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me. I took the little boy by the hand and went down to Shelbyville, and, walking the streets of the strange little city and inquiring after my husband, I was told I would find him in Judge Sparks' court-room. There, inside the bar, sat my husband, beside an officer. I saw and heard the prosecuting attorney stand and read to him an indictment charging him with the crime of highway robbery, and I heard the court say to the prisoner: Stand up and answer. You have heard this indictment read; are you guilty or not guilty? How do you plead? And then I saw my husband stand and heard him confess, with trembling lips and choking voice, his guilt of the great crime. Then I intervened; I told the judge the story of our lives, and I asked him, for the love of the little boy, to give my husband back to me. And through his tears the judge said: 'Madam, I would to God I could, and if I could I would, but under the law of Indiana I have no choice. I am without discretion. He is charged with a crime; he confesses his guilt; I have no choice but to pronounce the judgment of the law—five to twenty-one years in the State Reformatory.' And then they took him away, and I took the little boy by the hand and we came back to this city, back to our desolate home; and standing there that night in the darkness, amid the ruins of my home, my heart grew big with hate to God. I hated the State; I hated the law; I hated the court that had pronounced its judgment; I all but hated my husband till I remembered that it was the drink, and not him, and then I said: 'God help me'—I was about to do the wrong; I was about to betray the vow I had made him, 'for better or for worse, till death do us part'—'God helping me, I will keep the vow; I will keep my home and I will keep the little boy until Will comes back, and when he comes he will find us yet.' And, Governor, for five long, dreary winter months I have kept that pledge; I have washed and ironed and scrubbed and did everything that an honest woman could do. Look at the evidences of toil upon my hand. And I ask no man for help, and I would not ask you now, but there is to be a new baby in a few days, and I have got to go to the hospital, and my little boy to the orphans' home, unless you give me back my husband."

And then she threw herself upon her knees and laid her head upon the Governor's desk, and cried as if her heart would break. And then the little boy, scarcely three years old, slipped from the high chair from which his feet had dangled, came over to me, and with the artlessness of a baby put his little hand tremblingly on my hand, and looked up into my face through streaming eyes, and cried, in childish treble:

"Mister, I want my papa! Why don't you give me back my papa? I want my papa!"

Men, I looked down into his tear-dimmed face and caught a vision of my own little fellow, his age, that I had loved and lost a while, and the tugging at the heartstrings of the father became too much for the Gov-

ernor of Indiana; and, stooping down and taking him in my arms, I pressed him to my breast, and said to him: "God bless you, little man! You have won; you have won. I will give you back your father!"

The mother sprang to her feet and said:

"Governor, did I hear you right? Are you going to give him back to us?"

And I said, "Yes." And, ringing for my secretary, I said: "Wire Superintendent Whittaker, of the State Reformatory, to start Will Wolsifer at noon tomorrow. Tell him that I am paroling him upon his good behavior." And then, turning to the woman, I said:

"I want you to go meet him. He will arrive at the Union Station at 7 o'clock tomorrow evening. Go get him and bring him here. I want a word with him in your presence."

Then, with consideration for me, she said:

"Governor, why 7 o'clock? That will be after office hours, and the train may be late."

I said: "No matter. The Governor will have no other as big business tomorrow evening as yours, and he will be here."

Next evening, when all had gone from the great office, I sat in the stillness as the shadows lengthened and the twilight deepened to night. Finally through the gloaming there came this woman, the man, and the little boy, and as they approached my desk I stood up, took the man by the hand and looked him in the eyes, and said to him.

"Will Wolsifer, you have sinned against the State that was good to you; you have pulled down the pillars of your own house on your own flesh and blood; you have betrayed the promise you made at the marriage altar to this good woman in the sight of man and God, and you have forgotten the obligation you owe to the child you begot. Wolsifer, you are a bad man. And yet I am going to give you a chance to earn your freedom. I am going to parole you on your good behavior; not for you, no, but for the sake of this little boy that won my heart yesterday; for the sake of this good woman; and in memory of my own dear dead, I am going to give you a chance. Here is a letter. Take it to the man to whom it is addressed. We have seen him. He will give you employment, at good wage. Come back here once a month and bring your wife and child with you; for, Wolsifer, I must know that you keep the faith; and if you betray me I will send you back to prison for the limit of your term, twenty-one years. You may go."

And I watched them as they went out in the darkness.

But the next month they came back again, only there were four this time—the father, the mother, the little boy, and the new baby. And they came once a month for eighteen months. And then, one Christmas Eve, I sat again in the big office as the shadows lengthened and the twilight deepened, but I did not sit alone this time. This man, woman and little boy, and new baby were with me. And again I stood up and took the man by the hand and looked him in the eyes, and said to him:

"Will, God bless you. You are a man again; you have kept the faith; you have filled the bond, and on this glad day, so fragrant with the memory of him who died to atone for human sin, I am going to give you a Christmas gift worth while—your unconditional pardon! Here it is. Take it and sin no more!"

Men and women, do you know what

I was trying to do on that Christmas Eve? I was trying as best I knew to undo the work of the American saloon! I was trying to rebuild a wrecked home! I was trying to restore the broken factors of that unit of American society, the home—father and wife and child. I was trying to give back to childhood its heritage. And after they had gone out into the crisp Christmas air, I sat alone in the great office and held communion with myself, and said: "Hanly, here is a man's job. Have you the grace and courage to put upon its altar your ambition, your desire for public approval? Are you willing to go out across the continent and strike the thing that did this cruel wrong?"

For years I have answered that call as best I could. And hear me, friends, the fighting has been almighty good. It never was better than it is now; and if we win—and we will win in the providence of God—there must come into the hearts of Christian men and women more of forbearance, more of unity of purpose, more of desire to touch elbows and fight under a common banner. We must cease to sin with the ballot our fathers gave us. Vote for no man unless he stands publicly pledged in enmity to this traffic, and vote for the man that does stand so pledged. A little of that kind of fighting, instead of wrangling among ourselves, will command respect, and in the fulness of God's own time this accursed traffic will be able to find no safe habitation anywhere beneath Old Glory's stainless flag.—The Expositor.

Miscellaneous

IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS OF THE AMERICAN CHURCH.

A Sermon Preached by Rev. James Gordon Gilkey in the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, Penn.

Most sermons today deal with some one problem of Christian life. They take up conscience, or prayer, or discuss some one branch of Christian service. While these sermons have many advantages, they have at least one great defect. In presenting these single truths and single problems they lose sight of the great issues of Christianity as a whole. This morning I should like to turn to these wider aspects of our faith and consider the exact status of the Church in America. Viewed in the large, is Christianity gaining ground in the

United States or not? What are the great issues the Church of our day is facing?

Victory of Christian Principles.

When we compare the America of today with the America of a century ago, there is unmistakable evidence of a slow but sure victory of Christian principles. Take such a matter as drunkenness. The conditions prevalent at the time of the Revolution seem to us almost unbelievable. Colonel Thomas Hartley, one of Washington's commanders, who was stationed in the Alleghanies to protect the frontier against the Indians, reported at one time "that his command was in bad shape because its whiskey and flour were nearly exhausted." At that time whiskey was ranked with flour in the list of military supplies. These conditions were not confined to the army. In 1790, William Ellis, a pioneer settler in Pennsylvania, wrote to a friend of his: "We have just done cutting the grain, and have hauled all our wheat in. This year we cut the harvest without spirits, and without raising wages." Whiskey was such an important part of the harvesting apparatus that this settler reports with surprise a year when men worked without it. Turning from these conditions to those of our own time, we find that 24 of our 48 States have adopted State prohibition, and that in 85 per cent of the territory of the United States it is impossible to obtain liquor legally.

This gradual victory of Christian principles has extended to other fields as well. One who reads the private correspondence of a century ago finds that standards of private morality were prevalent then that would not be tolerated among respectable people today. And there has been another

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