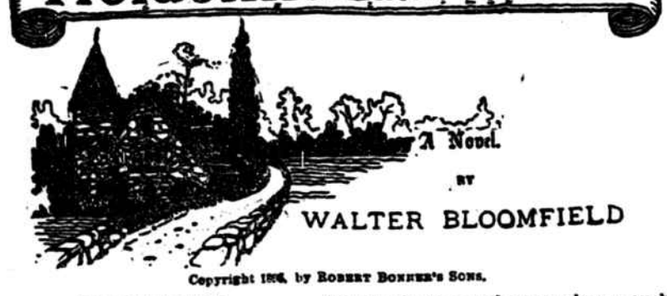
Holdenhurst Hall



A Novel.

BY

WALTER BLOOMFIELD

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CHAPTER XIII.

UNREST.

The conflicting emotions aroused by the perusal of my ancestor's Record, but more particularly, I think, by the keen hope of the existence of the treasure where it had been stored by Roger Trueman, and the possibilities which its recovery and possession presented to my mind, were beyond the strength of my nature to endure. The heavy volume fell from my hands to the floor, and I involuntarily rested against the side of the carriage, while a feeling of deadly faintness came over me, though I did not lose consciousness. Without doubt my aspect presented all the signs of sudden illness, or the comedy which immediately ensued could not be accounted for.

"Janet," screamed the old lady, "the flask, the flask! Don't you see the gentleman has fainted? Quick! What a stupid girl you are!" and the next moment that awful gorgon had me fixed in a corner, where she frantically endeavoured to thrust the neck of her nauseous flask into my mouth. I offered what resistance I could, but my efforts were as nothing opposed to the strength of my tormentor, who persisted in her purpose, her tongue running with great volubility while she saturated my shirt front with brandy. "This is what comes of reading novels. God bless us all, look at the size of that one! How thankful I am that I never allowed my sainted William to see any such devices of Satan! Janet, throw that horrid book out of the wondow."

The natural hesitation of the young lady addressed to deal in such summary fashion with another person's property averted the threatened calamity and afforded me an opportunity to grasp my volume, fear of its loss having inspired me with strength for the effort.

"Well, well, keep it, if you must," the old lady continued; "but it would have been no great loss any way; you could have got another at the next station. All novels are alike; though, I must say, that is an extra large one. Ah, if my poor dead boy were alive, he would be just about your age, and, oh, how like you he was! Everybody said what a sweet face my William had—just like a girl's. He was a good boy." Here the old lady, being overcome with emotion, resumed her seat, by which circumstance I was enabled to breathe once more, having learned that it is neither pleasant nor judicious when in a fainting condition to be projected against a fat individual enveloped in a vast quantity of crape. The collapse of my fellow-passenger was the signal for my recovery.

It was with much satisfaction that I perceived we had nearly arrived at Cambridge, where I was to change trains. It had transpired in some remarks to her maid that my troublesome fellow-passenger was also going to Bury St. Edmund's; but I resolved to avoid her companionship for the second part of my journey by taking a seat in a smoking compartment; and with my precious volume safely stowed in my bag, on the handle of which I kept my hand, I sat looking out of the window ready to alight the moment we entered the station.

The old lady must have divined my attention to flee from her at the earliest possible moment, for, though she did not cease to talk, she now assumed a somewhat quieter manner, confining her remarks to what she was pleased to consider my wonderful resemblance to her dear boy in heaven, and inviting me to visit her at my earliest convenience that she might have the pleasure of gazing on my features, to which end she presented me with her card—

: MRS. ANDREW BUTTERWELL, :
: Kingsthorpe Grange, :
: Chevington, :
: Bury St. Edmund's. :

I took the card and, having glanced at it, put it in my pocket, at the same time resolving to most carefully avoid Chevington and its neighborhood.

The short journey from Cambridge to Bury passed without incident. I tried hard to dispassionately consider the facts which my ancestor's Record had so opportunely revealed—to digest them and to weigh the chances for and against the treasure having been long ago found and appropriated; but my mental balance was too greatly disturbed for the task, and besides, thoughts of the living treasure which I might fearlessly claim were I but possessed of those long immured Venetian sequins obtruded themselves and prevented me resolving upon any definite plan of action. At last, after what seemed an interminable period, the train steamed into Bury station, and, pale, nervous and agitated, carrying my bag (which I would not trust to a porter), I ran down the steps into the courtyard. My father was waiting for me with the dogcart, and I observed with satisfaction that he was unaccompanied by a servant.

My father greeted me with cordiality, and in less time than it takes to tell I was seated at his side and we were speeding towards Holdenhurst as fast as our bay mare could trot "I thought it was best that you should come home," said he, "if only for a day. Of course, the place would be safe enough with old John; but you know I never fancied leaving it unless you were at home, and just now there are a dozen or more strangers at the Hall. It is a strange piece of business, this affair of your Aunt Annie. I have telegraphed to your grandfather that I will do all I can to find out where his daughter is, though, so far as I can perceive at present, that will be very little. Annie is the last girl in the world I should have expected to err in that way; she was always such a loving child. I would no more have believed that she had a thought hidden from her father than I would at this moment believe such a thing of you."

At this remark I winced, yet foolishly held my peace as to what I had so lately read, and which now engrossed all my thoughts. To be wise after the event is the quality of modern prophets—of dispensers of generalities and copy-book wisdom, whom I have no desire to imitate. I know not how it was. I suppose I am by nature secretive, or that at the time some ill-defined idea suggested itself to my mind that I should best serve my interest by carefully reserving to myself the information I had acquired; though I have never at any time regarded my father's interest as other than identical with my own, nor did I conceal my information as part of a determined policy. That my reticence was a grave error I now know. Had I at once imparted my discovery to him who by nature and statute law had the greatest right to know of it, I had spared myself much misery and the British public had not been afflicted with these memoirs.

"Even if you cannot suggest anything for us to do in the matter," said my father, continuing, "it is well that you have returned home. When two persons discuss a case some practicable notion will often occur to one of them which solitary contemplation fails to produce. You have read your grandfather's letter?"

"Yes; I have read grandfather's letter," I replied.

"Well, and what is your opinion?"

"I think he has acted unwisely in making such long journeys to find his daughter, more especially with such slender means as his. If he did not know at all what had become of her, I could better understand his doing so; but according to Annie's own letters, as grandfather describes them, she has gone off of her own free will, and repents her act only so far as her present position prevents her seeing her father. Suppose Annie's address is discovered, and grandfather visits her and learns all her circumstances, depend upon it his gratification will end there; having been heartless enough to voluntarily abandon her father, she would hardly be likely to give up whoever she is with and return to Holdenhurst, or to some employment in London. That you may gather from her protest that she is kindly treated. I do not think so well of her as you and grandfather do."

"Why, Ernest, my boy, you begin to reason like your uncle, and are rather uncharitable; but I fear you are right."

"I am not in the least uncharitable," I retorted warmly. "On the contrary, I regret what has happened as much perhaps as you do; but my sympathy is more with grandfather than with Annie. Although I see but little use in the inquiry he has asked you to make, I was in the act of starting for Richmond to investigate the clue he gave when the Rev. Evan Price brought me your message, and I at once came here instead. Don't think I'm indifferent to what concerns you so much."

"My dear boy, why asure me of what I know so well?" asked this best of fathers. "Your prompt return is sufficient proof of that." As this parental commendation was uttered we passed through my father's gates, and the next minute alighted at the porch of Holdenhurst Hall, where old John stood at the open door to receive us.

I had been absent from my birthplace only one week, but the changes, which had been made in that brief period astonished me. The entire Hall was encompassed with an intricate network of scaffolding, and our beautiful lawn, disfigured by planks, ladders, and piles of slate and white hewn stone laid about in confusion. Many of the upper windows had been taken out, the vacant spaces presenting a grim, inhospitable aspect. Thoughts of the enhanced grandeur of the place a few months hence failed to dispel the chilling depression that came over me as I noticed these changes, and I entered my old home with sadder and stranger feelings than I had ever before experienced.

My discomfort was increased when I saw the interior. All the pictures and armor had been removed from the hall and staircase, and while part of the oak walls remained darkened by the centuries part had been scraped and polished and looked like the library walls of a Kensington mansion built yesterday. In nearly all the rooms the furniture was displaced and much of it covered up.

"How do you like the look of the place?" asked my father with a faint smile.

The disconsolate expression of my face which prompted this query was a sufficient answer to it. I do not remember having ever before having been so profoundly miserable as when we wandered together from room to room and along the gloomy corridors surveying the confusion which everywhere prevailed.

"Come, don't be so melancholy about it," urged my father; "in seven or eight weeks at most the Hall will be thoroughly restored and cleaned, and the architect your uncle has engaged assures me that the renovation shall be effected in the most conservative manner possible, the antiquity of the place being in no way damaged."

I observed that I hoped it might be so.

"There is no doubt of it," continued my father. "Have you seen the church? No! It is at present without a roof, and the pulpit has been moved from the north to the south side. Where the altar was the new organ is to be. On Sunday Mr. Fuller is to preach in Johnson's barn near the watermill."

"Haven't these changes been made very quickly?"

"Indeed, they have; but you are not acquainted with half of them yet. Yesterday a celebrated arborculturist from Kew was here and went over the estate, marking trees which he considers too old either for use or ornament; they are to come down and more than two thousand new trees are to be planted. I am told that your uncle had to pay a fee of £25 for his services."

"Shall we dine now?" I asked, abruptly changing the subject, though I never felt less inclined to eat in my life. What I had seen and heard made me feel sick at heart, and I would have welcomed almost anything to divert my mind, perplexed as it was and wearied with strong and varying emotions.

"Of course; you have had a long journey," said my father, looking at his watch. "It is not yet seven o'clock, but I will order something to be served at once."

A small room which overlooked the garden had not as yet been interfered with, and there we sat down to a hastily improvised dinner. Old John waited at table as usual, but made one or two awkward blunders, and seemed so strange in his manners that I took the first opportunity that presented itself of remarking upon it.

"You see, he is over sixty," urged his employer, "and we must not expect much from him now. The alterations going on here, and the presence of so many strangers, has so disorganized him that he has been almost beside himself for the last few days; on Friday I could scarcely make anything of him. When the workmen are gone we must find the old man a cottage and a small pension. He has lived here since he was a boy, and has been a good and faithful servant."

"That will be rather lonely for him, won't it? Fancy old John Adams, bachelor and ex-butler, who never had a thought that went beyond his sideboard or the kitchen, living by himself in a cottage!"

"It will be as lonely for him as it has been for me the week that my boy was in London," agreed my good-natured father, and then reverted to the case of my unfortunate Aunt Annie. I listened to his opinions and conjectures with but feeble interest, making pretence of so much interest as decency required, while I debated with myself how I might best go down into the crypt unobserved by my father or the servants.

Very rarely was anybody out of bed at Holdenhurst Hall at so late an hour as eleven in the evening; and I therefore determined, if I could only screw my courage up to the necessary pitch, to make a secret visit to the crypt at midnight. With this purpose in view I withdrew to my room as soon as possible, and having unpacked my bag wrote to Miss Marsh; but I was so unsettled and unnerved that I made three rough drafts of a short letter before I could express myself to my satisfaction. That task accomplished, I went into the garden, and thence wandered to the stables to fetch a lantern which hung behind one of the doors there—a ponderous structure of glass and metal, encasing an oil lamp, the whole depending on a huge ring; such a lantern as the watchmen of London carried in the time of the Georges. Having assured myself that it was provided with oil and a wick, I conveyed it to my room, and then returned to my father, who at once resumed the discussion of which I was so heartily weary. As with most matters which are much discussed, no decision was reached; and when at ten o'clock we separated for the night, I retired to my room in a strange condition of unrest, a prey to diversified emotions, Hope and Fear struggling for the mastery.

To be continued.

An Expensive Education.

It is suggested, and the suggestion seems eminently reasonable, that when England gets through practicing in South African she will have the ablest army in Europe; an army fit to be compared with Grant's in 1865. It is the great drawback to the military art that a nation can't learn it thoroughly without practice, and that usually, as the world is managed now, by the time any generation in any nation becomes exceptionally proficient at fighting the chance to use its skill passes, not to return until its veterans are past the fighting age. Nothing but a rare combination of circumstances can enable any modern nation to recover the value of the money and the lives it has invested in the making of an efficient army. The most profit that England can hope for from her 200,000 seasoned veterans is respectful treatment from her neighbors while she is nursing her wounds.—E. S. Martin, in Harper's Weekly.

Increase in Marriages.

There has been a notable increase in the number of marriages recorded in Chicago for this year over a similar period of last year. This has set speculative persons at work figuring out why this should be, and some of the conclusions are interesting. It is noted that the increase has been accompanied by a corresponding decrease in the number of young women seeking employment as stenographers and clerks, and certain club women infer from this that there is a growing tendency on the part of young women to give up business life for that of the home. Others hold that prosperity in the business world has enabled more young men to marry, and that this will account for the increase.—Chicago Post.

A Forgotten Craft.

It was probably known to nearly every Roman citizen how the mortar which cemented the stones of their buildings was made—just as it is known to the majority of people that the principal ingredient of English mortar is street scrapings, but the knowledge being general nobody wrote it down, and in time, as the Romans shifted their building upon slaves and foreigners, the recipe of their mortar was lost. So far it has not been discovered, though the secret of it would be immensely valuable, for the cement outlasts the very stones which it joins.

DR. CHAPMAN'S SERMON

A SUNDAY DISCOURSE BY THE NOTED PASTOR-EVANGELIST.

Subject: The Song of the Lord—If Our Hearts Will But Sing Right Christ Will Help Us to Counteract Our Bias to Sin.

NEW YORK CITY.—The Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman's sermons continue to excite the profoundest interest and to give the greatest satisfaction to that large number of American people who demand a striking discourse for weekly reading. The popular pastor-evangelist has prepared the following sermon for the press. It is entitled "The Song of the Lord," and is preached from the text, "The song of the Lord began also." II. Chronicles 29: 27.

The difference between the 28th and the 29th chapters of II. Chronicles presents to us an illustration of that difference which we frequently see in the church as she passes from times of enthusiasm to days of depression and back again, and for which there seems to be no human explanation. So also is it the picture of many families where the godly father has an ungodly son and an ungodly father a godly son, which is entirely contrary to the rules which in our own house we have determined should abound. So also is it a picture of many individuals who after weeks and months and even years are found regularly in the house of God the most devout of worshipers, and then suddenly stop unable almost to explain to themselves how they have lost interest and why their zeal is quenched. The wicked reign of Ahaz and the reign of his righteous son Hezekiah thus furnish us with practical illustration.

I.

Ahaz was the eleventh king of Judah, the son of Jotham. His example was holy and his reign was peaceful and prosperous. Not so of his son. He was a gross idolator, actually sacrificed his children to the gods, remodeled the temple that it might be fit for idolatrous uses and owned chariot horses that were dedicated to the son. Upon all of this the judgment of God falls, but because of it the condition of the people is something dreadful. He is an illustration of the power of sin. First, in its infatuation. We find him robbing the palace and plundering the temple, places which had always been sacred both to the king and to the people, but which he presents as dishonored in the 21st verse of the 28th chapter, to the king of Assyria, but somehow sin seems always to present the same sort of an infatuation to those who walk for any length of time in its way.

Second, in its degradation. There could be no worse sin than that described in verses 24 and 25 of the 28th chapter, where Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, shut up the doors of the house, and in all the cities of Judah made high places to burn incense to other gods. A picture very much like it is found in the 5th chapter of Daniel the 3d and 5th verses, where the temple vessels are taken by the king and used in midnight revelry, when suddenly the fingers of a man's hand are seen writing on the wall, "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting." However, it is true that any man who uses his powers of body or of mind to sin is as defiantly sinful as was Ahaz the king.

Third, in his death he is a picture of the end of sin. He died when only thirty-six years of age an untimely death, and he sleeps in a dishonored grave, for they would not bury him in the tombs of the kings, a perfect illustration of the text, "Sin when it is finished brings forth death." In the city of Paris in burning letters of fire a certain place of dangerous sin greeted the passer-by with these words, all of them written in fire, "Nothing to pay," but he who enters in through the door will find that the wages of sin is death. This has always been true. Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, began to reign when he was twenty-five years old. In his parental heritage he had everything against him, but his mother's name was Abizah, and she was the daughter of Zechariah, a man who had understanding in the views of God. This is undoubedly the secret of Hezekiah's goodness. Boys frequently go right when their fathers are wrong, but when the mother is wrong very rarely do they walk in the paths of rectitude.

The temple with which we have to do in the story of the text was built 480 years after the children of Israel had turned from Egypt. It was the fourth year of the reign of Solomon, seven years of time was consumed in its construction, and 183,600 Jews and strangers wrought in its building. According to the present valuation of gold and silver it cost $1,710,000 in silver, $2,737,500 in gold, or a total of $4,447,500. Gold and silver and precious stones made up its adornment, embroidery work so fine that it seemed as if angel fingers must have worked it, and the service of the temple was almost too inspiring for description in human language. This temple is a type of the New Testament temple which Paul describes in I. Corinthians 6: 19, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" In a sense every individual is a temple of the Holy Ghost. There is also a sense in which a single church is that temple, but in a more literal interpretation it is the entire church which forms the temple, and we as living stones are built into it. Which ever one of these interpretations we accept to-day we have the three fold vision of the Old Testament temple. Before us the outer court, the holy place and the holy of holies which corresponds to the three fold nature of man, spirit, soul and body.

II.

For sixteen years there had been no song in the temple. This was a great loss, because the people had always been accustomed to sing from the time at creation when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy to the marching through the Red Sea where the sons of Israel were led by Miriam in the singing, and the birth of the Saviour where the angels were the choir, the last supper where the Lord Himself was one of the singers, up to the new heaven and the new earth where they sing the new song the world has had much to do with music. The temple service when men lived in right relations with God and the house was clean was beautiful. Some Psalms were written in the temple in letters of gold, and the people chanted them to the accompaniment of the consecrated instruments, the antiphonal choirs answered each other, as for example, in the 24th Psalm, one choir would say, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in," and the other choir would respond, "Who is this King of glory?" only to have the other singers reply, "The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory." But for sixteen years there had been no song.

First, why was this? The best explanation is given in the 28th chapter of II. Chronicles, the 24th and 25th verses. "And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the Lord, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods and provoked to anger the Lord God of his fathers." There is many a life to-day without a song, and to all such I give my message. The reason for this is found in the fact of sin. We sin in our outward acts, but God can keep us from that if we will let Him and give us the song once more. We sin in our desires, but He can remove these desires if we will but permit Him to do so, and our affections may be set on things above. We sin in our motives, but if we are His there is a new pivot to our life, and the motives which were most impure may become pure, indeed. We have also a bias to sin which comes to us with our birth, but He can counteract it if we will give Him the right to do so. If one could throw a stone up high enough it would come to the place of equipoise, where the law of gravitation would be overcome by the high law which pulls upward, and so if we did but yield ourselves to Christ as we ought we would come to the place where He would overpower the weakness of our nature, and what we doubtless need is a song to-day. It may be the old song we used to sing. It is natural to everybody to sing, the plowboy as he follows his plow, the shepherd as he keeps his flock in the mountains, the sailor on the sea and the traveler on the plain, they all sing. At a critical moment in the battle of Waterloo when the soldiers were wavering Wellington found out it was because the band had stopped. He ordered the musicians to play again, and the effect was marvelous. If there would only be a song in our souls to-day and in the church there would be power. A mother saw her child standing upon the edge of a precipice. She knew if she shouted she might startle the child so that he would fall, so she attracted his attention by a familiar song she sang. There are men and women standing on the very brink of perdition to-day without hope, but if the church were but singing her song as she ought the lost could be saved, and if one had a song others would join with it. On the battlefield of Shiloh fainting and suffering a Christian soldier began to sing, "When I can read my title clear." In a few moments another soldier with weak voice joined in and then another until a score of voices were taking up the song. Oh, if we could but set on fire one church for God the whole city might soon be under the touch of His mighty life.

Second, what did Hezekiah do? We have only to read the story to find out.

(1). He opened the doors, as indicated in the third verse.

(2). The priests were santified, the 15th verse.

(3) They went into the inner part of the house and made it clean, the 16th verse.

(4). They sanctified the entire house, the 17th verse.

(5). They restored the vessels which had once been used in the temple.

(6). "And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began the song of the Lord began again, also with the trumpets and with the instruments ordained by David, king of Israel. And all the congregation worshiped, and the singers sang and the trumpeters sounded, and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished."

Third, all this is typical. We have no song in the church to-day as once we had. I do not wish to be pessimistic in my view of the condition of things; it is my great desire to inspire the church with a new hope and a conception of better things, but no one is so blind to-day but what he can see that the church is without the old song she used to have, and beyond all question it is because the temple must needs be cleansed. Why should not the work begin now?

(1). It ought to begin with the priests themselves as in the Old Testament story. Christian Evans tells of the time when one day riding through a wood he dismounted from his horse, hitched it to the tree and made his way into the darkening shadows and stayed upon his face before God for hours waiting for his special blessing or his special work, and when he returned to his horse and mounted it and the next day began his preaching service a revival was started which swept the whole country. Maze spent a day and a night in a New York hotel asking for God's special blessing because he needed it, and at last must needs rise and say, "Oh, Lord, stay Thine hand I can hold no more." Murray McCheynne was so filled with God that as he laid his hands upon a boy's head and said, "I am very much concerned about your soul," the boy remembered it and when he forgot McCheynne's sermons he felt the touch of his loving hand upon his head, and it pushed him into the kingdom. Is it not true that too many of us in preaching have somehow become inculcated with the spirit of the world in this age of ssepticism? Is not the day upon us when we ought to begin anew our ministry pledging ourselves to God that it shall be only such a ministry as He could approve of.

(2). And the inner part of the house needs also to be cleansed. There is in every church a circle into which God has seemed to call certain persons. To these I now direct my message, to the officers of the church of whatever name, to the Sunday-school teachers and to those who have become spiritually minded is the searching question, "Is thine heart right in the sight of God?" In the 52d chapter of Isaiah and the 11th verse the prophet says, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." God pity the man whose life is unclean, while his office is one the angels might covet to fill. The searching power of God's word ought to touch the Sunday-school teacher. One of Mr. Moody's teachers in Chicago was dying of consumption. He must leave his Western home and return to the home of his boyhood in the East, but before he would leave, entering a carriage he drove to every home and besought the members of his class to yield to God, and said Mr. Moody, "When the time came for him to leave Chicago his whole class, every one of them saved, gathered at the platform of the station to wave him a farewell, and they all sang, 'Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.'" In Galatians, the 6th chapter and the 1st verse, it is commanded, "Ye which are spiritual restore the wanderers in the spirit of meekness," and alas, it is true that men have wandered in multitudes from the church, and we have done nothing to restrain them, let the work of cleansing go on.

(3). The church as a whole ought to be set right with God. In Zechariah, the 3d chapter and the first seven verses, we have the picture of Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord. He was clothed with filthy garments, and the word of the Lord came saying, "Put off the filthy garments and I will clothe thee with a change of raiment." These filthy garments upon the high priest are like the habits which cling to some of us. They have sapped our spiritual life, and we are powerless in the presence of the world. We ought to put them off and then put on Christ, so that living among men we might win them to Him by the very way we live. This will not be easy, for the picture of Joshua is with Satan resisting him. I doubt not he is resisting us now in the presence of God, doubtless calling attention to the way we have sung our hymns this morning and uttered our prayers, but this picture in Zechariah also tells us that Joshua, the high priest, had a fair mitre set upon his head, and the bands showed that service was hard. That fair mitre is like the descent of the Holy Ghost, for which there is a great need today. Then Hezekiah saw that the vessels of the temple were restored. The church has had certain vessels committed to her, as, for example, the Bible. We have picked it to pieces until the faith of some has been shaken. "Will you pray for a theological student?" said a woman to me this week, who used to be one of the most consistent Christians I ever knew and one of the most zealous. "He doubts much of the Scripture, and as a consequence his life is not only indifferent but inconsistent." The time has come when the Bible ought to be put in the church in the place it once occupied.

Preaching is another vessel entrusted to the church. As a matter of fact, do you believe that men would know they were lost from much of the preaching they hear to-day. The time has come for the old-time spirit of the church fathers to prevail

Music is still another vessel, and that church is to be pitied, if not despised, where the music is not in every way to the praise of God, rendered by men and women whose hearts have already been yielded to God, but it was when the burnt offering was presented that the song began and there was this peculiar about the burnt offering, it was all yielded and it was all consumed, an illustration of the fact that when we are entirely surrendered to God, when He rules in the ministry and controls in everything in the church, when there is no thought but for His glory and no competition but for His approval, then will the song of the Lord begin once again. If you will read the 30th chapter of II. Chronicles you will have the story of a great revival, where people from Dan to Beersheba came to Jerusalem to spend seven days, and then tarried seven days longer, or if you will read the 31st chapter of II. Chronicles you will have the picture of the priests of God going up and down the land overthrowing the idolatrous places of worship and setting up the altars once more. This is the secret of purifying our cities and purifying our land. Let the song of the Lord begin once again. There is no more fitting close to Hezekiah's life than the 21st verse of the 31st chapter of II. Chronicles. "And with every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered."

Ninety per cent. of the 128,000,000 people of the Russian empire are farmers.

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

READING FOR THE QUIET HOUR WHEN THE SOUL INVITES ITSELF.

Poem: My Faith—Three Bible Stories Connected With Gardens Which Find an Echo in the Experience of Every Soul—The Joy of God's Elect.

Of creeds and forms the schoolmen talk
I am not skilled to understand;
I only know I daily walk
Fast clinging to an Unseen Hand,
And that a Presence, grand and sweet,
Each morn and eve I go to meet.

I know but this—that "all the days"
A Form Divine is hovering near—
And when, at parting of the ways,
I sometimes shrink, that every fear
Is stilled—I cannot tell thee how—
And calm as a hushed child I bow.

I will not argue with the wise;
How can I, knowing 'naught they mean.
But all around my pathway lies
A light beyond the morning's sheen!
Content am I unlearned to be,
While Christ, God's Wisdom, dwells with me.

—Elizabeth Fenner Baker.

The Gardens.

It is a pleasant thing to care for a garden—to spend one's leisure in the cultivation of flowers. And if you have no leisure and your general lot is cast where the gardens do not bloom, still in summer time you sometimes see their beauty; let them remind you of three Bible stories connected with gardens, which find an echo in the experience of every soul.

I see in a garden salvation required. The Bible pictures a man and woman trembling, fearful. There is a sound that is not the sound of the wind nor of the murmuring trees—a movement that is not the stirring of the leaves; nay, oh trembling sinner, well mayest thou hide thyself; this is the voice of the Lord. "The voice of the Lord shaketh the cedar-trees"—well may it shake thee! It speaks the sentence of exile, condemnation, death. Go forth; human nature is utterly fallen; we have no spark of goodness left whereby we may claim to enter into the presence of the Lord.

Ah, that curse of the race is on all of us. All inherit sin; all are conscious of vileness within. You are kind, charitable, respectable, you do your duty; but it matters not—the taint is on thee, the trail of the serpent is over it all; you need a Saviour! And you remember the day when first you realized it, and cried to God to reveal His Christ to your soul.

Again, I look at a garden, and I see salvation being wrought out. It is night in a garden now. Pale night has come, the trees cast long shadows, and the shrubs take fantastic shapes, and the night has many voices, but the birds and flowers are asleep and heed not the marvels of darkness; and not only the flowers, but there are weary men there, sleeping for sorrow. One only wakes, agonizes, cries out in anguish of spirit. Who is this? Oh, promised Seed, oh, Star of Jacob, oh, bringer of Thy people home, it is Thou! Thou, oh Saviour, art agonizing for the sins of man.

"Great High Priest, we view Thee stooping,
With our names upon Thy breast,
In the garden, groaning, drooping,
To the ground with horror pressed."

He is sore amazed, for He sees the sins of all His children, their blackness, their ingratitude; He is to bear it all, to bear all the punishment that they may go free. "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." Nay, O Master, it is not possible; Thou must drain that cup to the very dregs that I may be pardoned and purified.

Christian, has not the scene in that garden been often made precious to your soul? And have you not known something of the anguish and amazement, as you have seen and realized the sin within you—that sin which amazed the Christ? Have you not known the agony, too, as salvation was being wrought out in you, as you did not yet know that your calling and election was sure, as you cried for pardon, and it was not yet vouchsafed to you? He, the Sinless, entered into agony when He was accomplishing salvation for us; we, the sinful, must enter into agony, in a measure, when salvation was being accomplished in us.

"His way was much rougher and darker than mine:
Did Christ, my Lord, suffer, and shall I repine?"

I look at another garden, and I see salvation accomplished. It is the death-day of Jesus. In darkness and pain the Lord of Life has expired upon the cross. In the place where He was crucified there is a garden, and in the garden a sepulcher; there, with weeping and mourning, pious hands have laid the body of Jesus to rest. Pale and bathed in blood, wrapped in linen, in the darkness of the tomb in that garden-place, lies the body of the eternal Son of God. He has atoned for His people's sins now; they are all put away; they owed to God a debt of unimaginable magnitude, but it is all paid now, paid to the utmost farthing—there is nothing for them to pay. No one can lay anything now to the charge of God's elect. It is finished; the little flock need not fear—theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Christian, have you realized that that final joy, the joy of knowing that the atoning work was accomplished for you—that you are accepted in the Beloved?—The Rev. R. C. Fillingham, in "The Gospel in the Fields."

Not According to Our Deserts.

How grateful we should be that God does not deal with us, either as individuals or as a nation, according to our deserts! How sadly we should fare if God did so! God loved us while we were sinners, and sought to save us. Our hope of salvation is that God saves sinners, not that He saves Christians. God does not love us because we are sinners, but God loves us in spite of the fact that we are sinners. That is our hope. As a nation we have been prospered of God, not because we have dealt fairly with other needy peoples, but in spite of the fact that we have ill-treated other peoples or races. We have ill-treated the Indians, we have ill-treated the negroes, we have ill-treated the Chinese. We have a sad record in our long course with other races—which we call inferior races. Yet God does not deal with us according to our deserts. What a God we have, and what reason for rejoicing we have that God does not give us according to our deserts!—Sunday-School Times.

Those Less Fortunate.

If our sincere desire be to advance the kingdom of righteousness upon the earth, ought we not to give ourselves more freely to share the culture and refinements that have graced our lives with those less fortunate, and, above all, to exert all the influence in our power to win the shallow and selfish to a higher plane of living?

In the World to Come.

When the soul shall have understanding to discern all the Saviour's gifts, wisdom wherewith to estimate them, and time in which to meditate upon them, such as the world to come will afford us, we shall then commune with Jesus in a nearer manner than at present.—Episcopal Recorder.

The Happiest People.

Even in ordinary life the unselfish people are the happiest—those who work to make others happy and who forget themselves. The dissatisfied people are those who are seeking happiness for themselves. —Mrs Besant.

Survey For a National Ditch.

A corps of Government surveyors are making a preliminary survey for a ditch to carry water from Platte River to the great Pawnee reservoir in Colorado, which the Government will build. The cost of the ditch will be fully $1,000,000. It will be seventy-five miles long, six feet deep, fifty feet wide at the bottom and seventy-five feet wide at the top. The impression is gained that the Pawnee basin has been practically decided upon as the site for one of the great national reservoirs.

Carnegie Library For English Town.

Andrew Carnegie has given $15,000 for the foundation of a free library at Stourbridge Worcestershire, England.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 21.

Subject: The Death of Moses, Deut. xxxiv., 1-12—Golden Text, Ex. xxxiii., 11—Memory Verses, 5-7—Commentary on the Day's Lesson.

1. "Plains of Moab." The level plain east of the Jordan, where Israel was encamped. "Nebo—Pisgah." Pisgah was a range of the mountain system east of the Dead Sea and Jordan; Nebo was one of the summits of this range. "Of Gilead unto Dan." This was the land on the east of the Jordan that was to be possessed by the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribes of Manasseh.

2. "All Naphtali." Moses also viewed the land on the west of the Jordan. Naphtali was to have a possession on the northern border of Canaan, the possessions of Ephraim and Manasseh were in the centre, while Judah was to occupy the southern part of the land. In Christ's time the three grand divisions on the west of Palestine were Galilee on the north, Samaria in the centre, and Judea on the south. "Unto the utmost sea." The Mediterranean Sea.

3. "The south." Probably referring to the region south of Canaan proper, toward the desert. "Valley of Jericho." His view was from the southern slopes of Lebanon southward, until his eye rested upon the city immediately before him. "Zoar." Not definitely located, but probably near the southern extremity of the Dead Sea.

4. "Unto Abraham," etc. Gen. 12: 7; 26: 3, 4; 28: 13-15. "To see it." There was no miraculous power of vision imparted to Moses. That he should see all that is described is what any man could do if he attained sufficient elevation. The atmosphere of that country is free from vapor, and the sight is carried a long distance. He could not enter the promised land on earth, but God gave him a vision of its glories from Pisgah's top, showing him that he had accomplished his work, that his life had been successful. This scene has ever been a type of the visions of heaven, the earnests and foretastes, the heavenly experiences of the Christian's promised land, which God gives to His people. The setting day is radiant with cloud glories unseen even at noonday. God's word has open windows through which shine glimpses of heaven and ideals of the blessed life. But these visions come after faithful service and the ripening of the character in love and trust. "Shalt not go over." See Num. 20: 8-13. In Meribah when the people needed water the Lord told Moses to speak to the rock, but instead of doing as directed he smote it twice. He also spoke unadvisedly with his lips, calling the people "rebels," and he failed to acknowledge God in the miracle. The Lord immediately told Moses and Aaron that they would not be permitted to enter Canaan.

5. "Servant of the Lord." This is a title of great dignity; Moses had been eminently useful. It was more his honor to be the servant of the Lord than to be king of Jeshurun. No one can be called the servant of the Lord who does not conquer the world, who is not able to overcome all things. "Died." There is a mystery in connection with the death and burial of Moses; there are some who think he was immediately translated. "According to the word." Literally, at the mouth of Jehovah. Some of the rabbins interpret it, By a kiss of Jehovah. The Jerusalem Targum expressly explains it, according to the sentence of the decree of Jehovah. The greatest men are but instruments in God's hands, and He can lay them aside whenever He chooses. None are indispensable with Him. This should, 1. Cause us to see our own littleness. 2. Dispel our fears for the future of the church.

6. "He buried him." That is, God buried him. This is an honor no human being ever received besides him. From Jude 9 it appears that Michael, the archangel, was employed on this occasion, and that Satan disputed the matter with him. Why did the Lord bury Moses? It hardly seems probable that the object was to keep the Israelites from making his tomb an object of idolatrous worship. The tomb of the patriarchs was known, and the bones of Joseph were then in camp on their way to burial, yet neither tombs nor bones were worshiped. The following view of Kurtz is worth considering: Jehovah did not intend to leave the body of Moses to corruption, but at the very time of his burial communicated some virtue by His own hand which saved the body from corruption, and prepared for the patriarch a transition into the same state of existence into which Enoch and Elijah were admitted without either death or burial. As an example of justice Jehovah caused him to die before the people entered the land of rest and promise, but as an example of grace He prepared him an entrance into another land of promise and rest. This view is also held by the Homiletic Commentary, and by the Speaker's and Whedon's commentaries.

7. "An hundred and twenty." The life of Moses was divided into three periods of forty years each. 1. He was in Egypt forty years, during which time he was trained, first in his own home, and afterward in the household of Pharaoh. 2. He was in Midian forty years, caring for the sheep of his father-in-law, in the very wilderness where he was to lead forth the children of Israel. 3. The first eighty years of his life was only a preparation for his life work, which was the deliverance of Israel. For forty years he led the people of God in their wanderings, as they journeyed toward Canaan. "Not dim." Moses did not die of disease. He was young even in old age.

8. "Thirty days." The usual time of mourning for persons of position and eminence. See Num. 20: 29.

9. "Spirit of wisdom." He possessed other gifts and graces also, but wisdom is mentioned as being most necessary for the government to which he was now called. "Laid his hands." See Num. 27: 18-23. The Lord had directed Moses to invest Joshua with authority. In chapter 31: 7, 8, Moses gives him a brief and impressive charge. "Harkened." They submitted themselves respectfully to Joshua, because God had appointed him as their leader by the hand of Moses.

10-12. "Not—like unto Moses." Joshua was filled with the spirit of practical wisdom, but was not like Moses, gifted with power to work signs and miracles, to found a kingdom and create a nation. None, except Jesus, equalled Moses in official dignity, holy character and intimate friendship with God. Moses knew God and freely and familiarly conversed with Him. In whatever light we view this extraordinary man the eulogy pronounced in these inspired verses will appear just.

Death of a Famous Thief-Taker.

Police Inspector Thomas J. Barry, who for many years had charge of the Rogues' Gallery, and who was head of the Bertillon system in Police Headquarters at Boston, Mass., died suddenly the other day from heart disease. Inspector Barry was said to have known more criminals than almost any other thief-taker in the United States. He had a remarkable memory, and was able to identify, call by name and show the record of almost any man who ever had been before him on a previous occasion, or whose picture he ever had seen.

Luccheni, the Assassin, Insane.

Advices from Geneva state that Luccheni, the murderer of the Empress of Austria, has not only become insane, but is at the point of death. He has been extremely violent since his incarceration, and two warders have been delegated to constantly watch him. Neither straitjackets nor a bread and water diet seem to have had any effect on his fierce temperament.

Russian Materials For Home-Built Ships

A decree of the Russian Minister of Marine has been gazetted requiring the exclusive use of materials of Russian origin in the construction of all Russian ships, with the exception of vessels built abroad. The decree may be modified in the case of ships which are to ply in foreign waters.

"Americanization of the World."

The Lokalanzeiger, at Berlin, sees an evidence of the growing Americanzation of the world is a plan to establish a post-graduate medical school at Frankfort after an American model. A private person has given $500,000 to found this school.