

and put fire into their hearts and light into their eyes, only that their hearts might break and their eyes grow dim in sharpening the points of pins for a lifetime, or in driving a steam-engine in a dark pit through the midnight of all their days. They will curse Nature, as Job refused to curse God, and die.

No, it is not to vegetate and stagnate that God lighted up our childhood with tale and legend, and our youth with aspiration and song. And our second point is—

II. The faith of Christ can meet this demand of our nature, which the world and learning only outrage, until they become the vassals of the cross.

1. *It redeems life from monotony by a great deliverance.*

You watch some pallid youth behind a counter; he has been there since early morning, and now it is dark night; he has had no change of scene for years; no bright prospect relieves his future; you say he is born to be a slave, and you contrast his vapid life with the eventful life of one who has been under fire in murderous battles, or shot tigers in the desert, or been rescued from cruel savages. But that pallid youth could tell you of deadlier peril and a more amazing rescue. He has been upon the edge of death eternal, has been led captive by the devil at his will, hell has yawned under his feet, deliverance has been bought for him by sacred blood, and now he stands erect in the freedom of the soul.

My friends, if this is nothing to us, do you think our religion is good for much? or can life be utterly flat and commonplace, when all this is realized? or can any circumstances rob us of the emotions which it should excite?

2. One event cannot stir a lifetime, but this rescue from slavery is followed by a *spiritual warfare*, so that the most monotonous calling is consistent with great events within the soul.

You have watched a soldier in torrents of rain bearing his rifle to and fro along a muddy track, and you shudder to think of the hardship of such a task at midnight. But tell him that an enemy is close, let the fate of an army rest upon his watchfulness, and what a change in his heart, though his outlook be the very same. Instead of complaining, he finds that his position is great; he is all alert; his eye strains through the darkness and examines every waving branch; no whispering breeze is unheard, and the meaning of every autumn leaf is questioned as it rustles past. His horrible occupation has become romantic and intense.

So it might be with our monotonous toils. Things which seem triv-