

No man can tell how much such testimony did both to leaning and suffering men actually to rest in Christ the one Saviour and to keep alive through ages of ignorance and social depression, the great doctrines of our holy religion. Certainly none can doubt the connection between the loving care and skill of those who wrought the old churches of England and such weekly scenes as the dying poetess sang of.

How many blessed groups this hour are bending,  
Through England's primrose meadow-paths their way  
Toward tower and spire, amidst shadowy elms  
Ascending  
Whence the sweet chimas proclaim the hallowed day.

We do not need elaborate sculptures now to tell the story of the atonement; but let us be just to those old workers; then there was no open Bible and no printing press, now, thank God, we have an open Bible and the story of the cross comes from living lips. But, brethren, we shall greatly mistake if we suppose that there is no need for costly expression of our love. We, too, have our work here. Who would care to live in a country or city where there were no churches of which the churches were unacquainted for, untidy, or falling into decay with no loving hands to keep them. So long then as our religion requires places where God's people shall assemble for His worship; so long will the character of those places be the measure of the love for God's work. The log cabin in a new settlement may as fully shew forth God's glory as your larger edifices with their great beauty in the centre of the city; but if the character be monumental its character must bear fitting relation to the taste and means of those who worship there. This is clearly taught us. "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your celled houses, and this house be waste." Shall we not build cheaply? A careful estimate there should be of what is necessary. Your City Halls, your Post Office and your Custom House shall not be cheap. When your City Halls, your Odd Fellow's Hall and your Masonic Temples shall be spacious and beautiful. When your Banks shall be of solid masonry and majestic proportions and perfect architecture, shapely Corinthian columns, with their fine capitals of the richly carved acanthus, plate glass, spaciousness, light and beauty everywhere, shall these stand as exponents of the value of those things which perish, while churches like garrets, and classrooms that are dark and dingy and Sabbath school rooms in cold and empty dungeons tell how we have loved the habitation of thine house, O Lord. No brethren, I thank God that an enlightened love for all that Sabbath Schools and prayer meetings and class meetings mean, have led you to build this first and by no means least important part of your church enterprise. Our churches mean so much for us, they show that God is known and His law is recognized, that saving truth is received which shall purify commerce and direct legislative and sweeten social life. They stand as exponents of the most blessed truths, as suggestive of the mightiest saving power. They remind those whose hearts had otherwise broken with the awful dread of the unknown future of the relief given. They suggest to the weary souls well nigh unto death an eternal rest. The sore and bruised hearts are comforted, the fearful learn to take refuge under the shadow of the Almighty, the bereaved keep their hearts tender over their graves, and yet triumphant with the visions of their faith, the passing soul fears no evil; and multitudes find their vision raised on lifting lines of light which lead to the celestial glory, and men weep, weary and depressed cry: "We know not what we shall be but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him."

I remember on the night of the great fire, the home of some of you were blazing, while towards others the inevitable doom came on, hearing some of your children saying in tones of the deepest grief, "Oh we shouldn't mind so much if only Centenary were spared." I don't wonder at it. Some of us think of the primitive looking chapel or the village church of our earlier days, and they suggest the Sabbath which the land was keeping, the class-room, the prayer-meeting, the Sabbath school, the influences which reached us there and the purity and sweetness which these brought into our home, the gracious forces that came to us moulding our lives and shaping our characters, and all which that experience led us up to of consolation and hope, which we now realize, and we cry: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

It is loved because here is taught the revelation of God's will. Plato of old voiced the deepest feeling of the unevangelized world when he complained that there was no authoritative statement of the destiny which lay beyond death. We have the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever. We know, indeed, that our faith in the Bible as the Word of God is ridiculed as a most absurd credulity, but somehow the absurdity cannot yet be made to appear. Eighteen centuries of attack, during which thought and learning and criticism have done their best, only leave our faith the stronger, in the early years of the Christian age its great facts passed through the most searching ordeal, and ran the gauntlet of the keenest wit of the most cultured age. The battle still rages. Men say, "We bring you facts which discredit Revelation." Well, we will loyally accept the proven facts. But science has yet given no indubitable facts which weaken by the smallest our faith in the Bible. But we, too, have facts, and we challenge our critics also to be loyal to truth. No thanks to them, no thanks to us. Here is our case. That out of this book as history, sustained by other histories contemporary and subsequent—there rise up to our view, first dimly in type and shadow, then in the most normal life, the great facts of our redemption. The great facts of our redemption. The great facts of our redemption.

Christ is here, but not now it shall be said of his people in danger, "It was now dark and Jesus was not come unto them." Not now shall those into whose homes is falling the shadow of death, have to strain their eyes vainly along the way for the Christ beyond the Jordan; not now to wait four days when life's greatest sorrow has visited them, for the coming of Jesus. Not now shall they go up to the temple to find that He is in the hands of Pilate.

Christ is here, but not now it shall be said of his people in danger, "It was now dark and Jesus was not come unto them." Not now shall those into whose homes is falling the shadow of death, have to strain their eyes vainly along the way for the Christ beyond the Jordan; not now to wait four days when life's greatest sorrow has visited them, for the coming of Jesus. Not now shall they go up to the temple to find that He is in the hands of Pilate.

of Jesus of Nazareth. These proved, we consider that substantially all is proved. Now, we aver that by testimony, various, full of undesigned coincidences, cumulative, irresistible, the life and death and resurrection of Christ, are as clearly proved as any facts of history have been. We aver that it is not more sure, it is not so sure, that Alexander the Great, or Julius Caesar lived and warred, as it is that Jesus of Nazareth lived and taught, and wrought miracles, and died and rose again.

And what intellectual rest, and what spiritual light, and what Divine solace does this book bring in. You have seen David's calm statement, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path," and his impassioned utterance, "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath into thy judgments at all times." But why should I dwell here to remind you, brethren, of what God's word is to you of instruction and strength and comfort. Well that Book is all authoritative here. Now in this divinely imperial manner, it gives the last word on questions which it is life for you to know; Low it comes into your deepest sorrow griefs, with the power to comfort. Here, too, in God's house, its truths are expounded—Here its precious promises are applied, and here the authorized ambassador of God, with loving lips, declares to men in their sin and sorrow the "Thus saith the Lord" which assures purity and rest to all who accept it.

It is loved because here God is worshipped.

The dignity to which man is advanced in connection with the worship of God is finely put by the inspired Psalmist: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him and the Son of man that thou visitest him?"

And "blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee. Here what hallowed pure excitement, when joining in holy hymns, in praise and prayer, each worshiper gaining inspiration from the whole assembly of believers, may meet with God, feels that the world of perishable things grows less to him; that he is raised to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and already breathes an "ampler ether and divider air." And here as God's people gather around the table of the Lord, and show forth the Lord's death, what unutterable tenderness of spirit is there; as they anticipate "His coming" and their eventual triumph, what wonderful possibility of life fill their thought in connection with the pleasures at God's right hand for evermore.

But I must hasten to notice that it is loved because God is here present. It is the habitation of God's house. You will remember what you have read of the magnificence of Solomon's temple; of its material splendours, its gorgeous ceremonial, its stately music. But all this paled into insignificance before the one fact of the divine presence there. What a scene rises before one in connection with its history: Then towered the palace, then in awful state, The temple reared its everlasting gate. No workman's steel, no ponderous axes rung, Like some tall palm the graceful spire sprung. Majestic silence then the harp awoke. The symbol changed; the deep voiced trumpet spoke And solemn spread her suppliant arms abroad. Viewed the descending flame and blessed the present God.

You will remember, too, that when after the restoration, the story of the house was in "comparison as nothing" to the house "in her first glory" and "the Holy Shekinah was dark where it shone;" it was promised "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former." The promise was fulfilled. In due time "the Desire of all nations" came. What an age of golden days for those who knew their Redeemer night. Well might Mary sing her Magnificat and Simeon cry "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." What discoveries of divine things were there for the disciples who came forth with radiant faces to declare "we have found the Messiah." What joy of companionship was there for Andrew and Peter and Matthew on the breezy hillside, or in the voyage on the lake, what tenderness, what rapture, what purity for the Magdalene, whose tears and ministry of love told how she prized the forgiveness He had wrought, what intimate communion with God for John the beloved; what physical and spiritual rest for scores of healed and forgiven sufferers; and for Martha and Mary, what brightness in their home, what hope in their sorrow, what healing for their heart-break, what discoveries made to them of a life which no death could touch for ever. Would that we could have seen those days, Have trod where the twelve in their wayfaring tread, Or stood where they stood with the chosen of God, or day by day have listened in the temple to the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. My brethren we have no need for such wish, that golden age has but grown into richer affluence. You will remember the Saviour's words "It is expedient for you that I go away, I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." Ah, thou Divine Saviour, we love the habitation of Thy house; for there, in the rude log hut which was the best that loving hands could build, and in the city temple, where the taste and beauty and spaciousness and comfort tell that out of their love men had given their best to Thee; art Thou, O Christ, in the midst of Thy worshippers.

Yes, loved of the Father, Thy Spirit is near To the meek and the lowly and patient here. And the voice of thy love is the same even now As at Bethany's tomb or Olivet's brow.

Christ is here, but not now it shall be said of his people in danger, "It was now dark and Jesus was not come unto them." Not now shall those into whose homes is falling the shadow of death, have to strain their eyes vainly along the way for the Christ beyond the Jordan; not now to wait four days when life's greatest sorrow has visited them, for the coming of Jesus. Not now shall they go up to the temple to find that He is in the hands of Pilate.

Christ is here, but not now it shall be said of his people in danger, "It was now dark and Jesus was not come unto them." Not now shall those into whose homes is falling the shadow of death, have to strain their eyes vainly along the way for the Christ beyond the Jordan; not now to wait four days when life's greatest sorrow has visited them, for the coming of Jesus. Not now shall they go up to the temple to find that He is in the hands of Pilate.

your little ones up here to the Sabbath School, and still His benedictive lips shall speak for your relief and for their blessing. Ye shall come here to the concert for prayer, or to the Class Meeting where two or three are gathered together in His name and ye shall find Him present. Ye shall join the great congregation weary and careworn, tired and tempted, and in great surprises of blessing, ye shall cry with Jacob—but with a far richer experience than his—"surely the Lord is in this place; this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven."

And what occasion is there for joy in the constant presence of the Divine Saviour in His Church. He is there in the potent and saving energies of His Holy Spirit. And now all the means of grace are replete with living power. Illuminating influences attend the inspired Word of God making it yet more plain, the conscience is touched into sensibility, the impenitent have visions, the tender-hearted are awakened, the penitents find Him near, and cry, Have mercy on me, and they do not call in vain; He gives the consciousness of pardon, and the blessed sense of purity, and He imparts the inspiration of a life which is felt to be true, and known to be safe, and which is full of the possibilities of a blessedness with God, than which the noblest soul could covet nothing higher.

And Christ is present as the hearer of prayer.

We need not trouble ourselves greatly with those who deny the value of prayer. We have settled that like many other matters once for all in reaching the great truth—the logical conclusion even of the concessions of His enemies—the proper Deity of the Lord Christ. And so it were enough to Him say, "Ask and it shall be given you." We need no prayer test, for we have seen its value tested. We have found in the case of those who truly prayed, the evidence that they had been with Jesus. We have seen the growing saintliness of their life, we have marked the nobility, the courage, the serenity of their spirit, and we knew that all this resulted from their communion with God. Yes, and we ourselves, led by gracious instincts, cried unto the Lord in our trouble, and He heard us. In a former dispensation, God had promised of his house: "And there will I meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat." But then only could the people come through the High Priest. Now, the way into the holiest where was the mercy seat is open to all His people, and more fully now than ever shall God's house be called the house of prayer.

And shall not God hear us. Why, "He heareth the young ravens when they cry; and yet they cry for carrion." But see for what we come. I have spoken of the Church of Christ. Why, it may be asked, is that not more fully exercised? A meeting was recently held of those who are looking for glorious moral results when, as they hope, Christ shall come in embodied hope to reign upon the earth. They forgot, as the Church too widely forgets, that Christ is here now in all his saving power. How shall we realize larger measures of that power? For these things He will be engaged of. He wants a praying Church. You dear friends shall not stand idly waiting for the Second Advent that the power of the Lord may be present to heal you and your families of sin and its evils. Lo, God is in this house. There is indeed, no hope for this sin-wrecked world but in the saving power of the Holy Ghost. Hence, every Christian Assembly meeting to renew their pledges of loyalty and devotion to His sacred cause feel this. Here as they incite each other to "wrestle for the ruined race by sin eternally undone." He is present to intensify all the feeling, and induce the mightier contention of true prayer—He is here to answer them by giving a fuller investiture of spiritual power, and by going with them as they go from their assemblies to conflict.

"To lead the trophied armies on,  
To spoil the foe, to take the crown,  
And win the world to God."

See again for what we pray. This word "habitation" signifies literally a refuge. In the early Zion "God was known in her palaces for a refuge." So it is yet. Sometimes God's people, like David, are tried with problems too painful for them. They come to God's house, and by His assurance, "What thou knowest not now thou shalt know hereafter," and by fresh supplies of His own sanctifying presence, He quiets them. They come pressed by severe temptations; He says, "My grace is sufficient; they ask, and sufficient grace is given. Some awful peril threatens them or their beloved ones; perhaps they go down into shadows like the grave, but Jesus comes in their distress, and now they sing "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." Or they have been already smitten; and bereaved and heart-sore they cry, "I shall never see good," but they go and tell Jesus, and he healeth the broken in heart. Do you wonder that God's people love His house?

And be assured, dear friends, that such love will be of a very practical character. We shall give with no niggardly hand of that which God hath given us, that convenience, comfort, taste and beauty shall belong to the house of God which we love.

Here are ample arrangements for your prayer and class meetings. Let a glad people through these rooms to meet a present Saviour. Let them so come that Christ shall meet them, and this church shall work miracles of blessing in this city by virtue of its endowment of power from on high.

Here is your Sabbath School work. What a field for your loving toil. Let all classes be kept in prayer, en-

in the far ages of eternity shall be able to write up the result. Give yourselves to the entire work of the church as Christian men and women, for it were easy to do so. Love is pure inspiration—the love of Christ and the love of the souls He has redeemed. This pours all its generous impulses into your bosoms, and this "constraining" love confers endowments something more than human and fits for achievements only less than divine.

I have only to remind you of a divine promise elsewhere given: They shall prosper that love her. Now this is fulfilled even in the lowest way by financial prosperity. In prophecy, the sons are re-estimated as coming from afar and the daughters from the ends of the earth, bringing their silver and their gold with them. The forests are tributary, sending the cedar and the box and the fir tree together. Does not this indicate that God does in some special way, more than men can calculate in ordinary financial arrangements, give aid in building our churches. Often have His people in their great love and with a strong faith laid the foundations of their church not knowing well how it should be finished, but God prospered them. Again and again have I seen it so. You have seen it, too. In your first Centenary Church "plans were obtained, a board of trustees formed and without a dollar in the chest the erection of the church was begun." Did not God prosper your fathers?

He gives spiritual prosperity. Under the blessed influence connected with this house, your children shall be brought to God. Here shall you be helped in the great fight of faith, and in the formation of character for heaven. Here shall you be comforted in all your afflictions.

And he prospers the church's great work, when thus lovingly wrought.

Not in vain shall you seek here to recover the lost, to bring the wanderers within the range of saving influence, and so recover them to purity and to God. The work shall prosper, and gracious influences which you shall have been instrumental in directing, shall live and widen and bless men until time shall be no more, nay, shall reach into eternity.

After the sermon, and while the collection in aid of the building fund was being taken up, the choir sang: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." The collection amounted to \$185, and during the afternoon a gentleman who was not prepared to give in the morning sent the treasurer a check for \$100 in the afternoon to be added to the collection.

FAMILY READING.

FOUR YEARS OLD.

Oh wind of the sweet May morning,  
What is the sweetest thing,  
The fittest for birthday token  
That fond rosy hands can bring?  
O army of loving mothers  
Send me your counsel I pray,  
And name me a gift for a darling,  
Who is four years old to-day.

I have hunted the clover meadow,  
And the blossoming orchard, through  
For a bit of the robin's crimson,  
Or the jay birds dainty blue;  
But robin's at home with her babies,  
Was having a holiday—  
And when I made love to the blue bird,  
She whistled and fluttered away.

And then I thought of the violet,  
Sweetest and best of them all,  
So I ran to catch the perfume,  
That her purple cloak let fall;  
But in vain I culled to gather,  
What never a cup can hold,  
Though for every breath of odor,  
You offer a cup of gold.

I searched in the highest grasses,  
For an echo of mellow song,  
That the sweet thrush left behind her,  
As she merrily flitted along,  
But the song was lost in the rushes,  
And the bird flew off to her nest,  
And crooned to the hungry children  
That fluttered under her breast.

I searched for a gift uncommon,  
O say was I proud and wrong?  
To try for the blue bird's color,  
Or to seek to prison a song,  
Was it like a foolish mother,  
To seek in her heart to bring,  
An odor of purple pansies  
That sweet intangible thing?

But stay! I have thought of a token,  
Surely I was not wise,  
Can you guess it, my secret dearest  
By the light that shines in my eyes?  
'Tis your motherless babe my darling,  
And it knows no change but death,  
It is truer than blue-birds color  
Sweeter than violets breath.

Though you may not grasp, nor hold it,  
In the palm of your small brown hand,  
Yet you can carry its sweetness,  
With you to the better land,  
O wind of the soft May morning!  
Have you anything sweeter to lay  
At the feet of a little youngster?  
Who is four years old to-day?

MAY RILEY SMITH.

I WILL MAKE YOU REPENT IT.

A young officer (in what army no matter) had so far forgotten himself, in a moment of irritation, as to strike a private soldier, full of personal dignity (as sometimes happens in all ranks), and distinguished for his courage. The inexorable laws of military discipline forbade to the injured soldier any practical redress—he could look for no re-

his command; and, in the tumult of indignation, as he turned away, the soldier said to his officer that he would "make him repent it." This, wearing the shape of a menace, naturally rekindled the officer's anger, and intercepted any disposition which might be rising within him toward a sentiment of remorse; and thus the irritation between the two young men grew hotter than before. Some weeks after this a partial action took place with the enemy. Suppose yourself a spectator, and looking down into a valley occupied by the two armies. They are facing each other, you see, in martial array. But it is no more than a skirmish which is going on, in the course of which, however, an occasion suddenly arises for a desperate service. A redoubt, which has fallen into the enemy's hands, must be recaptured at any price, and under circumstances of almost hopeless difficulty. A strong party has volunteered for the service; there is a cry for somebody to lead them; you see a soldier step out from the ranks to assume this dangerous leadership; the party moves rapidly forward; in a few minutes it is swallowed up from your eyes in clouds of smoke; for one-half hour, from behind these clouds, you receive hieroglyphic reports of bloody strife, fierce repeating signals, flashes from the guns, rolling musketry, and exulting hurrahs, advancing or receding, slackening or redoubling. A length all is over; the redoubt has been recovered; that which was lost is found again; the jewel which had been made captive is ransomed with blood. Crimsons with glorious gore, the wreck of the conquering party is relieved, and at liberty to return. From the river you see it ascending. The plume-crested officer in command rushes forward, with his left hand raising his hat in homage to the blackened fragments of what once was a flag, whilst with his right hand he seizes that of the leader; though no more than a private from the ranks. That perplexes you not; mystery you see none in that, for distinctions of order perish, ranks are confounded, high and low are words without a meaning, and to wreck goes every notion or feeling that divides the noble from the noble, or the brave man from the brave. But wherefore is it that now, when suddenly they wheel into mutual recognition, suddenly they pause? This soldier, this officer, who are they? O reader, once more they had stood face to face; the soldier it is that struck him; the officer it is that struck him. Once again they are meeting, and the gaze of armies is upon them. If for a moment a doubt divides them, in a moment the doubt has perished. One glance exchanged between them publishes the forgiveness that is sealed forever. As one who recovers a brother whom he had accounted dead, the officer sprang forward, threw his arms around the neck of the soldier, and kissed him, as if he were some martyr, glorified by that shadow of death from which he was returning; whilst on his part, the soldier, stepping back and carrying his open hand through the beautiful motions of the military salute to a superior, makes this immortal answer—that answer which shut up forever the memory of the indignity offered to him, even whilst for the last time alluding to it: "Sir," he said, "I told you before that I would make you repent it."—From De Quincey's Autobiographical Sketches.

DANGEROUS SMARTNESS.

A little while ago, it is said, a farmer in Pennsylvania set a trap with a tempting bait to catch a fox which was making unwelcome and expensive visits to his hen-roost.

When the farmer went to see his trap it had been sprung or "touched off." The bait was gone, and instead of a live captured fox there was only a quiet stick of wood fast in the jaws of the trap. This happened for fourteen nights. The farmer could see no tracks but his own, and those of the fox. It perhaps seemed discouraging work to furnish baits only to have them stolen; but the man persevered. He did not give up, and think, "Well, it's no use." No; he baited once more, and on the fifteenth night he found a fine old fox with his nose fast in the strong jaws of the traps, and in his mouth was a stick of wood. Once too often he had tried his sharp game of springing the trap and stealing the bait. He was caught at last.

This little story shows that some kinds of smartness are dangerous. The fox was cunning, but his cute tricks cost him dear.

Sometimes human beings, as well as foxes, try to gain something by sharp tricks. They seem to enjoy for awhile the fruit of their dishonest doings. They may many times escape catching, but they generally get safely "nabbed," at last.

Lying, cheating, pilfering, disobeying, and other naughty doings, may seem to be profitable for awhile, but by and by the trap snaps in an unexpected way, and the evil-doer is caught and punished, or found out and put to shame. The safest and best way is to