the marble slab of tombstones. Life to most has been a semifailure. They have not got what they wanted. They have not reached that which they started for. Friends betray. Change of business stand loses old custom and does not bring enough custom to make up for the loss. Health becomes precarious when one most needs strong muscle and steady nerve and clear brain. Out of this audience of thousands and thousands, if I should ask all those who have been unhurt in the struggle of life to stand up, or all standing to hold up their right hands, not one would move. Oh, how much we need the Holy Ghost as comforter! He recites the sweet gospel promises to the hardly bestead. He assures of mercy mingled with the severities. He consoles with thoughts of coming release. He tells of a heaven where tear is never wept and burden is never carried and injustice is never suffered. Comfort for all the young people who are maltreated at home, or receive insufficient income, or are robbed of their schooling, or kept back from positions they earned by the putting forward of others less worthy. Comfort for all these men and women midway in the path of life, worn out with what they have already gone through, and with no brightening future. Comfort for these aged ones amid many infirmities and who feel themselves to be in the way in the home or business which themselves established with their own grit.

The Holy Ghost comfort, I think, generally comes in the shape of a soliloquy. You find yourself saying to yourself: "Well, I ought not to go on this way about my mother's death. She had suffered enough. She had borne other people's burdens long enough. I am glad that father and mother are together in heaven, and they will be waiting to greet us, and it will be only a little while anyhow, and God makes no mistakes." Or you soliloquize, saying: "It is hard to lose my property. I am sure I worked hard enough for it. But God will take care of us, and, as to the children, the money might have spoiled them, and we find that those who have to struggle for themselves generally turn out best, and it will all be well if this upsetting of our worldly resources leads us to lay up treasures in heaven." Or you soliloquize, saying: "It was hard to give up that boy when the Lord took him. I expected great things of him, and, oh, how we miss him out of the house, and there are so many things I come across that make one think of him, and he was such a splendid fellow! But then what an escape he has made from the temptations and sorrows which come to all who grow up, and it is a grand thing to have him safe from all possible harm, and there are all those Bible promises for parents who have lost children, and we shall feel a drawing heavenward that we could not have otherwise experienced." And after you have said that you get that relief which comes from an outburst of tears. I do not say to you, as some say, do not cry. God pity people in trouble who have the parched eyeball and the dry eyelid and cannot shed a tear. That makes maniacs. To God's people tears are the dews of the night dashed with sunrise. I am so glad you can weep. But you think these things you say to yourself are only soliloquies. No, no: they are the Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost.

Notice also the Holy Ghost as the preacher's reinforcement. You and I have known preachers encyclopedic in knowledge, brilliant as an iceberg when the sun smites it, and with Chesterfieldian address and rhetorical hand uplifted with diamond big enough to dazzle an assembly and so surcharged with vocabulary that when they left this life it might be said of each of them as De Quincey said of another that in the act of dying he committed a robbery, absconding with a valuable polyglot dictionary, yet no awakening or converting or sanctifying result, while some plain man, with humblest phraseology, has seen audiences whelmed with religious influence. It was the Holy Ghost. What a useful thing it would be if every minister would give the history of his sermons! Years ago at an outdoor meeting in the State of New York I preached to many thousands. There had been much prayer on the grounds for a great outpouring of the Holy Ghost at that service, and the awakening power exceeded anything I ever witnessed since I began to preach, with perhaps the exception of two or three occasions. Clergymen and Christian workers by the score and hundreds expressed themselves as having been blessed during the service. That afternoon I took the train for an outdoor meeting in the State of Ohio, where I was to preach on the night of the next day. As the sermon had proved so useful the day before and the theme was fresh in my mind, I resolved to reproduce it, and did reproduce it as far as I could, but the result was nothing at all. Never had I seemed to have anything to do with a flatter failure. What was the difference between the two services? Some will say, "You were tired with a long journey." No, I was not tired at all. Some will say, "The temporal circumstances in the first case were more favorable than in the last." No, they were more favorable in the last. The difference was in the power of the Holy Ghost—nightily present at the first service, not seemingly present at all at the second. I call upon the ministers of America to give the history of sermons, for I believe it will illustrate as nothing else can the truth of that Scripture, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

On the Sabbath of the dedication of one of our churches in Brooklyn, at the morning service, 328 souls stood up to profess Christ. They were the converts in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, where we had been worshiping. The reception of so many members—and many of them baptized by immersion—had made it an arduous service, which continued from half past ten in the morning until half past two in the afternoon. From that service we went home exhausted, because there is nothing so exhausting as deep emotion. A messenger was sent out to obtain a preacher for that night, but the search was unsuccessful, as all the ministers were engaged for some other place. With no preparation at all for the evening service, except the looking in Cruden's Concordance for a text and feeling almost too weary to stand up, I began the service, saying audibly while the opening song was being sung, although because of the singing no one but God heard it: "Oh, Lord, Thou knowest my insufficiency for this service! Come down in gracious power upon this people." The place was shaken with the divine presence. As far as we could find out, over 400 persons were converted that night. Hear it, all young men entering the ministry; hear it, all Christian workers. It was the Holy Ghost.

In the Second Reformed Church, of Somerville, N. J., in my boyhood days, Mr. Osborne, the evangelist, came to hold a special service. I see him now as he stood in the pulpit. Before he announced his text and before he had uttered a word of his sermon strong men wept aloud, and it was like the day of judgment. It was the Holy Ghost.

In 1857 the electric telegraph bore strange messages. One of them read, "My dear parents will rejoice to hear that I have found peace with God." Another read, "Dear mother, the work continues, and I, too, have been converted." Another read, "At last faith and peace." In Vermont a religious meeting was singing the hymn, "Waiting and Watching for Me." The song rolled out on the night air, and a man halted and said, "I wonder if there will be any one waiting and watching for me?" It started him heavenward. What was it? The Holy Ghost. In that 1857 Jaynes's Hall, Philadelphia, and Fulton street prayer meeting, New York, telegraphed each other the number of souls saved and the rising of the devotional tides. Noonday prayer meetings were held in all the cities. Ships came into harbor, captain and all the sailors saved on that voyage. Police and fire departments met in their rooms for divine worship. At Albany the Legislature of the State of New York assembled in the rooms of the Court of Appeals for religious services. Congressional union prayer meeting was opened at Washington. From whence came the power? From the Holy Ghost. That power shook New York. That power shook America. That power shook the Atlantic Ocean. That power shook the earth. That power could take this entire audience into the peace of the gospel quicker than you could lift your eyes heavenward. Come, Holy Ghost! Come, Holy Ghost! He has come! He is here! I feel Him in my heart. There are thousands who feel Him in their hearts, convicting some, saving some, sanctifying some.

The difference in evangelical usefulness is not so much a difference in brain, in scholarship or elocutionary gifts as in Holy Ghost power. You will not have much surprise at the extraordinary career of Charles G. Finney as a soul winner, if you know that soon after his conversion he had this experience of the Paraclete. He says:

"As I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire I received a baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that there was any such thing for me, without any recollection that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Ghost descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love, for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me like immense wings. No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love. These waves came over me and over me and over me, one after the other until, I recall it cried out, 'I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me.' I said, 'Lord, I cannot bear any more.'"

Now, my hearers, let 500 of us, whether clerical or lay workers, get such a divine visitation as that, and we could take this world for God before the clock of the next century strikes 1.

How many marked instances of Holy Ghost power? When a black trumpeter took His place in Whitefield's audience proposing to blow the trumpet at a certain point in the service and put everything into derision, somehow he could not get the trumpet to his lips, and at the close of the meeting he sought out the preacher and asked for his prayers. It was the Holy Ghost. What was the matter with Hedley Vicars, the memorable soldier, when he sat with his Bible before him in a tent, and his deriding comrades came in and jeered, saying, "Turned Methodist, eh?" And another said: "You hypocrite! Bad as you were I never thought you would come to this, old fellow." And then he became the soldier evangelist, and when a soldier in another regiment hundreds of miles away telegraphed his spiritual anxieties to Hedley Vicars, saying, "What shall I do?" Vicars telegraphed as thrilling a message as ever went over the wires, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

What power was being felt? It was the Holy Ghost. And what more appropriate? For the Holy Ghost is a "tongue of fire," and the electricity that flies along the wires is a tongue of fire. And that reminds me of what I might do now. From the place where I stand on this platform there are invisible wires of lines or influence stretching to every heart in all the seats on the main floor and up into the boxes and galleries, and there are other innumerable wires or lines of influence reaching out from this place into the vast beyond and across continents and under the seas, for in my recent journey around the world I did not find a country where I had not been preaching this gospel for many years through the printing press. So a telegraph operator sits or stands at a given point and sends messages in all directions, and you only hear the click, click, click of the electric apparatus, but the telegrams go on their errand. God help me now to touch the right key and send the right message along the right wires to the right places. Who shall we first call up? To whom shall I send the message? I guess I will send the first to all the tired, wherever they are, for there are so many tired souls. Here goes the Christly message, "Come unto Me, all ye who are weary, and I will give you rest."

ONLY TWO FEET TALL.

Death of a Dwarf Who Lived Twenty-two Years and Never Walked or Talked.

Charles E. Mintram, a dwarf, whose singular existence has created widespread attention, died a few days ago at the home of his father, E. Mintram, at Pine Bush, Orange County, N. Y., of pneumonia. He was in his twenty-second year and was only twenty-four inches tall. He was born in Wortendyke, N. J., and was one of nine children. The first year he was as bright and thriving as the others, and increased a little in weight and stature, but he never walked or talked, and grew to manhood with the same baby face that he had twenty years ago and the same helpless body. The boy had been examined by many physicians during his life, but none of them could give any satisfactory explanation of the case. As a child he was as bright mentally as any other child until development ceased, and he became an ordinary baby all the rest of his life. He was passionately fond of music and understood all that was said to him, and was healthy until his last sickness.

MONSTER GRAPE FRUIT FARM.

To Be One of the Largest Fruit Orchards in California.

One of the largest enterprises in the planting of fruit orchards now in progress in California has just been begun within three miles of Pomona by Henry M. Loud, a millionaire of Detroit, Mich., who owns 600 acres of fine fruit land in the valley. Mr. Loud is the first man to undertake the production of grape fruit on a large scale on this coast. He has contracted for 3000 trees of this variety of fruit, all that can be had in that part of the State for immediate planting, put the success of the experiment will be watched with interest by fruit growers and followers in all parts of the country.

Grape fruit has come to be in demand at good prices in the Eastern markets, and has been one of Florida's most profitable crops, but the recent cold weather along the Atlantic coast killed every grape fruit tree in that State.

Japan's National Exhibition.

The fourth Industrial Exhibition of Japan will be held this year at Kioto. It opened on April 1 and will continue until July 31. This is the Japanese National exhibition, also being held in commemoration of the 1000th anniversary of the founding of Kioto as the old capital of Japan. Kioto is now known as the Western capital, though in reality no longer a seat of government, and is the most fascinating city of the empire. Temples abound in and about Kioto and it is the home of the finest products of Japanese looms.

SABBATH SCHOOL.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON FOR MARCH 31.

Review of the Fourth Quarter—Scripture Reading, Hebrews i., 1-14—Golden Text Matt. xi., 29—Commentary.

Lesson I.—John the Baptist Beheaded (Mark vi., 17-29). Golden text, Math. x., 28, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Here we see the the mystery of the sufferings of the righteous through the hatred of the wicked, as in the case of Joseph at the hands of his brethren and the wife of Potiphar; David from his own son, Absalom; Daniel and Jeremiah from their enemies; the apostles from the Christ hating Jews, the Jesus Himself from those for whom He laid down His life. The times of these things are still on and the need to remember His words: "Fear none of these things. Be thou faithful unto death" (Rev. ii., 10).

Lesson II.—Feeding the Five Thousand (Mark vi., 30-44). Golden text, Luke i., 53, "He hath filled the hungry with good things." If the last lesson taught us to endure patiently, even unto death, for His sake, this teaches us to place ourselves unreservedly in His hands that He may use us to feed the perishing multitudes who have no bread of life. We are not to calculate, like Philip, how or with what it may be done, but simply look to Him who knows what He will do and how He will do it.

Lesson III.—Christ the Bread of Life (John vi., 25-35). Golden text, John vi., 31 "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." The manna from heaven, the water from the rock, the serpent upon the pole, the morning and evening burnt offering—in fact, every whit of the sanctuary and its ritual all spake of Him. Apart from Him there is no life, but in Him are life and joy and peace and all true welfare for time and eternity.

Lesson IV.—The Great Confession (Math. xvi., 13-23). Golden text, Math. xvi., 16, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The one question for every individual that rises mountain high in importance above all other questions is, What think ye of Christ? We talk about the weather and the crops, the tariff and the labor troubles, the fashions and amusements, and are all the while drawing nearer to an eternity the happiness or misery of which depends upon our present estimate of and relation to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is either pity self and reject Him or deny self and receive Him.

Lesson V.—The Transfiguration (Luke ix., 28-36). Golden text, Math. xvii., 5: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him." It does not look attractive to take up the cross and die to self and all the pleasures and enjoyments of this sinful world, and perhaps literally die to gratify some ungodly person as John the Baptist did and James and many others. But there is another side to it. The present and all things seen are only for a little while. There is an eternity of glory for the righteous who die to self, and of torment for the unrighteous, who live for self.

Lesson VI.—Christ and the Children (Math. xviii., 1-14). Golden text, Math. xviii., 14: "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." The way to the kingdom and the eternity of glory is here set before us in the object lesson of the little child who came to Jesus when called. The little child came without doubtings or reasonings and trustingly let Jesus take him up and set him in the midst. When we thus trustfully come at His call and commit ourselves unto Him, we become children of God and come under special angelic care.

Lesson VII.—The Good Samaritan (Luke x., 25-37). Golden text, Lev. xix., 18, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The law, although holy and just and good, cannot give life, for we all come short of its requirements through the sinfulness and weakness of the flesh.

Lesson VIII.—Christ and the Man Born Blind (John ix., 1-11). Golden text, John ix., 5, "I am the light of the world." Every sinner is like this poor blind man, blind from birth, not through any special sin of our parents, but through Adam. If we know that we are only poor blind beggars, then Jesus stands ready to open our eyes and cause us to see, but if, while blind, we insist on thinking that we can see and talk about things of which we know nothing, as if we could see, then we are fools indeed and hopelessly blind. There is more hope for publicans and harlots who know they are sinners than for the self righteous.

Lesson IX.—The Raising of Lazarus (John xi., 30-45). Golden text, John xi., 25, "I am the resurrection and the life." As hopeless as was the case of Lazarus, dead and buried and corrupting, so utterly hopeless is the case of every sinner apart from the power of God, but there is nothing too hard for Him who made the heaven and the earth. This same Jesus who could open the eyes of one born blind and bring to life one who was four days buried is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

Lesson X.—The Rich Young Ruler (Mark x., 17-27). Golden text, Math vi., 33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." In this lesson we have one of the great hindrances in the way of coming to Christ. He can give sight to a poor blind beggar or life to a dead, corrupting body, but He cannot do anything for one who has life and sight and riches, which insnare and entangle him and come between his soul and God. Better to be empty and dependent as the child, wounded and helpless as the man who fell among thieves, blind as the poor beggar or dead as Lazarus than rich and self righteous as this young ruler.

Lesson XI.—Zaccheus, the Publican (Luke xix., 1-10). Golden text, Luke xix., 10. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Although the rich young ruler did not receive Christ, here is a rich publican who did. The ruler was the one to be coveted for the church, some would think, while the publican was not so desirable, even though rich, but the Lord seeth not as man seeth, and His choice is often very unlike what ours would be. See Samuel looking upon Eliab and read carefully I Sam., xvi., 6, 7. Mark well the substantial evidences of Zaccheus's sincerity and remember that faith without works is dead, being alone. When Jesus is truly received, He will live His life in us.

Lesson XII.—The Mission of the Seventy (Luke x., 1-9). Golden text, Luke x., 2, "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest." Willing hearted men and woman are the instruments whom the Spirit uses to gather out this elect body. The infallible and God breathed word is the all sufficient equipment for every Spirit filled worker.—Lesson Helper.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

Simple and childlike hearts that have newly entered into the joy of salvation, ignorant of scientific theology, but hungering and thirsting for God, turn to the writings of John with never failing desire, and find in them green pastures and living waters. To a large extent it is the same with those who have reached the most advanced stages of Christian experience, whose spiritual nature has become deepened and expanded by the manifold teachings of God. Here the simplicity of youth and the ripest and holiest wisdom of age agree. I have taken pains to inquire of many belonging to both classes how they have been guided in their reading, and what they have found most fruitful of spiritual blessing and delight: and almost every answer has included, at least, the gospel of John, often named in a tone of personal affection, as men name a dear friend.—Dr. Culross.

New Minister From Germany.

The National Zeitung states that Baron Von Thielmannn, now Prussian minister to Bavaria, has been appointed German Ambassador to the United States, to succeed Baron Von Saurma-Jeltsch, who may be sent to Constantinople.

RELIGIOUS READING.

"BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY."

Is there no getting to heaven without humility? No. Cannot the proud be saved? No. Is lowliness essential to true piety? Yes. Is the human heart naturally proud? Yes. Why are men so slow in learning God's will? Because they are no more like little children.—Why are they so averse to salvation by the righteousness of Christ? Because they are so puffed up with conceit of their own goodness. Why do so many go to hell? Because they will not humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. Why must we preach humility, seeing it is an unpopular doctrine? Because God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Nothing in Christianity is more opposed by carnal men than humbleness of mind. It was so from the beginning. "The philosophers thought humility to be the opposite of magnanimity." The wicked still regard it in very much the same light. It is the opposite of pride. It is "the peculiar glow of Christians and the parent and nurse of our graces. It preserves in us the light of faith and the heat of love. It begets modesty in prosperity, and patience in adversity. It is the root of gratitude and obedience." The feigned humility of a hypocrite hides his pretended good qualities; but the genuine lowliness of a true Christian hides even itself. It has no secret method of display.

This virtue adorns all who possess it. Rebecca was not the less lovely when she took a veil and covered her beauty and jewels.—Moses' face shone not the less brightly, because he wist it not. Even the appearance of this virtue is often put on by cunning men. In all virtues the reality is better than the semblance. Gold is better than any of its counterfeits.

Christ said, "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

In studying God's word, nothing is more necessary than humbleness of mind. "With the lowly is wisdom." "The meek will he teach his way." "God knoweth the proud afar off." "Be not wise in your own eyes." "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him. In seeking to become wise, all the proud become fools. The mysteries of salvation are revealed unto babes, but hid from the wise and prudent. He who prays much, will learn much of the mysteries of salvation. But the proud will not offer humble prayer. He thinks he already sees, and why should he cry, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law?" If you would learn of Christ, bow your neck, and take his yoke upon you.

The most difficult thing in man's salvation is sufficiently to abase his pride. He naturally trusts in himself that he is righteous. He counts himself rich and increased in goods. When Harvey said, "The most difficult thing in religion is to get rid of sinful self," he went as far as unrenewed nature ever goes. But when the boor peasant said to him "The most difficult thing in religion is to get rid of righteous self," he spoke like one taught of God. Strangely, wickedly, universally unrenewed men follow those who do not submit themselves into the righteousness of God, but go about to establish their own righteousness. The last thing a convicted sinner does, is to consent to be saved by the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet is there no other way of escaping the wrath to come, or of laying hold on eternal life. Oh, that all men thus believed. Would you grow in strength know your weakness; would you gain wisdom, know your folly; would you gain righteousness, know your own guilt and helplessness, and the glorious fullness and sufficiency there are in Christ. "Be clothed with humility," and you will cast away the filthy rags of your own righteousness, and gladly accept the spotless, seamless robe offered you by the Lord Christ. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the father but by him.—"When men are cast down, then shalt thou say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person."

All doctrinal statements, all usages, thoughts, and notions which exalt the creature, are false and wicked. And all views of Christ which make him a mere helper and not the sole author of salvation—an auxiliary, but not the well-spring of life, are false and wicked. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Humble thyself and accept of Jesus Christ. Without him you are nothing—can do nothing—can hope for nothing.—American Messenger.

CLOUDS OR ANGELS?

A very clever German artist, named Retsch, once etched a very beautiful picture which he called Cloudland. As you first glanced at it you could see nothing but great masses of cloud, floating soft and dim upon the background. If you stood and looked long and earnestly at it you saw that each cloud contained an angel's face and wings, and that what seemed at first like great billows of gloomy clouds was in reality a host of angels looking down with calm untroubled faces. After this was perceived the whole beauty of the picture became at once so perceptible that it was hard to turn away from the angel faces with their hovering wings. The longer one looked upon them the more beauty was seen. The great artist had etched it with rare skill, and that either clouds or angels filled the space made his cunning all the greater.

Is is not so with our lives? Upon life's canvas is not the Great Artist etching another Cloudland? Each hour comes to us laden with some little duty or trial. If we choose to make them so, we can think of them as clouds which come between them and happiness and shut out all sunshine. If we glance but hastily at the plan for our lives we may perhaps have reason to conclude that nothing but clouds overshadow our way. Trials, perplexities, are—these only; and little hope of anything brighter beyond. Surely we do well to call this design Cloudland. There is no sunshine in it.

Let us look again. As the hours rise before us, filling the canvas of the future with little trials, shall we not look patiently for the faces of angels, which will smile upon us if we but discern them with the eyes of trust. Each cloud has a Divine meaning if we only interpret it aright. God sends trials to us as blessings, and though we may not see the radiance of the hovering wings, and the look of love upon the tender faces, we may be none the less sure that they are there.

Just as one could not see the angels when he first looked upon the picture of the German artist, so we may not discern them at first; but as gradually they took shape, until one could see nothing but the throng of angels, so we may make of our clouds angels, if we will but wait patiently and trustfully for them to smile upon us out of the very heart of trial.—Messenger.

THE ONLY WAY LEFT.

A Scottish minister, in a provincial town, startled his congregation by an announcement recently. He could not be brought to see the beauty of bazars, and had a conflict of opinion with his church managers on the point. He called the whole affair gambling. Nevertheless, the church debt had to be lifted, and the good man yielded, and announced the hateful thing from the pulpit on Sunday, as follows: "You are aware that there is a considerable amount of debt hanging over this congregation. Now, we have tried several means to raise the money, but without success. And the opinion of the managers and others is, that as we have exhausted every honest means of raising the money there is nothing left but to have a bazar."—Exchange.

Trust in God, as Moses did, let the way be ever so dark, and it shall come to pass that your life at last shall surpass even your longing. Not, it may be, in the line of that longing,—that shall be as it pleaseth God,—but the glory is as sure as the grace; and the most ancient heavens are not more sure than that.—Robert Collyer, D. D.

Dr. Robert S. Buchanan, the wife poisoner, was sentenced by Recorder Goff to be executed April 22.

TEMPERANCE.

MY POSITION.

My motto is "Dare to do right!"
'Gainst strong drink I mean to fight
Every day;
For it really is no good
For muscle, brain or food
Anyway.

I'm opposed to beer and wine;
They are deadly foes of mine,
Foes that blight,
And I to the bitter end
Will my principles defend;
They are right.

And I simply ask if you
Will defend the good and true
From this hour?
Will you help our growing band
The vile monster to withstand?
You have power

Will you do each day your mite?
Will you help us in the fight?
If so, join our band.
Help us with heart and hand,
Drive this evil from the land,
Beginning now, to-night!
—Youth's Temperance Banner.

THOMAS JEFFERSON'S OPINION.

The habit of using ardent spirits by men in public office has occasioned more injury to the public service and more trouble to me than any other circumstance which has occurred in the internal concerns of the country during my Administration; and were I to commence my Administration again, with the knowledge which, from experience, I have acquired, the first question which I should ask with regard to every candidate for office would be, Is he addicted to the use of ardent spirits?—Thomas Jefferson, President 1801 to 1809.

FOR THE HEATHEN.

Rev. David A. Day, of the American Lutheran Mission in Liberia, describing a journey on the coast, writes: "Within a stone's throw lay a large steamer, the Africa, loaded to the water's edge with rum. Not only was the hold full, but on the decks were piled hundreds of green boxes and the wicker-covered demijohns so well known on the coast. When we remember that one of these steamers carries four thousand tons of freight, and that hundreds of them are running to the country laden with rum, the very vilest that chemistry can invent and conceit, we may have some conceptions of what it means, not only to the heathen, but to the very few missionaries at work among them."

HUNDERED.

Alice Dean, London, aged forty-two, is an example of the power of drink. Over six months ago her husband died, leaving her and her family of two sons amply provided for. Before she was a widow she was given to intemperance, and when left a widow she drank more heavily than before. Her excesses drove her sons to lodgings, but they visited her almost daily. Her medical attendant entreated and implored her to give over, but she told him "it was no use talking, she could not give it up." At last outraged nature could not stand her excesses, and she was found dead on the floor of her room, dying alone and unattended. No food in the house; but there was a half bottle of brandy, that last resort of the drink suicide. The liquor had ravaged her heart, her liver, and kidneys, and simply killed her. One can hardly believe that such a sacrifice to the liberty of the subject should be permitted in this country, or that a publican could be found to sell his murderous drug to such an excess to one who must in the locality have been by habit and repute so great a victim of inebriety. But the coroner admitted that such was the case, and that the friends and relatives of a person may stand and look on, and see one for whom the Saviour died deliberately slain before their eyes, and they powerless, without the consent of this maudlin drinker, to [illegible] Nothing, in our opinion, should so rouse a Christian community as so sad a case as that of Alice Dean. —The Scottish Reformer.

HE GOT THE BLESSING.

Canon Wilberforce tells a pathetic story illustrating the force of the little word "now." It was of a miner who, hearing the Gospel preached, determined that if the promised blessing of immediate salvation were indeed true, he would not leave the presence of the minister who was declaring it until assured of possessing it himself. He waited, consequently, after the meeting to speak with the minister, and in his untutored way, said: "Didn't ye say I could have the blessin' now?" "Yes, my friend." "Then pray with me, for I'm not goin' awa' wi'hout it." And they did pray, these two men, until the wrestling minor heard silent words of comfort and cheer. "I've got it now!" cried the minor; his face reflecting the joy within; "I've got it now!"

The next day a frightful accident occurred at the mines. The same minister was called to the scene, and among the men, dead and dying, was the quivering, almost breathless body of a man who, only the night before, big and brawny, came to him to know if salvation could really be had now for the asking. There was but a fleeting moment of recognition between the two ere the miner's soul took flight; but in that moment he had time to say, in response to the minister's sympathy: "Oh, I don't mind, for I've got it—I've got it—it's mine!" Then the name of this poor man went into the sad list of the "killed." There was no note made of the royal inheritance of which he had but a few hours before come into possession, and all by his believing grip of word "now."

TEMPERANCE NEWS AND NOTES.

There are 1591 liquor saloons in Brooklyn to January 1, 1895

During the year 1892-93 there were 59,755,353 gallons of brandy and spirits consumed in the German Empire.

The receipts of the German Government from tax on brandy and spirits during the financial year 1892-93 amounted to $65,000,000.

Canon Wilberforce, the eloquent Canon of Westminster, wears a piece of blue ribbon in his buttonhole—he is a staunch and enthusiastic temperance advocate.

General Lord Wolesley is greatly interested in the temperance movement in the British Army. He says that there never has been a time when there was so little drunkenness among the soldiers as now.

Miss Francis E. Willard says that in the commencement of her career as a temperance worker, when criticised, her mother would remark: "Keep quiet, child; we were not born to reign, but to wrestle."

Chamberlain, the English Liberal-Unionist leader, drinks nothing stronger than water before a long speech. Dr. McIlynn, the great pulpit orator, never drinks before or during a speech. He is a rigid total abstainer.

A gentleman prominent in several New York City clubs says that many of them are breaking away from the custom of treating to alcoholic drinks. In the famous Harvard Club, composed of graduates of Harvard College, there is a standing agreement that no member shall treat another member.

It was reported from Russia, some months ago, that strychnine could cure men of the appetite for drink. This is undoubtedly true, if enough strychnine be taken. But the French physicians in Paris have been trying experiments with it, and claim that hypodermic injections of nitrate of strychnine will cure the drinking habit.

Dr. Paul Garnier, of Paris, has made a special study of the children of habitual drunkards. He says: "There is a flaw in the very nature of these children that the physiologist sees clearly and notes with apprehension—the absence of affectionate emotions. When they do not become lunatics they show insensibility and pitilessness.