

With vivid power he brings home to us in his daily providence the solemn fact that *death is ever in our path*. With fearful em-

phasis he is continually enforcing the lesson, "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

Wages of Working Women in the Great Cities.

I will be a swift witness . . . against those that oppress the hireling in his wages.—Mal. iii. 5.

RECENT investigation by some of our leading dailies discloses a most distressing state of affairs among the working women in our great cities. It appears that the most dreadful poverty and the fiercest struggle for bread is developed under what is known as the contract or "sweating" system, where work for large manufacturing and retail establishments is bought by a "contractor" or middleman and let out by him to the poor women of the tenement houses. There are hundreds of these "contractors" in New York City alone, and they compete so energetically with each other that manufacturers find it cheaper to give out their work to them than to hire their own employees. The price for the woman's work is always fixed by the "contractor," and as near the lowest starvation rates as possible.

A few examples of woman's work and wages in the great cities may not be out of place.

Eighty-eight firms in New York make artificial flowers. They employ 1,500 girls at an average wage of \$2.50 a week for 54 hours' labor. Many of these girls have others dependent upon them and work "over time" to make ends meet. "Last night," said one to a *Sun* reporter, "I made 12 cents extra by making three gross of lilacs, but worked from 6.30 to 2 o'clock in the morning. I made 93 cents extra last week by working six and eight hours each night." This girl has a father who, with 50,000 others in the great city, is

searching for work, but can find none.

The average earnings of 1,500 corset-makers is \$3.00 per week. A designer in a cloak establishment says the average earnings of sewing women with machines is 50 cents a day, working 16 hours out of the 24. Another says: "An unscrupulous man can find plenty of starving women who will sew for 50 cents a day." Rev. W. E. Walker in a Chicago journal says: A firm on Fifth avenue manufacturing fringe pays such meager wages that the moderately skillful can make only from 30 to 50 cents a day. In a corset factory for the miserable pittance of 25 to 60 cents a day young girls are sacrificing the bloom of their cheeks and their buoyancy of frame, while at the end of the week the cost of materials is deducted from their wages. Scarcely one of the workers on woman's undergarments for a firm on Washington street can make more than \$1.50 a week, stitching from early morn till late at night. The average pay in a mammoth establishment employing hundreds of clerks, all girls, is \$2.50 a week.

Hundreds of such examples can be given. Yet with high rents to pay and the cramped and squalid quarters of the poor there are men who wonder at the great army that nightly walk the streets like birds of prey in search for their victims.

The Humane Movement.

A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast.—Prov. xii. 10.

THE recent death of Henry Bergh, the great apostle of anti-cruelty, calls attention to a movement which merits the hearty co-operation of every