

THE MOUNTAINS.

The mountains are great preachers. They teach us at once our weakness and our strength. "The mountains bring peace." Yes, as they speak of the steadfastness of God, whose purposes are firm as "the everlasting hills." But they bring, too, awe and fear, and sometimes terror and despair, as in telling of a creative power they tell also of a power that can destroy. It was from a mountain that God gave the law. It was itself the symbol of majesty and authority, and never can we come into such a presence without a vague sense that we are standing before the Throne. And what better preacher can we find to teach us the lesson of man's mortality. How little is the span of our earthly existence beside these hoary summits that have stood the storms of thousands of years! Well may we ask, what is our life! It is but a vapor—like one of the wreaths around these mountain tops—"that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." It is a stream like that which glides beneath us to the sea. In the presence of such greatness, we feel our littleness, and should be quite overwhelmed by the sense of utter insignificance were it not that we can fall back upon One who is greater than all that He has made.—Rev. Henry M. Field, D.D.

The movement for Sabbath rest is gaining in popular support. Men of all classes are in it; there are no denominational or sectarian lines; there are no party boundaries. The appeal is made to all employers of labor to give their men the day of rest which belongs to them. In this the highest interests of both parties are involved. The man who rests on the Sabbath is a better man for the remainder of the week. Working men are better in every way for a day at home and in the church. A machine requires rest; much more does a man. Ever bending to toil, the man in the mill, the woman in the shop, is wasting vital strength, and at an early age ceases to be able to render normal service. The Sabbath is necessary for man's higher nature, and without it there is a steady and unceasing lowering of the moral standard.

ANTICIPATING THE GOOD.

"Janet Bliss is the queerest girl!" one of Janet's schoolmates declared. "Everybody knows that her people are as poor as poverty, and there isn't one chance in a thousand that she will ever be able to go abroad, yet she studies up about things—pictures and cathedrals, and historic places—as though she expected to go tomorrow. She says there's no knowing what may happen; and anyway if she doesn't go, there's no reason why she shouldn't know as much as people who do. Isn't it funny to take all that trouble for nothing?"

But the Janets—bless their brave hearts—are not "taking trouble for nothing;" for in the first place the very determination and perseverance involved are the best kind of fortune for a girl to possess. Moreover, one who watches life long will discover after a while that things are very apt to "happen" to the people who are ready for them, and certainly only those who are ready can win the most from opportunities when they come.

But even suppose Janet never does go abroad, her study and hope are no less valuable, since she is training herself to see and enjoy everything that comes her way. To stay at home, with a spirit quick to beauty and honor and all high things, is far better fortune than the most splendid trip abroad with half-seeing eyes and a half-trained heart.—Forward.

MORE REVERENCE.

There has been a growing lack of reverence for the place of worship, the ordinance of the Church, the Word of God, that is hurtful to a painful degree. The way this irreverence appears is largely in a multitude of trifles. That is a serious phase of the matter. Trifles though they be, the aggregate constitute a peril to society and a hindrance to the work of the Church that is deplorable. The matter is worthy of the gravest concern. We see an increase of laughing, and talking on secular themes in a vein of levity, in the Sanctuary on the Lord's Day. Though the edifice is dedicated to the service of God and therefore called very naturally the 'House of God' it is recklessly converted into a place for worldly conversation, the theatre for having a good time in a vein of shocking hilarity. The preaching of the Word, one of the most solemn and fearful of performances for preacher and hearer in which a man can engage is heard as listlessly and criticised as freely as a lecture on some worldly subject with purely worldly aims. The fact that the minister is a mere mouthpiece through which God is speaking to all is disregarded. Although the Word sent is to prove to be either helpful or hurtful, either a savor of death unto death or of life unto life, according to the way it is respected and received, it is heard and talked about with the abandon we see among the auditors of the ordinary lecturer for gain. The 'Word' of God itself more and more holds a degraded place. It is quoted for all sorts of purposes. The thief, the demagogue, the flippant youngster, the debased newspaper scribbler quotes it without shame or fear, and in the most irreverent manner. In the tent meetings, in the churches, among assemblies of young Christian workers, we are met with cheap wit, levity, laughter, while professedly expounding the Word and working for Christ's Kingdom. All of this and more is current and highly reprehensible. The effects of it upon all but especially upon the younger people are very injurious. They are not affected as they should be by the Word, the Sunday school, the Sanctuary. Even the minister of the Gospel is degraded in thought and his office and he are alike shorn of the sanctity and influence they once held. Preachers, teachers, speakers, leaders, are largely responsible for the baneful phenomenon. The talker in the pulpit or upon the platform on the Holy Scriptures does incalculable injury by joking, levity and vulgar wit, and deserves to be loathed.

THY WILL BE DONE.

By the Late Hon. John Hay.

Not in dumb resignation we lift our hands on high;
Not like the nerveless fatalist, content to do and die.
Our faith springs, like the eagle's, who soars to meet the sun,
And cries exulting unto Thee, "O Lord, Thy will be done!"

When tyrant feet are trampling upon the common weal,
Thou dost not bid us bend and writhe beneath the iron heel.
In Thy name we claim our right by sword or tongue or pen,
And even the headman's axe may flash Thy message unto men.

Thy will! It bids the weak be strong;
It bids the strong be just;
No lips to fawn, no hand to beg, no brow to seek the dust.
Whenever man oppresses man beneath the liberal sun,
O Lord, be there! Thine arm make bare,
Thy righteous will be done.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S PRAYER MEETING.

Sunday, September 8, 1907. God's omnipresence (Psa. 139: 1-12).

How God's omnipresence makes faithfulness easier.

Helps to realizing God's presence.

What God's presence means in our weakness.

The rich and blessed assurance of the Bible from end to end is that we are not alone. God, who is our Father, knows our need. He understands how lonely our hearts sometimes become. We question whether any one understands, whether there is any help or love in the great world which we can have always with us. Our task is too great for our strength, or our plans fail, and we feel that we ourselves are failures; or some great sorrow strikes us down, and we are left alone and desolate. God knows how his children feel. So He assures them by His Word that He is near. He would have us understand from all nature that He is near. He would have us realize that the very longing of our hearts for Him is itself His creation, the quickening of a hunger in us which He quickens, in order that we may see that He is already there in our hearts with bread and love.

One of the purposes of Christ's coming was to show men that God is always with them, and to give us an example of a life among men lived with God, and in the joy and strength of His companionship. God came near in Christ that we might know how near He always is, and that thenceforth even the most desolate heart might know that it was not left comfortless or an orphan, but that God would be in it and go with it everywhere. The Saviour was Immanuel. God had visited His people to convince them that he was always near and everywhere.

There is no hard duty or distant place or heavy sorrow where God is not. We can go into the most difficult and unpleasant task with the confidence that he is in them with us, and will not let us fail. We can go off into the most distant place or the darkest room and know that He is there. In the heart of Africa we shall be with Him. "Any-where with Jesus," as the hymn truly assures us, "we can safely go." And no little child need be afraid of the dark. There, as in the light, God is; and our sorrows are the unique opportunities of His love. Then Christ's pitying heart is closer to us than we know—closer to us than our sorrow.

Pantheism is the view of the world which identifies God with the universe. It is the effort to reach a great truth, but it is an effort which loses God in the struggle to find Him. In our reaction from such a view, which confuses God with what God has made and with the world, through which God expresses Himself, we must not lose the precious truth that God is indeed in the world, though the world is not God. And all the world should speak to us of Him, and enable us to enter into the holy enjoyment and love of Him Who made it for us.

Daily Readings for Preceding Week.

Mon.—God greater than all (1 Kings 8: 22-27).
Tues.—Maker of all (Isa. 66: 12).
Wed.—"A God at hand" (Jer. 23: 23-32).
Thurs.—"In Him we live" (Acts 17: 22-23).
Fri.—"In the midst of them" (Matt. 18: 14, 20).
Sat.—Ever present (Matt. 28: 19, 20).

Religion is a constant struggle toward God. The shrines along the road mark the success of the struggle.

Prayer is a comfort. It helps a religion to realize its own aspirations.