

which we all should be deeply interested, the young because they are young, the older because they have been young, and because upon the young the future depends. Under God the future will be what they make it. We do not need to limit the question to the welfare of young men. We may widen it and ask, *is the young woman safe?* No doubt there are more moral safeguards thrown around young women than around young men. Their life is more secluded. The protecting influences of the home bind them more closely. They do not come into contact with so much of wickedness as young men, nor are they exposed to so many temptations, at least so many temptations of flagrant sin. And they have in addition to all that, the safeguard which God seems specially to have assigned to feminine nature, that innate sense of propriety, that modesty, and the love for the good and pure which are characteristic of womankind. Most women are naturally good. Yet the question to the young woman safe, is important and pertinent, more so at the present time than ever before. For conditions of life are rapidly changing. The safeguards of seclusion, and the protective influences of the home, do not now enshroud the young woman to the extent that they did in former days. For good or for evil woman's field is wider than it was, and is continually widening. More frequently than ever before, and at an earlier age perhaps, she goes forth from the home to fight her own battle, and earn her own livelihood. She is found in many of the professions and at many of the posts of labour where formerly only men were found. The young woman is more abroad than she used to be for the big world she is now-a-days seen elbowing her brother at every turn, and not seldom ousting him, and filling the position which he formerly did. I am not speaking meantime of the economic bearing of this—the effect that female labour, other than domestic, has and probably will increasingly continue to have upon the great labor market of the world, in lessening the available means of employment for men, and lowering the standard of wage, and the effect which that in turn will have upon marriage and the home. These things have a moral as well as an economic significance. But I refer first and simply to the fact that a large and increasing number of young women, either by choice or necessity, are deprived of the moral safeguard which a home life is supposed to furnish, and generally does furnish. Are others being supplied? Is it possible to supply others as good? The young woman is now not only a member of the family but a citizen of the world. And the world is very big and very rough, and sometimes very cruel and evil,—is she safe? Then her social life is larger than it used to be. Whether it be as wholesome is at least open to question. The demands of society upon her are more numerous and exacting than in former days. But society is often frivolous, sometimes worse than frivolous. From time to time we hear ominous mutterings as to society's doings, for in church papers and in the newspapers we read of the increasing use of intoxicants among society women at their afternoon parties. We have responsible people, who would not speak without a knowledge of the facts, warning against the gambling spirit which seems to have taken possession of so many women at the present time. And there are other evils of which we may not speak. It may be said that this applies only to a few giddy women of wealth and leisure who don't know what to do with their time or their money. Well the evil seems to be increasing; not diminish-

ing. And in any case these people have souls, and what shall a woman give in exchange for her soul? Moreover the evil if not checked will work downward. Society leads from the top. The constant tendency is for the lower grades to imitate the fashions, customs, foibles, follies of the higher so far as they can. Almost invariably B imitates A, and C imitates B, and so on down to X and Y and Z. And if the particular forms of evil that have been mentioned are not found as yet to any great extent in the lower strata of society are there not corresponding evils? I am not a pessimist nor a prophet of disaster. I do not wish to paint society as corrupt. Thank God there are many good, pure, healthy and helpful influences abroad. I have no doubt that despite those disgusting disclosures which from time to time are made, and the unsavory scandals which occasionally come to light the good influences are by far in the ascendency. But though society is not corrupt the leaven of corruption is there and it is working. It were folly to close our eyes to the fact that there is a dark underside to society. Many evils are abroad and many temptations, and our young women, because of their large social life, are more exposed than ever before. In view of this, and of the strong tendency of the present to materialistic standards of life, the question—is the young woman safe, is wanting of close attention. Is there adequate moral protection for innocence and inexperience in the world of business and the world of society? For we cannot afford that woman's ideals or her moral standards of life should be lowered. That would mean,—well in the end, in the final issue of things, it would mean moral and social damnation. That is strong language you say. Yes, I know, and if I could find any stronger I would use it. So potent is woman's influence in all the relations of life, particularly in the moulding of child life, which, notwithstanding all change of conditions, must always belong to her special province, that any permanent lowering of her ideals or her moral standards of life would unfailingly result in what I have said,—moral and social damnation.

Is the young man safe? For him also the temptations of life have not decreased but multiplied. Notwithstanding woman's incursions into the fields of labour, man is still in the main the bread winner. In order to that he must of necessity go into the world. The world is his workshop. Yet the young man, too, is more abroad in these days than he used to be. This is partly the result of choice, partly of necessity. It is partly of choice. The means of travel are cheap and convenient. New and far off fields beckon him. They hold out alluring prospects of success. The spirit of adventure, too, stirs strongly in him. He is not content with the little world in which older generations moved. He wants for himself a bigger world. He listens to the calls from afar and follows them. Sometimes it is from necessity. The older settled parts of the country become filled, then congested. The young man cannot earn his livelihood at home, or in the immediate neighborhood of home, even if he wished to do so. He must go farther afield. He cannot establish a home of his own beside the old home; there is no longer room for that. If only we could keep our young people beside us, is the cry of many a parent and many a minister. But it cannot be. There is from all the older districts a continual exodus, a continual outflow of the young life of the community. The majority of families have to break up and scatter. And the larger world means

of course more perils to encounter, more assailing temptations. Speaking generally too temptations specially assail young men—that connected with money, and that connected with pleasure. There is nothing wrong in the desire to improve one's worldly position. It is a laudable ambition provided it be properly exercised, and kept within proper bounds. But especially in a young country where new fields are continually opening up and new opportunities presenting themselves, there is the constant temptation to materialistic views of life—the temptation to get rich quickly, too quickly, anyhow, as if material gain were life's highest good. Young men beware of that spirit. If you allow it to possess you it will empty your life of its best content. You may attain to wealth, for wealth is a comparative thing, one man's poverty is another man's wealth, but it will be at the expense of manhood. Though you should never descend to legal dishonesty, though the law of the land should never lay its hand upon you and arrest you for any fraud, the soul that is in you will always be poor and mean and sordid. Use the world but don't abuse it, and don't let the world abuse you. Be its master not its slave. There is the temptation to pleasure. It has many forms. It may induce to over-indulgence in lawful pleasures and pursuits, or it may seduce to indulgence in unlawful, debasing pleasure that if followed will lay manhood in the dust. There are many roads to ruin, and the tempters are many, some of them full of guile, and others who tempt not knowing that they are tempting. Their proffers are those of a mistaken and misdirected friendships. Generous-hearted and jovial fellows they may be, who never for a moment realize that the social glass may contain a poison germ. The young man, especially when away from home and oldtime companions, thrown among new scenes and new associates, feeling somewhat lonesome perhaps, somewhat despondent perhaps, and with the external restraints of earlier days removed, is he safe? Is there no danger of his being turned from the right path, and either wasting his life in aimless pursuits, or descending to lower depths. Alas the many lives that might have been lived in honour and crowned with success but that instead have gone down into the abyss of sin and shame proclaim that there is. On the world's ways lie many slain. The dead are there. Its pits are the graves of souls.

Young men and women, what are you going to do about this thing? Absalom went out to battle, but he fought on the wrong side, not merely on the losing side but on the wrong side. He fought against the right, and in the end it will be found that the wrong side is always the losing side. That is God's ordainment. You, too, have your battle to fight, your life battle. No one is exempt from that, where then do you stand? On what side are you ranged, and how are you equipped for the contest? Are you sustained by love for the right, by Christian principle? Have you taken to yourselves the whole armour of God? If you haven't then most assuredly you are not safe. Every young man and young woman can be safe, but there is only one assured way for safety. It is to trust in God, and do the right. Home training, education, external restraints, the influence of Christian institutions, the influence of good society, for you will always be able to find good society, if you want to find it,—all these are exceeding helpful but they are not sufficient. They may suffice to make you respectable, but life, (Concluded on last column 2nd page editorial.)