

Russell H. Conwell eBook

Russell H. Conwell

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ACRES OF DIAMONDS.[A]

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Page 1

ANCESTRY

John Conwell, the English Ancestor who fought for the Preservation of the English Language. Martin Conwell of Maryland. A Runaway Marriage. The Parents of Russell Conwell.

When the Norman-French overran England and threatened to sweep from out the island the English language, many time-honored English customs, and all that those loyal early Britons held dear, a doughty Englishman, John Conwell, took up cudgels in their defence. Long and bitter was the struggle he waged to preserve the English language. Insidious and steady were the encroachments of the Norman-French tongue. The storm centre was the Castle school, for John Conwell realized that the language of the child of to-day is the language of the man of to-morrow. Right royal was the battle, for it was in those old feudal days of strong feeling and bitter, bloody partisanship. But this plucky Briton stood to his guns until he won. Norman-French was beaten back, English was taught in the schools, and preserved in the speech of that day.

It was a tale that was told his children and his children's children. It was a tradition that grew into their blood—the story of perseverance, the story of a fight against oppression and injustice. "Blood" is after all but family traditions and family ideals, and this fighting ancestor handed down to his descendants an inheritance of greater worth than royal lineage or feudal castle. The centuries rolled away, a new world was discovered, and the progressive, energetic Conwell family were not to be held back when adventure beckoned. Two members of it came to America. Courage of a high order, enthusiasm, faith, must they have had, or the call to cross a perilous, pathless ocean, to brave unknown dangers in a new world would have found no response in their hearts. They settled in Maryland and into this fighting pioneer blood entered that strange magic influence of the South, which makes for romance, for imagination, for the poetic and ideal in temperament.

[Illustration: *Miranda Conwell*]

Of this family came Martin Conwell, of Baltimore, hot-blooded, proud, who in 1810, visiting a college chum in western Massachusetts, met and fell in love with a New England girl, Miss Hannah Niles. She was already engaged to a neighbor's son, but the Southerner cared naught for a rival. He wooed earnestly, passionately. He soon swept away her protests, won her heart and the two ran away and were married. But tragic days were ahead. On her return her incensed father locked her in her room and by threats and force compelled her to write a note to her young husband renouncing him. He would accept no such message, but sent a note imploring a meeting in a nearby schoolhouse at nightfall. The letter fell into the father's hands. He compelled her to write a curt reply bidding him leave her "forever." Then the father locked the daughter safely in the attic, and with a mob led by the rejected suitor, surrounded the



schoolhouse and burnt it to the ground. The husband, thinking he had been heartlessly forsaken, made a brave fight against the odds, but seeing no hope of success, leaped from the burning building, amid the shots fired at him, escaped down a rocky embankment at the back of the schoolhouse, and under cover of the woods, fled. They told his wife that he was dead.



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A little son came to brighten her shadowed life, whom she named, after him, Martin Conwell; and after seven years she married her early lover. But Martin was the son of her first husband and always her dearest child, and day after day when old and gray and again a widow, she would come over the New England hills, a little lonely old woman, to sit by his fireside and dream of those bygone days that were so sweet.

Too proud to again seek an explanation, Martin Conwell, her husband, returned to his Maryland home, living a lonely, bitter life, believing to the day of his death, thirty years later, that his young wife had repudiated and betrayed him.

Martin Conwell, the son, grew to manhood and in 1839 brought a bride to a little farm he had purchased at South Worthington, up in the Hampshire Highlands of the Berkshire Hills in Massachusetts. Here and there among these hills, along the swift mountain streams, the land sweeps out into sunny little meadows filled in summer with rich, tender grasses, starred with flowers. It is not a fertile land. The rocks creep out with frequent and unpleasing persistency. But Martin Conwell viewed life cheerfully, and being an ingenious man, added to the business of farming, several other occupations, and so managed to make a living, and after many years to pay the mortgage on his home which came with the purchase. The little farmhouse, clinging to the bleak hillside, seemed daring to the point of recklessness when the winter's winds swept down the valley, and the icy fingers of the storm reached out as if to pluck it bodily from its exposed position.

But when spring wove her mantle of green over the hills, when summer flung its leafy banners from a million tree tops, then in the wonderful panorama of beauty that spread before it, was the little home justified for the dangers it had dared. Back of the house the land climbed into a little ridge, with great, gray rocks here and there, spots of cool, restful color amid the lavish green and gold and purple of nature's carpeting. To the north swept hills clothed with the deep, rich green of hemlock, the faint green flutter of birch, the dense foliage of sugar maples. To the east, in the valley, a singing silver brook flashed in and out among somber boulders, the land ascending to sunny hilltop pastures beyond. But toward the south from the homestead lay the gem of the scenery; one of the most beautiful pictures the Berkshires know. Down the valley the hills divided, sweeping upward east and west in magnificent curves; and through the opening, range on range of distant mountains, including Mount Tom, filled the view with an ever-changing fairyland of beauty—in the spring a sea of tender, misty green; in the summer, a deep, heaving ocean of billowy foliage; in the fall, a very carnival of color—gold, rich reds, deep glowing browns and orange. And always, at morning, noon and night, was seen subtle tenderness of violet shadows, of hazy blue mists, of far-away purple distances.



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Such was the site Martin Conwell chose for a home, a site that told something of his own character; that had marked influence on the family that grew up in the little farmhouse.

A mixture of the practical, hard common sense of New England and the sympathetic, poetic temperament of the South was in this young New England farmer—the genial, beauty-loving nature of his Southern father, the rigid honesty, the strong convictions, the shrewd sense of his Northern mother. Quiet and reserved in general, he was to those who knew him well, kind-hearted, broad-minded, fun-loving. He not only took an active interest in the affairs of the little mountain community, but his mind and heart went out to the big problems of the nation. He grappled with them, sifted them thoroughly, and having decided what to him was the right course to pursue, expressed his convictions in deed as well as word. His was no passive nature. The square chin denoted the man of will and aggression, and though the genial mouth and kindly blue eyes bespoke the sympathetic heart, they showed no lack of courage to come out in the open and take sides.

The young wife, Miranda Conwell, shared these broader interests of her husband. She came from central New York State and did not have that New England reserve and restraint that amounts almost to coldness. Her mind was keen and vigorous and reached out with her husband's to grasp and ponder the higher things of life. But the beauty of her character lay in the loving, affectionate nature that shone from her dark eyes, in the patient, self-sacrificing, self-denying disposition which found its chief joy in ministering to her husband and children. Deeply religious, she could no more help whispering a fervent little prayer, as she tucked her boys in bed, that the Father above would watch over and protect them, than she could help breathing, her trust in God was so much a part of her nature. Such a silent, beautiful influence unconsciously permeates a child's whole character, moulding it, setting it. Unconscious of it at the time, some day a great event suddenly crystalizes it like a wonderful chemical change, and the beauty of it shines evermore from his life. Miranda Conwell built better than she knew when in the every-day little things of her life, she let her faith shine.

Not a usual couple, by any means, for the early 40's in rugged New England. Yet their unusualness was of a kind within every one's reach. They believed the making of a life of more importance than the making of a living, and they grasped every opportunity of those meagre days to broaden and uplift their mental and spiritual vision. Martin Conwell's thoughts went beyond his plow furrow, Miranda's further than her bread-board; and so the little home had an atmosphere of earnest thought and purpose that clothed the uncarpeted floors and bare walls with dignity and beauty.

CHAPTER II



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EARLY ENVIRONMENT

The Family Circle. An Unusual Mother. What She Read Her Children. A Preacher at Three Years of Age.

Such was the heritage and the home into which Russell H. Conwell was born February 15, 1843. Think what a world his eyes opened upon—"fair, searching eyes of youth"—steadfast hills holding mystery and fascination in green depths and purple distances, streams rushing with noisy joy over stony beds, sweet violet gloom of night with brilliant stars moving silently across infinite space; tender moss, delicate fern, creeping vine, covering the brown earth with living beauty—a fascinating world of loveliness for boyish eyes to look upon and wonder about.

The home inside was as unpretentious as its exterior suggested. The tiny hall admitted on one side to a bedroom, on the other to a living room, from which opened a room used as a store. Above was an attic. The living room was the bright, cheery heart of the house. The morning sun poured in through two windows which faced the east; a window and door on the south claimed the same cheery rays as the sun journeyed westward. The big open fireplace made a glowing spot of brightness. The floor was uncarpeted, the walls unpapered, the furnishing of the simplest, yet cheerfulness and homely comfort pervaded the room as with an almost tangible spirit.

A brother three years older and a sister three years younger made a trio of bright, childish faces about the hearth on winter evenings as the years went by, while the mother read to them such tales as childish minds could grasp. It was a loving little circle, one that riveted sure and fast the ties of family affection and which helped one boy at her knee in after life to enter with such sure sympathy into the plain, simple lives of the humblest people he met. He had lived that same life, he knew the family affection that grows with such strength around simple firesides, and those of like circumstances felt this knowledge and opened their hearts to him.

That Miranda Conwell was an unusual woman for those times and circumstances is shown in those readings to her children. Not only did she read and explain to them the beautiful stories of the Bible, implanting its truths in their impressionable natures to blossom forth later in beautiful deeds; but she read them the best literature of the ancient days as well as current literature. Into this poor New England home came the "New York Tribune" and the "National Era." The letters of foreign correspondents opened to their childish eyes another world and roused ambitions to see it. Henry Ward Beecher's sermons, and "Uncle Tom's Cabin," when it came out as a serial, all such good and helpful literature, she poured into the eager childish ears. These readings went on, all through the happy days of childhood.



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Interesting things were happening in the world then; things that were to mould the future of one of the boys at her knee in a way she little dreamed. A war was being waged in Mexico to train soldiers for a greater war coming. Out in Illinois, a plain rail-splitter, farmer and lawyer was beginning to be heard in the cause of freedom and justice for all men, black or white. These rumors and discussions drifted into the little home and arguments rose high around the crackling woodfire as neighbors dropped in. Martin Conwell was not a man to watch passively the trend of events. He took sides openly, vigorously, and though the small, blue-eyed boy listening so attentively did not comprehend all that it was about, Martin Conwell's views later took shape in action that had a marked bearing on Russell's later life.

But the mother's reading bore more immediate, if less useful, fruit. Hearing rather unusual sounds from the back yard one day, she went to the door to listen. The evening before she had been reading the children one of the sermons of Henry Ward Beecher and telling them something of this great man and his work. Mounted upon one of the largest gray rocks in the yard, stood Russell, solemnly preaching to a collection of wondering, round-eyed chickens. It was a serious, impressive discourse he gave them, much of it, no doubt, a transcript of Henry Ward Beecher's. What led his boyish fancy to do it, no one knew, though many another child has done the same, as children dramatize in play the things they have heard or read. But a chance remark stamped that childish action upon the boyish imagination, making it the corner stone of many a childish castle in Spain. Telling her husband of it in the evening, Miranda Conwell said, half jokingly, "our boy will some day be a great preacher." It was a fertile seed dropped in a fertile mind, tilled assiduously for a brief space by vivid childish imagination; but not ripened till sad experiences of later years brought it to a glorious fruition.

Another result of the fireside readings might have been serious. A short distance from the house a mountain stream leaps and foams over the stones, seeming to choose, as Ruskin says, "the steepest places to come down for the sake of the leaps, scattering its handfuls of crystal this way and that as the wind takes them." The walls of the gorge rise sheer and steep; the path of the stream is strewn with huge boulders, over which it foams snow white, pausing in quiet little pools for breath before the next leap and scramble. Here and there at the sides, stray tiny little waterfalls, very Thoreaus of streamlets, content to wander off by themselves, away from the noisy rush of the others, making little silvery rills of beauty in unobtrusive ways. Over this gorge was a fallen log. Russell determined to enact the part of Eliza in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," fleeing over the ice. It was a feat to make a mother's heart stand still. Three separate times she whipped him severely and forbade him to do it. He took the punishment cheerfully, and went back to the log. He never gave up until he had crossed it.



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The vein of perseverance in his character was already setting into firm, unyielding mould—the one trait to which Russell H. Conwell, the preacher, the lecturer, writer, founder of college and hospital, may attribute the success he has gained. This childish escapade was the first to strike fire from its flint.

CHAPTER III

DAYS OF STUDY, WORK AND PLAY

The Schoolhouse in the Woods. Maple Sugar-making. The Orator of the Dawn. A Boyish Prank. Capturing the Eagle's Nest.

At three years of age, he trudged off to school with his brother Charles. Though Charles was three years the senior, the little fellow struggled to keep pace with him in all their childish play and work. Two miles the children walked daily to the schoolhouse, a long walk for a toddler of three. But it laid the foundation of that strong, rugged constitution that has carried him so unflinchingly through the hard work of these later years. The walk to school was the most important part of the performance, for lessons had no attraction for the boy as yet. But the road through the woods to the schoolhouse was a journey of ever new and never-ending excitement. The road lay along a silver-voiced brook that rippled softly by shadowy rock, or splashed joyous and exultant down its boulder-strewn path. It was this same brook whose music drifted into his little attic bedroom at night, stilled to a faint, far-away murmur as the wind died down, rising to a high, clear crescendo of rushing, tumbling water as the breeze stirred in the tree tops and brought to him the forest sounds. Hour after hour he lay awake listening to it, his childish imagination picturing fairies and elves holding their revels in the woods beyond. An oratorical little brook it was, unconsciously leaving an impress of its musical speech on the ears of the embryo orator. Moreover, in its quiet pools lurked watchful trout. Few country boys could walk along such a stream unheeding its fascinations, especially when the doors of a school house opened at the farther end, and many an hour when studies should have claimed him, he was sitting by the brookside, care-free and contented, delightedly fishing. Nor are any berries quite so luscious as those which grow along the country road to school. It takes long, long hours to satisfy the keen appetite of a boy, and lessons suffered during the berry seasons. Another keen excitement of the daily journey through a living world of mystery and enchantment was the search for frogs. Woe to the unlucky frog that fell in the way of the active, curious boy. Some one had told him that old, old countryside story, "If you kill a frog, the cows will give bloody milk." Eager to see such a phenomenon, he watched sharply. Let an unlucky frog give one unfortunate croak, quick, sure-aimed, flew a stone, and he raced home at night to see the miracle performed. He was just a boy as other boys—mischievous, disobedient, fonder of play than work or study. But underneath, uncalled upon as yet, lay that vein of perseverance as unyielding as the granite of his native hills.



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The schoolhouse inside was not unattractive. Six windows gave plenty of light, and each framed woodland pictures no painter's canvas could rival. The woods were all about and the voice of the little brook floated in, always calling, calling—at least to one small listener—to come out and see it dance and sparkle and leap from rock to rock. If he gained nothing else from his first school days but a love and appreciation of nature's beauties, it was a lesson well worth learning. To feed the heart and imagination of a child with such scenery is to develop unconsciously a love of the beautiful which brings a pure joy into life never to be lost, no matter what stress and storm may come. In the darkest, stormiest hours of his later life, to think back to the serene beauty of those New England hills was as a hand of peace laid on his troubled spirit.

This love and joy in nature—and the trait was already in his blood—was at first all that he gained from his trips to school. Then came a teacher with a new way of instructing, a Miss Salina Cole, who had mastered the art of visual memory. She taught her pupils to make on the mind a photographic impression of the page, which could be recalled in its entirety, even to the details of punctuation. This was a process of study that appealed immediately to Russell's boyish imagination. Moreover, it was something to “see if he could do,” always fascinating to his love of experiment and adventure. It had numerous other advantages. It was quick. It promised far-reaching results. If page after page of the school books could be stored in the mind and called up for future reference, getting an education would become an easy matter. Besides, they could be called up and pondered on in various places—fishing, for instance. He quickly decided to would master this new method, and he went at it with his characteristic energy and determination. Concentrating all his mental force, he would study intently the printed page, and then closing his eyes, repeat it word for word, even giving the punctuation marks. With the other pupils, Salina Cole was not so successful, but with Russell Conwell, the results were remarkable. It was a faculty of the utmost value to him in after years. When in military camp and far from books, he would recall page after page of his law works and study them during the long days of garrison duty as easily as though the printed book were in his hand.

But the work was of more value to him than the mere mastery of something new. It whetted his appetite for more. He began to want to know. School became interesting, and he plunged into studies with an interest and zest that were unflagging. And as he studied, ambitions awoke. The history of the past, the accomplishments of great men stirred him. He began to dream of the things to do in the days to come.



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Outside of school hours his time was filled with the ordinary duties of the farm. In the early spring, the maple sugar was to be made and there were long, difficult tramps through woods in those misty, brooding days when the miracle of new life is working in tree and vine and leaf. Often the very earth seemed hushed as if waiting in awe for this marvelous change that transforms brown earth and bare tree to a vision of ethereal, tender green. But his books went with him, and in the long night watches far in the woods alone, when the pans of sirrup were boiling, he studied. So enrapt did he become that sometimes the sugar suffered, and the patience of his father was sorely taxed when told the tale of inattention.

It was during those long night watches that he learned by heart two books of Milton's "Paradise Lost," and so firmly were they fixed in the boyish memory that at this day, Dr. Conwell can repeat them without a break. Many a time as the shadows lightened and the dim, misty dawn came stealing through the forest, would the small boy step outside the rude sugar-house and repeat in that musical, resonant voice that has since held audiences enthralled, Milton's glorious "Invocation to the Light." Strange scene—the great shadowy forest, the distant mist-enfolded hills, the faintly flushing morning sky, the faint splash of a little mountain stream breaking the brooding stillness, and the small boy with intent, inspired face pouring out his very heart in that wonderful invocation:

"Hail, holy light, offspring of Heaven, Firstborn
Or of the Eternal, co-eternal beam,
May I express thee Unblamed? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity—dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate!
Or hear'st thou, rather, pure Eternal Stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice
Of God as with a mantle didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless Infinite!"

Later in spring there was plowing, though the farm was so rocky and stony, there was little of that work to do. But here and there, a sunny hilltop field made cultivation worth while, and as he followed the patient oxen along the shining brown furrow, he looked away to the encircling hills so full of mystery and fascination. What was there? What was beyond? Then into the the morning and well into the afternoon they pried and labored. They dug away earth and exerted to the utmost their childish strength. Charles would soon have given up the gigantic task, but Russell was not of the stuff that quits, and so they toiled on. The father and mother at home wondered and searched for the boys. Then as they began truly to get alarmed, from the woods to the south came a crash and roar, the sound of trees snapping and then a shock that made the earth tremble.



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The rock had fallen, traversing a mile, in its downward rush to the river bed. Flushed and triumphant the boys returned, and the neighbors who had heard the noise, when it was explained to them, went to see the wreckage. It had dropped first a fall of fifteen feet, where it had paused an instant. Then the earth giving way under its tons of weight, it had plowed a deep furrow right down the mountain side, dislodging rocks, uprooting trees, until with a mighty crash, it struck the borders of the stream where it stands to this day, a monument to boyish ingenuity and perseverance.

But of all the mischievous pranks of these childish days, the one that had perhaps the greatest influence on his life was the capture of an eagle's nest from the top of a dead hemlock. To the north of the farmhouse a hill rises abruptly, covered with bare, outcropping rocks, their fronts sheer and steep. On top clusters a little sombre grove of hemlock trees, and from the midst of these rose the largest one, straight, majestic, swaying a little in the wind that swept on from the distant hills. In the top of this tree, an eagle had built her nest, and it had long been a secret ambition of the boy to capture it, the more resolved upon because it seemed impossible. One day in October he left his sheep, ran to the foot of the hill, and with the sure-footed agility of a mountain boy climbed the rocks and began the ascent of the tree. From the top of a high ledge nearby two men hid and watched him. A fall meant death, and many a time their hearts stood still, as the intrepid lad placed his foot on a dead branch only to have it break under him, or reached for a limb to find it give way at his touch. The tree was nearly fifty feet high and at some time a stroke of lightning had rent it, splintering the trunk. Only one limb was left whole, the others had been broken off or shattered by the storms of winter. In the very crown of the tree swayed the nest, a rude, uncouth thing of sticks and hay.

Up and up he climbed, stopping every now and then in the midst of his struggles to call to the sheep if he saw them wandering too far. He had only to call them by name to bring them nibbling back again.

"Not a man in the mountains," wrote one of those who watched him in that interesting sketch of Mr. Conwell's life, "Scaling the Eagle's Nest," "would have thought it possible to do anything else but shoot, that nest down. When we first saw him he was half way up the great tree, and was tugging away to get up by a broken limb which was swinging loosely about the trunk. For a long time he tried to break it off, but his little hand was too weak. Then he came down from knot to knot like a squirrel, jumped to the ground, ran to his little jacket and took his jack-knife out of the pocket. Slowly he clambered up again. When he reached the limb, he clung to another with his left hand, threw one leg over a splintered knot and with the right hand hacked away with his knife.



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“He will give it up,’ we both said.

“But he did not. He chipped away until at last the limb fell to the ground. Then he pocketed his knife, and bravely strove to get up higher. It was a dizzy height even for a grown hunter, but the boy never looked down. He went on until he came to a place about ten feet below the nest, where there was a long, bare space on the trunk, with no limbs or knots to cling to. He was baffled then. He looked up at the nest many times, tried to find some place to catch hold of the rough bark and sought closely for some rest higher up to put his foot on. But there was none. An eagle’s nest was a rare thing to him, and he hugged the tree and thought. Suddenly he began to descend again hastily, and soon dropped to the ground. Away he ran down through the ravines, leaped the little streams and disappeared toward his home. In a few minutes the torn straw hat and blue shirt came flitting back among the rocks and bushes. He called the sheep to him, talked to them, and shook his finger at them, then he clambered up the tree again, dragging after him a long piece of his mother’s clothes line. At one end of it, he had tied a large stone, which hindered his progress, for it caught in the limbs and splinters. The wind blew his torn straw hat away down a side cliff, and one side of his trousers was soon torn to strips. But he went on. When he got to the smooth place on the tree again, he fastened one end of the rope about his wrist, and then taking the stone which was fastened to the other end, he tried to throw it up over the nest. It was an awkward and dangerous position, and the stone did not reach the top. Six or seven times he threw that stone up, and it fell short or went to one side, and nearly dragged him down as it fell.

“The boy felt for his knife again, opened it with his teeth as he held on, and hauling the rope up, cut off a part of it. He threw a short piece around the trunk and tied himself with it to the tree. Then he could lean back for a longer throw. He tied the rope to his hand again, and threw the stone with all his energy. It went straight as an arrow, drew the rope squarely over the nest and fell down the other side of the tree. After a struggle he reached around for the stone, and tied that end of the rope to a long broken limb. When he drew the other end of the rope which had been fastened to his hand, it broke down the sides of the nest, and an old bird arose with a wild scream.

“Then he loosed the rope which held him to the tree, and pulling himself up with his hands on the scaling line, digging his bare toes, heels and knees at times into the ragged bark, he was up in two minutes to the nest.”

“That is a child’s ambition,” said one of the men, as they both drew a breath of relief, when he stepped safely to the ground. “Wait until he has a man’s ambition. If that vein of perseverance doesn’t run out, he will do something worth while.”



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CHAPTER IV

TWO MEN AND THEIR INFLUENCE

John Brown. Fireside Discussions. Runaway Slaves. Fred Douglas. Rev. Asa Niles. A Runaway Trip to Boston.

Two men entered into Russell Conwell's life in these formative days of boyhood who unconsciously had much to do with the course of his after life.

One was John Brown, that man "who would rush through fire though it burn, through water though it drown, to do the work which his soul knew that it must do." During his residence in Springfield, this man "possessed like Socrates with a genius that was too much for him" was a frequent visitor at the Conwell home. Russell learned to know that face with "features chiselled, as it were, in granite," the large clear eyes that seemed fairly to change color with the intensity of his feelings when he spoke on the one subject that was the very heart of the man. Tall, straight, lithe, with hair brushed back from a high forehead, thick, full beard and a wonderful, penetrating voice whose tones once heard were never forgotten, his arrival was always received with shouts by the Conwell boys. Had he not lived in the West and fought real Indians! What surer "open sesame" is there to a boy's heart? He was not so enrapt in his one great project, but that he could go out to the barn and pitch down hay from the mow with Russell, or tell him wonderful stories of the great West where he had lived as a boy, and of the wilderness through which he had tramped as a mere child when he cared for his father's cattle. Russell was entirely too young to grasp the meaning of the earnest discussions that went on about the fireplace of which this Spartan was then the centre. But in later years their meaning came to him with a peculiar significance. A light seemed to be shed on the horrors of slavery as if the voice of his childhood's friend were calling from the grave in impassioned tones, to aid the cause for which he had given his life.

Martin Conwell, progressive, aggressive, was not a man to let his deeds lag behind his words. Such help as he could, he lent the cause of the oppressed. He made his home one of the stations of the "Underground Railway," as the road to freedom for escaping slaves was called. Many a time in the dead of night, awakened by the noise of a wagon, Russell would steal to the little attic window, to see in the light of the lantern, a trembling black man, looking fearfully this way and that for pursuers, being hurried into the barn. Back to bed went Russell, where his imagination pictured all manner of horrible cruelties the slaves were suffering until the childish heart was near to bursting with sympathy for them and with fiery indignation at the injustice that brought them to this pitiful state. Not often did he see them, but sometimes childish curiosity was too strong and he searched out the cowering fugitive in the barn, and if the runaway happened to be communicative, he

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heard exaggerated tales of cruelty that set even his young blood to tingling with a mighty desire to right their wrongs. Then the next night, the wagon wheels were heard again and the slave was hurried away to the house of a cousin of William Cullen Bryant, at Cummington. As the wheels died in the distance up the mountain road, the boyish imagination pictured the flight, on, on, into the far north till the Canada border was reached and the slave free. Little wonder that when the war broke out, this boy, older grown, spoke as with a tongue of fire and swept men up by the hundreds with his impassioned eloquence, to sign the muster roll.

One of these slaves thus helped to freedom is now Rev. J.G. Ramage, of Atlanta, Ga. In 1905, he applied to Temple College for the degree of LL.D. Noticing on the letter sent in reply to his request, the name of Russell Conwell, President of the College, he wrote Dr. Conwell, telling him that in 1856 when a runaway slave he had stopped at a farmhouse at South Worthington, Mass., and remembered the name of Conwell. Undoubtedly Martin Conwell was one of the men who had helped him to freedom.

John Brown brought Fred Douglas, the colored orator, with him on one of his visits. When Russell was told by his father that this was "a celebrated colored speaker and statesman," the boyish eyes opened wide with amazement, and not able to control himself, he burst out in a fit of laughter, saying, "Why, he's not black," much to the amusement of Douglas, who afterwards told him of his life as a slave.

The other man who so helped Russell in his younger days was the Rev. Asa Niles, a cousin of his father's who lived on a neighboring farm. He had heard of Russell's various exploits and saw that he was a boy far above the average, that he had talents worth training. Himself a scholar and a Methodist minister, he knew the value of an education, and the worth to the world of a brilliant, forceful character with clear ideas of right, and high ideals of duty. He was a man far ahead of his times, broad-minded, spiritual in its best sense, and with a winning personality, just the man to attract a clear-sighted, keen-witted boy who quickly saw through shams and despised affectations. Russell at that plastic period could have fallen into no better hands. With loving interest in the boy's welfare, Asa Niles inspired him to get the broadest education in order to make the most of himself, yet ever held before him the highest ideals of life and manhood. Out of the stores of his own knowledge he told him what to read, helped, encouraged, talked over his studies with him, and in every way possible not only made them real and vital to him, but at every step aided him to see their worth.



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His curiosity keenly aroused, his ambitions kindled by his studies, Russell was restless to be off to see this great world he had read and studied about. The mountains suddenly seemed like prison walls holding him in. An uncontrollable longing swept his soul. He determined to escape. Telling no one of his intentions, one morning just before dawn, he raised the window of the little attic in which he and his brother slept, climbed out over the roof of the woodshed, slipped to the ground and made off down the valley to seek his fortune in the world. It was a hasty resolve. In a little bundle slung over his shoulders he had a few clothes and something to eat. How his heart thumped as he went down the familiar path in the woods, crossed the little brook and began the tramp toward Huntington! Every moment he expected to hear his father's footsteps behind him. Charles might have awakened, found him missing and roused the family! When morning came he climbed a little hill, from which he could look back at the house. He gazed long, and his heart nearly failed him. He could see in imagination every homely detail of the living room, his father's chair to the right of the fireplace, his mother's on the left, the clock between the front windows, which his father wound every night. On a nail hung his old rimless hat, Charlie's coat, and the little sister's sunbonnet. His mother would soon be up and getting breakfast. They would all sit down without him—a lump began to rise in his throat and he almost turned back. But something in his nature always prevented him from giving up a thing he had once undertaken. He set his teeth, picked up his bundle and went down the road between the mountains, the woods stretching, dense, silent, on each side, the little brook keeping close by him like the good, true friend it was.

It was a long, long tramp to the little village of Huntington, a walk that went for miles beneath overarching green trees, the sunlight sifting down like a shower of gold in the dim wood aisles. The wild mountain stream merged into the quiet Westfield river that flowed placidly through little sunny meadows and rippled in a sedate way here and there over stones as became the dignity of a river. Small white farmhouses, set about with golden lilies and deep crimson peonies, here and there looked out on the road. But his mind was intent on the wonderful experiences ahead of him; he walked as in a dream. Reaching Huntington, he asked a conductor if he could get a job on the train to pay his way to Boston. The conductor eyed the lanky country boy with sympathetic amusement. He appreciated the situation and told Russell he didn't think he had any job just then, but he might sit in the baggage car and should a job turn up, it would be given him. Delighted with this piece of good luck, Russell sat in the baggage car and journeyed to Boston.



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He arrived at night. He found himself in a new world, a world of narrow streets, of hurrying people, of house after house, but in none of them a home for him. They would not let him sit in the station all night, as he had planned to do in his boyish inexperience, and he had no money, for money was a scarce article in the Conwell home. He wandered up one street and down another till finally he came to the water. Footsore and hungry, he crawled into a big empty cask lying on Long Wharf, ate the last bit of bread and meat in his bundle, and went to sleep.

The next day was Sunday, not a day to find work, and he faced a very sure famine. He began again his walk of the streets. It was on toward noon when he noticed crowds of children hurrying into a large building. He stood and watched them wistfully. They made him think of his brother and sister at home. Suddenly an overwhelming longing seized him to be back again in the sheltering farmhouse, to see his father, hear his mother's loving voice, feel his sister's hand in his. Perhaps it was his forlorn expression that attracted the attention of a gentleman passing into the building. He stopped, asked if he would not like to go in; and then taking him by the hand led him in with the others. It was Deacon George W. Chipman, of Tremont Temple, and ever afterwards Russell Conwell's friend. Many, many years later, the boy, become a man, came back to this church, organized and conducted one of the largest and most popular Sunday School classes that famous church has ever known.

After Sunday School, Deacon Chipman and Russell "talked things over." The Deacon, amused and impressed by the original mind of the country boy, persuaded him to go home, and the next morning put him on the train that carried him back to the Berkshires.

CHAPTER V

TRYING HIS WINGS

Boyhood Days. Russell's First Case at Law. A Cure for Stage Fever. Studying Music. A Runaway Trip to Europe.

So scanty was the income from the rocky farm that the father and mother looked about them to see how they could add to it. Miranda Conwell turned to her needle and often sewed far into the night, making coats, neckties, any work she could obtain that would bring in a few dollars. She was never idle. The moment her housework was done, her needle was flying, and Russell had ever before him the picture of his patient mother, working, ever working, for the family good. The only time her hands rested was when she read her children such stories and pointed such lessons as she knew were needed to develop childish minds and build character. She never lost sight of this in the pressing work and the need for money. She had that mental and spiritual breadth of view that could look beyond problems of the immediate present, no matter how serious they might seem, to the greater, more important needs coming in the future.

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Martin Conwell worked as a stonemason every spare minute, and in addition opened a store in the mountain home in a small room adjoining the living room. Neighbors and the world of his day saw only a poor farmer, stonemason and small storekeeper. But in versatility, energy and public spirit, he was far greater than his environment. Considered only as the man there was a largeness of purpose, a broadness of mental and spiritual vision about him that gave a subtle atmosphere of greatness and unconsciously influenced his son to take big views of life.

In the little store one day was enacted a drama not without its effect on Russell's impressionable mind. For a brief time, the store became a court room; a flour barrel was the judge's bench, a soap box and milking stool, the lawyers' seats. The proceedings greatly interested Russell, who lay flat on his breast on the counter, his heels in the air, his chin in his hands, drinking it in with ears and eyes.

[Illustration: *The Conwell farmhouse at south Worthington, mass.*]

A neighbor had lost a calf, a white-faced calf with a broken horn. In the barn of a neighbor had been seen a white-faced calf with a broken horn. The coincidence was suspicions. The plaintiff declared it was his calf. The defendant swore he had never seen the lost heifer, and that the one in his barn he had raised himself. Neighbors lent their testimony, for the little store was crowded, a justice of the peace from Northampton having come to try the case. One man said he had seen the defendant driving a white-faced calf up the mountain one night just after the stolen calf had been missed from the pasture. The defendant intimated in no mild language that he must be a close blood relation to Ananias. Hot words flew back and forth between judge, lawyers and witnesses, and it began to look as if the man in whose barn the calf was placidly munching was guilty. Just then Russell, with a chuckle, slipped from the counter and disappeared through the back door. In a minute he returned, and solemnly pushed a white-faced calf with a broken horn squarely among the almost fighting disputants. There was a lull in the storm of angry words. Here was the lost calf. With a bawl of dismay and many gyrations of tail, it occupied the centre of the floor. None could dispute the fact that it was the calf in question. The defendant assumed an injured, innocent air, the plaintiff looked crestfallen. Russell explained he had found the calf among his father's cows. But, knowing the true situation, he had enjoyed the heated argument too hugely to produce the calf earlier in the case.

The event caused much amusement among the neighbors. Some said if they ever were hailed to court, they should employ Russell as their lawyer. The women, when they dropped in to see his mother, called him the little lawyer. The boyish ambition to be a minister faded. Once more he went to building castles in Spain, but this time they had a legal capstone.

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Thus the years rolled by much as they do with any boy on a farm. Of work there was plenty, but he found time to become a proficient skater, and a strong, sturdy swimmer, to learn and take delight in outdoor sports, all of which helped to build a constitution like iron, and to give him an interest in such things which he has never lost. The boys of Temple College find in him not only a pastor and president, but a sympathetic and understanding friend in all forms of healthy, honorable sport.

Attending a Fourth of July parade in Springfield, he was so impressed with the marching and manoeuvres of the troops that he returned home, formed a company of his schoolmates, drilled and marched them as if they were already an important part of the G.A.R. He secured a book on tactics and studied it with his usual thoroughness and perseverance. He presented his company with badges, and one of the relics of his childhood days is a wooden sword he made himself out of a piece of board. Little did any one dream that this childish pastime would in later years become the serious work of a man.

In all the school and church entertainments he took an active part. His talent for organizing and managing showed itself early, while his magnetism and enthusiasm swept his companions with him, eager only to do his bidding. Many were the entertainments he planned and carried through. Recitations, dialogues, little plays all were presented under his management to the people of South Worthington. It was these that gave him the first taste of the fascination of the stage and set him to thinking of the dazzling career of an actor. He is not the only country boy that has dreamed of winning undying fame on the boards, but not every one received such a speedy and permanent cure.

“One day in the height of the maple sugar season,” says Burdette, in his excellent life of Mr. Conwell, “The Modern Temple and Templars,” “Russell was sent by his father with a load of the sugar to Huntington. The ancient farm wagon complicated, doubtless, with sundry Conwell improvements, drawn by a venerable horse, was so well loaded that the seat had to be left out, and the youthful driver was forced to stand. Down deep in the valley, the road runs through a dense woodland which veiled the way in solitude and silence. The very place, thought Russell, for a rehearsal of the part he had in a play to be given shortly at school; a beautiful grade, thought the horse, to trot a little and make up time. Russell had been cast for a part of a crazy man—a character admirably adapted for the entire cast of the average amateur dramatic performer. He had very little to say, a sort of ‘The-carriage-waits-my-lord’ declamation, but he had to say it with thrilling and startling earnestness. He was to rush in on a love scene bubbling like a mush-pot with billing and cooing, and paralyze the lovers by shrieking ‘Woe! Woe! unto ye all, ye children of men!’ Throwing up his arms, after the manner of the Fourth of July orator’s justly celebrated windmill gesture, he roared, in his thunderous voice: ‘Woe! Woe! unto ye—’



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“That was as far as the declamation got, although the actor went considerably farther. The obedient horse, never averse to standing still, suddenly and firmly planted his feet and stood—motionless as a painted horse upon a painted highway. Russell, obedient to the laws of inertia, made a parabola over the dashboard, landed on the back of the patient beast, ricocheted to the ground, cutting his forehead on the shaft as he descended, a scar whereof he carries unto this day, and plunged into a yielding cushion of mud at the roadside.”

He returned home, a confused mixture of blood, mud, black eyes and torn clothes. Such a condition must be explained. It could not be turned aside by any off-handed joke. The jeers and jibes, the unsympathetic and irritating comments effectually killed any desire he cherished for the life of the stage. It became a sore subject. He didn't even want it mentioned in his hearing. He never again thought of it seriously as a life work.

But one thing these entertainments did that was of great value. They developed and fostered a love of music and eventually led to his gaining the musical education which has proven of such value to him. He had a voice of singular sweetness and great power. At school, at church, in the little social gatherings of the neighborhood, whenever there was singing his voice led. It was almost a passion with him. At the few parades and entertainments he saw in nearby towns, he watched the musicians fascinated. He was consumed with a desire to learn to play. Inventive as he was and having already made so many things useful about the farm or in the house, it is a wonder he did not immediately begin the making of some musical instrument rather than go without it. Probably he would, if an agent had not appeared for the Estey Organ Company. They were beginning to make the little home organs which have since become an ornament of nearly every country parlor. But they were rare in those days and the price to Martin Conwell, almost prohibitive. Knowing Russell's love of music, the father fully realized the pleasure an organ in the home would give his son. But the price was beyond him. He offered the man every dollar he felt he could afford. But it was ten dollars below the cost of the organ and the agent refused it.

Martin Conwell felt he must not spend more on a luxury, and the agent left. Crossing the fields to seek another purchaser, he met Miranda Conwell. She asked him if her husband had bought the organ. His answer was a keen disappointment. The mother's heart had sympathized with the boy's passion for music and knew the joy such a possession would be to Russell. Ever ready to sacrifice herself, she told the man she would pay him the ten dollars, if he would wait for it, but not to let her husband know. The agent returned to Martin Conwell, told him he would accept his offer, and in a short time a brand new organ was installed in the farmhouse. Miranda Conwell sewed later at nights, that was all. Not till she had earned the ten dollars with her needle did she tell her husband why the agent had, with such surprising celerity, changed his mind in regard to the price.

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Russell's joy in the organ was unbounded, and the mother was more than repaid for her extra work by his pleasure and delight. He immediately plunged unaided into the study of music, and he never gave up until he was complete master of the organ. His was no half-hearted love. The work and drudgery connected with practising never daunted him. He kept steadily at it until he could roll out the familiar songs and hymns while the small room fairly rang with their melody. He also improvised, composing both words and music, a gift that went with him into the ministry and which has given the membership of Grace Baptist Church, Philadelphia, many beautiful hymns and melodies.

Later he learned the bass viol, violoncello and cornet, and made money by playing for parties and entertainments in his neighborhood. Years afterward, when pastor of Grace Church, and with the Sunday School on an excursion to Cape May, he saw a cornet lying on a bench on the pier. Seized with a longing to play again this instrument of his boyhood, he picked it up and began softly a familiar air. Soon lost to his surroundings, he played on and on. At last remembering where he was, he laid down the instrument and walked away. The owner, who had returned, followed him and offered him first five dollars and then ten to play that night for a dance at Congress Hall.

Martin Conwell, during Russell's boyhood days, carefully guarded his son from being spoiled by the flattery of neighbors and friends. He realized that Russell was a boy in many ways above the average, but his practical common sense prevented him from taking such pride in Russell's various achievements as to let him become spoiled and conceited. Many a whipping Russell received for the personal songs he composed about the neighbors. But that was not prohibitive. The very next night, Russell would hold up to ridicule the peculiarity of some one in the neighborhood, much to his victim's chagrin and to the amusement of the listeners. He was forever inventing improvements for the fishing apparatus, oars, boats, coasting sleds, household and farm utensils, often forgetting the tasks his father had given him while doing it. Naturally, this exasperated Martin Conwell, who had no help on the farm but the boys, and the rod would again be brought into active service. Once, after whipping him for such neglect of work—he had left the cider apples out in the frost—Martin Conwell asked his son's pardon because he had invented an improved ox-sled that was of great practical value.

When he was fifteen he ran away again. No friendly Deacon Chipman interfered this time, nor is it likely he would easily have been turned from the project, for he planned to go to Europe. He went to Chicopee to an uncle's, whom he frankly told of his intended trip. The uncle kept Russell for a day or two by various expedients, while he wrote to his father telling him Russell was there and what he intended doing. The father wrote back saying to give him

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what money he needed and let him go. So Russell started on his journey over the sea. He worked his way on a cattle steamer from New York to Liverpool. But it was a homesick boy that roamed around in foreign lands, and as he has said most feelingly since, "I felt that if I could only get back home, I would never, never leave it again." He did not stay abroad long and when he returned to his home, his father greeted him as if he had been absent a few hours, and never in any way, by word or action, referred to the subject. In fact, so far as Martin Conwell appeared, Russell might have been no farther than Huntington.

Thus boyhood days passed with their measure of work and their measure of play. He lived the healthy, active life of a farm boy, taking a keen interest in the affairs of the young people of the neighborhood, amusing the older heads by his mischievous pranks. He diligently and perseveringly studied in school hours and out. He read every book he could get hold of. He was sometimes disobedient, often intractable, in no way different from thousands of other farm boys of those days or these.

But the times were coming which would test his mettle. Would he continue to climb as he had done after the eagle's nest, though compelled many times to go to the very ground and begin over again?

Would the experiences of life transmute into pure gold, these undeveloped traits of character or prove them mere dross? It rested with him. He was the alchemist, as is every other man. The philosopher's stone is in every one's hands.

CHAPTER VI

OUT OF THE HOME NEST

School Days at Wilbraham Academy. The First School Oration and Its Humiliating End. The Hour of Prayer in the Conwell Home at the Time of John Brown's Execution.

The carefree days of boyhood rapidly drew to a close. The serious work of life was beginning. The bitter struggle for an education was at hand. And because one boy did so struggle, thousands of boys now are being given the broadest education, practically free.

Russell had gone as far in his studies as the country school could take him. Should he stop there as his companions were doing and settle down to the work of the farm? The outlook for anything else was almost hopeless. He had absolutely no money, nor could his father spare him any. He knew no other work than farming. It was a prospect to daunt even the most determined, yet Russell Conwell is not the only farmer's boy who

has looked such a situation in the face and succeeded in spite of it. Nor were helping hands stretched out in those days to aid ambitious boys, as they are in these.



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Asa Niles, matching Russell's progress with loving interest, told Martin Conwell the boy ought to go to Wilbraham Academy. His own son William was going, and he strongly urged that Charles and Russell Conwell enter at the same time. It was no light decision for the father to make. He needed the boys in the work on the farm. Not only was he unable to help them, but it was a decided loss to let them go. Long and earnest were the consultations the father and mother held. The mother, willing to sacrifice herself to the utmost, said, of course, "let them go," deciding she could earn something to help them along by taking in more sewing. So it was decided, and in the fall of 1858, Russell and his brother entered the Academy of Wilbraham, a small town about twelve miles east from Springfield.

It was bitter, uphill work. All the money the two boys had, both to pay their tuition and their board, they earned. They worked for the near-by farmers. They spent long days gathering chestnuts and walnuts at a few cents a quart. They split wood, they did anything they could find to do. In fact, they worked as hard and as long as though no studies were awaiting to be eagerly attacked when the exhausting labor was finished. Such tasks interfered with their studies, so that Russell never stood very high in his Academy classes. Part of the time they lived in a small room on the outskirts of the village, barren of all furniture save the absolutely necessary, and for six weeks at a stretch, lived on nothing but mush and milk. Their clothes were of the cheapest kind, countrified in cut and make, a decided contrast to those of their fellow students, who came from homes of wealth and refinement. It is very easy for outsiders and older heads to talk philosophically of being above such things, but young, sensitive boys feel such a position keenly and none but those who have actually endured such a martyrdom of pride know what they suffer. It takes the grittiest kind of perseverance to face such slights, to seem not to see the amused glance, not to hear the sneering comment, not to notice the contemptuous shrug.

Such slights Russell endured daily from certain of his classmates, and though he realized fully that the opinion of these was of little value, nevertheless they hurt. But to the world he stood his ground unflinchingly, even if there were secret heartaches. He studied hard, and what he studied he learned. He had his own peculiar way of studying. Once he was missing from his classes several days. The teachers reported it to the principal, Dr. Raymond, who investigated. He found Russell completely absorbed in history and mastering it at a mile-a-minute gait. Dr. Raymond was wise in the management of boys, especially such a boy as Russell, and he reported to the teachers, "Let him alone. Conwell is working out his own education, and it isn't worth while to disturb him."

His passion for debate and oratory found full scope in the debating societies of the Academy. These welcomed him with open arms. He was so quick with his witty repartee, could so readily turn an opponent's arguments against him, that the nights it was known he would speak, found the "Old Club" hall always crowded to hear "that boy from the country."



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Thus working as hard as though he were doing nothing else, and studying as hard as though he were not working, Russell made his way through two terms of the academic year. Nobody knows or ever will know, all he suffered. Often almost on the point of starvation, yet too proud and sensitive to ask for help, he toiled on, working by day and studying by night. He never thought of giving up the fight and going back to the farm. But funds completely ran out for the spring term and he yielded the struggle for a brief while, returning to help his father, or to earn what he could teaching school, or working on neighboring farms, saving every cent like a very miser for the coming year's tuition. In addition, he kept up with his studies, so that when he returned the next fall, he went on with his class the same as if he had attended for the entire year.

The second year was a repetition of the first, work and study, grinding poverty, glorious perseverance. Again the spring term found him out of funds, and this time he replenished by teaching school at Blandford, Massachusetts. Among his pupils here was a bully of the worst type, whose conduct had caused most of the former teachers to resign. In fact, he was quite proud of his ability to give the school a holiday, and as on former occasions, made his boasts that it wouldn't be long before the new teacher would take a vacation. The other pupils watched with eager curiosity for the conflict. In due course of time it came. Russell at first dealt with him kindly. It hadn't been so many years since he himself had been the cause of numerous uproars at school. But this youth was not of the kind to be impressed by good treatment. He simply took it as a showing of the white feather on the part of the new teacher and became bolder in his misconduct. On a day, when he was unruly beyond all pardon, Russell took down the birch and invited him up before the school to receive the usual punishment. The great occasion had come. The children waited with bated breath. The boy refused openly, sneeringly. The next moment, he thought lightning had struck him. He was grabbed by the neck, held with a grip of iron despite all his struggles, whipped before the gaping school, taken to the door and kicked out in the snow. Then the school lessons proceeded. It made a sensation, of course. Some of the parents wanted to request the new teacher to resign. But others rallied to his support and protested to the school board that the right man had been found at last. And so Russell held the post until the school term was over. Thirty-five years after, Russell Conwell, pastor of the Baptist Temple, was asked to head a petition to get this same evil doer out of Sing Sing prison.



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But despite his hard work and hard study at Wilbraham, the spirit of fun cropped out as persistently as in his younger days at the country school. A chance to play a good joke was not to be missed. At one of the school entertainments, a student whom few liked was to take part. Relatives of his had given a large sum of money to the Academy, and on this account he somewhat lorded it over the other boys. He was, in addition, foppish in his dress, and on account of his money, position, and tailor, felt the country boys of the class a decided drawback to his social status. So the country boys decided to "get even," and they needed no other leader while Russell Conwell was about. Finally it came the dandy's turn to go on the platform to deliver a recitation. Just as he stepped out of the little anteroom before the audience, Russell, with deft fingers, fastened a paper jumping-jack to the tail of his coat, where it dangled back of his legs in plain view of the audience but unobserved by himself. With every gesture the figure jumped, climbed, contorted, and went through all manner of gymnastics. The more enthusiastic became the young orator, the more active the tiny figure in his rear. The audience went into convulsions. Utterly unable to tell what was the matter, he finally retired, red and confused, and the audience wiped away the tears of laughter.

It was at one of these entertainments that Russell himself met with a bitter defeat. A public debate was announced in which he was to take part. His classmates had spread abroad the story of his eloquence and the hall was packed to hear him. Knowing that it would be a great occasion and conscious of his poor clothes, he determined to make an impression by his speech. He prepared it with the utmost care, and to "make assurance doubly sure," committed it to memory, a thing he rarely did. His turn came. There was an expectant rustle through the audience, some almost audible comments on his clothes, his height, his thinness. He cleared his voice. He started to say the first word. It was gone. Frantically he searched his memory for that speech. His mind was a blank. Again he cleared his voice and wrestled fiercely with his inner consciousness. Only one phrase could he remember, and shouting in his thunderous tones, "Give me liberty or give me death," sat down, "not caring much which he got," as Burdette says, "so it came quickly and plenty of it."

It was while at Wilbraham that he laid down text books and stepped aside for a brief space to pay honor to a hero. Sorrow hung like a pall over the little home at South Worthington. In far-off Virginia, a brave, true-hearted man had raised a weak arm against the hosts of slavery, raised it and been stricken down. John Brown had been tried, convicted and sentenced to be hanged. The day of his execution was a day of mourning in the Conwell home. As the hour for the deed drew near, the father called the family into the little living room where Brown had so often sat among them. And during the hour while the tragedy was enacted in Virginia, the family sat silent with bowed heads doing reverence to the memory of this man who with single-minded earnestness went forward so fearlessly when others held back, to strike the shackles from those in chains.



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It was a solemn hour, an hour in which worldly ambitions faded before the sublime spectacle of a man freely, calmly giving his very life because he had dared to live out his honest belief that all men should be free. Like a kaleidoscope, Brown's history passed through Russell's mind as he sat there. He saw the brutal whipping of the little slave boy which had so aroused Brown's anger when, a small boy himself, he led cattle through the western forests. Russell's hands clenched as he pictured it and he felt willing to fight as Brown had done, single-handed and alone if need be, to right so horrible a wrong. He could see how the idea had grown with John Brown's growth and strengthened with his strength until he came to manhood with a single purpose dominating his life, and a will to do it that could neither be broken nor bent. He pictured him in Kansas when son after son was laid on the altar of liberty as unflinchingly as Abraham held the knife at his own son's breast at God's behest. Then the first "blow at Harper's Ferry in the cause of liberty for all men—the capture of the town of three thousand by twenty-two men, and now this—the public execution—the fearless spirit that looked only to God for guidance, that feared neither man nor man's laws, stopped on the very threshold of the supreme effort for which he had planned his life. Stopped? It was the 2nd Massachusetts Regiment of Infantry that was the first to sing on its way South, that song, afterward sung by the armies of a nation to the steady tramp of feet,

“John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave,
But his soul goes marching on.”

CHAPTER VII

WAR'S ALARMS

College Days at Yale. The Outbreak of the Civil War. Patriotic Speechmaking. New York and Henry Ward Beecher.

School days at Wilbraham ended, Russell determined to climb higher. As yet, he scarcely knew the purpose of his studying. Ambitions seethed in him to know, to be able to do. He only realized that he must have the tools ready when the work came. Not daunted, therefore, by the bitter experiences at Wilbraham, Russell determined to go to Yale. This meant a stern fight indeed, one that would call out all his reserves of determination, perseverance and indifference to the jeers and jibes of unthinking and unfeeling classmates. But he did not flinch at the prospect. His brother Charles went with him, and in the fall of '60 they entered Yale College. If poverty was bitter at Wilbraham, it was bitterer here. They were utter strangers among hundreds of boys from all parts of the country, the majority of them coming from homes of luxury and with money for all their needs. At Wilbraham, there had been a certain number of boys from their own section, many of them poor, though few so poor as themselves. They had not felt so altogether alone as they did at Yale. It is perhaps for this reason that so little is known of Russell Conwell's



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career at Yale. He was as unobtrusive as possible. "Silent as the Sphinx," some describe him. His sensitive nature withdrew into itself, and since he could not mingle with his classmates on a ground of equality, he kept to himself, alone, silent, studying, working, but telling no one how keenly he felt the difference between his own position and that of his fellow students. He worked for the nearby farmers as at Wilbraham and did anything that he could to earn money. But his clothes were poor, his manner of living the cheapest, and except in classes, his fellow students met him little.

He took the law course and followed fully the classical course at the same time—a feat no student at that time had ever done and few, if any, since. How he managed it, working as hard as he did at the same time, to earn money, seems impossible to comprehend. His iron constitution, for one thing, that seemed capable of standing any strain, helped him. And his remarkable ability to photograph whole pages of his text books on his memory was another powerful ally. He could reel off page after page of Virgil, Homer, Blackstone—anything he "memorized" in this unusual fashion. Well for him that he grasped the opportunity to learn this method presented him as a child. But it has always been one of the traits of his character to see opportunities where others walk right over them, and to seize and make use of them.

He did not register in the classical course as he was too poor to pay the tuition fee, nor did he join any of the clubs, as he could not afford it. He seldom appeared in debates or the moot courts, for he was so shabbily dressed he felt he would not be welcome. It was undoubtedly these humiliating experiences, combined with certain of his studies and reading, that caused him to drift into an atheistic train of thought. Working hard, living poor, desiring so much, yet on all sides he saw boys with all the opportunities he longed for, utterly indifferent to them. He saw boys spending in riotous dissipation the money that would have meant so much to him. He saw them recklessly squandering health, time, priceless educational opportunities, for the veriest froth of pleasure. He saw them sowing the wind, yet to his inexperienced eyes not reaping the whirlwind, but faring far more prosperously than he who worked and studied hard and yet had not what they threw so lightly away. It was all at variance with his mother's teaching, with such of the preaching at the little white church as he had heard. Bible promises, as he interpreted them, were not fulfilled. So he scoffed, cynically, bitterly, and said, as many another has done before he has learned the lessons of the world's hard school, "There is no God." And having said it, he took rather a pride in it and said it openly, boastingly.

As at Wilbraham, funds ran out before the school year was completed and he left Yale and taught district school during the day and vocal and instrumental music in the evenings.



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But into this eager, undaunted struggle for an education came the trumpet call to arms. With the memory of John Brown like a living coal in his heart, with the pictures of the cowering, runaway slaves ever before his eyes, he flung away his books and was one of the first to enlist. But his father interfered. Russell was only eighteen. Martin Conwell went to the recruiting officer and had his name taken from the rolls. It was a bitter disappointment. But since he might not help with his hands, he spoke with his tongue. All his pent-up enthusiasm flowed out in impassioned speeches that brought men by the hundreds to the recruiting offices. His fame spread up and down the Connecticut valley and wherever troops were to be raised, "the boy" was in demand.

"His youthful oratory," says the author of "Scaling the Eagle's Nest," "was a wonderful thing which drew crowds of excited listeners wherever he went. Towns sent for him to help raise their quotas of soldiers, and ranks speedily filled before his inspiring and patriotic speeches. In 1862 I remember a scene at Whitman Hall in Westfield, Massachusetts, which none who were there can forget. Russell had delivered two addresses there before. On that night there were two addresses before his by prominent lawyers, but there was evident impatience to hear 'The boy.' When he came forward there was the most deafening applause. He really seemed inspired by miraculous powers. Every auditor was fascinated and held closely bound. There was for a time breathless suspense, and then at some telling sentence the whole building shook with wild applause. At its close a shower of bouquets from hundreds of ladies carpeted the stage in a moment, and men from all parts of the hall rushed forward to enlist."

The adulation and flattery showered upon him were enough to turn any other's head. But it made no impression upon him. Heart, mind and soul he was wrapped up in the cause. He was burning with zeal to help the oppressed and suffering. His words poured from a heart overflowing with pity, love, and indignation. Never once did he think of himself, only of those in bonds crying, "Come over and help us."

When Lincoln made his great address in Cooper Institute in 1860, Russell was there. It was a longer journey from New England to New York in those days than it is now, and longer yet for a boy who had so little money, but he let no obstacle keep him away.

He utilized his visit also to hear Beecher, the man who had taken so powerful a hold of his childish fancy. Ever since those boyish days when his mother read Beecher's sermons to him, and standing on the big gray rock he had imagined himself another Beecher, he had longed to hear this great man. It was only this childish desire holding fast to him through the year that took him now, for church-going itself had no attraction for him.



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He sat on the steps of the gallery and heard this wonderful man preach a sermon in which he illustrated an auctioneer selling a negro girl at the block. He sat as one entranced. So did the immense audience, held spellbound by the scene so graphically pictured. It was the first interesting sermon he had ever heard. It made a tremendous impression on him, not only in itself, but as a vivid contrast between the formal, rattling-of-dry-bones sermon and the live, vital discourse that takes hold of a man's mind and heart and compels him to go out in the world and do things for the good of his fellow men. Long it remained in his memory, but the greatest inspiration from it did not come till later years, when suddenly it stood forth as if illumined, to throw a brilliant radiance on a path he had decided to tread.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILE THE CONFLICT RAGED

Lincoln's Call for 100,000 Men. Enlistment. Captain Conwell. In Camp at Springfield, Mass. The Famous Gold-sheathed Sword.

In 1862, Lincoln sent out an earnest call for 100,000 men for the war. Russell was not longer to be denied, and his father permitted him to enlist. What silent agony, what earnest prayers for his safety went up from his mother's heart, only other mothers in those terrible days knew.

He raised a company from Worthington, Chesterfield, Huntington, Russell, Blandford and the neighboring towns and was unanimously elected captain, though only nineteen. His earnest, fiery speeches had already made him famous, and when it was known he had enlisted and was raising a company, there was a rush to get into it, and the men as with one voice, demanded that he be their captain. No one ever thought of canvassing against him. A committee was appointed to wait on Governor Andrew to persuade him to commission Russell in spite of his age, and when he received the appointment, the cheers and applause of the enthusiastic, the quiet satisfaction of the sedate, showed the place which he had in their hearts. It is almost incomprehensible to those not acquainted with the man, but those who have come in contact with him, know what a hold he would soon gain over those "Mountain Boys," as the company was called. His kindly sympathy would quickly make them feel that in their captain, each had a warm personal friend. His generous heart would back up that belief with a hundred and one little acts of thoughtful kindness. Over each and every one would be exercised a watchful care that cheered the long days, lightened heavy loads, lessened discomforts. It is little wonder that their devotion to him amounted almost to adoration. Gray-haired men followed him as proudly as though his years matched theirs. Indeed, to their loyalty was added a fatherly feeling of guardianship over him, because of his youth, that brought a new pleasure into the relationship. The company was knit together with the bonds of loving comradeship as were few others.

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The rendezvous of the company was at Huntington, and there a banquet was given before the troops departed for war. Proud day for him when he marched down the familiar road from South Worthington, through the autumn woods with their slowly falling leaves, their shadowy forest aisles all glorious now with the banners of autumn, past the white farmhouses with their golden lilies, the faithful little brook singing ever at his side. Sad day for his mother as she watched him go, long looking after him, till she could see no more for tears.

From Huntington the company went into camp at Springfield. And now came into use, those tactics and drills he had studied as a boy, and others he had been secretly studying ever since the war broke out. His men were astonished to find how perfectly at home he was in military tactics. It further added to their pride in him. They fully expected him to know as little as they, but when he came to his work fully prepared, to their admiration of him as an orator, their love as a leader, was now added their confidence as an officer.

Camp life at Springfield made war no longer a glorious contemplation but an uncomfortable reality. The ground for a bed, a spadeful of earth for a pillow, sharp mountain winds, cold autumn storms, insufficient food, hinted at the hardships to follow. The gold and the alloy in the men's characters began to shine out, and Company F soon realized in practical ways, the nature of the man who led them. His new uniform overcoat went to a shivering boy, his rations were divided with those less fortunate, his blankets were given to a comrade in need. Always it was of his men, not himself, he thought.

Before leaving camp for the seat of war, Captain Conwell was presented with a sword by his Company, bearing this inscription:—

“Presented to Captain Russell H. Conwell by the soldiers of Company F, 46th Mass. Vol. Militia, known as ‘The Mountain Boys.’ *Vera Amicitia est sempiterna.* (True friendship is eternal.)” Colonel Shurtleff made the speech of presentation. The passionately eloquent reply of the boy captain is yet remembered by those who heard it. He received the beautiful, glittering weapon in silence. Slowly he drew the gleaming steel from its golden sheath and solemnly held it upward as if dedicating it to heaven, the sunlight bathing the blade with blinding flashes of light. His eyes were fixed upon the steel, as if in a rapt vision, he swept the centuries past, the centuries to come, and saw what it stood for in the destinies of men. Breathless silence fell upon his waiting comrades. Thus for a few moments he stood and then he spoke to the sword.



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“He called up the shade of the sword of that mighty warrior Joshua, which purified a polluted land with libations of blood, and made it fit for the heritage of God’s people; the sword of David, that established the kingdom of Israel; the sword of that resistless conqueror, Alexander, that pierced the heart of the Orient; the Roman short sword, the terrible gladius, that carved out for the Caesars the sovereignty of the world; the sword of Charlemagne, writing its master’s glorious deeds in mingling chapters of fable and history; the sword of Gustavus Adolphus, smiting the battalions of the puissant Wallenstein with defeat and overthrow even when its master lay dead on the field of Lutzen; the sword of Washington, drawn for human freedom and sheathed in peace, honor, and victory; then he bade the sword remember all it had done in shaping the destinies of men and nations; how it had written on the tablets of history in letters red and lurid, the drama of the ages; closing, he called upon it now, in the battle for the Union, to strike hard and strike home for freedom, for justice, in the name of God and the Right; to fail not in the work to which it was called until every shackle in the land was broken, every bondman free, and every foul stain of dishonor cleaned from the flag.”

CHAPTER IX

IN THE THICK OF THE FIGHT

Company F at Newberne, N.C. The Fight at Batchelor’s Creek. The Goldsboro Expedition. The Battle of Kingston. The Gum Swamp Expedition.

Breaking camp, the 46th left the beautiful, placid scenery about Springfield, its silver river, its silent mountains, for Boston, where they embarked for North Carolina, November 5th, 1862. They sailed out of Boston Harbor in the teeth of a winter gale which increased so in fury that the boat was compelled to put back. When they finally did leave, the sea was still very rough and they had a slow, stormy passage.

It goes without saying that many of the men were ill. The boat was crowded, the accommodations insufficient, and numbers of the Mountain Boys had never been on the water before. To the confusion of handling such a body of men was added inexperience in such work. The members of Company F would have fared badly had it not been for the forethought of their boy captain. It seemed as if he had passed beforehand in mental review, the experiences of these weeks and anticipated their needs. Out of his own funds, he laid in a stock of medicines and delicacies for the sick. Indeed, those who know, say that he expended all of his pay in sutler’s stores and various things to make his men more comfortable. Night and day, he was with those who suffered, cheering, sympathizing, nursing. He was the life of the ship. His men saw that his kindness and comradeship were not of the superficial order, but genuine, sincere, a part of his very self and they became, if possible, more passionately attached to him than ever.



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The placid Neuse river was a glad sight when at last they reached its mouth and steamed up to Newberne, North Carolina. General Burnside had already captured the town and Company F began army duties in earnest with garrison work in the little Southern city, with its long dull lines of earthworks, its white tents, its fleet of gunboats floating lazily on the river. The constant tramp of soldiers' feet echoed along the sidewalks of this erstwhile quiet, Southern town. Sentries stood on the corners challenging passers-by, wharves creaked under the loads of ordnance and quartermasters' stores. Army wagons and ambulances were constantly passing in the street, all strange and novel at first to the Mountain Boys but soon familiar. Drilling and guard duty filled their days. Morning and afternoon they drilled, and the actual possession of the enemies' country, the warlike aspect of everything about them, made drilling a far more real and important matter than it had seemed at home. Captain Conwell felt his responsibility and threw himself into the work with an earnestness that infected his men. They would rather drill with him two hours than with any other officer a half hour. They not only caught the contagion of his enthusiasm, but he changed the dull, monotonous drudgery of it, into real, fascinating work by marching them into seemingly hopeless situations and then in some unexpected and surprising way, extricating them. Nor did he spare himself any of the unpleasant phases of the work. One day, the Colonel, while drilling the regiment, noticed that many of the men of Company F marched far out of their places to avoid a mudhole in the road. He marched and countermarched them over the same ground to compel the men to keep their rank and file regardless of the mud. Captain Conwell saw his object, and himself plunged into the mire, his men followed, and were thus saved the reprimand which threatened.

During these days, Captain Conwell kept up with the law studies abandoned at Yale. Every spare minute, he devoted to his books and committed to memory, one whole volume of Blackstone during the term of his first enlistment. Not many of the soldiers so used their hours off duty. But it is this turning of every minute to account that has enabled Dr. Conwell to accomplish so much. He has made his life count for a half dozen of most person's by never wasting a moment.

The monotony of garrison duty was broken first by a small fight at Batchelor's Creek, seven miles above Newbern, but only four companies were engaged. The Mountain Boys saw the first blood spilled at Kingston and gained there the first glimpse of the horrors of war. Nearly the entire marching force was sent into the interior on this expedition, known as the Goldsboro expedition, the object being to cut the Weldon railroad at Goldsboro, North Carolina. It was a hard march with short and uncertain halts and occasional cavalry skirmishes. At Kingston, they met the enemy in force. The Confederates were massed about the bridge over the Neuse river and held it bravely till the charge of the 9th New Jersey and 10th Connecticut drove them from their position and left the woods and a little open field covered with the dead and dying. The 46th Massachusetts followed the retreating army and had that first experience with the grim, bloody side of war that always makes such a strong impression on the green soldier.



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They bivouacked at Kingston and next day marched to the Weldon railroad, reaching it at the bridge below Goldsboro, where the Confederates had massed a large body of troops to protect their lines of communication and supplies. This was a battle in earnest, the artillery was deafening, and the enemy repeatedly charged the Union lines. The Northern batteries were on a knoll in front, and at the very moment that a long line of gray was seen approaching through this field and the Massachusetts men were ordered to lie down, so that the shot and shell could pass over them, their boy captain walked openly forward to the batteries and stood there in the smoke. Careless of himself, he yet realized to the full the meaning of this grim duel, for when the fight was over and the Northern men cheering, he was silent. Captain Walkley asked why he did not cheer with the others. "Too many hearts made sad to-day," was the significant reply that showed he counted the cost to its bitter end, though he went forward none the less bravely.

Long, monotonous days of garrison duty followed for the men, days of drilling, of idling up and down the streets of the dull Southern town. But Captain Conwell used his spare minutes to advantage, and when no work connected with his company or the personal welfare of his comrades occupied him, he was studying. Then came the order to drive the Confederates from a fort they were erecting on the Newbern Railroad about thirty miles inland. This expedition, known as the Gum Swamp Expedition, was an experience that tested the mettle of the men and the resources of the young captain, and an experience none of the survivors ever forgot. It was a forced march, a quick charge. The Confederates fled leaving their fort unfinished. The Union men having successfully completed their work, began the return to Newberne, and here disaster overtook them. The Confederates hung on their rear, riddling their ranks with shot and shell. Suffering, maddened, with no way to turn and fight, for the enemy kept themselves well hidden, with no way of escape ahead if they remained on the road, they plunged into the swamp, that swept up black and dismal to the very edge of the highway. The Confederate prisoners with them, warned them of their danger, but the men were not to be stayed when a deadly rain of the enemy's balls was thinning their ranks every minute. The swamp was one black ooze with water up to their waists, a tangle of grass, reeds, cypress trees, bushes. Loaded down with their heavy clothing, and their army accoutrements, one after another the men sank from sheer exhaustion. No man could succor his brother. It was all he could do to drag himself through the mire that sucked him down like some terrible, silent monster of the black, slimy depths. But Captain Conwell would not desert a man. He could not see his comrades left to die before his very eyes, those men who came right from his own mountain town, his own boy friends,



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the ones who had enlisted under him, marched and drilled with him. Rather would he perish in the swamp with them. He worked like a Hercules, encouraging, helping, carrying some of the more exhausted. A wet, straggling remnant reached Newberne. Even then, when Captain Conwell found that two of his own company were missing, he plunged back into the swamp to rescue them. Hours passed, and just as a relief expedition was starting to search for him, he came back, his hat gone, his uniform torn into rags, but with one of the men with him and the other left on a fallen tree with a path blazed to lead the rescuers to him. No heart could withstand such devotion as that. Young and old, it touched his men so deeply, they could not speak of it unmoved. They would gladly have died for him if need be, as one did later, changing by his heroic act the whole current of Russell Conwell's life.

This same earnest desire to save that made him plunge back into that swamp, regardless of self, is with him still to-day, now that his whole soul is consumed with a longing to save men from moral death. He lets nothing stand in his way of reaching out a succoring hand. Then it was his comrades that he loved with such unselfish devotion. Now, every man is his brother and his heart goes out with the same earnest desire to help those who need help. The genuineness, the unselfishness of it goes straight to every man's heart. It binds men to him as in the old days, and it gives them new faith in themselves. The love of humanity in his heart is, and always has been, a clear spring, unpolluted by love of self, by ambition, by any worldly thing.

CHAPTER X

THE SWORD AND THE SCHOOL BOOK

Scouting at Bogue Sound. Capt. Conwell Wounded. The Second Enlistment. Jealousy and Misunderstanding. Building of the First Free School for Colored Children. Attack on Newport Barracks. Heroic Death of John Ring.

Once more, garrison duty laid its dull hand on the troops, varied by little encounters that broke the monotony and furnished the material for many campfire stories, but otherwise did little damage. The men eagerly welcomed these scouting expeditions, and when an especially dangerous one to Bogue Sound was planned, and Company F, eager to be selected, Captain Conwell personally interceded with the Colonel that his men might be given the task. The region into which they were sent was known to be full of rebels, and as they approached the danger zone, Captain Conwell ordered his men to lie down, while he went forward to reconnoitre. Noticing a Confederate officer behind a tree, he stole to the tree, and reaching as far around as he could, began firing with his revolver. Not being experienced in the shooting of men and believing since it must be done, "twere well it were done quickly," he shot all his loads in quick succession. His enemy,



more wily, waited till the Captain's ammunition was gone and then slowly and with steady aim began returning the fire. But Captain Conwell's comrades watching from a distance saw big peril, and disobeying orders, rose as one man and came to his rescue. The Confederate fled but not before he had left a ball in Captain Conwell's shoulder which, of little consequence at the time, later came near causing his death.



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Thus the days passed away, and as the term of enlistment drew to a close, General Foster sent for Captain Conwell and promised to recommend him for a colonelcy if he would enter at once upon recruiting service among his men. This he willingly consented to do, and as may be imagined his men nearly all wanted to re-enlist under him. Such a commission, however, for one so young aroused bitter jealousy among officers of other companies, and Captain Conwell hearing of it, decided not to accept the appointment. He wrote the Governor that he would be content with the captain's commission again and that he preferred not to raise contention by receiving anything higher. The company returned home, but before the new re-organization was effected, Captain Conwell was attacked with a serious fever. By the time he recovered, the new regiment had been organized and new officers put over it. Of course, his men were dissatisfied. With the understanding that such of his old comrades as wished could join it, he went to work immediately recruiting another company. But nearly all his old men wanted to come into it, the new men recruited would not give him up, and the anomalous position arose of two companies clamoring for one captain. While it created much comment, it did not lessen the jealousy which his popularity had aroused, among men and officers not intimately associated with him, so that his second enlistment began under a cloud of disappointment for his men, and jealousy among outsiders, that seemed to bring misfortune in its train.

His new men, however, never failed him. His thoughtful care for them, his kindness, his unselfishness won their loyalty and love as it had done in Company F, and Company D, 2nd Massachusetts Volunteers were to a man as devoted and as attached to him as ever were his old comrades of the first days of the war.

In this company went as Captain Conwell's personal orderly, a young boy, John Ring, of Westfield, Massachusetts, a lad of sixteen or seventeen. Entirely too young and too small to join the ranks of soldiers, he had pleaded with his father so earnestly to be permitted to go to the war that Mr. Ring had finally consented to put him in Captain Conwell's charge. The boy was a worshipper at the shrine of the young Captain. He had sat thrilled and fascinated under the magic of the burning words which had swept men by the hundreds to enlist. It was Captain Conwell's speeches that had stirred the boy and moved him with such fiery ardor to go to war. No greater joy could be given him, since he could not fight, than to be in his Captain's very tent to look after his belongings, to minister in small ways to his comfort. A hero worshipper the lad was, and at an age when ideals take hold of a pure, high-minded boy with a force that will carry him to any height of self-sacrifice, to any depth of suffering. He had been carefully reared in a Christian home and read the Bible every morning and every evening in their tent, a sight that so pricked the conscience of Captain Conwell, as he remembered his mother and her loving instructions, that he forbade it. But though John Ring loved Captain Conwell with a love which the former did not then understand, the boy loved duty and right better, and bravely disobeying these orders, he read on.

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The company was stationed at Fort Macon, North Carolina, for awhile, and then sent to Newport Barracks. Here it was that Captain Conwell and his soldiers cut the logs and built the first free schoolhouse erected for colored children. Colonel Conwell himself taught it at first and then he engaged a woman to teach. It is still standing.

Months passed away and the men received no pay. Request after request Captain Conwell sent to headquarters at Newberne, but received no reply. The men became discontented and unruly. Some had families at home in need. All of these tales were poured into the young Captain's ears. Ready ever to relieve trouble, impatient always to get to work and remedy a wrong, instead of talking about it, Captain Conwell decided to ride to Newberne, find out what was the matter and have the men's money forwarded at once. Leaving an efficient officer in command and securing a pass, which he never stopped to consider was not a properly made-out permit for a leave of absence for a commanding officer, he took an orderly and started. It was a twenty-mile ride to Newberne and meant an absence of some time. But he anticipated no trouble, for the rebels had been letting the Northern troops severely alone for nearly a year.

He had covered barely two-thirds of the distance, when a Union man passed, who shouted as he hurried on, "Your men are in a fight." Conwell and his orderly turned, put their horses to the gallop and rode back furiously. It was too late. The country between was swarming with Confederates. He ran into the enemies' pickets and barely escaped capture by swimming a deep creek, shot spattering all around them. He made desperate efforts to ride around the lines but failed. Then he tried descending the river by boat, but the enemy had captured the entire line of posts. Frustrated at all points, nothing was to be done but retrace his steps to Newberne, where the worst of news awaited him. The assault upon his fort had been sudden and in overwhelming force. His men had been shot down or bayoneted, the remnant driven to the woods. The whole ground was in the hands of the enemy.

Nor was this all. Back at that little fort had been enacted one of the saddest tragedies of the war. When the Union soldiers fled, they had retreated across the long railroad bridge that spanned the Newport river, and to prevent the enemy following, had set it on fire. Just as the flames began to eat into the timbers, John Ring, the boy orderly, thought of his Captain's sword, that wonderful gold-sheathed sword which had been presented to Captain Conwell on the memorable day in Springfield when he had so eloquently called upon it to fight in the cause of Justice. It had been left behind in the Captain's tent, the Army Regulations requiring that he wear one less conspicuous. Even now it might be in the hands of some slave-owning Confederate. Maddened at the thought, John King leaped on to the burning bridge, plunged back through the fire, through the ranks of the yelling, excited Confederates, reached the tent unobserved and grasped the sword of his idolized Captain. Again he made a rush for the flame-wrapped bridge. But this time the keen eyes of the enemy discerned him.



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“Look at the Yank with the sword. Wing him! Bring him down.” And bullets sped after the fearless boy. But he fled on undeterred, and plunged into the mass of flame and smoke. The fire had gained too great headway by this time for any living thing to pass through it unhurt. He saw it was useless to attempt to cross as before, and belting the sword about him, he dropped beneath the stringers and tried to make his way hand over hand. All about him fell the blazing brands. The biting smoke blinded him. The very flesh was burning from his arms. The enemies’ bullets sung about him. But still he struggled on. In sheer admiration of his courage, the Confederate general gave the order to cease firing, and the two armies stood silent and watched the plucky fight of this brave boy. Inch by inch, he gained on his path of fire. But he could see no longer. In torturing blackness he groped on, fearful only that he might not succeed in saving the precious sword, that in his blindness he might grasp a blazing timber and his hand be burnt from him, that death in a tongue of flame be swept down into his face, that the bridge might fall and the sword be lost. At last he heard his comrades shouting. They guided him with their cheers, “A little farther,” “Keep straight on,” “You’re all right now.” And then he dropped blazing into the outstretched arms of his comrades, while a mighty shout went up from both sides of the river, as enemy and friend paid the tribute of brave men to a brave deed.

[Illustration: *Lieutenant-Colonel Conwell*]

With swelling hearts and tear-blinded eyes, they tenderly laid the insensible hero on a gun carriage and took him to the hospital. Two days of quivering agony followed and then he met and bravely faced his last enemy. Opening his eyes, he said clearly and distinctly, “Give the Captain his sword.” Then his breath fluttered and the little armor-bearer slept the sleep of peace.

CHAPTER XI.

A SOLDIER OF THE CROSS

Under Arrest for Absence Without Leave. Order of Court Reversed by President. Certificate from State Legislature of Massachusetts for Patriotic Services. Appointed by President Lincoln Lieutenant-Colonel on General McPherson’s Staff. Wounded at Kenesaw Mountain. Conversion. Public Profession of Faith.

The tragic death of John Ring was the final crushing news that came to Captain Conwell at Newberne. Combined with the nervous strain he had been under in trying to get back to his men, the condemnation from his superior officers for his absence, it threw him into a brain fever. Long days and nights he rolled and tossed, fighting over again the attack on the fort, making heroic efforts to rescue John Ring from his fiery death, urging his horse through tangled forests and dark rivers that seemed never to have another shore. For weeks the fever racked and wasted him, and finally when feeble and weak,

he was once more able to walk, he found himself under arrest for absence without leave during a time of danger.



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It had been reported to General Palmer that the defeat of the Federal troops might have been avoided had the officers been on duty. An investigation was ordered and Captain Conwell was asked for his permit to be absent. He had simply his pass through the lines, a vastly different thing he found from an authorized permit of absence. The investigation dragged its slow course along, as all such things, encumbered by red tape, do. Disgusted and humiliated by being kept a prisoner for months when the country needed every arm in its defense, by having such a mountain made of the veriest molehill built of a kind act and boyish inexperience, he refused to put in a defense at the investigation and let it go as it would. Setting the Court of Inquiry more against him, a former Commander, General Foster, espoused his cause too hotly and wrote to General McPherson for an appointment for a "boy who is as brave as an old man." The Court of Inquiry, made up of local officers, most of them jealous of his popularity, resented this outside interference and the verdict was against him. But others higher in authority took up the matter and Captain Conwell was ordered to Washington. The President reversed the order of the Court. He was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel, detailed for service on General McPherson's staff and ordered West. General Butler, under whose command Captain Conwell served, afterward made a generous acknowledgment of the injustice of the findings and expressed in warm words his admiration of Captain Conwell, and the State Legislature of Massachusetts gave him a certificate for faithful and patriotic services in that campaign.

Nevertheless, it was an experience that sorely embittered his soul. Intentionally he had done nothing wrong, yet he had been humiliated and made to eat the bitter fruits of the envy and jealousy of others. It saddened but did not defeat him. His heart was too big, his nature too generous. He could forgive them freely, could do them a kindness the very first opportunity, but that did not take away the pain at his heart. One may forgive a person who burns him, even if intentionally, but that does not stop the burn from smarting.

Saddened, and with the futility of ambition keenly brought home to him, he joined General McPherson, and in the battle of Kenesaw Mountain he received a serious wound. He had stationed a lookout to watch the Confederate fire while he directed the work of two batteries. It was the duty of the lookout to keep Colonel Conwell and his gunners posted as to whether the enemy fired shot or shell, easily to be told by watching the little trail of smoke that followed the discharge. If a shot were sent, they paid no attention to it for it did little damage, but if it were a shell it was deemed necessary to seek protection.

Colonel Conwell was leaning on the wheel of one of the cannon when there was a discharge from the guns of the enemy. The lookout yelled, "Shot." But it was a fatal shell that came careening and screaming toward them, and before Conwell or his men could leap into the bomb-proof embankment, it struck the hub of the very wheel against which he leaned, and burst.



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When he came to himself, the stars were shining, the field was silent save for the feeble moans of the wounded, the voices and footsteps of parties searching for the injured. He was in a quivering agony of sharp, burning pain, but he could neither move nor speak. At last, he heard the searchers coming. Nearer, nearer drew the voices, then for a moment they paused at his side. He heard a man with a lantern say, "Poor fellow! We can do nothing for him." Then they passed on, leaving him for dead, among the dead.

All that June night he lay there, looking up at the stars that studded the infinity of space. About him were dark, silent forms, rigid in the sleep of death. Those were solemn hours, hours when he looked death in the face, and then backward over the years he had lived. Useless years they seemed to him now, years filled with petty ambitions that had to do solely with self. All the spiritual ideals of life, the things that give lasting joy and happiness because they are of the spirit and not of the flesh, he had scoffingly cast aside and rejected. He had narrowed life down to self and the things of the world. He had no such faith as made his mother's hard-working life happy and serene because it transformed its sordid care into glorious service of her Heavenly King. He had no such faith as carried John Ring triumphant and undismayed through the gates of fiery death in performance of a loving service. Suddenly a longing swept over him for this priceless faith, for a personal, sure belief in the love of a Savior. One by one the teachings of his mother came back to him, those beautiful immortal truths she had read him from that Book which is never too old to touch the hearts of men with healing. Looking up at the worlds swinging through space to unknown laws, with the immensities of life, death and infinity all about him, his disbelief, his atheism dropped away. Into his heart came the premonitions of the peace of God, which passeth understanding. Life broadened, it took on new meaning and duty, for a life into which the spirit of God has come can never again narrow down to the boundaries of self. He determined henceforth to live more for others, less for himself; to make the world better, somebody happier whenever he could; to make his life, each day of it, worthy of that great sacrifice of John Ring.

He being an officer, they came back for his body, and found a living man instead of the dead. He was taken to the field hospital. One arm was broken in two places, his shoulder badly shattered, and because there was no hope of his living, they did not at once amputate his arm, which would have been done had he been less seriously injured.

Long days he lay in the hospital with life going out all about him, the moan of the suffering in his ears, thinking, thinking, of the mystery of life and death, as the shadows flitted and swayed through the dimly lighted wards at night, the sunshine poured down during the day. His love of humanity burned purer. His desire to help it grew stronger. Long were the talks he had with the chaplain, a Baptist preacher, and when he recovered and left the hospital, his mind was fully made up. Like his father, his actions never lagged behind his speech, and he made at once an open profession of the faith on which he now leaned with such happy confidence.



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The fearless, unselfish love of humanity, the desire to help the oppressed that burned in the bosom of John Brown had sent the impetuous boy into the war.

The fearless, unselfish act of John Ring sent Colonel Conwell out of the war a God-fearing man, determined to spend his life for the good of humanity.

Providence uses strange instruments. Thousands in this country to-day have been inspired, helped, made different men and women through knowing Russell Conwell. What may not some of them do to benefit their country and their generation! Yet back of him stand this old gray-haired man and a young, fearless boy, whose influence turned the current of his life to brighten and bless countless thousands.

CHAPTER XII.

WESTWARD

Resignation from Army. Admission to Bar. Marriage. Removal to Minnesota. Founding of Minneapolis Y.M.C.A. and of the Present "Minneapolis Tribune." Burning of Home. Breaking Out of Wound. Appointed Emigration Agent to Germany by Governor of Minnesota. Joins Surveying Party to Palestine. Near to Death in Paris Hospital. Journey to New York for Operation in Bellevue Hospital. Return to Boston.

When Colonel Conwell was able to leave the hospital, he was still unable to assume active duty in the field, and he was sent to Nashville for further rest and treatment. Here he reported to General Thomas and was instructed to proceed to Washington with a despatch for General Logan. Colonel Conwell started, but the rough traveling of those days opened his wounds afresh and he completely broke down at Harper's Ferry. Too weak longer to resist, he yielded to the entreaties of his friends, sent in his resignation and returned home for rest and nursing. Before he fully recovered, peace was declared.

Free to resume his studies, he entered the law office of Judge W.S. Shurtleff, of Springfield, Massachusetts, his former Colonel, read law there for a short time, then entered the Albany University, where he graduated.

Shortly after passing his examination at the bar and receiving his degree, he was married at Chicopee Falls, March 8, 1865, to Miss Jennie P. Hayden, one of his pupils in the district school at West Granville, Massachusetts, and later one of his most proficient music scholars. Her brothers were in his company, and when Company F was in camp at Springfield after the first enlistment, she was studying at Wilbraham and there often saw her soldier lover. Anxious days and years they were for her that followed, as they were for every other woman with father, husband, brother or sweetheart in the terrible conflict that raged so long. But she endured them with that silent bravery that is ever

the woman's part, that strong, steady courage that can sit at home passive, patient, never knowing but that life-long sorrow and heartache are already at the threshold.



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Immediately after their marriage, they went West and finally settled in Minneapolis. Colonel Conwell opened a law office, and while waiting for clients acted as agent for a real estate firm in the sale of land warrants. He also began to negotiate for the sale of town lots. This not being enough for a man who utilized every minute, he became local correspondent for the "St. Paul Press." Nor did he stop here, though most men would have thought their hands by this time about full. He took an active part in local politics and canvassed the settlement and towns for the Republican and temperance tickets. He also was actively interested in the schools, and not only advocated public schools and plenty of them, but was a frequent visitor to the city and district schools, talking to the children in that interesting, entertaining way that always clothes some helpful lesson in a form long to be remembered.

True to the faith he had found in the little Southern hospital, he joined the First Baptist Church of Saint Paul. But mere joining was not sufficient. He must work for the cause, and he opened a business men's noon prayer-meeting in his law office at Minneapolis, rather a novel undertaking in those days and in the then far West. For three months, only three men attended. But nothing daunted, he persevered. That trait in his character always shone out the more brightly, the darker the outlook. Those three men were helped, and that was sufficient reason that the prayer-meeting be continued. Eventually it prospered and resulted finally in a permanent organization from which grew the Minneapolis Y.M.C.A.

Poor though he was, and he started in the West with nothing, he made friends everywhere. His speeches soon made him widely known. His sincerity, his unselfish desire to help others, his earnestness to aid in all good works brought him, as always, a host of loyal, devoted followers. A skating club of some hundred members made him their President, and his first law case in the West came to him through this position.

A skating carnival was to be given, and the club had engaged an Irishman to clear a certain part of the frozen Mississippi of snow for the skating. This he failed to do at the time specified and the club had it cleaned by some one else. Claiming that he would have done it, had they waited, the Irishman sued the club. Colonel Conwell, of course, appeared for the defense. The whole hundred members marched to the court house, the scene being town talk for some days. Needless to say he won his suit.

His love for newspaper work led him to start the "Minneapolis Chronicle" and the "Star of the North," which were afterward merged into "The Minneapolis Tribune," for which his clever young wife conducted a woman's column, in a decidedly brilliant, original manner. Mrs. Conwell wrote from her heart as one woman to other women, and her articles soon attracted notice and comment for their entertaining style and their inspiring, helpful ideas.



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At this time they were living in two rooms back of his office, for they were making financial headway as yet but slowly. But times brightened and Colonel Conwell was soon able to purchase a handsome home and furnish it comfortably, taking particular pride in the gathering of a large law library.

It seemed now as if life were to move forward prosperously. But greater work was needed from Russell Conwell than the comfortable practice of law. One evening while the family were from home, fire broke out and the house and all they owned was destroyed. Running to the fire from a G.A.R. meeting, a mile and a half away, Colonel Conwell was attacked with a hemorrhage of the lungs. It came from his old army wounds and the doctor ordered him immediately from that climate, and told him he must take a complete rest. Here was disaster indeed. Every cent they had saved was gone. And with it the strength to begin again the battle for a living. It was a hard, bitter blow for a young, ambitious man, right at the start of his career; a stroke of fate to make any man bitter and cynical. But his was not a nature to permit misfortune to narrow him or make him repine. He rose above it. It did not lessen his ambitions. It broadened, humanized them. It made him enter with still truer sympathy into other people's misfortune. And his trust in God was so strong, his faith so unshaken, he knew that in all these bitter experiences of life's school was a lesson. He learned it and used it to get a broader outlook.

His friends rallied to his aid. Prominent as an editor, lawyer, leader of the Y.M.C.A., it was not difficult to get him an appointment from the Governor, already a warm friend. He secured the position of emigration agent to Europe, and he turned his face Eastward. Mrs. Conwell was left in Minneapolis, and he sailed abroad in the hope that the sea trip and change of climate would heal the weakened tissue of his lung and fully restore him to health. But it was a vain hope. His strength would not permit him to fulfill the duty expected of him as emigration agent and he was compelled to resign. For several months he wandered about Europe trying one place, then another in the vain search for health. He joined a surveying party and went to Palestine, for even in those days that inner voice could not be altogether stilled that was calling him to follow in the footsteps of the Savior and preach and teach and heal the sick. The land where the Savior ministered had a strong fascination for him, and he gladly seized the opportunity to become a member of this surveying party and walk over the ground where the Savior had gone up and down doing good.

But the trip was of no benefit to his health. Instead of gaining he failed. He grew weaker and weaker. The hemorrhages became more and more frequent. Finally he came to Paris and lying, a stranger and poor, in Necker Hospital was told he could live but a few days. Face to face again with that grim, bitter enemy of the battlefield, what thoughts came crowding thick and fast—thoughts of his young wife in far-away America, of father and mother, memories of the beautiful woods, the singing streams of the mountain home, as the noise and clamor of Paris streets drifted into the long hospital ward.



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Then came a famous Berlin doctor to the dying American. He studied the case attentively, for it was strange enough to arouse and enlist all a doctor's keen scientific interest. When analyzed, copper had been found in the hemorrhage, with no apparent reason for it, and the Paris doctors were puzzling over the cause. "Were you in the war?" asked the great man. "Were you shot?"

"Yes."

"Shot in the shoulder?"

Then came back to Colonel Conwell, the recollection of the duel with the Confederate around a tree in the North Carolina woods and the shot that had lodged in his shoulder near his neck and was never removed.

"That is the trouble," said the physician. "The bullet has worked down into the lung and only the most skillful operation can save you, and only one man can do it"—and that man was a surgeon in Bellevue Hospital, New York.

Carefully was the sinking man taken on board a steamer. Only the most rugged constitution could have stood that trip in the already weakened condition of his system. But those early childhood days in the Berkshire Hills had put iron into his blood, the tonic of sunshine and fresh air into his very bone and muscle. Safely he made the journey, though no one knew all he suffered in those terrible days of weakness and pain on the lone, friendless trip across the Atlantic. Safely he went through the operation. The bullet was removed, and with health mending, he made his way to Boston where his loving young wife awaited him.

But out of these experiences, suffering, alone, friendless, poor, in a strange city, grew after all the Samaritan Hospital of Philadelphia that opens wide its doors, first and always, to the suffering sick poor.

CHAPTER XIII

WRITING HIS WAY AROUND THE WORLD

Days of Poverty in Boston. Sent to Southern Battlefields. Around the World for New York and Boston Papers. In a Gambling Den In Hong Kong, China. Cholera and Shipwreck.

Abject poverty awaited him on his return to Boston. The fire in St. Paul had left them but little property, while their enforced hurried departure compelled that little to be sold at a loss. This money was now entirely gone, and once more he faced the world in absolute poverty. He rented a single room in the East district of Boston and furnished it with the barest necessities. Colonel Conwell secured a position on "The Evening



Traveller” at five dollars a week, and Mrs. Conwell cheerily took in sewing. Thus they made their first brave stand against the gaunt wolf at the door. Here their first child was born, a daughter, Nima, now Mrs. E.G. Tuttle, of Philadelphia. These were dark days for the little household. Night after night the father came home to see the one he loved best in all the world, suffering for the barest necessities of life, yet cheerful, buoyant, never complaining. So sensitive to the sufferings of



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others that he must do all in his power to relieve even his comrades in the war when, injured or ill, what mental anguish must he have endured when his dearly loved wife was in want and he so powerless to relieve it. She read his heart with the sure sympathy of love, knew his bitter anguish of spirit, and suffered the more because he suffered. But bravely she cheered him, encouraged him, and spent all her own spare minutes doing what she could to add to the family income.

Thus they pluckily-worked, never repining nor complaining at fate, though knowing in its bitterest sense what it is to be desperately poor, to suffer for adequate food and clothing. Colonel Conwell learned in that hard experience what it is to want for a crust of bread. No man can come to Dr. Conwell to this day with a tale of poverty, suffering, sickness, but what the minister's eyes turn backward to that one little room with its pitiful makeshifts of furniture, its brave, pale wife, the wee girl baby; and his hand goes out to help with an earnest and heartfelt sympathy surprising to the recipient.

But the tide turned ere long. Colonel Conwell's work on the paper soon began to tell. His salary was raised and raised, until comfort once more with smiling face took up her abode with them. They moved into a pretty home in Somerville. Colonel Conwell resumed his law practice and began, as in the West, to deal in real estate. He also continued his lecturing.

Busy days these were, but his life had already taught him much of the art of filling each minute to an exact nicety in order to get the most out of it. His paper sent him as a special correspondent to write up the battlefields of the South, and his letters were so graphic and entertaining as to become a widely known and much discussed feature of the paper. Soldiers everywhere read them with eager delight and through them revisited the scenes of the terrible conflict in which each had played some part. While on this assignment, he invaded a gambling den in New Orleans, and interfering to save a colored man from the drunken frenzy of a bully, came near being killed himself. Coming to the aid of a porter on a Mississippi steamboat, he again narrowly escaped being shot, striking a revolver from the hand of a ruffian just as his finger dropped on the trigger. He mixed with all classes and conditions of men and saw life in its roughest, most primal aspect. But all these experiences helped him to that appreciation of human nature that has been of such value and help to him since.

These letters aroused such widespread and favorable comment that the "New York Tribune" and "Boston Traveller" arranged to send him on a tour of the world. When the offer came to him, his mind leaped the years to that poorly furnished room in the little farmhouse, where he had leaned on his mother's knee and listened with rapt attention while she read him the letters of foreign correspondents in that very "New York Tribune." The letter he wrote his mother telling her of the appointment was full of loving

gratitude for the careful way she had trained his tastes in those days when he was too young and inexperienced to choose for himself.

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It was a wrench for the young wife to let him go so far away, but she bravely, cheerfully made the sacrifice. She was proud of his work and his ability, and she loved him too truly to stand in the way of his progress.

This journey took him to Scotland, England, Sweden, Denmark, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Palestine, Arabia, Egypt and Northern Africa. He interviewed Emperor William I, Bismarck, Victor Emanuel, the then Prince of Wales, now Edward VII of England. He frequently met Henry M. Stanley, then correspondent for the London papers, who wrote from Paris of Colonel Conwell, "Send that double-sighted Yankee and he will see at a glance all there is and all there ever was."

He also made the acquaintance of Garibaldi, whom he visited in his island home and with whom he kept up a correspondence after he returned. Garibaldi it was who called Colonel Conwell's attention to the heroic deeds of that admirer of America, the great and patriotic Venetian, Daniel Manin. In the busy years that followed on this trip Colonel Conwell spent a long time gathering materials for a biography of Daniel Manin, and just before it was ready for the press the manuscript was destroyed by fire in the destruction of his home at Newton Centre, Massachusetts, in 1880. One of his most popular lectures, "The Heroism of a Private Life," took its inception from the life of this Venetian statesman.

He also gave a series of lectures at Cambridge, England, on Italian history that attracted much favorable comment.

Mr. Samuel T. Harris, of New York, correspondent of the "New York Times" in 1870, in a private letter, says, "Conwell is the funniest chap I ever fell in with. He sees a thousand things I never thought of looking after. When his letters come back in print I find lots in them that seems new to me, although I saw it all at the time. But you don't see the fun in his letters to the papers. The way he adapts himself to all circumstances comes from long travel; but it is droll. He makes a salaam to the defunct kings, a neat bow to the Sudras, and a friendly wink at the Howadji, in a way that puts him cheek-by-jowl with them in a jiffy. He beats me all out in his positive sympathy with these miserable heathen. He has read so much that he knows about everything. The way the officials, English, too, treat him would make you think he was the son of a lord. He has a dignified condescension in his manner that I can't imitate."

Part of the time Bayard Taylor was his traveling companion, and there grew up between these two kindred spirits an intimate friendship that lasted until Taylor's death.

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All through the trip he carried books with him, and every minute not occupied in gathering material for his letters was passed in reading the history of the scenes and the people he was among, in mastering their language. Such close application added an interesting background of historical information to his letters, a breadth and culture, that made them decidedly more valuable and entertaining than if confined strictly to what he saw and heard. It was on this journey that he heard the legend from which grew his famous lecture, "Acres of Diamonds," which has been given already three thousand four hundred and twenty times. It gave him an almost inexhaustible fund of material on which he has drawn for his lectures and books since.

During his absence his second child, a son, Leon, was born. He returned home for the briefest time, and then completed the tour by way of the West and the Pacific. He lectured through the Western States and Territories, for already his fame as a lecturer was spreading. He visited the Sandwich Islands, Japan, China, Sumatra, Siam, Burmah, the Himalaya Mountains, India, returning home by way of Europe. His Hong Kong letter to "The Tribune," exposing the iniquities of the labor-contract system in Chinese emigration, created quite a stir in political and diplomatic circles. It was while on this trip he gathered the material for his first book, "Why and How the Chinese Emigrate." It was reviewed as the best book in the market of its kind. The "New York Herald" in writing of it said: "There has been little given to the public which throws more timely and intelligent light upon the question of coolie emigration than the book written by Col. Russell H. Conwell, of Boston."

These travels were replete with thrilling adventures and strange coincidents. When he left Somerville after his brief visit, for his trip through the Western States, China and Japan, a broken-hearted mother in Charlestown, Mass., asked him to find her wandering boy, whom she believed to be "somewhere in China." A big request, but Colonel Conwell, busy as he was, did not forget it. Searching for him in such places as he believed the boy would most likely frequent, Colonel Conwell accidentally entered, one night in Hong Kong, a den of gamblers. Writing of the event, he says:

"At one table sat an American, about twenty-five years old, playing with an old man. They had been betting and drinking. While the gray-haired man was shuffling the cards for a 'new deal' the young man, in a swaggering, careless way, sang, to a very pathetic tune, a verse of Phoebe Carey's beautiful hymn,

'One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er:
I'm nearer home to-day
Than e'er I've been before.'



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Hearing the singing several gamblers looked up in surprise. The old man who was dealing the cards grew melancholy, stopped for a moment, gazed steadfastly at his partner in the game, and dashed the pack upon the floor under the table. Then said he, 'Where did you learn that tune?' The young man pretended that he did not know he had been singing. 'Well, no matter,' said the old man, 'I've played my last game, and that's the end of it. The cards may lie there till doomsday, and I will never pick them up,' The old man having won money from the other—about one hundred dollars—took it out of his pocket, and handing it to him said: 'Here, Harry, is your money; take it and do good with it; I shall with mine.' As the traveler followed them downstairs, he saw them conversing by the doorway, and overheard enough to know that the older man was saying something about the song which the young man had sung. It had, perhaps, been learned at a mother's knee, or in a Sunday-school, and may have been (indeed it was), the means of saving these gamblers, and of aiding others through their influence toward that nobler life which alone is worth the living."

The old man had come from Westfield, Mass. He died in 1888, at Salem, Oregon, having spent the last seven years of his life as a Christian Missionary among the sailors of the Pacific coast. He passed away rejoicing in the faith that took him

"Nearer the Father's House,
Where many mansions be,
Nearer the great white throne,
Nearer the jasper sea."

The boy, Harry, utterly renounced gambling and kindred vices.

While coming from Bombay to Aden, cholera broke out on the ship and it was strictly quarantined. It was a ship of grief and terror. Passengers daily lost loved ones. New victims were stricken every hour. The slow days dragged away with death unceasingly busy among them. Burials were constant, and no man knew who would be the next victim. But Colonel Conwell escaped contagion.

On the trip home, across the Atlantic, the steamer in a fearful gale was so dismantled as to be helpless. The fires of the engine were out, and the boat for twenty-six days drifted at the mercy of the waves. No one, not even the Captain, thought they could escape destruction. Water-logged and unmanageable, during a second storm it was thought to be actually sinking. The Captain himself gave up hope, the women grew hysterical. But in the midst of it all, Colonel Conwell walked the deck, and to calm the passengers sang "Nearer my God to Thee," with such feeling, such calm assurance in a higher power, that the passengers and Captain once again took courage. But strangest of all, on this voyage, while sick, he was cared for by the very colored porter whose life he had saved on the Mississippi steamboat.



CHAPTER XIV

BUSY DAYS IN BOSTON

Editor of "Boston Traveller." Free Legal Advice for the Poor. Temperance Work. Campaign Manager for General Nathaniel P. Banks. Urged for Consulship at Naples. His Work for the Widows and Orphans of Soldiers.



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Returning to Somerville, Mass., the long journey ended, he found the editorial chair of the "Boston Traveller" awaiting him. He plunged into work with his characteristic energy. The law, journalism, writing, lecturing, all claimed his attention. It is almost incredible how much he crowded into a day. Five o'clock in the morning found him at work, and midnight struck before he laid aside pen or book. Yet with all this rush of business, he did not forget those resolves he had made to lend a helping hand wherever he could to those needing it. And his own bitter experiences in the hard school of poverty taught him how sorely at times help is needed. He made his work for others as much a part of his daily life as his work for himself. It was an integral part of it. Watching him work, one could hardly have distinguished when he was occupied with his own affairs, when with those of the poor. He did not separate the two, label one "charity" and attend to it in spare moments. One was as important to him as the other. He kept his law office open at night for those who could not come during the day and gave counsel and legal advice free to the poor. Often of an evening he had as many as a half hundred of these clients, too poor to pay for legal aid, yet sadly needing help to right their wrongs. So desirous was he of reaching and assisting those suffering from injustice, yet without money to pay for the help they needed, that he inserted the following notice in the Boston papers:

"Any deserving poor person wishing legal advice or assistance will be given the same free of charge any evening except Sunday, at No. 10 Rialto Building, Devonshire Street. None of these cases will be taken into the courts for pay."

These cases he prepared as attentively and took into court with as eager determination to win, as those for which he received large fees. Of course such a proceeding laid him open to much envious criticism. Lawyers who had no such humanitarian view of life, no such earnest, sincere desire to lighten the load of poverty resting so heavily on the shoulders of many, said it was unprofessional, sensational, a "bid for popularity." Those whom he helped knew these insinuations to be untrue. His sympathy was too sincere, the assistance too gladly given. But misunderstood or not, he persevered. The wrongs of many an ignorant working man suffering through the greed of those over him, were righted. Those who robbed the poor under various guises were made to feel the hand of the law. And for none of these cases did he ever take a cent of pay.

Another class of clients who brought him much work but no profit were the widows and orphans of soldiers seeking aid to get pensions. To such he never turned a deaf ear, no matter the multitude of duties that pressed. He charged no fee, even when to win the case, he was compelled to go to Washington. Nor would he give it up, no matter what work it entailed until the final verdict was given. His partners say he never lost a pension case, nor ever made a cent by one.



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An unwritten law in the office was that neither he nor his partners should ever accept a case if their client were in the wrong, or guilty. But this very fact made wrongdoers the more anxious to secure him, knowing it would create the impression at once that they were innocent.

A story which went the rounds of legal circles in Boston and finally was published in the "Boston Sunday Times," shows how he was cleverly fooled by a pick-pocket. The man charged with the crime came to Colonel Conwell to get him to take the case. So well did he play the part of injured innocence that Colonel Conwell was completely deceived and threw himself heart and soul into the work of clearing him. When the case came up for trial, the lawyer and client sat near together in the court room, and Colonel Conwell made such an earnest and forceful plea in behalf of the innocent young man and the harm already done him by having such a charge laid at his door that it was at once agreed the case should be dismissed, by the District Attorney's consent. So lawyer and client walked out of court together, happy and triumphant, to Colonel Conwell's office, where the pick-pocket paid Colonel Conwell his fee out of the lawyer's own pocketbook which he had deftly abstracted during the course of the trial.

The incident caused much amusement at the time, and it was a long while before Colonel Conwell heard the last of it.

Into work for temperance he went heart and soul, not only in speech but in deed. Though he never drank intoxicating liquor himself, he could never see a man under its baneful influence but that heart and hand went out to help him. Many a reeling drunkard he took to his Somerville home, nursed all night, and in the morning endeavored with all his eloquence to awaken in him a desire to live a different life. Deserted wives and children of drunkards came to him for aid, and many of the free law cases were for those wronged through the curse of drink.

Friend always of the workingman, he was persistently urged by their party to accept a nomination for Congress. But he as persistently refused. But he worked hard in politics for others. He managed one campaign in which General Nathaniel P. Banks was running on an independent ticket, and elected him by a large majority. His name was urged by Senators Charles Sumner and Henry Wilson for the United States Consulship at Naples, the lectures he had given at Cambridge, England, on Italian history having attracted so much favorable comment by the deep research they showed, and the keen appreciation of Italian character. He was considered an expert in contested election cases and he frequently appeared before the Legislature on behalf of cities and towns on matters over which it had jurisdiction.

Mr. Higgins, who knew him personally, writing of these busy days in "Scaling the Eagle's Nest," says:



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“He prepared and presented many bills to Congressional Committees at Washington, and appeared as counsel in several Louisiana and Florida election cases. His arguments before the Supreme Courts in several important patent cases were reported to the country by the Associated Press. He had at one time considerable influence with the President and Senators in political appointments, and some of the best men still in government office in this State (Massachusetts) and in other New England States, say they owe their appointment to his active friendship in visiting Washington in their behalf. But it does not appear that through all these years of work and political influence he ever asked for an appointment for himself.”

Catholics, Jews, Protestants and non-sectarian charities sought his aid in legal matters, and so broad was his love for humanity that all found in him a ready helper. At one time he was guardian of more than sixty orphan children, three in particular who were very destitute, were through his intercession with a relative, left a fortune of \$50,000. Yet despite all these activities, he found time to lecture, to write books, to master five languages, using his spare minutes on the train to and from his place of business for their study. In 1872 he made another trip abroad. Speaking of him at this time, a writer in the London Times says:

“Colonel Conwell is one of the most noteworthy men of New England. He has already been in all parts of the world. He is a writer of singular brilliancy and power, and as a popular lecturer his success has been astonishing. He has made a place beside such orators as Beecher, Phillips and Chapin.”

Thus the busy years slipped by, years that brought him close to the great throbbing heart of humanity, the sorrows and sufferings of the poor, the aspirations and ambitions of the rich, years in which he looked with deep insight into human nature, and, illumined by his love for humanity, saw that an abiding faith in God, the joy of knowing Christ's love was the balm needed to heal aching hearts, drive evil out of men's lives, wretchedness and misery from many a home. More and more was he convinced that to make the world better, humanity happier, the regenerating, uplifting power of the spirit of God ought to be brought into the daily lives of the people, in simple sincerity, without formalism, yet as vital, as cherished, as freely recognized a part of their lives as the ties of family affection which bound them together.

CHAPTER XV

TROUBLED DAYS

Death of Wife. Loss of Money. Preaching on Wharves. Growth of Sunday School Class at Tremont Temple from Four to Six Hundred Members in a Brief Time. Second Marriage. Death of Father and Mother. Preaching at Lexington. Building Lexington Baptist Church.



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Into this whirl of successful, happy work, the comforts and luxuries of prosperity, came the grim hand of death. His loving wife who had worked so cheerfully by his side, who had braved disaster, bitter poverty, hardship, with a smile, died of heart trouble after a few days' illness, January 11, 1872. It was like a thunderbolt from a cloudless sky. In the loneliness and despair that followed, worldly ambitions turned to dust and ashes. He could not lecture. He could not speak. The desolation at his heart was too great. His only consolation was the faith that was in him, a "very present help," as he found, "in time of trouble." This bitter trial brought home to him all the more intensely the need of such comfort for those who were comfortless. His heart went out in burning sympathy for those sitting in darkness like himself, but who had no faith on which to lean, nothing to bring healing and hope to a broken heart. Her death was a loss to the community as well as to her family. Her writings in the "Somerville Journal" had made a decided impression, while her sweet womanly qualities had endeared her to a wide circle of friends. Noting her death, a writer in one of the Boston papers said:

"Mrs. Conwell was a true and loving wife and mother. Kind and sympathetic in her intercourse with all, and possessed of those rare womanly graces and qualities which endeared her to those with whom she was acquainted. Her death leaves a void which cannot be filled even outside her own household. Her writings were those of a true woman, always healthful in their tone, strong and vigorous in ideas and concise in language."

Other troubles came thick and fast. He lost at one time fifty thousand dollars in the panic of '74, and at another ten thousand dollars by endorsing for a friend. His old acquaintance, poverty, again took up its abode with him. In addition, he was heavily in debt. Those were black days, days that taught him how unstable were the things of this world—money, position, the ambitions that once had seemed so worthy. The only thing that brought a sense of satisfaction, of having done something worth while, was the endeavor to make others happier, to put joy into lives as desolate as his own. Such work brought peace.

To forget his own troubles in lightening those of others, he went actively into religious work. He took a class in the Sunday School of Tremont Temple, that very Sunday School into which Deacon Chipman had taken him a runaway boy some twenty years before. The class grew from four to six hundred in a few months. He preached to sailors on the wharves, to idlers on the streets, in mission chapels at night. The present West Somerville, Massachusetts, church grew from just such work. He could not but see the fruits of his labors. On all sides it grew to a quick harvest.

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The thought that he was thus influencing others for good, that he was leading men and women into paths of sure happiness brought him a spiritual calm and peace such as the gratification of worldly ambitions had never given him. More and more he became convinced it was the only work worth doing. The strong love for his fellowmen, the desire to help those in need and to make them happier which had always been such a pronounced characteristic, had set him more than once to thinking of the ministry as a life work. Indeed, ever since that childish sermon, with the big gray rock as a pulpit, it had been in his mind, sometimes dormant, breaking out again into strong feeling when for a moment he stood on some hilltop of life and took in its fullest, grandest meaning, or in the dark valley of suffering and sorrow held close communion with God and saw the beauty of serving Him by serving his fellowmen. That the inclination was with him is shown by the fact that when he was admitted to the bar in Albany in 1865, he had a Greek Testament in his pocket.

As soon as his means permitted after the war, he gathered a valuable theological library, sending to Germany for a number of the books. In 1875, when he was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of the United States, he delivered an address that same evening in Washington on the "Curriculum of the School of the Prophets in Ancient Israel." From all parts of the Old World he gathered photographs of ancient manuscripts and sacred places, and kept up a correspondence with many professors and explorers interested in these topics. He lectured in schools and colleges on archaeological subjects, with illustrations prepared by himself.

It is not to be wondered that with his keen mind and his gift of oratory the law tempted him at first to turn aside from the promptings of the inner spirit. Nor is it to be wondered that even when inclination led strongly he still hesitated. It was no light thing for a man past thirty to throw aside a profession in which he had already made an enviable reputation and take up a new lifework. With two small children depending upon him, it was a question for still more serious study.

But gradually circumstances shaped his course. In 1874, he married Miss Sarah F. Sanborn whom he had met in his mission work. She was of a wealthy family of Newton Centre, the seat of the Newton Theological Seminary. One of the intimate friends of the family was the Rev. Alvah Hovey, D.D., President of the Seminary. Thus while inclination pulled one way and common sense pulled the other, adding as a final argument that he had no opportunity to study for the ministry, he was thrown among the very people who made it difficult not to study theology. Troubled in mind he sought Dr. Hovey one day and asked how to decide if "called to the ministry." "If people are called to hear you," was the quick-witted, practical reply of the good doctor. But still he hesitated. His law practice, writing, lecturing, claimed part of him; his Sunday School work and lay preaching, a second and evergrowing stronger part. His law practice became more and more distasteful, his service to the soul needs of others, more and more satisfying.



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[Illustration: *Mrs. Sarah F. Conwell*]

In 1874 his father died, and in 1877 he lost his mother, these sad bereavements still further inclining his heart to the work of the ministry. They were buried at South Worthington, in a sunny hilltop cemetery, open to the sky, the voice of a little brook coming softly up from among the trees below. This visit to his old home under such sad circumstances, the memory of his father's and mother's prayers that the world might not be the worse, but that it might be the better for his having lived in it, deepened the growing conviction that he should give his life to the work of Christ.

At last came the deciding event. In 1879, a young woman visited Colonel Conwell, the lawyer, and asked his advice respecting the disposition of a Baptist Meeting House in Lexington. He went to Lexington and called a meeting of the members of the old church, for the purpose of securing legal action on the part of that body preparatory to selling the property. He got some three or four old Baptists together and, as they talked the business over, "they became reluctant to vote, either to sell, destroy, keep, or give away the old meeting-house," says Burdette, in "Temple and Templars." "While discussing the situation with these sorrowful old saints—and one good old deacon wept to think that 'Zion had gone into captivity,'—the preacher came to the front and displaced the lawyer. It was the crisis in his life; the parting of the ways. In a flash of light the decision was made. 'It flashed upon me, sitting there as a lawyer, that there was a mission for me there,' Dr. Conwell has often said, in speaking of his decision to go into the ministry. He advised promptly and strongly against selling the property. 'Keep it; hold service in it; repair the altar of the Lord that is broken down; go to work; get God to work for you, and work with Him; 'God will turn again your captivity, your months shall be filled with laughter and your tongues with singing.'" They listened to this enthusiastic lawyer whom they had retained as a legal adviser, in dumb amazement 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' But having given his advice, he was prompt to act upon it himself. 'Where will we get a preacher?' 'Here is one who will serve you until you can get one whom you will like better, and who can do you more good. Announce preaching in the old meeting house next Sunday!'

"It was nothing new for Colonel Conwell to preach, for he was engaged in mission work somewhere every Sunday; so when the day came, he was there. Less than a score of hearers sat in the moldy old pews. The windows were broken and but illy repaired by the curtaining cobwebs. The hand of time and decay had torn off the ceiling plaster in irregular and angular patches. The old stove had rusted out at the back, and the crumbling stove-pipe was a menace to those who sat within range of its fall. The pulpit was what Mr. Conwell called a 'crow's



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perch,' and one can imagine the platform creaking under the military tread of the tall lawyer who stepped into its lofty height to preach. But, old though it was, they say, a cold, gloomy, damp, dingy old box, it was a meeting house and the Colonel preached in it. That a lawyer should practice, was a commonplace, everyday truth; but that a lawyer should preach—that was indeed a novelty. The congregation of sixteen or seventeen at the first service grew the following Sabbath, to forty worshippers. Another week, and when the new preacher climbed into that high pulpit, he looked down upon a crowded house; the little old chapel was dangerously full. Indeed, before the hour for service, under the thronging feet of the gathering congregation, one side of the front steps—astonished, no doubt, and overwhelmed by the unwonted demand upon its services—did fall down. They were encouraged to build a fire in the ancient stove that morning, but it was past regeneration; it smoked so viciously that all the invalids who had come to the meeting were smoked out. The old stove had lived its day and was needed no longer. There was a fire burning in the old meeting-house that the hand of man had not lighted and could not kindle; that all the storms of the winter could not quench. The pulpit and the preacher had a misty look in the eyes of the old deacons at that service. And the preacher? He looked into the earnest faces before him, into the tearful, hopeful eyes, and said in his own strong heart, 'These people are hungry for the word of God, for the teachings of Christ. They need a church here; we will build a new one.'

"It was one thing to say it, another to achieve it. The church was poor. Not a dollar was in the treasury, not a rich man in the membership, the congregation, what there was of it, without influence in the community. But lack of money never yet daunted Dr. Conwell. The situation had a familiar look to him. He had succeeded many a time without money when money was the supreme need, and he attacked this problem with the same grim perseverance that had carried him so successfully through many a similar ordeal."

"After service he spoke about building a new church to two or three of the members. 'A new church?' They couldn't raise enough money to put windows in the old one, they told him."

"'We don't want new windows, we want a new church,' was the reply."

"They shook their heads and went home, thinking what a pity it was that such an able lawyer should be so visionary in practical church affairs. Part of that night Colonel Conwell spent in prayer; early next morning he appeared with a pick-axe and a woodman's axe and marched upon that devoted old meeting-house, as he had marched against Hood's intrenchments before Atlanta. Strange, unwonted sounds saluted the ears of the early risers and awakened the sluggards in Lexington that Monday morning. Bang, Bang, Bang! Crash—Bang! Travelers over the Revolutionary battlefield at Lexington

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listened and wondered. By and by a man turned out of his way to ascertain the cause of the racket. There was a black coat and vest hanging on the fence, and a professional-looking man in his shirt sleeves was smashing the meeting-house. The rickety old steps were gone by the time this man, with open eyes and wide-open month, came to stare in speechless amazement. Gideon couldn't have demolished 'the altar of Baal and the grove that was by it' with more enthusiastic energy, than did this preacher tumble into ruin his own meeting-house, wherein he had preached not twelve hours before. Other men came, looked, laughed, and passed by. But the builder had no time to waste on idle gossips. Clouds of dust hovered about him, planks, boards, and timbers came tumbling down in heaps of ruin."

"Presently there came along an eminently respectable citizen, who seldom went to church. He stared a moment, and said, 'What in the name of goodness are you doing here?'"

"'We are going to have a new meeting-house here,' was the reply, as the pick-axe tore away the side of a window-frame for emphasis."

"The neighbor laughed, 'I guess you won't build it with that axe,' he said."

"'I confess I don't know just exactly how it is going to be done,' said the preacher, as he hewed away at a piece of studding, 'but in some way it is going to be done.'"

"The doubter burst into an explosion of derisive laughter and walked away. A few paces, and he came back; walking up to Colonel Conwell he seized the axe and said, 'See here, Preacher, this is not the kind of work for a parson or a lawyer. If you are determined to tear this old building down, hire some one to do it. It doesn't look right for you to be lifting and pulling here in this manner.'"

"'We have no money to hire any one,' was the reply, 'and the front of this structure must give way to-day, if I have to tear it down all alone.'"

"'I'll tell you what I'll do,' persisted the wavering doubter; 'if you will let this alone, I'll give you one hundred dollars to hire some one.'"

"Colonel Conwell tranquilly poked the axe through.' the few remaining panes yet unbroken in the nearest window and replied, 'We would like the money, and I will take it to hire some one to help, but I shall keep right on with the work myself.'"

"'All right,' said the doubter; 'go ahead, if you have set your heart upon it. You may come up to the house for the hundred dollars any time to-day.'"



“And with many a backward look the generous doubter passed on, half beginning to doubt his doubts. Evidently, the Baptists of Lexington were beginning to do something. It had been many a year since they had made such a noise as that in the village. And it was a noise destined to be heard a long, long way; much farther than the doubter and a great many able scientists have supposed that sound would ‘carry.’”

“After the doubter came a good-natured man who disliked churches in general, and therefore enjoyed the fun of seeing a preacher tug and puff in the heavy work of demolition, for the many-tongued rumor by this time had noised it all around Lexington that the new preacher was tearing down the Baptist meeting-house. He looked on until he could no longer keep his enjoyment to himself.”



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“Going to pull the whole thing down, are you?’ he asked.”

“Yes, sir,’ replied the working preacher, ripping off a strip of siding, ‘and begin all new.’”

“Who is going to pay the bills?’ he asked, chuckling.”

“The preacher tucked up his sleeves and stepped back to get a good swing at an obstinate brace; ‘I don’t know,’ he said, ‘but the Lord has money somewhere to buy and pay for all we need.’”

“The man laughed, in intense enjoyment of the absurdity of the whole crazy business.”

“I’ll bet five dollars to one,’ he said, with easy confidence of a man who knows his bet will not be taken up, ‘that you won’t get the money in this town.’”

“Mr. Conwell brought the axe down with a crashing sweep, and the splinters flew out into the air like a cloud of witnesses to the efficacy of the blow.”

“You would lose your money, then,’ quietly said the preacher, ‘for Mr.— just now came along and has given me a hundred dollars without solicitation.’”

“The man’s eyes opened a trifle wider, and his next remark faded into a long-drawn whistle of astonishment. Presently—‘Did you get the cash?’ he asked feebly.”

“No, but he told me to call for it to-day.’”

“The man considered. He wasn’t enjoying the situation with quite so much humor as he had been, but he was growing more interested.”

“Well! Is that so! I don’t believe he meant it,’ he added hopefully. Then, a man after all not disposed to go back on his own assertion, he said, ‘Now I’ll tell you what I’ll do. If you really get that hundred dollars out of that man, I’ll give you another hundred and pay it to-night.’”

“And he was as good as his word.”

“All that day the preacher worked alone. Now came in the training of those early days on the farm, when he learned to swing an axe; when he builded up rugged strength in a stalwart frame, when his muscles were hardened and knotted with toil.”

“Passers-by called one after another, to ask what was going on. To each one Colonel Conwell mentioned his hope and mentioned his gifts. Nearly every one had added something without being asked, and at six o’clock, when Colonel Conwell laid down the pick and axe at the end of his day’s work, he was promised more than half the money necessary to tear down the old meeting-house and build a new one.”



“But Colonel Conwell did not leave the work. With shovel, or hammer, or saw, or paintbrush, he worked day by day all that summer alongside the workmen. He was architect, mason, carpenter, painter, and upholsterer, and he directed every detail, from the cellar to the gilded vane, and worked early and late. The money came without asking as fast as needed. The young people who began to flock about the faith-worker undertook to purchase a large bell, and quietly had Colonel Conwell’s name cast on the exterior, but when it came to the difficult task of hanging it in the



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tower, they were obliged to call Colonel Conwell to come and superintend the management of ropes and pulleys. Then the deep, rich tones of the bell rang out over the surprised old town the triumph of faith.' An unordained preacher, he had entered upon his first pastorate, and signalized his entrance upon his ministry by building a new meeting-house, awakening a sleeping church, inspiring his congregation with his own enthusiasm and zeal."

At last he had found his work. With peace and deep abiding joy he entered it. Doubts no longer troubled him. His heart was at rest. "Blessed is he who has found his work," writes Carlyle; "let him ask no other blessedness."

CHAPTER XVI

HIS ENTRY INTO THE MINISTRY

Ordination. First Charge at Lexington. Call to Grace Baptist Church, Philadelphia.

For this work he had been trained in the world's bitter school of experience. He had learned lessons there of infinitely more value in helping humanity than any the theological seminary could teach him. He knew what it was to be poor, to be utterly cast down and discouraged, to be sick and suffering, to sit in the blackness of despair for the loss of loved ones. From almost every human experience he could reach the hand of sympathy and say, "I know. I have suffered." Such help touches the heart of humanity as none other can. And when at the same time, it points the way to the Great Comforter and says again, "I know, I found peace," it is more powerful than the most eloquent sermon. Nothing goes so convincingly to a man's heart as loving, sympathetic guidance from one who has been through the same bitter trial.

He was ordained in the year 1879, the council of churches, called for his ordination, met in Lexington, President Alvah Hovey of Newton Seminary presiding. Among the members of the council was his life-long friend, George W. Chipman, of Boston, the same good deacon who had taken him a runaway boy into the Sunday School of Tremont Temple. The only objection to the ordination was made by one of the pastors present, who said, "Good lawyers are too scarce to be spoiled by making ministers of them."

The ordination over, the large law offices in Boston were closed. He gave his undivided time and attention to his work in Lexington. The lawyer, speaker and writer ceased to exist, but the pastor was found wherever the poor needed help, the sick and suffering needed cheer, the mourning needed comfort, wherever he could by word or act preach the gospel of the Christ he served.



His whole thought was concentrated in the purpose to do good. No one who knew him intimately could doubt his entire renunciation of worldly ambitions, the sacrifice was so great, yet so unhesitatingly made. Buried from the world in one way, he yet lived in it in a better way. Large numbers of his former legal, political and social associates called his action fanaticism. Wendell Phillips, meeting Colonel Conwell and several friends on the way to church, one Sunday morning, remarked that "Olympus has gone to Delphi, and Jove has descended to be an interpreter of oracles."



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His salary at the start was six hundred dollars a year, little more than ten dollars a week. But it was enough to live on in a little New England village and what more did he need? The contrast between it and the ten thousand dollars a year he had made from his law practice alone, never troubled him.

[Illustration: *The Baptist temple*]

The church was crowded from the first and the membership grew rapidly. His influence quickly spread to other than church circles. The town itself soon felt the effect of his progressive, energetic spirit. It awoke to new life. Other suburban villages were striding forward into cities and leaving this old Battlefield of the Revolution sleeping under its majestic elms. Mr. Conwell sounded the trumpet. Progress, enterprise, life followed his eloquent encouragement. Strangers were welcomed to the town. Its unusual beauty became a topic of conversation. The railroad managers heard of its attractiveness and opened its gates with better accommodations for travelers.

The governor of the state (Hon. John D. Long) visited the place on Mr. Conwell's invitation, and large business enterprises were started and strongly supported by the townspeople. From the date of Mr. Conwell's settlement as pastor, the town took on a new lease of life. He showed them what could be done and encouraged them to do it.

One of the town officers writing of that time, says: "Lexington can never forget the benefit Mr. Conwell conferred during his stay in the community."

Then all unknown to Mr. Conwell, a man came up to Lexington one Sunday in 1882, from Philadelphia, and heard him preach in the little stone church under the stately New England elms. It was Deacon Alexander Reed of the Grace Baptist Church of Philadelphia, and as a result of his visit, Mr. Conwell received a call from this church to be its pastor. It was like the call from Macedonia to "come over and help us." For the church was heavily in debt, and one of the arguments Deacon Reed used in urging Mr. Conwell to accept was that he "could save the church." He could have used no better argument. It was the call to touch Mr. Conwell's heart. A small church, and struggling against poverty; a people eager to work, but needing a leader. No message could have more surely touched that heart eager to help others, to bring brightness, joy and higher aspirations into troubled lives. It was a wrench to leave Lexington, the church and the people who had grown so dear to him. But the harvest called. There was need of reapers and he must go.

CHAPTER XVII

GOING TO PHILADELPHIA



The Early History of Grace Baptist Church. The Beginning of the Sunday Breakfast Association. Impressions of a Sunday Service.

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The church to which Mr. Conwell came and from which has grown the largest Baptist church in the country, and which was the first institutional church in America, had its beginning in a tent. In 1870 a little mission was started in a hall at Twelfth and Montgomery Avenue by members of the Young Men's Association of the Tenth Baptist Church. The committee in charge was Alexander Reed, Henry C. Singley, Fred B. Gruel and John Stoddart. A Sunday School was started and religious services held Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons. The little mission flourished, and within a year it was deemed advisable to put some one in charge who could give it his full time. The Rev. L.B. Hartman was called and the work went forward with increasing prosperity. He visited the families in the neighborhood, interested the children in the Sunday School, held two preaching services every Sunday and usually two prayer meetings during the week. In 1872, evangelistic services were held which resulted in a number of conversions. The need now became so imperative for a recognized church, that on Feb. 12, 1872, one was formally organized with forty-seven members, L.B. Hartman pastor, and John A. Stoddart, Henry O. Singley and G.G. Mayhew, deacons. The membership still increased rapidly, the little hall was crowded to discomfort, and it was decided to take a definite step toward securing a church building of their own. A lot was purchased at Berks and Mervine for \$7,500, a tent with a seating capacity of 500 erected, and Grace Baptist Church had its first home. The opening services of the tent were memorable for many things.

After addresses had been made by Drs. Malcolm, Peddie, Rowland and Wayland, an effort was made to raise the twelve hundred dollars due on the tent. A wealthy layman, Mr. William Bucknell, offered to pay the twelve hundred dollars provided the members of Grace Baptist Church should henceforth abstain from the use of tobacco. The alert chairman said, "All who are in sympathy with Brother Bucknell's proposition, please rise." The entire audience arose. Mr. Bucknell made out his check next morning for twelve hundred dollars.

In 1874, the tent was moved to a neighboring lot, where it was used as a mission. Homeless wanderers were taken in, fed and pointed the way to a different and better life. From this work grew the Sunday Breakfast Association of Philadelphia.

A contract was made for a new church building, and in 1875 Grace Church moved into the basement of the new building at Berks and Mervine Streets. But dark days came. The financial burden became excessive. Judgment bonds were entered against the building, the sheriff was compelled to perform his unpleasant duty, and the property was advertised for sale. A council of Baptist churches was called to determine what should be done.



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The sheriff was persuaded to wait. The members renewed their exertions and once more the church got on its financial feet sufficiently to meet current financial expenses. The plucky fight knit them together in strong bonds of good fellowship. It strengthened their faith, gave them courage to go forward, and taught them the joy of working in such a cause. And while they were struggling with poverty and looking disaster often in the face, up in Massachusetts, the man who was to lead this chosen people into a new land of usefulness, was himself fighting that battle as to whether he should hearken to the voice of the Spirit that was calling him to a new work. But finally he left all to follow Him, and when this church, going down under its flood of debt, sent out a cry for help, he heard it and came. To his friends in Massachusetts it seemed as if he were again throwing himself away. To leave his church in Lexington on the threshold of prosperity, for a charge little more than a mission, with only twenty-seven present to vote on calling him, seemed the height of folly. But he considered none of these things. He thought only of their need.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1882, he came. The outer walls of the small church were up, the roof on, but the upper part was unfinished, the worshippers meeting in the basement And over it hung a debt of \$15,000. But the plucky band of workers, full of the spirit that makes all things possible, had found a leader. Both had fought bitter fights, had endured hardships and privations, had often nothing but faith to lean on, and pastor and people went forward to the great work awaiting them.

Out of his love of God, his great love of humanity, his desire to uplift, to make men better and happier, out from his own varied experiences that had touched the deeps of sorrow and seen life over all the globe, came words that gripped men's hearts, came sermons that packed the church to the doors.

It was not many months before his preaching began to bear fruits. Not only was the neighborhood stirred, but people from all parts of the city thronged to hear him.

In less than a year, though the seating capacity of the church was increased to twelve hundred, crowds stood all through the service. It became necessary to admit the members by tickets at the rear, it being almost impossible for them to get through the throngs of strangers at the front. Upon request, these cards of admission were sent to those wishing them, a proceeding that led to much misunderstanding among those who did not know their purpose nor the reason for their use. But it was the only way that strangers in the city or those wishing to attend a special service could be sure of ever getting into the church.

A Methodist minister of Albany gives a description in "Scaling the Eagle's Nest," of his attendance at a service that pictures most graphically the situation:

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“I arrived at the church a full hour before the evening service. There was a big crowd at the front door. There was another crowd at the side entrance. I did not know how to get a ticket, for I did not know, till I heard it in the jam, that I must have one. Two young people, who like many got tired of waiting, gave me their tickets, and I pushed ahead. I was determined to see how the thing was done. I was dreadfully squeezed, but I got in at the back entrance and stood in the rear of the pretty church. All the camp chairs were already taken. Also all extra seats. The church was rather fancifully frescoed. But it is an architectural gem. It is half amphitheatrical in style. It is longer than it is wide, and the choir gallery and organ are over the preacher’s head. It looks underneath like an old-fashioned sounding board. But it is neat and pretty. The carpet and cushions are bright red. The windows are full of mottoes and designs. But in the evening under the brilliant lights the figures could not be made out.

“There was an unusual spirit of homeness about the place, such as I never felt in a church before. I was not alone in feeling it. The moment I stood in the audience room, an agreeable sense of rest and pleasure came over me. Everyone else appeared to feel the same. There was none of the stiff restraint most churches have. All moved about and greeted each other with an ease that was pleasant indeed. I saw some people abusing the liberty of the place by whispering, even during the sermon. They may have been strangers. They evidently belonged to the lower classes. But it was a curiosity to notice the liberty every one took at pauses in the service, and the close attention there was when the reading or speaking began.

“All the people sang. I think the great preacher has a strong liking for the old hymns. Of course I noticed his selection of Wesley’s favorite. A little boy in front of me stood upon the pew when the congregation rose. He piped out in song with all his power. It was like a spring canary. It was difficult to tell whether the strong voice of the preacher, or the chorus choir, led most in the singing. A well-dressed lady near me said ‘Good evening,’ most cheerfully, as a polite usher showed me into the pew. They say that all the members do that. It made me feel welcome. She also gave me a hymn-book. I saw others being greeted the same. How it did help me praise the Lord! At home with the people of God! That is just how I felt. I was greatly disappointed in the preacher. Agreeably so, after all. I expected to see an old man. He did not look over thirty-five. He was awkwardly tall. I had expected some eccentric and sensational affair. I do not know just what, but I had been told of many strange things. I think now it was envious misrepresentation. The whole service was as simple as simple can be. And it was surely as sincere as it was simple. The reading of the hymns was so natural and distinct



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that they had a now meaning to me. The prayer was very short, and offered in homely language. In it he paused a moment for silent prayer, and every one seemed to hold his breath in the deepest, real reverence. It was so different from my expectations. Then the collection. It was not an asking for money at all. The preacher put his notice of it the other way about He said, 'The people who wish to worship God by giving their offering into the trust of the church could place it in the baskets which would be passed to any who wanted to give.' The basket that went down to the altar by me was full of money and envelopes. Yet no one was asked to give anything. It was all voluntary, and really an offering to the Lord. I had never seen such a way of doing things in church collections. I do not know as the minister or church require it so. The church, was packed in every corner, and people stood in the aisles. The pulpit platform was crowded so that the preacher had nothing more than standing room. Some people sat on the floor, and a crowd of interested boys leaned against the pulpit platform. When the preacher arose to speak, I expected something strange. It did not seem possible that such a crowd could gather year after year to listen to mere plain preaching. For these are degenerate days. The minister began so familiarly and easily in introducing his text that he was half through his sermon before I began to realize that he was actually in his sermon. It was the plainest thing possible. I had often heard of his eloquence and poetic imagination. But there was little of either, if we think of the old ideas. There was close continuous attention. He was surely in earnest, but not a sign of oratorical display. There were exciting gestures at times, and lofty periods. But it was all so natural. At one point the whole audience burst into laughter at a comic turn in an illustration, but the preacher went on unconscious of it. It detracted nothing from the solemn theme. It was what the 'Chautauqua Herald' last year called a 'Conwellian evening.' It was unlike anything I ever saw or heard. Yet it was good to be there. The sermon was crowded with illustrations, and was evidently unstudied. They say he never takes time from his many cares to write a sermon. That one was surely spontaneous. But it inspired the audience to better lives and a higher faith. When he suddenly stopped and quickly seized a hymn-book, the audience drew a long sigh. At once people moved about again and looked at each other and smiled. The whole congregation were at one with the preacher. There was a low hum of whispering voices. But all was attention again when the hymn was read. Then the glorious song. One of the finest organists in the country, a blind gentleman by the name of Wood, was the power behind the throne. The organ did praise God. Every one was carried on in a flood of praise. It was rich. The benediction was a continuation of the sermon and a closing prayer, all in a single sentence.



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I have never heard one so unique. It fastened the evening's lesson. It was not formal. The benediction was a blessing indeed. It broke every rule of church form. It was a charming close, however. No one else but Conwell could do it. Probably no one will try. Instantly at the close of the service, all the people turned to each other and shook hands. They entered into familiar conversation. Many spoke to me and invited me to come again. There was no restraint. All was homelike and happy. It was blessed to be there."

CHAPTER XVIII

FIRST DAYS AT GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Early plans for Church Efficiency. Practical Methods for Church Work. The Growing Membership. Need of a New Building.

The preaching filled the church. Men and women felt that to miss a sermon was to miss inspiration and strength for the coming week's work, a broader outlook on life, a deeper hold on spiritual truths. But it was more than the sermons that carried the church work forward by leaps and bounds, added hundreds to its membership, made it a power for good in the neighborhood that gradually began to be felt all over the city.

The spirit of the sermons took practical form. Mr. Conwell followed no traditions or conventions in his church work. He studied the needs of the neighborhood and the hour. Then he went to work with practical, common sense to meet them. First he determined the church should be a home, a church home, but nevertheless a home in its true sense, overflowing with love, with kindness, with hospitality for the stranger within its gates. Committees were formed to make strangers welcome, to greet them cordially, find them a seat if possible, see that they had hymn books, and invite them heartily to come again. And every member felt he belonged to this committee even if not actually appointed on it, and made the stranger who might sit near him feel that he was a welcome guest. When the church became more crowded, members gave up their seats to strangers and sat on the pulpit, and it was no unusual sight in the church at Berks and Mervine streets to see the pulpit, as well as every other inch of space in the auditorium, crowded. Finally, when even this did not give room enough to accommodate all who thronged its doors, members took turns in staying away from certain services. No one who has not enjoyed the spiritual uplift, the good fellowship of a Grace Church service can appreciate what a genuine personal sacrifice that was.

After the service, Mr. Conwell stationed himself at the door and shook hands with all as they left, adding some little remark to show his personal interest in their welfare if they were members, or a cordial invitation to come again, if a stranger. The remembrance of

that hearty handclasp, that frank, friendly interest, lingered and stamped with a personal flavor upon the hearer's heart, the truths of Christianity that had been preached in such simple, clear, yet forcible fashion from the pulpit.



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Another of Mr. Conwell's methods for carrying out practical Christianity was to set every body at work. Every single member of the church was given something to do. As soon as a person was received into the membership, he was invited to join some one or other of the church organizations. He was placed on some committee. In such an atmosphere of activity there was no one who did not catch the enthusiasm and feel that being a Christian meant much more than attending church on Sundays, putting contributions in the box, and listening to the minister preach. It was a veritable hive of applied Christianity, and many a man who hitherto thought he had done his full duty by attending church regularly and contributing to its support had these ideas, so comfortable and self-satisfied, completely shattered.

The membership was composed almost entirely of working people, men and women who toiled hard for their daily bread. There were no wealthy people to help the work by contributions of thousands of dollars. The beginnings of all the undertakings were small and unpretentious. But nothing was undertaken until the need of it was felt; then the people as a whole put their shoulders to the wheel and it went with a will. And because it practically filled a need, it was a success.

The pastor was the most untiring worker of all. With ceaseless energy and unflinching tact, he was the head and heart of every undertaking. Day and night he ministered to the needs of his membership and the community. To the bedside of the sick he carried cheer that was better than medicine. In the homes where death had entered, he brought the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Where disgrace had fallen like a pall, he went with words of hope and practical advice. Parents sought him to help lead erring children back from a life of wretchedness and evil. Wherever sorrow and trouble was in the heart or home he went, his heart full of sympathy, his hands eager to help.

Much of his time, too, in those early days of his ministry was devoted to pastoral calls, not the formal ministerial call where the children tiptoe in, awed and silent, because the "minister is there." Children hailed his coming with delight, the family greeted him as an old, old friend before whom all ceremony and convention were swept away. He was genuinely interested in their family affairs. He entered into their plans and ambitions, and he never forgot any of their personal history they might tell him, so that each felt, and truly, that in his pastor he had a warm and interested friend.

His own simple, informal manner made every one feel instantly at home with him. He soon became a familiar figure upon the streets in the neighborhood of his church, for morning, noon and night he was about his work, cheery, earnest, always the light of his high calling shining from his face. The people for squares about knew that here was a man, skilled and practical in the affairs of the world, to whom they could go for advice, for help, for consolation, sure that they would have his ready sympathy and the best his big heart and generous hands could give.



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Such faithful work of the pastor, such earnest, active work of the people could not but tell. The family feeling which is the ideal of church fellowship was so strong and warm that it attracted and drew people as with magnetic power. The church became more and more crowded. In less than a year it was impossible to seat those who thronged to the Sunday services, though the auditorium then had a seating capacity of twelve hundred.

"I am glad," the pastor once remarked to a friend, "when I get up Sunday morning and can look out of the window and see it snowing, sleeting, and raining, and hear the wind shriek and howl. 'There,' I say, 'I won't have to preach this morning, looking all the while at people patiently standing through the service, wherever there is a foot of standing room.'"

[Illustration: *The Samaritan hospital of the future*]

The membership rose from two hundred to more than five hundred within two years. A question began to shape itself in the minds of pastor and people. "What shall we do?" As a partial solution of it, the proposition was made to divide into three churches. But, as in the old days of enlistment when two companies clamored for him for captain, all three sections wanted him as pastor, and so the idea was abandoned.

Still the membership grew, and the need for larger quarters faced them imperatively and not to be evaded. The house next door was purchased which gave increased space for the work of the Sunday School and the various associations. But it was a mere drop in the bucket. Every room in it was filled to overflowing with eager workers before the ink was fairly dry on the deed of transfer.

Then into this busy crowd wondering what should be done came a little child, and with one simple act cleared the mist from their eyes and pointed the way for them to go.

CHAPTER XIX

HATTIE WIATT'S LEGACY

How a Little Child Started the Building Fund for the Great Baptist Temple.

One Sunday afternoon a little child, Hattie Wiatt, six years old, came to the church building at Berks and Mervine to attend the Sunday School. She was a very little girl and it was a very large Sunday School, but big as it was there was not room to squeeze her in. Other little girls had been turned away that day, and still others, Sundays before. But it was a bitter disappointment to this small child; the little lips trembled, the big tears rolled down her cheeks and the sobs that came were from the heart. The pastor himself told the little one why she could not come in and tried to comfort her. His heart was big enough for her and her trouble if the church was not. He watched the



childish figure going so sadly up the street with a heart that was heavy that he must turn away a little child from the house of God, from the house raised in the name of One who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me."



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She did not forget her disappointment as many a child would. It had been too grievous. It hurt too deeply to think that she could not go to that Sunday School, and that other little girls who wanted to go must stay away. With quivering lip she told her mother there wasn't room for her. With a sad little heart she spent the afternoon thinking about it, and when bedtime came and she said her prayers, she prayed with a child's beautiful faith that they would find room for her so that she might go and learn more about Jesus. Perhaps she had heard some word dropped about faith and works. Perhaps the childish mind thought it out for herself. But she arose the next morning with a strong purpose in her childish soul, a purpose so big in faith, so firm in determination, it could put many a strong man's efforts to the blush. "I will save my money," she said to herself, "and build a bigger Sunday School. Then we can all go."

From her childish treasures she hunted out a little red pocketbook and in this she put her pennies, one at a time. What temptations that childish soul struggled with no one may know! How she shut her eyes and steeled her heart to playthings her friends bought, to the allurements of the candy shop window! But nothing turned her from her purpose. Penny by penny the little hoard grew. Day after day the dimpled fingers counted it and the bright eyes grew brighter as the sum mounted. That mite cast in by the widow was no purer, greater offering than these pennies so lovingly and heroically saved by this little child.

But there were only a few weeks of this planning, hoping, saving. The little Temple builder fell ill. It was a brief illness and then the grim Reaper knocked at the door of the Wiatt home and the loving, self-sacrificing spirit was born to the Father's House where there are many mansions, where there was no lack of room, for the little heart so eager to learn more of Jesus.

With her dying breath she told her mother of her treasure, told her it was for Grace Baptist Church to build.

In the little red pocketbook was just fifty-seven cents. That was her legacy. With swelling heart, the pastor reverently took it; with misty eyes and broken voice he told his people of the little one's gift.

"And when they heard how God had blessed them with so great an inheritance, there was silence in the room; the silence of tears and earnest consecration. The corner stone of the Temple was laid."

CHAPTER XX

BUILDING THE TEMPLE



How the Money was Raised. Walking Clubs. Jug Breaking. The Purchase of the Lot. Laying the Corner Stone.

Thus was their path pointed out to them and they walked steadily forward in it from that day.

Plans were made for raising money. The work went forward with a vim, for ever before each worker was the thought of that tiny girl, the precious pennies saved one by one by childish self-denial. The child's faith was equaled by theirs. It was a case of "Come unto me on the water." They were poor. Nobody could give much. But nobody hesitated.

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It was not only a question of giving, even small sums. What was given must be saved in some way. Few could give outright and not feel it. Incomes for the most part just covered living expenses, and expenses must be cut down, if incomes were to be stretched to build a church. So these practical people put their wits to work to see how money could be saved. Walking clubs were organized, not for vigorous cross country tramps in a search for pleasure and health, but with an earnest determination to save carfare for the building fund. Tired men with muscles aching from a hard day's work, women weary with a long day behind the counter or typewriter, cheerfully trudged home and saved the nickels. Women economized in dress, men who smoked gave it up. Vacations in the summer were dropped. Even the boys and girls saved their pennies as little Hattie Wiatt had done, and the money poured into the treasury in astonishing amounts, considering how small was each individual gift. All these sacrifices helped to endear the place to those who wove their hopes and prayers about it.

A fair was given in a large hall in the centre of the city which brought to the notice of many strangers the vigorous work the church was doing and netted nearly five thousand dollars toward the building fund. It was a fair that went with a vim, planned on business lines, conducted in a practical, sensible fashion.

Another effort that brought splendid results was the giving out of little earthen jugs in the early summer to be brought to the harvest home in September with their garnerings. It was a joyous evening when the jugs were brought in. A supper was given, and while the church members enjoyed themselves at the tables, the committee sat on the platform, broke the jugs, counted the money and announced the amount. The sum total brought joyous smiles to the treasurer's face.

Innumerable entertainments were held in the church and at homes of the church members. Suppers were given in Fairmount Park during the summer. Every worthy plan for raising money that clever brains could devise and willing hands accomplish was used to swell the building fund.

Thus the work went ahead, and in September, 1886, the lot on which The Temple now stands at Broad and Berks was purchased at a cost of twenty-five thousand dollars. Thus encouraged with tangible results, the work for the building fund was pushed, if possible, with even greater vigor. Ground was broken for The Temple March 27, 1889. The corner stone was laid July 13, 1890, and on the first of March, 1891, the house was occupied for worship.

The only large amount received toward the building fund was a gift of ten thousand dollars on condition that the church be not dedicated until it was free of debt. In a legal sense, calling a building by the name of the congregation worshipping in it is a dedication, and so the building, instead of being called The Grace Baptist Church, was called the Baptist Temple, a name which will probably cling to it while one stone stands upon another.



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Raising money and erecting a building did not stop the spiritual work of the church. Rather it increased it. People heard of the church through the fairs and various other efforts to raise money, came to the service, perhaps out of curiosity at first, became interested, their hearts were touched and they joined. Never did its spiritual light burn more brightly than in these days of hard work and self-denial. The membership steadily rose, and when Grace Church moved into its new temple of worship, more than twelve hundred members answered the muster roll.

CHAPTER XXI

OCCUPYING THE TEMPLE

The First Sunday. The Building Itself—Its Seating Capacity, Furnishing and Lighting. The Lower Temple and its Various Rooms and Halls. Services Heard by Telephone at the Samaritan Hospital.

That was a great day—the first Sunday in the new Temple. Six years of labor and love had gone to its building and now they possessed the land.

“During the opening exercises over nine thousand people were present at each service,” said the “Philadelphia Press” writing of the event. The throng overflowed into the Lower Temple; into the old church building. The whole neighborhood was full of the joyful members of Grace Baptist Church. The very air seemed to thrill with the spirit of thanksgiving abroad that day. All that Sabbath from sunrise until close to midnight members thronged the building with prayers of thankfulness and praise welling up from glad hearts.

Writing from London several years later, Mr. Conwell voiced in words what had been in his mind when the church was planned:

“I heard a sermon which helped me greatly. It was delivered by an old preacher, and the subject was, ‘This God is our God,’ He described the attributes of God in glory, knowledge, wisdom and love, and compared Him to the gods the heathen do worship. He then pressed upon us the message that this glorious God is the Christian’s God, and with Him we cannot want. It did me so much good, and made me long so much for more of God in all my feelings, actions, and influence. The seats were hard, and the tack of the pew hard and high, the church dusty and neglected; yet, in spite of all the discomforts, I was blessed. I was sorry for the preacher who had to preach against all those discomforts, and did not wonder at the thin congregation. Oh! it is all wrong to make it so unnecessarily hard to listen to the gospel. They ought for Jesus’ sake tear out the old benches and put in comfortable chairs. There was an air about the service of perfunctoriness and lack of object, which made the service indefinite and aimless. This is a common fault. We lack an object and do not aim at anything special in our

services. That, too, is all wrong. Each hymn, each chapter read, each anthem, each prayer, and each sermon should have a special and appropriate purpose. May the Lord help me, after my return, to profit by this day's lesson."

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No hard benches, no air of cold dreariness marks The Temple. The exterior is beautiful and graceful in design, the interior cheery and homelike in furnishing.

The building is of hewn stone, with a frontage on Broad Street of one hundred and seven feet, a depth on Berks Street of one hundred and fifty feet, a height of ninety feet. On the front is a beautiful half rose window of rich stained glass, and on the Berks Street side a number of smaller memorial windows, each depicting some beautiful Biblical scene or thought. Above the rose window on the front is a small iron balcony on which on special occasions, and at midnight on Christmas, New Year's Eve and Easter, the church orchestra and choir play sacred melodies and sing hymns, filling the midnight hour with melody and delighting thousands who gather to hear it.

The auditorium of The Temple has the largest seating capacity among Protestant church edifices in the United States. Its original seating capacity according to the architect's plans, was forty-two hundred opera chairs. But to secure greater comfort and safety only thirty-one hundred and thirty-five chairs were used.

Under the auditorium and below the level of the street is the part of the building called the Lower Temple. Here are Sunday School rooms, with a seating capacity of two thousand. The Sunday School room and lecture room of the Lower Temple is forty-eight by one hundred and six feet in dimensions. It also has many beautiful stained-glass windows. On the platform is a cabinet organ and a grand piano. In the rear of the lecture room is a dining-room, forty-five by forty-six feet, with a capacity for seating five hundred people. Folding tables and hundreds of chairs are stowed away in the store rooms when not in use in the great dining-room. Opening out of this room are the rooms of the Board of Trustees, the parlors and reading-rooms of the Young Men's Association and the Young Women's Association, and the kitchen, carving-room and cloak-room. Through the kitchen is a passageway to the engine and boiler rooms. In pantries and cupboards is an outfit of china and table cutlery sufficient to set a table for five hundred persons. The kitchen is fully equipped, with two large ranges, hot-water cylinders, sinks and drainage tanks. In the annex beyond the kitchen, a separate building contains the boilers and engine room and the electric-light plants.

The steam-heating of the building is supplied by four one hundred horse-power boilers. In the engine room are two one hundred and thirty-five horse-power engines, directly connected with dynamos having a capacity of twenty-five hundred lights, which are controlled by a switchboard in this room. The electrician is on duty every day, giving his entire time to the management of this plant. The building is also supplied with gas. Directly behind the pulpit is a small closet containing a friction wheel, by means of which, should the electric light fail for any reason, every gas jet in The Temple can be lighted from dome to basement.



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For cleaning the church, a vacuum plant has been installed, which sucks out every particle of dust and dirt. It does the work quickly and thoroughly, in fact, so thoroughly it is impossible even with the hardest beating to raise any dust on the covered chairs after they have been cleaned by this process. Such crowds throng The Temple that some quick, thorough method of cleaning it became imperative.

Back of the auditorium on the street floor are the business offices of the church, Mr. Conwell's study, the office of his secretary and of the associate pastor. All are practically and cheerfully furnished, fitted with desks, filing cabinets, telephones, speaking tubes, everything to carry forward the business of the church in a time-saving, businesslike way.

The acoustics of the great auditorium are perfect. There is no building on this continent with an equal capacity which enables the preacher to speak and the hearers to listen with such perfect comfort. The weakest voice is carried to the farthest auditor. Lecturers who have tested the acoustic properties of halls in every state in the Union speak with praise and pleasure of The Temple, which makes the delivery of an oration to three thousand people as easy, so far as vocal effort is concerned, as a parlor conversation.

Telephonic communication has recently been installed between the auditorium and the Samaritan Hospital. Patients in their beds can hear the sermons preached from The Temple pulpit and the music of the Sunday services.

Compared with other assembly rooms in this country, the auditorium of The Temple is a model. It seats thirty-one hundred and thirty-five persons. The American Academy of Music, Philadelphia, seats twenty-nine hundred; the Academy of Music, Brooklyn, twenty-four hundred and thirty-three; Academy in New York, twenty-four hundred and thirty-three; the Grand Opera House, Cincinnati, twenty-two hundred and fifty; and the Music Hall, Boston, twenty-five hundred and eighty-five.

But greater than the building is the spirit that pervades it. The moment one enters the vast auditorium with its crimson chairs, its cheery carpet, its softly tinted walls, one feels at home. Light filters in through rich windows, in memory of some member gone before, some class or organization. Back of the pulpit stands the organ, its rich pipes rising almost to the roof. Everywhere is rich, subdued coloring, not ostentatious, but cheery, homelike.

Large as is the seating capacity of The Temple, when it was opened it could not accommodate the crowds that thronged to it. Almost from the first, overflow meetings were held in the Lower Temple, that none need be turned away from the House of God. From five hundred to two thousand people crowded these Sunday evenings in addition to the large audience in the main auditorium above.



The Temple workers had come to busy days and large opportunities. But they took them humbly with a full sense of their responsibility, with prayer in their hearts that they might meet them worthily. Their leader knew the perils of success and with wise counsel guided them against its insidious dangers.



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“Ah, that is a dangerous hour in the history of men and institutions,” he said, in a sermon on the “Danger of Success,” “when they become too popular; when a good cause becomes too much admired or adored, so that the man, or the institution, or the building, or the organization, receives an idolatrous worship from the community. That is always a dangerous time. Small men always go down, wrecked by such dizzy elevation. Whenever a small man is praised, he immediately loses his balance of mind and ascribes to himself the things which others foolishly express in flattery. He esteems himself more than he is; thinking himself to be something, he is consequently nothing. How dangerous is that point when a man, or a woman, or an enterprise has become accepted and popular! Then, of all times, should the man or the society be humble. Then, of all times, should they beware. Then, of all times, the hosts of Satan are marshaled that by every possible insidious wile and open warfare they may overcome. The weakest hour in the history of great enterprises is apt to be when they seem to be, and their projectors think they are, strongest. Take heed lest ye fall in the hour of your strength. The most powerful mill stream drives the wheel most vigorously at the moment before the flood sweeps the mill to wildest destruction.”

Just as plainly and unequivocally did he hold up before them the purpose of their high calling:

“The mission of the church is to save the souls of men. That is its true mission. It is the only mission of the church. That should be its only thought. The moment any church admits a singer that does not sing to save souls; the moment a church calls a pastor who does not preach to save souls; the moment a church elects a deacon who does not work to save souls; the moment a church gives a supper or an entertainment of any kind not for the purpose of saving souls—it ceases in so much to be a church and to fulfil the magnificent mission God gave it. Every concert, every choir service, every preaching service, every Lord’s supper, every agency that is used in the church must have the great mission plainly before its eye. We are here to save the souls of dying sinners; we are here for no other purpose; and the mission of the church being so clear, that is the only test of a real church.”

The thousands of men and women Grace Church has saved and placed in paths of righteousness and happiness, show that it has nobly stood the test, that it has proved itself a church in the true sense of the word.

CHAPTER XXII

HOW THE CHURCH WORKS

The Ladies’ Aid Society. The Young Women’s Association. The Young Men’s Association. The Ushers’ Association. The Christian Endeavor Societies. The Many Other Organizations. What They Do, and How They Do It.

Now that the church was built, now that such power was in its hands, how should it work?



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“The church of Christ should be so conducted always as to save the largest number of souls, and in the saving of souls the Institutional church may be of great assistance,” said Russell Conwell in an address on “The Institutional Church.” “It is of little matter what your theories are or what mine are; God, in His providence, is moving His church onward and moving it upward at the same time, adjusting it to new situations, fitting it to new conditions and to advancing civilization, requiring us to use the new instrumentalities he has placed in our hands for the purpose of saving the greatest number of human souls.”

The conditions confronting him, the leader of this church studied. He turned his eyes backward over the years. He thought of his own boyhood when church was so distasteful. He thought of those ten busy years in Boston when he had worked among all classes of humanity, with churches on all sides, yet few reaching down into the lives of the people in any vital way. He knew of the silent, agonizing cry for help, for comfort, for light, that went up without ceasing day and night from humanity in sorrow, in suffering, in affliction, went up as it were to skies of brass, yet he knew a loving Savior stood ready to pour forth his healing love, a Divine Spirit waited only the means, to lay a healing touch on sore hearts. What was needed was a simple, practical, real way to make it understandable to men, to bring them into the right environment, to make their hearts and minds receptive, to point the way to peace, joy and eternal life. He brought to bear on this problem all the practical, trained skill of the lawyer, the keen insight and common sense, the knowledge of the world, of the traveler and writer. Every experience of his own life he probed for help and light on this great work Nothing was done haphazard. He studied the wants of men. He clearly saw the need. He calmly surveyed the field, then he went to work with practical common sense to fill it, filling his people with the enthusiasm and the faith that led him, doing with a will all there was to do, and then leaving the rest with God. Never did he think of himself, of how he might lighten his tasks, give himself a little more leisure or rest. The work needing to be done and how to do it was his study day and night.

[Illustration: This Picture Shows the Four Speaking Tubes Which Connect by Telephone with the Samaritan Hospital]

A reporter of the “Philadelphia Press” once asked Dr. George A. Peltz, the associate pastor of Grace Church, “if you were called upon to express in three words the secret of the mysterious power that has raised Grace Church from almost nothing to a membership of more than three thousand, that has built this Temple, founded a college, opened a hospital, and set every man, woman and child in the congregation to working, what would be your answer?”

“Sanctified common sense,” was the Doctor’s unhesitating reply.

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Rev. F.B. Meyer, in speaking on “Twentieth Century Evangelism,” at Bradford, England, in 1902, made a plea for “the institutional church, the wide outlook, more elastic methods, greater eagerness to reach and win outsiders, more varied service on the part of Christian people, that the minister of any place of worship should become the recognized friend of the entire district in which his chapel is placed.”

The “elastic method” is characteristic of the work of The Temple. When Dr. Conwell first came to Grace Church, he organized four societies—the Ladies’ Aid Society, the Business Men’s Union, the Young Women’s Association, the Young Men’s Association. Into one or another of these, every member of the church fitted, and as the new members came into the fellowship, they found work for their hands in one or the other.

The Ladies’ Aid Society is the pastor’s right hand. It stands ready to undertake any project, social, religious, financial, to give receptions in honor of noted visitors, to hold a series of special meetings, to plan suppers, festivals, and other affairs—whenever it is necessary to raise money. Its creed, if one might so call it, is:

“Use every opportunity to bring in new members.

“Remember the name of every new church member.

“Visit useless members and encourage them for their own sake to become useful.

“Visit persons when desired by the Pastors.

“Speak cheerfully to each person present on every opportunity.

“Regard every patron of your suppers or entertainments, and every visitor to your religious meetings, as a guest calling on you in your own house.

“Accept contributions and subscriptions for the various Christian enterprises.

“Bring in every suggestion you hear which is valuable, new or effective in Christian work elsewhere.

“Never allow a meeting to pass without your doing *some one practical* thing for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom.

“Make yourself and the Society of some certain use to some person, or some cause, each week.”



The Society helps in the church prayer meetings, in refurnishing and improving the church property, in celebrating anniversaries, in missionary enterprises, securing the insertion of tablets in the Temple walls, in clothing the poor, in supporting the local missions connected with the church, in calling socially on church members or members of the congregation, in evangelistic meetings, in household prayer meetings, in supporting reading rooms, in comforting those in special affliction, in visiting the sick, in aiding the needy, in paying the church debt, in maintaining Mother's meetings, in looking after the domestic wants of the Temple, in sewing for the Hospitals, the Missions, the Baptist Home, the Orphanage, church fairs, Missionary workers, the poor, in managing church suppers and receptions connected with Ordinations, Conventions, and other religious gatherings.

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It is one of the most important organizations of the church and has its own rooms handsomely furnished and well supplied with reading matter.

The Business Men's Union drew into a close band the business men of the church and used their knowledge of business affairs to plan and carry out various projects for raising money for the building fund. They also took a deep personal interest in each other's welfare as is shown by the following incident, taken from the "Philadelphia Press":

"At one time a member became involved in financial difficulties in a very peculiar way. Previous to connecting himself with the church, he had been engaged in a business which he felt he could not conscientiously continue after his conversion. He sold his interest and entered upon mercantile pursuits with which he was unfamiliar. As a result, he became involved and his establishment was in danger of falling into the sheriff's hands.

"His situation became known to some members of the Business Men's Union, and a committee was appointed to look into his affairs. His books were found to be straight and his stock valuable. The members immediately subscribed the thousands of dollars necessary to relieve him of all embarrassment, and the man was saved."

After the building was completed and the imperative need for such an organization was past, the members joined other organizations needing their help, and it disbanded. It is typical of the elastic methods of Grace Church that no society outlives its usefulness. When the need is past for it as a body, the members look elsewhere for work, and wherever each is needed, there he goes heart and soul to further some other endeavor.

The Young Women's Association is composed of young women of the church. It bubbles over with youthful enthusiasm and energy and is one of the strongest agencies for carrying forward the church work. Its creed is:

"Secure new members.

"Attend the meetings, propose new work, urge on neglected duties.

"Help the prayer meetings.

"Volunteer for social meetings.

"Aid in the entertainments.

"Originate plans for Christian benevolent work.

"Welcome young women to the Church.



“Visit the sick members of the Church.

“Seek after and encourage inquirers.

“Hold household devotional meetings.

“Sustain missionary work for young women.

“Make the Church home cheerful and happy.

“Arrange social home gatherings for various church or charitable enterprises.

“Solicit books or periodicals for the reading room or circulating library.

“Secure employment for the needy.

“Treat all visitors to the rooms as special personal guests in your home.

“Undertake large things for the Church and Christ in many ways, as may be suggested by any new conditions and deeds.

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“Instruct in domestic arts, dressmaking, millinery, cooking, decoration, and, through the Samaritan Hospital, in the art of nursing.

“Furnish steadily instructive entertainments for the young.

“Develop the various singing services.

“Specially care for and assist young sisters.

“Coooperate in sewing enterprises of all sorts.

“Aid the Pastors by systematic visitation.

“Push many branches of City Missions, especially with reference to developing young women as workers.

“Maintain suitable young women as missionaries at home or in foreign fields.

“Carry sunshine to darkened hearts and homes.

“Be noble, influential Christian women.”

It has a room of its own in the Lower Temple, with circulating library, piano and all the cheerful furnishings of a parlor in the home. To this bright room comes many a girl from her dreary boarding house to spend the evening in reading and social chat. It has been the cheery starting point in many a girl's life to a career of happy usefulness.

The Young Men's Association follows similar lines and is an equally important factor in the church work. It plans to:

“Help increase the membership and efficiency of the Young Men's Bible Class and other similar organizations.

“Persistently follow the meetings of these associations and keep them in the hands of able, consecrated managers and officers, who will lead in the best enterprises of the church.

“Make the reading-room attractive and helpful.

“Help sustain the great Sunday morning prayer meeting.

“Invite passers-by to enter the church, and welcome strangers who do enter.



“Advise seekers after God.

“Bring back the wandering.

“Organize relief committees to save the lost young men of the city.

“Look after traveling business men at hotels, and bring them to The Temple.

“Promote temperance, purity, fraternity and spiritual life.

“Initiate the most important undertakings of the church.

“Surround themselves with strong young men, and inaugurate vigorous, fresh plans and methods for bringing the gospel to the young men of to-day in store, shop, office, school, college, on the streets, and elsewhere.” Visit sick members, help into lucrative employment, organize religious meetings, make the church life of the young bright, inspiring and noble, plan for sociables, entertainments for closer acquaintance and for raising money for Christian work and to use their pens for Christ among young men whom they know, and also with strangers.”

It has a delightful room in the Lower Temple, carpeted, supplied with books, good light, a piano, comfortable chairs. It is a real home for young men alone in the city or without family or home ties.



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During the building of The Temple many associations were formed which, when the need was over, merged into others. As Burdette says:

“Often a working guild of some sort is brought into existence for a specific but transient purpose; the object accomplished, the work completed, the society disbands, or merges into some other organization, or reorganizes under a new name for some new work. The work of Grace Church is like the operations of a great army; recruits are coming to the front constantly; regiments being assigned to this corps, and suddenly withdrawn to reinforce that one; two or three commands consolidated for a sudden emergency; one regiment deployed along a great line of small posts; infantry detailed into the batteries, cavalry dismounted for light infantry service, yet all the time in all this apparent confusion and restless change which bewilders the civilian, everything is clear and plain and perfectly regular and methodical to the commanding general and his subordinates.”

Another association of this kind was the “Committee of One Hundred,” organized in 1891. The suggestion for its organization came from the Young Women’s Association. A number of them went to the Trustees and proposed that the Board should appoint a committee of fifty from among the congregation to devise ways and means to raise money for paying off the floating indebtedness of the church. The suggestion was adopted. The Committee of Fifty was appointed, each organization of the church being represented in it by one or more members. It met for organization in 1892. The Young Women’s Association, pledged itself to raise \$1,000 during the year. Other societies pledged certain sums. Individuals went to work to swell the amount, and in one year, the Committee reported that the floating debt of the church, which at the time of the Committee’s organization was \$25,000, was paid. Encouraged by this success the Committee enlarged itself to one hundred and vigorously attacked the work of paying off the mortgage of \$15,200 on the ground on which the college was to be built.

Among the minor associations of the church that promoted good fellowship and did a definite good work in their time were the “Tourists’ Club,” a social development of the Young Women’s Association. The members took an ideal European trip while sitting in the pleasant reading room in the Lower Temple. A route of travel was laid out a month in advance. Each member present took some part; to one was assigned the principal buildings; to another, some famous painting; to others, parks, hotels, places of amusement, ruins, *etc.*, until at the close of the evening they almost could hear the tongue of the strange land through which in fancy they had journeyed. Maps and pictures helped to materialize the journey.

The “Girls” Auxiliary was formed to meet the needs of the younger members of the church. Any girl under sixteen could become a member by the payment of monthly dues of five cents. There were classes in embroidery, elocution, sewing, *etc.*



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The “Youth’s Culture League” was organized for the work among youth of the slums; an effort to supplement public school education, making it a stepping-stone to higher culture and better living.

Sports of various kinds of course received attention. The Temple Guard, the Temple Cyclers, the Baseball League gave opportunity for all to enjoy some form of healthy outdoor sport. But since the college and its gymnasium have become so prominent, those who now join such organizations usually do it through college instead of church doors.

The following incident from the “Philadelphia Evening Bulletin” is typical of the help these organizations often gave the church in its religious work:

[Illustration: *The observatory*

Built on the Site of the Old Hemlock Tree]

[Illustration: *The present Conwell homestead in Massachusetts*]

“Eight and a half years ago the Rev. Russell H. Conwell surprised a great many people by organizing a military company among his little boys. The old wiseacres shook their heads, and the elders of the old school wondered at this new departure in church work. Then again he fairly shocked them by making the organization non-sectarian, and securing one of the best tacticians in the city to instruct the boys in military science.... From the first the company has clearly demonstrated that it is the best-drilled military organization in the city, and the number of prizes fairly won demonstrates this. However, the company does not wish to be understood as being merely in existence for prize honors, although it cannot be overlooked that twenty victories over as many companies afford them the best record in Pennsylvania.

“In 1896, the Samaritan Rescue Mission was established by the Grace Baptist Church, and proving a great financial burden, Dr. Conwell offered to give a lecture on Henry Ward Beecher. The Guard took the matter up, brought Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher, despite her threescore years and ten, to Philadelphia for the first time in her life, and so great was the desire of the church-loving public of this city to attend that the mission did not perish.”

When the stress of building and paying the church debt was passed, many of these societies went heart and soul into the Christian Endeavor work. Indeed, for awhile it seemed as if the Christian Endeavor would absorb all the church associations. There are at present fifteen Christian Endeavor Societies in the church. In addition to the Christian Endeavor pledge, the following special ways in which they can forward the church work is ever held before each member:



“For the sake of your character and future success, as well as for the supreme cause, keep your pledge unflinchingly.

“Endeavor persistently, but courteously, to seek after those who ask for our prayers and advice at any meeting.

“Never discontinue your endeavors to get new members for the societies. Follow it continually in the name of the Lord.



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“Endeavor each day to think, speak, act and pray like the Savior.

“Endeavor and present plans for effective work. Build up a standard of noble living in the Church.

“Send comforting messages to members of the Church in sorrow, send flowers to the sick, or for the funeral, look after the orphans, visit the widows and the fatherless, write letters of advice, invitation, condolence, establish missions for new churches in growing parts of the city, and hold by kindness at least one thousand personal friends at The Baptist Temple.

“Select one leading duty, and follow it without waiting to be asked.

“Make yourself a master of some special line of Christian effort.

“Save some one!”

Five of these societies some years ago started a mission at Logan, a suburb of Philadelphia, and so successful was their work that the mission soon grew into a flourishing church.

The Ushers' Association is one of the strongest and most helpful organizations in furthering the church work. The ushers number twenty-four, and are banded together in a businesslike association for mutual pleasure and good fellowship, and also to better conduct their work and the church interests they have in hand. They are under the leadership of a chief usher who is president of the Association. The spirit of hospitality that pervades The Temple finds its happiest expression in the courteous welcome and ready attention accorded visitors by the ushers.

All members of the church who are willing to give up their seats to strangers on special occasions send their names to the chief usher. And it is no unusual thing to see a member cheerfully relinquish his seat after a whispered consultation with an usher in favor of some stranger who is standing.

In addition to their work in seating the crowd that throng to The Temple either for Sunday services or the many entertainments that fill the church during the week, the Ushers' Association itself during the winter gives a series of fine entertainments. Its object is to offer amusement of the very highest class, so that people will come to the church rather than go elsewhere in their leisure hours and thus be surrounded by influences of the best character and by an atmosphere that is elevating and refining. They have also undertaken to pay off the balance of the church debt.

Missionary interests at Grace Church are well looked after. The church has educated and supported a number of missionaries in home and foreign fields, as well as contributed money and clothing to the cause. The Missionary Circle combines in one



organization all those interested in missionary work. One afternoon a month the members meet in the Lower Temple to sew, have supper together, and afterward hold religious services. The members are advised in the church hand-book to—

“Suggest plans for raising money; arrange for a series of addresses; organize children’s societies; distribute missionary literature; maintain a circulating library of missionary books; correspond with missionaries; solicit and work for the ‘missionary barrels’; send out ‘comfort bags’; advocate missions in the prayer meetings and socials; encourage those members who are preparing for or are going into foreign fields, and maintain special missionary prayer meetings.”



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Members of the church have started several missions, some of which have already grown into flourishing churches. The Logan Baptist Church and the Tioga Baptist Church, are both daughters of The Temple.

The Samaritan Aid Society sews and secures contributions of clothing and such supplies for the Samaritan Hospital. Other charities, however, needing such help, find it ever willing to lend its aid. It is ready for any emergency that may arise. A hurry call was sent once for sheets, pillow cases and garments for the sick at Samaritan Hospital. The President of the Society quickly summoned the members. Merchants were visited and contributions of muslin and thread secured. Sewing machines were sent to the Lower Temple. An all-day sewing bee was held, those who could, came all day, others dropped in as time permitted, and by sunset more than three hundred pieces of work were finished.

Two other organizations very helpful to the members of the church are the Men's Beneficial Association and the Women's Beneficial Association. They are purely for the benefit of church members during sickness or bereavement, and are managed as all such associations are, paying \$5.00 a week during sickness and \$100 at death.

The books are closed at the end of each year and the fund started afresh.

The Temple Building and Loan Association was organized by the membership of the Business Men's Association, and is officered by prominent members of the church. But it is not in any way a church organization and is not under the management of the church. It is very successful and its stockholders are composed largely of church members.

To keep members and friends in touch with the many lines of activity in which the church works, a magazine, "The Temple Review," is published. It is a private business enterprise, but it chronicles church work and publishes each week Dr. Conwell's sermons. Many living at a distance who cannot come often to The Temple find it most enjoyable and helpful to thus obtain their pastor's sermons, and to look through the printed page into the busy life of the church itself. It helps members in some one branch of the church work to keep in touch with what others are doing. The work of the college and hospital from week to week is also chronicled, so that it is a very good mirror of the many activities of the Grace Church membership.

Thus in good fellowship the church works unitedly to further Christ's kingdom. New organizations are formed as some enthusiastic member discerns a new need or a new field. It is a veritable hive of industry whose doors are never closed day or night.



CHAPTER XXIII

FAIRS AND ENTERTAINMENTS

The Temple Fairs. How They are Planned. Their Religious Aim. Appointment of Committees. How the Committees Work. The Church Entertainments. Their Character.

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Not only does the church work in a hundred ways through its regular organizations to advance the spiritual life of its members and the community, but once every year, organization fences are taken down and as a whole and united body, it marches forward to a great fair. The Temple fairs are famous. They form an important feature of church life, and an important date in the church calendar.

“The true object of a church fair should be to strengthen the church, to propagate the Gospel, and to bring the world nearer to its God.” That is Dr. Conwell’s idea of the purpose of a church fair and the basic principle on which The Temple fairs are built. They always open on Thanksgiving Day, the anniversary of Dr. Conwell’s coming to the church and continue for ten days or two weeks thereafter. These fairs are most carefully planned. The membership, of course, know that a fair is to be held; but before any definite information of the special fair coming, is given them, a strong foundation of systematic, careful preparation is laid. In the early summer, before Dr. Conwell leaves for his two months’ rest at his old home in the Berkshires, he and the deaconess of the church go over the ground, decide on the executive committee and call it together. Officers are elected, Dr. Conwell always being appointed president and the deaconess, as a rule, secretary. The whole church membership is then carefully studied, and every member put at work upon some committee, a chairman for the committee being appointed at the same time. A notice of their appointment, the list of their fellow workers, and a letter from the pastor relative to the fair are then sent to each. Usually these lists are prepared and forwarded from Dr. Conwell’s summer home. The chief purpose of the fair, that of saving souls, is ever kept in view. The pastor in his letter to each member always lays special stress on it. Quoting from one such letter, he says:

“The religious purpose is to consolidate our church by a more extensive and intimate acquaintance with each other, and to enlarge the circle of social influence over those who have not accepted Christ.

“This enterprise being undertaken for the service of Christ, each church member is urged to enter it with earnest prayer, and to use every opportunity to direct the attention of workers and visitors to spiritual things.

“Each committee should have its prayer circle or a special season set apart for devotional services. This carnival being undertaken for the spiritual good of the church, intimate friends and those who have hitherto worked together are especially requested to separate on this occasion and work with new members, forming a new circle of acquaintances.

“Do not seek for a different place unless it is clear that you can do much more in another position, for they honor God most who take up His work right where they are and do faithfully the duty nearest to them.

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“Your pastor prays earnestly that this season of work, offering, and pleasure may be used by the Lord to help humanity and add to the glory of His Kingdom on earth.”

This is the tenor of the letters sent each year. This is the purpose held ever before the workers.

Each committee is urged to meet as soon as possible, and, as a rule, the chairman calls a meeting within a week after the receipt of the list. Each committee upon meeting elects a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, which, together with the original executive committee, form the executive committee of the fair.

During the summer and fall, until the opening of the fair, these various committees work to secure contributions or whatever may be needed for the special work they have been appointed to do. If they need costumes, or expensive decorations for the booths, they give entertainments to raise the money. All this depends upon the character of the fair in general. Sometimes it is a fair in the accepted sense of the word, devoted to the selling of such goods as interested friends and well-wishers have contributed. At other times it takes on special significance. At one fair each committee represented a country, the members dressed in the costume of its people, the booth so far as possible was typical of a home, or some special building. Such products of the country as could be obtained were among the articles sold or exhibited.

Every committee meeting is opened with prayer, and each night during the fair a prayer meeting is held. In addition, a committee is appointed to look after the throng of strangers visiting the fair, and whenever possible, to get them to register in a book kept especially for that purpose at the entrance. To all those who sign the register, a New Year's greeting is sent as a little token of recognition and appreciation of their help.

Much of the great tide of membership that flows into the church comes through the doors of these church fairs. The fairs are really revival seasons. They are practical illustrations of how a working church prays, and a praying church works. Christianity has on its working clothes. But it is Christianity none the less, outspoken in its faith, fearless in its testimony, full of the love that desires to help every man and woman to a higher, happier life.

The church entertainments form another important feature of church life. Indeed, from the first of September until summer is well started, few weekday nights pass but that some religious service or some entertainment is taking place in The Temple. In the height of the season, it is no uncommon thing for two or three to be given in various halls of The Temple on one evening. An out-of-town man attending a lecture at the Lower Temple, and seeing the throngs of people pouring in at various entrances, asked the custodian of the door if there were a rear entrance to the auditorium.



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“Here’s where you go in for the lecture,” was the reply. “There are two other entertainments on hand this evening in the halls of the Lower Temple. That’s where those people are going.”

In regard to church fairs and entertainments, Dr. Conwell said in a sermon in 1893:

“The Lord pity any church that has not enough of the spirit of Christ in it to stand a church fair, wherein devout offerings are brought to the tithing-house in the spirit of true devotion; the Lord pity any church that has not enough of the spirit of Jesus in it to endure or enjoy a pure entertainment. Indeed, they are subjects for prayer if they cannot, without quarrels, without fightings, without defeat to the cause of Christ, engage in the pure and innocent things God offers to His children.”

And in an address on “The Institutional Church,” he says:

“The Institutional church of the future will have the best regular lecture courses of the highest order. There will be about them sufficient entertainment to hold the audience, while at the same time they give positive instruction and spiritual elevation. Every church of Christ is so sacred that it ought to have within its walls anything that helps to save souls. If an entertainment is put into a church for any secular purpose—simply to make money—that church will be divided; it will be meshed in quarrels, and souls will not be saved there. There must be a higher end; as between the church and the world we must use everything that will save and reject everything that will injure. This requires careful and close attention. You must keep in mind the question, ‘Will Jesus come here and save souls?’ Carefully eliminate all that will show irreverence for holy things or disrespect for the church. Carefully introduce wherever you can the direct teachings of the Gospel, and then your entertainments will be the power of God unto salvation. The entertainments of the church need to be carefully guarded, and, if they are, then will the church of the future control the entertainments of the world. The theatre that has its displays of low and vulgar amusement will not pay, because the churches will hold the best classes, and for a divine and humane purpose will conduct the best entertainments. There will be a double inducement that will draw all classes. The Institutional church of the future will be free to use any reasonable means to influence men for good.”

The Temple, as can be seen, believes in good, pure, elevating amusements. But every entertainment to be given is carefully considered. In such a vast body of workers, many of them young and inexperienced, this is necessary. By a vote of the church, every programme to be used in any entertainment in The Temple must first be submitted to the Board of Deacons. What they disapprove cannot be presented to the congregation of Grace Church under any circumstance.

The concerts and oratorios of the chorus are of the very highest order and attract music lovers from all parts of the city and nearby towns. The other entertainments in the

course of a year cover such a variety of subjects that every one is sure to find something to his liking. Among the lectures given in one year were:



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“Changes and Chances,” by Dr. George C. Lorimer.

“The Greek Church,” by Charles Emory Smith.

“Ancient Greece,” by Professor Leotsakos, of the University of Athens.

An illustrated lecture on the Yellowstone Park, by Professor George L. Maris.

“Work or How to Get a Living,” by Hon. Roswell G. Horr.

“Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,” by Rev. Robert Nourse, D.D.

“Backbone,” by Rev. Thomas Dixon.

The other entertainments that season included selections from “David Copperfield,” by Leland T. Powers; readings by Fred Emerson Brooks, concerts by the Germania Orchestra, the Mendelssohn Quintette Club of Boston and the Ringgold Band of Reading, Pennsylvania; a “Greek Festival,” tableaux, by students of Temple College; “Tableaux of East Indian Life,” conducted by a returned missionary, Mrs. David Downie; “Art Entertainment,” by the Young Women’s Association; concert by the New York Philharmonic Club; and many entertainments by societies of the younger people, music, recitations, readings, debates, suppers, excursions, public debates, class socials. The year seems to have been full of entertainments, teas, anniversaries, athletic meetings, “cycle runs,” gymnasium exhibitions, “welcomes,” “farewells,” jubilees, “feasts.” But every year is the same.

A single society of the church gave during one winter a series of entertainments which included four lectures by men prominent in special fields of work, four concerts by companies of national reputation, and an intensely interesting evening with moving pictures.

“We are often criticised as a church,” said Mr. Conwell, in an address, “by persons who do not understand the purposes or spirit of our work. They say, ‘You have a great many entertainments and socials, and the church is in danger of going over to the world.’ Ah, yes; the old hermits went away and hid themselves in the rocks and caves and lived on the scantiest food, and ‘kept away from the world,’ They were separate from the world. They were in no danger of ‘going over to the world.’ They had hidden themselves far away from man. And so it is in some churches where in coldness and forgetfulness of Christ’s purpose, of Christ’s sacrifice, and the purpose for which the church was instituted, they withdraw themselves so far from the world that they cannot save a drowning man when he is in sight—they cannot reach down to him, the distance is too great—the life line is too short. Where are the unchurched masses of Philadelphia today? Why are they not in the churches at this hour? Because the church is so far away. The difference that is found between the church which saves and that which



does not is found in the fact that the latter holds to the Pharisaical profession that the church must keep itself aloof from the people—yes, from the drowning thousands who are going down to everlasting ruin—to be forever lost. The danger is not now so much in going over to the world as in going away from it—away from the world which Jesus died to save—the world which the church should lead to Him.”



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In all these entertainments, the true mission of the church is never forgotten—that mission which its pastor so earnestly and often says is “not to entertain people. The church’s only thought should be to turn the hearts of men to God.”

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BUSINESS SIDE

How the Finances are Managed. The Work of the Deacons. The Duties of the Trustees.

“The plain facts of life must be recognized,” says Dr. Conwell. The business affairs of Grace Baptist Church are plain facts and big ones. There is no evading them. The membership is more than three thousand. A constant stream of money from the rental of seats, from voluntary offerings, from entertainments, is pouring in, and as quickly going out for expenses and charitable purposes. It must all be looked after. A record of the membership must be kept, changes of address made—and this is no light matter—the members themselves kept in touch with. It all means work of a practical business nature and to get the best results at least expenditure of time and money, it must all be done in skilled, experienced fashion. Dr. Conwell, in speaking of the careful way in which the business affairs of the church are conducted, says:

“What has contributed most as the means used of God to bring Grace Church up to its efficiency? I answer it was the inspired, sanctified, common sense of enterprising, careful business men. The disciplined judgment, the knowledge of men, the forethought and skill of these workers who were educated at the school of practical business life, helped most. The Trustees and working committees in all our undertakings, whether for Church, Hospital, College, or Missions, have been, providentially, men of thorough business training, who used their experience and skill for the church with even greater care and perseverance than they would have done in their own affairs.

“When they wanted lumber, they knew where to purchase it, and how to obtain discounts. When they needed money, they knew where the money was, and what securities were good in the market. They saved by discounting their own bills, and kindly insisted that contractors and laborers should earn fairly the money they received. They foresaw the financial needs and always insisted on securing the money in full time to meet demands.

“Some men make religion so dreamy, so unreal, so unnatural, that the more they believe in it the less practical they become. They expect ravens to feed them, the cruse of oil to be inexhaustible, and the fish to come to the right side of the ship at breakfast time. They trust in God and loaf about. They would conduct mundane affairs as though men were angels and church business a series of miracles. But the successful church



worker is one who recognizes the plain facts of life, and their relation to heavenly things; who is neither profane nor crazy, who feels that his experience and judgment are gifts of God to be used, but who also fully realizes that, after all, unless God lives in the house, they labor in vain who build it.

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“None of our successful managers have been flowery orators, nor have they been in the habit of wearying man and the Lord with long prayers. If they speak, they are earnest and conservative. They are men whom the banks would trust, whose recommendations are valuable, who know a counterfeit dollar or a worthless endorsement They read men at a glance, being trained in actual experience with all classes. They have been the pillars of the church. While some have been praying with religious phraseology that the stray calf might be sent home, these men have gone after him and brought him back. They have faithfully done their part, and God has answered their earnest prayers for the rest.”

Dr. Peltz, for many years associate pastor of The Temple, in speaking of the business management of the affairs of the church, says:

“Many persons imagine that the financial organization of Grace Baptist Church must be something out of the usual way, because the results have been so unusual. There is nothing peculiar in the general plan of financial procedure, but great pains are taken to work the plan for all it is worth. Special pains have been taken to secure consecrated and competent men for the Board of Trustees. And the Trustees do this one thing, a rule of the church permitting a man to hold but one elective office. Competent financiers, consecrated to this work, and doing it as carefully as they would do their own business, is the statement that tells the whole story.”

All these business matters are in the hands of the deacons and Trustees, the deacons, if any distinction in the work can be made, looking after the membership, the Board of Trustees attending to the financial matters.

[Illustration: *Photo by Gutekunst professor David D wood*]

After a person has signified his intention to join the church, he meets the deacons, who explain to him the system by which members contribute to the support of the church. If he desires to contribute by taking a sitting, he is assigned a seat according to the amount he wishes to pay, or he can pay the regular church dues, \$1.20 a year for those under eighteen years of age, \$3.00 for those over that age. Those who take sittings find in their seats, on the first of every month, a small envelope made out in bill form on the face, stating the month and the amount due. Into this they can place their money, seal it, and put it into the basket when the offering is taken. The following Sunday a receipt is placed in their seat, a duplicate being kept in the office. Envelopes are sent those who do not have sittings, and in these they can send in their dues any time within the year.

In addition to the little envelope for the seat rent, every Sunday envelopes are placed in each seat for the regular Sunday offering. These envelopes read:

Special offering

The Baptist temple



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Amount

Name

Address

This offering is made in thankful recognition of the Mercy and Goodness of God during the past week, and with the hope that my gift and my prayer may be acceptable to God.

In addition to the amount raised from sittings and dues, it is necessary for the payment of the debt on the Temple to have givers for 5 years as follows:

100 persons who will contribute 50 cents per week. 300 persons 25 cents per week. 1000 persons 10 cents per week. 1300 persons 5 cents per week.

Visitors and members

Can enclose special Messages for the Pastor with their offerings.

This Gift will be Recorded on the books of the Church.

All this money pours into the business office of the church, where it is taken in charge by the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees and duly recorded by the Financial Secretary.

The business office is a very businesslike place, with files, typewriter, letter-copying press, big ledgers and all the modern appliances of an up-to-date business office.

The card system is used for keeping the record of member's contribution, being printed in a form that will last for eight years.

All payments are entered on these, and at any time at a moment's notice, a member can tell just what he has paid or what he owes on the year's account.

But in addition, the Sunday offerings of all those who place their contributions in envelopes at the morning and evening service and sign their names, are entered on cards, and when it is remembered that the basket collections alone for the year 1904 amounted to \$6,995.00, it can be seen that this is no light task. But The Temple appreciates what is given it, and likes to keep a record. Any person giving to The



Temple and signing his name to his gift, can find at any time how much he has contributed during the year.

All this income is deposited to the order of the church treasurer, who is then at liberty to draw against it as directed by the Board of Trustees and properly certified by their chairman and secretary. The business office is kept open during the entire week with the exception of two afternoons, and two evenings.

The pew committee, which is composed of three members of the Board of Trustees, attends to the rental of the many sittings in The Temple. A large number of the regular attendants at the services of The Temple are not members of the church. They enjoy the services and so rent sittings that they may be sure of a seat. The third committee drawn from the Board of Trustees is the House Committee, composed of three members. It has charge of The Temple building; sees to its being kept in order; arranges for all regular and special meetings; sees that the building is properly heated and lighted; decides on



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all questions as to the use of the house for any purpose, for the use of a part of it for special purposes; manages the great crowds that so often throng the building; has charge of the doors when entertainments are going on; in short, makes the most and the best of the great building under its care. Six persons are constantly employed in taking care of The Temple, and often there is necessity for securing extra help for the caretakers of this church whose doors are never shut.

The Deacons, as always, look after the welfare of the membership. On Communion Sundays, cards are passed the members that they may sign their names. These cards the Deacons take charge of and record the members present and those absent. If a member is away three successive communion Sundays the Deacons call on him, if he lives in the city, to find the cause of his absence. If he resides in some neighboring town, they send a kindly letter to know if it is not possible for him to attend some of the Communion services. In person or by letter, they keep a loving watch over the vast membership, so that every member feels that even though he may not attend often, he is not forgotten.

Thus the business of Grace Baptist Church is managed prayerfully but practically. If some part of the machinery seems cumbersome, shrewd and experienced minds take the matter in hand and see whereby it can be improved. What may seem a good method to-day, a year from now may be deemed a waste of time and energy and cast aside for the new and improved system that has taken its place in the world of everyday work. In its business methods the church keeps up to the times, as well as in its spiritual work. It knows it cannot grow if it is not alive.

CHAPTER XXV

THE CHORUS OF THE TEMPLE

Its Leader, Professor David Wood. How he Came to the Church. A sketch of His life. The Business Management of the Chorus. The Fine System. The Sheet Music and Its Care. Oratorios and Concerts. Finances of the Chorus. Contributions it has Made to Church Work.

With a pastor who had loved music from childhood, who taught it in his early manhood, who was himself proficient on several instruments, music naturally assumed an important place in Temple life and work. From the moment of his entering upon the pastorate of Grace Baptist Church, Mr. Conwell made the music an enjoyable feature of the services.



In this early work of organizing and developing a church choir, he found an able and loyal leader in Professor David D. Wood, who threw himself heart and soul into helping the church to grow musically. He has been to the musical life of the church what Mr. Conwell has been to its spiritual growth, and next to their pastor himself, it is doubtful if any man is so endeared to the Grace Church membership as is Professor Wood, their blind organist.



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He came to them in May, 1885, the regular organist being sick. His connection with the church came about in the most simple manner and yet it has been invaluable to the work of The Temple. His son was an attendant at the church, and when the regular organist fell ill, asked his father if he would not take his place. Ever ready to do a kindness. Professor Wood consented. The organist never sufficiently recovered to come back to his post, being compelled to go West finally for his health. Mr. Conwell asked Professor Wood to take the position, and from that day to the present he has filled it to the satisfaction and gratification of the Grace Church.

He was born in Pittsburgh, March 2, 1838. His parents were poor, his father being a carpenter and he himself built the little log cabin in which the family lived. When David was a baby only a few months old, he lost the sight of one eye by inflammation resulting from a severe cold. When about three years old, he noiselessly followed his sister into the cellar one day, intending in a spirit of mischief to blow out the candle she was carrying. Just as he leaned over to do it, she, unconscious that he was there, raised up, thrusting the candle in her hand right into his eye. The little boy's cry of pain was the first warning of his presence. The eye was injured, but probably he would not entirely have lost its sight had he not been attacked shortly after this with scarlet fever. When he recovered from this illness he was entirely blind. But the affliction did not change his sweet, loving disposition. He entered as best he could into the games and sports of childhood and grew rugged and strong. One day, while playing in the road, he was nearly run over by a carriage driven by a lady. Learning the little fellow was blind, she became interested in him and told his father of the school for the blind in Philadelphia. His parents decided to send him to it, and at five years of age he was sent over the mountains, making the journey in five days by canal.

He was a bright, diligent pupil and a great reader, showing even at an early age his passion for music. When eight years old, he learned the flute. Soon he could play the violin and piano, and in his twelfth year he began playing the organ. All these instruments he took up and mastered himself without special instruction. In mathematics, James G. Blaine was his instructor for two years.

After leaving school his struggles to succeed as an organist were hard and bitter. Despite his unusual ability, it was difficult to secure a position. He met with far more refusals than encouragement. But he was persistent and cheerful. Finally success came. Two days before Easter the organist of an Episcopal church was suddenly incapacitated and no one could be found to play the music. Professor Wood offered himself. The rector's wife read the music to him. He learned it in an hour, and rehearsal and the services passed off without a break. He was immediately engaged, his salary being one hundred dollars a year, his next position paid him fifty dollars a year. In 1864, he went to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, as choirmaster and organist, which position he still holds, playing at The Temple in the evenings only.



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He is to-day one of the most widely known organists of the country, being acknowledged everywhere a master of the instrument. He is a member of the faculty of the Philadelphia Musical Academy, principal of the music department in the Pennsylvania School for the Blind. It is said he has trained more good organists than any other teacher in Philadelphia.

His cheery, kindly personality wins loyalty and devotion at once. His Christianity is the simple, loving, practical kind that fairly shines from his presence and attracts people to him immediately. The members of the Chorus of The Temple are devoted to him. No rules are required to keep them in order; no other inspiration to do their best is needed than his simple wish.

In the old church at Mervine and Berks streets he had a volunteer choir of about twenty, all that the little organ loft would accommodate. They could sing as the birds sing, because they had voices and loved it, but of musical training or education they had little. They were drawn from the membership of the church, composed of poor working people.

From this nucleus grew the chorus of The Temple, which was organized in 1891, six weeks before the membership took possession of its new building. With the organization of this large chorus, Professor Wood faced a new and difficult problem. How was he to hold from one hundred to one hundred and fifty people together, who were not paid for their services, who were not people of leisure to whom rehearsals are no tax on time or strength? These were nearly all working people who came to rehearsal after a day's tiring employment. That he has succeeded so splendidly in these fourteen years proves his fine leadership.

He had a body of workers devoted to the church, people before whom was ever held up the fact that they could serve the Master they all loved by singing, if they could in no other way; that they could give their voices, if they could give nothing else. He had a body of workers devoted also to himself, who would have followed him unhesitatingly no matter what commands he lay upon them. But he felt they should have some other encouragement, some other interest to hold them together, so almost immediately upon their organization he took up the study of Haydn's "Creation." It seemed a stupendous undertaking for a young and inexperienced chorus, one with no trained voices, few of whom could even read music at sight. But they plunged into the study with spirit. No incentive was needed to come to rehearsals, no one thought of dropping out. Indeed, the opportunity to study such music under such a master brought many new members. And in the fall of that year the oratorio was given with splendid success.



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This method has been followed ever since. Every year some special work is taken up for study and given in the fall. It is an event that is now a recognized feature of the city's musical life, eagerly awaited by music lovers not only of Philadelphia but of nearby towns. In addition to Haydn's "Creation," which has been sung four times, the chorus has given Handel's "Messiah" three times, Mendelssohn's "Elijah" twice, Beethoven's "Mount of Olives," Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise," Miriam's "Song of Triumph." It has also given a number of secular concerts. For all this extra work neither Professor Wood nor any member of the chorus has ever received one cent of pay. It is all cheerfully contributed. The oratorios are given with a full orchestra and eminent soloists. In the secular concerts the music is always of the highest order. Guilman, the celebrated French organist, gave a recital at The Temple while in this country. The chorus believes in the best, both in the class of music it gives and the talent it secures, and has long been looked on by those interested in the city's musical welfare as a society that encourages and supports all that is high and fine in music. Among the selections given at the Sunday services are Gounod's "Sanctus," the magnificent "Pilgrim's Chorus," the "Gloria," from Mozart's "Twelfth Mass," Handel's beautiful "Largo," the "St. Cecilia Mass," and others of the same character.

The plan of fining members for absence from rehearsal, which was adopted at the time the chorus was organized, has also had much to do with its success, though it is rather unusual for a choir. Instead of being paid to sing, they pay if they do not sing. The fine at first was twenty-five cents for each failure to attend rehearsal or Sunday service. Many shook their heads and said it was a bad idea, that the members wouldn't come and couldn't pay the fine, and that the chorus would go to pieces. But the members did come, and when for any reason they were compelled to stay away they cheerfully paid the fine and the chorus flourished. These fines helped to pay the current expenses of the chorus. In the last three years the amount has been reduced to ten cents, but it still nets a sum in the course of the year that the treasurer welcomes most gladly. A collection is also taken at each service among the members, which likewise helps to swell the chorus treasury.

Speaking of the organization and work of such a chorus, Professor Wood says:

"In organizing a church chorus one must not be too particular about the previous musical education of applicants. It is not necessary that they be musicians, or even that they read music readily. All that I insist upon is a fairly good voice and a correct ear. I assume, of course, that all comers desire to learn to sing. Rehearsals must be scrupulously maintained, beginning promptly, continuing with spirit, and not interrupted with disorder of any kind. A rehearsal should never exceed two

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hours, and a half hour less is plenty long enough, if there is no waste of time. In learning new music, voices should be rehearsed separately; that is, all sopranos, tenors, basses, and altos by themselves first, then combine the voices. You should place before a choir a variety of music sufficient to arouse the interest of all concerned. This will include much beyond the direct demand for church work. The chorus of The Temple has learned and sung on appropriate occasions war songs, college songs, patriotic songs, and other grades of popular music.

“No one man’s taste should rule in regard to these questions as to variety, although the proprieties of every occasion should be carefully preserved. Due regard must be paid to the taste of members of the chorus. If any of them express a wish for a particular piece, I let them have it. When it comes my time to select, they are with me. Keep some high attainment before the singers all the time. When the easier tasks are mastered, attempt something more difficult. It maintains enthusiasm to be ever after something better, and enthusiasm is a power everywhere. In music, this is ‘the spirit which quickeneth.’

“In the preparation of chorus work do not insist on perfection. When I get them to sing fairly well, I am satisfied. To insist on extreme accuracy will discourage singers. Do not, therefore, overtrain them.

“An incredible amount may be done even by a crude company of singers. When the preparation began for the opening of The Temple, there was but a handful of volunteers and time for but five rehearsals. But enthusiasm rose, reinforcements came, and six anthems, including the ‘Hallelujah Chorus,’ were prepared and sung in a praiseworthy manner. Do not fear to attempt great things. Timidity ruins many a chorus.

“Do not be afraid to praise your singers. Give praise, and plenty of it, whenever and wherever it is due. A domineering spirit will prove disastrous. Severity or ridicule will kill them. Correct faults faithfully and promptly, but kindly.

“In the matter of discipline I am a strong advocate of the ‘fine system.’ It is the only way to keep a chorus together. The fines should be regulated according to the financial ability of the chorus. Our fine at The Temple was at first twenty-five cents for every rehearsal and every service missed. It has since been dropped to ten cents. This is quite moderate. In some musical societies the fine is one dollar for every absence. This system is far better than monthly dues.

“The advantages to members of a chorus are many and of great value. Concerted work has advantages which can be secured in no other way. A good chorus is an unequaled drill in musical time. The singer cannot humor himself as the soloist can, but must go right on with the grand advance of the company. He gets constant help also, in the



accurate reading of music. Then, too, there is an indescribable, uplifting, enkindling power in the presence and coeperation of others. The volume of song lifts one, as when a great congregation sings. It is the *esprit du corps* of the army; that magnetic power which comes from the touch of elbows, and the consecration to a common cause. No soloist gets this.



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“Some would-be soloists make a great mistake right here. They think that chorus work spoils them as soloists. Not at all, if they have proper views of individual work in a chorus. If they propose to sing out so they shall sound forth above all others, then they may damage their voices for solo work. But that is a needless and highly improper use of the voice. Sing along with the others in a natural tone. They will be helped and the soloist will not be harmed.

“The best conservatories of music in the world require of their students a large amount of practice in concerted performance and will not grant diplomas without it. All the great soloists have served their time as chorus singers. Parepa-Rosa, when singing in the solo parts in oratorio, would habitually sing in the chorus parts also, singing from beginning to end with the others.

“Many persons have expressed their astonishment at the absence of the baton both from the rehearsals and public performances of the chorus of The Temple. Experience has proven to me, beyond a doubt, that a chorus can be better drilled without a baton than with it, though it costs more labor and patience to obtain the result. To sing by common inspiration is far better than to have the music ‘pumped out,’ as is too often the case, by the uncertain movements of the leader’s baton.”

With a membership that has ranged from one hundred to two hundred and fifty, skilled business management is needed to keep everything running smoothly.

The record of attendance is regulated by the use of checks. Each member of the chorus is assigned a number. As they come to rehearsal, service, or concert, the singer removes the check on which is his number from the board upon which it hangs and gives it to the person appointed to receive it as he passes up the stairway to his seat in the choir. When the numbers are checked up at the close of the evening, the checks which have not been removed from the board are marked “absent.”

The bill for sheet music for one year is something between \$400 and \$500. To care for so much music would be no light task if it were not reduced to a science. The music is in charge of the chorus librarian, who gives to each member an envelope stamped with his number and containing all the sheet music used by the chorus. Each member is responsible for his music, so that the system resolves itself into simplicity itself. In the Lower Temple enclosed closets are built in the wall, divided into sections, in which the envelopes are kept by their numbers, so that it is but the work of a moment to find the music for any singer. An insurance of \$1,200 is carried on the music.

Typical of the spirit of self-sacrifice that animates the chorus is the fact that for nearly ten years after the choir was organized, one of the members, in order to reduce the expense for sheet music, copied on a mimeograph all the music used by the members. It was a gigantic task, but he never faltered while the need was felt.

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In order to avoid confusion both in rehearsals and at each service, every singer has an appointed seat. There is also a system of signals employed by the organist, clearly understood and promptly responded to by the chorus, for rising, resuming their seats, and for any other duty. This regularity of movement, the precision with which the great choir leads the attitudes and voices of the congregation in all the musical services, the entire absence of confusion, impresses the thoroughness of the chorus drill upon every one, and adds greatly to the effectiveness and decorum of the service.

Most remarkable of all the work of the chorus, perhaps, is the fact that it has not only paid its way, but it has in addition contributed financially to the help of the church. Most choral societies have to be supported by guarantors, or friends or members must reach down in their pockets and make up the deficits that occur with unpleasant regularity. But the chorus of The Temple has borne its own expenses and at various times contributed to the church work.

At the annual banquet in 1905, the following statement was made of the financial history of the chorus since 1892:

Amount Received—

Collections from members \$ 2,564.60
Fines paid by members 975.60
Gross receipts from concerts 11,299.40

\$14,839.60

Amount Disbursed—

For music \$ 2,167.80
For sundry expenses for socials, flowers for sick,
contributions for benevolent purposes, *etc.* 1,035.81
Expenses of concerts 8,506.34
Contributions to church, college, hospital, Sunday
School, repairs to organ, *etc.* 3,050.51

\$14,760.46

The chorus has furnished a private room in the Samaritan Hospital at a cost of \$250, pays half the cost of the telephone service to a shut-in member, so that while lying on his bed of sickness he can still hear the preaching and singing of his beloved church, and has contributed to members in need; in fact, whatever help was required, it has come forward and shouldered its share of the financial burdens of the church. It is a chorus that helps by its singing in more ways than singing, though that were enough.



Out of the chorus has grown many smaller organizations which not only assist from time to time in the church and prayer meeting services, but are in frequent demand by Lyceums and other churches. All the money they earn is devoted to some part of The Temple work.

The organ which rears its forest of beautiful pipes in the rear of the church is one of the finest in the country. It was built under the direct supervision of Professor Wood at a cost of \$10,000. The case is of oak in the natural finish, 35 feet wide, 35 feet high, 16 feet deep. It has 41 stops, 2,133 pipes, four sets of manuals, each manual with a compass of 61 notes; there are 30 pedal notes, 9 double-acting combination pedals; all the metal pipes are 75 per cent pure tin.



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In loving Christian fellowship the chorus abides. No difficulty that could not be settled among themselves has ever rent it; no jealousies mar its peaceful course. Professor Wood is a wise leader. He leaves no loophole for the green-eyed monster to creep in. He selects no one voice to take solo parts. If a solo occurs, he gives it to the whole of that voice in the chorus or to a professional.

Dr. Conwell reads the hymns with so much expression and feeling that new meaning is put into them. The stranger is quietly handed a hymn book by some watchful member. The organ swings into the melody of the hymn, the chorus, as one, rises, and a flood of song sweeps over the vast auditorium that carries every one as in a mighty tide almost up to the gates of heaven itself. And as it ebbs and sinks into silence, faith has been refreshed and strengthened, hardened hearts softened, the love of Christ left as a precious legacy with many a man and woman there.

CHAPTER XXVI

SERVICES AT THE TEMPLE

A Typical Sunday. The Young People's Church. Sunday School. The Baptismal Service. Dedication of Infants. The Pastor's Thanksgiving Reception to Children. Sunrise Services. Watch Meeting.

Sunday is a joyous day at The Temple, and a busy one. It is crowded with work and it is good to be there. Services begin at half after nine with prayer meetings in the Lower Temple by the Young Men's Association and the Young Women's Association. The men's is held in the regular prayer meeting room; the women's in the room of their association. Each is led by some member of the association who is assigned a subject for the morning's study. These subjects, together with the leaders' names, are prepared in advance and printed on a little schedule which is distributed among the church members, so that they may know who has charge of the prayer meeting and the topic for thought.

Dr. Conwell has for twenty-two years presided at the organ in the men's meeting, and usually before the services are over takes a peep into the women's gathering, leaving a prayer or a brief word of cheer and inspiration. The meetings are not long, but they are full of spiritual strength. Men and women, tired with the business life of the week, find them places of soul refreshment where they can step aside from the rush and press of worldly cares and commune with the higher, better things of life.

By the time the prayer meetings are over, the members of the chorus are thronging the Lower Temple, receiving their music and attendance checks, waiting for the signal to march to their seats in the church above.

The morning services begin at half after ten, with the singing of the Doxology, the chanting of the Lord's Prayer by the choir and congregation, followed by the sermon. At the close of the service, Dr. Conwell steps from the pulpit and meets all strangers or friends with a hearty handclasp and a cordial word of greeting.



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While morning service is being conducted in The Temple, a Young People's Church is held in the Lower Temple. Dr. Conwell has not forgotten those wearisome Sundays of his boyhood when, too young to appreciate the church service, he fidgeted, strove to keep awake, whittled, and ended it all by thoroughly disliking church. He wants no such unhappy youngsters to sit through his preaching. He wants no such dislike of the church imbedded in childish hearts and minds. So he planned the Young People's Church. Boys and girls between three and fourteen attend it, and Sunday morning the streets in the neighborhood of The Temple are thronged with happy-faced children on the way to their own church, the youngest in the care of parents, who are able later to enjoy more fully The Temple services, since they are not compelled to keep a watchful eye on a restless child.

Before the services begin, the children are very much at home. No stiff, silent formalism chills youthful spirits. They are as joyous and happy as they would be in their own homes. As the moment approaches for the services to begin, they take their seats and at a given signal rise and recite, "The Lord is in His holy Temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him." A hush falls and then the sweet, childish voices begin that beautiful psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," and without break or faltering, recite it to the end. Songs follow, bright, cheerful songs full of life, which they sing with a will. Then responsive readings and the Lord's Prayer and always plenty of singing. A short talk is given by the leader, often some one especially secured for the occasion, a talk not over their heads, but into their hearts, a talk whose meaning they can grasp and which sets young minds to thinking of the finer, nobler things of life and inspires them to so live as to be good and useful. Sometimes lantern exhibits to illustrate special topics are given. The mere sight of their bright, happy faces in contrast to the dull, bored expression of the usual child in church proves the wisdom of the work.

The children, as far as possible, perform all the duties of the services. A small boy plays the music for their songs, two small girls keep a record of the attendance, children take up the offering. But it is a church in more than mere services. Committees from among the children are appointed for visiting, for calling on the sick, to plan for entertainments, provide the games for the socials, and to look after all details of this character. There are also two officers, a secretary and treasurer. An advisory committee of ladies, members of The Temple, keep an oversight and guiding hand on the work of the children. The instruction is all in the hands of trained teachers, mostly from the college, including as Director the lady Dean of the College, Dr. Laura H. Carnell.

In the afternoon the Sunday Schools meet. The youngest children are enrolled in the primary or kindergarten department. This has a bright, cheery room of its own in the Lower Temple, with a leader and a number of young women scattered here and there among the children to look after their needs and keep them orderly. Hats are taken off and hung on pegs on the wall and the youngsters are made to feel very much at home.

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One of the prettiest features of the service in this department is the offering of the birthday pennies. All the members who have had a birthday during the week come forward to put a penny for each year into the basket. Then the class stands up and recites a verse and sings a song on birthdays. Very pretty and inspiring both verse and song are, and then the honored ones return to their seats, wishing, no doubt, they had a birthday every week.

The taking of the offering is also a pretty ceremony. Verses on giving are recited by the children, then one small child takes his stand in the doorway, holding the basket, and the children all march by and drop in their pennies.

The intermediate department claims the next oldest children. It is led by an orchestra composed of members of the Sunday School, and the singing is joyous and spirited. The superintendent walks around among the scholars during the opening exercises, smiling, encouraging, giving a word of praise, urging them to do better. The fresh, clear voices rise clear and strong. Outside, on Broad Street, people stop to listen. Men lean up against the windows and drink in the melody. No one knows what messages of peace and salvation those songs carry out to the throng on the city street.

The classes of the senior department meet in the various rooms of the college, and the adult class in the auditorium of The Temple. This Dr. Conwell conducted himself for a number of years, until pressure of work compelled him to use these hours for rest. A popular feature of his service was the question box, in which he answered any question sent to him on any subject connected with religious life or experience or Christian ethics in everyday life. The questions could be sent by mail or handed to him on the platform by the ushers. They were most interesting, and the service attracted men and women from all parts of the city. The following was one of the questions, during the year of building the college:

“Five thousand dollars are due next week, and \$15,000 next month. Will you set on foot means to raise this amount or trust wholly to God’s direction?”

And the pastor answered from the platform:

“I would trust wholly in God’s direction. This is a sort of test of faith, and I would make it more so in the building of the College. I do not know for certain now where the money is to come from next Wednesday; I have an idea. But a few days ago I did not know at all. I do not see where the \$15,000 is to come from in December unless it be that the Feast of Tithes will bring in \$10,000 towards it; that would be a marvelous sum for the people to give, but if it is necessary they will give it. We are workers together with God. I have partly given up my lecture work this month, as the church thought it was best, but suppose there should come to me from Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, or some other place a call to go and lecture on the 10th or

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12th of December, and they should offer me \$500 or more—I would say immediately, ‘Yes, I will go’; that is God’s call to help the College; that would be the direction of God. Such opportunities will come to those who should give this \$15,000. If God intends the amount due on the College to be paid (and I believe he does), he will cause the hearts of those who desire to help to give money toward this cause. We trust entirely to God. I don’t believe if I were to lie down, and the church should stop, that it would be paid. But I am sure that if we work together with God, He will never fail to do as He promises, and He won’t ask us to do the impossible. I tell you, friends, I feel sure that the \$5,000 will be paid next Wednesday, and I feel sure the \$15,000 will be paid when it is due.”

It may be interesting to know that the \$5,000 was paid; and when the \$15,000 was due in December, the money was in the treasury all ready for it.

From half after six on, there are the meetings of the various Christian Endeavor Societies in the Lower Temple. At half after seven the evening services begin and an overflow meeting is held at the same time in the Lower Temple for those who find it impossible to gain admittance to the main auditorium.

The preaching service is followed by a half-hour prayer meeting in the Lower Temple in which both congregations join, taxing its capacity to the utmost. It is a half hour that flies, a half hour full of inspiration and soul communion with the “Spirit that moved on the waters,” a fitting crown to a day devoted to His service.

After the solemn benediction is pronounced, a half hour more of good fellowship follows. The pastor meets strangers, shakes hands with members, makes a special effort to hold a few words of personal conversation with those who have risen for prayer. Friends and acquaintances greet each other, and the home life of the church comes to the surface. The hand of the clock creeps to eleven, sometimes past, before the last member reluctantly leaves.

Baptism is a very frequent part of the Sunday services at The Temple, usually taking place in the morning. It is a beautiful, solemn ordinance. The baptistry is a long, narrow pool, arranged to resemble a running stream. Years ago, when Dr. Conwell was in Palestine, he was much impressed with the beauty of the river Jordan at the place where Jesus was baptized. Always a lover of the beautiful in nature, the picture long remained in his memory, especially the leaves and blossoms that drifted on the stream. When The Temple was planned he thought of it and determined to give the baptismal pool as much of the beauty of nature as possible.



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It is fifteen feet wide, sixty feet long, and during the hour of the solemn ordinance, the brook is running constantly. The sides of the pool, the pulpit and platform, summer or winter, are banked with flowers, palms, moss and vines. On the surface of the water float blossoms, while at the back, banked with mosses and flowers, splashes and sparkles a little waterfall. Over all falls the soft radiance of an illuminated cross. It is a beautiful scene, one that never fades from the memory of the man or woman who is "buried with Christ by baptism into death," to be raised again in the likeness of His resurrection. The candidates enter at the right and pass out at the left, the pastor pressing into the hands of each, some of the beautiful blossoms that float on the water. During the whole service the organ plays softly, the choir occasionally singing some favorite hymn.

When the number of candidates is large, being on occasion as high as one hundred and seventy-seven adults, the associate pastor assists. It is no unusual thing to see members of a family coming together to make this public profession of their faith. Husband and wife, in many cases; husband, wife and children in many others; a grandmother and two grandchildren on one occasion, and on yet another, a venerable gray-haired nurse came with four of the family in which she had served for many years, and the five entered the baptistry together.

"Among the converts," says one who witnessed a baptismal service, "there were aged persons with their silvered hair. There were stalwart men, fitted to bear burdens in the church for many years to come. There were young men and maidens to grow into strong men and women of the future church. There were little children sweet in their simplicity and pure love of the Savior, little children who were carried in the arms of those who assisted, and whom Dr. Conwell tenderly held in his arms as he buried them with Christ."

Another solemn service of the church is the dedication of infants. Any parents who wish, may bring their child and reverently dedicate it to God, solemnly promising to do all within their power to train it and teach it to lead a Christian life and to make a public profession of faith when it has arrived at the years of discretion. The service reads:

Question.—Do you now come to the Lord's house to present your child (children) to the Lord? *Answer.*—We do.

QUES.—Will you promise before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you will, so far as in you lieth, teach this child the Holy Scriptures, and bring him (her) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Will you train his (her) mind to respect the services of the Lord's House, and to live in compliance with the teachings and example of our Lord? When he reaches the years of understanding, will you show him the necessity of repentance, explain to him the way of salvation, and urge upon him the necessity of conversion, Baptism, and union with the visible Church of Christ? *ANS.*—We will.



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QUES.—By what name do you purpose to register him (her or them) at this time? ANS.

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* * * * *

Beloved: These parents have come to the house of God at this time to present this child (these children) before the Lord in imitation of the presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple as recorded by the Evangelist Luke, saying, “When the days of her [Mary’s] purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.” These parents have learned from the Lord Jesus himself that he desires that all the children should come unto him, and that he was pleased when the little children were brought unto him that he might put his hands on them and pray. Therefore, in obedience to the scriptures, these parents are here to present this child unto the Lord Jesus in spirit, that he may take him up in his arms, place his spiritual hands on him and bless him.

We will turn, therefore, to the Holy Scriptures for direction, as they are our only rule of faith and practice, and ascertain the wishes and commandments of the Lord in this matter.

I Sam. I, 26, 27, 28:

And Hannah said, O my Lord, as thy soul liveth, my Lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord.

For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him;

Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there.

* * * * *

Mark X, 13, 14, 15:

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.



* * * * *

Luke XVIII, 15, 16, 17:

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

* * * * *

Matt. XVIII, 2-6, 14:

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them.



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And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Even so it is not the will of your father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

Therefore, believing it is wise and that it is a sacred duty to dedicate our precious little ones to God in this solemn manner; believing that all the dear children are especially loved by Christ; and that when taken from this world before active, intentional participation in sin, they are saved by His merciful grace; and believing that Christ by His example, and the apostles by their direct teaching, reserve the sacred ordinance of baptism for repentant believers, we will now unitedly ask the Lord to accept the consecration of this child (children), and to take him in His spiritual arms and bless him.

Prayer.

Hymn.

Benediction.

* * * * *

The pastor's reception to the children Thanksgiving afternoon is a service the youngsters await from one year to another. Each child is supposed to bring some article to be given to Samaritan Hospital. One year each child brought a potato, which in the aggregate amounted to several barrels. A writer in the "Temple Magazine," describing one of these services, says:

"The children came from all directions, of all sizes and in all conditions. One lad marched up the aisle to a front seat, and his garments fluttered, flag-like, at many points as he went; others were evidently rich men's darlings, but all were happy, and their bright eyes were fixed on the curtained platform, rather than on each other. They came until four or five thousand of them had arrived, filling every nook and corner of the Upper Temple."



“Then Dr. Conwell came in, made them all feel at home—they already were happy—and music, songs and entertainment followed for an hour or more. At the close he shook hands with every happy youngster who sought him—and few failed to do it—gave each a cheery word and hearty handclasp, and then the little ones scattered, swarming along the wide pavements of Broad Street till the Thanksgiving promenaders wondered what had broken loose and whence the swarms of merry children came.”

Sunrise services are held Easter and Christmas mornings at seven o'clock. These beautiful days are ushered in by a solemn prayer meeting, spiritual, uplifting, which seems to attune the day to the music of heavenly things, and to send an inspiration into it which glorifies every moment.



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Another service very dear to the members of Grace Baptist Church is watch meeting. The services begin at eight o'clock New Year's Eve with a prayer meeting which continues until about half after nine. An intermission follows and usually a committee of young people serve light refreshments for those who want them. At eleven o'clock the watch meeting begins. It is a deeply spiritual meeting, opened by the pastor with an earnest prayer for guidance in the year to come, for renewed consecration to the Master's service, for a better and higher Christian life both as individuals and a church. Hymns follow and a brief, fervid talk on the year coming and its opportunities, of the record each will write on the clean white page in the book of life to be turned so soon. As midnight approaches, every church member is asked to signify his re-dedication to God and His service by standing. Then the solemn question is put to others present if they do not want to give themselves to God, not only for the coming year, but for all years. As twelve o'clock strikes, all bow in silent prayer while the organ, under the pastor's touch, softly breathes a sacred melody.

A few minutes later the meeting adjourns, "Happy New Years" are exchanged, and the church orchestra on the iron balcony over the great half rose window on Broad Street breaks into music.

Sometimes an audience of a thousand people gather on the street to listen to this musical sermon, preached at the parting of the ways, a eulogy and a prophecy. A writer in the "Philadelphia Press" relates the following incident in connection with a watch meeting service:

"For the last half hour of the old and the first half hour of the new year the band played sacred melodies to the delight of not less than a thousand people assembled on the street. Diagonally across Broad Street and a short distance below the church is the residence of the late James E. Cooper, P.T. Barnum's former partner, the millionaire circus proprietor. He had been ailing for months and on this night he lay dying.

"Although not a member he had always taken a personal interest in Grace Church, and one of his last acts was the gift of \$1,000 to the building fund. On this night, the first on which The Temple balcony had been used for its specially designed purpose, among the last of earthly sounds that were borne to the ears of the dying man was the music of 'Coronation' and 'Old Hundred,'—hymns that he had learned in childhood. The watch meeting closed and from a scene of thanksgiving and congratulation Rev. Mr. Conwell hurried to the house of mourning, where he remained at the bedside of the stricken husband and father until the morning light of earth came to the living and the morning of eternity to the dying."



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Sacred music on the balcony at midnight also ushers in Christmas and Easter. “On the street, long before the hour, the crowds gather waiting in reverent silence for the opening of the service,” writes Burdette, in “Temple and Templars.” “The inspiring strains of ‘the English Te Deum,’ ‘Coronation,’ rise on the starlit night, thrilling every soul and suggesting in its triumphant measures, the lines of Perronet’s immortal hymn made sacred by a thousand associations—‘All hail the power of Jesus’ Name.’” “This greeting of the Resurrection, as it floats out over Monument Cemetery just opposite, where sleep so many thousands, does seem like an assurance sent anew from above, cheering those who sleep in Jesus, telling them that as their Lord and King had risen, and now lives again, so shall they live also. Men looked at the graves of them that slept, listened to the song of triumph that was making the midnight glorious, remembered the risen Christ who was the theme of the song, thought of that other midnight, the riven tomb, the broken power of Death a conquered conqueror, and seemed to hear the Victor’s proclamation as the apostle of the Apocalypse heard it, pealing like a trumpet voice over all the earth, ‘I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore; Amen; and have the keys of hell and death!’

“The music continues, the band playing ‘The Gloria,’ ‘The Heavens are Telling,’ ‘The Palms’; now and then the listeners join in singing as the airs are more familiar, and ‘What a Friend we Have In Jesus,’ ‘Whiter than Snow,’ ‘Just as I Am,’ and other hymns unite many of the audience on the crowded streets about The Temple in a volunteer choir, and when the doxology, ‘Praise God from whom all blessings flow,’ closes the service, hundreds of voices swell the volume of melody that greets the Easter morning.”

CHAPTER XXVII

A typical prayer meeting.

The Prayer Meeting Hall. How the Meeting is Conducted. The Giving of Favorite Bible Verses. Requests for Prayer. The Lookout Committee.

The prayer meetings of Grace Baptist Church are characterized by a cheery, homelike atmosphere that appeals forcibly and at once to any one who may chance to enter, inclining him to stay and enjoy the service, be he the utmost stranger.

But underneath this and soon felt, is the deep spiritual significance of the meeting, which lays hold on men’s hearts, inspiring, uplifting, sending them home with a sense of having “walked with God” for a little while.

The large prayer meeting hall is usually crowded, the attendance including not only members of the church but hundreds who are not members of any church. It is no unusual sight to see all the various rooms of the Lower Temple thrown into one by the raising of the sashes, and this vast floor packed as densely as possible, while a fringe of

standers lines the edges. People will come to these prayer meetings though they cannot see the platform, though they must lose much of what is said. But the spirit of the meeting flows into their hearts and minds, sending them home happier, and with a strengthened determination to live a more righteous life.

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Frequently Dr. Conwell arrives ten or fifteen minutes before the time for the service to begin. As he walks to the platform, he stops and chats with this one, shakes hands with another, nods to many in the audience. At once all stiffness and formalism vanish. It is a home, a gathering of brothers and sisters. It is the meeting together of two or three in His name, as in the old apostolic days, though these two or three are now counted by the hundreds.

When Dr. Conwell thus arrives early, the time is passed in singing. Often he utilizes these few minutes to learn new hymns. So that when the real prayer meeting is in progress, there will be no blundering through new tunes or weak-kneed renditions of them. The singing, Dr. Conwell wants done with the spirit. He will not sing a verse if the heart and mind cannot endorse it. After singing several hymns in this earnest, prayerful fashion, every one present is fully in tune for the services to follow. Prayer meeting opens with a short, earnest prayer. Then a hymn. It is Dr. Conwell's practice to have any one call out the number of a hymn he would like sung. And it is no unusual thing to hear a perfect chorus of numbers after Dr. Conwell's "What shall we sing?"

A chapter from the Bible is read and a short talk on it given. Then Dr. Conwell says, "The meeting now is in your hands," and sits down as if he had nothing more to do with it. But that subtle leadership which leads without seeming to do so, is there ready to guide and direct. He never allows the meeting to grow dull—though it seldom exhibits a tendency to do so. If no one is inclined to speak, hymns are sung. An interesting feature, and one that is tremendously helpful in leading church members to take part in the prayer meeting, is the giving of Bible verses. It is a frequent feature of Grace Church prayer meetings. "Let us have verses of Scripture," or "Each one give his favorite text," Dr. Conwell announces. Immediately from all parts of the large room come responses. Some rise to give them, others recite them sitting. Hundreds are given some evenings in a short space of time, sometimes the speakers giving a bit of personal experience connected with the verse.

The prayer meetings are always full of singing, often of silent prayer; and never does one end without a solemn invitation to those seeking God and wishing the prayers of the church, to signify it by rising. While the request is made, the audience is asked to bow in silent prayer that strength may be given those who want God's help to make it known. In the solemn hush, one after another rises to his feet, often as many as fifty making this silent appeal for strength to lead a better life. Immediately Dr. Conwell leads into an eloquent, heartfelt prayer that those seeking the way may find it, that the peace that passeth understanding may come into their hearts and lives.



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But Dr. Conwell doesn't let the matter rest here. A committee of church members already appointed for just such work, is posted like sentinels about the prayer meeting room, ready to extend practical help to those who have asked for the prayers of the church. After the services are over, each one who has risen is sought out, by some member of this committee, talked with in a friendly, sympathetic way, and his name and address taken. These are given to Dr. Conwell. If time permits, he writes to many of them. All of them he makes the subject of personal prayer.

Frequently, before asking those to rise who wish the prayers of the church, Dr. Conwell asks if any one wishes to request prayers for others. The response to this is always large. A member of the staff of "The Temple Magazine" made a note at one prayer meeting of these requests and published it in the magazine. Three requests were made for husbands, eight for sons, one for a daughter, three for children, ten for brothers, two for sisters, two for fathers, one for a cousin, one for a brother-in-law, four for friends, eleven for Sunday School scholars, one for a Sunday School class, four for sick persons, two for scoffers, twenty-one for sinners, four for wanderers, five for persons addicted to drink, three for mission schools, five for churches—one that was divided, another deeply in debt, another for a sick pastor and the other two seeking a higher development in godliness.

As many of these requests come from church members, both pastor and people pay especial attention to them and practically, as well as prayerfully, try to reach those for whom prayers are asked. In many cases distinct answers to these prayers are secured, so evident that none could mistake them. At an after-service on Sunday evening a mother asked prayers for a wayward son in Chicago. Dr. Conwell and some of the deacons led the church in prayer for the boy, very definitely and in faith. At that same hour, as the young man afterward related, he was passing a church in Chicago, and felt strangely impressed to enter and give his heart to Christ. It was something he had no intention of doing when he left his hotel a few minutes before. But he went in, joined in the meeting, asked for forgiveness of his sins and the prayers of the church to help him lead a better life, and accepted Christ as his personal Savior. In the joy of his new experience, he wrote his mother immediately.

At another prayer meeting, Dr. Conwell read a letter from a gentleman requesting the prayers of the church for his little boy whom the doctors had given up to die. He stated in the letter that if God would spare his child in answer to prayer, he would go anywhere and do anything the Lord might direct. After reading the letter, Dr. Conwell led earnestly in prayer, beseeching that the child's life might be saved since it meant much for the cause of Christ on earth. Several members of the church made fervent prayers for the child, and at the close of the meeting, many expressed themselves as being confident that their prayers would be answered. At that same hour, the disease turned. The child has grown to be a young man, and with his father is a member of Grace Church.



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Such direct, unmistakable answers to prayer strengthen faith, give confidence to ask for prayers for loved ones, and make it a very earnest, solemn part of the prayer meeting service. Thus working and praying, praying and working, the church marches forward.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE TEMPLE COLLEGE

The Night Temple College Was Born. Its Simple Beginning and Rapid Growth. Building the College. How the Money was Raised. The Branches it Teaches. Instances of Its Helpfulness. Planning for greater Things.

In a letter written to a member of his family, from which we quote the following, Dr. Conwell tells how the idea of Temple College was born in his mind one wintry night.

“A woman, ragged, with an old shawl over her head, met me in an alley in Philadelphia late one night. She saw the basket on my arm, and looked in my face wistfully, as a dog looks up beside the dinner table. She was hungry, and was coming in empty. I shook my head, and with a peculiarly sad glance she turned down the dark passage. I had found several families hungry, and yet I felt like a hypocrite, standing there with an empty basket, and a woman, perhaps a mother, so pale for lack of decent food.

“On the corner was a church, stately and architecturally beautiful by day, but after midnight it looked like a glowering ogre, and looked so like Newgate Prison, in London, that I felt its chilly shadow. Half a million cost the cemented pile, and under its side arch lay two newsboys or boot-blacks asleep on the step.

“What is the use? We cannot feed these people. Give all you have, and an army of the poor will still have nothing; and those to whom you do give bread and clothes to-day will be starving and naked to-morrow. If you care for the few, the many will curse you for your partiality. While I stood meditating, the police patrol drove along the street, and I could see by the corner street lamp that there were two women, one little girl and a drunken old man in the conveyance, going to jail! I could do nothing for them.

“At my door I found a man dressed in costly fashion, who had waited for me outside, as he had been told that I would come soon, and the family had retired. He said his dying father had sent for me. So I left the basket in a side yard and went with the messenger. The house was a mansion on Spring Garden Street. The house was inelegantly overloaded with luxurious furniture, money wasted by some inartistic purchasers. The paintings were rare and rich. The owners were shoddy. The family of seven or eight gathered by the bedside when I prayed for the dying old man. They were grief-stricken and begged me to stay until his soul departed. It was daylight before I left the bedside,

and as the dying still showed that the soul was delaying his journey, I went into the spacious, handsome library. Seeing a rare book in costly binding among the volumes



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on a lower shelf, I opened the door and took it out My hands were black with dust. I glanced then along the rows and rows of valuable books, and noticed the dust of months or years. The family were not students or readers. One son was in the Albany Penitentiary; another a fugitive in Canada. At the funeral, afterwards, the wife and daughter from Newport were present, and their tears made furrows through the paint. Those rich people were strangely poor, and a book on a side table on the 'Abolition of Poverty' seemed to be in the right place.

"That night was conceived the Temple College idea. It was no new truth, no original invention, but merely a simpler combination of old ideas. There was but one general remedy for all these ills of poor and rich, and that could only be found in a more useful education. Poverty seemed to me to be wholly that of the mind. Want of food, or clothing, or home, or friends, or morals, or religion, seemed to be the lack of the right instruction and proper discipline. The truly wise man need not lack the necessities of life, the wisely educated man or woman will get out of the dirty alley and will not get drunk or go to jail. It seemed to me then that the only great charity was in giving instruction.

"The first class to be considered was the destitute poor. Not one in a thousand of those living in rags on crusts would remain in poverty if he had education enough of the right kind to earn a better living by making himself more useful. He is poor because he does not know any better. Knowledge is both wealth and power.

"The next class who stand in need of the assistance love wishes to give is the great mass of industrious people of all grades, who are earning something, who are not cold or hungry, but who should earn more in order to secure the greater necessities of life in order to be happy. They could be so much more useful if they knew how. To learn how to do more work in the same time, or how to do much better work, is the only true road to riches which the owner can enjoy.

[Illustration: *The Samaritan hospital* Showing the houses in which it was originally located, and part of the new building]

"To help a man to help himself is the wisest effort of human love. To have wealth and to have honestly earned it all, by labor, skill or wisdom, is an object of ambition worthy of the highest and best. Hence, to do the most good to the great classes, rich or poor, we must labor industriously. The lover of his kind must furnish them with the means of gaining knowledge while they work.



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“Then there was a third class of mankind, starving, with their tables breaking with luscious foods, cold in warehouses of ready-made clothing of the most costly fabrics; seeing not in the moon-light, and restless to distraction on beds of eiderdown. They do not know the use or value of things. They are harassed with plenty they cannot appropriate. They are doubly poor. They need education. The library is a care, an expense and a disgrace to the owner who cannot read. To give education to those in the possession of property which they might use for the help of humanity and which they might enjoy, is as clear a duty and charity as it is to help the beggar. And, indeed, indirectly the education of the unwise wealthy to become useful may be the most practical way of raising the poor. There is a need for every dollar of the nation’s property, and it should be invested by men whose minds and hearts have been trained to see the human need and to love to satisfy it.

“The thought that in education of the best quality was to be found the remedy for hunger, loneliness, crime and weakness was most clearly emphasized to my mind by the coming of two young men who had felt the need from the under side. They had received but little instruction; they were over twenty years of age, and they wished to enter the ministry. Was there any way open for a poor, industrious laborer to get the highest education while he supported his mother, sister and himself? I urged them to try it for the good of many who would follow them if they made it a clear success. I was elated almost to uncontrollable enthusiasm the night they came to my study to begin their course. They brought five with them, and all proved themselves noble men. One is not, for God took him. But the others are moulding and inspiring their world.”

Thus was conceived the idea of the institution that is now educating annually three thousand men and women. The need for it has been plainly proven. Rev. Forest Dager, at one time Dean of Temple College, said in regard to the people who in later life crave opportunities for study:

“That the Temple College idea of educating working men and working women, at an expense just sufficient to give them an appreciation of the work of the Institution, covers a wide and long-neglected field of educational effort, is at once apparent to a thoughtful mind. Remembering that out of a total enrollment in the schools of our land of all grades, public and private, of 14,512,778 pupils, 96-1/2 per cent are reported as receiving elementary instruction only; that not more than 35 in 1,000 attend school after they are fourteen years of age; that 25 of these drop out during the next four years of their life; that less than 10 in 1,000 pass on to enjoy the superior instruction of a college or some equivalent grade of work, we begin to see the unlimited field before an Institution like this. Thousands upon thousands of those who have



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left school quite early in life, either because they did not appreciate the advantages of a liberal education, or because the stress of circumstances compelled them to assist in the maintenance of home, awake a few years later to the realization that a good education is more than one-half the struggle for existence and position. Their time through the day is fully occupied; their evenings are free. At once they turn to the evening college, and grasping the opportunities for instruction, convert those hours which to many are the pathway to vice and ruin, into stepping stones to a higher and more useful career ... An illustration of the wide-reaching influence of the College work is the significant fact that during one year there were personally known to the president, no less than ninety-three persons pursuing their studies in various universities of our country, who received their first impulses toward a higher education and a wider usefulness in Temple College.”

In 1893, in an address on the Institutional church, delivered before the Baptist Ministers' Conference in Philadelphia, Dr. Conwell said:

“At the present time there are in this city hundreds of thousands—to speak conservatively, (I should say at least five hundred thousand people) who have not the education they certainly wish they had obtained before leaving school. There are at least one hundred thousand people in this city willing to sacrifice their evenings and some of their sleep to get an education, if they can get it without the humiliation of being put into classes with boys and girls six years old. They are in every city. There is a large class of young people who have reached that age where they find they have made a mistake in not getting a better education. If they could obtain one now, in a proper way, they would. The university does not furnish such an opportunity. The public school does not.

“The churches must institute schools for those whom the public does not educate, and must educate them along the lines they cannot reach in the public schools.

“We are not to withdraw our support from, nor to antagonize, the public schools; they are the foundations of liberty in the nation. But the public schools do not teach many things which young men and young women need. I believe every church should institute classes for the education of such people, and I believe the Institutional church will require it. I believe every evening in the week should be given to some particular kind of intellectual training along some educational line; that this training should begin with the more evident needs of the young people in each congregation, and then be adjusted as the matter grows, to the wants of each.”

So, because one poor boy struggled so bitterly for an education, because a man, keen-eyed, saw others' needs, reading the signs by the light of his own bitter experience, a

great College for busy men and women has grown, to give them freely the education which is very bread and meat to their minds.



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Most people use for their own benefit the lessons they have learned in the hard school of experience. They have paid for them dearly. They endeavor to get out of them what profit they can. Not so Dr. Conwell. He uses his dearly bought experiences for the good of others, turning the bitterness which he endured, into sweetness for their refreshment.

The Temple College was founded, as was stated in its first catalogue, for the purpose "of opening to the burdened and circumscribed manual laborer, the doors through which he may, if he will, reach the fields of profitable and influential professional life.

"Of enabling the working man, whose labor has been largely with his muscles, to double his skill through the helpful suggestions of a cultivated mind.

"Of providing such instruction as shall be best adapted to the higher education of those who are compelled to labor at their trades while engaged in study, or who desire while studying to remain under the influence of their home or church.

"Of awakening in the character of young laboring men and women a strong and determined ambition to be useful to their fellowmen.

"Of cultivating such a taste for the higher and most useful branches of learning as shall compel the students, after they have left the college, to continue to pursue the best and most practical branches of learning to the very highest walks of mental and scientific achievement."

A broad, humanitarian purpose it is, one that grew out of the heart of a man who loved humanity, who believed in the practical application of the teachings of Christ, who knew a cause would succeed if it filled a need.

Dr. Conwell's own experience, his observations of life had told him that this great need existed, but it was brought home to him practically in 1884, when these two young men of whom he speaks in the letter quoted came to him and said they wanted to study for the ministry but had no money. His mind leaped the years to those boyhood days when he longed for an education but had no money. He fixed an evening and told them he would teach them himself. When the night came, the two had become seven. The third evening, the seven had grown to forty. It was in the days when pastor and people were working hard for their new church and his hands were full. But he did not shirk this new task that came to him. Forty people eager to study, anxious to broaden their mental vision, to make their lives more useful, could not be disappointed, most assuredly not by a man who had known this hunger of the mind. Teachers were secured who gave their services free, the lower parts of the church where they were then worshipping at Berks and Mervine streets were used as class rooms and the work went forward with vigor.

The first catalogue was issued in 1887, and the institution chartered in 1888, at which time there were five hundred and ninety students. The College overflowed the basement of the church into two adjoining houses. When The Temple was completed the College occupied the whole building. When that was filled it moved into two large houses on Park Avenue. Still growing, it rented two large halls.



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The news that The Temple College had enlarged quarters in these halls brought such a flood of students that almost from the start applicants were turned away. Nothing was to be done but to build. It was a serious problem. The church itself had but just been completed and a heavy debt of \$250,000 hung over it. To add the cost of a college to this burden of debt required faith of the highest order, work of the hardest. But God had shown them their work and they could not shirk it.

“For seven years I have felt a firm conviction that the great work, the special duty of our church, is to establish the College,” said Dr. Conwell, in speaking of the matter to his congregation. “We are now face to face with it. How distinctly we have been led of God to this point! Never before in the history of this nation have a people had committed to them a movement more important for the welfare of mankind than that which is now committed to your trust in connection with the permanent establishment of The Temple College. We step now over the brink. Our feet are already in the water, and God says, ‘Go on, it shall be dryshod for you yet’; and I say that the success of this institution means others like it in every town of five thousand inhabitants in the United States.”

“One thing we have demonstrated—those who work for a living have time to study. Some splendid specimens of scholarship have been developed in our work. And there are others, splendid geniuses, yet undiscovered, but The Temple College will bring them to the light, and the world will be the richer for it. By the use of spare hours—hours usually running to waste—great things can be done. The commendation of these successful students will do more for the college than any number of rich friends can do. It will make friends; it will bring money; it will win honor; it will secure success.”

An investment fund was created and once more the people made their offerings. The same self-sacrificing spirit was evident as in the building of the church. One boy brought to the pastor fifty cents, the first money he had ever earned; a woman sent to the treasury a gold ring, the only gift she could make, which bore interest in the suggestion that all who chose might offer similar gifts as did the women in the day of Moses. A business man hearing of this said, “If a day is appointed, I will on that day give to the College all the gold and silver that comes into my store for purchases.” Every organization of Grace Church contributed time, work, money, and prayer to the building of the College. Small wonder then that obligations were met and payments made promptly.

One of the most successful methods by which money was raised for the College was the “Penny Talent” effort in 1893. Burdette, in his “Temple and Templars” has made a most painstaking record of the various ways in which the talent was used. He says:



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“Each worker was given a penny, no more. Four thousand were given out at one service. One man put his penny in a neat box, took it to his office, and exhibited his ‘talent’ at a nickel a ‘peep.’ He gained \$1.70 the first day of his ‘show,’ A woman bought a ‘job lot’ of molasses with her penny, made it into molasses candy, sold it in square inch cakes, after telling the customer her story; payments were generous and she netted \$1.80. Then the man who sold her the molasses returned her penny. Another sister established a ‘cooky’ business, which grew rapidly. One boy kept his penny and went to work, earned 50 cents, the first money he ever earned in his life. It was a big penny, but he was bubbling over with enthusiasm and in it all went; he brought it straight to his pastor. One worker collected autographs and sold them. A boy sold toothpicks. One young man made silver buttonhooks and a young lady sold them. A woman traded her penny up to a dollar, made aprons from that time on until she earned \$10. One class of seven girls in the Sunday-school united its capital and gave a supper at the Park and netted \$50. The Young Men’s Bible Class constructed a model of the College building, which they exhibited. The children gave a supper in the Lower Temple, which added \$100 to the College fund. There came into the treasury \$1.00 ‘saved on carfares’; ‘whitewashing a cellar’ brought \$3. Thrice, somebody walked from Germantown to The Temple and back, saving 75 cents; a wife saved \$20 from household allowances. A little girl of seven years went into a lively brokerage business with her penny, and took several ‘flyers’ that netted her handsome margins. Here is her report—

“Sold the “talent penny” to Aunt Libby for seven cents; sold the seven cents to Mamma for 25 cents; sold the 25 cents to Papa for 50 cents. Aunt Caddie, 10 cents; Uncle Gilman, 5 cents; Cousin Walter, 4 cents; cash, 25 cents,—\$1.04 and the penny talent returned.’

“‘Pinching the market-basket’ sent in \$2.50; ‘all the pennies and nickels received in four months, \$12.70’; ‘walking instead of riding, \$6.50’; ‘singing and making plaster plaques, \$7.’ A dentist bought of a fellow dentist one cent’s worth of cement filling-material; this he used, giving his labor, and earned 50 cents; with this he bought 50 cents’ worth of better filling, part of which he used, again giving his labor, and the College gained \$3.00. A boy sold his penny to a physician for a dollar. The physician sold the ‘talent penny’ for 10 cents, which he exchanged at the Mint for bright new pennies. These he took to business friends and got a dollar apiece for them; added \$5.00 of his own and turned in \$15.00. Donations of one cent each were received through Mr. William P. Harding, from Governor Tillman of South Carolina, Governor McKinley of Ohio, Governor Russell of Massachusetts. From Governor Fuller of Vermont—a rare old copper cent, 1782, coined by Vermont before she was admitted to the Union;



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the governors' letters were sold to the highest bidders. Everybody who worked, everybody who traded with the penny, did something, and every penny was blessed, so lovingly and so zealously was the trading done. It was the Master's talent which they were working with. All the little things that went into the treasury; lead pencils, tacks, \$3.00 in one case and \$5.00 in another; 'beefs liver, \$14.00'—think of that! How tired the boarders must have grown of liver away out on Broad Street—stick pins, hairpins, and the common kind that you bend and lose; candy, pretzels, and cookies; 'old tin cans,' wooden spoons, pies; one man sent \$50.00 as a gift because he said 'his penny had brought him luck'; another found 16 pennies, which good fortune he ascribed to the penny in his pocket.

“So in October the workers who had received their pennies in April came together to show what they had done. Four thousand pennies had been given out; \$6,000 came directly from the returns, and indirectly about \$8,000 more.

“The 'Feast of Tithes,' held in December of the same year, was a great fair, extending through seven week days. The displays of goods and the refreshment booths were in the Lower Temple, while fine concerts and other entertainments were given in the auditorium. The Feast of Tithes netted \$5,500 for the College fund.”

Thus the work progressed. No one could give large amounts, but many gave a little, and stone by stone the building grew. In August, 1893, the corner stone of the College building was laid. Taking up the silver trowel which had been used in laying the corner stone of The Temple, in 1889, Dr. Conwell said:

“Friends, to-day we do something more than simply lay the corner stone of a college building. We do an act here very simply that shows to the world, and will go on testifying after we have gone to our long rest, that the church of Jesus Christ is not only an institution of theory, but an institution of practice. It will stand here upon this great and broad street and say through the coming years to all passersby, 'Christianity means something for the good of humanity; Christianity means not only a belief in things that are good and pure and righteous, but it also means an activity that shall bless those who need the assistance of others.' It shall say to the rich man, 'Give thou of thy surplus to those who have not.' It shall say to the poor man, 'Make thou the most of thy opportunities and thou shalt be the equal of the rich.'

“Now, in the name of the people who have given for this enterprise, in the name of the many Christians who have prayed, and who are now sending up their prayers to heaven, I lay this corner stone.”



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The work went on. In May, 1894, a great congregation thronged The Temple to attend the dedication services of "Temple College," for it was in its new home; a handsome building, presenting with The Temple a beautiful stone front of two hundred feet on the broad avenue which it faces. Robert E. Pattison, governor of Pennsylvania, presided, saying, in his introductory remarks, "Around this noble city many institutions have arisen in the cause of education, but I doubt whether any of them will possess a greater influence for good than Temple College." Bishop Foss, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, offered prayer. The orator was Honorable Charles Emory Smith, of Philadelphia, ex-minister to Russia. Mr. James Johnson, the builder, gave the keys to the architect, Mr. Thomas P. Lonsdale, who delivered them to the pastor of Grace Church and president of Temple College, remarking that "it was well these keys should be in the hands of those who already held the keys to the inner temple of knowledge."

President Conwell, receiving the keys, said that, "by united effort, penny by penny, and dollar by dollar, every note had been paid, every financial obligation promptly met. It is a demonstration of what people can do when thoroughly in earnest in a great enterprise."

Academies were also started in distant parts of the city for the benefit of those who could not reach the college in time for classes. Unfortunately these academies were compelled to close on account of lack of funds. Many pitiful letters were received at the college from those who were thus shut out of educational advantages. One in particular, poorly spelled but breathing its bitter disappointment, said that the writer (a woman) was just beginning to hope she would get her head above water some day. But that now she must sink again. A little light had begun to glimmer for her through the blackness, but that light had been taken away. She was going down again into the depth of hopeless ignorance with no one to lend a helping hand—the tragedy of which Carlyle wrote when he penned "That there should be one man die ignorant who is capable of knowledge, this I call a tragedy."

The College at first was entirely free, but as the attendance increased, it was found necessary to charge a nominal tuition fee in order to keep out those who had no serious desire to study, but came irregularly "just for the fun of the thing." When it was decided to charge five dollars a year for the privilege of attending the evening classes, the announcement was received with the unanimous approbation of the students who honestly wished to study, and who more than any others were hindered by the aimless element.

Not only did the poor and those who were employed during the day come, but before long the sons and daughters of the well-to-do were knocking at the doors, not for admission to the evening classes but for day study. So the day department was opened. Not only has it proved most successful in its work, but it has helped the College to meet expenses.



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The curriculum of the College is broad. A child just able to walk can enter the kindergarten class in the day department and receive his entire schooling under the one roof, graduating with a college degree, taking a special university course, or fitting himself for business.

Four university courses are given—theology, law, medicine, pharmacy. The Medical and Theological Departments take students to their graduation and upon presentation of their diploma before the State Board they are admitted to the State Examination. The Theological Course, of course, graduates a man the same as any other theological seminary.

Post-graduate courses are also given.

The college courses include—arts, science, elocution and oratory, business, music, civil engineering, physical education. The graduates of the college course are admitted to the post-graduate courses of Pennsylvania, Yale, Princeton and Harvard on their diplomas. Students pass from any year's work of the college course to the corresponding course of other Institutions.

The preparatory courses are college preparatory, medical preparatory, scientific preparatory, law preparatory, an English course and a business preparatory course. Thus, if one is not ready to enter one of the higher courses, he can prepare here by night study for them.

The Business Course includes a commercial course, shorthand course, secretarial course, conveyancing course, telegraphy course, advertisement writing and proofreading.

There are normal courses for kindergarteners and elementary teachers, and in household science, physical training, music, millinery, dressmaking, elocution and oratory.

Special courses are given in civil engineering, chemistry, elocution and oratory, painting and drawing, sign writing, mechanical and architectural drawing, music, physical training, dressmaking, millinery, cooking, embroidery, and nursing, the last being given at the Samaritan Hospital.

All of these courses, excepting the Normal Kindergarten, can be studied day or evening, as best suits the student.

The kindergarten and model schools cover the work of the public schools from the kindergarten to the highest grammar grades, fitting the student to enter the first year of the preparatory department. These classes are held in the daytime only.

The power to confer degrees was granted in 1891. The teaching force has been greatly enlarged until at present there are one hundred and thirty-five teachers and an average of more than three thousand regular students yearly.



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The number of students instructed at Temple College in proportion to money expended and buildings used is altogether out of proportion to any other college in America. Some idea of the breadth of study presented at Temple College may be had from a comparison with Harvard. Harvard has more than five thousand students, four hundred instructors, and presents five hundred courses of study. Its growth since 1860 has been wonderful. In 1860, while one man might not have been able in four years to master all the subjects offered, he could have done so in six. It was estimated in 1899 that the courses of study offered were so varied that sixty years would have been required. It would take one student ninety-six years to take all the courses presented by the Temple College.

From the time of the opening of Temple College up to the closing exercises of 1905, its students have numbered 55,656. If an answer is desired to the question, "Is such an institution needed," that number answers is most emphatically. That more than fifty thousand people, the majority of them working men and women, will give their nights after a day of toil, to study, proves that the institution that gives them the opportunity to study is sorely needed.

The life story of men and women who have studied here and gone on to lives of usefulness would make interesting reading. One young girl who lived in the mill district of Kensington was earning \$2.50 a week, folding circulars, addressing envelopes and doing such work. Her parents were poor. She had the most meagre education, and the outlook for her to earn more was dark. Some one advised her to go to Temple College at night and study bookkeeping. A few years after, her well-wisher saw her one evening at the college, bright, happy, a different girl in both dress and deportment. She had a position as bookkeeper at \$10 a week and was going on now and taking other courses.

That is the ordinary story of the work Temple College does, multiplied in thousands of lives. Others are not so ordinary. One of the early students was a poor man earning \$6.00 a week. To-day he is earning \$6,000 a year in a government position at Washington, his rise in life due entirely to the opportunities of study offered him at Temple College. A lady who had been brought up in refined and cultured society was compelled to support herself, her husband and child through his complete physical breakdown. She took the normal course in dressmaking and millinery, and has this year been appointed the Director of the Domestic Science work in a large institution at a very good salary, being able to keep herself and family in comfort. One of the present college students was a weaver without any education at all, getting not only his elementary education and his preparatory education here, but will next year graduate from the college department. He has been entirely self-supporting in the meantime, and will make a fine teacher of mathematics. He has been teaching extra classes in the evening department of the College for several years.



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One of the students who entered the classes in 1886 was a poor boy of thirteen. For nineteen long years he has studied persistently at night, passing from one grade to another until this summer (1905) his long schooling was crowned with success and he was admitted to the bar. All these weary years he has worked hard during the day, for there were others depending upon him, and at night despite his physical weariness, has faithfully pursued his studies. He deserves his success and the greater success that will come to him, for such a man in those long years has stored away experiences that will make him a power.

Another student in the early days of the college was a poor boy who had no education whatever, having been compelled to help earn the family living as soon as he was able, his father being a drunkard. For fifteen years he studied, passing from one grade to another until in 1899, he had the great joy of being ordained to the ministry, six of his ministerial brethren gathering around him in the great Temple and laying on his head the hands of ordination, feeling they were setting apart to the struggles and hardships of the Gospel ministry one who had shown himself worthy of his exalted calling.

One of the official stenographers connected with the Panama Canal Commission was a breaker boy who came to Philadelphia from the mining district poor and ignorant, and studied in Temple College at night, working during the day to earn his living.

Such records would fill a book. They prove better even than numbers the worth of such an institution. If only one such man or woman is lifted to a happier, more useful life, the work is worth while.

Such an institution can do much for the purification of politics. Before the students are ever held high ideals of right living, of honesty, of purity. All the associations of the College are conducive to clean character and high ideals. As the largest number of the students are men and women from active business life, they are keenly alive to the questions of the day. They know the responsibility for honest government rests with each voter, that to have clean politics every man and woman must individually do his share to uphold high standards in political and social life, that only men whose characters are above reproach should be elected to office. That the President of their college shares these views and knows also what a power lies in their hands, is shown by the following letter:

“Fraternal Greetings: The near approach of an important election leads me to suggest to you the following:

“First. There being now in this city over seven thousand voters who have been students in the Temple College, you have by your votes and your influence, either by combination or as individuals, a considerable political power. You should use it for the good of your city, state, and nation.



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“Second. In city affairs I urge you to think first of the poor. The rich do not need your care. Vote only for such city candidates as will most speedily secure for the more needy classes pure water, clean streets, cheaper homes, cheaper and more useful education, healthier environment, cheap and quick transportation, the development of the labor-giving improvements, and the increase of sea-going and inland commerce. Select large-hearted, cool-headed men for city officers, regardless of national parties.

“Third. Let no man or party purchase your patriotic birthright for a fifty-cent tax bill or any other sum.

“Fourth. In selecting your candidates for state offices remember the needs of the people. Favor the granting to the submerged poor a more favorable opportunity to help themselves. Move in the most reasonable and direct way toward the ultimate abolition of the sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and for the increase of hospital and college privileges for the afflicted and the ignorant.

“Fifth. In national politics, remember that both parties have a measure of truth in their principles, and the need of the time is noble, conscientious lovers of humanity, who will not be led by party enthusiasm into any wild schemes in either direction which would result in the destruction of business and the degradation of national honor. Think independently, vote considerately, stand unflinchingly against any measure that is wrong, and vigorously in favor of every movement that is right. This is an opportunity to do a great, good deed. Quit you like men. With endearing affection,

“Russell H. Conwell.”

Even now the press of students is so great the trustees are planning larger things. The “Philadelphia Press,” speaking of the new work to be undertaken, said:

“A city university, with a capacity of seven thousand students, more than are attending any other one seat of learning in the United States, is to be built in Philadelphia. It will be the university of the Temple College and will stand on the site of the old Broad Street Baptist Church at the southeast corner of Broad and Brown Streets, and the lot adjoining the church property on the south side on Broad Street.

“The new structure will cost \$225,000, while the ground on which it will be built is worth \$165,000, making the total value of the new institution \$390,000.

“Rev. Russell H. Conwell, D.D., pastor of the Grace Baptist Church, at Broad and Berks Streets, and President of Temple College, said yesterday that the new university will be completed and ready for occupancy by September, 1906. In the twenty years of its existence Temple College has grown as have few educational institutions in America, until now it has more than three thousand students enrolled yearly.

“With the erection of the university building the institution will have facilities for educating four thousand more students, or a total of seven thousand.



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“Some idea of how the other great universities of the country compare with regard to the number of students attending them with this new university of Philadelphia is shown by the following table:

Name. Number of Students,

Temple University 7,000

Harvard 5,393

Yale 2,995

Pennsylvania 2,692

Princeton 1,373

“The Temple University building will be eight stories high, at least that is the plan the trustees have in mind at present, but the structure will be so built that a height of two stories may be added at any time. It will have a frontage of 129 feet on Broad Street and 140 feet on Brown Street. The corner property was deeded as a gift to Temple College by the Broad and Brown Streets Church and the College then purchased the adjoining property on Broad Street. In appreciation of the gift the College has offered the use of the university chapel, which will be built in the building, to the Broad and Brown Streets Church congregation for a place of worship.

“The university will be built of stone, and while not an elaborate structure, it will be substantial and suitable in every respect and imposing in its very simplicity.

“In addition to the university offices there will be a large gymnasium, a free dispensary, departments of medicine, theology, law, engineering, sciences, and, in fact, all the branches of learning that are taught in any of the great universities. There will be a library and lecture room for every department, pathological and chemical laboratories and a sufficient number of classrooms to preclude crowding of students for the next ten or fifteen years.

“There are now one hundred and thirty-five instructors in Temple College, but when the university is opened this number will be increased to three hundred.

“The present college building, which adjoins the Baptist Temple, will continue to be used, but only for the normal classes and lower grade of work. The building will be remodeled. The dwelling adjoining the college which has been occupied as the theological department will be vacated when the university is completed.

“Dr. Conwell, the father of Temple College and who in years to come will be spoken of as the father of Temple University, said yesterday:

“It will be a university for busy people, the same as the college has been a college for busy people. Our institution reaches and benefits a class—in some respects the greatest class—of persons who want to study and enlarge their education, but cannot attend the other universities and colleges for financial reasons and because of their business.



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“There’s many a man and woman, young and middle-aged, who is not satisfied with himself—he wants to go on farther, he wants to learn more. But his daily work won’t allow him to complete his education because of the inconvenient hours of the classes and lectures in other colleges. And he comes to Temple, as there classes are held practically all day and for several hours at night. The terms of the course at Temple College are reasonable, and thus many young men or women may prepare themselves for higher and more remunerative work, whereas they would not feel that they could afford to pay the tuition fee at some other institution. The Temple University will be similar to the London University, a city university for busy persons.”

Thus Temple College grows because it is needed. And such an institution is needed in other cities as well as in Philadelphia. This is but the pioneer. It can have sister institutions wherever people want to study and Christian hearts want to help.

It grows also because in the heart of one man, its founder, is the bitter knowledge of how sorely such an institution is needed by those who want to study, and who himself works hand, heart and soul so that it shall never fail those who need it.

Says James M. Beck, the noted lawyer: “There have been very wealthy men who, out of the abundance of their resources, have founded colleges, but I can hardly recall a case where a man, without abundant means, by mere force of character and intellectual energy, has both created and maintained an institution of this size and character,”

Far back in the dim light of the centuries, Confucius wrote, “Give instruction unto those who cannot obtain it for themselves.” This is the great and useful work the Temple College is doing and doing it nobly, a work that will count for untold good on future generations.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE SAMARITAN HOSPITAL

Beginning in Two Rooms. Growth. Number of Beds. Management. Temple Services Heard by Telephone. Faith and Nationality of Those Cared For.

His pastoral work among his church members and others of the neighborhood brought to Dr. Conwell’s mind constantly the needs of the sick poor. Scarcely a week passed that some one did not come to him for help for a loved one suffering from disease, but without means to secure proper medical aid. Sick and poor—that is a condition which sums up the height of human physical suffering—the body racked with pain, burning with fever, yet day and night battling on in misery, without medical aid, without nursing, without any of the comforts that relieve pain. Nor is the sick one the only sufferer. Those who love him endure the keenest mental anguish as they stand by helpless,

unable to raise a finger for his relief because they are poor. Through the deep waters of both these experiences Dr. Conwell had himself passed. He knew the anguish of heart



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of seeing loved ones suffer, of being unable to secure for them the nourishing food, the care needed to make them well. He knew the wretchedness of being sick and poor and of not knowing which way to turn for help, while quivering flesh and nerves called in torture for relief. His heart went out in burning sympathy to all such cases that came to his knowledge, and generously he helped. But they were far too many for one man, big-hearted and open-handed as he might be. More and more the need of a hospital in that part of the city was impressed upon him. Accidents among his membership were numerous, yet the nearest hospital was blocks and blocks away, a distance which meant precious minutes when with every moment life was ebbing.

He laid the matter before his church people. Down through the centuries came ringing in their ears that command, "Heal the sick." They knew it was Christ's work—"Unto Him were brought all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and he healed them."

So they decided to rent two rooms where the sick could be cared for, and later built a hospital for the poor, where without money and without price, the best medical aid, the tenderest nursing were at the command of those in need.

"The Hospital was founded," says Dr. Conwell, "and this property purchased in the hope that it would do Christ's work. Not simply to heal for the sake of professional experience, not simply to cure disease and repair broken bones, but to so do those charitable acts as to enforce the truth Jesus taught, that God 'would not that any should perish, but that all should come unto Him and live.' Soul and body, both need the healing balm of Christianity. The Hospital modestly and touchingly furnishes it to all classes, creeds, and ages whose sufferings cause them to cry out, 'Have mercy on me!'"

So far as buildings were concerned, it began in a small way, though its spirit of kindness and Christian charity was large. After one year in rented rooms, a house was purchased on North Broad Street, near Ontario Street, and fitted up as a hospital with wards, operating room and dispensary. It was situated just where a network of railroads focuses and near a number of large factories and machine shops, where accidents were occurring constantly. Almost immediately its wards were filled. The name "Samaritan Hospital" was given as typical of its work and spirit, its projectors and supporters laying down their money and agreeing to pay whatever might be needed, as well as giving of their personal care and attention to the sufferer. But though Dr. Conwell's heart is big, his head is practical. He does not believe in indiscriminate charity.



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“Charity is composed of sympathy and self-sacrifice. There is no charity without a union of these two,” he said, in an address years ago at Music Hall, Boston. “To make a gift become a charity the recipient must feel that it is given out of sympathy; that the donor has made a sacrifice to give it; that it is intended only as assistance and not as a permanent support, unless the needy one he helpless; and that it is not given as his right. To accomplish this end desired by charitable hearts demands an acquaintance with the persons to be assisted or a study of them, and a great degree of caution and patience. It is not only unnecessary, but a positive wrong to give to itinerant beggars. There is no such thing as charity about a so-called state charity. It is statesmanship to rid the community of nuisances, to feed the poor and prevent stealing and robbery, but it should not be called ‘a charity.’ The paupers take their provision as their right, feel no gratitude, acquire no ambition, no industry, no culture. The state almshouse educates the brain and chills the heart. It fastens a stigma on the child to hinder and curse it for life. Any institution supported otherwise than by voluntary contribution, or in the hands of paid public officials, can never have the spirit of charity nor be correctly called a charity. Boston’s public charitable institutions, so called, are not charities at all; the motive is not sympathy, but necessity. The money for the support of paupers is not paid with benevolent intentions by the tax-payers, nor do the inmates of almshouses so receive it. I have been engaged in gathering statistics, and have found sixty-three per cent of all persons who applied for assistance at the various institutions were impostors, while many were swindlers and professional burglars.”

The sick poor are never turned away from Samaritan Hospital, but those who are able to pay are requested to do so. Dr. Conwell believes it would be a wrong to treat such people free, an injustice to physicians, as well as an encouragement of a wrong spirit in themselves. The hospital has a number of private rooms in which patients are received for pay. Many have been furnished by members of Grace Baptist Church in memory of some loved one “gone before,” or by Sunday School classes or church organizations.

It may have been the fact that it started in an ordinary house that gave the Hospital its cheery, homelike atmosphere. It may have been the spirit of the workers. But its homelike air is noticeable. While rules are strictly enforced, as they must be, there is a feeling of personal interest in each patient that makes the sick feel that she is something more than a “case” or a “number.”

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“The lovely Christ spirit,” says Dr. Conwell, “which inclines men and women to care for their unfortunate fellowmen, is especially beautiful when in addition to the healing of wounds and disease, the afflicted sufferers are welcomed to such a home as the Samaritan Hospital has become. All such kind deeds become doubly sweet when done in the name of Christ, because they carry with them sympathy for those in pain, love for the loveless, a home for the homeless, friendship for the friendless, and a divine solace, which are often more than surgical skill or medical science. Such an institution the Samaritan Hospital is ever to be. It began in weakness and inexperience, but with Christian devotion and affection, its founders and supporters have conquered innumerable difficulties, and can now say unreservedly that they have a hospital with all the conveniences and all the influences of a Christian home.”

The hospital was opened February 1, 1892. It did not take long to prove the need of the work. Before the year was out it was so crowded that an addition had to be built, and now magnificent buildings stand adjoining the original “house” as a monument to the untiring work and zeal of Grace Church members and their friends. It is now an independent corporation.

The hospital is fitted with all modern appliances for caring for the sick. It has a hundred and seventy beds, and a large and competent staff of physicians numbering many of the best in the city. There is also a training school for nurses, the original hospital building being now fitted up and furnished as a nurses’ home. More than five thousand different cases are ministered to during the year in the beds and dispensary. The annual expense of running the hospital is more than forty thousand dollars, the value of the property more than three hundred thousand dollars.

In addition to the customary weekly visiting days, visitors are allowed on one evening during the week and on Sunday afternoons. These rather unusual visiting hours are an innovation of Dr. Conwell’s for the benefit of busy workers who cannot visit their sick friends or relatives on week days.

A novel feature of the hospital and one which brings great pleasure to the patients, is the telephone service connecting it with The Temple, whereby those who are able, can hear the preaching of the pastor Sunday morning and evening at the big church farther down Broad Street.

One of the most efficient aids in the hospital’s growth has been the Board of Lady Managers. When the hospital was opened in 1892, a committee of six ladies was appointed by Mr. Conwell to take charge of the housekeeping affairs, and from this committee has grown this Board which has done so much to aid the hospital, both by raising money and looking after its household affairs.

This committee had entire charge of the house department, visiting it weekly, inspecting the house, and making suggestions to the trustees for improving the work in that department.



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The Board is divided into Finance, Visiting, Flower, Linen, Ward Supplies, House Supplies and Sewing Committee. The chairman of these committees, together with the five officers, constitute the Executive Committee, and meet with the trustees at their regular monthly meetings.

In addition to paying the housekeeping bills, the board has come many times to the assistance of the trustees, and by giving entertainments, holding sales, teas, receptions, has raised large sums of money for special purposes. In connection with this Board is the Samaritan Aid Society which annually contributes about three hundred new articles of clothing and bedding.

The Board of Trustees is composed of able, experienced business men who apply their knowledge of business affairs to the conduct of the hospital. It means a sacrifice of much time on their part, but it is cheerfully given.

The hospital is non-sectarian. Suffering and need are the only requisites for admission. During the past year among those who were cared for were:

Catholic 284
 Baptist 134
 Methodist 141
 Episcopalian 112
 Lutheran 97
 Presbyterian 96
 Hebrew 89
 Protestant 54
 Reformed 25
 Friends 12
 Confucianism 5
 Congregational 4
 United Brethren 3
 Evangelist 3
 Christian 2
 Not recorded 60

1141

[Illustration: *Attending service in bed*]

The nativity of the patients showed that nearly all countries were represented—Russia, Poland, Italy, Canada, Sweden, Norway, Scotland, England, Germany, Ireland, China, Hungary, Australia, Switzerland, Jerusalem, Roumania and Armenia.



Never was the worth of its work better shown than in the terrible Ball Park accident, which happened in Philadelphia in 1904, when by the collapsing of the grandstand hundreds were killed and injured. Without a moment's notice, more than a hundred patients were rushed to the hospital and cared for. When the wards were filled, cots were placed in the halls, in the offices, wherever there was room, and the injured tenderly treated.

Thus from small beginnings and a great need it has steadily grown, supported by contributions and upheld by the faithful work of those who labor for the love of the Master. Sacrifices of time and money have been freely made for it, for the people who have worked to support it are few of them rich. It still needs help, for "the poor ye have always with you." And while there are poor people and sick people, Samaritan Hospital will always need the help of the more fortunate to aid it in its great work of relieving pain.

CHAPTER XXX

THE MANNER OF THE MAN

Boundless Love for Men. Utter Humility. His Simplicity and Informality. Keen Sense of Humor. His Unconventional Methods of Work. Power as a Leader. His Tremendous Faith.



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What of the personality of the man back of all this ceaseless work, these stupendous undertakings? Much of it can be read in the work itself. But not all. One must know Dr. Conwell personally to realize that deep, abiding love of humanity which is the wellspring of his life and which shows itself in constant and innumerable acts of thoughtfulness and kindness for the happiness of others. He cannot see a drunkard on the street without his heart going out in a desire to help him to a better life. He cannot see a child in tears, but that he must know the trouble and mend it. From boyhood, it was one of the strongest traits of his character, and when it clasped hands with a man's love of Christ, it became the ruling passion of his life. The woes of humanity touch him deeply. He freely gives himself, his time, his money to lighten them. But he knows that to do his best, is but comparatively little. To him it is a pitiful thing that so much of the world's, misery cannot be relieved because of the lack of money; that people must starve, must suffer pain and disease, must go without the education that makes life brighter and happier, simply for the want of this one thing of so little worth compared with the great things of life it has the power to withhold or grant.

One must also be intimately associated with Dr. Conwell to realize the deep humility that rules his heart, that makes him firmly believe any man who will trust in God and go ahead in faith can accomplish all that he himself has done, and more.

"You do not know what a struggle my life is," he said once to a friend. "Only God and my own heart know how far short I come of what I ought to be, and how often I mar the use He would make of me even when I would serve Him."

And again, at the Golden Jubilee services, in honor of his fiftieth birthday, he said publicly what he many times says in private:

"I look back on the errors of by-gone years; my blunders; my pride; my self-sufficiency; my willfulness—if God would take me up in my unworthiness and imperfection and lift me to such a place of happiness and love as this—I say, He can do it for any man.

"When I see the blunders I unintentionally make in history, in mathematics, in names, in rhetoric, in exegesis, and yet see that God uses even blunders to save men—I sink back into the humblest place before Him and say, 'If God can use such preaching as that, blunders and mistakes like these; if He can take them and use them for His glory, He can use anybody and anything.' I let out the secret of my life when I tell you this: If I have succeeded at all, it has been with the conscious sense that as God has used even me, so can He use others. God saved me and He can save them. My very faults show me, they teach me, that any person can be helped and saved."

Speaking of his sermons, which are taken down by a stenographer and typewritten for publication in the "Temple Review," he said, with the utmost dejection, "Positively they make me sick. To think that I should stand up and undertake to preach when I can do no better than that"



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He has ever that sense of defeat from which all great minds suffer whose high ideals ever elude them.

In manner and speech, he is simple and unaffected, and approachable at all times. When not away from the city lecturing, he spends a certain part of the day in his study at the church, where any one can see him on any matter which he may wish to bring to his attention. The ante-room is thronged at the hour when it is known that he will be there. People waylay him in the church corridors, and on the streets, so well known is his kindly heart, his attentive ear, his generous hand.

Not only do these visitors invade the church, but they come to his home. Early in the morning they are there. They await him when he returns late at night. As an instance of their number, one Saturday afternoon late in June he had one hour free which he hoped to take for rest and the preparation of the next morning's sermon. During that one hour he had six callers, each staying until the next arrived. One of these was a young man whom Dr. Conwell had never seen, a boy no more than seventeen or eighteen. He had a few weeks before made a runaway marriage with a girl still younger than himself. Her parents had indignantly taken the bride home, and the young husband came to Dr. Conwell to ask him to seek out these parents and persuade them to let the child wife return to her husband.

He has a knack of putting everybody at ease in his presence, which perhaps accounts for the freedom with which people, even utter strangers, come to him and pour into his ear their life secrets. This earnest desire to help people, to make them happier and better, shines from his life with such force that one feels it immediately on entering his presence and opens one's heart to him. He helps, advises, and, because he is so preeminently a man of faith and believes so firmly that all he has done has been accomplished by faith and perseverance, he inspires others with like confidence in themselves. They go away encouraged, hopeful, strengthened for the work that lies ahead of them, or for the trouble they must surmount. It is little wonder the people throng to him for help.

His simple, informal view of life is shown in other things. During a summer vacation in the Berkshires he was scheduled to lecture in one of the home towns. His old friends and neighbors dearly love to hear him, and nearly always secure a lecture from him while he is supposed to be resting. Entirely forgetting the lecture, he planned a fishing trip that day. Just as the fishing party was ready to start, some one remembered the lecture. There would not be time to go fishing, return, dress and go to the lecture town. But Dr. Conwell is a great fisherman, and he disliked most thoroughly to give up that fishing trip. He thought about it a few minutes, and then in his informal, unconventional fashion, decided he would both fish and lecture. He packed his lecturing



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apparel in a suit case, tied a tub for the accommodation of the fish on the back of the wagon and started. All day he fished, happy and contented. When lecturing time drew near, rattling and splashing, with a tubful of fish, round-eyed and astonished at the violent upheavals of their usual calm abiding place, he drove up to the lecture hall, changed his clothes, and at the appointed time appeared on the platform and delivered one of the best lectures that section ever heard.

Some people call his methods sensational. They are not sensational in the sense of merely making a noise for the purpose of attracting attention. They are unconventional. Dr. Conwell pays no attention to forms if the life has gone out of them, to traditions, if their spirit is dead, their days of usefulness past. He lives in the present He sees present needs and adopts methods to fit them. No doubt, many said it was sensational to tear down that old church at Lexington himself. But there was no money and the church must come down. The only way to get it down and a new one built, was to go to work. And he went to work in straightforward, practical fashion. It takes courage and strength of mind thus to tear down conventions and forms. But he does not hesitate if he sees they are blocking the road of progress. This disregard of customs, this practical common-sense way of attacking evil or supplying needs is seen in all his church work. And because it is original and unusual, it brings upon him often, a storm of adverse criticism. But he never halts for that. He is willing to suffer misrepresentation, even calumny, if the cause for which he is working, progresses. He cares nothing for himself. He thinks only of the Master and the work He has committed to his hands.

Though the great masses in their ignorance and poverty appeal to him powerfully and incite him to tremendous undertakings for their relief, he does not, because his hands are so full of great things, turn aside from opportunities to help the individual. Indeed, it is this readiness to answer a personal call for help that has endeared him so to thousands and thousands. No matter what may be the labor or inconvenience to himself, he responds instantly when the appeal comes.

Two men, now members of the church, often tell the incident that led to their conversion. One evening they fell to discussing Dr. Conwell with some young friends who were members of the church. The young men stoutly maintained that "Conwell was like all the rest—in it for the almighty dollar." The church members as stoutly asserted that he was actuated by motives far above such sordid consideration. But the men would not yield their point and the subject was dropped. A few evenings later, coming out of a saloon at midnight into a blinding snowstorm, they heard a man say, "My dear child, why did you not tell me before that you were in need. You know I would not let you suffer."

"That's Conwell," said one of the young fellows.



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“Nothing of the kind,” replied the other. “What’s the matter with you? Catch him out a night like this.”

“But I tell you that was Conwell’s voice,” said the first man. “I know it. Let’s follow him and see what he’s doing.”

Through the thickly falling snow, they could see the tall figure of Dr. Conwell with a large basket on one arm and leading a little child by the hand. Keeping a sufficient distance behind, they followed him to a poor home in a little street, saw him enter, saw the light flash up and knew that he was living out in deed the doctrine he preached. Silent, they turned away. What his spoken word in The Temple could not do his ministry at midnight had accomplished, and they became loyal and devoted members of the church.

In conversation with a street car conductor at one time, he found the man eager to hear of Christ and His love, but unable to give heed on the car because he might be reported for inattention to his duties and lose his place. Dr. Conwell asked him where he took dinner, and at the noon hour was there and, plainly and simply, as the man ate his lunch, told what Christ’s love in his heart and life would mean.

Such stories could be multiplied many times of this personal ministry that seeks day and night, in season and out, to make mankind better, to lift it up where it may grasp eternal truth.

Francis Willard says:

“To move among the people on the common street; to meet them in the market-place on equal terms; to live among them not as saint or monk, but as a brother man with brother men; to serve God not with form or ritual, but in the free impulse of the soul; to bear the burden of society and relieve its needs; to carry on its multitudinous activities in the city, social, commercial, political, and philanthropic—this is the religion of the Son of man.” This is the religion of Dr. Conwell.

As a leader and organizer he is almost without an equal in church work. He sees a need. His practical mind goes to work to plan ways to meet it. He organizes the work thoroughly and carefully; he rallies his workers about him and then leads them dauntlessly forward to success. He has weathered many a fierce gale of opposition, won out in many a furious storm of criticism. The greater the obstacles, the more brightly does his ability as a leader shine. He seems to call up from some secret storehouse reserves of enthusiasm. He gets everybody energetically and cheerfully at work, and the obstacles that seemed insurmountable suddenly melt away. As some one has said, “He attempts the impossible, yet finds practical ways to accomplish it”

The way he met an unexpected demand for money during the building of the church illustrates this:

The trustees had, as they thought, made provision for the renewal of a note of \$2,000, due Dec. 27th. Late Friday, Dec. 24th, the news came that the note could not be renewed, that it must be paid Monday. They had no money, nothing could be done but appeal to the people on Sunday.



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But it was not a usual Sunday. The Church, just the night before, had closed a big fair for the College. Many had served at the fair tables almost until the Sabbath morning was ushered in. They were tired. All had given money, many even beyond what they could afford. It was, besides, the day after Christmas, and if ever a man's pocketbook is empty, it is then. To make the outlook still drearier, the day opened with a snowstorm that threatened at church time to turn into a drizzling rain. Here was truly the impossible, for none of the people at any time could give a large sum. Yet he faced the situation dauntlessly, aroused his people, and by evening \$2,200 had been pledged for immediate payment, and of that \$1,300 was received in cash that Sunday.

In a sermon once he said:

“Last summer I rode by a locality where there had been a mill, now partially destroyed by a cyclone. I looked at the great engine lying upon its side. I looked at the wheels, at the boilers so out of place, thrown carelessly together. I saw pieces of iron the uses of which I did not understand. I saw iron bands, bearings, braces, and shafting scattered about, and I found the great circular saw rusting, flat in the grass. I went on my way wondering why any person should abandon so many pieces of such excellent machinery, leaving good property to go to waste. But again, not many weeks ago, I went by that same place and saw a building there, temporary in its nature, but with smoke pouring out of the stack and steam hissing and puffing from the exhaust pipe. I heard the sound of the great saw singing its song of industry; I saw the teamsters hauling away great loads of lumber. The only difference between the apparently useless old lumber and scrap iron, piled together in promiscuous confusion, machinery thrown into a heap without the arrangement, and the new building with its powerful engine working smoothly and swiftly for the comfort and wealth of men, was that before the rebuilding, the wheels, the saw, the shafting, boilers, piston-rod, and fly wheel had no definite relation to each other. But some man picked out all these features of a complete mill and put them into proper relation; he adjusted shaft, boiler, and cogwheel, put water in the boiler and fire under it, let steam into the cylinders, and moved piston-rod, wheels, and saw. There were no new cogs, wheels, boilers, or saws; no new piece of machinery; there has only been an intelligent spirit found to set them in their proper places and relationship.

“One great difficulty with this world, whether of the entire globe or the individual church, is that it is made up of all sorts of machinery which is not adjusted; which is out of place; no fire under the boiler; no steam to move the machinery. There is none of the necessary relationship—there can be no affinity between cold and steam, between power wasted and utility; and to overcome this difficulty is one of the great problems of the earth to-day.



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The churches are very much in this condition. There are cogwheels, pulleys, belting, and engines in the church, but out of all useful relationship. There are sincere, earnest Christians, men and women, but they are adjusted to no power and no purpose; they have no definite relationship to utility. They go or come, or lie still and rust, and a vast power for good is unapplied. The text says "We are ambassadors for Christ"; that means, in the clearest terms, the greatest object of the Christian teacher and worker should be the bringing into right relations all the forces of men, and gearing them to the power of Christ"

He undoubtedly understands bringing men together, and getting them at work to secure almost marvelous results. A friend speaking of his ability once said: "I admire Mr. Conwell for the power of which he is possessed of reaching out and getting hold of men and grappling them to himself with hooks of steel.

"I admire him not only for the power he has of binding men not only to himself, but of binding men to Christ, and of binding them to one another; for the power he has of generating enthusiasm. His people are bound not only to the church, to the pastor, to God, but to one another."

He never fails to appreciate the spirit with which a church member works, even if results are not always as anticipated, or even if the project itself is not always practical. He will cheerfully put his hand down into his pocket and pay the bill for some impractical scheme, rather than dampen the ardor of an enthusiastic worker. He knows that experience will come with practice, but that a willing, zealous worker is above price.

Those who know him most intimately find in him, despite his strong, practical common sense, despite his years of hard work in the world, despite the many times he has been deceived and imposed upon, a certain boyish simplicity and guilelessness of heart, a touch of the poetic, idealistic temperament that sees gold where there is only brass; that hopes and believes, where reason for hope and belief there is none. It is a winning trait that endears friends to him most closely, that makes them cheerfully overlook such imprudent benefactions as may result from it, though he himself holds it with a strong rein, and only reveals that side of his nature to those who know him best.

He studies constantly how he may help others, never how he may rest himself. At his old home at South Worthington, Mass., he has built and equipped an academy for the education of the boys and girls of the neighborhood. He wants no boy or girl of his home locality to have the bitter fight for an education that he was forced to experience. It is a commodious building with class-rooms and a large public hall which is used for entertainments, for prayer meetings, harvest homes and all the gatherings of the nearby farming community.

Many other enterprises besides those directly connected with the church grow out of Dr. Conwell's desire to be of service to mankind. But like the organizations of the church, the need for them was strongly felt before they took form.



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While officiating at the funeral of a fireman who had lost his life by the falling walls of a burning building and who had left three small children uncared for, Dr. Conwell was impressed with the need of a home for the orphans of men who risked their lives for the city's good. Pondering the subject, he was called that same day to the bedside of a shut-in, who, while he was there, asked him if there was any way by which she could be of service to helpless children left without paternal care or support. She said the subject had been on her mind and such a work was dear to her heart. She was a gifted writer and wielded considerable influence and could, by her pen, do much good for such a work, not only by her writings but by personal letters asking for contributions to establish and support an orphanage. The coincidence impressed the matter still more strongly on Dr. Conwell's mind. But that was not the end of it. Still that same day, a lady came to him and asked his assistance in securing for her a position as matron of an orphanage; and a woman physician came to his study and offered her services free, to care for orphan children in an institution for them.

Such direct leading was not to be withstood. Dr. Conwell called on a former chief of police and asked his opinion as to an orphanage for the children of fireman and policeman. The policeman welcomed the project heartily, said he had long been thinking of that very problem, and that if it were started by a responsible person, several thousand dollars would be given by the policeman for its support. Still wondering if he should take such leadings as indications of a definite need, Dr. Conwell went to his study, called in some of his church advisers and talked the matter over. Nothing at that meeting was definitely settled, because some work interrupted it and those present dispersed for other duties. But as they disbanded and Dr. Conwell opened his mail, a check fell out for \$75 from Rev. Chas. M. Sheldon, which he said in the letter accompanying it, he desired to give toward a movement for helping needy children.

Dr. Conwell no longer hesitated, and the Philadelphia Orphans' Home Society, of which he is president, was organized, and has done a good work in caring for helpless little ones, giving its whole effort to securing permanent homes for the children and their adoption into lonely families.

Although most of the money from his lectures goes to Temple College, he uses a portion of it to support poor students elsewhere. He has paid for the education of 1,550 college students besides contributing partly to the education of hundreds of others. In fact, all the money he makes, outside of what is required for immediate needs of his family, is given away. He cares so little for money for himself, his wants are so few and simple, that he seldom pays any attention as to whether he has enough with him for personal use. He found once when starting



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to lecture in New Jersey that after he had bought his ticket he hadn't a cent left. Thinking, however, he would be paid when the lecture was over, he went on. But the lecture committee told him they would send a check. Having no money to pay a hotel bill, he took the train back. Reaching Philadelphia after midnight he boarded a trolley and told the conductor who he was and his predicament, offering to send the man the money for his fare next day. But the conductor was not to be fooled, said he didn't know Dr. Conwell from Adam, and put him off. And Dr. Conwell walked twenty long blocks to his home, chuckling all the way at the humor of the situation.

He has a keen sense of humor, as his audiences know. Though the spiritual side of his nature is so intense, his love of fun and appreciation of the humorous relieves him from being solemn or sanctimonious. He is sunny, cheerful, ever ready at a chance meeting with a smile or a joke. Children, who as a rule look upon a minister as a man enshrouded in solemn dignity, are delightfully surprised to find in him a jolly, fun-loving comrade, a fact which has much to do with the number of young people who throng Grace church and enter its membership.

The closeness of his walk with God is shown in his unbounded faith, in the implicit reliance he has in the power of prayer. Though to the world he attacks the problems confronting him with shrewd, practical business sense, behind and underneath this, and greater than it all, is the earnestness with which he first seeks to know the will of God and the sincerity with which he consecrates himself to the work. Christ is to him a very near personal friend, in very truth an Elder Brother to whom he constantly goes for guidance and help, Whose will he wants to do solely, in the current of Whose purpose he wants to move. "Men who intend to serve the Lord should consecrate themselves in heart-searching and prayer," he has said many and many a time. And of prayer itself he says:

"There is planted in every human heart this knowledge, namely, that there is a power beyond our reach, a mysterious potency shaping the forces of life, which if we would win we must have in our favor. There come to us all, events over which we have no control by physical or mental power. Is there any hope of guiding those mysterious forces? Yes, friends, there is a way of securing them in our favor or preventing them from going against us. How? It is by prayer. When a man has done all he can do, still there is a mighty, mysterious agency over which he needs influence to secure success. The only way he can reach that is by prayer."

He has good reason to believe in the power of prayer, for the answers he has received in some cases have seemed almost miraculous.



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When The Temple was being built, Dr. Conwell proposed that the new pipe organ be put in to be ready for the opening service. But the church felt it would be unwise to assume such an extra burden of debt and voted against it. Dr. Conwell felt persuaded that the organ ought to go in, and spent one whole night in The Temple in prayer for guidance. As the result, he decided that the organ should be built. The contract was given, the first payment made, but when in a few months a note of \$1,500 came due, there was not a cent in the treasury to meet it. He knew it would be a most disastrous blow to the church interests, with such a vast building project started, to have that note go to protest. Yet he couldn't ask the membership to raise the money since it had voted against building the organ at that time. Disheartened, full of gloomy foreboding, he came Sunday morning to the church to preach. The money must be ready next morning, yet he knew not which way to turn. He felt he had been acting in accordance with God's will, for the decision had been made after a night of earnest prayer. Yet here stood a wall of Jericho before him and no divine direction came as to how to make it fall. As he entered his study, his private secretary handed him a letter. He opened it, and out fell a check for \$1,500 from an unknown man in Massillon, Ohio, who had once heard Dr. Conwell lecture and felt strangely impelled to send him \$1,500 to use in The Temple work. Dr. Conwell prayed and rejoiced in an ecstasy of gratitude. Three times he broke down during the sermon. His people wondered what was the matter, but said he had never preached more powerfully.

He is a man of prayer and a man of work. Loving, great-hearted, unselfish, cheery, practical, hard-working, he yet draws his greatest inspiration from that silent inner communion with the Master he serves with such single-hearted, unfaltering devotion.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE MANNER OF THE MESSAGE

The Style of the Sermons. Their Subject Matter. Preaching to Help Some Individual Church Member.

In the pulpit, Dr. Conwell is as simple and natural as he is in his study or in the home. Every part of the service is rendered with the heart, as well as the understanding. His reading of a chapter from the Bible is a sermon in itself. The vast congregation follow it with as close attention as they do the sermon. He seems to make every verse alive, to send it with new meaning into each heart. The people in it are real people, who have lived and suffered, who had all the hopes and fears of men and women of to-day. Often little explanations are dropped or timely, practical applications, and when it is over, if that were all of the service one would be repaid for attending.

The hymns, too, are read with feeling and life. If a verse expresses a sentiment contrary to the church feeling, it is not sung. He will not have sung what is not worthy of belief.



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The sermons are full of homely, practical illustrations, drawn from the experiences of everyday life. Dr. Conwell announces his text and begins quite simply, sometimes with a little story to illustrate his thought. If Bible characters take any part in it, he makes them real men and women. He pictures them so graphically, the audience sees them, hears them talk, knows what they thought, how they lived. In a word, each hearer feels as if he had met them personally. Never again are they mere names. They are living, breathing men and women.

Dr. Conwell makes his sermons human because he touches life, the life of the past, the life of the present, the lives of those in his audience. He makes them interesting by his word pictures. He holds attention by the dramatic interest he infuses into the theme. He has been called the "Story-telling Preacher" because his sermons are so full of anecdote and illustrations. But every story not only points a moral, but is full of the interest that fastens it on the hearer's mind. Children in their teens enjoy his sermons, so vivid are they, so full of human, every day interest. Yet all this is but the framework on which is reared some helpful, inspiring Biblical truth which is the crown, the climax, and which because of its careful upbuilding by story and homely illustration is fixed on the hearer's mind and heart in a way never to be forgotten. It is held there by the simple things of life he sees about him every day, and which, every time he sees them, recall the truth he has heard preached. Dr. Thomas May Pierce, speaking of Dr. Conwell's method of preaching, says:

"Spurgeon sought the masses and found them by preaching the gospel with homely illustrations; Russell H. Conwell comes to Philadelphia, he seeks out the masses, he finds them with his plain presentation of the old, old story."

Occasionally he paints word pictures that hold the audience enthralled, or when some great wrong stirs him, rises to heights of impassioned oratory that bring his audience to tears. He never writes out his sermons. Indeed, often he has no time to give them any preparation whatever. Sometimes he does not choose his text until he comes on the platform. Nobody regrets more than Dr. Conwell this lack of preparation, but so many duties press, every minute has so many burdens of work, that it is impossible at times to crowd in a thought for the sermon. It is left for the inspiration of the moment. "I preach poor sermons that other men may preach good ones," he remarked once, meaning that so much of his time was taken up with church work and lecturing that he has little to give his sermons, and almost all of the fees from his lectures are devoted to the education of men for the ministry.

His one purpose in his sermons is to bring Christ into the lives of his people, to bring them some message from the word of God that will do them good, make them better, lift them up spiritually to a higher plane. His people know he comes to them with this strong desire in his heart and they attend the services feeling confident that even though he is poorly prepared, they will nevertheless get practical and spiritual help for the week.

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When he knows that some one member is struggling with a special problem either in business, in the home circle, in his spiritual life, he endeavors to weave into his sermon something that will help him, knowing that no heart is alone in its sorrow, that the burden one bears, others carry, and what will reach one will carry a message or cheer to many.

“During the building of The Temple,” says Smith in his interesting life of Dr. Conwell, “a devoted member, who was in the bookbinding business, walked to his office every morning and put his car-fare into the building fund. Dr. Conwell made note of the sacrifice, and asked himself the question, ‘How can I help that man to be more prosperous?’ He kept him in mind, and while on a lecturing trip he visited a town where improved machines for bookbinding were employed. He called at the establishment and found out all he could about the new machines. The next Sunday morning, he used the new bookbinder as an illustration of some Scriptural truth. The result was, the church member secured the machines of which his pastor had spoken, and increased his income many-fold. The largest sum of money given to the building of the new Temple was given by that same bookbinder.

“A certain lady made soap for a fair held in the Lower Temple. Dr. Conwell advised her to go into the soap-making business. She hesitated to take his advice. He visited a well known soap factory, and in one of his sermons described the most improved methods of soap-making as an illustration of some improved method of Christian work. Hearing the illustration used from the pulpit, the lady in question acted on the pastor’s previous advice, and started her nephew in the soap business, in which he has prospered.

“A certain blacksmith in Philadelphia who was a member of Grace Church, but who lived in another part of the city, was advised by Dr. Conwell to start a mission in his neighborhood. The mechanic pleaded ignorance and his inability to acquire sufficient education to enable him to do any kind of Christian work. On Sunday morning Dr. Conwell wove into his sermon an historical sketch of Elihu Burritt, that poor boy with meagre school advantages, who bound out to a blacksmith, at the age of sixteen, and compelled to associate with the ignorant, yet learned thirty-three languages, became a scholar and an orator of fame. The hesitating blacksmith, encouraged by the example of Elihu Burritt, took courage and went to work. He founded the mission which soon grew into the Tioga Baptist Church.”

In addition to helping his own church members, this method of preaching had other results. Smith gives the following instance:



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“A few years ago the pastor of a small country church in Massachusetts resolved to try Dr. Conwell’s method of imparting useful information through his illustrations, and teaching the people what they needed to know. Acting on Dr. Conwell’s advice, he studied agricultural chemistry, dairy farming, and household economy. He did not become a sensationalist and advertise to preach on these subjects, but he brought in many helpful illustrations which the people recognized as valuable, and soon the meeting-house was filled with eager listeners. After careful study the minister became convinced that the farmers on those old worn-out farms in Western Massachusetts should go into the dairy business, and feed their cows on ensilage through the long New England winter. One bright morning he preached a sermon on ‘Leaven,’ and incidentally used a silo as an illustration. The preacher did not sacrifice his sermon to his illustration, but taught a great truth and set the farmers to thinking along a new line. As a result of that sermon one poor farmer built a silo and filled it with green corn in the autumn; his cows relished the new food and repaid him splendidly with milk. That farmer is the richest man in the country to-day. This is only one of a great many ways in which that practical preacher helped his poor, struggling parishioners by using the Conwell method. What was the spiritual result of such preaching among the country people? He had a great, wide, and deep revival of religion, the first the church had enjoyed for twenty-five years.”

Thus Dr. Conwell weaves practical sense and spiritual truths together in a way that helps people for the span of life they live in this world, for the eternal life beyond. He never forgets the soul and its needs. That is his foremost thought. But he recognizes also that there is a body and that it lives in a practical world. And whenever and wherever he can help practically, as well as spiritually, he does it, realizing that the world needs Christians who have the means as well as the spirit to carry forward Christ’s work.

Speaking of his methods of preaching, Rev. Albert G. Lawson, D.D., says:

“He has been blessed in his ministry because of three things: He has a democratic, philosophic, philanthropic bee in his bonnet, a big one, too, and he has attempted to bring us to see that churches mean something beside fine houses and good music. There must be a recognition of the fact that when a man is lost, he is lost in body as well as in soul. One needs, therefore, as our Lord would, to begin at the foundations, the building anew of the mind with the body; and I bless God for the democratic, and the philosophic, and the philanthropic idea which is manifest in this strong church. I hope there will be enough power in it to make every Baptist minister sick until he tries to occupy the same field that Jesus Christ did in his life and ministry; until every one of the churches shall recognize the privilege of having Jesus Christ reshaped in the men and women near them.”



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CHAPTER XXXII

THESE BUSY LATER DAYS

A Typical Week Day. A Typical Sunday. Mrs. Conwell. Back to the Berkshires in Summer for Rest.

By the record of what Dr. Conwell has accomplished may be judged how busy are his days.

In early youth he learned to use his time to the best advantage. Studying and working on the farm, working and studying at Wilbraham and Yale, told him how precious is each minute. Work he must when he wanted to study. Study he must when he needed to work. Every minute became as carefully treasured as though it were a miser's gold. But it was excellent training for the busy later days when work would press from all sides until it was distraction to know what to do first.

"Do the next thing," is the advice he gives his college students. It is undoubtedly a saving of time to take the work that lies immediately at hand and despatch it. But when the hand is surrounded by work in a score of important forms, all clamoring for recognition, what is "the next thing" becomes a question difficult to decide.

Then it is that one must plan as carefully to use one's minutes as he does to expend one's income when expenses outrun it.

His private secretary gave the following account, in the "Temple Magazine," of a week day and a Sunday in Dr. Conwell's life:

"No two days are alike in his work, and he has no specified hour for definite classes of calls or kinds of work.

"After breakfast he goes to his office in The Temple. Here visitors from half a dozen to twenty await him, representing a great variety of needs or business.

"Visitors wait their turn in the ante-room of his study and are received by him in the order of their arrival. The importance of business, rank or social position of the caller does not interfere with this order.

[Illustration: *The chorus of the Baptist temple*]

"Throughout the whole day in the street, at the church, at the College, wherever he goes, he is beset by persons urging him for money, free lectures, to write introductions to all sorts of books, for sermons, or to take up collections for indigent individuals or churches. Letters reach him even from Canada, asking him to take care of some aunt,



uncle, runaway son, or needy family, in Philadelphia. Sometimes for days together he does not secure five minutes to attend to his correspondence. Personal letters which he must answer himself often wait for weeks before he can attend to them, although he endeavors, as a rule, to answer important letters on the day they are received. People call to request him to deliver addresses at the dedication of churches, schoolhouses, colleges, flag-raising, commencements, and anniversaries, re-unions, political meetings, and all manner of reform movements. Authors urge him to read their work in manuscript; orators without orations write to him and come to him for address or sermon; applications flow in for letters of introduction highly recommending entire strangers for anything they want. Agents for books come to him for endorsements, with religious newspapers for subscriptions and articles, and with patent medicines urging him to be 'cured with one bottle.'



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“It is well known that he was a lawyer before entering the ministry, and orphans, guardians, widows, and young men entering business come to him asking him to make wills, contracts, *etc.*, and to give them points of law concerning their undertakings. Weddings and funerals claim his attention. Urgent messages to visit the sick and the dying and the unfortunate come to him, and these appeals are answered first either by himself or the associate pastor; the cries of the suffering making the most eloquent of all appeals to these two busy men.”

Frequently he comes to the church again in the afternoon to meet some one by appointment. Both afternoon and evening are crowded with engagements to see people, to make addresses, to attend special meetings of various kinds, with College and Hospital duties.

“I am expected to preside at six different meetings to-night,” he said smilingly to a friend at The Temple one evening as the membership began to stream in to look after its different lines of work.

Much, of the time during the winter he is away lecturing, but he keeps in constant communication with The Temple and its work. By letter, wire or telephone he is ready to respond to any emergency requiring his advice or suggestion. These lecture trips carry him all over the country, but they are so carefully planned that with rare exceptions he is in the pulpit Sunday morning. Frequently, when returning, he wires for his secretary to meet him part way, if from the West, at Harrisburg or Altoona; if from the South, at Washington or beyond. The secretary brings the mail and the remaining hours of the journey are filled with work, dictating letters, articles for magazines or press, possibly material for a book, whatever work most presses.

Pastoral calls in the usual sense of the term cannot be made in a membership of more than three thousand. But visits to the sick, to the poor, to the dying, are paid whenever the call comes. To help and console the afflicted, to point the way to Christ, is the work nearest and dearest to Dr. Conwell’s heart and always comes first. Funerals, too, claim a large part of the pastor’s time, seven in one day among the Grace Church membership calling for the services of both Dr. Conwell and his associate. Weddings are not an unimportant feature, six having been one day’s record at The Temple.

Of his Sundays, his secretary says:

“From the time of rising until half-past eight, he gives special attention to the subject of the morning sermon, and usually selects his text and general line of thought before sitting down to breakfast. After family prayers, he spends half an hour in his study, at home, examining books and authorities in the completion of his sermon. Sometimes he is unable to select a text until reaching The Temple. He has, though rarely, made his selection after taking his place at the pulpit.



“At nine-thirty, he is always promptly in his place at the opening of the Young Men’s prayer-meeting or at the Women’s prayer-meeting in the Lower Temple. At the Young Men’s meeting he plays the organ and leads the singing. If he takes any other part in the meeting he is very brief, in talk or prayer.



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“At half-past ten he goes directly to the Upper Temple, where as a rule he conducts all the exercises with the exception of the ‘notices’ and a prayer offered by the associate pastor, or in his absence at an overflow service in the Lower Temple, by the dean of the College or chaplain of the Hospital. The pastor meets the candidates for baptism in his study before service, for conference and prayer. In administering the ordinance, he is assisted by the associate pastor, who leads the candidates into the baptistry.

“The pastor reads the hymns. It is his custom to preach without any notes whatever; rarely, a scrap of paper may lie on the desk containing memoranda or suggestions of leading thoughts, but frequently even when this is the case the notes are ignored.

“A prominent—possibly the prevailing—idea in the preparation of his sermons is the need of individuals in his congregation. He aims to say those things which will be the most helpful and inspiring to the unconverted seeking Christ, or to the Christian desiring to lead a nobler spiritual life. It may be said of nearly all his illustrations that they present such a variety of spiritual teaching that different persons will catch from them different suggestions adapted to needs of each.

“The morning service closes promptly at twelve o’clock; then follows an informal reception for thirty minutes or it may be an hour, for hundreds, sometimes a thousand and more, many of them visitors from other cities and states, press forward to shake hands with him. This, Dr. Conwell considers an important part of his church work, giving him an opportunity to meet many of the church members and extend personal greetings to those whom he would have no possible opportunity to visit in their homes.

“He dines at one o’clock. At two, he is in The Temple; again he receives more callers, and if possible makes some preparation for services of the afternoon, in connection with the Sunday-school work. At two-thirty, he is present at the opening of the Junior department of the Sunday-school in the Lower Temple, where he takes great interest in the singing, which is a special feature of that department. At three o’clock, he appears promptly on the platform in the auditorium where the Adult department of the Sunday-school meets, gives a short exposition of the lesson for the day, and answers from the Question Box. These cover a great variety of subjects, from the absurdity of some crack-brained crank to the pathetic appeal of some needy soul. Some of these questions may be sent in by mail during the week, but the greater part of them are handed to the pastor by the ushers. To secure an answer the question must be upon some subject connected with religious life or experience, some theme of Christian ethics in everyday life.

“When the questions are answered, the pastor returns to the Lower Temple, going to the Junior, Intermediate, or Kindergarten department to assist in the closing exercises. At the close of the Sunday-school session, teachers and scholars surround him, seeking information or advice concerning the school work, their Christian experience or perhaps to tell him their desire to unite with the church.[A]



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[Footnote A: Lately (1905), however, he has had to give up much of this Sunday-school work on account of the need of rest.]

“As a rule, he leaves The Temple at five o'clock. If he finds no visitors with appeals for counsel or assistance waiting for him at his home, he lies down for half an hour. Usually the visitors are there, and his half-hour rest is postponed until after the evening service.

“Supper at five-thirty, after which he goes to his study to prepare for the evening service, selecting his subject and looking up such references as he thinks may be useful. At seven-fifteen, he is in The Temple again, often visiting for a few moments one of the Christian Endeavor societies, several of which are at that time in session in the Lower Temple. At half-past seven the general service is held in the auditorium. The evening sermon is published weekly in the “Temple Review.” He gives all portions of this service full attention.

“At nine o'clock this service closes, and the pastor goes once more to the Lower Temple, where both congregations, the ‘main’ and the ‘overflow’ unite, so far as is possible, in a union prayer service. The hall of the Lower Temple and the rooms connected with it are always overcrowded at this service meeting, and many are unable to get within hearing of the speakers on the platform. Here Dr. Conwell presides at the organ and has general direction of the evangelistic services, assisted by the associate pastor. As enquirers rise for prayers,—the prayers of God’s people,—Dr. Conwell makes note of each one, and to their great surprise recognizes them when he meets them on the street or at another service, long afterward. This union meeting is followed by another general reception especially intended for a few words of personal conversation with those who have risen for prayer and with strangers who are brought forward and introduced by members of the church. This is the most fatiguing part of the day’s work and occupies from one hour to an hour and a half. He reaches home about eleven o'clock and before retiring makes a careful memoranda of such people as have requested him to pray for them, and such other matters as may require his attention during the week. He seldom gets to bed much before midnight.”

In all the crowd and pressure of work, he is ably assisted by Mrs. Conwell. In the early days of his ministry at Grace Church she was his private secretary, but as the work grew for both of them, she was compelled to give this up.

She enters into all her husband’s work and plans with cheery, helpful enthusiasm. Yet her hands are full of her own special church work, for she is a most important member of the various working associations of the church, college and hospital. For many years she was treasurer of the large annual fairs of The Temple, as well as being at the head of a number of large teas and fairs held for the benefit of Samaritan Hospital. In addition to all this church and charitable work, she makes the home a happy centre of the brightest social life and a quiet, well-ordered retreat for the tired preacher and lecturer when he needs rest.



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A writer in "The Ladies' Home Journal," in a series of articles on "Wives of Famous Pastors," says of Mrs. Conwell:

"Mrs. Conwell finds her greatest happiness in her husband's work, and gives him always her sympathy and devotion. She passes many hours at work by his side when he is unable to notice her by word or look; she knows he delights in her presence, for he often says when writing, 'I can do better if you remain.' Her whole life is wrapped up in the work of The Temple, and all those multitudinous enterprises connected with that most successful of churches.

"She makes an ideal wife for a pastor whose work is varied and whose time is as interrupted as are Mr. Conwell's work and time. On her husband's lecture tours she looks well after his comfort, seeing to those things which a busy and earnest man is almost sure to overlook and neglect. In all things he finds her his helpmeet and caretaker."

From this busy life the family escape in summer to Dr. Conwell's boyhood home in the Berkshires. Here amid the hills he loves, with the brook of his boyhood days again singing him to sleep, he rests and recuperates for the coming winter's campaign.

The little farmhouse is vastly changed since those early days. Many additions have been made, modern improvements added, spacious porches surround it on all sides, and a green, velvety lawn dotted with shrubbery and flowers has replaced the rocks and stones, the sparse grass of fifty years ago. If Martin and Miranda Conwell could return and see the little house now with its artistic furnishings, its walls hung with pictures from those very lands the mother read her boy about, they would think miracles had indeed come to pass.

In front of the house where once flashed a little brook that "set the silences to rhyme" is now a silvery lake framed in rich green foliage. Up in the hill where swayed the old hemlock with the eagle's nest for a crown rises an observatory. From the top one gazes in summer into a billowy sea of green in which the spire of the Methodist church rises like a far distant white sail.

It is a happy family that gathers in the old homestead during the summer days. His daughter, now Mrs. Tuttle, comes with her children, Mr. Turtle, who is a civil engineer, joining them when his work permits. Dr. Conwell's son Leon, proprietor and editor of the Somerville (Mass.) "Journal," with his wife and child, always spend as much of the summer there as possible. One vacant chair there is in the happy family circle. Agnes, the only child of Dr. and Mrs. Conwell, died in 1901, in her twenty-sixth year. She was the wife of Alfred Barker. A remarkably bright and gifted girl, clever with her pen, charming in her personality, an enthusiastic and successful worker in the many interests of church, college and hospital, her death was a sad loss to her family and friends.

Not only the beauty of the place but the associations bring rest and peace to the tired spirit of the busy preacher and lecturer, and he returns to his work refreshed, ready to take up with rekindled energy and enthusiasm the tasks awaiting him.



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Thus his busy life goes on, full of unceasing work for the good of others. Over his bed hangs a gold sheathed sword which to him is a daily inspiration to do some deed worthy of the sacrifice which it typifies. "I look at it each morning," said Dr. Conwell to a friend, "and pray for help to do something that day to make my life worthy of such a sacrifice." And each day he prays the prayer his father prayed for him in boyhood days, "May no person be the worse because I have lived this day, but may some one be the better."

CHAPTER XXXIII

AS A LECTURER

His Wide Fame as a Lecturer. Date of Entrance on Lecture Platform. Number of Lectures Given. The Press on His Lectures. Some Instances of How His Lectures Have Helped People. Address at Banquet to President McKinley.

In the maze of this church, college and hospital work, Dr. Conwell finds time to lecture from one hundred to two hundred and twenty-five times in a year. Indeed, he frequently leaves Philadelphia at midnight after a Sunday of hard work, travels and lectures as far as Kansas and is back again for Friday evening prayer meeting and for his duties the following Sunday.

As a lecturer, he is probably known to a greater number of people than he is as a preacher, for his lecturing trips take him from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Since he began, he has delivered more than six thousand lectures.

He has been on the lecture platform since the year 1862, giving on an average of two hundred lectures in a year. In addition, he has addressed many of the largest conventions in America and preaches weekly to an audience of more than three thousand. So that he has undoubtedly addressed more people in America than any man living. He is to-day one of the most eminent and most popular figures on the lecture platform of this country, the last of the galaxy of such men as Gough, Beecher, Chapin. "There are but ten real American lecturers on the American platform to-day," says "Leslie's Weekly." "Russell Conwell is one of the ten and probably the most eminent."

His lectures, like his sermons, are full of practical help and good sense. They are profusely illustrated with anecdote and story that fasten the thought of his subject. He uses no notes, and gives his lecture little thought during the day. Indeed, he often does not know the subject until he hears the chairman announce it. If the lecture is new or one that he has not given for many years, he occasionally has a few notes or a brief outline before him. But usually he is so full of the subject, ideas and illustrations so crowd his mind that he is troubled with the wealth, rather than the dearth, of material. He rarely gives a lecture twice alike. The main thought, of course, is the same. But

new experiences suggest new illustrations, and so, no matter how many times one hears it, he always hears something new. “That’s the third time I’ve heard Acres of Diamonds,” said one delighted auditor, “and every time it grows better.”



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Perhaps the best idea of his lectures can be gleaned from the press notices that have appeared, though he never keeps a press notice himself, nor pays any attention to the compliments that may have been paid him. These that have been collected at random by friends by no means cover the field of what has been said or written about him.

Speaking of a lecture in 1870, when he toured England, the London "Telegraph" says:

"The man is weirdly like his native hills. You can hear the cascades and the trickling streams in his tone of voice. He has a strange and unconscious power of so modulating his voice as to suggest the roar of the tempest in rocky declivities, or the soft echo of music in distant valleys. The breezy freshness and natural suggestiveness of varied nature in its wild state was completely fascinating. He excelled in description, and the auditor could almost hear the Niagara roll as he described it, and listened to catch the sound of sighing pines in his voice as he told of the Carolinas."

"The lecture was wonderful in clearness, powerful, and eloquent in delivery," says the London "News." "The speaker made the past a living present, and led the audience, unconscious of time, with him in his walks and talks with famous men. When engrossed in his lecture his facial expression is a study. His countenance conveys more quickly than his words the thought which he is elucidating, and when he refers to his Maker, his face takes on an expression indescribable for its purity. He seems to hold the people as children stare at brilliant and startling pictures."

"It is of no use to try to report Conwell's lectures," is the verdict of the Springfield "Union." "They are unique. Unlike anything or any one else. Filled with good sense, brilliant with new suggestions, and inspiring always to noble life and deeds, they always please with their wit. The reader of his addresses does not know the full power of the man."

"His stories are always singularly adapted to the lecturer's purpose. Each story is mirth-provoking. The audience chuckled, shook, swayed, and roared with convulsions of laughter," says the "London Times." "He has been in the lecture field but a few years, yet he has already made a place beside such men as Phillips, Beecher, and Chapin."

"The only lecturer in America," concludes the Philadelphia "Times," "who can fill a hall in this city with three thousand people at a dollar a ticket."

The most popular of all his lectures is "Acres of Diamonds," which he has given 3,420 times, which is printed, in part, at the end of the book. But his list of lectures is a long one, including:

"The Philosophy of History."

"Men of the Mountains."

"The Old and the New New England."



“My Fallen Comrades.”

“The Dust of Our Battlefields.”

“Was it a Ghost Story?”

“The Unfortunate Chinese.”

“Three Scenes in Babylon.”

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“Three Scenes from the Mount of Olives.”
“Americans in Europe.”
“General Grant’s Empire.”
“Princess Elizabeth.”
“Guides.”
“Success in Life.”
“The Undiscovered.”
“The Silver Crown, or Born a King.”
“Heroism of a Private Life.”
“The Jolly Earthquake.”
“Heroes and Heroines.”
“Garibaldi, or the Power of Blind Faith.”
“The Angel’s Lily.”
“The Life of Columbus.”
“Five Million Dollars for the Face of the Moon.”
“Henry Ward Beecher.”
“That Horrid Turk.”
“Cuba’s Appeal to the United States.”
“Anita, the Feminine Torch.”
“Personal Glimpses of Celebrated Men and Women.”

His lecturing tours now are confined to the United States, as his church duties will not permit him to go farther afield, but so wide is his fame that a few years ago he declined an offer of \$39,000 for a six months’ engagement in Australia. This year (1905) he received an offer of \$50,000 for two hundred lectures in Australia and England.

He lectures, as he preaches, with the earnest desire ever uppermost to help some one. He never goes to a lecture engagement without a definite prayer to God that his words may be so directed as to do some good to the community or to some individual. When he has delivered “Acres of Diamonds,” he frequently leaves a sum of money with the editor of the leading paper in the town to be given as a prize for any one who advances the most practical idea for using waste forces in the neighborhood. In one Vermont town where he had lectured, the money was won by a young man who after a careful study of the products of the neighborhood, said he believed the lumber of that section was especially adapted to the making of coffins. A sum of \$2,000 was raised, the water power harnessed and a factory started.

A man in Michigan who was on the verge of bankruptcy, having lost heavily in real estate speculation, heard “Acres of Diamonds,” and started in, as the lecture advises, right at home to rebuild his fortunes. Instead of giving up, he began the same business



again, fought a plucky fight and is now president of the bank and a leading financier of the town.

A poor farmer of Western Massachusetts, finding it impossible to make a living on his stony place, had made up his mind to move and advertised his farm for sale. He heard "Acres of Diamonds," took to heart its lessons. "Raise what the people about you need," it said to him. He went into the small fruit business and is now a rich man.

The man who invented the turnout and switch system for electric cars received his suggestion from "Acres of Diamonds."

A baker heard "Acres of Diamonds," got an idea for an improved oven and made thousands of dollars from it.

A teacher in Montrose, Pennsylvania, was so impressed with the practical ideas in the now famous lecture that he determined to teach what his pupils most needed to know. Being in a farming district, he added agricultural chemistry to their studies with such success that the next year he was elected principal of one of the Montrose schools and shortly afterward was appointed Superintendent of Education and President of the State University of Ohio.

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But incidents by the hundreds could be related or practical, helpful results that flow from Dr. Conwell's lectures.

There is yet another side of their helpfulness that the world knows little about. In his early lecturing days, he resolved to give his lecture fees to the education of poor boys and faithfully through all these years has that resolve been kept. The Redpath Lyceum Bureau has paid him nearly \$300,000, and more than \$200,000 of this has gone directly to help those poor in purse who hunger after knowledge, as he himself did in those days at Wilbraham when help would have been so welcome. The balance has been given to Temple College, which in itself is the strongest and most helpful hand ever stretched out to those struggling for an education.

In addition to his lectures, he is called upon to make innumerable addresses at various meetings, public gatherings and conventions. Those who have never heard him speak may gather some idea of the impression he makes by the following letter written by a gentleman who attended the banquet given to President McKinley at the G.A.R. encampment in Philadelphia in 1899:

"At the table with the President was Russell H. Conwell, and no one near me could tell me who he was. We mistook him for the new Secretary of War, until Secretary Root made his speech. There was a highly intelligent and remarkably representative audience of the nation at a magnificent banquet in the hall decorated regardless of cost.

"The addresses were all specially good and made by men specially before the nation. Yet all the evening till after midnight there were continuous interruptions and much noise of voices, dishes, and waiters. Men at distant tables laughed out often. It was difficult to hear at best, the acoustics were so bad. The speakers took it as a matter of course at such a 'continuous performance.' Some of the Representatives must have thought they were at home in the House at Washington. They listened or not, as they chose. The great hall was quiet only when the President gave his address, except when the enclosed remarks were made long after midnight, when all were worn out with speeches.

"When, about the last thing, Conwell was introduced by the chairman, no one heard his name because of the noise at the tables. Two men asked me who he was. But not two minutes after he began, the place was still and men craned their necks to catch his words. I never saw anything so magical. I know how you would have enjoyed it. Its effect was a hot surprise. The revelers all worn; the people ready to go home; the waiters impatient; the speech wholly extemporaneous. It was a triumph that did honor to American oratory at its best. The applause was decisive and deafening. I never heard of anything better done under such circumstances.



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“None of the morning papers we could get on the train mentioned either Conwell or his great speech. Perhaps Conwell asked the reporters to suppress it. I don’t know as to that. But it was the first thing we looked for. Not a word. There is no clue to account for that. Yet that is the peculiarity of this singular life: one of the most public, one of the most successful men, but yet one of the least discussed or written about. He was to us as visitors the great feature of that banquet as a speaker, and yet wholly ignored by the press of his own city. The United States Senator Penrose seemed only to know in a general way that Conwell was a great benefactor and a powerful citizen and preacher. Conwell is a study. I cogitated on him all day. I was told that he marched throughout the great parade in the rear rank of his G.A.R. post. It is the strangest case of a private life I have ever heard mentioned. The Quakers will wake up resurrection day and find out Conwell lived in Philadelphia. It is startling to think how measureless the influence of such a man is in its effect on the world. Through forty years educating men, healing the sick, caring for children, then preaching to a great church, then lecturing in the great cities nearly every night, then writing biographies; and also an accessible counselor to such masses of young people!”

The address referred to in the foregoing letter was taken down in shorthand, and was substantially as follows:

“Comrades: I feel at this moment as Alexander Stephens said he felt at the close of the war of 1865, and it can well be illustrated by the boasting athlete who declared he could throw out twenty men from a neighboring saloon in five minutes. He requested his friend to stand outside and count as he went in and threw them out. Soon a battered man was thrown out the door far into the street. The friend began his count and shouted, ‘One!’ But the man in the street staggered to his feet and angrily screamed, ‘Stop counting! It’s me!’ When this feast opened I was proudly expecting to make a speech, but the great men who have preceded me have done all and more than I intended to do. The hour is spent—they are sounding ‘taps’ at the door. I could not hope to hold your attention. It only remains for me to do my duty in behalf of Meade Post, and do it in the briefest possible space.

“Comrades of Boston and New York, you have heard the greetings when you entered the city—you have seen the gorgeous and artistic decorations on halls and dwellings—you have heard the shouts of the million and more who pressed into the streets, waved handkerchiefs from the stands, and looked over each other’s heads from all the windows and roofs throughout that weary march. Here you see the lovely decorations, the most costly feast, and listen to the heart-thrilling, soul-subduing orchestra. All of these have already spoken to you an unmistakable message of welcome. Knowing this city as I do,



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I can say to you that not one cornet or viol, not one hymn or shout, not one wave in all the clouds which fair hands rolled up, not one gun of all that shook the city, not one flush of red on a dear face of beauty, not one blessing from the aged on his cane, not one tear on the eyelids which glowed again as your march brought back the gleam of a morning long since dead, not one clasp of the hand, not one 'God bless you!' from saint or priest in all this fair city, but I believe has been deeply, earnestly, sincere.

"This repast is not the result of pride—is not arranged for gluttony or fashion. No political scheme inspired its proposal, and no ulterior motive moved these companions to take your arm. The joy that seems to beam in the comrade's eye and unconsciously express itself in word and gesture, is real. It is the hearty love of a comrade who showed his love for his country by battle in 1862, and who only finds new ways in time of peace for expressing the same character now. The eloquence of this night has been unusually, earnestly, practically patriotic and fraternal. It has been the utterance of hearts beating full and strong for humanity. Loyalty, fraternity, and charity are here in fact. It is true, honest, heart. Such fraternal greetings may be as important for liberty and justice as the winning of a Gettysburg. For the mighty influence of the Grand Army of the Republic is even more potent now than it was on that bloody day. Peace has come and the brave men of the North recognize and respect the motives and bravery of that Confederate army which dealt them such fearful blows believing *they* were in the right. But the glorious peace we enjoy and the greatness of our nation's name and power are due as much to the living Grand Army as to the dead. I am getting weary of being counted 'old,' but I am more tired of hearing the soldier overpraised for what he did in 1861. You have more influence now than then, and are better men in every sense. At Springfield, Illinois, they illustrated the growth of the city by telling me that in 1856 a lunatic preacher applied to Mr. Lincoln for his aid to open the legislative chamber for a series of meetings to announce that the Lord was coming at once. Mr. Lincoln refused, saying, 'If the Lord knew Springfield as well as I do, he wouldn't come within a thousand miles of it.' But now the legislative halls are open, and every good finds welcome in that city. The world grows better—cities are not worse. The nation has not gone backward, and all the good deeds did not cease in 1865. The Grand Army of the Republic, speaking plainly but with no sense of egotism, has been praised too much for the war and too little for its heroism and power in peace. Does it make a man an angel to eat hardtack? Or does it educate in inductive philosophy to chase a pig through a Virginia fence? Peace has its victories no less renowned than war.



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“The Grand Army is not growing old. You all feel younger at this moment than you did at the close of the day’s march. Your work is not finished. You were not fossilized in 1865. The war was not a nurse, nor was it a very thorough schoolmaster. It did serve, however, to show to friends and country what kind of men America contained. Not I nor you perhaps can take this pleasing interpretation to ourselves, but looking at the five hundred thousand men who outlived the war, we see that they were the same men before the war and have remained the same since the war. Their ability, friendship, patriotism, and religion were better known after they had shown their faith by deeds, but their identity and character were in great measure the same.

“Many of our Presidents have been taken from the ranks of the army. But it would be a mockery of political wisdom to declare that a free, intelligent people elect a chief executive simply to reward him for having been in the war of 1861. Captain Garfield, Lieutenant Hayes, Major McKinley, and General Grant were not put at the head of the nation as one would vote a pension. They were elected because the people believed them to be the very best statesmen they could select for the office. For a time every foreign consul except four was a soldier. Two-thirds of Congress had been in the army. Twenty-nine governors in the same year had been in military service. Nine presidents of universities had been volunteers in 1863. Three thousand postmasters appointed in one year were from the army. Cabinet officers, custom-house officers, judges, district attorneys, and clerks in public offices were almost exclusively selected from army men. Could you look in the face of the nations and declare that with all our enterprise, learning, progress, and common sense, we had such an inadequate idea of the responsibilities of government that we elected men to office who were incapable, simply because they had carried a gun or tripped over a sword! No, no. The shrewd Yankee and the calculating Hoosier are not caught with such chaff. They selected these officers as servants of the nation because the war had served to show what sort of men they were.

“In short, they appointed them to high positions because they were true men. They are just as true men now. They are as patriotic, as industrious, as unselfish, as brave to-day as they were in the dark days of the rebellion. Their efforts are as honest now as they were then, to perpetuate free institutions and maintain the honor of the flag.

“They have endowed colleges, built cathedrals, opened the wilderness to railroads, filled the American desert with roses, constructed telephone, telegraph, and steamship lines. They have stood in classroom and in the pulpit by the thousand; they have honored our courts with their legal acumen; they have covered the plains with cities, and compelled the homage of Europe to secure our scholars, our wheat and our iron.



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The soldier has controlled the finances of banking systems and revolutionized labor, society, and arts with his inventions. They saw poor Cuba, beautiful as her surf and femininely sweet as her luscious fruits, tortured in chains. They saw her lovely form through the blood that covered her, and Dewey, Sampson, Schley, Miles, Merritt, Sigsbee, Evans, Philip, Alger, and McKinley of the Grand Army led the forces to her rescue. The Philippines in the darkness of half-savage life were brought unexpectedly under our colors because Dewey and his commanders were in 1898 just the same heroes they were in 1864.

“At the bidding of Meade Post, then, I welcome you and bid you farewell. This gathering was in the line of duty. Its spectacle has impressed the young, inspired the strong man, and comforted the aged. The fraternity here so sincerely expressed to-night will encourage us all to enfold the old flag more tenderly, to love our country more deeply, and to go on in every path of duty, showing still the spirit of '61 wherever good calls for sacrifice or truth for a defender.”

CHAPTER XXXIV

AS A WRITER

His Rapid Method of Working. A Popular Biographical Writer. The Books He Has Written.

Still the minutes are not full. The man who learned five languages while going to and from his business on the street cars of Boston finds time always to crowd in one thing more. Despite his multitude of other cares, Dr. Conwell's pen is not idle. It started to write in his boyhood days and it has been writing ever since.

His best known works are his biographies. Charles A. Dana, the famous editor and publisher of the New York “Sun,” just before his death, wrote to Harper Brothers recommending that Mr. Conwell be secured to write a series of books for an “American Biographical Library,” and in his letter said:

“I write the above of my own notion, as I have seldom met Mr. Conwell; but as a writer of biographies he has no superior. Indeed, I can say considerably, that he is one of America's greatest men. He never advertises himself, never saves a newspaper clipping concerning himself, never keeps a sermon of his own, and will not seek applause. You must go after him if you want him. He will not apply to you. His personal history is as fascinating as it is exceptional. He took himself as a poor back country lad, created out of the crude material the orator which often combines a Webster with Gough, and made himself a scholar of the first rank. He created from



nothing a powerful university of high rank in Philadelphia, especially for the common people. He created a great and influential church out of a small unknown parish. He has assisted more men in securing an education than any other American. He has created a hospital of the first order and extent. He has fed the poor and housed large numbers of orphans. He has written many books and has addressed more people than any other living man. To do this without writing or dictating a line to advertise himself is nothing else than the victory of a great genius. He is a gem worth your seeking, valuable anywhere. I say again that I regard Russell H. Conwell, of Philadelphia, as America's greatest man in the best form. I cannot do your work; he can."



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His most successful biography, his "Life of Charles H. Spurgeon," was written in a little more than two weeks. In fact, it was not written at all, it was dictated while on a lecturing trip. When Spurgeon died, a publisher telegraphed Dr. Conwell if he would write a biography of the great London preacher. Dr. Conwell was traveling at the time in the West, lecturing. He wired an affirmative, and sent for his private secretary. It was during the building of the College when great financial responsibilities were resting on him, and he was lecturing every night to raise money for the college building fund. His secretary accompanied him on the lecture trip. Dr. Conwell dictated the book on the train during the day, the secretary copied it from his notes at night while Dr. Conwell lectured. At the end of two weeks the book of six hundred pages was nearly completed. It had a sale of 125,000 copies in four months. And all the royalties were given to a struggling mission of Grace Baptist Church.

[Illustration: *Temple college*]

His biography of Elaine was written almost as rapidly. In a few hours after Blaine was nominated as candidate of the Republican party for the presidency. Dr. and Mrs. Conwell boarded a train and started for Augusta, Maine. In three weeks the book was completed.

He has worked at times from four o'clock in the morning until twelve at night when work pressed and time was short.

His life of Bayard Taylor was also written quickly. He had traveled with Taylor through Europe and long been an intimate friend, so that he was particularly well fitted for the work. The book was begun after Taylor's death, December 19, 1878, in Germany, and completed before the body arrived in America. Five thousand copies were sold before the funeral.

Dr. Conwell presided at the memorial service held in Tremont Temple, Boston. Many years after, in a sermon preached at The Temple, he thus described the occasion:

"When Bayard Taylor, the traveler and poet, died, great sorrow was felt and exhibited by the people of this nation. I remember well the sadness which was noticed in the city of Boston. The spontaneous desire to give some expression to the respect in which Hr. Taylor's name was held, pressed the literary people of Boston, both writers and readers, forward to a public memorial in the great hall of Tremont Temple. As a friend of Mr. Taylor's I was called upon to preside at that memorial gathering. That audience of the scholarly classes was a wonderful tribute to a remarkable man, and one for which. I feel still a keen sense of gratitude. I remember asking Mr. Longfellow to write a poem, and to read it, and standing on the broad step at his front door, in Cambridge, he replied to my suggestion with the sweet expression: 'The universal sorrow is almost too sacred to touch with a pen.'



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“But when the evening came, although Professor Longfellow was too ill to be present, his poem was there. The great hall was crowded with the most cultivated people of Boston. On the platform sat many of the poets, orators and philosophers, who have since passed into the Beyond. When, after several speeches had been made, I arose to introduce Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, the pressure of the crowd was too great for me to reach my chair again, and I took for a time the seat which Dr. Holmes had just left, and next to Ralph Waldo Emerson. Never were words of poet listened to with a silence more respectfully profound than were the words of Professor Longfellow’s poem as they were so touchingly and beautifully read by Dr. Holmes:

“Dead he lay among his books,
The peace of God was in his looks!

* * * * *

Let the lifeless body rest,
He is gone who was its guest.—
Gone as travelers haste to leave
An inn, nor tarry until eve!
Traveler, in what realms afar,
In what planet, in what star,
In what vast, aerial space,
Shines the light upon thy face?
In what gardens of delight
Rest thy weary feet to-night—’

* * * * *

“Before Dr. Holmes resumed his seat, Mr. Emerson whispered in my ear, in his epigrammatic style, ‘This is holy Sabbath time.’”

Among the books which Dr. Conwell has written are:

“Lessons of Travel.”
“Why and How Chinese Emigrate.”
“Nature’s Aristocracy.”
“History of the Great Fire in Boston.”
“The Life of Gen. U.S. Grant.”
“Woman and the Law.”
“The life of Rutherford B. Hayes.”
“History of the Great Fire in St. Johns.”
“The Life of Bayard Taylor.”
“The Life, Speeches, and Public Service of James A. Garfield.”
“Little Bo.”



“Joshua Gianavello.”

“The Life of James G. Blaine.”

“Acres of Diamonds.”

“Gleams of Grace.”

“The Life of Charles H. Spurgeon.”

“The New Day.”

The manuscript which he prepared most carefully was the “Life of Daniel Manin,” which was destroyed by fire when his home at Newton Centre was burned. He had spent much time and labor collecting data on Italian history for it, and the loss was irreparable.

“Joshua Gianavello” is a biographical story of the great Waldensian chieftain who loved religious liberty and feared neither inquisition nor death. It is dedicated to “the many believers in the divine principle that every person should have the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience; and to the heroic warriors who are still contending for religious freedom in the yet unfinished battle.”

The same powerful imagination that pictures so realistically to his lecture and church audiences the scenes and people he is describing, makes them live in his books. His style holds the reader by its vividness of description, its powerful delineation of character and emotion.



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His latest book, "The New Day," is an amplification of his great lecture, "Acres of Diamonds." It is not only delightful reading but it is full of practical help for the affairs of everyday life. For no matter in what field Dr. Conwell works, this great desire of his life—to help his brother man—shines out.

CHAPTER XXXV

A HOME COMING

Reception Tendered by Citizens of Philadelphia in Acknowledgment of Work as Public Benefactor.

One more scene in the life of this man who, from a barefoot country boy with no advantages, has become one of the most widely known of the preachers, lecturers and writers of the day, as well as the founder of a college and hospital holding an honored position among the institutions of the country.

In 1894, acting upon the advice of his physician, Dr. Conwell went abroad. It is no unusual thing for pastors to go abroad, nor for members of their church and friends to see them off. But for Grace Baptist Church personally to wish its pastor "Bon voyage" is something of an undertaking. A special train was chartered to take the members to New York. Here a steamer engaged for the purpose awaited them, and twelve hundred strong, they steamed down the harbor alongside the "New York" that Dr. Conwell's last glimpse of America might be of the faces of his own church family.

On his return six hundred church members met him and gave him a royal welcome, and a large reception was held in The Temple to show how glad were the hearts of his people that he was restored to them in health.

But it was not enough. The people of Philadelphia said, "This man belongs to us." In all parts of the city, in all walks of life, were men and women who had studied at Temple College, whose lives were happier, more useful because of the knowledge they had gained there, for whom he had opened these college doors. The Samaritan Hospital had sent forth people by the hundreds whose bodies had been healed and their spirits quickened because his kindly heart had foreseen their need and his generous hands labored to help it. Everywhere throughout the whole city was felt the leaven of his work, and the people as a body said, "We will show our appreciation of the work he has done for Philadelphia, we will show that we recognize him as one of the city's greatest benefactors and philanthropists."

A committee of twenty-one citizens was formed, of which the Mayor, Edwin S. Stuart, was chairman, and a reception was tendered Dr. and Mrs. Conwell and the others of his party in the name of the citizens of Philadelphia. It was given at the Academy of Fine



Arts. With its paintings and statuary, its broad sweeping staircases, it made a magnificent setting for the throngs of men and women who crowded to pay their respects to this man who had lived among them, doing good.

The line of waiting guests reached for two blocks and more and for hours moved in steady procession before the receiving party. At last the final farewell was said and on toward midnight Dr. Conwell stepped into the carriage waiting to take him home.



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But the affair was not over. The college boys felt that shaking hands in formal fashion did not express sufficiently their loyalty and devotion, their joy in the return of their beloved "Prex." They unharnessed the horses, and with college cheers and yells triumphantly drew their president all the way from the Academy of Fine Arts to his home, a distance of two miles. As they passed Temple College, their enthusiasm broke all bounds and they drew up the carriage at the Doctor's residence, two blocks beyond the College, with a yell and a flourish that fairly lifted the neighbors from their beds.

It was in every way a homecoming and a welcome that proved how wide-reaching has been the work Dr. Conwell has done, how deeply it has touched the lives of thousands of people in Philadelphia. This spontaneous act of appreciation was but the tribute paid by grateful hearts.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE PATH THAT HAS BEEN BLAZED

Problems that Need Solving. The Need of Men Able to Solve Them.

"O do not pray for easy lives
Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for
Tasks equal to your powers. Pray
For powers equal to your tasks.
Then the doing of your work shall be
No miracle. But you shall be a miracle,
Every day you shall wonder at yourself,
At the richness of life that has come to you
By the Grace of God."

wrote that great preacher, Phillips Brooks.

The world does not want easy lives but strong men. Every age has its problems. Every age needs men with clear moral vision, strong hands, humane hearts to solve these problems. Character, not the fortune of birth, qualifies for leadership in such a work. And such work ever waits, the world over, to be done. In every large city of the country are thousands crying for better education, the suffering poor are holding up weak hands for help, men and women morally blind, are asking for light to find Christ—the Christ of the Bible, not the Christ of dogma and creed, religion pure and undefiled, the church in the simplicity of the days of the apostles, the church that reaches out a helping hand to all the needs of humanity.

Institutional churches are needed, not one, but many of them, in the cities, churches that help men to grapple with the stern actualities of everyday life, churches that preach



by works as well as by word, churches in which the man in fustian is as welcome as the one in broadcloth, churches whose influence reaches into the highways and byways and compels people to come in by the very cordiality and kindness of the invitation, churches that help people to live better and more happily in this world, while at the same time preparing them for the world to come.



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“In no other city in the country is there such an example of the quickening force of a united and working church organization as is given by the North Broad Street Temple, Philadelphia,” says an editorial writer in the Philadelphia “Press.” “Twenty such churches in this city of 1,250,000 people would do more to evangelize it and re-awaken an interest in the vital truths of Christianity than the hundreds of church organizations it now has. The world is demanding more and better returns from the church for the time and money given it. Real, practical Christian work is what is asked of the church. The sooner it conforms to this demand, the more quickly it will regain its old influence and be prepared to make effective its fight against evil.”

Hospitals are needed that heal in the name of Christ, that heal ills of the body and at the same time by the spirit of love that permeates, by the Christian spirit that animates all connected with them, cure the ills of the soul and send the sufferers away rejoicing in spirit as well as in body, with a brighter outlook on the world and increased faith in humankind.

Colleges are needed the length and breadth of this land, wherever the poor and ignorant sit in darkness. In every town of five thousand or more, a college for working people on the lines of the Temple College would be thronged with eager, rejoicing students. And the world is the better for every man and woman raised to a higher plane of living. Any life, no matter how sordid and narrow, how steeped in ignorance, if swept sweet and clean by God’s love, if awakened by ambition and then given the opportunity to grow, can be changed into beauty, sweetness and usefulness. And such work is worth while.

The way has been blazed, the path has been pointed out, it only remains for those who follow after to walk therein. And if they walk therein, they will gain that true greatness and deep happiness which Phillips Brooks says comes ever “to the man who has given his life to his race, who feels that what God gives him, He gives him for mankind.”

ACRES OF DIAMONDS

Dr. Conwell’s most famous lecture and one of his earliest has been given at this writing (October, 1905) 3420 times. The income from it if invested at regular rates of interest would have amounted very nearly to one million dollars.

PERSONAL GLIMPSES OF CELEBRATED MEN AND WOMEN

Is Dr. Conwell’s latest lecture. It is a backward glance over his own life in which he tells in his inimitable fashion many of its most interesting scenes and incidents. It is here published for the first time.



ACRES OF DIAMONDS.[A]

[Footnote A: Reported by A. Russell Smith and Harry E. Greager.]

[Mr. Conwell's lectures are all delivered extemporaneously and differ greatly from night to night.—Ed.]



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I am astonished that so many people should care to hear this story over again. Indeed, this lecture has become a study in psychology; it often breaks all rules of oratory, departs from the precepts of rhetoric, and yet remains the most popular of any lecture I have delivered in the forty-four years of my public life. I have sometimes studied for a year upon a lecture and made careful research, and then presented the lecture just once—never delivered it again. I put too much work on it. But this had no work on it—thrown together perfectly at random, spoken offhand without any special preparation, and it succeeds when the thing we study, work over, adjust to a plan is an entire failure.

The “Acres of Diamonds” which I have mentioned through so many years are to be found in Philadelphia, and you are to find them. Many have found them. And what man has done, man can do. I could not find anything better to illustrate my thought than a story I have told over and over again, and which is now found in books in nearly every library.

In 1870 we went down the Tigris River. We hired a guide at Bagdad to show us Persepolis, Nineveh and Babylon, and the ancient countries of Assyria as far as the Arabian Gulf. He was well acquainted with the land, but he was one of those guides who love to entertain their patrons; he was like a barber that tells you many stories in order to keep your mind off the scratching and the scraping. He told me so many stories that I grew tired of his telling them and I refused to listen—looked away whenever he commenced; that made the guide quite angry, I remember that toward evening he took his Turkish cap off his head and swung it around in the air. The gesture I did not understand and I did not dare look at him for fear I should become the victim of another story. But, although I am not a woman, I did look, and the instant I turned my eyes upon that worthy guide he was off again. Said he, “I will tell you a story now which I reserve for my particular friends!” So then, counting myself a particular friend, I listened, and I have always been glad I did.

He said there once lived not far from the River Indus an ancient Persian by the name of Al Hafed. He said that Al Hafed owned a very large farm with orchards, grain fields and gardens. He was a contented and wealthy man—contented because he was wealthy, and wealthy because he was contented. One day there visited this old farmer one of those ancient Buddhist priests, and he sat down by Al Hafed’s fire and told that old farmer how this world of ours was made. He said that this world was once a mere bank of fog, which is scientifically true, and he said that the Almighty thrust his finger into the bank of fog and then began slowly to move his finger around and gradually to increase the speed of his finger until at last he whirled that bank of fog into a solid ball of fire, and it went rolling through the universe, burning its way through other cosmic banks



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of fog, until it condensed the moisture without, and fell in floods of rain upon the heated surface and cooled the outward crust. Then the internal flames burst through the cooling crust and threw up the mountains and made the hills of the valley of this wonderful world of ours. If this internal melted mass burst out and cooled very quickly it became granite; that which cooled less quickly became silver; and less quickly, gold; and after gold diamonds were made. Said the old priest, "A diamond is a congealed drop of sunlight."

This is a scientific truth also. You all know that a diamond is pure carbon, actually deposited sunlight—and he said another thing I would not forget: he declared that a diamond is the last and highest of God's mineral creations, as a woman is the last and highest of God's animal creations. I suppose that is the reason why the two have such a liking for each other. And the old priest told Al Hafed that if he had a handful of diamonds he could purchase a whole county, and with a mine of diamonds he could place his children upon thrones through the influence of their great wealth. Al Hafed heard all about diamonds and how much they were worth, and went to his bed that night a poor man—not that he had lost anything, but poor because he was discontented and discontented because he thought he was poor. He said: "I want a mine of diamonds!" So he lay awake all night, and early in the morning sought out the priest. Now I know from experience that a priest when awakened early in the morning is cross. He awoke that priest out of his dreams and said to him, "Will you tell me where I can find diamonds?" The priest said, "Diamonds? What do you want with diamonds?" "I want to be immensely rich," said Al Hafed, "but I don't know where to go." "Well," said the priest, "if you will find a river that runs over white sand between high mountains, in those sands you will always see diamonds." "Do you really believe that there is such a river?" "Plenty of them, plenty of them; all you have to do is just go and find them, then you have them." Al Hafed said, "I will go." So he sold his farm, collected his money at interest, left his family in charge of a neighbor, and away he went in search of diamonds. He began very properly, to my mind, at the Mountains of the Moon. Afterwards he went around into Palestine, then wandered on into Europe, and at last when his money was all spent, and he was in rags, wretchedness and poverty, he stood on the shore of that bay in Barcelona, Spain, when a tidal wave came rolling in through the Pillars of Hercules and the poor afflicted, suffering man could not resist the awful temptation to cast himself into that incoming tide, and he sank beneath its foaming crest, never to rise in this life again.



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When that old guide had told me that very sad story, he stopped the camel I was riding and went back to fix the baggage on one of the other camels, and I remember thinking to myself, "Why did he reserve that for his *particular friends*?" There seemed to be no beginning, middle or end—nothing to it. That was the first story I ever heard told or read in which the hero was killed in the first chapter. I had but one chapter of that story and the hero was dead. When the guide came back and took up the halter of my camel again, he went right on with the same story. He said that Al Hafed's successor led his camel out into the garden to drink, and as that camel put its nose down into the clear water of the garden brook Al Hafed's successor noticed a curious flash of light from the sands of the shallow stream, and reaching in he pulled out a black stone having an eye of light that reflected all the colors of the rainbow, and he took that curious pebble into the house and left it on the mantel, then went on his way and forgot all about it. A few days after that, this same old priest who told Al Hafed how diamonds were made, came in to visit his successor, when he saw that flash of light from the mantel. He rushed up and said, "Here is a diamond—here is a diamond! Has Al Hafed returned?" "No, no; Al Hafed has not returned and that is not a diamond; that is nothing but a stone; we found it right out here in our garden." "But I know a diamond when I see it," said he; "that is a diamond!"

Then together they rushed to the garden and stirred up the white sands with their fingers and found others more beautiful, more valuable diamonds than the first, and thus, said the guide to me, were discovered the diamond mines of Golconda, the most magnificent diamond mines in all the history of mankind, exceeding the Kimberley in its value. The great Kohinoor diamond in England's crown jewels and the largest crown diamond on earth in Russia's crown jewels, which I had often hoped she would have to sell before they had peace with Japan, came from that mine, and when the old guide had called my attention to that wonderful discovery he took his Turkish cap off his head again and swung it around in the air to call my attention to the moral. Those Arab guides have a moral to each story, though the stories are not always moral. He said had Al Hafed remained at home and dug in his own cellar or in his own garden, instead of wretchedness, starvation, poverty and death in a strange land, he would have had "acres of diamonds"—for every acre, yes, every shovelful of that old farm afterwards revealed the gems which since have decorated the crowns of monarchs. When he had given the moral to his story, I saw why he had reserved this story for his "particular friends." I didn't tell him I could see it; I was not going to tell that old Arab that I could see it. For it was that mean old Arab's way of going around a thing, like a lawyer, and saying indirectly what he did not dare say directly, that there was a certain young man that day traveling down the Tigris River that might better be at home in America. I didn't tell him I could see it.



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I told him his story reminded me of one, and I told it to him quick. I told him about that man out in California, who, in 1847, owned a ranch out there. He read that gold had been discovered in Southern California, and he sold his ranch to Colonel Sutter and started off to hunt for gold. Colonel Sutter put a mill on the little stream in that farm and one day his little girl brought some wet sand from the raceway of the mill into the house and placed it before the fire to dry, and as that sand was falling through the little girl's fingers a visitor saw the first shining scales of real gold that were ever discovered in California; and the man who wanted the gold had sold this ranch and gone away, never to return. I delivered this lecture two years ago in California, in the city that stands near that farm, and they told me that the mine is not exhausted yet, and that a one-third owner of that farm has been getting during these recent years twenty dollars of gold every fifteen minutes of his life, sleeping or waking. Why, you and I would enjoy an income like that!

But the best illustration that I have now of this thought was found here in Pennsylvania. There was a man living in Pennsylvania who owned a farm here and he did what I should do if I had a farm in Pennsylvania—he sold it. But before he sold it he concluded to secure employment collecting coal oil for his cousin in Canada. They first discovered coal oil there. So this farmer in Pennsylvania decided that he would apply for a position with his cousin in Canada. Now, you see, this farmer was not altogether a foolish man. He did not leave his farm until he had something else to do. Of all the simpletons the stars shine on there is none more foolish than a man who leaves one job before he has obtained another. And that has especial reference to gentlemen of my profession, and has no reference to a man seeking a divorce. So I say this old farmer did not leave one job until he had obtained another. He wrote to Canada, but his cousin replied that he could not engage him because he did not know anything about the oil business. “Well, then,” said he, “I will understand it.” So he set himself at the study of the whole subject. He began at the second day of the creation, he studied the subject from the primitive vegetation to the coal oil stage, until he knew all about it. Then he wrote to his cousin and said, “Now I understand the oil business.” And his cousin replied to him, “All right, then, come on.” That man, by the record of the county, sold his farm for eight hundred and thirty-three dollars—even money, “no cents.” He had scarcely gone from that farm before the man who purchased it went out to arrange for the watering the cattle and he found that the previous owner had arranged the matter very nicely. There is a stream running down the hillside there, and the previous owner had gone out and put a plank across that stream at an angle, extending across the brook and down edgewise



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a few inches under the surface of the water. The purpose of the plank across that brook was to throw over to the other bank a dreadful-looking scum through which the cattle would not put their noses to drink above the plank, although they would drink the water on one side below it. Thus that man who had gone to Canada had been himself damming back for twenty-three years a flow of coal oil which the State Geologist of Pennsylvania declared officially, as early as 1870, was then worth to our State a hundred millions of dollars. The city of Titusville now stands on that farm and those Pleasantville wells flow on, and that farmer who had studied all about the formation of oil since the second day of God's creation clear down to the present time, sold that farm for \$833, no cents—again I say “no sense.”

But I need another illustration, and I found that in Massachusetts, and I am sorry I did, because that is my old State. This young man I mention went out of the State to study—went down to Yale College and studied Mines and Mining. They paid him fifteen dollars a week during his last year for training students who were behind their classes in mineralogy, out of hours, of course, while pursuing his own studies. But when he graduated they raised his pay from fifteen dollars to forty-five dollars and offered him a professorship. Then he went straight home to his mother and said, “Mother, I won't work for forty-five dollars a week. What is forty-five dollars a week for a man with a brain like mine! Mother, lets go out to California and stake out gold claims and be immensely rich.” “Now” said his mother, “it is just as well to be happy as it is to be rich.”

But as he was the only son he had his way—they always do; and they sold out in Massachusetts and went to Wisconsin, where he went into the employ of the Superior Copper Mining Company, and he was lost from sight in the employ of that company at fifteen dollars a week again. He was also to have an interest in any mines that he should discover for that company. But I do not believe that he has ever discovered a mine—I do not know anything about it, but I do not believe he has. I know he had scarcely gone from the old homestead before the farmer who had bought the homestead went out to dig potatoes, and as he was bringing them in in a large basket through the front gateway, the ends of the stone wall came so near together at the gate that the basket hugged very tight. So he set the basket on the ground and pulled, first on one side and then on the other side. Our farms in Massachusetts are mostly stone walls, and the farmers have to be economical with their gateways in order to have some place to put the stones. That basket hugged so tight there that as he was hauling it through he noticed in the upper stone next the gate a block of native silver, eight inches square; and this professor of mines and mining and mineralogy, who would not work for forty-five dollars a week, when he sold that homestead



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in Massachusetts, sat right on that stone to make the bargain. He was brought up there; he had gone back and forth by that piece of silver, rubbed it with his sleeve, and it seemed to say, "Come now, now, now, here is a hundred thousand dollars. Why not take me?" But he would not take it. There was no silver in Newburyport; it was all away off—well, I don't know where; he didn't, but somewhere else—and he was a professor of mineralogy.

I do not know of anything I would enjoy better than to take the whole time to-night telling of blunders like that I have heard professors make. Yet I wish I knew what that man is doing out there in Wisconsin. I can imagine him out there, as he sits by his fireside, and he is saying to his friends, "Do you know that man Conwell that lives in Philadelphia?" "Oh, yes, I have heard of him." "And do you know that man Jones that lives in that city?" "Yes, I have heard of him." And then he begins to laugh and laugh and says to his friends, "They have done the same thing I did, precisely." And that spoils the whole joke, because you and I have done it.

Ninety out of every hundred people here have made that mistake this very day. I say you ought to be rich; you have no right to be poor. To live in Philadelphia and not be rich is a misfortune, and it is doubly a misfortune, because you could have been rich just as well as be poor. Philadelphia furnishes so many opportunities. You ought to be rich. But persons with certain religious prejudice will ask, "How can you spend your time advising the rising generation to give their time to getting money—dollars and cents—the commercial spirit?" Yet I must say that you ought to spend time getting rich. You and I know there are some things more valuable than money; of course, we do. Ah, yes! By a heart made unspeakably sad by a grave on which the autumn leaves now fall, I know there are some things higher and grander and sublimer than money. Well does the man know, who has suffered, that there are some things sweeter and holier and more sacred than gold. Nevertheless, the man of common sense also knows that there is not any one of those things that is not greatly enhanced by the use of money. Money is power. Love is the grandest thing on God's earth, but fortunate the lover who has plenty of money. Money is power; money has powers; and for a man to say, "I do not want money," is to say, "I do not wish to do any good to my fellowmen." It is absurd thus to talk. It is absurd to disconnect them. This is a wonderfully great life, and you ought to spend your time getting money, because of the power there is in money. And yet this religious prejudice is so great that some people think it is a great honor to be one of God's poor. I am looking in the faces of people who think just that way. I heard a man once say in a prayer meeting that he was thankful that he was one of God's poor, and then I silently wondered what his wife would say to that speech, as she took in washing to support



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the man while he sat and smoked on the veranda. I don't want to see any more of that kind of God's poor. Now, when a man could have been rich just as well, and he is now weak because he is poor, he has done some great wrong; he has been untruthful to himself; he has been unkind to his fellowmen. We ought to get rich if we can by honorable and Christian methods, and these are the only methods that sweep us quickly toward the goal of riches.

I remember, not many years ago a young theological student who came into my office and said to me that he thought it was his duty to come in and "labor with me." I asked him what had happened, and he said: "I feel it is my duty to come in and speak to you, sir, and say that the Holy Scriptures declare that money is the root of all evil." I asked him where he found that saying, and he said he found it in the Bible. I asked him whether he had made a new Bible, and he said, no, he had not gotten a new Bible, that it was in the old Bible. "Well," I said, "if it is in my Bible, I never saw it. Will you please get the text-book and let me see it?" He left the room and soon came stalking in with his Bible open, with all the bigoted pride of the narrow sectarian, who founds his creed on some misinterpretation of Scripture, and he puts the Bible down on the table before me and fairly squealed into my ear, "There it is. You can read it for yourself." I said to him, "Young man, you will learn, when you get a little older, that you cannot trust another denomination to read the Bible for you." I said, "Now, you belong to another denomination. Please read it to me, and remember that you are taught in a school where emphasis is exegesis." So he took the Bible and read it: "The *love* of money is the root of all evil." Then he had it right. The Great Book has come back into the esteem and love of the people, and into the respect of the greatest minds of earth, and now you can quote it and rest your life and your death on it without more fear. So, when he quoted right from the Scriptures he quoted the truth. "The love of money is the root of all evil." Oh, that is it. It is the worship of the means instead of the end, though you cannot reach the end without the means. When a man makes an idol of the money instead of the purposes for which it may be used, when he squeezes the dollar until the eagle squeals, then it is made the root of all evil. Think, if you only had the money, what you could do for your wife, your child, and for your home and your city. Think how soon you could endow the Temple College yonder if you only had the money and the disposition to give it; and yet, my friend, people say you and I should not spend the time getting rich. How inconsistent the whole thing is. We ought to be rich, because money has power. I think the best thing for me to do is to illustrate this, for if I say you ought to get rich, I ought, at least, to suggest how it is done. We get a prejudice against rich



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men because of the lies that are told about them. The lies that are told about Mr. Rockefeller because he has two hundred million dollars—so many believe them; yet how false is the representation of that man to the world. How little we can tell what is true nowadays when newspapers try to sell their papers entirely on some sensation! The way they lie about the rich men is something terrible, and I do not know that there is anything to illustrate this better than what the newspapers now say about the city of Philadelphia. A young man came to me the other day and said, “If Mr. Rockefeller, as you think, is a good man, why is it that everybody says so much against him?” It is because he has gotten ahead of us; that is the whole of it—just gotten ahead of us. Why is it Mr. Carnegie is criticised so sharply by an envious world? Because he has gotten more than we have. If a man knows more than I know, don’t I incline to criticise somewhat his learning? Let a man, stand in a pulpit and preach to thousands, and if I have fifteen people in my church, and they’re all asleep, don’t I criticise him? We always do that to the man who gets ahead of us. Why, the man you are criticising has one hundred millions, and you have fifty cents, and both of you have just what you are worth. One of the richest men in this country came into my home and sat down in my parlor and said: “Did you see all those lies about my family in the paper?” “Certainly I did; I knew they were lies when I saw them.” “Why do they lie about me the way they do?” “Well”, I said to him, “if you will give me your check for one hundred millions, I will take all the lies along with it” “Well,” said he, “I don’t see any sense in their thus talking about my family and myself. Conwell, tell me frankly, what do you think the American people think of me?” “Well,” said I, “they think you are the blackest-hearted villain that ever trod the soil!” “But what can I do about it?” There is nothing he can do about it, and yet he is one of the sweetest Christian men I ever knew. If you get a hundred millions you will have the lies; you will be lied about, and you can judge your success in any line by the lies that are told about you. I say that you ought to be rich. But there are ever coming to me young men who say, “I would like to go into business, but I cannot.” “Why not?” “Because I have no capital to begin on.” Capital, capital to begin on! What! young man! Living in Philadelphia and looking at this wealthy generation, all of whom began as poor boys, and you want capital to begin on? It is fortunate for you that you have no capital. I am glad you have no money. I pity a rich man’s son. A rich man’s son in these days of ours occupies a very difficult position. They are to be pitied. A rich man’s son cannot know the very best things in human life. He cannot. The statistics of Massachusetts show us that not one out of seventeen rich men’s sons ever die rich. They are raised in luxury, they die in poverty. Even if a rich man’s son retains his father’s money even then he cannot know the best things of life.



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A young man in our college yonder asked me to formulate for him what I thought was the happiest hour in a man's history, and I studied it long and came back convinced that the happiest hour that any man ever sees in any earthly matter is when a young man takes his bride over the threshold of the door, for the first time, of the house he himself has earned and built, when he turns to his bride and with an eloquence greater than any language of mine, he sayeth to his wife, "My loved one, I earned this home myself; I earned it all. It is all mine, and I divide it with thee." That is the grandest moment a human heart may ever see. But a rich man's son cannot know that. He goes into a finer mansion, it may be, but he is obliged to go through the house and say, "Mother gave me this, mother gave me that, my mother gave me that, my mother gave me that," until his wife wishes she had married his mother. Oh, I pity a rich man's son. I do. Until he gets so far along in his dudeism that he gets his arms up like that and can't get them down. Didn't you ever see any of them astray at Atlantic City? I saw one of these scarecrows once and I never tire thinking about it. I was at Niagara Falls lecturing, and after the lecture I went to the hotel, and when I went up to the desk there stood there a millionaire's son from New York. He was an indescribable specimen of anthropologic potency. He carried a gold-headed cane under his arm—more in its head than he had in his. I do not believe I could describe the young man if I should try. But still I must say that he wore an eye-glass he could not see through; patent leather shoes he could not walk in, and pants he could not sit down in—dressed like a grasshopper! Well, this human cricket came up to the clerk's desk just as I came in. He adjusted his unseeing eye-glass in this wise and lisped to the clerk, because it's "Hinglish, you know," to lisp: "Thir, thir, will you have the kindness to fuhnish me with thome papah and thome envelopehs!" The clerk measured that man quick, and he pulled out a drawer and took some envelopes and paper and cast them across the counter and turned away to his books. You should have seen that specimen of humanity when the paper and envelopes came across the counter—he whose wants had always been anticipated by servants. He adjusted his unseeing eye-glass and he yelled after that clerk: "Come back here thir, come right back here. Now, thir, will you order a thervant to take that papah and thothe envelopes and carry them to yondah dethk." Oh, the poor miserable, contemptible American monkey! He couldn't carry paper and envelopes twenty feet. I suppose he could not get his arms down. I have no pity for such travesties of human nature. If you have no capital, I am glad of it You don't need capital; you need common sense, not copper cents.



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A.T. Stewart, the great princely merchant of New York, the richest man in America in his time, was a poor boy; he had a dollar and a half and went into the mercantile business. But he lost eighty-seven and a half cents of his first dollar and a half because he bought some needles and thread and buttons to sell, which people didn't want. Are you poor? It is because you are not wanted and are left on your own hands. There was the great lesson. Apply it whichever way you will it comes to every single person's life, young or old. He did not know what people needed, and consequently bought something they didn't want, and had the goods left on his hands a dead loss. A.T. Stewart earned there the great lesson of his mercantile life and said, "I will never buy anything more until I first learn what the people want; then I'll make the purchase." He went around to the doors and asked them what they did want, and when he found out what they wanted, he invested his sixty-two and a half cents and began to supply "a known demand." I care not what your profession or occupation in life may be; I care not whether you are a lawyer, a doctor, a housekeeper, teacher or whatever else, the principle is precisely the same. We must know what the world needs first and then invest ourselves to supply that need, and success is almost certain. A.T. Stewart went on until he was worth forty millions. "Well," you will say, "a man can do that in New York, but cannot do it here in Philadelphia." The statistics very carefully gathered in New York in 1889 showed one hundred and seven millionaires in the city worth over ten millions apiece. It was remarkable and people think they must go there to get rich. Out of that one hundred and seven millionaires only seven of them made their money in New York, and the others moved to New York after their fortunes were made, and sixty-seven out of the remaining hundred made their fortunes in towns of less than six thousand people, and the richest man in the country at that time lived in a town of thirty-five hundred inhabitants, and always lived there and never moved away. It is not so much where you are as what you are. But at the same time if the largeness of the city comes into the problem, then remember it is the smaller city that furnishes the great opportunity to make the millions of money. The best illustration that I can give is in reference to John Jacob Astor, who was a poor boy and who made all the money of the Astor family. He made more than his successors have ever earned, and yet he once held a mortgage on a millinery store in New York, and because the people could not make enough money to pay the interest and the rent, he foreclosed the mortgage and took possession of the store and went into partnership with the man who had failed. He kept the same stock did not give them a dollar of capital, and he left them alone and went out and sat down upon a bench in the park. Out there on that bench in the park he had the most



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important, and to my mind, the pleasantest part of that partnership business. He was watching the ladies as they went by; and where is the man that wouldn't get rich at that business? But when John Jacob Astor saw a lady pass, with her shoulders back and her head up, as if she did not care if the whole world looked on her, he studied her bonnet; and before that bonnet was out of sight he knew the shape of the frame and the color of the trimmings, the curl of the—something on a bonnet. Sometimes I try to describe a woman's bonnet, but it is of little use, for it would be out of style to-morrow night. So John Jacob Astor went to the store and said: "Now, put in the show window just such a bonnet as I describe to you because," said he, "I have just seen a lady who likes just such a bonnet. Do not make up any more till I come back." And he went out again and sat on that bench in the park, and another lady of a different form and complexion passed him with a bonnet of different shape and color, of course. "Now," said he, "put such a bonnet as that in the show window." He didn't fill his show window with hats and bonnets which drive people away and then sit in the back of the store and bawl because the people go somewhere else to trade. He didn't put a hat or bonnet in that show window the like of which he had not seen before it was made up.

In our city especially there are great opportunities for manufacturing, and the time has come when the line is drawn very sharply between the stockholders of the factory and their employes. Now, friends, there has also come a discouraging gloom upon this country and the laboring men are beginning to feel that they are being held down by a crust over their heads through which they find it impossible to break, and the aristocratic money-owner himself is so far above that he will never descend to their assistance. That is the thought that is in the minds of our people. But, friends, never in the history of our country was there an opportunity so great for the poor man to get rich as there is now and in the city of Philadelphia. The very fact that they get discouraged is what prevents them from getting rich. That is all there is to it. The road is open, and let us keep it open between the poor and the rich. I know that the labor unions have two great problems to contend with, and there is only one way to solve them. The labor unions are doing as much to prevent its solving as are the capitalists to-day, and there are positively two sides to it. The labor union has two difficulties; the first one is that it began to make a labor scale for all classes on a par, and they scale down a man that can earn five dollars a day to two and a half a day, in order to level up to him an imbecile that cannot earn fifty cents a day. That is one of the most dangerous and discouraging things for the working man. He cannot get the results of his work if he do better work or higher work or work longer; that is a dangerous thing, and in order to get every



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laboring man free and every American equal to every other American, let the laboring man ask what he is worth and get it—not let any capitalist say to him: “You shall work for me for half of what you are worth;” nor let any labor organization say: “You shall work for the capitalist for half your worth.” Be a man, be independent, and then shall the laboring man find the road ever open from poverty to wealth. The other difficulty that the labor union has to consider, and this problem they have to solve themselves, is the kind of orators who come and talk to them about the oppressive rich. I can in my dreams recite the oration I have heard again and again under such circumstances. My life has been with the laboring man. I am a laboring man myself. I have often, in their assemblies, heard the speech of the man who has been invited to address the labor union. The man gets up before the assembled company of honest laboring men and he begins by saying: “Oh, ye honest, industrious laboring men, who have furnished all the capital of the world, who have built all the palaces and constructed all the railroads and covered the ocean with her steamships. Oh, you laboring men! You are nothing but slaves; you are ground down in the dust by the capitalist who is gloating over you as he enjoys his beautiful estates and as he has his banks filled with gold, and every dollar he owns is coined out of the hearts’ blood of the honest laboring man.” Now, that is a lie, and you know it is a lie; and yet that is the kind of speech that they are all the time hearing, representing the capitalists as wicked and the laboring men so enslaved. Why, how wrong it is! Let the man who loves his flag and believes in American principles endeavor with all his soul to bring the capitalist and the laboring man together until they stand side by side, and arm in arm, and work for the common good of humanity.

He is an enemy to his country who sets capital against labor or labor against capital.

Suppose I were to go down through this audience and ask you to introduce me to the great inventors who live here in Philadelphia. “The inventors of Philadelphia,” you would say “Why we don’t have any in Philadelphia. It is too slow to invent anything.” But you do have just as great inventors, and they are here in this audience, as ever invented a machine. But the probability is that the greatest inventor to benefit the world with his discovery is some person, perhaps some lady, who thinks she could not invent anything. Did you ever study the history of invention and see how strange it was that the man who made the greatest discovery did it without any previous idea that he was an inventor? Who are the great inventors? They are persons with plain, straightforward common sense, who saw a need in the world and immediately applied themselves to supply that need. If you want to invent anything, don’t try to find it in the wheels in your head nor the wheels in your



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machine, but first find out what the people need, and then apply yourself to that need, and this leads to invention on the part of people you would not dream of before. The great inventors are simply great men; the greater the man the more simple the man; and the more simple a machine, the more valuable it is. Did you ever know a really great man? His ways are so simple, so common, so plain, that you think any one could do what he is doing. So it is with the great men the world over. If you know a really great man, a neighbor of yours, you can go right up to him and say, "How are you, Jim, good morning, Sam." Of course you can, for they are always so simple.

When I wrote the life of General Garfield, one of his neighbors took me to his back door, and shouted, "Jim, Jim, Jim!" and very soon "Jim" came to the door and General Garfield let me in—one of the grandest men of our century. The great men of the world are ever so. I was down in Virginia and went up to an educational institution and was directed to a man who was setting out a tree. I approached him and said, "Do you think it would be possible for me to see General Robert B. Lee, the President of the University?" He said, "Sir, I am General Lee." Of course, when you meet such a man, so noble a man as that, you will find him a simple, plain man. Greatness is always just so modest and great inventions are simple.

I asked a class in school once who were the great inventors, and a little girl popped up and said, "Columbus." Well, now, she was not so far wrong. Columbus bought a farm and he carried on that farm just as I carried on my father's farm. He took a hoe and went out and sat down on a rock. But Columbus, as he sat upon that shore and looked out upon the ocean, noticed that the ships, as they sailed away, sank deeper into the sea the farther they went. And since that time some other "Spanish ships" have sunk into the sea. But as Columbus noticed that the tops of the masts dropped down out of sight, he said: "That is the way it is with this hoe handle; if you go around this hoe handle, the farther off you go the farther down you go. I can sail around to the East Indies." How plain it all was. How simple the mind—majestic like the simplicity of a mountain in its greatness. Who are the great inventors? They are ever the simple, plain, everyday people who see the need and set about to supply it.

I was once lecturing in North Carolina, and the cashier of the bank sat directly behind a lady who wore a very large hat. I said to that audience, "Your wealth is too near to you; you are looking right over it." He whispered to his friend, "Well, then, my wealth is in that hat." A little later, as he wrote me, I said, "Wherever there is a human need there is a greater fortune than a mine can furnish." He caught my thought, and he drew up his plan for a better hat pin than was in the hat before him, and the pin is now being manufactured. He was offered fifty-five thousand dollars for his patent. That man made his fortune before he got out of that hall. This is the whole question: Do you see a need?



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I remember well a man up in my native hills, a poor man, who for twenty years was helped by the town in his poverty, who owned a wide-spreading maple tree that covered the poor man's cottage like a benediction from on high. I remember that tree, for in the spring—there were some roguish boys around that neighborhood when I was young—in the spring of the year the man would put a bucket there and the spouts to catch the maple sap, and I remember where that bucket was; and when I was young the boys were, oh, so mean, that they went to that tree before than man had gotten out of bed in the morning, and after he had gone to bed at night, and drank up that sweet sap. I could swear they did it. He didn't make a great deal of maple sugar from that tree. But one day he made the sugar so white and crystalline that the visitor did not believe it was maple sugar; thought maple sugar must be red or black. He said to the old man: "Why don't you make it that way and sell it for confectionary?" The old man caught his thought and invented the "rock maple crystal," and before that patent expired he had ninety thousand dollars and had built a beautiful palace on the site of that tree. After forty years owning that tree he awoke to find it had fortunes of money indeed in it. And many of us are right by the tree that has a fortune for us, and we own it, possess it, do what we will with it, but we do not learn its value because we do not see the human need, and in these discoveries, and inventions this is one of the most romantic things of life.

I have received letters from all over the country and from England, where I have lectured, saying that they have discovered this and that, and one man out in Ohio took me through his great factories last spring, and said that they cost him \$680,000, and said he, "I was not worth a cent in the world when I heard your lecture "Acres of Diamonds"; but I made up my mind to stop right here and make my fortune here, and here it is." He showed me through his unmortgaged possessions. And this is a continual experience now as I travel through the country, after these many years. I mention this incident, not to boast, but to show you that you can do the same if you will.

Who are the great inventors? I remember a good illustration in a man who used to live in East Brookfield, Mass. He was a shoemaker, and he was out of work, and he sat around the house until his wife told him "to go out doors." And he did what every husband is compelled by law to do—he obeyed his wife. And he went out and sat down on an ash barrel in his back yard. Think of it! Stranded on an ash barrel and the enemy in possession of the house! As he sat on that ash barrel, he looked down into that little brook which ran through that back yard into the meadows, and he saw a little trout go flashing up the stream and hiding under the bank. I do not suppose he thought of Tennyson's beautiful poem:

"Chatter, chatter, as I flow,
To join the brimming river,
Men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever."



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But as this man looked into the brook, he leaped off that ash barrel and managed to catch the trout with his fingers, and sent it to Worcester. They wrote back that they would give him a five dollar bill for another such trout as that, not that it was worth that much, but he wished to help the poor man. So this shoemaker and his wife, now perfectly united, that five dollar bill in prospect went out to get another trout. They went up the stream to its source and down to the brimming river, but not another trout could they find in the whole stream; and so they came home disconsolate and went to the minister. The minister didn't know how trout grew, but he pointed the way. Said he, "Get Seth Green's book, and that will give you the information you want." They did so, and found all about the culture of trout. They found that a trout lays thirty-six hundred eggs every year and every trout gains a quarter of a pound every year, so that in four years a little trout will furnish four tons per annum to sell to the market at fifty cents a pound. When they found that, they said they didn't believe any such story as that, but if they could get five dollars a piece they could make something. And right in that same back yard with the coal sifter up stream and window screen down the stream, they began the culture of trout. They afterwards moved to the Hudson, and since then he has become the authority in the United States upon the raising of fish, and he has been next to the highest on the United States Fish Commission in Washington. My lesson is that man's wealth was out there in his back yard for twenty years, but he didn't see it until his wife drove him out with a mop stick.

I remember meeting personally a poor carpenter of Hingham, Massachusetts, who was out of work and in poverty. His wife also drove him out of doors. He sat down on the shore and whittled a soaked shingle into a wooden chain. His children quarreled over it in the evening, and while he was whittling a second one, a neighbor came along and said, "Why don't you whittle toys if you can carve like that?" He said, "I don't know what to make!" There is the whole thing. His neighbor said to him: "Why don't you ask your own children?" Said he, "What is the use of doing that? My children are different from other people's children." I used to see people like that when I taught school. The next morning when his boy came down the stairway, he said, "Sam, what do you want for a toy?" "I want a wheel-barrow." When his little girl came down he asked her what she wanted, and she said, "I want a little doll's washstand, a little doll's carriage, a little doll's umbrella," and went on with a whole lot of things that would have taken his lifetime to supply. He consulted his own children right there in his own house and began to whittle out toys to please them. He began with his jack-knife, and made those unpainted Hingham toys. He is the richest man in the entire New England States, if Mr. Lawson is to be trusted in his statement concerning such things, and yet that man's fortune was made by consulting his own children in his own house. You don't need to go out of your own house to find out what to invent or what to make. I always talk too long on this subject.



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I would like to meet the great men who are here to-night. The great men! We don't have any great men in Philadelphia. Great men! You say that they all come from London, or San Francisco, or Rome, or Manayunk, or anywhere else but here—anywhere else but Philadelphia—and yet, in fact, there are just as great men in Philadelphia as in any city of its size. There are great men and women in this audience. Great men, I have said, are very simple men. Just as many great men here as are to be found anywhere. The greatest error in judging great men is that we think that they always hold an office. The world knows nothing of its greatest men. Who are the great men of the world? The young man and young woman may well ask the question. It is not necessary that they should hold an office, and yet that is the popular idea. That is the idea we teach now in our high schools and common schools, that the great men of the world are those who hold some high office, and unless we change that very soon and do away with that prejudice, we are going to change to an empire. There is no question about it. We must teach that men are great only on their intrinsic value, and not on the position that they may incidentally happen to occupy. And yet, don't blame the young men saying that they are going to be great when they get into some official position. I ask this audience again who of you are going to be great? Says a young man: "I am going to be great" "When are you going to be great?" "When I am elected to some political office," Won't you learn the lesson, young man; that it is *prima facie* evidence of littleness to hold public office under our form of government? Think of it. This is a government of the people, and by the people, and for the people, and not for the office-holder, and if the people in this country rule as they always should rule, an officeholder is only the servant of the people, and the Bible says that "the servant cannot be greater than his master," The Bible says that "he that is sent cannot be greater than him who sent him." In this country the people are the masters, and the office-holders can never be greater than the people; they should be honest servants of the people, but they are not our greatest men. Young man, remember that you never heard of a great man holding any political office in this country unless he took that office at an expense to himself. It is a loss to every great man to take a public office in our country. Bear this in mind, young man, that you cannot be made great by a political election. Another young man says, "I am going to be a great man in Philadelphia some time." "Is that so? When are you going to be great?" "When there comes another war! When we get into difficulty with Mexico, or England, or Russia, or Japan, or with Spain again over Cuba, or with New Jersey, I will march up to the cannon's mouth, and amid the glistening bayonets I will tear down their flag from its staff, and I will come home with stars on my shoulders, and hold every office in the gift of the government, and I will be great." "No, you won't! No, you won't; that is no evidence of true greatness, young man." But don't blame that young man for thinking that way; that is the way he is taught in the high school. That is the way history is taught in college. He is taught that the men who held the office did all the fighting.



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I remember we had a Peace Jubilee here in Philadelphia soon after the Spanish war. Perhaps some of those visitors think we should not have had it until now in Philadelphia, and as the great procession was going up Broad street I was told that the tally-ho coach stopped right in front of my house, and on the coach was Hobson, and all the people threw up their hats and swung their handkerchiefs, and shouted "Hurrah for Hobson!" I would have yelled too, because he deserves much more of his country than he has ever received. But suppose I go into the High School to-morrow and ask, "Boys, who sunk the Merrimac?" If they answer me "Hobson," they tell me seven-eighths of a lie—seven-eighths of a lie, because there were eight men who sunk the Merrimac. The other seven men, by virtue of their position, were continually exposed to the Spanish fire, while Hobson, as an officer, might reasonably be behind the smoke-stack. Why, my friends, in this intelligent audience gathered here to-night I do not believe I could find a single person that can name the other seven men who were with Hobson. Why do we teach history in that way? We ought to teach that however humble the station a man may occupy, if he does his full duty in his place, he is just as much entitled to the American peopled honor as is a king upon a throne. We do teach it as a mother did her little boy in Now York when he said, "Mamma, what great building is that?" "That is General Grant's tomb." "Who was General Grant?" "He was the man who put down the rebellion." Is that the way to teach history?

Do you think we would have gained a victory if it had depended on General Grant alone? Oh, no. Then why is there a tomb on the Hudson at all? Why, not simply because General Grant was personally a great man himself, but that tomb is there because he was a representative man and represented two hundred thousand men who went down to death for their nation and many of them as great as General Grant. That is why that beautiful tomb stands on the heights over the Hudson.

I remember an incident that will illustrate this, the only one that I can give to-night. I am ashamed of it, but I don't dare leave it out. I close my eyes now; I look back through the years to 1863; I can see my native town in the Berkshire Hills, I can see that cattle-show ground filled with people; I can see the church there and the town hall crowded, and hear bands playing, and see flags flying and handkerchiefs steaming—well do I recall at this moment that day. The people had turned out to receive a company of soldiers, and that company came marching up on the Common. They had served out one term in the Civil War and had re-enlisted, and they were being received by their native townsmen. I was but a boy, but I was captain of that company, puffed out with pride on that day—why, a cambric needle would have burst me all to pieces. As I marched on the Common at the head of my company, there was not a man more proud than I. We marched



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into the town hall and then they seated my soldiers down in the center of the house and I took my place down on the front seat, and then the town officers filed through the great throng of people, who stood close and packed in that little hall. They came up on the platform, formed a half circle around it, and the mayor of the town, the "chairman of the Select men" in Kew England, took his seat in the middle of that half circle, He was an old man, his hair was gray; he never held an office before in his life. He thought that an office was all he needed to be a truly great man, and when he came up he adjusted his powerful spectacles and glanced calmly around the audience with amazing dignity. Suddenly his eyes fell upon me, and then the good old man came right forward and invited me to come up on the stand with the town officers. Invited me up on the stand! No town officer ever took notice of me before I went to war. Now, I should not say that. One town officer was there who advised the teacher to "whale" me, but I mean no "honorable mention." So I was invited up on the stand with the town officers. I took my seat and let my sword fall on the floor, and folded my arms across my breast and waited to be received. Napoleon the Fifth! Pride goeth before destruction and a fall. When I had gotten my seat and all became silent through the hall, the chairman of the Select men arose and came forward with great dignity to the table, and we all supposed he would introduce the Congregational minister, who was the only orator in the town, and who would give the oration to the returning soldiers. But, friends, you should have seen the surprise that ran over that audience when they discovered that this old farmer was going to deliver that oration himself. He had never made a speech in his life before, but he fell into the same error that others have fallen into, he seemed to think that the office would make him an orator. So he had written out a speech and walked up and down the pasture until he had learned it by heart and frightened the cattle, and he brought that manuscript with him, and taking it from his pocket, he spread it carefully upon the table. Then he adjusted his spectacles to be sure that he might see it, and walked far back on the platform and then stepped forward like this. He must have studied the subject much, for he assumed an elocutionary attitude; he rested heavily upon his left heel, slightly advanced the right foot, threw back his shoulders, opened the organs of speech, and advanced his right hand at an angle of forty-five. As he stood in that elocutionary attitude this is just the way that speech went, this is it precisely. Some of my friends have asked me if I do not exaggerate it, but I could not exaggerate it. Impossible! This is the way it went; although I am not here for the story but the lesson that is back of it:



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“Fellow citizens.” As soon as he heard his voice, his hand began to shake like that, his knees began to tremble, and then he shook all over. He coughed and choked and finally came around to look at his manuscript. Then he began again: “Fellow citizens: We—are—we are—we are—we are—We are very happy—we are very happy—we are very happy—to welcome back to their native town these soldiers who have fought and bled—and come back again to their native town. We are especially—we are especially—we are especially—we are especially pleased to see with us to-day this young hero (that meant me)—this young hero who in imagination (friends, remember, he said “imagination,” for if he had not said that, I would not be egotistical enough to refer to it)—this young hero who, in imagination, we have seen leading his troops—leading—we have seen leading—we have seen leading his troops on to the deadly breach. We have seen his shining—his shining—we have seen his shining—we have seen his shining—his shining sword—flashing in the sunlight as he shouted to his troops, ‘Come on!’”

Oh, dear, dear, dear, dear! How little that good, old man knew about war. If he had known anything about war, he ought to have known what any soldier in this audience knows is true, that it is next to a crime for an officer of infantry ever in time of danger to go ahead of his men. I, with my shining sword flashing in the sunlight, shouting to my troops: “Come on.” I never did it. Do you suppose I would go ahead of my men to be shot in the front by the enemy and in the back by my own men? That is no place for an officer. The place for the officer is behind the private soldier in actual fighting. How often, as a staff officer, I rode down the line when the Rebel cry and yell was coming out of the woods, sweeping along over the fields, and shouted, “Officers to the rear! Officers to the rear!” and then every officer goes behind the line of battle, and the higher the officer’s rank, the farther behind he goes. Not because he is any the less brave, but because the laws of war require that to be done. If the general came up on the front line and were killed you would lose your battle anyhow, because he has the plan of the battle in his brain, and must be kept in comparative safety. I, with my “shining sword flashing in the sunlight.” Ah! There sat in the hall that day men who had given that boy their last hardtack, who had carried him on their backs through deep rivers. But some were not there; they had gone down to death for their country. The speaker mentioned them, but they were but little noticed, and yet they had gone down to death for their country, gone down for a cause they believed was right and still believe was right, though I grant to the other side the same that I ask for myself. Yet these men who had actually died for their country were little noticed, and the hero of the hour was this boy. Why was he the hero? Simply because that man



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fell into that same foolishness. This boy was an officer, and those were only private soldiers. I learned a lesson that I will never forget. Greatness consists not in holding some office; greatness really consists in doing some great deed with little means, in the accomplishment of vast purposes from the private ranks of life; that is true greatness. He who can give to this people better streets, better homes, better schools, better churches, more religion, more of happiness, more of God, he that can be a blessing to the community in which he lives to-night will be great anywhere, but he who cannot be a blessing where he now lives will never be great anywhere on the face of God's earth. "We live in deeds, not years, in feeling, not in figures on a dial; in thoughts, not breaths; we should count time by heart throbs, in the cause of right." Bailey says: "He most lives who thinks most."

If you forget everything I have said to you, do not forget this, because it contains more in two lines than all I have said. Bailey says: "He most lives who thinks most, who feels the noblest, and who acts the best."

"PERSONAL GLIMPSES OF CELEBRATED MEN AND WOMEN."[A]

[Footnote A: Stenographic report by A. Russell Smith, Sec'y.]

When I had been lecturing forty years, which is now four years ago, the Lecture Bureau suggested that before I retire from the public platform, that I should prepare one subject and deliver it through the country. For I had told the Bureau thirty years ago that when I had lectured forty years, I would retire. They therefore suggested a talk on this topic, "Personal Glimpses of Celebrated Men and Women." But a death in our family which destroyed the homeness of our house produced such an effect upon us that after the forty years came we found that we would rather wander than stay at home, and consequently we are traveling still, and will do so until the end. This explanation will show why many of these things are said. For I must necessarily bring myself often into this topic, sometimes unpleasantly to myself. Mark Twain says, that the trouble with an old man is that he "remembers so many things that ain't so," and with Mark Twain's caution in my ears, I will try to give you these "Personal Glimpses of Celebrated Men and Women."

I do not claim to be a very intimate friend of great men. But a fly may look at an elephant, and for this reason we may glance at the great men and women whom I have seen through the many years of public life. Sometimes those glimpses give us a better idea of the real man or woman than an entire biography written while he was living would do; and to-night as a grandfather would bring his grandchildren to his knee and tell them of his little experiences, so let me tell to you these incidents in a life now so largely lived out.



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As I glance back to the Hampshire Highlands of the dear old Berkshire Hills in Massachusetts, where my father worked as a farmer among the rocks for twenty years to pay off a mortgage of twelve hundred dollars upon his little farm, my elder brother and myself slept in the attic which had one window in the gable end, composed of four lights and those very small. I remember that attic so distinctly now, with the ears of corn hung by the husks on the bare rafters, the rats running over the floor and sometimes over the faces of the boys; the patter of the rain upon the roof, and the whistle of the wind around that gable end, the sifting of the snows through the hole in the window over the pillow on our bed. While these things may appear very simple and homely before this great audience, yet I mention them because in this house I had a glimpse of the first great man I ever saw. It was far in the country, far from the railroad, far from the city, yet into that region there came occasionally a man or woman whose name is a household word in the world. In those mountains of my boyhood there was then an "underground railroad" running from Virginia to Canada. It was called an "underground railroad," although it was a system by which the escaped slaves from Virginia came into Delaware, from Delaware into Philadelphia, then to New York, then to Springfield, and from Springfield my father took the slaves by night to Worthington, Mass., and they were sent on by St. Albans, over the Canada line into liberty. This "underground railroad" system was composed of a chain of men of whom my father was one link. One night my father drove up in the dark, and my elder brother and I looked out to see who it was he had brought home with him. We supposed he had brought a slave whom he was helping to escape. Oh, those dreary, dark days, when we were in continual dread lest the United States Marshal should arrest my father, throw him into prison for thus assisting these fugitive slaves. The gloomy memory of those early years chills me now. But as we gazed out that dark night, we saw that it was a white man with father and who helped unhitch the horses and put them in the barn. In the morning this white man sat at the breakfast table and my father introduced him to us, saying: "Boys, this is Frederick Douglass, the great colored orator," While I looked at him, giggling as boys will do, Mr. Douglass turned to us and said, "Yes, boys, I am a colored man; my mother was a colored woman and my father a white man," and said he, "I have never seen my father, and I do not know much about my mother. I remember her once when she interfered between me and the overseer, who was whipping me, and she received the lash upon her cheek and shoulder, and her blood ran across my face. I remember washing her blood from my face and clothes." That story made a deep impression on us boys, stamped indelibly on our memories. Frederick Douglass is thus mentioned to illustrate the subject that I have come to teach



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to-night. He frequently came to our house after that and my mother often said to him, "Mr. Douglass, you will work yourself to death," but he replied that until the slaves were free, and that would be very soon, he must devote his life to them. But after that, said he, "I will retire to Rochester, New York, where I have some land and will build a house." He told us how many rooms it would have, what decorations would be there, but when the war had been over several years, he came to the house again and my father asked him about the house in Rochester. "Well," he said, "I have not built that one yet, but I have my plans for it. I have some work yet to do; I must take care of the freedmen in the South, and look after their financial prosperity, then I will build my cottage." You all remember that he never built his house, but suddenly went on into the unknown of the greatest work of his life.

I remember that in 1852, my father came with another man who was put for the night into the northwest bedroom—this is the room where those New Englanders always put their friends, because, perhaps, pneumonia comes there first—that awful, cold, dismal, northwest bedroom. Thinking a favorite uncle had come, I went to the door early in the morning. The door was shut—one of those doors which, if you lift the latch, the door immediately swings open. I lifted the latch and prepared to leap in to awaken my uncle and astonish him by my early morning greeting. But when the door swung back, I glanced toward the bed. The astonishment chills me at this moment, for in that bed was not my uncle; but a giant, whose toes stood up at the foot-board, and whose long hair was spread out over the pillow and his long gray whiskers lay on the bed clothes, and oh, that snore—it sounded like some steam horn. That giant figure frightened me and I rushed out into the kitchen and said, "Mother, who is that strange man in the northwest bed room?" and she said, "Why, that is John Brown." I had never seen John Brown before, although my father had been with him in the wool business in Springfield. I had heard some strange things about John Brown, and the figure of the man made them seem doubly terrible. I hid beside my mother, where I said I would stay until the man was through his breakfast, but father came out and demanded that the boys should come in, and he set me right under the wing of that awful giant. But when John Brown saw us coming in so timidly, he turned to us with a smile so benign and beautiful and so greatly in contrast to what we had pictured him, that it was a transition. He became to us boys one of the loveliest men we ever knew. He would go to the barn with us and milk the cows, pitch the hay from the hay-mow; he drove the cattle to water for us, and told us many a story, until the dear, good old man became one of the treasurers of our life. It is true that my mother thought he was half crazy, and consequently she and father did not always agree



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about him, and did not discuss him before the children. But nevertheless, be he a crank, or a fanatic, or what he may, one thing is sure, the richest milk of human kindness flowed from that heart and devoted itself sincerely to the uplift of humanity. I remember him with love, love deep and sacred, up to this present time. However great an extremist John Brown was, there were many of them in New England. Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison and John Brown never could agree. John Brown used to criticise Wendell Phillips severely. He said that Wendell Phillips could not see to read the clearest signs of revolution, and he was reminded by the husband who bought a grave-stone that had been carved for another woman, but the stone-cutter said "That has the name of another person." "Oh," said the widower, "that makes no difference; my wife couldn't read." John Brown once said of Wm. Lloyd Garrison that he couldn't see the point and was like the woman who never could see a joke. One morning, seated at the breakfast table, her husband cracked a joke, but she did not smile, when he said, "Mary, you could not see a joke if it were fired at you from a Dalgreen gun," whereupon she remarked: "Now John, you know they do not fire jokes out of a gun." Well do I recall that December 2d of 1859. Only a few weeks before John Brown came to our house and my father subscribed to the purchase of rifles to aid in the attempt to raise the insurrection among the slaves. The last time I saw John Brown he was in the wagon with my father. Father gave him the reins and came back as though he had forgotten something. John Brown said, "Boys, stay at home; stay at home! Now, remember, you may never see me again," and then in a lower voice, "And I do not think you ever will see me again," but "Remember the advice of your Uncle Brown (as we called him), and stay at home with the old folks, and remember that you will be more blessed here than anywhere else on earth." The happiest place on earth for me is still at my old home in Litchfield, Connecticut. I did not understand him then, but on December 2d at eleven o'clock my father called us all into the house and all that hour from eleven to twelve o'clock we sat there in perfect silence. As the old clock in that kitchen struck eleven, I heard the bell, ring from the Methodist Church, its peal coming up the valley, from hill to hill, and echoing its sad tone as the hour wore on. The peal of that bell remains with me now; it has ever been a source of inspiration to me. Sixty times struck that old bell. Once a minute, and when the long sad hour was over, father put his Bible upon the mantel and went slowly out, and we all solemnly followed, going to our various duties. That solemn hour had a voice in the coming great Civil War of 1861-65. At that hour John Brown was hanged in Virginia. All through New England, they kept that hour with the same solemn services which characterized my father's family. When the call came for volunteers the young men of



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New England enlisted in the army, and sang again and again, that old song, "John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave, but his soul goes marching on." His soul is still marching on. And while I am one of those who would be the first to resist any attempt to mar the sweet fraternity that now characterises the feeling between the North and South, as I believe that the Southern soldier fought for what he believed to be right, and consequently is entitled to our fraternal respect, and while I believe that John Brown was sometimes a fanatic, yet this illustration teaches us this great lesson and that John Brown's advice was true. His happiest days were passed far back in the quiet of his old home.

Near to our home, in the town of Cummington, lived William Cullen Bryant, one of the great poets of New England. He came back there to spend his summers among the mountains he so clearly loved. He promised the people of Cummington that he would again make his permanent home there. I remember asking him if he would come clown to the stream where he wrote "Thanatopsis" and recite it for us. The good, old neighbor, white haired and trembling, came down to the banks of that little stream and stood in the shade of the same old maple where he had written that beautiful poem, and read from the wonderful creation that made his name famous.

"So live that when thy summons comes, to join
The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm where each must take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon; but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

"Yes," he said, "I will come back to Cummington." So he went to Europe but came not back to occupy that home. He loved the old home. We were driving by his place one day when we saw him planting apple trees in July. We all know that apple trees won't grow when planted in July, so my father, knowing him well, called to him and said, "Mr. Bryant, what are you doing there? They won't grow." Mr. Bryant paused a moment and looked at us, and then said half playfully: "Conwell, drive on, you have no part nor lot in this matter. I do not expect these trees to grow; I am setting them out because I want to live over again the days when my father used to set trees when they would grow. I want to renew that memory." He was wise, for in his work on "The Transmigration of Races" he used that experience wonderfully.



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In 1860, when we were teaching school, my elder brother and myself, in Blanchford, Massachusetts, were asked to go to Brooklyn with the body of a lady who died near our schools. We went to Brooklyn on Saturday and after the funeral, our friends asked us to stay over Sunday, saying that they would take us to hear Henry Ward Beecher! That was a great inducement, because my father read the "Tribune" every Sunday morning after his Bible (and sometimes before it) and what Henry Ward Beecher said, my father thought, "was law and Gospel." Sunday night, we went to Plymouth Church, and there was a crowd an hour before the service, and when the doors were opened we were crowded up the stairs. We boys were thrust back into a dirty corner where we could not see. Oh, yes, that is the way they treat the boys, put them any place—they're only boys! I remember the disappointment of that night, when we went there more to see than hear. But finally Mr. Beecher came out and gave out his text. I remember that I did not pay very much attention to it. In the middle of the sermon Mr. Beecher began in the strangest way to auction off a woman: "How much am I offered for the woman?" he yelled, and while in his biographies, they have said that this woman was sold in the Broadway Tabernacle, but I afterwards asked Mrs. Beecher and she said that Mr. Beecher had not sold this woman twice, so far as she knew, but that she recalled distinctly the sale in the Plymouth Church. I remember standing up on tip-toes to look for that woman that was being sold. After he had finished, after the singing of the hymn, he said "Brethren, be seated," and then said, "Sam, come here." A colored boy came up tremblingly and stood beside him. "This boy is offered for \$770.00; he is owned in South Carolina and has run away. His master offers him to me for \$770.00, and now if the officers of the church will pass the plates the boy shall be set free," and when the plates were returned over \$1700.00 came in. As we went our way home I said to my elder brother: "Oh, what a grand thing it must be to preach to a congregation of fifteen hundred people." But my elder brother very wisely said: "You don't know anything about it; you do not know whether he is happy or not." "Well," I suggested, "wasn't it a strange thing to introduce a public auction in the middle of a sermon," and my elder brother again said that if they did more of that in a country church they would have a larger congregation. Afterwards I was quite fortunate to know Mr. Beecher and frequently reported his sermons. I often heard him say that the happiest years he ever knew were back in Lawrenceville, Ohio, in that little church where there were no lamps and he had to borrow them himself, light them himself, and prepare the church for the first service. He told how he swept the church, lighted the fire in the stove, and how it smoked; then how he sawed the wood to heat the church, and how he went into carpenter work to earn money to pay his own salary, yet he said that was the happiest time of his life. Mrs. Beecher told me afterwards that Mr. Beecher often talked about those days and said that bye and bye he would retire and they would again go back to the simple life they had enjoyed so much.



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When he had built his new home near the Hudson, Robert Collier and I visited him. We found in the rear of an addition that clap-boards had been put up in all sorts of adjustment. Mr. Collier asked him: "Where did you find a carpenter to do such poor work as that?" and Mr. Beecher said humorously: "You could not hire that carpenter on your house." Then he said: "Mr. Collier, I put those boards on that house myself. I insisted that they leave that work for me to do. I have been happy putting on these boards and driving these nails. They took me back to the old days at Lawrenceville, where we lived over a store and our pantry was a dry goods box. But there we were so happy. I am hoping sometime to be as happy again, but it is not possible to do it while I am in the service of the public." He had promised himself and his wife some day to go back to that simple life. But his sudden death taught the same great lesson with all the examples I give of great men and women. Rev. Robt. Collier always enjoyed the circus—the circus was the great place of enjoyment outside, perhaps, of his pulpit work. It was Robert Collier who used to tell the story of the boy whose aunt always made him go to church, but after going to a circus he wrote to his aunt: "Auntie, if you had ever been to a circus, you wouldn't go to another prayer-meeting as long as you live." The love of Collier for the circus only shows the simplicity of the great man's mind. Mr. Collier is said to have paid a dollar for a fifty cent ticket to the circus, only making it conditional that he was to have the privilege of going 'round to the rear and crawling under the tent, showing what he must have done when a boy. The fact of Mr. Collier's love for the circus was one of the strange things in the eccentricities of a great man's life. Once Mr. Barnum came into Mr. Collier's church and Mr. Collier said to the usher: "Please show Mr. Barnum to a front seat for he always gives me one in *his* circus." These simplicities often show that somewhere back in each man's life there is a point where happiness and love are one, and when, that point is passed, we go on longing to the return.

The night after he went to hear Henry Ward Beecher's great sermon they persuaded us to stay until the following Monday night, because there was to be a lecture at the Cooper Institute and there was to be a parade of political clubs, and fire works, so as country boys, easily influenced, we decided that the school could wait for another day, and staid for the procession. We went to Cooper's Institute and there was a crowd as there was at Beecher's church. We finally got on the stairway and far in the rear of the great crowd, but my brother stood on the floor, and I sat on the ledge of the window sill, with my feet on his shoulders, so he held me while I told him down there what was going on over yonder. The first man that came on the platform, and presided at that meeting, was William Cullent Bryant, our dear



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old neighbor. When we boys in a strange city saw that familiar face, oh, the emotions that arose in our hearts! How proud we were at that hour, that he, our neighbor, was presiding on that occasion. He took his seat on the stage, the right of which was left vacant for some one yet to come. Next came a very heavy man, but immediately following him a tall, lean man. Mr. Bryant arose and went toward him, bowing and smiling. He was an awkward specimen of a man and all about me people were asking "Who is that?" but no man seemed to know. I asked a gentleman who that man was, but he said he didn't know. He was an awkward specimen indeed; one of the legs of his trousers was up about two inches above his shoe; his hair was dishevelled and stuck out like rooster's feathers; his coat was altogether too large for him in the back, his arms much longer than the sleeves, and with his legs twisted around the rungs of the chair, was the picture of embarrassment. When Mr. Bryant arose to introduce the speaker of that evening, he was known seemingly to few in that great hall. Mr. Bryant said: "Gentlemen of New York, you have your favorite son in Mr. Seward and if he were to be President of the United States, every one of us would be proud of him." Then came great applause. "Ohio has her favorite son in Judge Wade; and the nation would prosper under his administration, but Gentlemen of New York, it is a great honor that is conferred upon me to-night, for I can introduce to you the next President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln." Then through that audience flew the query as to whom Abraham Lincoln was. There was but weak applause. Mr. Lincoln had in his hand a manuscript. He had written it with great care and exactness and the speech which you read in his biography is the one that he wrote, not the one that he delivered as I recall it, and it is fortunate for the country that they did print the one that he wrote. I think the one he wrote had already been set up in type that afternoon from his manuscript, and consequently they did not go over it to see whether it had been changed or not. He had read three pages and had gone on to the fourth when he lost his place and then he began to tremble and stammer. He then turned it over two or three times, threw the manuscript upon the table, and, as they say in the west, "let himself go." Now the stammering man who had created only silent derision up to that point, suddenly flashed out into an angel of oratory and the awkward arms and dishevelled hair were lost sight of entirely in the wonderful beauty and lofty inspiration of that magnificent address. The great audience immediately began to follow his thought, and when he uttered that quotation from Douglass, "It is written on the sky of America that the slaves shall some day be free," he had settled the question that he was to be the next President of the United States. The applause was so-great that the building trembled and I felt the windows shake behind me. Afterward, as we walked home,



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I said to my elder brother again, "Wasn't it a great thing to be introduced to all those people as the next President of the United States?" and my elder brother very wisely said: "You do not know whether he was really happy or not." Afterwards, in 1864, when one of my soldiers was unjustly sentenced and his gray-haired mother plead with me to use what influence I would have with the President, I went to Washington and told the story to the President. He said he had heard something about it from Mr. Stanton, and he said he would investigate the matter, and he did afterward decide that the man should not be put to death. At the close of that interview I said to the President: "I beg your pardon, Mr. Lincoln, but is it not a most exhausting thing to sit here hearing all these appeals and have all of this business on your hands?" He laid his head on his hand, and in a somewhat wearied manner, said, with a deep sigh: "Yes, yes; no man ought to be ambitious to be President of the United States," and said he, "When this war is over, and that won't be very long, I tell my "Tad" that we will go back to the farm where I was happier as a boy when I dug potatoes at twenty-five cents a day than I am now; I tell him I will buy him a mule and a pony and he shall have a little cart and he shall make a little garden in a field all his own," and the President's face beamed as he arose from his chair in the delight of excitement as he said: "Yes, I will be far happier than I have ever been here." The next time I looked in the face of Abraham Lincoln was in the east room of the White House at Washington as he lay in his coffin. Not long ago at a Chautauqua lecture I was on the very farm which he bought at Salem, Illinois, and looked around the place where he had resolved to build a mansion, but which was never constructed.

Near my home in the Berkshires, Charles Dudley Warner was born. When he had accomplished great things in literature and had written "My Summer in a Garden," that popular work which attracted the attention of his newspaper friends, he went to Hartford, where the latter gave him a banquet. I was invited to attend and report it for the public press. They lauded him and said how beautiful it was to be so elevated above his fellow men, and how great he was in the estimation of the world. But he in his answer to the toast said, "Gentlemen, I wish for no fame, I desire no glory and you have made a mistake if you think I enjoy any such notoriety. I envy the Hartford teacher whose smile threw sunshine along her pathway." Then he told us the story of a poor little boy, cold and barefooted, standing on the street on a terribly cold day. A lady came along, and looking kindly at him, said, "Little boy, are you cold?" The little fellow, looking up into her face, said, "Yes Ma'am, I was cold till you smiled." He would rather have a smile like that and the simple love of his fellow men than to have all the fame of the earth. He was honored in all parts of the world by the greatest



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of the great, yet he was a sad man when he wrote "My Summer in a Garden," and it all seems a mystery how he could in such grief have written that remarkable little tale. This sadness is often associated with humorists. Mr. Shaw was one of the saddest men I ever met. Why, he cried on the slightest occasion. I went one day to interview him in Boston, and Mr. Shepard, his publisher, said "Please don't trouble Josh Billings now." "What is the matter?" "Oh, he is crying again," said Mr. Shepard. I asked him how Mr. Shaw could write such funny things as he did. He then showed me the manuscript (which Mr. Shaw had just placed on his desk and which he had just written), in which he says, "I do not know any cure for laziness, but I have known a second wife to hurry it up some." Artemus Ward wrote the most laughable things while his heart was in the deepest wretchedness. Often these glimpses of the funny men whose profession would seem to show them to be the happiest of earth's people, prove that they are sometimes the most gloomy and miserable.

John B. Gough, the great temperance orator, the greatest the world has ever seen, said to me one evening at his home that he would lecture for forty years, and then would stop. But his wife said, "Now, John, you know you won't give it up." He assented, "Yes, I will." But his wife said, "No you won't. You men when you drink of public life find it like a drink of whiskey, and you are just like the rest of the men." "No," said he. Then Mr. Gough told again his familiar story of the minister who was preaching in his pulpit in Boston when he saw the Governor of the State coming up the aisle. Immediately he began to stammer, and finally said: "I see the Governor coming in, and as I know you will want to hear an exhortation from him, I think that I had better stop." Then one of the old officials leaped up from one of the front seats and said, "I insist upon your going on with your sermon, sir; you ought not be embarrassed by the Governor's coming in. We are all worms! All worms! nothing but worms!" Then the minister was angry and shouted: "Sir, I would have you understand that there is a difference in worms." Mr. Gough said he was different from other people yet the years came and went, and he stayed on the public platform. One night a committee from Frankford, Philadelphia, asked me to write him and ask him to lecture for them. I wrote and whether my influence had anything to do with it or not, I do not know, but he came from New York and when he was in about the middle of his lecture, he came to that sentence, "Young man, keep your record clear, for a single glass of intoxicating liquor may somewhere, in after years, change into a horrid monster that shall carry you down to woe." And when he had uttered that wonderful sentence of advice, he slopped to get breath, reached for a drink of water, swung forward and fell over. The doctor said he was too late for any earthly aid, and John B. Gough, with his armor on, went on into Glory. He never found that earthly rest he had promised himself. His garden never showed its flowers, and his fields were never strewn with grain.



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When our regiment was encamped in Faneuil Hall at Boston before embarking for the war in 1863, Mr. Wendell Phillips sent an invitation to the officers of the regiment to visit his home. But when we reached his house we found that he had been called to Worcester suddenly to make a speech. But we found his wife there in her rolling chair, for she was a permanent invalid. Our evening was spent very pleasantly, but I said to her: "Are you not very lonesome when Mr. Phillips is away so much?" "Yes," she said, "I am very lonesome; he is father, mother, brother, sister, husband and child to me," and said she, "he cares for me with the tenderness of a mother; he waits upon me, he takes me out, and brings me in; he dresses me, and it now seems so strange that he is not by my side. If it were not for him, I should die, but he says that as soon as the slaves are free that he will come back and be the same husband he was before." The officers standing around me smiled as they heard of his promise to retire, but said she, "Oh, yes, he will do as he promised." When the war was over and the slaves were free, and he had scolded General Grant all he wished, he did do as he promised, and did retire. He sold his house in the city and bought one in Waverly, Massachusetts. He did prove the exception and went back to the private life that he had promised himself and his wife. Every Sunday morning as I drove by his home I could see him swinging on his gate. It was a double gate over the driveway, and he would pull that gate far in, get on it and then swing way out over the side-walk and then in again. Well, he used to swing on that gate every Sunday morning, and my family wondered why it was that he always did it on that particular morning. One Sunday morning when I drove by, I found Mr. Phillips swinging on his gate over the side-walk, and I said, "Mr. Phillips, my family wish me to ask you why you swing on this gate every Sunday morning." Mr. Phillips, who had a very deep sense of humour, stepped off the gate, stood back, and assuming a dignified, ministerial air, "I am requested to discourse to-day upon the text 'Why I swing upon this gate on Sunday morning,' and I will, therefore, divide my text into two heads." I quickly told him that I must get to church some time that day. "Then," said he, with a smile, "just one word more: Why do I swing on a gate? Because the first time I saw my wife she was swinging on the gate, and the second time I saw her, we kissed each other over the top of the gate, and when I swing it reminds me of other happy days long gone by. That, sir, is the reason I swing upon this gate." Then his humor all disappeared and he said: "I really swing upon this gate on Sunday morning because I think the next thing to the love of God is love of man for a true woman—as you cannot say you love God and hate your brother, neither can you say you love God unless you have first loved a human being, and I swing on this gate on Sunday morning because to me it is next to life's highest worship." And then, in a majestic manner, he said, "Conwell, all within this gate is PARADISE and all without it MARTYRDOM." In that wonderful sentence, which I feel sure I recall accurately, he uttered the most glorious expression that could ever come from uninspired lips.



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I had a glimpse of James G. Elaine when I went to his home in Augusta, Maine, to write his biography for the committee. A day or two after it was finished a distinguished Senator from Washington came to see me in Philadelphia and asked if Mr. Blaine had seen the book, and I told him that he certainly had. "Did he see that second chapter?" "Of course he did," said I; "he corrected it." Then he wanted to know how much money it would take to get the book out of circulation. "Why, what is the matter with the book," said I, but he would not tell me, and said that he would pay me well if I would only keep the book from circulation. He did not tell me what was the matter. I told him that the publishers owned the copyright, having bought it from me. He said, "Is it not possible for you to take a trip to Europe to-morrow morning?" "But why take a trip to Europe?" "The committee will pay all of your expenses, all your family's expenses, and of any servants you wish to take with you—only get out of the country." "Well," I said, "I am not going to leave the country for my country's good, unless I know what I am going for." I never could find out what the trouble with that second chapter was, and I afterwards asked Mrs. Blaine if she knew what was the matter. She then broke out in a paroxysm of grief and said that if he had stayed in Washington, Pennsylvania, where he was a teacher, "he would be living yet." She said "he had given thirty years of his life to the public service, and now they have so ungratefully disgraced his name, sent him to an early grave, and all in consequence of what he has done for the public. He is a stranger to his country—a stranger to his friends," and then she said, "O would to God he had stayed in Pennsylvania!" I left her then, but I have never known what was in that second chapter that caused the disturbance. But I do know the second chapter was concerning their early and happy life in Washington, Pennsylvania, where he taught in the college.

Near our home in Newton, Massachusetts, was that of F.F. Smith, who wrote "America." It was of him that Oliver Wendell Holmes said that "Nature tried to hide him by naming him Smith." Smith lived that quiet and restful life that reminds one of Tennyson's "Brook" when thinking of him. He knew the glory of modest living.

The last time I saw the sweet Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, was in Amesbury, before he died. He sent a note to the lecture hall asking me to come to come to him. I asked him what was his favorite poem of his own writing. He said he had not thought very much about it, but said that there was one that he especially remembered:

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

I then asked him, "Mr. Whittier, how could you write all those war songs which sent us young men to war, and you a peaceful Quaker? I cannot understand it." He smiled and said that his great-grandfather had been on a ship that was attacked by pirates, and as one of the pirates was climbing up the rope into their ship, his great-grandfather

grasped a knife and cut the rope, saying: "If thee wants the rope, thee can have it." He said that he had inherited something of the same spirit.



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At Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, Bayard Taylor took me to the grave of his wife, and said "Here is the spot where I determined to live anew. From this grave the real experiences of my life began." There he was completing his home called "Cedar Croft." But he died while U.S. Minister to Germany. The Young Men's Congress of Boston, when arranging for a great memorial service in Tremont Temple, asked me to call on Dr. Oliver Wendel Holmes to ask him to write a poem on Bayard Taylor's death. When I asked Mr. Holmes to write this poem, to be read in the Tremont Temple, he was sitting on the rocking chair. He rocked back and kicked up his feet, and began to laugh. "I write a poem on Bayard Taylor—ah, no—but I tell you, if you will get Mr. Longfellow to write a poem on Bayard Taylor's death, I will read it." These things only show the eccentricities of Mr. Holmes. So I went to Mr. Longfellow and told him what Dr. Holmes had said, and here is the poem he wrote:

"Dead he lay among his books!
The peace of God was in his looks.
As the statues in the gloom
Watch o'er Maximilian's tomb,
So those volumes from their shelves
Watched him, silent as themselves.
Ah, his hand will never more
Turn their storied pages o'er.
Never more his lips repeat
Songs of theirs, however sweet.
Let the lifeless body rest!
He is gone who was its guest.
Gone as travellers haste to leave
An inn, nor tarry until eve.

"Traveller! in what realms afar,
In what planet, in what star,
In what gardens of delight
Rest thy weary feet to-night?
Poet, thou whose latest verse
Was a garland on thy hearse,
Thou hast sung with organ tone
In Deukalion's life thine own.
On the ruins of the Past
Blooms the perfect flower, at last
Friend, but yesterday the bells
Rang for thee their loud farewells;
And to-day they toll for thee,
Lying dead beyond the sea;
Lying dead among thy books;
The peace of God in all thy looks."



That great traveller, like Mr. Longfellow, used to tell me of his first wife. He always said that her sweet spirit occupied that room and stood by him. I often told him that he was wrong and argued with him, but he said, "I know she is here." I often thought of the great inspiration she had been to him in his marvelous poems and books. Poor Bayard Taylor, "In what gardens of delight, rest thy weary feet to-night?" Mr. Longfellow once said that Mary "stood between him and his manuscript," and he could not get away from the impression that she was with him all the time. How sad was her early death and how he suffered the martyrdom of the faithful! Longfellow's home life was always beautiful But his later years were disturbed greatly by souvenir and curiosity seekers.

Horace Greeley died of a broken heart because he was not elected President of the United States, and never was happy in the last years of his life. His idea of true happiness was to go to some quiet retreat and publish some little paper. He once declared at a dinner in Brooklyn that he envied the owner of a weekly paper in Indiana whose paper was so weakly that the subscribers did not miss it if it failed to appear.



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Mr. Tennyson told me that he would not exchange his home, walled in as it was like a fortress for Windsor Castle or the throne of the Queen.

Mr. Carnegie said to me only a few months ago that if a man owned his home and had his health he had all the money that man needed to be as happy as any person can be. Mr. Carnegie was right about that.

Empress Eugenie, in 1870, was said to be the happiest woman in France. I saw her in the Tuilleries at a gorgeous banquet and a few years after, when her husband had been captured, her son killed and she was a widow, at the Chislehurst Cottage, I said to her, "The last time I saw you in that beautiful palace you were said to be the happiest woman in the world." "Sir," she said, "I am far happier now than I was then." It was a statement that for a long time I could not understand.

I caught a glimpse of Garibaldi weeping because he did not go back with his wife, Anita, to South America.

I visited Charles Dickens at his home and asked him to come to America again and read from his books, but Mr. Dickens said "No, I will never cross the ocean; I will not go even to London. When I die, I am to be buried out there on the lawn," and he pointed out the place to me. A few weeks later I hired a custodian to let me in early at the rear gate of Westminster Abbey, for Parliament had changed Mr. Dickens's will in one respect, and provided that he should not be buried on the lawn of his cottage, but instead in Westminster Abbey, but they made no other change in his will. There I looked on the fifteen men, all whom the will allowed to be present at his funeral, who were bearing all that was mortal of Charles Dickens to his rest, and I heard Dean Stanley say "While Mr. Dickens lived, his loss was our gain; but now his gain is our loss." When he uttered that great truth, very condensed, in that beautiful language, he showed that human life in the public service of one's fellow men may be nothing more or less than continual sacrifice.

My friends, if you are called to public service; if you have influence that you can use for the public good, do not hesitate to go if you are SURE that DUTY calls you. But if, instead, no voice of God, no call of mankind, doth require that you go out and give up the best of life for your fellows, remember how fortunate you are. If you can go to your home at evening and read your paper in peace, and rest undisturbed, do so, and remember that you have reached the very height of personal happiness. Then seek no farther, count thyself happy and go no farther than God shall call you. For the happiest man is not famous, nor rich, but he who hath his loved ones in an undisturbed peace around. Remember what Wendell Phillips said, "All within this gate is Paradise; all without it is MARTYDROM."

I had a glimpse of Generals Grant and Sheridan wrestling like boys, over a box of cigars sent into General Grant's tent. They were boys again.

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I had a glimpse of Li-Hung Chang at Nanking, China, at an execution by beheading, and a glimpse of him an hour later playing leap frog with his grandchildren. Childhood was a joy, manhood a tragedy.