

time, and the papers sent to them, will be read by many, and I doubt not, will, through the blessing of God, do much good. This year past I have been a believer in "millenium," as it is called, but in fact a believer in the Bible, and I am the only person in this part of the country, who has the moral courage to own it. I am much opposed and ridiculed, but this does not move me. I have had nearly all the books that have been written upon this subject in the United States, and I have done all I could to circulate them. I have given them to every person that would read them, and had the pleasure, in several instances, to know that the Lord has blessed the reading of these little books to the conviction and conversion of souls. I have sent some of the books to the West Indies and Halifax. Also tracts in every direction: and in this way I am trying to give the "Midnight Cry." None of the ministers in this part of the Province are sounding the alarm, and the Methodists are publicly speaking against it, and say that many things in the prophecies are to be fulfilled before the judgment. The people look up to their minister, and whatever he says they take for granted is the truth without examining the Bible for themselves. If I was a preacher, I should have much more influence. It is considered here that preachers must know more of the Bible than any one else, consequently if the doctrine was preached here, I believe that many would be induced to give their hearts to God, who are now delaying the time "till a more convenient season."

Should a talented lecturer come to this place, I would do all that I could to assist him, (I am no preacher as above stated.)

My prayer is that the Lord may send one here to awaken up a sleeping church, and to convince to indifferent sinners of the nearness of the judgment. Should one come, he would be opposed; but if the Lord sent him, he would make his way clear, and much good, I doubt not, would be done. Should you wish to get any further information upon this subject, I should be happy to give it to you. Whatever is done, must be done quickly. I write this in haste. May the Lord bless you in the prayer of

Thursday—Brother Martin has not yet returned from his visit to Lincoln, Woodstock, &c.—We expect him daily.

The Celestial Railroad.

BY NATHANIEL HARTWELL

The following interesting article first appeared in the Democratic Review. We publish it on account of the rich stores of instruction it contains, and the moral it teaches. It admirably illustrates the progress made in popular religion since the days of John Bunyan, and shows the improvements made by the Transcendentalists and Neologists, to be found in our modern popular churches. We commend it to those among the sects who are the most bitter against the coming of Christ, as a looking glass in which themselves are strikingly reflected. It is just such an article as John Bunyan would write were he now alive.

Not a great while ago, passing through the gate of dreams, I visited that region of the earth in which lies the famous city of Destruction. It interested me much to learn that, by the public spirit of some of the inhabitants, a railroad has recently been established between this populous and flourishing town and the Celestial City. Having a little time upon my hands, I resolved to gratify a liberal curiosity by making a trip thither. Accordingly, one fine morning, after paying my bill at the hotel, and directing the porter to stow my luggage behind a coach, I took my seat in the vehicle and set out for the station house. It was my good fortune to enjoy the company of a gentleman—one Mr. Smooth-it-away—who, though he had never actually visited the Celestial City, yet seemed as well acquainted with its laws, customs, policy, and statistics, as with those of the City of Destruction, of which he was a native townsman. Being, moreover, a director of the railroad corporation, and one of its largest stockholders, he had it in his power to give me all desirable information respecting that praiseworthy enterprise.

Our coach rolled out of the city, and at a short distance from its outskirts passed over a bridge of elegant construction, but somewhat too slight as I imagined, to sustain any considerable weight. On both sides lay an extensive quagmire, which could not have been more disagreeable, either to sight or smell, had it been the kernels of the earth emptied of their pollution than this.

"This," remarked Mr. Smooth-it-away, "is the famous Slough of Despond—a disgrace to all the neighbourhood; and the greater that it might so easily be converted into firm ground."

"I have understood," said I, "that efforts had been made for that purpose from time immemorial."

Gorman rationalism, tracts, sermons, and essays of modern clergymen, extracts from Plato, Confucius, and various Hindoo eggers, together with a few ingenious commentaries on texts of Scripture, all of which, by some scientific process, have been converted into a mass like granite. The whole bog might be filled up with similar matter."

It really seemed to me, however, that the bridge vibrated and heaved up and down in a very unsteady manner, and in spite of Mr. Smooth-it-away's testimony to the solidity of its foundation, I should be loth to cross it in a crowded omnibus, especially if each passenger were encumbered with as heavy luggage as that gentleman and myself. Nevertheless, we got over without any accident, and soon found ourselves at the Station house. This very neat and spacious edifice, erected on the site of the little Wicket gate, which formerly, as old pilgrims will recollect, stood directly across the highway, and by its inconvenient narrowness, was a great obstruction to the traveller of liberal mind and expansive stomach.

A large number of passengers were already at the Station house, awaiting the departure of the cars. By the aspect and demeanour of the persons, it was easy to judge that the feelings of the community had undergone a very favourable change, in reference to the celestial pilgrimage. It would have done Bunyan's heart good to see it. Instead of a lonely and fagged man with a huge burthen on his back, plodding along sorrowfully on foot while the whole city hooted after him, here were parties of the first gentry and most respectable people in the neighbourhood setting forth toward the Celestial City as cheerfully as if the pilgrimage were merely a summer tour. Among the gentlemen were characters of deserved eminence, magistrates, politicians, and men of wealth, by whose example religion could not but be greatly recommended to their unwearied brethren. In the ladies' apartment, too, I rejoiced to distinguish some of those firsts of fashionable society, who are so well fitted to adorn the most elevated circles of the Celestial City. There was much pleasant conversation about the news of the day, topics of business, politics, or the lighter matters of amusement, while religion, though indubitably the main thing at heart, was thrown tastefully in the background. Even an infidel would have heard little or nothing to shock his sensibility.

One great convenience of the new method of going on pilgrimage I must not forget to mention. Our enormous burthens, instead of being carried on our shoulders as had been the custom of old, were all safely deposited in the baggage car, and I was assured would be delivered to their respective owners again. It may be remembered also that there was an ancient feud between Prince Beezlebub and the keeper of the Wicket Gate, and that the adherents of the former distinguished personage were accustomed to stoutly deny the door at honest pilgrims while knocking at the doors. This dispute, much to the credit, as well of the illustrious potentate above mentioned, as of the worthy and enlightened directors of the railroad, has been specifically arranged on the principle of mutual compromise. The Prince's subjects are now pretty numerously employed about the Station house, some in taking care of the baggage, others in collecting fuel, feeding the engines, and such congenial occupations, and I can conscientiously affirm that persons more attentive to their business, more willing to accommodate, or more generally agreeable to the passengers, are not to be found on any railroad. Every good heart must surely exult at so satisfactory an arrangement of an immemorial difficulty.

"Where is Mr. Great-heart?" inquired I.—"Beyond a doubt the directors have engaged that famous old champion to be chief conductor on the railroad?"

"Why, no," said Mr. Smooth-it-away, with a dry cough. He was offered the situation of brakeman, but to tell you the truth, our friend Great-heart has grown preposterously stiff and narrow in his old age. He has so often guided pilgrims over the road on foot that he considers it a sin to travel in any other fashion. Besides, the old fellow had entered so heartily into the ancient feud with Prince Beezlebub, that he would have been perpetually at blows, or in language with some of the Prince's subjects, and thus have embroiled us anew. So, on the whole, we were not sorry when honest Great-heart went off to the Celestial City in a buff, and left us at liberty to choose a more suitable and accommodating man. Yonder comes the conductor of the train. You will probably recognize him at once."

The engine at this moment took its station in advance of the cars, looking, I must confess, much more like a sort of mechanical demon that would hury us to the infernal regions, than a laudable contrivance for smoothing our way to the Celestial City. On its top sat a personage almost enveloped in smoke and flame, which (not to startle the reader) appeared to gush from his own mouth and stomach as we lag from the engine's brazen abdomen.

"Is my eye deceiving me?" cried I. "What an earth is this? A living creature? If so, he is own brother to the engine he rides upon."

"Poh, poh, you are obtuse," said Mr. Smooth-it-away, "with a hearty laugh. Don't you know Apollyon, Christian's old enemy, with whom he fought so fierce a battle in the Valley of Humiliation? He was the very fellow to manage the engine, and so we have reconciled him to the custom of going on pilgrimage, and engaged him as chief conductor."

"Bravo—bravo!" exclaimed I, with irrepressible enthusiasm. "This shows the liberality of the age. This proves, if anything can, that many prejudices are in a fair way to be obliterated. And how will Christian rejoice to hear of this happy transformation of his old an-

tagonist. I promise myself great pleasure in insuring him of it when we reach the Celestial City."

The travellers being all comfortably seated, so now rattled away merrily, accomplishing a greater distance in ten minutes than Christian probably trodged over in a day. It was laughable to have glanced along, as it were, at the side of a thousand to observe two dourly toll-travellers in the old pilgrim guise, with corks and staff, and the intricate rolls of parchment in their hands, and their moleratish burthens on their backs. The preposterous obstinacy of these honest people in persisting to groan and stumble along the difficult pathway, rather than take advantage of modern improvements, excited great mirth among our wiser brotherhood. We greeted the two pilgrims with many pleasant gibes and a roar of laughter, whereupon they gazed at us with such woful and absurdly compassionate gazes, that our merriment grew ten-fold more obstreperous. Apollyon, also, entered heartily into the fun, and contrived to stir the smoke and flame of the engine, or of his own breath, into their faces, and enveloped them in an atmosphere of scalding steam. These little practical jokes amused us mightily, and doubtless afforded the pilgrims the gratification of considering themselves martyrs.

At some distance from the railroad, Mr. Smooth-it-away pointed to a large, antique edifice, which he observed was a tavern of long standing, and had formerly been a noted stopping-place for pilgrims, in Bunyan's road-book it is mentioned as the Interpreter's House.

"I have long had a curiosity to visit that old mansion," remarked I.

"It is not one of our stations, as you perceive," said my companion. "The keepers was violently opposed to the railroad, and well he might be, as the track left his house of entertainment on one side, and thus was pretty certain to deprive him of all his reputable customers. But the foot-path still passes his door, and the old gentleman now and then receives a call from some solitary traveller, and entertains him with fare as old-fashioned as himself."

Before our talk on the subject came to a conclusion, we were rushing by the place where Christian's burthen fell from his shoulders at the sight of the cross. This served for a theme for Mr. Smooth-it-away, Mr. Live-for-the-world, Mr. Hide-an-in-the-heart, and Mr. Scaly-conscience, and a knot of gentlemen from the town of Shin-repentance, to descend upon the incalculable advantages to be gained from the safety of our baggage. Myself and all the passengers indeed joined with great unanimity in this view of the matter, for our burthens were rich in many things esteemed precious throughout the world, and especially, we each of us possessed a variety of favourite habits, which we trusted would not be out of fashion, even in the polite circles of the Celestial City. It would have been a sad spectacle to see such an assortment of valuable articles tumbling into the sepulchre. Thus pleasantly conversing on the favourable circumstances of our position as compared with those of past pilgrims, and of narrow-minded ones at the present day, we soon found ourselves at the foot of Hill Difficulty. Through the very heart of this rocky mountain a tunnel had been constructed of the most admirable architecture, with a lofty arch and a spacious double track, so that notwithstanding the earth and rocks should chance to crumble down, it will remain an eternal monument of builder's skill and enterprise. It is a great thing, incidentally to advance that the materials from the heart of Hill Difficulty have been employed in filling up the Valley of Humiliation; thus obviating the necessity of descending into that disagreeable and unwholesome hollow.

"This is a wonderful improvement, indeed," said I. "Yet I should have been glad of an opportunity to visit the Palace Beautiful, and be introduced to the charming young ladies—Miss Prudence, Miss Piety, Miss Charity, and the rest—who have had the kindness to entertain pilgrims there."

"Young Ladies," cried Mr. Smooth-it-away, "as soon as he could speak for laughing. "And charming young ladies! For my dear fellow, they are old maids, every soul of them—grim, starchy, dry, and angular—and not one of them, I will venture to say, has altered so much as the fashion of her gown, since the days of Christian's pilgrimage."

"Ah, well," said I much comforted, "then I can very well dispense with their acquaintance."

The respectable Apollyon was now putting out the steam at a prodigious rate, anxious perhaps to get rid of the unpleasant reminiscences connected with the spot where he had so deplorably encountered Christian. Consulting Mr. Bunyan's road-book, I perceived that we must now be within a few miles of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, into which deleterious region, at our present speed, we should plunge much sooner than seemed at all desirable. In truth I expected nothing better than to find myself in the ditch on one side, or the quag on the other. But, on communicating my apprehensions to Mr. Smooth-it-away, he assured me that the difficulties of this passage, even in its worst condition had been vastly exaggerated, and that in its present state of improvement, I might consider myself as safe as on any railroad in Christendom.

Even while we were speaking, the train shot into the entrance of this dreaded valley.— Though I plead guilty to some foolish palpitations of the heart during our headlong rush over the cavernous bowels of the earth, yet we were unjust to withhold the highest encomiums on the wisdom of its original conception, and the ingenuity with which it was executed. It was gratifying likewise to observe how much care had been taken to dispel the everlasting gloom and supply the defect of cheerful sunshine, not a ray of which has ever penetrated these awful bowels.

For this purpose, the inflammable gas, which exudes plentifully from the soil, is collected by means of pipes, and thence conducted to a quadruple row of lamps along the whole extent of the passage. Thus a radiance has been created, even out of the fiery and sulphurous excreta that rises forever upon the valley; a radiance lurid, but ever, to the eyes, and somewhat bewildering, as I discovered by the changes which it wrought on the visages of my companions. In this respect, as compared with natural daylight, there was the same difference as between truth and falsehood, but if the reader has ever travelled through the dark valley, he will have learned to be thankful for any light that he can get; if not from the sky above, then from the blasted oak beneath. Such was the red brilliancy of these lamps that they appeared to build walls of fire on both sides of the track, between which we held our course at lightning speed, while a reverberating thunder filled the valley with its echoes. Had the engine run off the track, (a catastrophe it is whispered, by no means unprecedented,) the bottomless pit, if there be any such place, would undoubtedly have received us. Just as some dismal foibles of this kind had made my heart quake, there came a tremendous shriek careering along the valley, as if a thousand devils had burst their lungs to utter it, but which proved to be merely the whistle of the engine on arriving at a stopping place.

The spot where we had now paused is the same that our friend Bunyan—a truthful man, but infected with many fantastic notions—has designated, in terms plainer than I like to repeat, as the mouth of the infernal region. This, however, must be a mistake, inasmuch as Mr. Smooth-it-away, while we remained in the smoky and lurid cavern, took occasion to prove that Tophet has not even a metaphorical existence. The place, he assured us, is no other than the crater of a half extinct volcano, in which the diabolical cause forges to be set up for the manufacture of railroad iron. Hence also is obtained a plentiful supply of fuel for the use of the engines. We were here gazed into the dismal obscurity of the broad cavern mouth, whence, erect and anon, dashed huge tongues of dusky flame, and the most strange-shaped shaped monsters, as well as scenes of fearful grotesque into which the smoke seemed to writh itself, and had heard the avast murmurs, and shrieks, and deep soughing, whispers of the blast, sometimes blowing itself into words almost articulate—would have been red upon Mr. Smooth-it-away's countenance as greedily as we did. The infernals of the cavern, moreover, were unwearily personages, dark, smoke-begrimed, generally deformed, with misshapen feet, and a pair of dusky claws in their eyes, as if their hands had caught fire, and were blazing out of the upper windows. It struck me as a peculiarity that our labourers at the forge and those who brought fuel to the engine, when they began to draw in their breath, positively emitted smoke from their mouth and nostrils.

Among the idlers about the train, most of whom were puffing cigars which they had lighted at the flame of the crater, I was perplexed to notice several who, to my certain knowledge, had herefore set forth by railroad to the Celestial City. They looked dark, wild, and smoky, with a singular resemblance, indeed, to the native inhabitants, like whom, also, they had a disagreeable propensity to utter snarling gibes and sneers, the habit of which had wrought a scolding contortion on their visages. Having begun on speaking terms with one of them—a indolent, good-for-nothing fellow, who went by the name of Take-it-easy—I called to him, and inquired what was his business there.

"Did you not start," said I, "for the Celestial City?"

"That's a fact," said Mr. Take-it-easy, carefully puffing some smoke into my eye. "But I heard such bad accounts that I never took pains to climb the hill on which the city stands. No business doing, no fun going on, nothing to drink and no smoking allowed, and a thrumming of church music from morning till night. I would not stay in such a place, if they offered me house-room and living free." "But, my good Mr. Take-it-easy," cried I, "why take up your residence here, of all places in the world?" "Oh," said the loafer with a grin, "it is very warm hereabouts, and I meet with plenty of old acquaintances, and altogether the place suits me. I hope to see you back again, some day moon. A pleasant journey to you."

While he was speaking, the bell of the engine rang, and we dashed away after dropping a few passengers, but receiving no new ones. Rattling onward through the valley, we were dazzled with the fiercely gleaming gas lamps, as before; but sometimes, in the dark, of intense brightness, gem-faces, that bore the aspect and expression of individual spirits or evil passions, seemed to thrust themselves through the veil of light, glaring upon us, and stretching forth a great dusky hand, as if to impede our progress. I almost thought that they were my own sins that appalled me there. These were freaks of imagination—nothing more,—mere delusions, which I ought to be heartily ashamed of; but all through the dark Valley, I was tormented, and pestered, and doubtfully bewildered with the same kind of waking dreams. The mephitic gases of that region indoxiate the brain. As the light of the natural day however began to struggle with the glow of the lanterns, these wild imaginations lost their vividity, and finally vanished with the first ray of sunshine that greeted our escape from the Valley of the Shadow of Death. "I've had gone a mile beyond it, I could not tell what gave me my cat that this whole gloomy passage was a dream."

At the mouth of the valley, so John Bunyan mentions, is a cavern, where, in his day, such two great giants, Pope and Fagan, who had sworn