

still, to a wretch whom they are about to hang by the neck till he be dead. The very jailer supplies him with dainty dishes from his table. The pitying women sigh, "Poor man!" and proceed to deck his cell with flowers. His food, at the last day or two, is of the richest, and at his own ordering. The bill of fare, it is likely enough, will be published in the papers, as tinted menus are printed at a banquet. "He called for 'this,'" say they; "his dinner consisted of 'such and such.'" In the morning, while the crowd was gathering in the street outside, and the deputy sheriffs, filing in, were waiting, "he took a hearty breakfast." It is usually reported that he made a substantial meal, and his deglutition is described in the very journal that depicts the throttling of the throat that swallowed once, to swallow now no more forever.

One does not see much pleasure in it. But there it is. Now you have it, make the most of it. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." And such is the morose philosophy. There is no heartiness nor cheeriness, no charity, in all the whimpering of unbelief or all the levity and ease of man's mortality.

But, within the covenant of life to come, beneath the canopy of a providing grace and preparing glory, how can there be less than an abiding satisfaction and an enduring rest? "Oh, satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." "Eat, O friends! drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!" "In whom believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

To us, this world is not a bad world, after all, nor a sad one. In the lustre of God's countenance, it shines like a planet in the firmament. So the moon shining in the midnight is an object of delight; so is the evening and the morning star steeped in the lustre of the skies. But, if you had to toil through one of its cañons or crevasses, or if you were peering down into one of its volcanoes, it is to be doubted whether you

would much enjoy the view. Study it as it is in heaven. And so survey this orb in its orbit, in its track of light, as they see it from surrounding stars. All is well. The world is by no means finished hitherto. Human history, so far as we can judge, is not complete. Man's story is not told. It is in progress and serial publication. The testimony is not all in. Wait until the other side opens; wait until God sums up. To us, who see not yet all things put under Him, but even now see Jesus, this is a spectacle large with promise, lustrous with its rapture and its peace.

What would you think of that household, in which an invalid, who had been dying—given up—suddenly rallies and revives, who should brood in melancholy and bitterness because the invalid might be still unable to go down-stairs, or walk out-doors? It is gladness enough, thereupon, to know that he can take his nourishment and sit up or lie on his couch. Thanks be to God for *such* relief as this, and hope to come!

The skeptic spirit that murmurs and that mourns in its discontent is like a person straying on the Alps, who falters at length, lost among the passes, and, lying down beneth an avalanche or precipice above a chasm, shudders that the way is lost. But if a traveler or tourist, who had lost his way, and wandering long had sunken, all exhausted, on the spot, should spy a little chalet in the dimness of the distance, and make his faltering track towards the herdsman's cottage, and have his fainting frame refreshed by the coarse bread and scanty fare, and feel the fire crackling on the chimney-hearth of the simple low-roofed room, while the blast roared outside—he would never criticise ungratefully the frugal morsel because he lacked the dainties, or missed the silver service or the damask napkins or other elegancies of refined society.

After all, then, taking things as we find them, we have come upon a possible and a tolerable life in a formative and comfortable world; a fair, decent-enough sphere. It requires a good deal