Holdenhurst Hall

A Novel.

BY

WALTER BLOOMFIELD

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CHAPTER XXVI.
Continued.

As I progressed along the lonely road, I mercilessly dissected and criticised my past conduct, resolving with all the strength of will I could exert to be henceforth more sceptical in all things, more deliberate in action, and more secretive. The voluntary and generous declarations of Constance Marsh absolved me, I thought, from my former cherished resolve not to marry unless my resources were at least as great as those of my wife; and I would therefore at once return to America, claim the hand and heart I had won, and while endeavoring in all things to gratify my youthful wife, devote a large part of my time and means to some work for the general good. Reconciliation with my father could not fail to come about after the lapse of a little time; and as friendship is no less contagious than enmity, might it not reasonably be hoped that the peacemaking would be yet further extended?

In this mood I arrived at Bury St. Edmund's, and having walked up Abbeygate street, turned aside into the Butter Market, and entered an inn there, where not many minutes afterwards I was sitting in a private room at a table spread with writing materials.

The letter which poor old Adams had brought from Chevington on the day of his death had not yet been acknowledged. It was an inquiry by Mrs. Butterwell for the address of the Rev. Mr. Evan Price. "That gentleman," wrote Mrs. Butterwell, "I once or twice had the pleasure to hear preach in the little church at Holdenhurst Minor, and his manners impressed me as everything that was right and proper in a clergyman—such charming elucidations of Scriptural difficulties! such admirable discrimination in his bearing toward proprietors, tenants and peasantry! I have long intended to benefit this very deserving young man as soon as the opportunity to do should arise, and the living of Kingsthorpe being vacant just now in consequence of the death of the Rev. Mr. Obadiah Hornblower (poor dear man, he was only seventy-two, and till this year was never troubled with bronchitis in summer!) I have decided to offer it to Mr. Price. The living of Kingsthorpe is worth nominally £1200 a year, but owing to the badness of the times the income is now not much over £800. It is a great depreciation, of course, but in these days the living is still regarded as a good one, and I have received hundreds of letters from unbeneficed clergymen begging for the preferment, some of them written as soon as it became known that Mr. Hornblower was not likely to recover. Do pray oblige me with Mr. Price's present address, for I shall not offer the living to any one else until he has rejected it."

As I pondered over Mrs. Butterwell's letter the bitter things—bitter chiefly because they were true—which Mr. Price had said of the Truman family when conversing with Constance Marsh at Tarrytown, were vividly reproduced by my memory, and I thought, too, how persistently he had continued his suit after he had plainly perceived that I was preferred to him. Though I could not entertain these recollections without some bitterness, and in a foolish moment was half tempted to withhold all knowledge of the coveted preferment from my rival, my better self prevailed. No; I would not inaugurate my new course of conduct with a splenetic freak; I should be forgiving and charitable, and would write a friendly though brief note to Mr. Price, enclosing therewith Mrs. Butterwell's letter. This done I wrote another note informing Mrs. Butterwell of my action in the matter.

And now I had to communicate with uncle Sam. What should I say to him? Of the failure, or worse than failure, of the course he had advised, he knew at present nothing. For a long while I paused and stared vacantly upon a blank sheet of paper with my pen grasped ready to record my thoughts; but, alas! those thoughts were too painful and too chaotic for me to give them coherent expression, so after much waste of time I contented myself with inditing two telegrams. One was to my uncle, and merely stated that my mission had failed, and I was on my way to New York; the other, addressed to Miss Marsh, ran thus: "My own! No treasure but you. Returning to claim your promise. Your loving Ernest."

CHAPTER XXVII.

AT THE WINDSOR HOTEL, NEW-YORK.

On a certain Sunday in the month of October the good steamship Campania was made fast to her berth at the quay in New York City, and the delighted passengers, hastily abandoning the floating palace which had so quickly and luxuriously transported them from the old to the new world, hurried hither and thither, greeting the friends who awaited them, inquiring after luggage, or hailing hackney carriages. One passenger, however, quickly made his way through the eager throng, and as he had no other impedimenta than a small handbag, and was oblivious of the bawling of the expressmen, he was the first whom the Customs officials permitted to pass into the street.

The weather was superb, the season being what Americans call their "Indian summer." The excessive heat of summer had passed away, but its brilliance remained, and there was a delightful coolness in the air. The foliage had put on a golden tint of extreme beauty, the sky was cloudless, and all external conditions of a sort to [illegible] humanity. But the gloom which had taken possession of me when I embarked at Liverpool had steadily increased during the voyage, and at times I had hardly been able to endure my own communings. After the exhaustive consideration of my position and prospects engendered by eight days of self-sought isolation in my cabin, the vista before me did not appear nearly so rosy as I had at first pictured it. Thoughts of the death of Adams now tormented me more than was the case immediately after that tragic event. Though I could not in justice reproach myself with having killed the old man, and was comforted by the positive evidence of Dr. Thurlow to that effect, yet I well knew that at best my act had hastened the old man's decease, and who could say by how much? As I reflected how delicate was the distinction between my act and manslaughter I suffered pangs of remorse. Consideration, too, of my other affairs was not calculated to afford me much relief. Here was a young Englishman with little or no experience of the world, homeless, heir to a small impoverished estate which he would probably not inherit for thirty years, owner of 200 pounds and a handbag, come to New York to marry a young lady worth millions of dollars! Why, the idea seemed too preposterous for anyone but a dreamer to entertain. But the die was cast, and the course entered upon must be persevered in to the end. Had it been possible for me to live my days over again I should probably have made other and equally disastrous errors.

Though it was Sunday, and the great stores were closed, Broadway was thronged with well-dressed, prosperous looking people, not much unlike such as one sees in the principal thoroughfares of European capitals. After a long sea voyage a walk is essential to most people for adjusting the physical equilibrium which has been so rudely disturbed. I found it so, and grasping my hand sachel bent my steps up town as I had done on the occasion of my first coming to New York. Not long afterward I paused before my uncle's house, and was struck with consternation when I observed that the blinds were all drawn down and the shutters closed.

Sounds of much unbolting and unbarring reached me before the door was opened in response to my summons, and then I was informed by a man servant, whose face I remembered, that Mr. Truman was staying at the Windsor Hotel, and had left word that he would like me to call upon him there.

"Are Mrs. Truman and Miss Marsh with him?" I inquired, greatly surprised at this intelligence.

"I believe not," replied the man, looking aside in a strange way that discouraged further questioning. However, I inquired of him the whereabouts of the Windsor Hotel, and being informed that it was close at hand on Fifth avenue, I went there as quickly as I could, more perturbed than ever. When I presented my card to the clerk who had charge of the entrance hall of that colossal hotel, he at once deputed a waiter to conduct me to my uncle's apartments, at the same time telling me that Mr. Truman had remained indoors the whole of yesterday in expectation of my arrival.

"Ah!" exclaimed uncle Sam, as he laid his cigar on the mantelpiece and advanced to meet me, "you are the man I need! I received your cablegram, and would have replied to it had it been possible, but you were already on the water. I perceive you are well, so lose no time in telling me as briefly as you can about those infernal sequins, for I am in haste to tell you something of infinitely greater importance."

My uncle's manner alarmed me. He seemed to be laboring under suppressed excitement, and as he resumed his cigar and walked up and down the large room, his whole aspect impressed me as strangely different from the self-possessed, confident man who had excited my boyish wonder. Could it be that the enormous resources of this able financier had at last been broken by a combination for that purpose such as one not unfrequently hears of in the country of his adoption? I could not conceal my fear, and gave timid expression to it.

"No, no," said uncle Sam, impatiently, as a forced smile overspread his features; "nothing of the kind. Get on with your story."

To hear was to obey. At no time was uncle Sam a man to trifle with, and least of all at the present moment. When I had completed my account of my mission to England he paused in front of me (for during my recital he had not once ceased to pace the room), and throwing away the end of his cigar said:

"It is as I supposed. Though you are probably now farther off than ever from the recovery of the sequins, and the result of your expense and trouble is merely the addition of another inhabitant to the unknown world. I have as little doubt as ever that the old man had the gold, and that he has bestowed it where it will rest until it is discovered by some other thief. And now please oblige me by never mentioning this matter to me again, for I do assure you I am most heartily sick of it."

My uncle took two cigars from his pocket. One of them he threw to me across the table, and having lit the other he again paced the room. A minute or two elapsed before he spoke. When at last he did so it was with intense bitterness.

"Of all that you have done or failed to do that which vexes me most is your forwarding Mrs. Butterwell's letter to Price. But I don't blame you in any way; it was impossible that you could know of the deep hatred I was so soon to bear to that unspeakable humbug. The fault is my own for having, in the exercise of my natural generosity, foolishly suffered myself to befriend one of his canting, hypocritical caste. When I picked that unconscionable beggar out of the Suffolk mud he was not ten cents ahead of his debts, and the utmost racking of his wits produced him an income about one-fifth as much as I pay my cook."

Uncle Sam paused a moment, puffed forth a cloud of smoke in a way suggestive of ineffable contempt, and resumed:

"As you know, I brought him here and gave him the management of a newspaper I own, paying him largely for his inefficient discharge of duties which I had to teach him. He attached himself to Connie, and did his best to win her, but Connie, with prudence worthy of her father, would have none of him. When you appeared upon the scene and gained almost without effort the prize for which he had contended in vain, he made the girl for whom he used to profess the most extravagant regard the victim of his revenge. His inability to injure her without injuring Mrs. Truman and me in a greater degree did not deter the villain. His method was this. Knowing that Constance was devoted to her sister, and that anything which would trouble one must needs disquiet the other, he showed her (in your presence, I understand) a letter he had received from another pestilent Suffolk parson, exposing Annie Wolsey—the writer, a craven-hearted windbag named Fuller, having got his information from old Wolsey or your father. Connie, wiser than most women, kept her knowledge to herself, and Price, suspecting this from the fact that there was no upset in my house, forwarded Fuller's letter to my wife."

The malicious leer upon Mr. Price's face at the moment when I last looked upon him was pictured in my memory and not likely to be forgotten. That it was the outward and visible sign of a diabolical nature I had never doubted, and his strictures upon my family on that occasion helped to confirm the opinion, but none the less was I astonished to learn in what circuitous ways this man had worked to injure people who, so far from giving him any cause for enmity, had done much to earn his gratitude. As my uncle again paused I ventured to congratulate him on the futility of Mr. Price's act, seeing that Mr. Fuller's letter contained nothing which aunt Gertrude did not already know.

"My affairs are hardly as smooth as that," continued uncle Sam, forgetful of, or diplomatically ignoring, a previous declaration he had made. "My wife has left me, and I cannot induce her to return home except by substantial assurances that I have finally ceased to correspond with Annie Wolsey."

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed, in great affright. "Do you know where she has gone? Is Constance with her?"

"Don't talk so loud. I am not deaf, and there is no necessity for informing everybody; the affair is sufficiently known already. You have no cause for alarm. I shall give my wife the assurances she demands, and in a day or two at farthest she will reassume her rightful position. It is a pity you forwarded that old lady's letter to him."

"Where is my aunt and Connie?" I asked bluntly.

"In Orange, at a house where their father used to live."

"Is that far from here?"

"Only a few miles. Orange is in New Jersey, the other side of the North River."

A sigh of relief escaped me when I heard these words. To know that I was so near to my dear Constance was as one faint streak of light in a dark sky. I lit the cigar which I had been nervously twirling between my fingers during the progress of this conversation, and took a seat by the open window. Uncle Sam, too, became somewhat calmer and seated himself opposite to me. A long pause ensued, which was at last broken by uncle Sam suddenly breaking out into a loud laugh, quite in his old style. I looked up at him in surprise.

To be continued.

London's Undermined Houses.

Underground London is, no doubt, a very convenient, picturesque, and, when properly confined in tubes, safe enough place, but too much of it becomes awkward. An underground city might prove too much even for the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen. And yet a strong disposition appears to have seized certain parts of the "square mile" to get down below, probably to escape the cold, and they are consequently crackling in an ominous way.

Uneasiness prevails among property owners on both sides of Finsbury pavement, owing to gaping fissures which have appeared in many large business premises. Ground floors, upper floors and basements have alike suffered, and in several instances the cracks are said to be most curious. Many of the properties have been recently surveyed, and reports are being drawn up in regard thereto. It is supposed that new excavations are responsible for this disquieting instability. — London Telegraph.

Wearing Out the Nerves.

Many people wear themselves out needlessly; their conscience is a tyrant. An exaggerated sense of duty leads many a person to anxious, ceaseless activity, to be constantly doing something, over-punctual, never idle a second of time, scorn to rest; such are in unconscious nerve tension. They say they have no time to rest, they have so much to do, not thinking they are rapidly unfitting themselves for probably what would have been their best and greatest work in after years. Self-control of nerve force is the great lesson of health, and therefore of life itself. To understand how to relax is to understand how to strengthen nerves. Hearty laughter is a source of relaxation, as are also all high thoughts, as those of hope, beauty, trus[redacted] love. Relaxation is found in di London Doctor.

—"Say, papa, I heard a go inutes ago." Blind Jerry— ll me about it. I couldn't unt after business hou ews.

A SERMON FOR SUNDAY

AN ELOQUENT DISCOURSE ENTITLED "LIVE IN THE SUNSHINE."

The Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman Says Faith Produces Men, and Their Living in the World is Contending For the Faith—Keeping in the Love of God.

NEW YORK CITY.—The following sermon, entitled "Live in the Sunshine," has been furnished for publication by the distinguished and eloquent evangelist, the Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman. It was preached from the text "Keep yourselves in the love of God." Jude 21.

Jude's is one of the briefest of all the letters in the New Testament, containing only twenty-five verses. It is, perhaps, the last of the epistles. Though the date is not definitely settled, it was probably written after the destruction of Jerusalem, when most of the apostles had finished their work. There is a most delightful spirit of humility in the letter. The writer called himself a servant, and the bondsman of Jesus Christ and the brother of James, and that is a beautiful modesty, for, in fact, it is generally believed that he was the Lord's own brother and the son of Joseph and Mary.

To no particular church or people was the letter written, but the accounts make it especially applicable to us. It is very practical. The heart of Jude was stirred because certain men were denying God and the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, because of this, "I exhort you that you should contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." That expression in the Greek, however, reads for the faith delivered "once and for all" to the saints. So the doctrine is the same to-day as in the days of Jude and before then. Reading on to the twentieth and twenty-fifth verses they indicate that we are expected to contend as did the early disciples.

It has always seemed to me that faith produced men, and their living in the world was a contending for the faith. We have the pattern of the life of the apostolic Christian given to us. If you study the Acts of the Apostle, the letters of Paul, Peter, John, and, better still, the wonderful prayer of Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John, you will see that there were three great elements in their character. They were in the world, but not of it; they were constantly looking for the coming of Christ, and they were filled with missionary fire and zeal. These three characteristics must predominate now if the church is to have power. When one is in the world and not of it he realizes he is a pilgrim and a stranger here, and he endures trials and temptations because he knows that they are but for a little while. The second characteristic has just as great an influence. The disciples were constantly expecting the return of our Lord; they remembered the testimony of the men who had heard the angels on the slopes of Olivet, and again and again they opened their eyes, expecting to behold Him face to face. It was this hope in their hearts which inspired their lives, transfigured the cross and its shame and kept them pure in the midst of all temptation and sin.

The third characteristic is equally important. How much we need to long for the salvation of others! Nothing so touches the hidden springs of the Christian heart as to feel in some measure that he is responsible for those about him. Some one has said, when God would draw out all the fathomless love of a woman's heart, He lays a helpless babe upon her bosom, and it is true that the church will awake to power when she awakes to responsibility.

There is something which I have in mind which will give us all the things I have spoken about. It is described in the text. If there could be any subject growing out of the text to describe it, I should say that it would be "Live in the sunshine." I know what the sunshine does for the clouds; it gives them a silver lining. I know what it does for the grass and the trees and the flowers; it warms and nourishes until they blossom into beauty and fruitfulness. Take the plant away from the light and it will droop and die; place it where the sun will kiss it and every leaf rejoices. This is the very poorest illustration as to what the love of God will do for us, so let us keep ourselves in the love of God.

I. That word "keep" is the key word of Jude's epistle. In it we are told that God will keep us, but we are also told to keep ourselves. We are told to persevere, but it is also said we will be preserved. This is God and man working together, and it is singular, to say the least, that the word "preserve" and the word "persevere" are composed of exactly the same letters. The literal rendering of the expression that God will keep us is "as in a garrison." How secure, then, we must be!

HOW MAY WE KEEP OURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD?

1. No way so efficient as by prayer. There are different kinds of prayer. Jacob prayed when he met the angel of Jabbok, and had his name changed from Jacob to Israel. Moses prayed when he plead with God to look with favor again upon His chosen people. Christ prayed in the garden, for it is said: "Being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly." But this is not the kind of prayer I have in mind; it is rather the kind that Christ offered when He was alone on the mountain with God. I imagine the Father talked with Him more than He with the Father. It is the kind that David describes when he says: "My meditation of Him shall be sweet." Faith is the eye with which we can see God, and meditation the wing with which we fly to Him. It is the kind of prayer offered when the suppliant feels that he is the only one in all the universe; it is the kind of prayer which if our mother could hear, or the dearest friend we had on earth, we should feel that it had been diverted and had not reached God. It is the kind of prayer we offer when we let God talk to us as well as talk to Him. This will keep us in the love of God.

2. Few things will so help as this old book, the Bible. Two gentlemen were riding together, and when they were about to separate one asked the other, "Do you ever read your Bible?" "Yes," said his friend; "I do, but I receive no benefit because I feel that I do not love God." "Neither did I," replied the other, "but God loved me," and that answer fairly lifted the man into the skies, for it gave him a new thought. The question is not at all as to how much I love God, but rather as to how much God loves me. Read the Bible in that way and it will help you to live in the text.

Love dictated every word, love selected every sentence, love presented every providence, love sent Christ to die upon the cross, and you can not read it in this way without keeping yourself in the love of God.

3. All the means of grace will keep us, but if there is one above another it would be the Lord's Supper. The very coming to the table and taking that which represents His body and His blood really lifts the soul into such a condition that it is one with Christ. He that hath seen Christ hath seen the Father, and he that is in Christ is in the Father. What better way could there be of entereing into His love?

II. There must be emphasis upon the preposition "in." The Greek signifies the closest connection, the most intimate association and the most perfect communion. All these things are possible. The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and there may be just as close a fellowship between Christ and His followers. Now and then in this world we find persons whose lives are so blended that they almost look alike. This is oftentimes true of the husband and wife. Tennyson had it in his mind when he said: "In the long years liker must they grow." This communion of the believer with Christ is suggested by the stones in a building, which take hold upon the foundation; by the branches which take hold upon the vine; by the different members of the body knit together; by the union of the husband and wife; by the union of the Father and the Son; so that in this union there is a stability, vitality, consciousness, affection and perfect harmony. If one is in Christ, he will live above the world and the storm's effect. The earth may be covered with storms, but a little way up the atmosphere is clear and the sun in shining. If we wait upon the Lord we shall renew our strength; we shall mount with wings as eagles.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

III. Would that we might understand the meaning of the expression "the love of God." It is hinted at in this world. Passing along the streets one hears the words of a song or catches the strains of a piece of music being played, and he says, "that is from Beethoven or Mozart, I recognize the movement." So in this life we catch strains of the love of God. We behold it in the mother's disinterested, self-denying love; we see it in the lover's glow, and in the little child's innocent affection, but these things are only hints. The Bible gives us the best revelation. Beginning with Genesis the scroll is constantly unfolding. Patriarchs and prophets, judges and kings each tell their story. So, little by little we get flashes out of His great heart until they all come together as the rays of the sun are converged in the sun-glass; then we begin to understand. It was not, however, until the Son of Righteousness arose at the advent that there came the morning light which gives us the thought, not of the administration of God, but of His heart. What is infinite love? The purest, sweetest, tenderest thing known on earth is the overhanging heart of a mother over the cradle that contains her babe that can give nothing back; receiving everything and returning nothing—yet the love of the mother is but a drop in the ocean when compared with the love of God. It is infinite, infinite!

There's a wideness in God's mercy
  Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice,
  Which is more than liberty.

For the love of God is broader
  Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
  Is most wonderfully kind.

Over in England an archdeacon, having reached almost the end of his life, had his home so constructed that he could spend his closing days in sunshine. In the morning they placed his chair so that he could turn his face toward the east and see the rising sun; at noontime they wheeled his chair into the south window, where he could behold the sun in his meridian, but in the evening hours they would place him in the west window, where he could behold the king of day sinking behind the distant hills. So let me ask you in the morning of your life to keep your faces toward the east window, and at noontide live in the south window, but when evening comes turn your face toward the west window, so that all your journey through you may live in the sunshine, and thus keep yourselves in the love of God.

The Right View of Life.

If we could restrain our often too-ready tongues and fiery tempers until the storms of human, every-hour and every-day trials pass over, what shadows we would arise through!—aye, smiling, as we saw them vanishing into the distant nothingness of oblivion. If we could but reason calmly and patiently and resolutely with ourselves, as we betimes must bear the foot-bruises along life's rugged pathway, and bathe them in His heavenly dew of hope until even the scars leave not a vestige of their existence as we gaze upon them again with the solacing eyes of eternal faith; if we could only train our human ears to listen to the tolls of sorrow that rebound upon them as we perforce must often see the heavy clouds falling upon some beloved breast; if we could only train our hearts to thrill with the ecstacy of a higher trust and a supremer love instead of morbid human despair when some mortal eye, some hand, some voice in which we vainly trusted, oh! so fondly, desecrates the pedestal of loyal friendship and honor upon which our love elected their endurance, had turned to mock us, or thrown us helplessly aside, or traduced us by calumny or distrustful suspicions. Ah, yes! if we only could do these things how different would our lives seem in their passing. But we must only try, remembering our Saviour's heavy heart and cross-wearied shoulders, and His bleeding feet on the lonely road to Calvary. He also had to reach the immortal goal of peace through life's bitterest shadows. He smiled angelically at His enemies, and to-day He turns—oh! we know not how often—to blot out the sins of His wandering human fold as they cry out to Him for mercy below.—Christian Work.

The Father's Hand.

Nor is the sense of safety all that is awakened in the memory of a father's hand. It tells also of guidance and companionship. Not only in stormy evenings was the large hand reached down to clasp the little one. But memory is filled with pleasant outlines and beauties of the country, always guided by the father's hand. The hand of father came to mean so much, both of pleasure and comfort, that the phrase is never seen or used but a sacred tenderness steals into the heart. All this and much more the Heavenly Father is to His children. We reserve our thoughts of the Father too frequently to the days of stress and grief, and forget it is the Father who gives the joys and pleasures, too. We think so much of the pitying Father, and imagine falsely that His care is confined to circumstances that call for pity. His hand is a bountiful hand, filled with pleasures. "The way is dark; my Father takes my hand," is often upon our lips, but just as true and far more frequently the path has many flowers, all planted by one hand, life has many gifts all planted by one hand, the days are crowded with joys all showered from one hand. And this hand is "my Father's hand."—Episcopal Recorder.

Happy People.

How pleasant it is to meet in our daily walks of life happy faced people, whose countenances reflect so much sunshine of soul. They are good to look upon; we go our way the better for having met them. Happiness is a great beautifier. It matters not how plain or ill-favored the features if the mind and heart are happy, the joy of living lights a face with the wondrous charm which contentment alone can give.

The rarest feeling that brightens the human face is the peace of a loving soul. As we walk the crowded streets of a large city, where the great drama of life is being earnestly enacted, some in the proud consciousness of leading role, others struggling humbly in minor parts; many with careworn and shrewd countenances, a few with the bright, beautiful expression of happiness, yet the curtain falls, sooner or later, over all. He who has gathered the sweetness from earth's flowers, and distributed it generously among his fellows, is truly a benefactor of the human race, and his name worthy of benediction.

Lack of Home Feeling.

"More of the evil in the world than we often think for can be traced back to the lack of home feeling in childhood days," says the Watchman, of Boston. "Where that does not exist, the young man or woman loses the invaluable consciousness of the solidarity of the family. They come to feel that they stand only for themselves, that they need not consult the interest of others, and they miss that happy restraint of affection for those with whom God united them in the closest of ties. In spite of all that is said about the misdoings of the children of devout parents, we believe that it will be found almost universally true that the children of happy Christian homes turn out well. They have a special guard in their hearts against the seductions of evil. They do not sin against the home, and the memory of their own happy households weaves an ideal of the homes they desire to build, which keeps them brave and pure and human."

The World is Beautiful.

God made the world beautiful; man in his ignorance has made it in many places repulsively ugly; man in his wisdom must undo the work of his ignorance and make the world, so far as he has anything to do with it, beautiful. Art is not mere decoration; it is the interpretation of the world and of man's experience in it in beautiful ways, precisely as the creative mind of God is expressed in the beauty of the skies, the fields, the trees and the flowers.—The Outlook.

When Prayer is Needed.

It is well to let our spirit of prayer find expression according to God's grace and our needs. It is said that "when a Breton sailor puts to sea his prayer is, 'Keep me, my God; my boat is so small, and the ocean is so wide.'" We need God's loving care at all times, and no place or degree of danger is beyond the limit of His ability or readiness to give protection.—Sunday-School Times.

Keep Up Spiritual Tone.

Cease to live in the atmosphere of your sin, by which I mean that you must see to it that your mind is occupied by thoughts as far removed as possible from those in which your temptation can take root. It is a great mistake to loiter around a sin to which one's nature is prone. Your moral strength will depend upon your spiritual tone.—R. J. Campbell.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR JANUARY 4.

Subject: Paul and Silas at Philippi, Acts xvi., 22-34—Golden Text, Acts xvi., 31—Memory Verses, 29-32—Commentary on the Day's Lesson.

I. An evil spirit cast out (vs. 16-18). The missionaries made their home at the house of Lydia (see v. 15) while they continued to preach the gospel at Philippi. They had good success, and in this city the first Christian church in Europe was founded. But their great victories did not come about without great opposition. There was in the city a certain damsel who was a fortune-teller, who brought her masters great gain. This slave girl followed the missionaries and cried after them. Paul was grieved because of this, and commanded the evil spirit to come out of her. "And he came out the same hour" (v. 18). Why was Paul grieved? 1. Because her presence was troublesome to him. 2. Because it might appear that he was in alliance with her. 3. Because what she did was for gain and was a base imposition. 4. Because her state was one of bondage and delusion. 5. Because the system under which she was acting was then holding a large part of the pagan world in bondage.

II. Paul and Silas arrested (vs. 19-21). After the evil spirit had left the girl she no longer had power to make money for her masters by fortune-telling. This made her masters angry, and they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them before the magistrates into the market place, where legal business was transacted. "The Philippian magistrates were excited against the missionaries by the accusation that they had attacked the religion of Rome."

III. Paul and Silas beaten and imprisoned (vs. 22-24). 22. "Multitude rose up." An excited mob. This was done without any form of law. The very magistrates who were affecting such great zeal for the law were among the first to disregard it. "Rent off their clothes." They violently tore the clothes off of Paul and Silas. "Beat them." The words mean to "beat with rods" (2 Cor. 11: 25). The Roman custom was to inflict blows upon the naked body.

23. "Many stripes." The Roman punishment was not limited to "forty stripes save one," like that of the Jews.

24. "Thrust them." All sore and bleeding. "Inner prison." The dungeon, a deep, damp, chilly cell, far under ground, opening only at the top, without fresh air or light.

IV. A great deliverance (vs. 25, 26). 25. "Prayed and sang praises." Their wounds were undressed; filth and vermin added to their pain; their position was one of torture. Sleep was out of the question. They passed the night in devotions. It is a significant fact that the most joyous of Paul's epistles is that written to the church at Philippi, born out of his experience of suffering.

26. "An earthquake." Thus did God answer prayer and prove His presence and protection. No doubt all Philippi heard the sound and felt the force of the earthquake. "Doors were opened," etc. The chains were made fast to the wall, and the shock which burst asunder the bolts of the doors also released the fastenings which held the chains in the masonry. A symbol of the spiritual deliverance they were to effect for the heathen (Isa. 42: 7).

V. The jailor converted (vs. 27-34). 27. "Awaking." The praying and singing did not awake him, but the earthquake did. He evidently slept in full view of the prison doors. "Drew out his sword." The Roman laws transferred to the jailor the punishment due to an escaped prisoner. He decided at once to take his own life and thus avoid a worse fate. He supposed that all in the prison had escaped.

28. "Paul cried." Anticipating the jailor's fear for his own safety, Paul raised his voice to secure attention at once. His purpose of suicide was a great sin. "All here." "Strange for a prisoner to be solicitous about his keeper. But Paul was passionately trying to save men, and the whole gospel is an appeal to men to do themselves no harm."

29. "Called for a light." Which could be carried in the hand. This care for his welfare begat a tenderness in the heart of the keeper. It was the arrow of conviction which had reached his soul. "Came trembling." Not for his life or his office, but for his soul, which he felt was in danger of eternal loss. A moment before he was ready to destroy his life to escape the wrath of man, but now he was eager to find the way of life.

30. "Brought them out." "From the inner prison, where they were confined in the stocks, into the court of the prison, or into his own apartments, having no fear that they would escape, but rather convinced that God was overruling all things for them." "Sirs." "The Greek word implies an acknowledgement of great superiority. Those who had been his prisoners were now his lords." "Saved." "He had called for a light to look for his prisoners. He now calls for the true light, to go forth out of his own prison."

31. "Believe," etc. The sum of the whole gospel; the covenant of grace in a few words. Faith in Christ saves us, (1) because it is the acceptance of God's way of salvation by the atonement in Jesus; (2) because it is the act of taking the things offered to us by God; (3) because it is the act of committing ourselves to an infallible teacher and guide; (4) because it unites us to Christ, the holy and perfect being; (5) because it fills the heart with love to God and to Jesus; (6) it makes spiritual and eternal things real and effective in our lives.

32. "Spake unto him." Then they proceeded, more at leisure, to pour into his attentive ears the history of Jesus Christ, to declare His doctrine, and to explain what it was to believe in Him.

33. "Washed their stripes." "He had not concerned himself about their suffering condition when he put them into the inner prison, but now that his sins were washed away his thought was to minister to the needs of those who were instrumental in his salvation."

34. "Set meat." As they were the instruments of bringing health to his soul he became the instrument of health to their bodies. "Rejoiced." The joy that filled the hearts of Paul and Silas, making the prison a delightful place to them, now filled the hearts of the converted heathen, and made their family circle the scene of holy worship.

A Home For Radcliffe Students.

Relatives and friends of **Mrs. Louis Agassiz, President of Radcliffe College**, at Cambridge, Mass., on the occasion of her eightieth birthday presented her with $116,465, to be devoted to a Radcliffe students' home. It is said $30,000 of the sum was contributed by the Agassiz family. Contributions ranged from $1 to $1000, and came from 452 persons, in addition to graduates, who contributed in a body. The building, which will be named Agassiz Hall, will be built next spring.

The Brains of Ancient Egyptians.

New fields for research are continually opening up. The last illustration of this is the discovery by Professor G. Elliot Smith that it is possible to map the convolutions of the brains of non-mummified ancient Egyptians. The brain is naturally preserved in the vast majority of the bodies in Egyptian cemeteries from pre-dynastic to recent Coptic, the favorable conditions being burial in dry soil and removal from all direct access to the air.

Dangerous Ice Cream.

According to Nature, the Health Department of the city of London has recently had a number of samples of ice cream bacteriologically examined. Many of these samples had set up gastro-enteritis in boys employed by the postoffice. In several of them micro-organisms were very numerous, while in some virulent organisms of the bacillas coli type were present.

Things in Fruit Skins.

Twelve million bacteria inhabit the skins of a half pound of cherries, according to Dr. Ehrlich, a German scientist. Currants have 11,000,000 and grapes 8,000,000. Dr. Ehrlich urges that all fruit be peeled or washed before eaten, according to a consular report from Frankfort, Germany.

An Austrian Custom.

Servants and people of menial rank in Austria are accustomed to kiss the hand of their employer.

THE GREAT DESTROYER

SOME STARTLING ACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.

In a Powerful Editorial the New York American Considers the Drunkard's Side of the Question—First Thing Drink Attacks is W ll Power—Be Sympathetic

You lucky, well balanced ones talk much, and sincerely, of the horrors of drink, and of the drunkard's weakness.

You think the whisky drinker ought to stop.

Do you ask yourselves whether or not he can stop?

Let us consider to-day the drunkard's side of the case. Let us see what may be said on his behalf.

Very often physical weakness causes drunkenness. Many a man takes a drink because the task put upon him is heavier than he can bear. The whisky does not help him—it hurts him. But it cheats him and makes him think that he is helped.

You realize that whisky drinking settled on man as a habit must be fought with weapons of some kind.

Will power is the great weapon to use in our own behalf. You tell the drunkard to use his will power.

But you forget that the first thing that whisky attacks is our will power.

You remind the drunkard that his weakness brings suffering on others, and you appeal to his conscience. But you forget that whisky weakens conscience even more than it weakens the nerves. You forget, too, that whisky makes its victim suffer. If he could free himself he would do so, if only for his own sake.

And you must not forget that whisky argues ingeniously, in addition to its telling of lies.

A man is overcome with some great grief. Whisky makes him forget, or at least it makes him not care.

A man is suffering under some great humiliation, some sense of personal shortcoming, that is intolerable to him. Whisky offers to relieve him, and for the moment it does relieve him.

You who talk nobly of temperance and advocate laws governing other men are apt to be proud of your own self-control.

Perhaps you have never drunk—then you are absolutely unable to judge others, or the effort you ask of them.

Perhaps you have been a drinking man and have stopped. But you do not know how much lighter whisky's hold may have been upon you than upon others.

Suppose you worked hard every day, every week and every year.

Suppose you had no pleasure in life, save the fictitious pleasure and excitement that come from whisky. Suppose you failed, and failed and failed again—and suppose that whisky was always ready to praise you, make you feel proud of yourself, make you hold others responsible for your own failures—are you sure that you could let whisky alone?

Suppose that many misfortunes afflicted you and that you had a friend able to make you forget them all. Would you not seek out that friend most eagerly?

To many, many thousands of men whisky is such a friend—and so they seek whisky. It is a lying friend, and daily pushes them further down hill. But it lies ingeniously—and it does give forgetfulness for the moment.

In your condemnation of those who pe sist in whisky drinking you must remer ber that what is easy for one man is ver hard for another.

Suppose you should urge two animals t go without meat—one of the animals being a tiger and the other a sheep. Would you praise the sheep for its faithful keeping of the promise? Would you blame the tiger for breaking its word, if the temptation to eat meat were offered?

In men's nervous systems, in their craving for alcohol, there is as great a difference between different temperaments as between the appetites of the sheep and the tiger. One man is dragged toward the gulf by whisky with a force of which yo can have no conception.

You look with contempt at a hopeless drunkard, shuffling along toward destruction.

There are thousands of such men who every day of their lives make an effort of the will of which you would be incapable.

But that effort, great as it is, is not great enough to save them—whisky drags them too hard in the other direction.

Is the drunkard's case hopeless? No.

Is any drunkard's case hopeless? No.

But the drunkard will not be cured by upbraidings, by contempt, by the preachings of those who do not understand him—and the drunkard will not be cured by prohibitory laws.—New York American.

Pledge-Signing Movement.

A strong movement for pledge-signing against the use of alcoholic drinks has been inaugurated. It will cover all the English-speaking countries and has been undertaken after much study and preparation. In the United States the general direction will be under the National Temperance Society, but the work will be organized and managed largely through special committees. A general committee has been appointed for the United States, headed by Henry B. Metcalf, of Rhode Island. A similar committee for Great Britain and Canada is headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was planned to inaugurate the movement simultaneously in all the leading cities and towns of the English-speaking world with sermons in churches and suitable exercises in Sabbath-schools, to be followed at once by public meetings and the circulation of the pledge for signatures.

Insanity in India.

That the results attending the use of intoxicating drinks are the same all the world over is shown by some statistics of lunacy in India which were published last year. Of the 1300 lunatics admitted into asylums during the year 1899, 177 were Christians (of whom 129 were Europeans and Eurasians), 810 Hindus and 330 Mohammedans. Bearing in mind the fact that the Christians and Europeans are less than one in 100 of the population, and that the rest of the community are mainly total abstainers, these figures are painfully significant. Among the chief causes of insanity the use of "ganga," against the sale of which temperance friends have never ceased to protest, is the most prominent.

An Important Suggestion.

Discussion about the food value of alcohol is closed by the Journal of the America Medical Association with these wise wor "Whatever may be said for alcohol will be utilized unscrupulously by advocates of th liquor interest. Give them an inch and they will take a mile. We believe it will be found far safer for medical men to stand on the facts opposing the general use of alcohol than even qualifiedly to advocate i usage, except exclusively as a medicine an under medical prescription." The be minds in the profession are undoubtedly agreed on this point, to give the saloonkeeper a monopoly of the liquor business—and to send him no customers.—Youth's Companion.

The Crusade in Brief.

When Satan cannot come himself h sends strong drink as a messenger.

San Francisco is credited with having one saloon for every twenty-two adult male inhabitants.

A new Catholic temperance society ha been organized at Stanford, Conn. Mis Margaret H. Smith is the first president.

It is said that in Kofu, Japan, a class meeting for daily students has been started, being held for half an hour after school every Monday afternoon. The temperance meetings in this connection are most interesting and helpful and at each meeting there are generally additions.

Measures to promote temperance in Swiss towns are impeded by the fact that in nearly all hotels and restaurants guests are expected to drink wine or beer.

In accepting nomination for the Lord Mayoralty of Sheffield, England, Alderman J. Wycliffe Wilson has stipulated that as his total abstinence and non-smoking principles are well known, his colleagues must not expect him to make provision in these directions in any hospitalities that may take place if he is elected.

Iowa has a law which provides for the confining of habitual drunkards in insane asylums. It is popularly known as "the old topers' law," and its enforcement is reported to be having a wonderful effect. Many men who for years clung to the habit of getting drunk regularly have reformed and become more or less useful as citizens.