

The Book of Genesis.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Embodied in these simple words we find the key-stone of the mighty arch upon which rests the seven days work of the Creator. For the first time recorded, inspiration finds a voice and man is introduced to God.—The veil of the invisible is rent and stands face to face with Theos. From the abyss of eternity, for as yet there was no time, the world came rolling into space, darkness and chaos were its habiliments, while murky billows wrapped like a winding sheet its darkened form.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Without prelude Moses throws the work of centuries into that brief sentence. He stops not to tell us of the Primary or Secondary or Tertiary, the Igneous or Old Red Sandstone, but simply says, "The earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Thirty-one verses complete the history of the work of God. Last of all he made man, who is called "the coronation of universal nature" and the image and likeness of God. Tomes have been written on these few verses, yet evolution has never gone beyond the concise narrative of Moses. "And there was evening and morning, the sixth day, and the heavens and the earth were finished and the whole world of them."

Two chapters contain in concise language, the only glimpse of the original eden or garden of delight where the infancy of our first parents was spent, where God walked and talked with them in the cool of the day. To us there comes no revelation of the inner life of that beautiful home beyond the marriage of Adam and Eve. The ceremony that made them one was brief and pointed. And Adam said: "This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of her husband."

The song of the morning stars had hardly ceased to echo through the groves of paradise or angels ceased to wonder at the new born world, when he who led the rebel hosts from heaven, appeared in Eden. Then came the temptation, the fall, the expulsion, and last of all the awful curse, and man himself lays the foundation of a suffering world while the gates of paradise are closed forever to bar his return to an earthly Eden and Cherubim, with fiery sword to keep the way to the tree of life.

Without a period or a pause the history rushes on. Important events fly from the pen of the lawgiver "like sparks from an anvil." The birth of Cain, the murderer of Abel, the birth of Seth, and the beginning of religion, are all stated in a few brief verses. Five chapters contain fifteen hundred years of the world's history; then comes the deluge that awful burial of a world. What a mighty event chronicled in a few short lines.

"All flesh died that moved upon the earth both of fowl and of cattle and of beast and every creeping thing, that creepeth upon the earth. All in whose nostrils was the breath of life. All that was in the dry land." What a short description of the funeral of the world!

Noah and his family were all that were left to mourn over the lost, or greet with gladness the bow of promise which lent its glorious beauty to grace the birth of a new world.

Moses does not attempt to gloss over the wickedness of the postdiluvians who thought to build a tower that should reach to heaven. The temptation and the fall is given to us without a word of comment or regret, and an ocean world bears on its throbbing bosom but eight souls, yet he never expresses an opinion in regard to it.

The call of Abraham from an idolatrous family to leave his country and

to go he knew not whither—the birth of Ishmael—the love Abraham bore the boy, the sending away of Hagar, the agony of parting, the birth of Isaac, the sacrifice, the purchase of the cave of Machpelah, the death and burial of Sarah, are told as simply as we would narrate the commonest events of life.

He states the birth of Jacob and Esau, the rivalry of the twin brothers, the banishment of the one and the fierce anger of the other, without praise or blame for the scheming mother.

He gives us the mercenary character of Laban without comment.

Who now would write his own life as briefly as Moses wrote his? His father and mother were both of the tribe of Levi. She strove to save the boy. In an ark she committed him to the waters of that wondrous river, and as son of the Nile he was born into Pharaoh's household. We meet again when he was forty years old; how full of events must have been his life, yet he gives no whisper of it at all.

As a fugitive we find him fleeing from the anger of the King; and again, in forty years we meet him at Mount Horeb, before the bush burning with fire. There is no pride or exultation in his heart because God hath chosen him to lead his people forth from bondage—but only humility and meekness. He was slow of speech and incompetent to do so mighty a work. He went in obedience to God's command and from the hour when the Nile blushed in blood, until the wail of anguish went up from every Egyptian household for the death of the first born, there comes to us no self gratulation from the pen of Moses. Truly Genesis is a wonderful book by a most wonderful man. Who can doubt its authenticity or inspiration?—*Apostolic Times*.

Getting Out of One's Self.

Some celebrated persons have been said to possess in an unusual degree a power which all men share to a certain extent,—that of projecting the mind out of the body, so that it stands for a moment as a sort of outsider and stranger, and looks at its old surroundings and even at its ordinary self with something of surprise, and with the critical coldness which any chance spectator might feel.

There is nothing supernatural or unhealthy in such a seeming severance of the ordinary bonds of the mind, any more than there is in the common dream of seeing one's own dead body. It is a healthy exercise to set aside, once and a while, all ordinary methods of thought and action. Many a sound reform in personal character has come from some sharp shock, overturning and uprooting things which seemed essential to existence, but which proved to be hindrances to right living. Many a man who otherwise would never amount to anything, and who would have left the world no better than he found it, had his life been confined to an ordinary round of duties, has been made a hero and a great public benefactor, merely by being called upon to meet circumstances having imperative claims upon his own efforts. However the fatalist and the hero-worshiper may quarrel over the question whether events make men, or men make events, it is certain that there would be fewer "mute inglorious Miltons" and "village Hamdens," if there were a more general ability to make use of the power for which Burns sigged, of seeing ourselves from the outside instead of the inside.

There is no use in multiplying examples showing the different view and the changed opinion which come from a transfer of the point of observation. Any one who has traveled upon a railroad and then traversed the same region by carriage perceives what danger lies in forming opinions while journeying upon any fixed path. The fixed paths in per-

sonal character are quite as deceptive, in the formation of just opinions concerning one's surroundings in the journey of life. Long employment of the same methods of thought, and constant familiarity with the same vicinage, too often lead to a wheeling of conscience and a cossetting of whims which do a far more destructive work than are ever perceived from any inside standpoint. It is a hard lesson, sometimes, to learn how one's person, or character, or work, or surroundings, is regarded by those outside the limits of personal acquaintance and discreet courtesy, but it is likely to be a very salutary one. Such a shield of sophistry and selfishness sometimes grows around the character of a person accustomed to look at him self only from the inside, that it must finally be put off utterly, and abandoned forever, just as crabs abandon their disused shells. The shell stands in its old place, but the rejuvenated occupant has got outside of himself, and started on a new career.

All through life, whatever tenderness may be felt toward a new home, there is pretty sure to remain a sense of surprise and narrowness of what once seemed large and fair. One of childhood's long journeys is but a few minutes' walk for the grown man. So, whatever gain we make, we look upon ourselves with more of pity and surprise than contempt. Affection for what we have left behind does not blind us to the value of what we have gained. Not all need leave their local homes, but luckless are they who dwell, without discontent, in the narrow quarters of an unambitious mind or a worldly spirit.

An endeavor to get out of our own selves is most of all beneficial in that it helps us to understand how God looks at us. He knows our inmost thought, but he also compares it with his own unchanging standard of right. He wants us to grow, not to stand still. He bids us seek peace, and not remain content in stagnation. Sooner or later the most stubborn and self-contained men must get out from himself, whether he will or not; if not during life, at least at the end of it. His work, his friends, and his body, must all be left at once, for it is God's will that we tarry not long in the same place. The more, therefore, that we go out from ourselves, from our evil associates, from our injurious prejudices, from our self-confidence, the more ready shall we be for that moment when the spirit shall go out from its earthly home, and return unto God who gave it.—*S. S. Times*.

The Church Scold.

The apple-tree has its inchworm, and the ox its gadfly; husbands sometimes have their certain lectures; Murray had his deacon; so almost every church has its scold. There is the church debt, the church music, and the church croaker, these three, and the greatest of the three is the church croaker.

A pious scold in the church is a dispensation of mercy, to keep the brotherhood from worldly vanity and proud-flesh, and to prevent Christians from having their good things in this life. God permits this grumbling in these days of fine churches and eloquent ministers and excellent music, that the attention of the saints may be recalled to their own faults and infirmities, that they may take their turn with the elder prophets, at sackcloth and ashes.

The church is always painfully aware that not all its interests are managed in the best way, that not all its departments of work and service are complete, notwithstanding it has tried to do its best. Conscious that defects inher in all human endeavor, it hopes that there will be a little blindness toward some errors and mistakes, that time will be given to mend that which is amiss, and a general charity exercised. But the scold, like a hungry fly, is sure always to

dive for the sore spot and stick. Point out other things to him, that are hopeful and inviting, and he is silent, and soon manages to get around to the weak point, and put in his complaint. It is impossible to get this kind of buzzard far away from the carcass, although it has been put aside and buried.

The grumbler in the church is not the person to be put off or silenced. No short-coming will be let pass unnoticed. He has a high and holy mission, self-constituted, by the laying on of hands upon all his imperfect brethren. He cares little for the truth. It is error that it gratifies him to get hold of. A conscience has he that never sleeps nor slumbers. It is a wasp's nest in the path of evil-doers. He is set on high for the defense of the jots and tittles. On all the questions that belong to the mint and annise and cummin of the church, he is bound to lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. Never mind the camel; he will see that the gnat is strained out of all church affairs.—*The Advance*.

A Saintly Girl in a Garret.

The Rev. Dr. Samuel Manning, Secretary to the Religious Tract Society, London, preached not long ago on "Looking unto Jesus," and he forcibly showed that the aim of the Society, in each of the sixteen millions of tracts issued every year, was to point men to Jesus as the author and finisher of faith. In the course of his sermon he related the following anecdote:

"Some years ago I stood by the sick bed of a young woman racked by a cruel disease, which was dragging her to her grave. She was lying in a poor chamber, and was dependent upon the charity of the church for her support in her last days. By patient submission, however, to the discipline through which she was called to pass, she had, through the grace of God, been lifted into a region of holy peace and hope, such as I have seldom witnessed. Her poor, mean antic was as the antechamber of heaven, she was always so full of thankfulness and joy.

"At last she came to the hour of death," Mary, said her visitor, 'how is it with you now?' Her reply deserves to be remembered: 'I once thought,' she said, 'that I should rise above my starting-point, that I should get beyond it. I do not think so now, sir. I must leave off where I began—at the feet of Christ.' Then she murmured:

"A guilty, weak, and worthless worm
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all."

Then her eyes closed in that sleep which men call death, but as I stood there I knew it to be but the awakening into a higher and diviner life. So it is with all of us; we begin with Christ when we begin to live, and we end with Christ when this mortal life is over, for he is the author and the finisher of our faith.—*Christian Herald*.

THE MOTHERLESS.—Sitting in the school room, I overheard a conversation between a sister and a brother. The little boy complained of insults or wrongs received from another little boy. His face was flushed with anger. The sister listened awhile, and then turning away, she answered: "I do not want to hear another word; Willie has no mother." The brother's lips were silent; the rebuke came home to him, and stealing away, he muttered, "I never thought of that." He thought of his own mother, and the loneliness of Willie compared with his own happy lot. "He has no mother."

Do we think of it when want comes to the orphan and rude words assail him? Has the little wanderer no mother to listen to his little sorrows? Speak gently to him, then.—*Good Words*.

Do Not be Cruel.

In my walk this morning, I passed near a large pool, where a number of boys were enjoying what they called a duck hunt. A poor duck was pursued through the water by dogs, and every time a dog approached it, the poor thing was obliged to dive under the water, to escape from its tormentors. This it did so frequently, that at last it became quite exhausted, and two of the dogs caught it, and pulled it to pieces in a shocking manner, while the cruel boys on the brink of the water clapped their hands to encourage the dogs. It was a barbarous sport, and I mention it that I may impress on your minds a piece of advice: Do not be cruel.

No, no, my boys and girls, do not be cruel, for cruelty is one of the very worst symptoms of a bad disposition. Young people run into a thousand errors through folly; but cruelty is a crime that a child ought to abhor. The heart that is cruel is not to be trusted. Do not think that all cruel things we hear of among mankind are brought around suddenly. Oh, no; they are done by little and little; first the child is cruel, and then he becomes a cruel man. Show me a child that can delight in tearing off the legs of a fly, and I will show you one who, when he becomes a man, will not scruple to torment his fellow-creatures, unless his heart be changed. I know this to be the case, and therefore, mind what I say, Do not be cruel.—*Ex*.

An Easy Fit.

The late Horace Greeley had his own ideas as to what a shoe ought to be. If it was an easy fit, he cared little for its appearance. The following anecdote illustrates his eccentricity:

Mr. Greeley rolled into the shoemaker's store with that heavy, billowy sort of gait he had. "Sit down, Mr. Greeley," said the shoemaker.

Greeley looked up with that broad, wondering, child-like look, and said: "Why, do you know me?"

"Everybody knows you, Mr. Greeley," was the reply; and it did not seem to displease this big-hearted man, who was so glad to have his fellow-men think well of him.

A comfortable-fitting shoe was tried on. "No; that's altogether too small."

Then a shoe that was really altogether too large, but that, too, was not large enough; then a cloth shoe, so large that Mr. Greeley could put his hand in and arrange his stocking over his foot so as to fit him.

He was amazed at the contrast with Broadway prices, not seeing that there was also a contrast with the Broadway quality, bought several pairs like it—all the man had, in fact,—and went away greatly delighted, saying that he had a lot of shoes he would send around to be mended.

Sure enough, a boy came in a few moments with a small basketful. The shoemaker pledged me his professional honor that there were not two shoes alike in that whole basket. He hurried around to Mr. Greeley's house and suggested that, as none of the shoes were mated, it was of no use to mend them.

"Well," said Mr. Greeley, with that confidential half whisper of his, "the fact is, I put 'em on just about as they came along." And it is not difficult to believe that he did.—*Ex*.

—The new law of compulsory education in Italy is working well, it is said. The passage of the law involved the building of 2,000 new school houses, and the improvement of 20,000 old ones.

Talleyrand said that happiness depended on a hard heart and a good stomach.