

strikes me that modern biography furnishes incidents plainly betokening the imminency of an interested but unknown power influencing, if not actually originating and co-ordinating, special events, so as to be specially adaptive to meet extraordinary exigencies in the lives of earnest pure minded men.

There are those of us who, in a minor degree, have experienced just such strange happenings. But the biographies of Müller, Livingston and Paton furnish notable instances, and I am happy in being enabled by his critics to add to the list the illustrious name of the late Herbert Spencer. That great and good man passed quietly from earth a few days ago, execrated by the Christian world as an Agnostic; and although admitted to be one of England's few great thinkers and writers with not a blot to his moral character, yet the consecrated Dean and Chapter of Westminster denied to his few calcined ashes sepulture by the side of his friend and co-worker, Darwin. Where should such a man rest but with England's illustrious dead in his country's great Valhalla? Posterity and alien countries will do him deserved honor. How very unlike the narrow bigotry of the sects is the all-wise all-comprehending Providence that reads the hearts of men and confers its favors accordingly. Friendless, without fortune, health impaired, and for years his own publisher at serious loss, had Heaven not interposed in its own effective but mysterious way his great life work must have been abandoned.

Man's necessity is said to be God's opportunity. Each of those great men—great in the sphere assigned him—was doing a great meritorious work. To me it is quite sufficient to read Spencer's "First Principles" to see the great

towering intellect exploring laboriously among heaps of pearls and rubbish, trying to learn something reliable of the great inaccessible—the Palace of the Great King, and of its occupant. Wonder if in just such a case as Spencer and those eminent clericals there should come to be exemplified the Master's reported saying, "Many that are first shall be last, and the last first." Phylacteries and earth power will avail little where Spencer has entered. Character, not creed; works, not faith, are cited as the criteria for judging and separating the sheep from the goats. Therefore, let us all be earnest and persevering in our special sphere, the noble cause of safeguarding the widow and the orphan from the cruel pangs of penury.

With that thought in mind let us take another good look at Sunshine for December, with its groups of happy innocent faces of little ones. Doesn't it pain you to think of the numerous by-paths that are all gaping wide open to allure just such innocent creatures to vice and ultimate degradation? The great preventative is a pure, happy, well provided home. And life assurance is perhaps the surest and safest and easiest way to guarantee that boon that is known to us. These bright happy faces take no thought for the morrow; it is enough for them to know that "father's at the helm." Teach fathers, therefore, this pressing duty, to provide early for their offspring. With you I join in wishing all those happy children "a fond God-speed for the coming year," and for every other year of their life.

Neglect of so great and urgent a duty early in life may, and too often is, followed later with utter inability either physically or financially to accomplish it. With the resulting self-reproach comes up the solemn words: "It is im-