OUR ROBIN.

CHAPTER II (CONTINUED).

"Do came away!" I urge in my most persuasive tones.

"All in good time, my dear," assents Robin coolly.

A moment later she fairly bubbles over with laughter.

"Oh, do come here and look! Bee Bee, I never saw anything so absurd in my life! Isn't it ghastly?"

For a moment I hesitate, then curiosity gets the better hand, and, advancing to the table, I glance over her shoulder, and own to myself that her exclamation was not uncalled for.

The volume lies open at a rough, old-fashioned woodcut, which represents, in perspective quite unique, a churchyard crowded with cross-boned tombstones. In the foreground a form is struggling out of its tomb, and pointing its skeleton finger at a knock-kneed, cringing figure, who, with hair standing on end like the quills of an angry porcupine, is vainly endeavoring to hide behind a diminutive headstone.

"What a horrid old book," I exclaim, turning over a few leaves, and reading here and there a short sentence of the large-typed old printing—so old indeed is the volume that the letter "s" is throughout printed long, nearly resembling an "f."

"I must induce your brother to lend it to me," cries Robin, as she points to a second woodcut, representing a ruin, with presumably evil spirits hovering in the air. "I never saw anything so delightfully morbid in my life—see here;" and she reads aloud—

"'To those who would have intercourse with departed friends. The hour selected should be after midnight, but before the striking of one o'clock. The night chosen should be at the early shrinking of the moon'—what is the shrinking of the moon?" interrupts Robin.

"Just after the full moon," I suggest, for I am becoming interested.

"Perhaps so," acquiesces Robin—then she continues to read—"'Let any one so desirous select, if possible, a burying-ground for his experiment, and let him also fast for at least ten hours previous to the trial—then let him close his eyes and repeat three times in a loud clear voice the following words'"—Robin pauses, and breaks into a half-vexed laugh.

"What a shame!" she cries impatiently. "It is in Latin; the whole spell is written in Latin, and I did so want to try it." Then she ponders for a moment meditatively—"I wonder whether the ghosts would be very particular about pronunciation; because if not, you know, I could say it somehow. Any way, its a receipt worth keeping, if only to put in one's scrap-book."

She takes a sheet of paper from a packet lying on the table, and, producing a pencil from her pocket, proceeds hastily with her task, whilst I, totally oblivious of John's anger should he catch us in his study, turn to the beginning of the fascinating volume. I am obliged to read sideways, because Robin is holding up the center pages and copying from the end of the book. So engrossed are we both with our all-absorbing occupation, that we become forgetful of our surroundings.

"Good morning, Miss Wolstencroft."

John's scornful voice breaks in on our dreams, and, withdrawing my nose from close proximity with the fusty leather-covered volume, I see my brother standing like an avenging spirit in the doorway.

Guiltily I straighten my aching back, and wonder what will happen.

"Oh, good morning!" answers Robin, glancing up with one of her brightest smiles. "I shall soon have finished my work, and then I will go."

John stands for a moment undecided, then he enters the room, wanders round it in his usual aimless fashion, and mechanically begins smelling a huge bunch of roses which Robin has placed on the chimney-piece.

"Wasn't it good of me to arrange some flowers for your study?" she asks in her sauciest tone. "And I have let in the fresh air too. Bee Bee made out that you would be furious at my impertinence; but I thought you wouldn't mind."

"I forgot to lock the door last night," answers John quietly, but with no show of anger.

Robin only laughs.

"Now I call that the most base ingratitude," she remarks, pausing for a moment to glance up slyly at me, "after the trouble I have taken to make your room nice too."

John has strolled away from the hearth rug and moved round the room; he now approaches the writing-table.

"Are you sketching?" he asks, bending over her chair.

"No; I am copying a receipt for raising ghosts. It will be excruciatingly difficult to learn and worse to pronounce; perhaps—

But her sentence remains unfinished. John's hand swoops suddenly down upon the volume, closes it violently, and takes possession of it.

"Oh," cries Robin, springing to her feet and facing my brother with an innocent look of astonishment, "what did you do that for? Give me back the book, please—I have not finished."

"And never will!" answers John sternly, as he locks up the book in his big desk and places the key in his pocket. "How dare you tamper with such things?" he adds; and I see that he is white to the very lips.

"'Dare' indeed!" echoes Robin scornfully, and with flushed cheeks. "Dare indeed! Such nonsense! I would repeat all that nonsense at midnight as soon as look at you; and I will too, and raise a ghost if I can"—still more scornfully. "Only I forgot"—her anger changing to merriment—"I only copied enough to raise half a ghost. I wonder"—meditatively—"if it will be his head or his heels that I shall evoke?"

John is evidently in no humor for joking.

"Give me that paper!" he says, holding out his hand with a gesture of command.

Robin, however, with a malicious and defiant smile, quietly places it in her pocket.

"'Though lost to sight, to memory dear,'" she quotes, tapping her pocket affectionately; and then she turns and, with a mocking little laugh, trips out of the room.

I follow close on her heels; and we have the satisfaction of hearing the key turned fiercely in the lock before we are half-way across the hall.

CHAPTER V.

John, when he takes his place at the breakfast table, seems to have recovered his equanimity; he even appears to be in an apologetic frame of mind.

"I am afraid you must think me a dreadful bear, Miss Wolstencroft," he says, addressing Robin. "I never even thanked you for the flowers this morning; yet I do appreciate your kindness in arranging them."

"I don't want any thanks," answers Robin a little brusquely. "Of course I know it was very officious of me. I don't suppose I should ever have thought of taking them to your room, only Blanche was constantly impressing it on me that it was forbidden ground."

"An excellent reason for your visit," remarks John, a trifle sarcastically.

"A truly feminine reason," declares Robin. "She excited my curiosity. There was something so delightfully romantic and fascinating about a forbidden room."

John gives a short laugh.

"If you have taken such a fancy to the room," he says slowly and thoughtfully, "I will leave it unlocked at night, so that you can have the run of it before breakfast."

I glance up in amazement, and catch a lurknig look of satire in my brother's eyes; but, if he intends to annihilate Robin by either eye, tone or manner, he is vastly mistaken; his arrow flies clean over her head, leaving her totally unscathed.

"Will you?" she returns, helping herself for the second time to marmalade. "That is kind—only I am afraid that if I know I may go in every morning the room will quite lose its charm."

Nevertheless Robin avails herself of the permission, and from that time forth John's study is regularly supplied with fresh flowers, and the window thrown open to the early sunshine. Taking heart, I gradually introduce a few little comforts which have been hitherto wanting—we recover his smoking chair with gaily-flowered chintz, and a white fur mat is placed in one corner for the accommodation of Nell, who seems to be regaining her lost place in her master's heart.

During these early days of June the weather is particularly bright and warm, so my friend and I spend much of our time in the open air, either driving through the shady lanes or wandering idly about the grounds and garden.

It had been decided that Harry must make one more voyage before our marriage; and as the hour of his departure draws near he spends more and more time daily at Podmore. I must own that Robin is the most discreet of girls—she seems to know instinctively when she is wanted and when she is not, and thinks nothing of absenting herself for hours together, when she deems such a course expedient.

"It must be very slow work, courting—isn't it?" she asks one day compassionately, after Harry is gone.

"Not very—it is much slower for you," I answer, with a superior shake of my head.

"Not a bit of it, my dear. I have my book and flowers, or if I like I can go to sleep—in fact I am free; whilst you must talk on one theme for hours at a stretch. Ugh! I couldn't do it."

"In that case you had better make up your mind to die an old maid."

"Oh, I don't see that!"—a little impatiently. "Once you are married, it is all right; but it is the courting I could never stand. Now if a man should ever propose to me"—doubtfully—"I should answer, 'I am quite ready to marry you, only don't let's have any engagement."

"If any man asked you, that would be your answer?"

"No, of course not any man; but the right man. I am sure"—speaking with confidence—"that I could get him into shape if we were once married; but I could not—could not possibly go on saying sweet things to him for hours together—it would be frightfully insipid."

"Ah, Robin, you are fancy free! Wait till the right man comes."

"I am quite willing to wait; falling in love always seems to sour people. I suppose the fact is all the sweetness goes to the beloved object, and their friends must put up with the rest."

"Am I so cross then?"

"You? Oh, no!"—and Robin laughs a little. "But then I really believe you have more sugar in your temperament than most people. Now in my constitution there is a strong dash of pepper and mustard; but I hope no vinegar."

For some days after that first invasion of my brother's sanctum John seems brighter and more companionable; then the old gloom settles down and envelops him once more. Instead of remaining with us in the drawing-room after dinner, he creeps off to his beloved study; it certainly is very odd and unsociable of him. Indeed, his conduct, instead of improving, as I had hoped it would, under the influence of a stranger, becomes more eccentric than ever.

One evening I am quite startled by making a new discovery regarding him. Harry had been dining with us, and it was after eleven before he took his departure, aunt Louisa at that time being fast asleep in her chair; Robin and I, instead of retiring at once to our rooms, remain chatting softly in the drawing-room. It is past twelve before we decide on going to bed. Aunt Louisa is the first to seek her room, then Robin and I, arm-in-arm, ascend the broad staircase.

"Oh, wait a minute!" cries Robin, as we pause for a moment on the first landing. "I forgot my book—I won't be a second getting it."

"But the lamp is out."

"No matter; I am very clever at groping, and I know where I left it."

So she runs down-stairs again, and I stand gazing out of the staircase window at the grounds, bathed in moonlight, and backed by the dark line of tree-tops which shade the Lover's Walk.

Naturally enough, I am thinking of Harry, and wondering whether the time of his absence may be shortened to eighteen months, as he hinted during the evening. I suppose I fall into one of my dreams, for I certainly start when Robin's arm is again slipped within mine.

"What are you gazing at so intently?" she asks.

"Nothing," I answer, preparing to move up-stairs.

But Robin's eyes are riveted on the moonlit grounds.

"Look," she cries, in a low voice, full of pleased excitement—"I believe we are going to have an adventure—there is a burglar in the garden."

"Don't," I cry, with a shiver, and trying to pull her up-stairs. "It is not kind—you know how nervous I am!"

"But I am not joking in the least," remonstrates Robin; "it is a real live burglar. See, he is coming towards the house."

My first impulse is to run up-stairs and lock myself into my room; but I have no chance of availing myself of that prudent instinct of self-preservation, for Robin holds me firmly by the arm. Seeing that escape is out of the question, my eyes turn with a kind of involuntary attraction towards the scene without.

"There he comes—there he comes!" murmurs Robin, as the advancing figure steps from the shadow of the trees into the patch of moonlight.

A moment later she breaks into a fit of smothered laughter.

"What a sell!" she cries, with a sigh—I verily believe of disappointment. "It is only your brother after all!"

"John? Impossible!" I say, straining my eyes to make sure of the point. "He is in his study."

"If not John, then it must be John's double," answers Robin.

All eagerness has died out of her tone now that she is fully assured that no thrilling adventure is in store for her.

"Yes, it certainly is John," I say rather unwillingly, as the figure passes by the window, within a few paces of the house; "he is coming in at the side door. What could have induced him to go out at this time of night?"

"Restlessness," suggests Robin.

"No, he is not given to restlessness. Wait here for a moment; I must run down and speak to him."

"All right," responds Robin, with a yawn; and she sinks down upon the window seat as I depart on my errand.

John is turning the handle of the side door as I gain the end of the passage. He gives a violent start when he sees me, and holds up his hand as if to ward me off.

"John, where have you been?" I cry.

He recovers himself instantly, and answers, placing his hand reassuringly on my arm—

"Only for a stroll in the moonlight, child. Why are you not in bed?"

"Harry went late, and I have been chatting since with Robin. We saw you from the staircase window, and took you at first for a burglar. What were you doing out of doors?"

"Doing?" says my brother, with just a touch of impatience in his tone. "I was merely walking in the grounds. There is no law against it, I suppose?"

"But midnight is such an odd time to go for a walk!" I object.

"Perhaps so; but then I am an odd fellow," answers John drily.

I make no response, only sigh; and John, stooping down, kisses me on the cheek.

"There, run away to bed; and don't be alarmed in future by my nocturnal rambles. I often go out for an hour or so at night."

"You often go out?" I say feeling strangely perplexed.

"Yes, often; only you never chanced to see me before. Good night."

"Good night"—knowing I am dismissed; and then I turn away reluctantly, and retrace my steps to the staircase, where Robin is awaiting me.

"Well?" she remarks interrogatively, and with a very decided yawn.

"He had only been for a walk in the grounds," I remark, with a melancholy shake of my head; "it seems he often does so."

"How sweetly romantic!"—and Robin clasps her hands in derision.

"Not at all," I answer, annoyed at her tone; "it must be lovely out in the moonlight."

"Yes; and the full moon is said to have an attractive influence on——"—she pauses, and gives a mischievous laugh.

"Well, on what?" I demand sternly.

"Oh, on puppy-dogs!" she answers meekly; but I know well enough what she means to insinuate, and stalk away before her up-stairs.

"You old goose! I was only teasing!" she cries, catching me by my dress before I have time to gain my room. "There—give me a kiss of forgiveness, or I shall never sleep."

"Now remember that you never call Jack a lunatic again," I say firmly, as I comply with her request.

"I never did; and, if I am not allowed my little jokes, I shall pine away and die," says Robin pathetically.

"That would be too—too utterly sad," I answer, laughing. "And now good night; it is nearly one o'clock."

Then I seek my bed; but it is some time before I fall asleep, for my thoughts are occupied with Jack. What can be his object in wandering about the grounds at night? Has he been long in the habit of doing so? Is there any truth in Robin's little jest, and can the moon affect his brain? This last question however I scout at once. John is perfectly sane, and we came of a sane family. Of course he is eccentric and melancholy and given to the study of abstruse sciences, but he is healthy in mind and body.

I had hoped that Robin's cheering presence was rousing him from his usually torpid state; and now, by a mere chance, I discover that he has been avenging himself for extra liveliness during the day by long and mysterious walks at night. Shall I remonstrate with him on the strangeness of his conduct? Better not; remonstrances from the lips of a younger sister are apt to fall flat on masculine ears. So, having come to a satisfactory but humiliating acknowledgment of my own helplessness, I fall asleep.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

They Were Irregular Twins.

An old, ragged, red-faced, forlorn-looking woman accosted a gentleman with:

"Plaise, sur, for the luv of Heaven give me a nickle to buy bread with. I am a poor, lone woman, and have young twins to support."

"Why, my good woman," he replied, "you seem to be too old to have twins of your own."

"They are not mine, sir," she replied, "I'm only raisin' 'em."

"How old are your twins?"

"One of 'em is seven weeks ould and the other is eight months."

THE ALMANAC.

Dr. Talmage Says, Next to the Bible, It is the Most Solemn of Books.

His Discourse Contains a Brilliant Verbal Painting of Gideon and His Troops.

These Ancient "Sogers," However, Were Void of Sufficient Nerve.

Special to The Kansas City Times.

BROOKLYN, April 14.—At the Brooklyn tabernacle to-day, after expounding passages descriptive of the world as it shall be when gospelized, Dr. Talmage gave out the hymn:

People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on his love with sweetest song.

Text, Revelations xix., 4: "Amen; Alleluia."

The Nineteenth century is departing. After it has taken a few more steps, if each year be a step, it will be gone into the eternities. In a short time we shall be in the last decade of this century, which fact makes the solemnest book outside the Bible the almanac, and the most suggestive and the most tremendous piece of machinery in the earth the clock. The last decade of this century upon which we shall soon enter will be the grandest, mightiest and most decisive decade in all the chronologies. I am glad it is not to come immediately, for we need by a new baptism of the Holy Ghost to prepare for it. That last ten years of the Nineteenth century, may we all live to see them! Does any one say that this division of time is arbitrary? Oh, no; in other ages the divisions of time may have been arbitrary, but our years date from Christ. Does any one say that the grouping of ten together is an arrangement arbitrary? Oh, no; next to the figure seven, ten is with God a favorite number. Abraham dwelt ten years in Caanan. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom. In the ancient tabernacle were ten curtains, their pillars ten and their sockets ten. In the ancient temple were ten lavers and ten candle-sticks and ten tables and a moulten sea of ten cubits. And the commandments written on the granite of Mount Sinai were ten, and the kingdom of God was likened to ten virgins, and ten men should lay hold of him that was a Jew, and the reward of the greatly faithful is that they shall reign over ten cities, and in the effort to take the census of the New Jerusalem the number ten swings around the thousands, crying "ten thousand times ten thousand." So I come to look toward the closing ten years of the Nineteenth century with an intensity of interest I can hardly describe.

I have also noticed that the favorite time in many of the centuries for great events was the closing fragment of the century. Is America to be discovered, it must be in the last decade of the Fifteenth century, namely, 1492. Was free constitutional government to be well established in America, the last years of the Eighteenth century must achieve it. Were three cities to be submerged by one pitch of scoriæ, Herculaneum and Strabiæ and Pompeii in the latter part of the First century must go under. The Fourth century closed with the most agitating ecclesiastical war of history, Urban the Sixth against Clement the seventh. Alfred the Great closes the Ninth century and Edward Ironsides the Eleventh century with their resounding deeds. The Sixteenth century closed with the establishment of religious independence in the United Netherlands. Aye, almost every century has had its peroration of overtowering achievements. As the closing years of the centuries seem a favorite time for great scenes of emancipation or disaster, and as the number ten seems a favoroite number in the scriptures, written by divine direction, and as we are soon to enter upon the last ten years of the nineteeth century, what does the world propose? What does the church of Christ propose? What do reformers propose? I know not; but now in the presence of this consecrated assembly I propose that we make ready, get all our batteries planted and all our plans well laid in what remains of this decade, and then in the last decade of the nineteenth century march up and take this round world for God.

When I say we, I mean the five hundred million Christains now alive. But, as many of them will not have enough heart for the work let us copy Gideon, and as he had thirty-two thousand men in his army to fight the Midianites but many of them were not made of the right stuff and he promulgated a military order saying: "Whosoever is fearful and afraid let him return and depart early from Gilead," and twenty-two thousand were afraid of getting hurt and went home and only ten thousand were left and God told them that even this reduced number was too large a number, for they might think they had triumphed independent of divine help, and so the mumber must be still further reduced and only those should be kept in the ranks who in passing the river should be so in haste for victory over their enemies that, though very thirsty, they would without stopping a second just scoop up the water in the palm of their right hand and scoop up the water in the palm of their left hand and only three hundred men did that and those three hundred men with the battle shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," scattered the Midianites like leaves in an equinox, so out of the five hundred million nominal Christians of to-day let all unbelievers and cowards go home and get out of the way. And suppose we have only four hundred million left; suppose only two hundred million left: suppose only one hundred million left; yea, suppose we only have fifty million left; with them we will undertake the divine crusade, and each one just scooping up a palm full of the river of God's mercy in one hand and a palm full of the river of God's strength in the other, let us with the cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," the sword of the Lord and of John Knox, the sword of the Lord and of Matthew Simpson, the sword of the Lord and of Bishop Mellvaine, the sword of the Lord and of Adoniram Judson, the sword of the Lord and of Martin Luther, go into the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Is it audacious for me to propose it? Oh, no; a captive servant in the kitchen of Naaman told the commander-in-chief where he could get rid of the blotches of his awful leprosy and his complexion became as fair as a babe's. And didn't Christ in order to take the ophthalmia out of the eyes of the blind man use a mixture of spittle and dust? And who showed Blucher a short cut for his army so that instead of taking the regular road by which he would have come up too late, he came up in time to save Waterloo and Europe? Was it not an unknown lad, who perhaps could not write his own name? And so I, "who am less than the least of all saints," propose a short cut to victory and am willing to be the expectoration on some blind eye and tell some of the brigadier generals of the Lord of hosts how this leprosied world may in the final decade of the Nineteenth century have its flesh come again as the flesh of a little child.

Is there anything in prophecy to hinder this speedy consummation? No. Some one begins to quote from Daniel about "times, time and a half time," and takes from Revelation the seven trumpets blowing them all at once in my ear. But with utmost reverence I take up all the prophecies and hold them toward heaven and say God never will stop consecrated effort and holy determination and magnificent resolve, and that if the church of God will rise up to its full work it can make Daniel's time twenty years and his half time ten years. Neither Isaiah, nor Ezekiel, nor Micah, nor Malachi, nor Jeremiah, nor any of the major or minor prophets will hinder us a second. Suppose the Bible had announced the millenium to begin the year 3880, that would be no hinderance. In one sense God never changes his mind, being the same yesterday, to-day and forever. But in another sense he does change his mind and times without number every day, and that is when his people pray. Didn't he change his mind about Nineveh? By God's command Jonah, at the top of his voice, while standing on the steps of the merchants' exchange and the palatial residences of that city, cried out, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Was it overthrown in forty days? No. The people gave up their sins and cried for mercy, and though Jonah got mad because his whole course of sermons had been spoiled and went into a disgraceful pouting, we have the record so sublime I cannot read it without feeling a nervous chill running through me. "God saw their works and they turned from their evil way and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them and he did it not." God is a father, and some of us know what that means, and some time when we have promised chastisement and the child deserved it, the little darling has put her arms around our neck and expresses such sorrow and such promises of doing better that her tears landed on the lips of our kiss, and we held her a half hour after on our knee and would as soon think of slapping an angel in the face as of even striking her with the weight of our little finger. God is a father, and while he has promised this world scourgings, though they were to be for a thousand years or five thousand years, he would, if the world repented, substitute benediction and divine caress. God changed his mind about Sodom six times. He had determined on its destruction. Abraham asked him if he would not spare it if fifty righteous people were found there; and, narrowing down the number, if forty-five people were found there; if forty people; if thirty people; if twenty people; if ten people were found there. And each of the six times the Lord answered yes. Oh, why didn't Abraham go on just two steps further and say if five be found there and if one be found there, for then for the sake of Lot, its one good citizen, I think Sodom would have been spared. Eight times does the Bible say that God repented when he had promised punishments and withheld the stroke. Was it a slip of Paul's pen when he spoke of God's cutting short the work in righteousness? No, Paul's pen never slipped. There is nothing in the way of proptecy to hinder the crusade I have proposed for the last decade of the Nineteenth century.

The whole trouble is that we put off the completion of the world's redemption to such long and indefinite distances. The old proverb that "what is everybody's business is nobody's business," might be changed a little and be made truthfully to say what is the gospel business of all the ages is the gospel business of no age. We are so constituted we cannot get up much enthusiasm about something five hundred years from now or a thousand years from now. We are fighting at too long a range. That gun called the "Swamp Angel" was a nuisance. It shot six miles, but it hardly ever hit anything. It did its chief destructive work when it burst and killed those who were setting it off. Short range is the effective kind of work, whether it be for wordly or religious purpose. Some man with his eyes half shut drones out to me the Bible quotation: "A thousand years are as one day," that is, ten centuries are not long for the Lord. But why do you not quote the previous sentence, which says that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years? That is, he could do the work of ten centuries in twenty-four hours. The mighiest obstacle to christian work is the impression that the world's evangelization is away off. And we take the telescope and look on and on through centuries until we see two objects near each other and we strain our vision and guess what they are and we call great conventions to guess what they are, and we get down our heaviest theological works and balance our telescope on the lid and look and look and finally conclude that they are two beasts that we see, and the one has hair and the other has wool and we guess it must be the lion and the lamb lying down together. In the great cradle of postponement and somnolence we rock the church as though it were an impatient child and say, "Hush, my dear, don't be impatient! Don't get excited by revivals! Don't cry! Your Father's coming! Don't get uneasy! He will be here in two or three or ten or twenty thousand years." And we act as though we thought that when Macaulay's famous New Zealander in the far distance is seated on a broken arch of London bridge sketching the ruins of St. Paul's his grandchild might break in and jolt his pencil by asking him if he thought the millennuim ever would appear. Men and women of the eternal God! Son's and daughters of the Lord Almighty! We may have it start in the decade that is soon to commence and it will be done if we can persuade the people between now and then to get ready for the work.

What makes me think it can be done? First, because God is ready. He needs no long persuasion to do his work, for if he is not willing that any should perish, he is not willing that any of the people of the next decade shall perish; and the whole Bible is a chime of bells ringing out "Come, come, come," and you need not go round the earth to find out how much he wants the world to come, but just to walk around one stripped and bare and leafless tree with two branches, not arched, but horizontal. But he is waiting, as he said he would, for the co-operation of the church. When we are ready God is ready. And he certainly has all the weaponry ready to capture this world for the truth, all the weapons of kindness or devastation. On the one hand the Gospel and sunshine and power to orchordize and gardenize the earth, and fountains swinging in rainbow and Chatsworthian verdure and aromas poured out of the vials of heaven, while on the other hand he has the weaponry of devastation, thunderbolt and conflagration and forces planetary, solar, lunar, stellar or meteoric, that with loose rein thrown on the neck for a second would leave constellations and galaxies so many split and shivered wheels on the boulevards of heaven. And that God is on our side, all on our side. Blessed be his glorious name! Blessed was the hour when through Jesus Christ my sinful soul made peace with him!

If you continue to ask me why I think that the world can be saved in the final decade of the Nineteenth century, I reply because it is not a great undertaking, considering the number of workers that will go at it, if once persuaded it can be done. We have sifted the five hundred million of workers down to four hundred million and three hundred million and two hundred million and one hundred million and to fifty million. I went to work to cipher out how many souls that number could bring to God in ten years, if each one brought a soul every year, and if each soul so brought should bring another each succeeding year. I found out, aided by a professor in mathematics, that we did not need anything like such a number of workers enlisted. You see it is simply a question of mathematics and in geometrical progression. Then I gave to the learned professor this problem: How many persons would it require to start with if each one brought a soul into the kingdom each year for ten years and each one brought another each succeeding year, in order to have fourteen hundred million people saved or the population of the earth at present? His answer was two million seven hundred and fifty-four thousand three hundred and seventy-five workers. So you see that when I sifted the five hundred million nominal christians of the earth down to fifty million and stopped there, I retained *for* this work forty-seven million people too many. There it is in glorious mathematics, *quod erat demonstrandum.* Do you tell me that God does not care for mathematics? Then you have never seen the Giant's Causeway where God shows his regard for the hexagonal in whole ranges of rocky columns with six sides and six angles. Then you have not studied the geometry of a bee's honeycomb with six sides and six angles. Then you have not noticed what regard God has for the square; the altar of the ancient tabernacle, four square; the breastplate, four square; the court of the temple in Ezekiel's vison, four square; the New Jerusalem laid out four square. Or you have not noticed his regard for the circle by making it his throne, "sitting on the circle of the earth," and fashioning sun and moon and stars in a circle and sending our planetary system around other systems in a circle. And as to his regard for mathematical numbers, he makes the fourth book in his Bible the Book of Numbers, and numbers of the hosts of Isreal and numbers the troops of Sennacherib and numbers Solomon's hewers in the forest and numbers the spearmen and numbers the footmen and numbers the converts at Pentecost and numbers the chariots of God rolling down the steps of heaven. So I have a right to enlist mathematics for the demonstration of the easy possibility of bringing the whole world to God in the coming decade by simple process of solicitation, each one only having to bring one a year; although I want to take in forty thousand and I know men now alive who I think, by pen or voice, or both, directly or indirectly, will take hundreds of thousands each. So you see that that will discharge some of the 2,754,375 from the necessity of taking any.

Another reason why I know it can be done is that we may divide the work up among the denominations. God does not ask any one denomination to do the work of any dozen denominations. The work can be divided up, not geographically but according to the temperaments of the human family. We cannot say to one denomination, You take Persia, and another, You take China, and another, You take India, because there are all styles of temperaments in all nations. And some denominations are especially adapted to work with people of sanguine temperament or phlegmatic temperament or choleric temperament or bilious temperament or nervous temperament or lymphatic temperament. The Episcopal church will do its most effective work with those who by taste prefer the stately and ritualistic. The Methodist church will do its best work among the emotional and demonstrative. The Presbyterian church will do its best work among those who like strong doctrine and the stately service softened by the emotional. So each denomination will have certain kinds of people whom it will especially affect. So let the work be divided up. There are the seven hundred and fifty thousand Christians of the Presbyterian church, north, and other hundreds of thousands in the Presbyterian church, south, and all foreign Presbyterians, more especially Scotch, English and Irish, making, I guess, about two million Presbyterians; the Methodist church is still larger; the church of England on both sides the sea still larger; and many other denominations as much, if not more, consecrated than any I have mentioned. Divide up the world's evangelization among these denominations after they are persuaded it can be done before the Nineteenth century is dead, and the last Hottentot, the last Turk, the last Japanese, the last American, the last European, the last African will see the salvation of God before he sees the opening gate of the Twentieth century.

Again, I feel the whole world can be saved in the time specified, because we have all manner of machinery requisite. It is not as though we had to build the printing presses; they are all built and running day and night, those printing religious papers (925 of those religious papers in this country), those printing religious tracts and those printing religious books. And thousands of printing presses now in the service of the devil could be brought and set to work in the service of God. Why was the printing press invented? To turn out billheads and circulars of patent medicines and tell the news which in three weeks will be of no importance? From the old time Franklin printing press on up to the Lord Stanhope's press and the Washington press and the Victory press to Hoe's perfecting printing press that machine has been improving for its best work and its final work, namely, the publication of the glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. We have the presses, or can have them before the first of January when the new decade is to begin, to put a Bible in the hand of every son and daughter of Adam and Eve now living, and if such person cannot read we can have a colporteur, an evangelist or missionary to read it to him or her.

But this brings me to the adjoining thought; namely, we have the money to do the work. I mean the fifty million of christians have it. Aye, the two million seven hundred and fifty-four thousand christains have it, and the dam which is beginning to leak will soon break and there will be rushing floods of hundreds and millions and billions of dollars in holy contribution when you persuade the wealthy men of the kingdom of God that the speedy conversion of the world is a possibility and that Isaiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and St. John will not stand in the way of it, but help it on. I have no sympathy with this bombardment of rich men. We would each one be worth five millions dollars if we could, and by hard persuasion might perhaps be induced to take fifteen million. Almost every paper I take tells of some wealthy man who has endowed a college or built a church or a hospital or a free library, and that thing is going to multiply until the treasury of all our denominations and reformatory organizations will be overwhelmed with munificence if we can persuade our men of wealth that the world's evangelization is possible and that they may live to see it with their own eyes. I have always cherished the idea that when the world is converted we would be allowed to come out on the battlements of heaven and see the bannered procession and the bonfires of victory. But I would like to see the procession closer by and just be permitted myself to throw on a fagot for a bigger bonfire. And if you persuade our men of wealth that there is a possibility for them to join on earth in the universal glee of a redeemed planet, instead of laborious beseeching for funds and arguing and flattering in order to get a contribution for Christian objects our men of wealth will stand in line as at a postoffice window or a railroad ticket office, but in this case waiting for their turn to make a charitable deposit. The Gentiles are not long going to allow themselves to be eclipsed by Mr. Hirsch, the Jew who has just given forty million dollars for schools in France, Germany and Russia. I rejoice that so much of the wealth of the world is coming into the possession of Christian men and women. And although the original church was very poor, and its members were fish dealers on the banks of Galilee, and had only such stock on hand as they could take in their own net, to-day in the hands of Christian men and women there is enough money to print Bibles and build churches and support missionaries under God in ten years to save the world.

My friends, what but such a consummation could be a fit climax to this century? You notice a tendency in history and all about us to a climax. The creation rising from herbs to fish and from fish to bird and from bird to quadruped and from quadruped to immortal man. The New Testament rising from quiet genealogical table in Matthew to apocalyptic doxology in Revelation. Now, what can be an appropriate climax to this century, which has heard the puff of the first steamer and the throb of the first stethoscope and the click of the first telegraph and the clatter of the first sewing machine, and saw the flash of the first electric light and the revolution of the first steam plow, and the law of storms was written, and the American Bible society and American Tract society were born; and instead of an audience laughing down Dr. Carey for advocating foreign missions as was done at Northampton England in the last century, now all denominations vying each other as to who shall go the furtherest and the soonest into the darkest of the New Hebrides; and three hundred thousand souls have been born to God in the South Sea islands, and Micronesia and Melanesia and Polynesia have been set in the crown of Christ, and David Livingstone has unveiled Africa and the last bolted gate of barbaric nations has swung wide open to let the gospel in. What, I ask, with a thousand interrogation points uplifted, can be a fit, an appropriate and sufficient climax except it be a world redeemed?

Yea, I believe it can be done if we get prepared for it, because the whole air and the whole heaven is full of willing help. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth?" We make an awful mistake if we calculate only on the forces we can see. The mightiest army is in the air. My brethren, so much of selfishness and pride and rivalry and bad motives of all kinds get into our work here that we are hindered. But the mighty souls have gone up to the flying armies of the sky have left all perfection behind; and these souls are with us and without a fault and with perfect natures on our side. You cannot make me believe that after toiling here for long years for the redemption of the world until from exhaustion some of them fell into their graves they have ceased their interest in the stupendous conflict now raging, or that they are going to decline their help. Irenæus Prime! Honored on earth but now glorified in heaven, have you forgotten the work toward which you gave for more than half a century your gracious life, your loving voice and your matchless pen? No! Then come down and help. Alexander Duff! Have you forgotten the millions of India for whose salvation you suffered in Hindoo jungle and thundered on missionary platform? No! Then come down and help. David Brainard! Have you forgotten the aborigines to whom you preached and for whom you prayed until you could preach and pray no more, lying down delirious amid the miasmas of the swamp? No! Then come down and help. Moncrieff and Freeman and Campbell! Have you forgotten Lucknow and Cawnpore? No! Then come down and help. I rub out of my eyes the stupidity and unbelief, and I, the servant of these great Elishas in the gospel, see the mountains all round about are full of horses of fire and chariots of fire; and they head this way. Hovered over are we by great clouds of witnesses and helpers! Clouds of apostles in the air led on by Paul! Clouds of martyrs in the air led on by Stephen! Clouds of prophets in the air led on by Isaiah! Clouds of patriarchs in the air led on by Abraham! Clouds of ancient warriors in the air led on by Joshua, and that bible warrior at whose prayer astronomy once halted over Ajalon and Gideon seems now to lift one hand toward the descending sun of this century and the other hand toward the moon of the last decade saying: "Stand thou still till the church of God gets the final victory!"

Then let us take what remains of this decade to get ready for the final decade of the nineteenth century. You and I may not live to see that decade or may not live to see its close, but that shall not hinder me from declaring the magnificent possibility. I confess that the mistake of my life has been, not that I did not work hard—for I could not have worked harder and lived, as God knows and my family know—but that I have not worked under the realization that the salvation of this world was a nearby possibility. But whether we see it, the beginning or the closing of that decade, is of no importance, if only that decade can get the coronation, and then all decades shall kneel before this enthroned decade, and even the gray grown centuries will cast heir crowns before it and it will be the most honored decade between the time when the morning stars sang together as the libretto of worlds was opened and the time when the mighty angel, robed in cloud and garlanded in rainbow, shall with one foot on the sea and the other foot on the land swear by him that liveth forever and ever that time shall be no longer. Alleluia! Amen!

Amusing Acuteness.

Golden Days.

Nowadays acuteness is deemed essential to success in any direction, and a certain amount of it does materially aid in the accomplishment of purpose. But of a person reputed "cute" it is unexpectedly involved in difficulties of some kind.

While for the greater part human acuteness is tinctured with base elements, it may be exercised without injury to the agent or object, merely exemplifying a good-natured though keen wit.

A young man under examination for admission to the University of Edinburg was asked if he had studied logic, and replied affirmatively.

"You understand the difference between cause and effects?" inquired the professor.

"I do."

"Did you ever know an instance where the effect was in advance of the cause?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mention it," said the professor, in great amazement.

"Well, when a man pushes a wheelbarrow ahead of him."

On a certain occasion Rabelais desired to visit Paris, but was destitute of the means for so doing. He made up three packages and marked them "Poison for the king," "Poison for dauphin," "Poison for M.——."

His landlord saw them, reported the case to the authorities, and he was arrested and taken to Paris. The contents was analyzed found to be brick, dust and harmless. Then Rabelais explained matters and the king was highly amused by the ruse.

In days gone by southern lawyers were more distinguished than Luther Martin. He was one day riding to Annapolis in a stage coach, when his only companion—a young man who had just been admitted to the bar—addressing him, said:

"Mr. Martin, you have been wonderfully successful in your profession. Are you willing to acquaint me with the secret of your success?"

"If you will pay my expense during the few days I shall remain in Annapolis."

"I will," was the earnest reponse.

"It is in this advice: Deny everything and insist upon proof."

At Annapolis Mr. Martin enjoyed all the luxuries that a fine hotel could furnish, regardless of expense and, when the time for his departure arrived passed the "bill"—of enormous proportions—to the young lawyer who was standing near. The latter merely glanced at it, and then returned it to Mr. Martin.

"Aren't you going to pay it?" Mr. Martin asked.

"Pay what?"

"This bill. Didn't you promise to defray my expenses during my stay in Annapolis?"

My dear sir," was the quiet reply, "I deny everything and insist upon proof."

"You need no further counsel from me."

A Rich Man's Revenge.

Even the arbitrary power of Prince Bismarck can not prevent him from receiving hard blows. The Berlin correspondent of the New York Tribune writes as follows:

"Just opposite the palace of the young Prince Leopold of Prussia, and next to the chancellor's palace, on the Wilhelm strasse, where half of Europe is ruled at present, stands a house, lofty and palatial in size, but with an air of desolation, desertion and mystery which attracts the attention of the passer-by. It is larger than the home of the chancellor. The windows are closed, the blinds lowered, and the great iron gate opening upon the court, where grass has sprouted, is barred and bolted. The ivy has grown wild along the wall, and the marble statues of Watt, Stephenson, Fulton and a score of mechanics, which fill the niches of the front and sides, giving it the appearance of an international tomb, are yellow with the repeated pelting of the rain. Between the dark, gloomy, dungeon-like house and the chancellor's palace, in fact with adjoining walls, are the stables ready for a stud of horses and appartments for a coachman on the floor above. Wrapped in this silence, the house stands to-day as it stood for years. It was the home of the great Borsig, the German locomotive builder, one of the wealthies and brightest men of Germany, and probably Bismarck's most bitter enemy. The chancellor had refused a request vital to his interests, and he determined upon revenge. He is long since dead, but he lived long enough ere he left his millions to an industrious son to offend Bismarck more than any other man. Bors