

great sea of His life and of His revelation, and the precious promises which are there in infinite expanse like the stars in the sky for multitude, and the sand upon the seashore innumerable.

The life of worldly people is like one of those rivers in South Africa, of which you and I have read, wide and strong and great, but follow them for twenty or thirty miles and they begin to drizzle, then they are lost in the vast sands of the desert. And there are men and women here this morning, perhaps, who look back twenty years and see a beautiful beginning of a consecrated life, but it has vanished in this sad world's experience; the river that once was so large has dried up—but God's river is like the river in Ezekiel's vision, you go up to your ankles, then reach on and it spreads to the loins, then it becomes a river with mighty waters, waters that one can swim in, waters rolling on for evermore like the crystal stream of God's river in the world to come.

THE TRUE GROWTH.

The Christian is a man who grows. He does not stand on the edge of human experience watching the heroes on the march to war; he joins the ranks and he fights to fight; he has a cause worthy of engagement; he has a leader worthy of following; he has a prize worth fighting for, and he fights, and as he fights his life enlarges, his hope kindles, his sympathy deepens, his views of charity enlarge, life becomes more hopeful, life becomes stronger—new endeavours, new duties, new responsibilities make him understand how great God's life is.

He does not go forth to crow and to criticise and give men his grievances, his enervations and dispiritements; he goes out to give men his beliefs; there are doubts enough in the world without you scattering more; there are disabilities enough without your increasing the dimness of life. The Christ man goes forth in the name of Christ, whose symbols are a cross that vanquished death, a conquered grave that told of life, a cloud of ascension rising into infinite light above, and a

crown of glory that all shall have who love Him.

This life of the Christian is not only a life of expanse by his duties, it is a life that actually grows upon its failures and rises from its defeats. The man who never made a mistake never made anything; the man who never was a failure never was anything; he never tried in the vigour of a strong enthusiasm to accomplish anything worth anything.

PROFITING BY FAILURE.

But the Christian is a man who rises out of his failures into a higher life, and the abundant life of God transforms his mistakes into victories and he is more than conqueror through Him who loved him. Men may rise on the stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things, but, mark you, only on the stepping-stones of their dead selves.

We must die to live. "More and more" is the motto of the Christian; "more and more" is his inspiration; "more and more" is his stepping-stone upwards. I pray that your love may abound more and more, said the Apostle; "We beseech you, brethren, to increase more and more"—that is, Christianity; never backwards, ever onwards, never downwards, always upwards. It is like the message that the good rich man sent to the good poor man, enclosing a five-pound note and saying, "But there is more to follow"—aye, there is ever more to follow; every day is a resurrection life of victory for the Christian, and there is more victory to follow; every day sees him marching into grander living, but there is more to follow. That is the meaning of life; Christ gives life more abundantly.

THE ENDLESS LIFE.

Then there is another thought; this life goes on and on and on for evermore. We were not made to die, you and I; we were made to live.

"Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathed with human breath,
Has ever truly longed for death;
It is life whereof our nerves are scant,
More life and fuller than we want,
'Tis life, not death, for which we pant."

In Christ this desire reveals a destiny; we see in Him we were

not made to die; He rose from death—"Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him; He ever liveth, and He ever liveth for us, and because He liveth we shall live also." We look forward to the life more abundant, and we know that this life is only a beginning.

THIS LIFE PROBATIONARY.

Do you remember that day when you climbed up the winding stairs of our university college in the park here? How you hugged in the darkness the side of the wall as you climbed a little bit and then you got a little higher up, then there came a glint of light through one of the narrow windows, and you were cheered with it, and thought that there was light beyond—and doubtless, after much groping and silent, heavy climbing, you emerged through a narrow floor, and there was life in its broad expanse and the glory of God's heaven beyond. Death is not an end; it is a beginning: "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." Christ died, Christ lives, Christ lives for evermore, Christ loves, Christ loves you.

As I close, I say to each one of you, my brothers, my sisters, bring to Christ that life of yours. It may be broken; it may be marred by many things; bring it as it is; give it to Him with your heart and with your soul, and lay it at His feet, and He will evacuate it of its selfishness, failure and mistakes, and He will lift it up into His own, and identified with His, it will be ennobled, and you will live the life that never dies. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Thank God that we men and women have such a Gospel as this to-day.

FAILURE.

What, then, is failure?

We rush after success in this world until, perhaps, we lose sight of our true end and aim in the strife after gain; and what began in a noble and lofty desire to excel in our work resolves itself into