

will. Strange as it seems, the mind is less our servant than the body. We can close the eyes of the body, but not the eyes of the mind. We must drive out, and keep out, the bad by the presence of the good. We must occupy the mind with pure, elevating, ennobling, useful thoughts, drawn from reading, from conversation, from hearing, from meditation; and, while we cannot forget absolutely, we shall in this way overlay the old impressions, and the mind will become wonted to travelling over another course. The mind indignantly resists vacancy. It will not be unoccupied.

The popular superstition which credits every vacant house with being haunted, and peoples it with bad spirits, has a germ of truth. If the demon be excluded, and the soul be swept and garnished, yet if it be empty, the demon will return with seven other spirits more wicked than himself. The Holy Spirit by entering the soul empties it of evil spirits; and, by dwelling in the soul, filling it to the utmost, he maintains the exclusion of the bad.

Here is a lesson for the conduct of our hearts. Perhaps Solomon only half comprehended the truth when he said, "Keep thine heart with all diligence." However great the diligence, we cannot keep it except by filling. There is a deep meaning in Paul's promise to the Philippians, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds" (Phil. iv. : 7). The word "keep" but inadequately expresses the sense of the Greek verb. It is more adequately rendered in the Revision, "shall guard." It means literally, "shall garrison,"—shall keep as a garrison, as a fortified place. Paul wrote from the place of his imprisonment at Rome. The castle in which he was confined was, of course, garrisoned. Often, when he lay awake at night, his mind occupied with thought for the infant churches, he heard the pacing of the sentinel upon the walls, and he knew there was not an hour of darkness or light when the castle was not fully occupied. Every morning he heard the

guard-mounting, when the new guard was mustered in before the old guard was turned out. He desired that in the same way the peace of God as a garrison should so occupy the hearts of his Philippian brethren that anxiety and foreboding, the enemies of the soul, could not find entrance.

Here is a lesson as to our oversight of the souls of others. It is not enough for the pastor or preacher to try to empty the mind; he must keep it filled. He can institute circles for the study of attractive subjects in sociology, economics, ethics, history. It is not enough for the Sunday-school teacher to reprove the scholar whose mind wanders; he must give the mind something to attend to, he must make his thought attractive, he must preoccupy the mind. There is enormous significance in the original meaning of our word "prevent." To prevent is, literally, to "come before." He who comes first may naturally hope to retain possession. If the church and the Sunday-school could only prevent the saloon and the gambling-hell in our new Western towns, it would make all the difference in the world.—By H. L. Wayland, D.D.

OUR Lord's great lesson in John xv. is about the vine and its branches. He says "I am the vine, ye are the branches." If you look at the branches of a vine, you observe that the bark is the same, the leaves are the same, and the fruit is the same. There is the closest resemblance between the branches and the vine. Some Christians reduce your spiritual temperature to zero. They have comparatively little or no spirituality, and worse, they are worldly. If I brought you a slip of a log, and said I had found it growing on a vine, you would say: "I think there is a mistake, this is oak, the leaves are ragged like those of an oak. We are not accustomed to see that kind of branch on a vine." I can believe that that oak grew on a vine before I can believe that some men and women that I have met grow on Jesus Christ.

BISHOP OF HURON.

## MY VESPER SONG.

By MARY R. BUTLER.

Filled with weariness and pain,  
Scarce strong enough to pray,  
In this twilight hour I sit,  
Sit and sing my doubt away,  
O'er my broken purposes,  
Ere the coming shadows roll,  
Let me build a bridge of song,  
"Jesus, lover of my soul,

"Let me to Thy bosom fly."  
How the words my thoughts repeat!  
To Thy bosom, Lord, I come,  
Though unfit to kiss Thy feet.  
Once I gathered sheaves for Thee,  
Dreaming I could hold them fast:  
Now I can but idly sing,  
"Oh, receive my soul at last."

I am weary of my fears;  
Like a child, when night comes on,  
In the shadow, Lord, I sing  
"Leave, oh, leave me not alone."  
Through the tears I still must shed,  
Through the evil yet to be,  
Though I falter while I sing,  
"Still support and comfort me."

"All my trust on Thee is stayed";  
Does the rhythm of the song,  
Softly falling on my heart,  
Make its pulses firm and strong?  
Or is this Thy perfect peace,  
Now descending while I sing,  
That my soul may sleep to-night  
"Neath the shadow of Thy wing?"

"Thou of life the fountain art";  
If I slumber on Thy breast,  
If I sing myself to sleep,  
Sleep and death alike are rest.  
Through the shadows over past,  
Through the shadows yet to be,  
Let the ladder of my song  
"Rise to all eternity."

Note by note its silver bars  
May my soul in love ascend,  
Till I reach the highest round  
In Thy kingdom without end.  
Not impatiently I sing,  
Though I lift my hands and cry,  
"Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

## WERE THEY MERELY COINCIDENCES?

Not unfrequently the coincidence is so marvelous as to take our reason by surprise, and suggest that

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them then how we will.

Two of these coincidences are related by an eminent Boston clergyman, the late Dr. A. J. Gordon, as occurring to himself. We abridge the narrative as published in his "Biography."

On opening his mail one morn-