"THOSE OTHER PEOPLE."

WE had quarreled. I don't know what about; neither quite knew, I think. One of those unexplained quarrels when we thought mean things of each other without any cause, and then justified the other's condemnation by meaner actions. We were polite to stupidity, and our conversation was interlarded with the poorest satire, in which we exulted as displaying the sharpness of our wit and the indifference of our feelings. We ruthlessly stabbed, and wondered every time at the other's cruelty with a renewed sense of surprise, whilst pondering on a return thrust likely to prove more hurtful. Every day we seemed to be growing farther from the possibility of a reconciliation, till at last we became quite friendly in our enmity. We ceased to be personal, and only discussed outside matters. Our hearts had solidly frozen—we, who had loved each other so much—there was no longer warmth enough even for satire. We ate our meals silently together in the great hall of the queer old Pan of Montenero, which was built high up on the rocks above the swift river coiling about their base 200 feet below, an impregnable stronghold in the old times of the border wars, and now but a hostelry for travelers crossing the wild forest lands that stretched for miles to the horizon. I had come to meet the Count, my father, on his way south, but he had been detained, and Ugo had declared he would not leave me in the desolate old castle till a safer protector than my female attendant should arrive. I acquiesced—how willingly then, when my heart beat at the sound of his footsteps, and the gloomy halls seemed so mysteriously delightful whilst he was there! Things had indeed changed! Now I protested impatiently at the waiting. Would not my father soon arive? Yet surely I dreaded his advent, which would mean our parting without ever a reconciliation.

He offered to ride to his encounter. I murmured, "He might if he wished," and turned away with my heart sinking into my toes. He did not go, however, and in this I found further cause for a display of ill-humor. He successfully retaliated, till I despised him with all my soul, and wondered how I ever could have thought him aught but a bear.

One day, as I strode angrily along the corridor, I encountered one of the guests I had not before noticed, though later I remembered that she had been about the inn for some days. She was a little person, not so much in height—she might have been as tall as myself—as in general effect; she looked little, and had the meanest countenance I had ever beheld. I took such a sudden dislike to the creature that I involuntarily drew my skirts aside as she passed. Later on in the day we both observed her at a table in the company of a man. He was taller than she, yet had the same appearance of puny meanness. An impotent pugnacity marked the whole of his irascible physiagnomy, the features of which were white and formless. The two openly wrangled during the whole course of the meal, so that we could not help laughing at the ridiculousness of their behavior. They handied words on every conceivable subject. "Pray don't eat your soup as if you were fond of it," said she; "I hate to see people eat their soup in that way." "You hate every one but yourself," said he. "Perhaps I do, when every one has diminished to a you," she replied.

"How brutal they are!" murmured Ugo.

I laughed. Well, we were well-bred in our quarrels, at any rate. Whatever we thought we took care to conceal in elaborate politeness worthy, certainly, of better feelings. I think he understood what was passing through my mind, for he flushed a little angrily. Surely I did not mean to compare ourselves to these low creatures, whose deformed bodies seemed the index to their crooked souls. Whether I did or not, I succeeded in hiding further expression of my thoughts.

During the following days we became better friends; the discussion of these oddities made us forget something of our own rancor. We were pleased to condemn them, and philosophize on the usefulness of such beings on earth, their hideousness and evident discontent with life. Whenever we came across them our loathing increased. It happened one afternoon as we were seated on the parapet of the tower overlooking the dense stretch of wooded country to westward, and the silver serpent river, whose color deepened with the setting of the sun, till the whole became a winding line of molten crimson at our feet, that a strange emotion, caused by the wondrous scene, stirred us both. We turned to look at one another, when the sight of their vile figures intercepted our glances, and their querulous voices echoed in the great silence—petty, stupid, mean.

"I wonder that they can even think of such things," I said a little hotly, whereat an odd look crept into Ugo's eyes, which made me feel suddenly indignant. No doubt he was comparing me to them. How small of him to do that! How I disliked the way he dangled his feet against the parapet, his sword between his knees! I rose up and went in. He could listen and enjoy the company of those horrible people if he liked, since he could not see any difference between them and me. I went disconsolately to my room and watched from my window, and the tears crept into my eyes as I thought that surely Ugo and I would never be the same to one another again. Whilst I sat and dreamily pondered, the idea entered my head that this strange pair had come between us; that they had cast the evil eye on us—the evil eye! I shudder as a sense of the reality of the superstition assailed me. I recollected that they had appeared at the inn on the day of our quarrel. For seven days Ugo and I had been as strangers to one another, and they, they would sever us for all time. I leaned out of my window, gazing down on the parapet beneath me, on which Ugo still sat. The horrible woman was looking at him even as I was, and the man mumbling to himself. I could have laughed out loud from very rage, for Ugo seemed to be mesmerized to the spot, bathed in the crimson light from the setting sun, with a look in his eyes that was not his, a look of one enthralled by evil. Far below, the river seemed a way of blood, and the forest trees black and immutable. The idea of blood entered my soul, and with it a terrible thought. I shivered and closed the casement, then hastened away to escape from the grewsome notion that seemed to pursue me and take possession of my will.

* * * * * * *

I had done it. The awful idea had returned to me.

In the late evening I stole through the dark corridor to her room, and all the way I laughed to myself, for the strange madness so possessed me that I had neither fear nor horror. Then I crept away down the stairs and out into the open by the flowing river. There, as the cool air fanned my feverish face, I thought—I had done right; she was an evil, horrible thing who would harm us. But, Ugo! Who will he think? Still, I said aloud, I am glad. I am glad.

"Why are you glad?"

I turned round with a little cry as Ugo came out of the darkness and joined me.

"I could not rest," he went on quite naturally, "so I came out here. I did not expect to find you," he continued, with no warmth in his tone, adding, "Those people got on my mind. I felt an irresistible desire to go and smother that brute—kill him. I wish I had; but somehow I hadn't the courage."

"Ugo!"

"What is it?" he said.

"I have done it."

"What?"

"I have killed her."

"You are mad!"

"I have killed her," I repeated.

He remained silent, pale to the lips, then said, hurriedly: "No one can possibly know you did it?"

"No—unless——"

"Unless?"

"He—he should divine."

"But he must die, too!" He sprang away from my side, bitten by my madness. "Don't you see," he said, looking oddly, "such people must not exist; they are horrible, venomous worms; they are not human, they have the evil eye, they poison the earth."

I followed slowly, possessed by a strange calm. Of course it was quite right. The world must be rid of such extraneous beings. We cleansed our houses of all vile accumulations, we swept our streets, and burned every useless thing, killed nauseous insects and treacherous animals, exterminating all that was loathsome. Why did we stop at human vermin, and not purify the world, too, of such defilement? Then suddenly I stood still. Ugo, a few yards before me, was rooted to the ground, and, she! I had failed, then. My stabs meant nothing. She could not be killed. Ugo, too, had failed! The blood in my veins turned cold with horror, and, like him, I could not move from where I stood.

At last he came up to me as one in a dream, and said, "We cannot kill them! Look! They are some evil spirits. Little one," he murmured, tenderly, "come away, come away from here; it is a poisonous place. They may live forever, but they shall not separate us. We were in their thralldom." Was it a dream? Ugo's arms were round me. "I love you, I love you!" he said. "I have been afraid to tell you, and they, they came between us; but we do not care—do we? You were so brave, braver than I, for you did not hesitate; but it was no use, we could not kill them."

Our arms were tightly entwined, nothing in the world could come between us now. Those grewsome people were but pigmies. What cared we? And we turned with a laugh towards them. Then we saw what was indeed stranger than anything that had yet happened at the old castle, for there under our very eyes they changed, and she became even as I was, tall and fair, and he as Ugo, brave and beautiful, till at last it seemed that they were we and we were they; then as the pale moon gleamed from out the clouds and threw a flood of light across our path, we found that we were alone.

"It is not true!" I murmured. "I may have been like that, but not you." He colored to his eyebrows. "The portrait of me was doubtless excellent," said he; "the other, of course, was a preposterous calumny."

But I don't think either of us cared very much, for me knew that as long as our hearts beat near one another's those other people could not find a way to come between us. And, in very truth, they were seen no more at Montenero.—Westminster Budget.

SHEEP SHEARING.

Expertness of Professional Shearers in New South Wales.

Most of our readers would probably think that to shear, say, twenty or thirty sheep, would be as much as the most skillful and industrious shearer could do in a long day's work. They may, then, says Chambers' Journal, be interested to know what vastly greater numbers are expected to pass through the deft hands of a capable craftsman in the pastoral regions of the great sheep-keeping colony of New South Wales. Our notes have been collected on the spot.

The number of sheep a man can shear in a day of eight and a half hours is governed by several circumstances over and above the shearer's expertness, depending mainly on the class of sheep and the nature of the country over which the sheep have pastured.

Of all the breeds of sheep merimos are the most difficult to shear. In the first place, they are very "throaty"—that is, the skin covering the neck lies in large, loose folds, so that manipulation with the shears is at best tedious and troublesome. Then, again, they possess what is technically known as the "points" of the breed—they are wooled to the tip of the nose and down the legs to the hoofs; it is these so-called "points" that take up time.

Sheep grazing over pastures where burs, grass seeds, twigs, etc., are numerous, or over coarse, sandy country, pick up in their fleece quantities of foreign matter that blunt the shears during the process of shearing. It will at once be seen that this especially applies to short-legged sheep, heavily fleeced as the merinos are to the extremities of their limbs. The time taken up sharpening his shears is a serious consideration to the shearer.

Bad or careless shearers, in order to give the sheep the appearance of being properly shorn, may either "shingle" or "feather" the fleeces they cut off. By "shingling" is meant making a second cut over the same part of the body of the sheep, the first severing the staple toward the center, and the second close to the skin; yet the whole fleece holds together and the damage may not be detected till closely examined. On the contrary, "feathering" is plainly seen as soon as the fleece is shaken out; here the clip has been uneven, leaving patches of longer wool to be severed by a second cut. This leaves a quantity of short wool in the inside the fleece, which readily separates when the fleece is unrolled. "Shingling" is the worst fault, as it quite ruins the staple for combing purposes.

In the mountain districts west of the table-land the average number of sheep a fairly good man will shear in a day of eight and a half hours varies from seventy to 120. On the northern plains near the Queensland border the average is 120 to 170; and it is on record that the champion shearer of Queensland clipped 327 sheep in nine hours. Such a man, in the language of "the seed," is termed a "ringer."

In the central plains on the Lachlan River the average is eighty to 120. With machines the numbers are, of course, considerably more. The men are paid £1 per 100 sheep; and out of this they have to provide rations, shears, sharpening-stones, oil, etc.

A Neat Swindling Trick.

The latest swindling game was practiced successfully the other day at Benton, Pa. Two men, who appeared to be strong silver and gold advocates, were in the central depot and became involved in a heated discussion. The gold man offered to bet a gold double eagle that if he hammered the coin into a shapeless mass it would still be worth $20. He was ostensibly taken up by the silver advocate, but when it came to selling the lump to Jeweler Roth the store was closed. James Hagerty, a strong sound money advocate, who stood by and who had implicit faith in the value of gold, gave the man $20 for the battered coin. The two enthusiasts disappeared shortly after, and then it was discovered that the metal left by them was spurious.

A Terrible Warning.

A Bangor, Me., man was struck and killed by lightning while he was hugging his best girl.

In the eyes of a young woman, a man cannot exaggerate the importance of his $40 a month position.

A CALL TO YOUNG MEN

THEIR OPPORTUNITY, SAFETY, DEFENSE AND DESTINY.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Says a Good Home Is a Mighty Defense, and So Are Industrious Habits, but He Insists that Religion Is the Strongest of All.

Our Washington Pulpit.

A resounding call goes out in this sermon of Dr. Talmage. If heeded, it would be revolutionary for good. His subject is "Young Men Challenged to Nobility," and the text II. Kings, vi. 17, "And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man."

One morning in Dothan a young theological student was scared by finding himself and Elisha the prophet, upon whom he waited, surrounded by a whole army of enemies. But venerable Elisha was not scared at all because he saw the mountains full of defense for him in chariots made of fire, drawn by horses of fire—a supernatural appearance that could not be seen with the natural eye. So the old minister prayed that the young minister might see them also, and the prayer was answered, and the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he also saw the fiery procession, looking somewhat, I suppose, like the Adirondacks or the Alleghanies in autumnal resplendence.

Many young men, standing among the most tremendous realities, have their eyes half shut or entirely closed. May God grant that my sermon may open wide your eyes to your safety, your opportunity and your destiny!

The Charm of Home.

A mighty defense for a young man is a good home. Some of my hearers look back with tender satisfaction to their early home. It may have been rude and rustic, hidden among the hills, and architect or upholsterer never planned or adorned it. But all the fresco on princely walls never looked so enticing to you as those rough hewn rafters. You can think of no park or arbor of trees planted on fashionable country seat so attractive as the plain brook that ran in front of the old farmhouse and sang under the weeping willows. No barred gateway adorned with statue of bronze and swung open by obsequious porter in full dress has half the glory of the old swing gate. Many of you have a second dwelling place—your adopted home—that also is sacred forever. There you built the first family altar. There your children were born. All those trees you planted. That room is solemn because once in it, over the hot pillow, flapped the wing of death. Under that roof you expect when your work is done to lie down and die. You try with many words to tell the excellency of the place, but you fail. There is only one word in the language that can describe your meaning. It is home.

Now, I declare it, that young man is comparatively safe who goes out into the world with a charm like this upon him. The memory of parental solicitude, watching, planning and praying will be to him a shield and a shelter. I never knew a man faithful both to his early and adopted home who at the same time was given over to any gross form of dissipation or wickedness. He who seeks his enjoyment chiefly from outside association rather than from the more quiet and unpresuming pleasures of which I have spoken may be suspected to be on the broad road to ruin. Absalom despised his father's house, and you know his history of sin and his death of shame. If you seem unnecessarily isolated from your kindred and former associates, is there not some room that you can call your own? Into it gather books and pictures and a harp. Have a portrait over the mantel. Make ungodly mirth stand back from the threshold. Consecrate some spot with the knee of prayer. By the memory of other days, a father's counsel, and a mother's love, and a sister's confidence, call it home.

Another defense for a young man is industrious habits. Many young men in starting upon life in this age expect to make their way through the world by the use of their wits rather than the toil of their hands. A boy now goes to the city and falls twice before he is as old as his father was when he first saw the spires of the great town. Sitting in some office, rented at $1,000 a year, he is waiting for the bank to declare its dividend, or goes into the market expecting before night to be made rich by the rushing up of the stocks. But luck seemed so dull he resolved on some other tack. Perhaps he borrowed from his employer's money drawer and forgets to put it back, or for merely the purpose of improving his penmanship makes a copy of a merchant's signature. Never mind. All is right in trade. In some dark night there may come in his dreams a vision of the penitentiary, but it soon vanishes. In a short time he will be ready to retire from the busy world, and amid his flocks and herds cultivate the domestic virtues. Then those young men who once were his schoolmates and knew no better than to engage in honest work will come with their ox teams to draw him logs and with their hard hands to help heave up his castle. This is no fancy picture. It is everyday life. I should not wonder if there were some rotten beams in that beautiful palace. I should not wonder if dire sickness should smite through the young man, or if God should pour into his cup of life a draft that would thrill him with unbearable agony; if his children should become to him a living curse, making his home a pest and a disgrace. I should not wonder if he goes to a miserable grave and beyond it into the gnashing of teeth. The way of the ungodly shall perish.

A Great Battle.

My young friends, there is no way to genuine success except through toil either of head or hand. At the battle of Crecy in 1346 the Prince of Wales, finding himself heavily pressed by the enemy, sent word to his father for help. The father, watching the battle from a windmill, and seeing his son was not wounded and could gain the day if he would, sent word: "No, I will not come. Let the boy win his spurs, for, if God will, I desire that this day be his with all its honors." Young man, fight your own battle all through and you shall have the victory. Oh, it is a battle worth fighting! Two monarchs of old fought a duel, Charles V. and Francis, and the stakes were kingdoms, Milan and Burgundy. You fight with sin and the stake is heaven or hell.

Do not get the fatal idea that you are a genius, and that, therefore, there is no need of close application. It is here where multitudes fail. The curse of this age is the geniuses—men with enormous self-conceit and egotism and nothing else. I had rather be an ox than an eagle; plain and plodding and useful rather than high flying and good for nothing but to pick out the eyes of carcasses. Extraordinary capacity without work is extraordinary failure. There is no hope for that person who begins life resolved to live by his wits, for the probability is that he has not any. It was not safe for Adam, even in his unfallen state, to have nothing to do, and therefore God commanded him to be a farmer and horticulturist. He was to dress the garden and keep it, and had he and his wife obeyed the divine injunction and been at work they would not have been sauntering under the trees and hankering after that fruit which destroyed them and their posterity—a proof positive for all ages to come that those who do not attend to their business are sure to get into mischief.

I do not know that the prodigal in Scripture would ever have been reclaimed had he not given up his idle habits and gone to feeding swine for a living. The devil does not so often attack the man who is busy with the pen, and the book, and the trowel, and the saw, and the hammer. He is afraid of those weapons. But woe to the man whom this roaring lion meets with his hands in his pockets.

Do not demand that your toil always be elegant and cleanly and refined. There is a certain amount of drudgery through which we must all pass whatever be our occupation. You know how men are sentenced a certain number of years to prison, and after they have suffered and worked out the time, then they are allowed to go free. So it is with all of us. God passed on us the sentence, "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." We must endure our time of drudgery, and then, after awhile, we will be allowed to go into comparative liberty. We must be willing to endure the sentence. We all know what drudgery is connected with the beginning of any trade or profession, but this does not continue all our lives, if it be the student's, or the merchant's, or the mechanic's life. I know you have at the beginning many a hard time, but after awhile those things will become easy. You will be your own master. God's sentence will be satisfied. You will be discharged from prison.

Bless God that you have a brain to think and hands to work and feet to walk with, for in your constant activity, O young man, is one of your strongest defenses. Put your trust in God and do your best. That child had it right when the horses ran away with the load of wood and he sat on it. When asked if he was frightened, he said, "No, I prayed to God and hung on like a beaver."

A Recreative Day.

Respect for the Sabbath will be to the young man another preservative against evil. God has thrust into the toil and fatigue of life a recreative day when the soul is especially to be fed. It is no new fangled notion of a wild brained reformer, but an institution established at the beginning. God has made natural and moral laws so harmonious that the body as well as the soul demands this institution. Our bodies are seven day clocks that must be wound up as often as that or they will run down. Failure must come sooner or later to the man who breaks the Sabbath. Inspiration has called it the Lord's day, and he who devotes it to the world is guilty of robbery. God will not let the sin go unpunished either in this world or the world to come.

This is the statement of a man who has broken this divine enactment: "I was engaged in manufacturing on the Lehigh River. On the Sabbath I used to rest, but never regarded God in it. One beautiful Sabbath when the noise was all hushed, and the day was all that loveliness could make it, I sat down on my piazza and went to work inventing a new shuttle. I neither stopped to eat nor drink till the sun went down. By that time I had the invention completed. The next morning I exhibited it and boasted of my day's work, and was applauded. The shuttle was tried and worked well, but that Sabbath day's work cost me $30,000. We branched out and enlarged, and the curse of heaven was upon me from that day onward."

While the divine frown must rest upon him who tramples upon this statute, God's special favor will be upon that young man who scrupulously observes it. This day, properly observed, will throw a hallowed influence over all the week. The song and sermon and sanctuary will hold back from presumptuous sins. That young man who begins the duties of life with either secret or open disrespect to the holy day, I venture to prophesy, will meet with no permanent successes. God's curse will fall upon his ship, his store, his office, his studio, his body and his soul. The way of the wicked he turneth upside down. In one of the old fables it was said that a wonderful child was born in Bagdad, and a magician could hear his footsteps 6,000 miles away. But I can hear in the footstep of that young man on his way to the house of worship to-day the step not only of a lifetime of usefulness, but the oncoming step of eternal ages of happiness yet millions of years away.

An Infallible Defense.

A noble ideal and confident expectation of approximating to it are an infallible defense. The artist completes in his mind the great thought that he wishes to transfer to the canvas or the marble before he takes up the crayon or the chisel. The architect plans out the entire structure before he orders the workmen to begin, and, though there may for a long while seem to be nothing but blundering and rudeness, he has in his mind every Corinthian wreath and Gothic arch and Byzantine capital. The poet arranges the entire plot before he begins to chime the first canto of tingling rhythms. And yet, strange to say, there are men who attempt to build their character without knowing whether in the end it shall be a rude Tartar's tent or a St. Mark's of Venice—men who begin to write the intricate poem of their lives without knowing whether it shall be a Homer's "Odyssey" or a rhymster's botch.

Nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand are living without any great life plot. Booted and spurred and plumed, and urging their swift courser in the hottest haste, I ask: "Hello, man! Whither away?" His response is, "Nowhere." Rush into the busy shop or store of many a one and taking the plane out of the man's hand or laying down the yardstick, say, "What, man, is all this about—so much stir and sweat?"

The reply will stumble and break down between teeth and lips. Every day's duty ought only to be the filling up of the main plan of existence. Let men be consistent. If they prefer misdeeds to correct courses of action, then let them draw out the design of knavery and cruelty and plunder. Let every day's falsehood and wrongdoing be added as coloring to the picture. Let bloody deeds red stripe the picture, and the clouds of a wrathful God hang down heavily over the canvas, ready to break out in clamorous tempest. Let the waters be chafed and froth tangled and green with immeasurable depths. Then take a torch of burning pitch and scorch into the frame the right name for it—the soul's suicide. If one entering upon sinful directions would only in his mind or on paper draw out in awful reality this dreadful future, he would recoil from it and say, "Am I a Dante that by my own life I should write another 'Inferno?'" But if you are resolved to live a life such as God and good men will approve, do not let it be a vague dream, an indefinite determination, but in your mind or upon paper sketch it in all its minutiae. You cannot know the changes to which you may be subject, but you may know what always will be right and always will be wrong. Let gentleness and charity and veracity and faith stand in the heart of the sketch.

On some still brook's bank make a lamb and lion lie down together. Draw two or three of the trees of life, not frost-stricken, nor ice-glazed, nor wind-stripped, but with thick verdure waving like the palms of heaven. On the darkest cloud place the rainbow, that pillow of the dying storm. You need not print the title on the frame. The dullest will catch the design at a glance and say, "That is the road to heaven." Ah, me! On this sea of life what innumerable ships, heavily laden and well rigged, yet seem bound for no port! Swept every whither of wind and wave, they go up by the mountains, they go down by the valleys and are at their wits' end. They sail by no chart, they watch no star, they long for no harbor. I beg every young man to-day to draw out a sketch of what, by the grace of God, he means to be. Think no excellence so high that you cannot reach it. He who starts out in life with a high ideal of character and faith in its attainment will find himself incased from a thousand temptations. There are magnificent possibilities before each of you, young men of the stout heart, and the buoyant step, and the bounding spirit. I would marshal you for grand achievement. God now provides for you the field and the armor and the fortifications. Who is on the Lord's side? A captain in ancient times, to encourage his men against the immense odds on the side of their enemies, said: "Come, my men, look these fellows in the face. They are 6,000; you are 300. Surely the match is even." That speech gave them the victory. Be not, my hearers, dismayed at any time by what seems an immense odds against you. Is fortune, is want of education, are men, are devils against you, though the multitudes of earth and hell confront you, stand up to the charge. With 1,000,000 against you, the match is just even—nay, you have a decided advantage. If God be for us, who can be against us? Thus protected, you need not spend much time in answering your assailants.

Cling to the Cross.

You may now have enough strength of character to repel the various temptations to gross wickedness which assail you, but I do not know in what strait you may be thrust at some future time. Nothing short of the grace of the cross may then be able to deliver you from the lions. You are not meeker than Moses, nor holier than David, nor more patient than Job, and you ought not to consider yourself invulnerable. You may have some weak point of character that you have never discovered, and in some hour when you are unsuspecting the Philistines will be upon thee, Samson. Trust not in your good habits, or your early training, or your pride of character—nothing short of the arm of Almighty God will be sufficient to uphold you. You look forward to the world sometimes with a chilling despondency. Cheer up. I will tell you how you may make a fortune. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you." I know you do not want to be mean in this matter. Give God the freshness of your life. You will not have the heart to drink down the brimming cup of life and then pour the dregs on God's altar. To a Savior so infinitely generous you have not the heart to act like that. That is not brave. That is not honorable. That is not manly. Your greatest want in all the world is a new heart. In God's name I tell you that. And the Blessed Spirit presses through the solemnities and privileges of this holy hour. Put the cup of life eternal to your thirsty lips. Thrust it not back. Mercy offers it—bleeding mercy, long suffering mercy. Reject all other friendships, be ungrateful for all other kindness, prove recreant to all other bargains, but to despise God's love for your immortal soul—do not do that.

I would like to see some of you this hour press out of the ranks of the world and lay your conquered spirit at the feet of Jesus. This hour is no wandering vagabond staggering over the earth; it is a winged messenger of the skies whispering mercy to thy soul. Life is smooth now, but after awhile it may be rough, wild and precipitate. There comes a crisis in the history of every man. We seldom understand that turning point until it is far past. The road of life is forked, and I read on two signboards: "This is the way to happiness" and "This is the way to ruin." How apt we are to pass the fork of the road without thinking whether it comes out at the door of bliss or the gates of darkness.

Many years ago I stood on the anniversary platform with a minister of Christ who made this remarkable statement: "Thirty years ago two young men started out in the evening to attend the Park Theater, New York, where a play was to be acted in which the cause of religion was to be placed in a ridiculous and hypocritical light. They came to the steps. The consciences of both smote them. One started to go home, but returned again to the door, and yet had not courage to enter, and finally departed. But the other young man entered the pit of the theater. It was the turning point in the history of these two young men. The man who entered was caught in the whirl of temptation. He sank deeper and deeper in infamy. He was lost. That other young man was saved, and he now stands before you to bless God that for twenty years he has been permitted to preach the gospel."

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

Every man has some peculiar train of thought which he falls back upon when he is alone. This, to a great degree, moulds the man.—Dugald Stewart.

Good is God, and long is eternity.