

HOPE OF THE WORLD.

TURN TOWARD CHRIST IN OUR ADVERSITIES.

This Refers Alike to Individuals and Nations—Christlike Sermon by Dr. Talmage—A Beautiful Picture of the Redeemer.

WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 22.—In his sermon to-day, Dr. Talmage chose the universal theme of the season—the Christmas-tide. The text selected was, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem." Matt. ii, 1.

At midnight from one of the galleries of the sky a chant broke. To an ordinary observer there was no reason for such a celestial demonstration. A poor man and wife—travelers, Joseph and Mary by name—had lodged in an out-house of an unimportant village. The supreme hour of solemnity had passed, and upon the pallid forehead and cheek of Mary, God had set the dignity, the grandeur, the tenderness, the everlasting and divine significance of motherhood.

But such scenes had often occurred in Bethlehem, yet never before had a star been unfixed, or had a baton of light marshalled over the hills winged orchestra. If there had been such a brilliant and mighty recognition at an advent in the house of Pharaoh, or at an advent in the house of Caesar, or the house of Hapsburg, or the house of Stuart, we would not so much have wondered; but a barn seems too poor a center for such a delicate and archangelic circumstance. The stage seems too small for so great an act, the music too grand for such unappreciative auditors, the windows of the stable too rude to be serenaded by other worlds.

It is my joy to tell you what was born that night in the village barn; and as I want to make my discourse accumulative and climactic, I begin, in the first place by telling you that that night in the Bethlehem manger was born encouragement for all the poorly started. He had only two friends—they his parents. No satin-lined cradle, no delicate attentions, but straw, and the cattle, and the coarse joke and banter of the camel drivers. No wonder the mediæval painters represent the oxen as kneeling before the infant Jesus, for there were no men there at that time to worship. From the depths of that poverty he rose until to-day he is honored in all Christendom, and sits on the imperial throne in heaven.

What name is mightiest to-day in Christendom? Jesus. Who has more friends on earth than any other being? Jesus. Before whom do the most thousands kneel in chapel and church and cathedral this hour? Jesus. From what depths of poverty to what height of renown! And so let all those who are poorly started remember that they cannot be more poorly born, or more disadvantageously, than this Christ. Let them look up to his example while they have time and eternity to imitate it.

Do you know that the vast majority of the world's deliverers had barnlike birthplaces? Luther, the emancipator of religion, born among the mines. Shakespeare, the emancipator of literature, born in an humble home at Stratford-on-Avon. Columbus, the discoverer of a world, born in poverty at Genoa. Hogarth, the discoverer of how to make art accumulative and administrative of virtue, born in an humble home in Westmoreland. Kitto and Pringle, whose keys unlocked new apartments in the Holy Scriptures which had never been entered, born in want. Yes, I have to tell you that nine out of ten of the world's deliverers were born in want.

I stir your holy ambitions to-day, and I want to tell you, though the whole world may be opposed to you, and inside and outside of your occupations or professions there may be those who would hinder your ascent, on your side and unlisted in your behalf are the sympathetic heart and the almighty arm of One who one Christmas night about eighteen hundred and ninety-five years ago was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. Oh, what magnificent encouragement for the poorly started!

Again, I have to tell you that in that village barn that night was born good will to men, whether you call it kindness, or forbearance, or forgiveness, or gentleness, or affection, or love. It was so sport of high heaven to send its favorite to that humiliation. It was sacrifice for a rebellious world. After the calamity in Paradise, not only did the ox begin to gore, and the adder to sting, and the elephant to smite with his trunk, and the lion to put to bad use tooth and paw, but under the very tree from which the forbidden fruit was plucked were hatched out war and revenge and malice and envy and jealousy and the whole brood of cockatrices.

But against that scene I set the Bethlehem manger, which says, "Bless rather than curse, endure rather than resent," and that Christmas night puts out malice and envy and jealousy and the whole brood of cockatrices. It says, "Sheathe your sword, disarm your guns, dismantle your batteries, turn the warship into a hospital, that carries shot and shell, into a grain ship to take food to famishing Ireland, hook your cavalry horses to the plow, use your deadly gunpowder in blasting rocks and in patriotic celebration, stop your lawsuits, quit writing anonymous letters, extract the sting from your sarcasms, let your spit congeal but never burn, drop all the harsh words out of your vocabulary—'Good will to men.'"

"Oh," you say, "I can't exercise it; I won't exercise it until they apologize; I won't forgive them until they ask me to forgive them." You are no Christian then—I say you are no Christian, or you are a very inconsistent Christian. If you forgive not men their trespasses, how can you expect your Heavenly Father to forgive you? Forgive them if they ask your forgiveness, and forgive them anyhow. Shake hands all around. "Good will to men."

Oh, my Lord Jesus, drop that spirit into all our hearts this Christmas time. I tell you what the world wants more than anything else—more helping hands, more sympathetic hearts, more kind words that never die, more disposition to give other people a ride, and to carry the heavy end of the load and give other people the light end, and to ascribe good motives instead of bad, and to find our happiness in making others happy.

Out of that Bethlehem crib let the bear and lion eat straw like an ox. "Good will to men." That principle will yet settle all controversies, and under it the world will keep on improving until there will be only two antagonists in all the earth, and they will side by side take the jubilant sleigh-ride intimated by the prophet when he said, "Holiness shall be on the bells of the horses."

Again, I remark that born that Christmas night in the village barn was sympathetic union with other worlds. From that supernatural grouping of the cloud bank over Bethlehem, and from the especial trains that ran down to the scene I find that our world is beautifully and gloriously and magnificently surrounded. The meteors are with us, for one of them ran to point down to the birth-place. The heavens are with us, because at the thought of our redemption they roll hosannas out of the midnight sky.

Oh, yes, I do not know but our world may be better surrounded than we have sometimes imagined; and when a child is born angels bring it, and when it dies another takes it, and when an old man bends under the weight of years angels uphold him, and when a heart breaks angels soothe it. Angels in the hospital to take care of the sick. Angels in the cemetery to watch our dead. Angels in the church ready to fly heavenward with the news of repentant souls. Angels above the world. Angels under the world. Angels all around the world.

Rub the dust of human imperfections out of your eyes, and look into the heavens and see angels of pity, angels of mercy, angels of pardon, angels of help, angels crowned, angels charioted. The world defended by angels, girdled by angels, cohorted by angels—clouds of angels. Hear David cry out, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand. Even thousands of angels." But the mightiest angel stood not that night in the clouds over Bethlehem; the mightiest angel that night lay among the cattle—the Angel of the new covenant.

As the clean white linen was being wrapped around that little form of that Child Emperor, not a cherub, not a seraph, not an angel, not a world but wept and thrilled and shouted. Oh, yes, our world has plenty of sympathizers! Our world is only a silver rung of a great ladder at the top of which is our Father's house. No more stellar solitariness for our world, no other friendless planets sput out into space to freeze, but a world in the bosom of divine maternity. A star harnessed to a manger.

Again, I remark that that night born in that village barn was the offender's hope. Some sermonizers may say I ought to have projected this thought at the beginning of the sermon. Oh, no! I wanted you to rise toward it. I wanted you to examine the cornellians and the jaspers and the crystals before I showed you the Kohinoor—the crown jewel of the ages. Oh, that jewel had a very poor setting! The cub of bear is born amid the grand old pillars of the forest, the whelp of lion takes its first step from the jungle of luxuriant leaf and wild flower, the kid of goat is born in cavern chandeliered with stalactite and pillared with stalagmite. Christ was born in a bare barn.

Yet that nativity was the offender's hope. Over the door of heaven are written these words: "None but the sinless may enter here." "Oh, horror," you say, "that shuts us all out!" No, Christ came to the world in one door, and he departed through another door. He came through the door of the manger, and he departed through the door of the sepulchre, and his one business was so to wash away our sin that after we are dead there will be no more sin about us than about the eternal God. I know that is putting it strongly, but that is what I understand by full remission. All erased, all washed away, all scoured out, all gone. That un-dergirding and overreaching and irradiating and imparadising possibility for you, and for me, and for the whole race, that was given that Christmas night.

Do you wonder we bring flowers to-day to celebrate such an event? Do you wonder that we take organ and youthful voice and queenly soloist to celebrate it? Do you wonder that Raphael and Rubens and Titian and Giotto and Ghirlandajo, and all the old Italian and German painters gave the mightiest stroke of their genius to sketch the Madonna, Mary and her boy?

Oh! now I see what the manger was. Not so high the gilded and jeweled and embroidered cradle of the Henrys of England, or the Louis of France, or the Fredericks of Prussia. Now I find out that that Bethlehem crib fed not so much the oxen of the stall as the white horses of Apocalyptic vision. Now I find the swaddling clothes enlarging and emblazoning into an imperial robe for a conqueror. Now I find that the star that that Christmas night was only the dismounted sandal of him who hath the moon under his feet. Now I come to understand that the music of that

night was not a completed song, but only the stringing of the instruments for a great chorus of two worlds, the bass to be carried by earthly nations saved, and the soprano by kingdoms of glory won.

Oh, heaven, heaven, heaven! I shall meet you there. After all our imperfections are gone, I shall meet you there. I look out to-day, through the mists of years, through the fog that rises from the cold Jordan, through the wide open door of solid pearl to that reunion. I expect to see you there as certainly as I see you here. What a time we shall have in high converse, talking over sins pardoned, and sorrows comforted, and battles triumphant!

Some of your children have already gone, and though people passing along the street and seeing white craps on the doorbells may have said: "It is only a child," yet when the broken-hearted father came to solicit my service, he said: "Come around and comfort us, for we loved her so much."

What a Christmas morning it will make when those with whom you used to keep the holidays are all around you in heaven! Silver-haired old father young again, and mother who had so many aches and pains and deceitfulness well again, and all your brothers and sisters and the little ones. How glad they will be to see you! They have been waiting. The last time they saw your face it was covered with tears and distress, and pallid from long watching, and one of them I can imagine today, with one hand holding fast the shining gate, and the other hand swung out toward you, saying: "Steer this way, father, steer straight for me; Here safe in heaven I am waiting for thee."

Oh, those Bethlehem angels, when they went back after the concert that night over the hills, forgot to shut the door! All the secret is out. No more use of trying to hide from us the glories to come. It is too late to shut the gate. It is blocked wide open with hosannas marching this way, and hallelujahs marching that way. In the splendor of the anticipation I feel as if I was dying—not physically, for I never was more well—but in the transport of the Christmas transfiguration.

What almost unmanly me is the thought that it is provided for such sinners as you and I have been. If it had been provided only for those who had always thought right, and spoken right, and acted right, you and I would have had no interest in it, had no share in it; you and I would have stuck to the raft and I would have let the ship sail by carrying perfect passengers from a perfect life on earth to a perfect life in heaven. But I have heard the Commander of that ship is the same great and glorious and sympathetic One who hushed the tempest around the boat on Galilee, and I have heard that all the passengers on the ship are sinners saved by grace. And so we hail the ship, and it bears down this way, and we come by the side of it and ask the captain two questions: "Who art thou? and whence?" and he says: "I am captain of Salvation, and I am from the manger." Oh, bright Christmas morning of my soul's delight! Chime all the bells. Merry Christmas!

Merry with the thought of sins forgiven, merry with the idea of sorrows comforted, merry with the raptures to come. Oh, lift that Christ from the manger and lay him down in all our hearts! We may not bring to him as costly a present as the Magi brought, but we bring to his feet and to the manger to-day the frankincense of our joy, the prostration of our worship.

Down at His feet, all churches, all ages, all earth, all heaven. Down at His feet the four-and-twenty elders on their faces. Down the "great multitude that no man can number." Down Michael, the arch-angel! Down all worlds at His feet and worship. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men!"

WOMEN OF NOTE.

Mrs. John Jones, one of Chicago's colored people, is worth \$300,000. The wife of President Cleveland has a most mellifluous voice, and an admirer says: "Her speech is a continual song without words."

One of the richest heiresses in the world is Lady Mary Hamilton Douglas, the 11-year-old daughter of the late Duke of Hamilton, whose income is now about £160,000 a year.

Princess Waldemar, wife of the youngest brother of the Princess of Wales, is a courageous woman. At Copenhagen recently, when a fire started in a building adjoining her residence, she borrowed a fireman's helmet, mounted a wall and assisted in extinguishing the flames.

The ex-Empress Frederick of Germany, in her early married life, embroidered a piece of tapestry, on which all her children knelt when crowned; the late Emperor's coffin rested upon it; the present German Emperor and the Princesses Charlotte, Sophia and Victoria, were married standing on it. Mrs. Barney Baranto, a pleasant-faced, unaffected woman, was born in South Africa of English parentage.

GENERAL LABOR NOTES.

Printers of Toronto are unionizing the town. The new bicycle workers' union starts out with 2,000 members. All state printing of Nevada bears the printers' union label. A \$500,000 iron mill has been erected by co-operators at Edinburgh, Scotland. A national anti-sweating league has been formed at Melbourne, Vic., N. S. W.

An effort is being made to combine the four central labor bodies of Chicago. The commercial grower must receive his profit, after all these expenses are paid. The farmer may have his berries at first cost. He saves expense of picking and provides a pleasure for his wife and children. He saves boxes, cases, packing, freight, express and commission. Every farmer in the country and every owner of a house in the village should grow "big berries and lots of them" for family use. He may thus have them fresh from the vines in summer, and canned, dried or preserved for winter. There is no better food than ripe fruit. There is none more healthful, and at two or three cents per quart there is none cheaper. A berry garden for next season should be decided upon at once. The best preparation for it is the reading of good books and papers. Subscribe for them now and thus provide the greatest pleasure for long winter evenings. M. A. Thayer

FARM AND GARDEN.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO AGRICULTURISTS.

Some Up-to-Date Hints About Cultivation of the Soil and Yields Thereof—Horticulture, Viticulture and Floriculture.

HOW LONG SEEDS will retain their vitality so as to germinate and grow into plants is a disputed question among men of science. Many persons still believe that wheat has been grown from seed found in Egyptian mummy cases, and that grain could be made to sprout from seed found in Pompeii and Herculaneum. An elaborate and interesting series of experiments made by Professor Italo Giglioli of the royal high school of agriculture, at Portici, near Naples, as communicated to Nature, throws considerable light on the matter. The seeds used were put away in the fall of 1877 and spring of 1878 and were tested in August, 1894, the longest time that any had been kept being a few days less than seventeen years, and the shortest fifteen years, nine months and a few days; the average was about sixteen years and a half. Lucerne seed was chiefly used and the results really apply only to that plant, for the wheat, vetch, coriander and other seeds tried happened to be put into solutions that proved fatal to lucerne too. The seeds were put into small tubed tubes, into which dry grass was passed, and the tubes were then sealed and kept in the dark; others were put into alcohol, ether, chloroform and other liquids, but the alcoholic solutions alone could be tested, as the other liquids evaporated.

Out of 320 seeds kept in nitrogen, 181 germinated; of 502 kept in arseniuretted hydrogen, 351 germinated, as did 224 out of 266 kept in carbon monoxide; 40 out of 60 lived that had been kept in strong alcohol, originally absolute. Seeds kept in chloroform, in hydrogen, in alcoholic solution of phenol, and in carbon dioxide all died. With other gases and solutions the results were not so decisive; only 2 out of 293 in oxygen lived; 33 out of 509 in chlorine and hydrochloric acid; 1 out of 101 lucerne seeds and none out of 50 wheat seeds in sulphuretted hydrogen; 5 out of 609 in nitric oxide. In alcoholic solutions, 16 seeds out of 79 kept in a solution of corrosive sublimate germinated; 1 out of 645 in that of sulphur dioxide; 41 out of 583 in that of sulphuretted hydrogen, and 12 out of 288 in that of nitro oxide.

Many of the germinating plants were put into flower pots, where they grew well, flowered and seeded normally. When the seeds were put away Professor Giglioli was not aware of the evil effect of even small proportions of moisture; he thinks if he had taken more care in excluding moisture from the seeds and from the gases, a much larger number of seeds would have retained their vitality. There is no reason apparent why the seeds planted could not have been kept indefinitely in the solutions without further change. He has established that, for some seeds, at least, respiration or exchange with the surrounding medium is not necessary for the preservation of germ life. There is reason for believing that living matter may exist in a completely passive state, without any chemical change, and may maintain its special properties for an indefinite time, as is the case with mineral and all lifeless matter. In experimenting with seeds from Pompeii and Herculaneum, he has not yet found any living grain; they are too much carbonized to admit of much hope, especially those from Pompeii, which have been exposed to the slow action of moisture. If the seeds found in the granaries of the "Casa d'Argo" at Herculaneum in 1828 had been planted at once, a fair test might have been had, as they had been preserved under favorable conditions; it is too late now, as they have been so long exposed to light and air.

Actual cost on market. Cents per Qt. Picking ready for picking. . . 2 Boxes. 1/2 Cases, packing and delivery. . . 1 Freight or express charges. . . 1/2 Commission for selling. 1

Sparta, Wis. Georgia Peach Orchard.—The foundation of the orchard of the Hale, Georgia, Orchard Co., Fort Valley, Ga., was an old cotton plantation of 900 acres, purchased in the summer of 1890, and 600 acres were planted with a little over 100,000 peach trees in the winter of 1891-92. It is all laid out in blocks 1,000 feet long, and 500 feet wide, with avenues running north and south, named after the peach growing states of the union, and streets running east and west, named after leading horticulturists of the country. A resident superintendent, thirty or forty negro assistants and sixteen mules have kept up most thorough culture for the past three years. There was a full bloom on the orchard in the spring of 1894, but a heavy frost the last of March destroyed all the fruit prospects.

This year, the fourth summer after planting, all the trees set a full amount of fruit, and during April and May, forty to fifty hands were employed in thinning out the surplus.—Ex. Swine Improvement in Texas.—The hog breeders of Texas are entitled to a great deal of the credit for the improved character of our Texas swine. They have educated the farmers to appreciate good hogs. I have seen quite a stir made in the neighborhood by the advent of a pair of fine pigs. It is a disgusting sight to see a Texas farmer go to the grocery store and give up his good cotton money for a slug of tolerably hard looking bacon, and I am sorry to say that it is a sight altogether too common. But even in Western Texas the numbers who do not raise their own bacon are growing gradually less.—Claridge Stock Farmer.

Shakespeare mentions perfume as in common use in his time.

Starting an Orchard.

The ground for an orchard should be well and deeply cultivated, and free from weeds, well drained, if the soil requires it, and most soils are better for draining, except sandy or light gravelly soils with a light subsoil. Such land may not require draining, but in every case it should be well worked and pulverized and enriched before planting. The work of preparation must be done during the summer, so as to be ready for fall or spring planting. Planting in the spring is preferred, which will enable the trees to take firm hold of the earth and to resist the frost of next winter, but planting may be done successfully in the autumn by protecting the trees so as to prevent the frost from heaving or displacing them.

Select young, healthy and vigorous trees, and from a reliable nurseryman, and if possible from a soil similar to that in which you intend to plant your orchard. The different kinds of apples will depend upon your own choice and the suitability of soil and climate. I should advise that the selection be made from the old, tried and reliable kinds.

The distance apart should not be less than thirty feet, so as to allow the trees room to spread their branches and to form a low and spreading head. Close planting has a tendency to force the trees to run up, and preventing the fruit from obtaining its proper coloring from the sun, and making it more difficult to gather the fruit. At the distance of thirty feet apart it will require twenty-nine trees to the acre. Before planting the tree, remove all bruised and broken roots by cutting clean with a sharp knife. Lay out your ground in straight lines, so that your trees will be in line each way and at equal distances, thirty feet apart.—Wm. Gray.

Thayer's Berry Bulletin. For December, 1895.

Any intelligent farmer can grow ripe, luscious strawberries, ready for picking, at two cents per quart.

With good cultivation, at least 100 bushels per acre should be grown. Two hundred bushels per acre is not an unusual yield and 300 is often produced.

Fruit that can be grown so cheaply and will yield so much, should be considered a necessity in every family. No one can so well afford to have strawberries, every day in the season, as the farmer.

No one can have them so fresh from the vines, so ripe, so delicious, and at so little cost, as the farmer, and yet as a class none have so few.

The cost of placing berries on the market depends somewhat on locations and the manner in which it is done. For good berries, carefully picked in clean new boxes, well packed and honestly measured, it may be estimated by the quart as follows:

Actual cost on market. Cents per Qt. Picking ready for picking. . . 2 Boxes. 1/2 Cases, packing and delivery. . . 1 Freight or express charges. . . 1/2 Commission for selling. 1

The commercial grower must receive his profit, after all these expenses are paid. The farmer may have his berries at first cost. He saves expense of picking and provides a pleasure for his wife and children. He saves boxes, cases, packing, freight, express and commission. Every farmer in the country and every owner of a house in the village should grow "big berries and lots of them" for family use. He may thus have them fresh from the vines in summer, and canned, dried or preserved for winter. There is no better food than ripe fruit. There is none more healthful, and at two or three cents per quart there is none cheaper. A berry garden for next season should be decided upon at once. The best preparation for it is the reading of good books and papers. Subscribe for them now and thus provide the greatest pleasure for long winter evenings. M. A. Thayer

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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

LESSON 1, FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 5—LUKE, 1:5-17.

Golden Text: "Thou shalt Go Before the Face of the Lord to Prepare His Way"—Luke, 1:16—The Forerunner of Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTORY: Today's section includes the whole chapter, Luke, 1:1-18, but the portion referring to Mary rather belong to the next lesson. Time, October, 6 P. M. C. to 26 A. D. Place, the angel came to Zacharias in the temple at Jerusalem. The birth of John was somewhere in the hill country of Judea, where the hymns, the Magnificent Mary and the Benedictus of Zacharias, were uttered. These lessons is somewhat different from that pursued when we studied Luke in 1890. It requires less of detailed exposition of verses, but more of complete view of the subject as a distinct portion of the wonderful life of Christ. It will be a series of twenty-four cartoons, after the manner of the "Impressional" style of painting pictures. Each will exhibit a distinct phase or development of Christ's life.

1. The First Sign of the Dawn.—The Preparation of the World for the Advent of Christ.—When Adam was created God spoke to him, revealed himself to him, so that through their great ancestor all people had some knowledge of the true God, the Creator of all things. To this witness is borne by every great religion, by the lately discovered stone tablets of Assyria, and the tombs of Egypt. 2. The Second Sign of the Dawn.—A Holy Family and Other Persons Watching and Praying for the Coming of the Redeemer.—Vs. 5-7. A group of holy persons is given by Luke, Anna, Simeon, Joseph, Mary, and Zacharias and Elizabeth, whose eyes were toward the dawn, and whose hearts were ready to receive the light.

3. There was in the days of Herod (Herod the Great, the founder of the Herodian family and the father of most of the Herods mentioned in the New Testament after the infancy of Jesus.) A certain priest named Zacharias. (The Greek form of the Hebrew Zachariah, the same as Zechariah.) Of the course of Abia. (Greek for Abijah.) And his wife was of the daughters of Aaron (and therefore in the line of the priesthood). The priests were the descendants of Aaron of the tribe of Levi. Both John's parents were of priestly rank. And her name was Elizabeth. (So named after her ancestress, Elisheba, Aaron's wife.) 6. And they were both righteous before God. (Not in appearance only, but in the inmost depths of their hearts, where God's eye alone could see.) The fountain of action was pure. Walking is a Hebrew metaphor for "living," "conducting oneself," in the various relations of men to each other and to God. Commandments, the moral law, Ordinances. Probably the ceremonial law, and the outward religious duties and rules of living. Thus they were blameless toward God and man. Neither would find fault with them.

7. And they had no child, because that Elizabeth was barren; and they both were now well stricken in years. 8. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course. 9. According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without, at the time of incense. 11. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. 14. And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. 18. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. Verse 17 Explained: He shall go before him, before the Lord, to herald his advent and to prepare the way for his coming in the world in the Christian family. "Convert an adult, and you convert a unit; convert a child, and you convert a multiplication table." The star of Bethlehem rests over the home. The disobedient, the great mass of the people who have turned away from God. To do the will of the Lord, to walk in the wisdom of the just. Being good is the only real wisdom. Only her ways "are ways of pleasantness and her paths are peace." Disobedience and sin are always folly. To make people prepared for him, by his call to repentance, by his denunciation of sin, by his portrayal of the consequences of sin, he was to make ready people who would be wise enough to receive the Savior.

His Busy Day. Irate Manufacturer.—See here! I sent you an advertisement saying my pianos were "inferior to none." Editor.—Yes, sir. "You printed it 'inferior in tone.'" "Oh, well, never mind; that's easily fixed." "Eh? Easily fixed?" "Certainly. Change the name of your pianos and send me another advertisement. Here's a card showing our rates. Good-day, sir."

Paid in Her Own Coin. "It seems to me, John, that you might take the oars for a little while now." "No, my dear; the new man ought not to attempt to perform the arduous duty of a woman. Besides I don't want to get my nose freckled."—Harper's Magazine.

JOHN BILLINGS' PHILOSOPHY. There isn't a more thankless task in this world than trying to help the improvident. Wimmen are elegant creatures; but I never saw one yet who could expectorate gracefully. I know of men whose word is better than their bond. These fellows I call the knight-errants in honesty.

I am more interested in the vices of mankind than I am in their virtues. Their vices need charity; their virtues will take care of themselves.