

DAILY THOUGHTS

by Charles Kingsley

A collection of daily reflections by Charles Kingsley, the Victorian clergyman and author, offering brief meditations on Christian faith, duty, and the natural world for each day of the year.

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Daily Thoughts

January.

Welcome, wild North-easter!

Shame it is to see

Odes to every zephyr:

Ne'er a verse to thee.

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Tired we are of summer,

Tired of gaudy glare,

Showers soft and steaming,

Hot and breathless air.

Tired of listless dreaming

Through the lazy day:

Jovial wind of winter

Turn us out to play!

Sweep the golden reed-beds;

Crisp the lazy dyke;

Hunger into madness

Every plunging pike.

Fill the lake with wild-fowl;

Fill the marsh with snipe;

While on dreary moorlands

Lonely curlew pipe.

Through the black fir forest

Thunder harsh and dry,

Shattering down the snow-flakes

Off the curdled sky.

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Come; and strong within us

Stir the Viking's blood;

Bracing brain and sinew:

Blow, thou wind of God! Ode to North-east Wind.

New Year's Day. January 1. {3}

Gather you, gather you, angels of God --

Freedom and Mercy and Truth;

Come! for the earth is grown coward and old;

Come down and renew us her youth.

Wisdom, Self-sacrifice, Daring, and Love,

Haste to the battlefield, stoop from above,

To the day of the Lord at hand!The Day of the Lord. 1847.

The Nineteenth Century. January 2.

Now, and at no other time: in this same nineteenth century lies our work. Let us thank God that we are here now, and joyfully try to understand where we are, and what our work is here. As for all superstitions about "the good old times," and fancies that they belonged to God, while this age belongs only to man, blind chance, and the evil one, let us cast them from us as the suggestions of an evil lying spirit, as the natural parents of laziness, pedantry, fanaticism, and unbelief. And therefore let us not fear to ask the meaning of this present day, and of all its different voices -- the pressing, noisy, complex present, where our workfield lies, the most intricate of all states of society, and of all schools of literature yet known. Introductory Lecture, Queen's College.

1848.

Forward. January 3.

Let us forward. God leads us. Though blind, shall we be afraid to follow? I do not see my way: I do not care to: but I know that He sees His way, and that I see Him. Letters and Memories. 1848.

The Noble Life. January 4.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;

Do noble things, not dream them all day long;

And so make life, and death, and that For Ever

One grand sweet song. A Farewell. 1856. Live in the present that you may be ready for the future. MS.

Duty and Sentiment. January 5.

God demands not sentiment but justice. The Bible knows nothing of "the religious sentiments and emotions" whereof we hear so much talk nowadays. It speaks of Duty. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another."National Sermons. 1851.

The Everlasting Harmony. January 6.

If thou art living a righteous and useful life, doing thy duty orderly and cheerfully where God has put thee, then thou in thy humble place art humbly copying the everlasting harmony and melody which is in heaven; the everlasting harmony and melody by which God made the world and all that therein is -- and behold it was very good -- in the day when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy over the new- created earth, which God had made to be a pattern of His own perfection. Good News of God Sermons. 1859.

The Keys of Death and Hell. January 7.

Fear not. Christ has the keys of death and hell. He has been through them and is alive for evermore. Christ is the first, and was loving and just and glorious and almighty before there was any death or hell. And Christ is the last, and will be loving and just and glorious and almighty as ever, in that great day when all enemies shall be under His feet, and death shall be destroyed, and death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire. MS. Sermon. 1857.

A Living God. January 8.

Here and there, among rich and poor, there are those whose heart and flesh, whose conscience and whose intellect, cry out for the Living God, and will know no peace till they have found Him. For till then they can find no explanation of the three great human questions -- Where am I? Whither am I going? What must I do? Sermons on the Pentateuch. 1862.

The Fairy Gardens. January 9.

Of all the blessings which the study of Nature brings to the patient observer, let none, perhaps, be classed higher than this, that the farther he enters into those fairy gardens of life and birth, which Spenser saw and described in his great poem, the more he learns the awful and yet comfortable truth, that they do not belong to him, but to One greater, wiser, lovelier than he; and as he stands, silent with awe, amid the pomp of Nature's ever-busy rest, hears as of old, The Word of the "Lord God walking among the trees of the garden in the cool of the day."Glaucus. 1855.

Love. January 10.

Oh! Love! Love! Love! the same in peasant and in peer! The more honour to you, then, old Love, to be the same thing in this world which is common to peasant and to peer. They say that you are blind, a dreamer, an exaggerator -- a liar, in short! They just know nothing about you, then. You will not see people as they seem -- as they have become, no doubt; but why? Because you see them as they ought to be, and are in some deep way eternally, in the sight of Him who conceived and created them! Two Years Ago, chap. xiv. 1856.

Life--Love. January 11.

We must live nobly to love nobly.MS.

The Seed of Good. January 12.

Never was the young Abbot heard to speak harshly of any human being. "When thou hast tried in vain for seven years," he used to say, "to convert a sinner, then only wilt thou have a right to suspect him of being a worse man than thyself." That there is a seed of good in all men, a divine word and spirit striving with all men, a gospel and good news which would turn the hearts of all men, if abbots and priests could but preach it aright, was his favourite doctrine, and one which he used to defend, when at rare intervals he allowed himself to discuss any subject, from the writings of his favourite theologian, Clement of Alexandria. Above all, Abbot Philamon stopped by stern rebuke any attempt to revile either heretics or heathens. "On the Catholic Church alone," he used to say, "lies the blame of all heresy and unbelief; for if she were but for one day that which she ought to be, the world would be converted before nightfall." Hypatia, chap. xxx. 1852.

Danger of Thinking vaguely. January 13.

Watch against any fallacies in your ideas which may arise, not from disingenuousness, but from allowing yourself in moments of feeling to think vaguely, and not to attach precise meaning to your words. Without any cold caution of expression, it is a duty we owe to God's truth, and to our own happiness and the happiness of those around us, to think and speak as correctly as we can. Almost all heresy, schism, and misunderstandings, between either churches or individuals who ought to be one, have arisen from this fault of an involved and vague style of thought. MS. 1842.

The Possession of Faith. January 14.

I don't want to possess a faith, I want a faith which will possess me. Hypatia, chap. xvii. 1852.

The Eternal Life. January 15.

Eternally, and for ever, in heaven, says St. John, Christ says and is and does what prophets prophesied of Him that He would say and be and do. "I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star. And let him that is athirst, come: and whosoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely." For ever Christ calls to every anxious soul, every afflicted soul, to every man who is ashamed of himself, and angry with himself, and longs to live a gentler, nobler, purer, truer, and more useful life, "Come, and live for ever the eternal life of righteousness, holiness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, which is the one true and only salvation bought for us by the precious blood of Christ our Lord." Amen. Water of Life Sermons. 1865

The Golden Cup of Youth. January 16.

Ah, glorious twenty-one, with your inexhaustible powers of doing and enjoying, eating and hungering, sleeping and sitting up, reading and playing! Happy are those who still possess you, and can take their fill of your golden cup, steadied, but not saddened, by the remembrance that for all things a good and loving God will bring them to judgment! Happier still those who (like a few) retain in body and soul the health and buoyancy of twenty-one on to the very verge of forty, and, seeming to grow younger-hearted as they grow older-headed, can cast off care and work at a moment's warning, laugh and frolic now as they did twenty years ago, and say with Wordsworth --
"So was it when I was a boy,

So let it be when I am old,

Or let me die."Two Years Ago, chap. xix. 1856.

Work and Duty. January 17.

If a man is busy, and busy about his duty, what more does he require for time or for eternity? Chalk Stream Studies. 1856.

Members of Christ. January 18.

. . . Would you be humble, daughter?

You must look up, not down, and see yourself

A paltry atom, sap-transmitting vein

Of Christ's vast vine; the pettiest joint and member Of His great body. Let thyself die --

And dying, rise again to fuller life.

To be a whole is to be small and weak --

To be a part is to be great and mighty

In the one spirit of the mighty whole --

The spirit of the martyrs and the saints. Saint's Tragedy, Act ii. Scene vi.

1847.

Beauty a Sacrament. January 19.

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful. Beauty is God's handwriting -- a way-side sacrament; welcome it in every fair face, every fair sky, every fair flower, and thank Him for it, who is the Fountain of all loveliness, and drink it in simply and earnestly with all your eyes; it is a charmed draught, a cup of blessing. True Words to Brave Men. 1844.

The Ideal of Rank. January 20.

With Christianity came in the thought that domination meant responsibility, that responsibility demanded virtue. The words which denoted Rank came to denote, likewise, high moral excellencies. The nobilis, or man who was known, and therefore subject to public opinion, was bound to behave nobly. The gentle-man -- gentile-man -- who respected his own gens, or family, or pedigree, was bound to be gentle. The courtier who had picked up at court some touch of Roman civilisation from Roman ecclesiastics was bound to be courteous. He who held an "honour," or "edel" of land, was bound to be honourable; and he who held a "weorthig," or "worthy," thereof, was bound himself to be worthy. Lectures on Ancien Regime. 1866.

An Indulgent God. January 21.

A merely indulgent God would be an unjust God, and a cruel God likewise. If God be just, as He is, then He has boundless pity for those who are weak, but boundless wrath for the strong who misuse the weak. Boundless pity for those who are ignorant, misled, and out of the right way; but boundless wrath for those who mislead them and put them out of the right way. Discipline Sermons. 1867.

The Fifty-First Psalm. January 22.

It is such utterances as these which have given for now many hundred years their priceless value to the little Book of Psalms ascribed to the shepherd outlaw of the Judean hills, which have sent the sound of his name into all lands throughout all the world. Every form of human sorrow, doubt, struggle, error, sin -- the nun agonising in the cloister; the settler struggling for his life in Transatlantic forests; the pauper shivering over the embers in his hovel and waiting for kind death; the man of business striving to keep his honour pure amid the temptations of commerce; the prodigal son starving in the far country and recollecting the words which he learnt long ago at his mother's knee; the peasant boy trudging afield in the chill dawn and remembering that the Lord is his Shepherd, therefore he will not want -- all shapes of humanity have found, and will find to the end of time, a word said here to their inmost hearts. . . .Sermons on David. 1866.

Waiting for Death. January 23.

Death, beautiful, wise, kind Death, when will you come and tell me what I want to know? I courted you once and many a time, brave old Death, only to give rest to the weary. That was a coward's wish -- and so you would not come. . . . I was not worthy of you. And now I will not hunt you any more, old Death. Do you bide your time, and I mine. . . . Only when you come, give me not rest but work. Give work to the idle, freedom to the chained, sight to the blind! Two Years Ago, chap. xv. 1856.

The One Refuge. January 24.

Safe! There is no safety but from God, and that comes by prayer and faith. Hypatia. 1852.

Future Identity. January 25.

I believe that the union of those who have loved here will in the next world amount to perfect identity, that they will look back on the expressions of affection here as mere meagre strugglings after and approximation to the union which then will be perfect. Perfect! Letters and Memories. 1842.

Friendship. January 26.

A friend once won need never be lost, if we will be only trusty and true ourselves. Friends may part, not merely in body, but in spirit, for a while. In the bustle of business and the accidents of life, they may lose sight of each other for years; and more, they may begin to differ in their success in life, in their opinions, in their habits, and there may be, for a time, coldness and estrangement between them, but not for ever if each will be trusty and true. For then they will be like two ships who set sail at morning from the same port, and ere night-fall lose sight of each other, and go each on its own course and at its own pace for many days, through many storms and seas, and yet meet again, and find themselves lying side by side in the same haven when their long voyage is past. Water of Life Sermons.

Night and Morning. January 27.

It is morning somewhere or other now, and it will be morning here again to-morrow. "Good times and bad times and all times pass over." I learnt that lesson out of old Bewick's Vignettes, and it has stood me in good stead this many a year. Two Years Ago, chap. i. 1856.

Communion with the Blessed Dead. January 28.

Shall we not recollect the blessed dead above all in Holy Communion, and give thanks for them there -- at that holy table at which the Church triumphant and the Church militant meet in the communion of saints? Where Christ is they are; and, therefore, if Christ be there, may not they be there likewise? May not they be near us though unseen? like us claiming their share in the eternal sacrifice, like us partaking of that spiritual body and blood which is as much the life of saints in heaven as it is of penitent sinners on earth? May it not be so? It is a mystery into which we will not look too far. But this at least is true, that they are with Him where He is. MS. Sermon.

The Great Law. January 29.

True rest can only be attained as Christ attained it, through labour. True glory can only be attained in earth or heaven through self-sacrifice. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; whosoever will lose his life shall save it. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1870.

The Coming Kingdom. January 30.

There is a God-appointed theocracy promised to us, and which we must wait for, when all the diseased and false systems of this world shall be swept away, and Christ's feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, and the twelve apostles shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel! All this shall come, and blessed is that servant whom his Lord when He cometh shall find ready! All this we shall not see before we die, but we shall see it when we rise in the perfect material and spiritual ideal, in the kingdom of God! Letters and Memories.

Christ's Coming. January 31.

Christ may come to us when our thoughts are cleaving to the ground, and ready to grow earthy of the earth -- through noble poetry, noble music, noble art -- through aught which awakens once more in us the instinct of the true, the beautiful, and the good. He may come to us when our souls are restless and weary, through the repose of Nature -- the repose of the lonely snow-peak and of the sleeping forest, of the clouds of sunset and of the summer sea, and whisper Peace. Or He may come, as He comes on winter nights to many a gallant soul -- not in the repose of Nature, but in her rage -- in howling storm and blinding foam and ruthless rocks and whelming surge -- and whisper to them even so -- as the sea swallows all of them which it can take -- of calm beyond, which this world cannot give and cannot take away. And therefore let us say in utter faith, Come as Thou seest best -- but in whatsoever way Thou comest, Even so come, Lord Jesus. Amen. Last Sermon. MS. 1874.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

Since we gave up at the Reformation the superstitious practice of praying to the saints, Saints' Days have sunk -- and, indeed, sunk too much -- into neglect. We forget too often still, that though praying to any saint or angel, or other created being, is contrary both to reason and Scripture, yet it is according to reason and to Scripture to commemorate them. That is, to remember them, to study their characters, and to thank God for them, -- both for the virtues He bestowed on them, and the example which He has given us in them. MS. Sermon. JANUARY 6.

The Epiphany,

Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. On this day the Lord Jesus was first shown to the Gentiles. The word Epiphany means "showing." The Wise Men were worshippers of the true God, though in a dim confused way; and they had learnt enough of what true faith, true greatness was, not to be staggered and fall into unbelief when they saw the King of the Jews laid, not in a palace, but in a manger, tended by a poor village maiden. And therefore God bestowed on them the great honour that they first of all -- Gentiles -- should see the glory and the love of God in the face of Jesus Christ. God grant that they may not rise up against us in the Day of Judgment and condemn us! They had but a small spark, a dim ray, of the Light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world; but they were more faithful to that little than many of us, who live in the full sunshine of the Gospel, with Christ's Spirit, Christ's Sacraments, Christ's Churches, -- means of grace and hopes of glory of which they never dreamed. Town and Country Sermons. JANUARY 25.

Conversion of St. Paul, Apostle and Martyr. How did St. Paul look on his past life? There is no sentimental melancholy in him. He is saved, and he knows it. He is an Apostle, and he stands boldly on his dignity. He is cheerful, hopeful, joyful. And yet, when he speaks of the past, it is with noble shame and sorrow that he calls himself the chief of sinners, not worthy to be called an Apostle, because he persecuted the Church of Christ. What he is, he will not deny; what he was, he will not forget; lest he should forget that in him, that is, in his flesh -- his natural character -- dwelleth no good thing; lest he should forget that the good which he does, he does not, but Christ which dwelleth in him; lest he should grow careless, puffed up, self-indulgent; lest he should neglect to subdue his evil passions; and so, after preaching to others, himself become a castaway. Town and Country Sermons.

February.

. . . Every winter,
When the great sun has turned his face away,
The earth goes down into the vale of grief,
And fasts, and weeps, and shrouds herself in sables, Leaving her wedding garments to decay;
Then leaps in spring to his returning kisses. Saint's Tragedy, Act iii. Scene i. Out of the morning
land,
Over the snow-drifts,
Beautiful Freya came,
Tripping to Scoring.
White were the moorlands,
And frozen before her;
Green were the moorlands,
And blooming behind her.
Out of her gold locks
Shaking the spring flowers,
Out of her garments
Shaking the south wind,
Around in the birches
Awaking the throstles,
Love and love-giving,
Came she to Scoring.
. . . . The Longbeard's Saga. 1852.

Virtue. February 1.

The first and last business of every human being, whatever his station, party, creed, capacities, tastes, duties, is morality; virtue, virtue, always virtue. Nothing that man will ever invent will absolve him from the universal necessity of being good as God is good, righteous as God is righteous, holy as God is holy. Sermons on David. 1866.

Happiness. February 2.

God has not only made things beautiful; He has made things happy; whatever misery there is in the world there is no denying that. Misery is the exception; happiness is the rule. No rational man ever heard a bird sing without feeling that the bird was happy, and that if God made that bird He made it to be happy, and He takes pleasure in its happiness, though no human ear should ever hear its song, no human heart should ever share in its joy. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1871.

A Dream of the Future. February 3.

God grant that the day may come when in front of the dwellings of the poor we may see real fountains -- not like the drinking-fountains, useful as they are, which you see here and there about the streets, with a tiny dribble of water to a great deal of expensive stone, but real fountains, which shall leap, and sparkle, and splash, and gurgle, and fill the place with life and light and coolness; and sing in the people's ears the sweetest of all earthly songs -- save the song of a mother over her child -- the song of "The Laughing Water."The Air Mothers. 1872.

Bondage of Custom. February 4.

Strive all your life to free men from the bondage of custom and self, the two great elements of the world that lieth in wickedness. MS. Letter. 1842. Henceforth let no man peering down

Through the dim glittering mine of future years

Say to himself, "Too much! this cannot be!"

To-day and custom wall up our horizon:

Before the hourly miracle of life

Blindfold we stand, and sigh, as though God were not. Saint's Tragedy, Act i. Scene ii.

1847.

The Childlike Mind. February 5.

There comes a time when we must narrow our sphere of thought much, that we may truly enlarge it! we must, artificialised as we have been, return to the rudiments of life, to children's pleasures, that we may find easily, through their transparent simplicity, spiritual laws which we may apply to the more intricate spheres of art and science. MS. Letter. 1842.

Unselfish Prayer. February 6.

The Lord's Prayer teaches that we are members of a family, when He tells us to pray not "My Father" but "Our Father;" not "my soul be saved," but "Thy kingdom come;" not "give me" but "give us our daily bread;" not "forgive me," but "forgive us our trespasses," and that only as we forgive others; not "lead me not," but "lead us not into temptation;" not "deliver me," but "deliver us from evil." After that manner our Lord tells us to pray, and in proportion as we pray in that manner, just so far, and no farther, will God hear our prayers. National Sermons. 1850.

God is Light. February 7.

All the deep things of God are bright, for God is Light. God's arbitrary will and almighty power may seem dark by themselves though deep, but that is because they do not involve His moral character. Join them with the fact that He is a God of mercy as well as justice; remember that His essence is love, and the thunder-cloud will blaze with dewy gold, full of soft rain and pure light. MS. Letter. 1844.

The Veil Lifted. February 8.

Science is, I verily believe, like virtue, its own exceeding great reward. I can conceive few human states more enviable than that of the man to whom -- panting in the foul laboratory, or watching for his life in the tropic forest -- Isis shall for a moment lift her sacred veil and show him, once and for ever, the thing he dreamed not of, some law, or even mere hint of a law, explaining one fact: but explaining with it a thousand more, connecting them all with each other and with the mighty whole, till order and meaning shoots through some old chaos of scattered observations. Is not that a joy, a prize, which wealth cannot give nor poverty take away? What it may lead to he knows not. Of what use it may be he knows not. But this he knows, that somewhere it must lead, of some use it will be. For it is a truth. Lectures on Science and Superstition.

1866.

All Science One. February 9.

Physical and spiritual science seem to the world to be distinct. One sight of God as we shall some day see Him will show us that they are indissolubly and eternally the same.MS.

Passion and Reason. February 10.

Passion and reason in a healthy mind ought to be inseparable. We need not be passionless because we reason correctly. Strange to say, one's feelings will often sharpen one's knowledge of the truth, as they do one's powers of action. MS. 1843.

Enthusiasm and Tact. February 11.

. . . People smile at the "enthusiasm of youth" -- that enthusiasm which they themselves secretly look back at with a sigh, perhaps unconscious that it is partly their own fault that they ever lost it. . .
. Do not fear being considered an enthusiast. What matter? But pray for tact, the true tact which love alone can give, to prevent scandalising a weak brother. Letters and Memories. 1842. Be earnest, earnest, earnest; mad, if thou wilt:

Do what thou dost as if the stake were heaven, And that thy last deed ere the judgment-day.

When all's done, nothing's done. There's rest above -- Below let work be death, if work be love! Saint's Tragedy, Act ii. Scene viii. 1847.

The Eternal Good. February 12.

"God hath showed thee what is good," . . . what is good in itself, and of itself -- the one very eternal and absolute good, which was with God and in God and from God, before all worlds, and will be for ever, without changing, or growing less or greater, eternally the same good -- the good which would be just as good and just and right and lovely and glorious if there were no world, no men, no angels, no heaven, no hell, and God were alone in His own abyss. Sermons for the Times. 1855.

Awfulness of Words. February 13.

A difference in words is a very awful and important difference; a difference in words is a difference in things. Words are very awful and wonderful things, for they come from the most awful and wonderful of all beings, Jesus Christ, THE WORD. He puts words into men's minds. He made all things, and He made words to express those things. And woe to those who use the wrong words about anything. Village Sermons. 1848.

A Wise Woman. February 14.

What wisdom she had she did not pick off the hedge, like blackberries. God is too kind to give away wisdom after that useless fashion. So she had to earn her wisdom, and to work hard, and suffer much ere she attained it. And in attaining she endured strange adventures and great sorrows; and yet they would not have given her the wisdom had she not had something in herself which gave her wit to understand her lessons, and skill and courage to do what they taught her. There had been many names for that something before she was born, there have been many names for it since, but her father and mother called it the Grace of God. Unfinished Novel. 1869.

Charity the one Influence. February 15.

The older we grow, the more we understand our own lives and histories, the more we shall see that the spirit of wisdom is the spirit of love; that the true way to gain influence over our fellow-men is to have charity towards them. That is a hard lesson to learn; and all those who learn it generally learn it late; almost -- God forgive us -- too late. Westminster Sermons.

The Ascetic Painters. February 16.

We owe much (notwithstanding their partial and Manichean idea of beauty) to the early ascetic painters. Their works are a possession for ever. No future school of religious art will be able to rise to eminence without learning from them their secret. They taught artists, and priests, and laymen, too, that beauty is only worthy of admiration when it is the outward sacrament of the beauty of the soul within; they helped to deliver men from that idolatry to merely animal strength and loveliness into which they were in danger of falling in ferocious ages, and among the relics of Roman luxury. Miscellanies. 1849.

Reveries. February 17.

Beware of giving way to reveries. Have always some employment in your hands. Look forward to the future with hope. Build castles if you will, but only bright ones, and not too many. Letters and Memories. 1842.

Woman's Mission. February 18.

It is the glory of woman that she was sent into the world to live for others rather than for herself; and therefore, I should say, let her smallest rights be respected, her smallest wrongs redressed; but let her never be persuaded to forget that she is sent into the world to teach man -- what I believe she has been teaching him all along, even in the savage state, namely, that there is something more necessary than the claiming of rights, and that is, the performing of duties; to teach him specially, in these so-called intellectual days, that there is something more than intellect, and that is -- purity and virtue. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

The Heroic Life. February 19.

Provided we attain at last to the truly heroic and divine life, which is the life of virtue, it will matter little to us by what wild and weary ways, or through what painful and humiliating processes, we have arrived thither. If God has loved us, if God will receive us, then let us submit loyally and humbly to His law -- "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." All Saints' Day Sermons.

The Wages of Sin. February 20.

It is sometimes said, "The greater the sinner the greater the saint." I do not believe it. I do not see it. It stands to reason -- if a man loses his way and finds it again, he is so much the less forward on his way, surely, by all the time he has spent in getting back into the way. And if any of you fancy you can sin without being punished, remember that the prodigal son is punished most severely. He does not get off freely the moment he chooses to repent, as false preachers will tell you. Even after he does repent and resolves to go back to his father's house he has a long journey home in poverty and misery, footsore, hungry, and all but despairing. But when he does get home; when he shows he has learnt the bitter lesson; when all he dares to ask is, "Make me as one of thy hired servants," -- he is received as freely as the rest. Water of Life Sermons. 1864.

Silent Depths. February 21.

Our mightiest feelings are always those which remain most unspoken. The most intense lovers and the greatest poets have generally, I think, written very little personal love-poetry, while they have shown in fictitious characters a knowledge of the passion too painfully intimate to be spoken of in the first person. MS. 1843.

True Justification. February 22.

God grant us to be among those who wish to be really justified by faith, by being made just persons by faith, -- who cannot satisfy either their conscience or their reason by fancying that God looks on them as right when they know themselves to be wrong; and who cannot help trusting that union with Christ must be something real and substantial, and not merely a metaphor and a flower of rhetoric. MS. 1854.

A Present Hell. February 23.

"Ay," he muttered, "sing awa', . . . wi' pretty fancies and gran' words, and gang to hell for it." "To hell, Mr. Mackaye?" "Ay, to a verra real hell, Alton Locke, laddie -- a warse ane than any fiend's kitchen or subterranean Smithfield that ye'll hear o' in the pulpits -- the hell on earth o' being a flunkey, and a humbug, and a useless peacock, wasting God's gifts on your ain lusts and pleasures -- and kenning it -- and not being able to get oot o' it for the chains of vanity and self-indulgence." Alton Locke, chap. viii. 1849.

Time and Eternity. February 24.

Eternity does not mean merely some future endless duration, but that ever- present moral world, governed by ever-living and absolutely necessary laws, in which we and all spirits are now; and in which we should be equally, whether time and space, extension and duration, and the whole material universe to which they belong, became nothing this moment, or lasted endlessly. *Theologica Germanica*. 1854.

Christ's Life. February 25.

What was Christ's life? Not one of deep speculations, quiet thoughts, and bright visions, but a life of fighting against evil; earnest, awful prayers and struggles within, continued labour of body and mind without; insult, and danger, and confusion, and violent exertion, and bitter sorrow. This was Christ's life. This was St. Peter's, and St. James's, and St. John's life afterwards. Village Sermons. 1849.

The Higher Education. February 26.

In teaching women we must try to make our deepest lessons bear on the great purpose of unfolding Woman's own calling in all ages -- her especial calling in this one. We must incite them to realise the chivalrous belief of our old forefathers among their Saxon forests, that something Divine dwelt in the counsels of woman: but, on the other hand, we must continually remind them that they will attain that divine instinct, not by renouncing their sex, but by fulfilling it; by becoming true women, and not bad imitations of men; by educating their heads for the sake of their hearts, not their hearts for the sake of their heads; by claiming woman's divine vocation as the priestess of purity, of beauty, and of love. Introductory Lecture, Queen's College.

1848.

God's Kingdom. February 27.

Philamon had gone forth to see the world, and he had seen it; and he had learnt that God's kingdom was not a kingdom of fanatics yelling for a doctrine, but of willing, loving, obedient hearts. Hypatia, chap. xxiii. 1852.

Sowing and Reaping. February 28.

So it is, that by every crime, folly, even neglect of theirs, men drive a thorn into their own flesh, which will trouble them for years to come, it may be to their dying day -- Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small; Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all -- as those who neglect their fellow-creatures will discover, by the most patent, undeniable proofs, in that last great day, when the rich and poor shall meet together, and then, at last, discover too that the Lord is the Maker of them all. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1871.

The Church Catechism. February 29.

Did it ever strike you that the simple, noble, old Church Catechism, without one word about rewards and punishments, heaven or hell, begins to talk to the child, like a true English Catechism as it is, about that glorious old English key-word Duty? It calls on the child to confess its own duty, and teaches it that its duty is something most human, simple, everyday -- commonplace, if you will call it so. And I rejoice in the thought that the Church Catechism teaches that the child's duty is commonplace. I rejoice that in what it says about our duty to God and our neighbour, it says not one word about counsels of perfection, or those frames and feelings which depend, believe me, principally on the state of people's bodily health, on the constitution of their nerves, and the temper of their brain; but that it requires nothing except what a little child can do as well as a grown person, a labouring man as well as a divine, a plain farmer as well as the most refined, devout, imaginative lady. Sermons for the Times. 1855.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

FEBRUARY 2.

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple,

COMMONLY CALLED

The Purification of the Virgin Mary. Little children may think of Christ as a child now and always. For to them He is always the Babe of Bethlehem. Let them not say to themselves, "Christ is grown up long ago." He is, and yet He is not. His life is eternal in the heavens, above all change of time and space. . . . Such is the sacred heart of Jesus -- all things to all. To the strong He can be strongest, to the weak weakest of all. With the aged and dying He goes down for ever to the grave; and yet with you children Christ lies for ever on His mother's bosom, and looks up for ever into His mother's face, full of young life and happiness and innocence, the Everlasting Christ-child, in whom you must believe, whom you must love, to whom you must offer up your childish prayers. The Christ-child,

Sermons, (Good News of God). FEBRUARY 24.

St. Matthias, Apostle and Martyr. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. They rest from their labours -- all their struggles, failures, past and over for ever. But their works follow them. The good which they did on earth -- that is not past and over. It cannot die. It lives and grows for ever, following on in their path long after they are dead, and bearing fruit unto everlasting life, not only in them, but in men whom they never saw, and in generations yet unborn. Sermons (Good News of God). Ash Wednesday. There is a repentance too deep for words -- too deep for all confessionals, penances, and emotions or acts of contrition; the repentance, not of the excitable, theatric Southern, unstable as water even in his most violent remorse, but of the still, deep-hearted Northern, whose pride breaks slowly and silently, but breaks once for all; who tells to God what he will never tell to man, and having told it, is a new creature from that day forth for ever. Two Years Ago, chap. xviii. The True Fast. The rationale of Fasting is to give up habitual indulgences for a time, lest they become our masters -- artificial necessities. MS.

March.

Early in the Springtime, on raw and windy mornings, Beneath the freezing house-eaves, I heard the starlings sing -- Ah! dreary March month, is this then a time for building wearily? Sad, sad, to think that the year is but begun! Late in the Autumn, on still and cloudless evenings, Among the golden reed-beds I heard the starlings sing -- Ah! that sweet March month, when we and our mates were courting merrily;

Sad, sad, to think that the year is all but done. The Starlings.

Knowledge and Love. March 1.

Knowledge and Love are reciprocal. He who loves knows. He who knows loves. Saint John is the example of the first; Saint Paul of the second. Letters and Memories. 1842.

A Charm of Birds. March 2.

Little do most people know how much there is to learn -- what variety of character, as well as variety of motion, may be distinguished by the practised ear in a "charm of birds" -- from the wild cry of the missel-thrush, ringing from afar in the first bright days of March a passage of one or two bars repeated three or four times, and then another and another, clear and sweet and yet defiant -- for the great "storm-cock" loves to sing when rain and wind is coming on, and faces the elements as boldly as he faces hawk and crow -- down to the delicate warble of the wren, who slips out of his hole in the brown bank where he has huddled through the frost with wife and children, all folded in each other's arms like human beings. Yet even he, sitting at his house-door in the low sunlight, says grace for all mercies in a song so rapid, so shrill, so loud, and yet so delicately modulated, that you wonder at the amount of soul within that tiny body; and then stops suddenly, like a child that has said its lesson or got to the end of a sermon, gives a self-satisfied flirt of his tail, and goes in again to sleep. Prose Idylls. 1866.

Tact of the Heart. March 3.

Random shots are dangerous and cruel, likely to hit the wrong person and hurt his feelings unnecessarily. It is very easy to say a hard thing, but not so easy to say it to the right person at the right time.MS.

Special Providences. March 4.

I believe not only in "special providences," but in the whole universe as one infinite complexity of special providences. Letters and Memories. The grain of dust is a thought of God; God's power made it; God's wisdom gave it whatsoever properties or qualities it may possess. God's providence has put it in the place where it is now, and has ordained that it should be in that place at that moment, by a train of causes and effects which reaches back to the very creation of the universe. The grain of dust can no more go from God's presence or flee from God's Spirit than you or I can. Town Geology. 1871.

Be Calm. March 5.

Strive daily and hourly to be calm; to stop yourself forcibly and recall your mind to a sense of what you are, where you are going, and whither you ought to be tending. This is most painful discipline, but most wholesome. MS. Letter. 1842.

Self-sacrifice and Personality. March 6.

What a strange mystery is that of mutual self-sacrifice! to exist for one moment for another! the perfection of human bliss! And does not love teach us two things? First, that self-sacrifice, the living for others, is the law of our perfect being, and next, that by and in self-sacrifice alone can we attain to the perfect apprehension of ourselves, our own personality, our own duty, our own bliss. So that the mystics are utterly wrong when they fancy that self-sacrifice can be attained by self-annihilation. Self-sacrifice, instead of destroying the sense of personality, perfects it. MS. Letter. 1843.

Follow your Star. March 7.

I believe with Dante, "se tu segui la tua Stella," that He who ordained my star will not lead me into temptation but through it. Without Him all places and methods of life are equally dangerous, with Him all equally safe. Letters and Memories. 1848.

Reverence for Books. March 8.

This is the age of books. And we should reverence books. Consider! except a living man there is nothing more wonderful than a book -- a message to us from the dead, from human souls whom we never saw, who lived perhaps thousands of miles away, and yet in those little sheets of paper speak to us, amuse us, terrify us, teach us, comfort us, open their hearts to us as brothers! We ought to reverence books, to look at them as awful and mighty things. If they are good and true, whether they are about religion or politics, trade or medicine, they are the message of Christ, the Maker of all things, the Teacher of all truth, which He has put into the heart of some men to speak. And at the last day, be sure of it, we shall have to render an account -- a strict account -- of the books which we have read, and of the way in which we have obeyed what we read, just as if we had had so many prophets or angels sent to us. Village Sermons. 1849.

The Unknown Future. March 9.

As for the things which God has prepared for those who love Him, the Bible tells me that no man can conceive them, and therefore I believe that I cannot conceive them. God has conceived them; God has prepared them; God is our Father. That is enough. Sermons for the Times. 1855.

Secular and Sacred. March 10.

I grudge the epithet of "secular" to any matter whatsoever. But more; I deny it to anything which God has made, even to the tiniest of insects, the most insignificant grain of dust. To those who believe in God, and try to see all things in God, the most minute natural phenomenon cannot be secular. It must be divine, I say deliberately, divine, and I can use no less lofty word. Town Geology. 1871.

Content or Happy? March 11.

My friends, whether you will be the happier for any knowledge of physical science, or for any other knowledge whatsoever, I cannot tell. That lies in the decision of a higher Power than I; and, indeed, to speak honestly, I do not think that any branch of physical science is likely, at first at least, to make you happy. Neither is the study of your fellow-men. Neither is religion itself. We were not sent into the world to be happy, but to be right -- at least, poor creatures that we are -- as right as we can be, and we must be content with being right, and not happy. . . . And we shall be made truly wise if we be made content; content, too, not only with what we can understand, but content with what we do not understand -- the habit of mind which theologians call (and rightly) faith in God, true and solid faith, which comes often out of sadness and out of doubt. Lecture on Bio-geology. 1869.

Duty of Man to Man. March 12.

Each man can learn something from his neighbour; at least he can learn this -- to have patience with his neighbour, to live and let live. Peace! peace! Anything which is not wrong for the sake of heaven-born Peace!Town and Country Sermons. 1861.

Blessing of a True Friend. March 13.

A blessed thing it is for any man or woman to have a friend, one human soul whom we can trust utterly, who knows the best and worst of us, and who loves us in spite of all our faults; who will speak the honest truth to us, while the world flatters us to our face, and laughs at us behind our back; who will give us counsel and reproof in the days of prosperity and self-conceit; but who, again, will comfort and encourage us in the day of difficulty and sorrow, when the world leaves us alone to fight our battle as we can. It is only the great-hearted who can be true friends: the mean and cowardly can never know what true friendship means. Sermons on David. 1866.

True Heroines. March 14.

What is the commonest, and yet the least remembered form of heroism? The heroism of an average mother. Ah! when I think of that broad fact I gather hope again for poor humanity, and this dark world looks bright, this diseased world looks wholesome to me once more, because, whatever else it is or is not full of, it is at least full of mothers. Lecture on Heroism. 1873.

Secret Atheism. March 15.

There is little hope that we shall learn the lessons God is for ever teaching us in the events of life till we get rid of our secret Atheism, till we give up the notion that God only visits now and then to disorder and destroy His own handiwork, and take back the old scriptural notion that God is visiting all day long for ever, to give order and life to His own work, to set it right where it goes wrong, and re-create it whenever it decays. Water of Life Sermons. 1866.

Tolerance. March 16.

If we really love God and long to do good and work for God, if we really love our neighbours and wish to help them, we shall have no heart to quarrel about how the good is to be done, provided it is done. "Master," said St. John, "we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us; wilt Thou that we forbid him? And Jesus said, Forbid him not." Sermons.

The Hopes of Old Age. March 17.

Christianity alone deprives old age of its bitterness, making it the gate of heaven. Our bodies will fade and grow weak and shapeless, just when we shall not want them, being ready and in close expectation of that resurrection of the flesh which is the great promise of Christianity (no miserable fancies about "pure souls" escaped from matter, but) -- of bodies, our bodies, beloved, beautiful, ministers to us in all our joys, sufferers with us in all our sorrows -- yea, our very own selves raised up again to live and love in a manner inconceivable from its perfection. MS. 1842. . . . No! I can wait:

Another body! -- Ah, new limbs are ready,

Free, pure, instinct with soul through every nerve, Kept for us in the treasures of God! Santa Maura. 1852.

The Highest Study for Man, March 18.

Man is not, as the poet said, "the noblest study of mankind." God is the noblest study of man, and Him we can study in three ways. 1st. From His image as developed in Christ the Ideal, and in all good men -- great good men. 2dly. From His works. 3dly. From His dealings in history; this is the real philosophy of history. Letters and Memories. 1842.

Eclecticism. March 19.

An eclectic, if it mean anything, means this -- one who in any branch of art or science refuses to acknowledge Bacon's great law, that "Nature is only conquered by obeying her;" who will not take a full and reverent view of the whole mass of facts with which he has to deal, and from them deducing the fundamental laws of his subject, obey them whithersoever they may lead; but who picks and chooses out of them just so many as may be pleasant to his private taste, and then constructs a partial system which differs from the essential ideas of Nature in proportion to the number of facts which he has determined to discard. Miscellanies. 1849.

Duty. March 20.

Duty, be it in a small matter or a great, is duty still; the command of Heaven; the eldest voice of God. And it is only they who are faithful in a few things who will be faithful over many things; only they who do their duty in everyday and trivial matters who will fulfil them on great occasions. Sermons for the Times. 1855.

The Great Unknown. March 21.

"Brother," said the abbot, "make ready for me the divine elements, that I may consecrate them." And he asking the reason therefor, the saint replied, "That I may partake thereof with all my brethren before I depart hence. For know assuredly that within the seventh day I shall migrate to the celestial mansions. For this night stood by me in a dream those two women whom I love, and for whom I pray, the one clothed in a white, the other in a ruby-coloured garment, and holding each other by the hand, who said to me, 'That life after death is not such a one as you fancy: come, therefore, and behold what it is like.'"Hypatia, chap. xxx. 1852.

Loss nor Gain, March 22.

Nothing is more expensive than penuriousness; nothing more anxious than carelessness; and every duty which is bidden to wait returns with seven fresh duties at its back. Sermons for the Times. 1855.

Ancient Greek Education, March 23.

We talk of education now. Are we more educated than were the ancient Greeks? Do we know anything about education, physical, intellectual, aesthetic (religious education in our sense of the word of course they had none), of which they have not taught us at least the rudiments? Are there not some branches of education which they perfected once and for ever, leaving us northern barbarians to follow or not to follow their example? To produce health, that is, harmony and sympathy, proportion and grace, in every faculty of mind and body -- that was their notion of education. Ah! the waste of health and strength in the young! The waste, too, of anxiety and misery in those who love and tend them! How much of it might be saved by a little rational education in those laws of nature which are the will of God about the welfare of our bodies, and which, therefore, we are as much bound to know and to obey as we are bound to know and to obey the spiritual laws whereon depend the welfare of our souls. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Body and Soul. March 24.

Exalt me with Thee, O Lord, to know the mystery of life, that I may use the earthly as the appointed expression and type of the heavenly, and, by using to Thy glory the natural body, may be fit to be exalted to the use of the spiritual body. Amen. MS. 1842.

Moderation. March 25.

Let us pray for that great -- I had almost said that crowning grace and virtue of Moderation, what St. Paul calls sobriety and a sound mind. Let us pray for moderate appetites, moderate passions, moderate honours, moderate gains, moderate joys; and if sorrows be needed to chasten us, moderate sorrows. Let us not long violently after, or wish too eagerly to rise in life. Water of Life Sermons. 1869.

Poetry in the Slums. March 26.

"True poetry, like true charity, my laddie, begins at home. . . . Hech! is there no the heaven above them there, and the hell beneath them? and God frowning, and the devil grinning? No poetry there! Is no the verra idea of the classic tragedy defined to be man conquered by circumstance? canna ye see it there? And the verra idea of the modern tragedy, man conquering circumstance? and I'll show ye that too -- in many a garret where no eye but the good God's enters to see the patience, and the fortitude, and the self-sacrifice, and the love stronger than death, that's shining in those dark places of the earth." "Ah, poetry's grand -- but fact is grander; God and Satan are grander. All around ye, in every gin-shop and costermonger's cellar, are God and Satan at death-grips; every garret is a hail Paradise Lost or Paradise Regained." Alton Locke, chap. viii. 1849.

Time and Eternity. March 27.

. . . Our life's floor

Is laid upon Eternity; no crack in it

But shows the underlying heaven. Saint's Tragedy, Act iii. Scene ii.

Work. March 28.

Yes. Life is meant for work, and not for ease; to labour in danger and in dread, to do a little good ere the night comes when no man can work, instead of trying to realise for oneself a paradise; not even Bunyan's shepherd-paradise, much less Fourier's casino-paradise, and perhaps, least of all, because most selfish and isolated of all, our own art-paradise, the apotheosis of loafing, as Claude calls it. Prose Idylls. 1849.

Teaching of Pictures. March 29.

Pictures raise blessed thoughts in me. Why not in you, my toiling brother? Those landscapes painted by loving, wise, old Claude two hundred years ago, are still as fresh as ever. How still the meadows are! How pure and free that vault of deep blue sky! No wonder that thy worn heart, as thou lookest, sighs aloud, "Oh, that I had wings as a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest." Ah! but gayer meadows and bluer skies await thee in the world to come -- that fairyland made real -- "the new heavens and the new earth" which God hath prepared for the pure and the loving, the just, and the brave, who have conquered in this sore fight of life. True Words for Brave Men. 1849.

Voluntary Heroism. March 30.

Any man or woman, in any age and under any circumstances, who will, can live the heroic life and exercise heroic influences. It is of the essence of self-sacrifice, and therefore of heroism, that it should be voluntary; a work of supererogation, at least, towards society and man; an act to which the hero or heroine is not bound by duty, but which is above though not against duty. Lecture on Heroism. 1872.

The Ideal Holy One. March 31.

Have you never cried in your hearts with longing, almost with impatience, "Surely, surely, there is an ideal Holy One somewhere -- or else, how could have arisen in my mind the conception, however faint, of an ideal holiness? But where? oh, where? Not in the world around strewn with unholiness. Not in myself, unholy too, without and within. Is there a Holy One, whom I may contemplate with utter delight? and if so, where is He? Oh, that I might behold, if but for a moment, His perfect beauty, even though, as in the fable of Semele of old, 'the lightning of His glance were death.'" . . . And then, oh, then -- has there not come that for which our spirit was athirst -- the very breath of pure air, the very gleam of pure light, the very strain of pure music -- for it is the very music of the spheres -- in those words, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come"? Yes, whatever else is unholy, there is a Holy One -- spotless and undefiled, serene and self-contained. Whatever else I cannot trust, there is One whom I can trust utterly. Whatever else I am dissatisfied with, there is One whom I can contemplate with utter satisfaction, and bathe my stained soul in that eternal fount of purity. And who is He? Who, save the Cause and Maker and Ruler of all things past, present, and to come? Sermon on All Saints' Day. 1874. Charles Kingsley's Dying Words,

"HOW BEAUTIFUL GOD IS."

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

MARCH 25.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin,

COMMONLY CALLED

Lady Day. It is one of the glories of our holy religion, and one of the ways by which the Gospel takes such hold on our hearts, that, mixed up with the grandest and most mysterious and most divine matters, are the simplest, the most tender, the most human. What more grand, or deep, or divine words can we say than, "I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost," -- and yet what more simple, human, and tender words can we say than, "Who was born of the Virgin Mary"? For what more beautiful sight on earth than a young mother with her babe upon her knee? Beautiful in itself; but doubly beautiful to those who can say, "I believe in Him who was born of the Virgin Mary." For since He was born of woman, and thereby took the manhood into God, birth is holy, and childhood holy, and all a mother's joys and a mother's cares are holy to the Lord; and every Christian mother with her babe in her arms is a token and a sign from God, a pledge of His good-will towards men, a type and pattern of her who was highly-favoured and blessed above all women. Everything has its time, and Lady-Day is the time for our remembering the Blessed Virgin. For our hearts and reasons tell us (and have told all Christians in all ages), that she must have been holier, nobler, fairer in body and soul, than all women upon earth. MS. Sermon.

April.

Wild, wild wind, wilt thou never cease thy sighing? Dark, dark night, wilt thou never wear away?

Cold, cold Church, in thy death sleep lying,

Thy Lent is past, thy Passion here, but not thine Easter Day. Peace, faint heart, though the night be dark and sighing, Rest fair corpse, where thy Lord Himself hath lain. Weep, dear Lord, above Thy bride low lying,

Thy tears shall wake her frozen limbs to life and health again. The Dead Church.

The Song of Birds. April 1.

St. Francis called the birds his brothers. Perfectly sure that he himself was a spiritual being, he thought it at least possible that the birds might be spiritual beings likewise, incarnate like himself in mortal flesh, and saw no degradation to the dignity of human nature in claiming kindred lovingly with creatures so beautiful, so wonderful, who (as he fancied in his old-fashioned way) praised God in the forest even as angels did in heaven. Prose Idylls. 1867.

True Reformers. April 2.

It is not the many who reform the world; but the few who rise superior to that Public Opinion which crucified our Lord many years ago. MS. Lecture at Cambridge. 1866.

High Ideals. April 3.

What if a man's idea of "The Church" be somewhat too narrow for the year of grace 18 -- , is it no honour to him that he has such an idea at all? that there has risen up before him the vision of a perfect polity, a "divine and wonderful order," linking earth to heaven, and to the very throne of Him who died for men; witnessing to each of its citizens what the world tries to make him forget, namely, that he is the child of God Himself; and guiding and strengthening him from the cradle to the grave to do his Father's work? Is it no honour to him that he has seen that such a polity must exist, that he believes that it does exist, or that he thinks he finds it in its highest, if not in its most perfect form, in the most ancient and august traditions of his native land? True, he may have much still to learn. . . .Two Years Ago, chap. iv. 1856.

Divine Knowledge. April 4.

That glorious word know -- it is God's attribute, and includes in itself all others. Love, truth -- all are parts of that awful power of knowing at a single glance, from and to all eternity, what a thing is in its essence, its properties, and its relations to the whole universe through all Time. I feel awestruck whenever I see that word used rightly, and I never, if I can remember, use it myself of myself. Letters and Memories. 1842.

Woman's Love. April 5.

The story of Ruth is the consecration of woman's love. I do not mean of the love of wife to husband, divine and blessed as that is. I mean that depth and strength of devotion, tenderness, and self-sacrifice, which God has put into the heart of all true women; and which they spend so strangely, and so nobly often, on persons who have no claim on them, and from whom they can receive no earthly reward -- the affection which made women minister of their substance to our Lord Jesus Christ, which brought Mary Magdalene to the foot of the cross and to the door of the tomb -- the affection which made a wise man say that as long as women and sorrow are left in the world, so long will the gospel of our Lord Jesus live and conquer therein. Water of Life Sermons.

Feeling and Emotion. April 6.

Live a life of feeling, not of excitement. Let your religion, your duties, every thought and word, be ruled by the affections, not by the emotions, which are the expressions of them. Do not consider whether you are glad, sorry, dull, or spiritual at any moment, but be yourself -- what God makes you. MS. Letter. 1842.

The Beasts that perish. April 7.

St. Paul says that he himself saw through a glass darkly. But this he seems to have seen, that the Lord, when He rose from the dead, brought a blessing even for the dumb beasts and the earth on which we live. He says the whole creation is now groaning in the pangs of labour, about to bring forth something, and that the whole creation will rise again -- how and when and into what new state we cannot tell; but that when the Lord shall destroy death the whole creation shall be renewed. National Sermons. 1851.

Reverence for Age. April 8.

Reverence for age is a fair test of the vigour of youth; and, conversely, insolence towards the old and the past, whether in individuals or in nations, is a sign rather of weakness than of strength. Lecture on Westminster Abbey.

1874.

Prayers for the Dead. April 9.

We do not in the Church of England now pray for the dead. We are not absolutely forbidden by Scripture to do so. But we believe they are where they ought to be -- that they are gone to a perfectly just world, in which is none of the confusion, mistakes, wrong, and oppression of this world; in which they will therefore receive the due reward of their deeds done in the body; and that they are in the hands of a perfectly just God, who rewardeth every man according to his work. It seems therefore unnecessary, and, so to speak, an impertinence towards God, to pray for them who are in the unseen world of spirits exactly in the state which they have deserved. MS. Sermon.

Diversities of Gifts. April 10.

Why expect

Wisdom with love in all? Each has his gift --

Our souls are organ pipes of diverse stop

And various pitch: each with its proper notes

Thrilling beneath the self-same breath of God.

Though poor alone, yet joined, they're harmony. Saints' Tragedy, Act ii. Scene v.

1847.

The Atonement. April 11.

How Christ's death takes away thy sins thou wilt never know on earth -- perhaps not in heaven. It is a mystery which thou must believe and adore. But why He died thou canst see at the first glance, if thou hast a human heart and will look at what God means thee to look at -- Christ upon His Cross. He died because He was Love -- love itself, love boundless, unconquerable, unchangeable -- love which inhabits eternity, and therefore could not be hardened or foiled by any sin or rebellion of man, but must love men still -- must go out to seek and save them, must dare, suffer any misery, shame, death itself, for their sake -- just because it is absolute and perfect Love which inhabits eternity. Good News of God Sermons.

A Day's Work. April 12.

Make a rule, and pray to God to help you to keep it, never, if possible, to lie down at night without being able to say, I have made one human being at least a little wiser, a little happier, or a little better this day. You will find it easier than you think, and pleasanter. Sermons for the Times. 1855.

Self-control. April 13.

A well-educated moral sense, a well-educated character, saves from idleness and ennui, alternating with sentimentality and excitement, those tenderer emotions, those deeper passions, those nobler aspirations of humanity, which are the heritage of the woman far more than of the man, and which are potent in her, for evil or for good, in proportion as they are left to run wild and undisciplined, or are trained and developed into graceful, harmonious, self-restraining strength, beautiful in themselves, and a blessing to all who come under their influence. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Women and Novels. April 14.

Novels will be read; but that is all the more reason why women should be trained, by the perusal of a higher, broader, deeper literature, to distinguish the good novel from the bad, the moral from the immoral, the noble from the base, the true work of art from the sham which hides its shallowness and vulgarity under a tangled plot and a melodramatic situation. They should learn -- and that they can only learn by cultivation -- to discern with joy and drink in with reverence, the good, the beautiful, and the true, and to turn with the fine scorn of a pure and strong womanhood from the bad, the ugly, and the false. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Expect Much. April 15.

Expect great things from God, and also expect the least things, for the great test of faith is shown about the least matters. People will believe their soul is sure to be saved who have not the heart to expect that God will take away some small burden. MS. Letter. 1842.

What is Theology? April 16.

Theology signifies the knowledge of God as He is. And it is dying out among us in these days. Much of what is called theology now is nothing but experimental religion, which is most important and useful when it is founded on the right knowledge of God, but which is not itself theology. For theology begins with God, but experimental religion, right or wrong, begins with a man's own soul. Discipline and other Sermons.

Sweetness and Light. April 17.

Ah, that we could believe that God is love, and that he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him! Then we should have no need to be told to cultivate sweetness and light, for they would seem to us the only temper which could make life tolerable in any corner of the universe. *Essay on the Critical Spirit*. 1871.

The Contemplative Life. April 18.

"Woman is no more capable than man of living on mere contemplation. We must have an object to whom we may devote the fruits of thought, and unless we have a real one in active life we shall be sure to coin one for ourselves, and spend our spirits on a dream." "True, true," chimed in the counsellor, "spirit is little use without body, and a body it will find; and therefore, unless you let people's brains grow healthy plants, they will grow mushrooms."MS. unfinished Story. 1843.

Sudden Death. April 19.

"What better can the Lord do for a man, than take him home when he has done his work?" "But, Master Yeo, a sudden death?" "And why not a sudden death, Sir John? Even fools long for a short life and a merry one, and shall not the Lord's people pray for a short death and a merry one? Let it come as it will to old Yeo!" Westward Ho! chap. xxxii. 1855.

Prayer and Praise. April 20.

Pray night and day, very quietly, like a little weary child, to the good and loving God, for everything you want, in body as well as soul -- the least thing as well as the greatest. Nothing is too much to ask God for -- nothing too great for Him to grant: glory be to Thee, O Lord! And try to thank Him for everything . . . I sometimes feel that eternity will be too short to praise God in, if it was only for making us live at all! And then not making us idiots or cripples, or even only ugly and stupid! What blessings we have! Let us work in return for them -- not under the enslaving sense of paying off an infinite debt, but with the delight of gratitude, glorying that we are God's debtors. Letters. 1843.

The Divine Spark. April 21.

Man? I am a man, thou art a woman -- not by reason of bones and muscles, nerves and brain, which I have in common with apes, and dogs, and horses -- I am a man, thou art a man or woman, not because we have a flesh, God forbid! but because there is a spirit in us, a divine spark and ray which nature did not give, and which nature cannot take away. And therefore, while I live on earth, I will live to the spirit, not to the flesh, that I may be indeed a man. Lecture on Ancient Civilisation.

1873.

The Worst Calamity. April 22.

The very worst calamity, I should say, which could befall any human being would be this -- to have his own way from his cradle to his grave; to have everything he liked for the asking, or even for the buying; never to be forced to say, "I should like that, but I cannot afford it. I should like this, but I must not do it." Never to deny himself, never to exert himself, never to work, and never to want -- that man's soul would be in as great danger as if he were committing great crimes. All Saints' Day Sermons.

Men and Women. April 23.

"The Lord be with you, dearest lady," said Adrian Gilbert. "Strange how you women sit at home to love and suffer, while we men rush forth to break our hearts and yours against rocks of our own seeking! Ah! heh! were it not for Scripture I should have thought that Adam, rather than Eve, had been the one who plucked the fruit of the forbidden tree."Westward Ho! chap. xiii. 1855.

Faith in the Unseen. April 24.

He was not one of those "ungodly" men of whom David speaks in his Psalms, who rob the widow and the fatherless. His morality was as high as that of the average, his honour higher. But of "godliness" in its true sense -- of belief that any Being above cared for him, and was helping him in the daily business of life: that it was worth while asking that Being's advice, or that any advice would be given if asked for -- of any practical notion of a heavenly Father or a Divine educator -- he was as ignorant as thousands of persons who go to church every Sunday, and read good books, and believe firmly that the Pope is Antichrist. Two Years Ago, chap. i. 1856.

Death--Resurrection. April 25.

As we rose to go, my eye caught a highly-finished drawing of the Resurrection painted above the place where the desk and faldstool and lectern, holding an open missal book, stood. I should have rather expected, I thought to myself, a picture of the Crucifixion. She seemed to guess my thought, and said, "There is enough in an abode of heavy hearts, and in daily labours among poverty and suffering, to keep in our minds the Prince of Sufferers. We need rather to be reminded that pain is not the law but the disease of our existence, and that it has been conquered for us in body and soul by Him in whose eternity of bliss a few years of sadness were but as a mote within the sunbeam's blaze."MS. unfinished Story. 1843.

Woman's Work. April 26.

Woman is the teacher, the natural and therefore divine guide, purifier, inspirer of man.MS.

Passion--Easter--Ascension. April 27.

Good Friday, Easter Day, and Ascension, are set as great lights in the firmament of the spiritual year; -- to remind us that we are not animals born to do what we like, and fulfil the simple lusts of the flesh -- but that we are rational moral beings, members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, and that, therefore, like Christ, we must die in order to live, stoop in order to conquer. They remind us that honour must grow out of humility; that freedom must grow out of discipline; that sure conquest must be born of heavy struggles; righteous joy out of righteous sorrow; pure laughter out of pure tears; true strength out of the true knowledge of our own weakness; sound peace of mind out of sound contrition. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1871.

How to keep Passion-Week. April 28.

Can we go wrong if we keep our Passion-week as Christ kept His? And how did He keep it? Not by shutting Himself up apart, not by the mere thinking over the glory of self-sacrifice. He taught daily in the temple; instead of giving up His work, He worked more earnestly than ever as the terrible end drew near. Why should not we keep Passion-week, not by merely hiding in our closets to meditate even about Him, but by going about our work each in his place, dutifully, bravely, as Christ went? Town and Country Sermons. 1859.

Self-Sacrifice. April 29.

Without self-sacrifice there can be no blessedness either in earth or in heaven. He that loveth his life will lose it. He that hateth his life in this paltry, selfish, luxurious world shall keep it to life eternal. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1870.

Help from our Blessed Dead. April 30.

And so with those who are Christ's whom we love. Partakers of His death, they are partakers of His resurrection. Let us believe the blessed news in all its fulness, and be at peace. A little while and we see them, and again a little while and we do not see them. But why? Because they are gone to the Father, to the Source and Fount of all life and power, all light and love, that they may gain life from His life, power from His power, light from His light, love from His love; and surely not for nought. Surely not for nought. For if they were like Christ on earth, and did not use their powers for themselves alone; if they are to be like Christ when they see Him as He is, then, more surely, will they not use their powers for themselves, but as Christ uses His, for those they love. MS. Sermon. 1866.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS. Passion-tide.

From the earliest times the Cross has been the special sign of Christians. St. Paul tells us his great hope, his great business, what God had sent him into the world to do, was this -- to make people know the love of Christ; to look at Christ's Cross, and take in its breadth and length and depth and height. And what is the breadth of Christ's Cross? My friends, it is as broad as the whole world, for He died for the whole world; as it is written, "He is a propitiation not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world." And that is the breadth of Christ's Cross. And what is the length of Christ's Cross? Long enough to last through all time. As long as there is a sinner to be saved; as long as there is ignorance, sorrow, pain, death, or anything else which is contrary to God and hurtful to man in the universe of God, so long will Christ's Cross last. And that is the length of the Cross of Christ. And how high is Christ's Cross? As high as the highest heaven, and the throne of God and the bosom of the Father -- that bosom out of which for ever proceed all created things. Ay, as high as the highest heaven; for, if you will receive it, when Christ hung upon the Cross heaven came down on earth, and earth ascended into heaven. And that is the height of the Cross of Christ. And how deep is the Cross of Christ? This is a great mystery which people are afraid to look into, and darken it of their own will. But if the Cross of Christ be as high as heaven, then it must be as deep as hell, deep enough to reach the deepest sinner in the deepest pit to which he may fall, for Christ descended into hell, and preached to the spirits in prison. Let us hope, then, that is the depth of the Cross of Christ. "The Measure of the Cross,"

Sermons (Good News of God). Good Friday. Listen! and our God shall whisper, as we hang upon the cross, {97} "Children! love! and loving, faint not! great your glory, light your loss!

Ye are bound -- ye may be loosed -- I was nailed upon the tree, Of the pangs I suffered for you -- bear awhile a few for me! Fear not, though the waters overwhelm you; fear not, though ye see no land! Know ye not your God is with you, guiding with a Father's hand? Cords may wring, and winds may freeze you, shivering on the sullen sea, Yet the life that burns within you liveth ever hid with Me!"MS. 1842. Christ must suffer before He entered into His glory. He must die before He could rise. He must descend into hell before He could ascend into heaven. For this is the law of God's kingdom. Without a Good Friday there can be no Easter Day. Without self-sacrifice there can be no blessedness. My Saviour! My King! Infinite, Eternal Love -- alone of all beings devoid of self-love! Glory be to Thee for Thy humiliation, for Thy Cross and Passion!MS.Easter Even.Christ went down into hell and preached to the spirits in prison. It is written that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" and again, "When the wicked man turns from his wickedness he shall save his soul alive." And we know that in the same chapter God tells us that His ways are not unequal. It is possible, therefore, that He has not one law for this life and another for the life to come. Let us hope, then, that David's words may be true after all, when, speaking by the Spirit of God, he says not only "if I ascend up to heaven, thou art there," but "if I go down to hell, thou art there also."MS. Sermon.Easter Day.The Creed says, "I believe in the Resurrection of the flesh." I believe that we, each of us, as human beings, men and women, shall have a share in that glorious day; not merely as ghosts and disembodied spirits, but as real live human beings, with new bodies

of our own, on a new earth, under a new heaven. "Therefore," David says, "my flesh shall rest in hope;" not merely my soul, my ghost, but my flesh. For the Lord, who not only died but rose again with His body, shall raise our bodies according to His mighty working, and then the whole manhood of us -- body, soul, and spirit -- shall have our perfect consummation and bliss in His eternal and everlasting glory. National Sermons. APRIL 25.

St. Mark, Evangelist and Martyr. God's apostles, saints, and martyrs are our spiritual ancestors. They spread the Gospel into all lands, and they spread it, remember always, not only by preaching what they knew, but by being what they were. Their characters, their personal histories, are as important to us as their writings. Sermons.

May.

Is it merely a fancy that we are losing that love for Spring which among our old forefathers rose almost to worship? That the perpetual miracle of the budding leaves and the returning song-birds awakes no longer in us the astonishment which it awoke yearly among the dwellers in the old world, when the sun was a god who was sick to death each winter, and returned in spring to life, and health, and glory; when Freya, the goddess of youth and love, went forth over the earth while the flowers broke forth under her tread over the brown moors, and the birds welcomed her with song? To those simpler children of a simpler age winter and spring were the two great facts of existence; the symbols, the one of death, the other of life; and the battle between the two -- the battle of the sun with darkness, of winter with spring, of death with life, of bereavement with love -- lay at the root of all their myths and all their creeds. Surely a change has come over our fancies! The seasons are little to us now! Prose Idylls.

Past and Present. May 1.

Now see the young spring leaves burst out a-maying, Fill with their ripening hues orchard and glen;

So though old forms pass by, ne'er shall their spirit die, Look! England's bare boughs show green leaf again. Poems. 1849.

The Earth is the Lord's. May 2.

The earth is holy! Can there be a more glorious truth to carry out -- one which will lead us more into all love and beauty and purity in heaven and earth? One which must have God's light of love shining on it at every step. God gives us souls and bodies exquisitely attuned for this very purpose -- the aesthetic faculty, our sensibilities to the beautiful. All events of life, all the workings of our hearts, should point to this one idea. As I walk the fields, the trees and flowers and birds, and the motes of rack floating in the sky, seem to cry to me: "Thou knowest us! Thou knowest we have a meaning, and sing a heaven's harmony by night and day! Do us justice! Spell our enigma, and go forth and tell thy fellows that we are their brethren, that their spirit is our spirit, their Saviour our Saviour, their God our God!" Letters and Memories. 1842.

The Great Question. May 3.

Is there a living God in the universe, or is there not? That is the greatest of all questions. Has our Lord Jesus Christ answered it, or has He not? Water of Life Sermons. 1866.

Our Father. May 4.

Look at those thousand birds, and without our Father not one of them shall fall to the ground; and art thou not of more value than many sparrows -- thou for whom God sent His Son to die? . . . Ah! my friend, we must look out and around to see what God is like. It is when we persist in turning our eyes inward, and prying curiously over our own imperfections, that we learn to make a god after our own image, and fancy that our own hardness and darkness are the patterns of His light and love. Hypatia, chap. xi.

Want of Sympathy. May 5.

If we do not understand our fellow-creatures we shall never love them. And it is equally true, that if we do not love them we shall never understand them. Want of charity, want of sympathy, want of good feeling and fellow-feeling -- what does it, what can it breed but endless mistakes and ignorances, both of men's characters and men's circumstances? Westminster Sermons. 1873.

A Religion. May 6.

If all that a man wants is "a religion," he ought to be able to make a very pretty one for himself, and a fresh one as often as he is tired of the old. But the heart and soul of man wants more than that; as it is written, "My soul is athirst for GOD, even for the living God." I want a living God, who cares for men, forgives men, saves men from their sins: and Him I have found in the Bible, and nowhere else, save in the facts of life which the Bible alone interprets. Sermons on the Pentateuch. 1863.

True Civilisation. May 7.

Do the duty which lies nearest to you; your duty to the man who lives next door, and to the man who lives in the next street. Do your duty to your parish, that you may do your duty by your country and to all mankind, and prove yourselves thereby civilised men. Water of Life Sermons. 1866.

Nature and Grace. May 8.

Why speak of the God of Nature and the God of grace as two antithetical terms? The Bible never in a single instance makes the distinction, and surely if God be the eternal and unchangeable One, and if all the universe bears the impress of His signet, we have no right, in the present infantile state of science, to put arbitrary limits of our own to the revelation which He may have thought good to make of Himself in Nature. Nay, rather, let us believe that if our eyes were opened we should fulfil the requirement of genius and see the universal in the particular by seeing God's whole likeness, His whole glory, reflected as in a mirror in the meanest flower, and that nothing but the dulness of our simple souls prevents them from seeing day and night in all things the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilling His own saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Glaucus. 1855.

Wisdom the Child of Goodness. May 9.

Goodness rather than talent had given her a wisdom, and goodness rather than courage a power of using that wisdom, which to those simple folk seemed almost an inspiration. Two Years Ago, chap. ii. 1857.

Rule of Life. May 10.

Two great rules for the attainment of heavenly wisdom are simple enough -- "Never forget what and where you are," and "Grieve not the Holy Spirit."MS. Letter. 1841.

Music the Speech of God. May 11.

Music -- there is something very wonderful in music. Words are wonderful enough, but music is more wonderful. It speaks not to our thoughts as words do, it speaks straight to our hearts and spirits, to the very core and root of our souls. Music soothes us, stirs us up; it puts noble feelings into us; it melts us to tears, we know not how; it is a language by itself, just as perfect, in its way, as speech, as words; just as divine, just as blessed. Music has been called the speech of angels; I will go farther, and call it the speech of God Himself. The old Greeks, the wisest of all the heathen, made a point of teaching their children music, because, they said, it taught them not to be self-willed and fanciful, but to see the beauty of order, the usefulness of rule, the divineness of law. Good News of God Sermons. 1859.

Facing Realities. May 12.

The only comfort I can see in the tragedies of war is that they bring us all face to face with the realities of human life, as it has been in all ages, giving us sterner and yet more loving, more human, and more divine thoughts about ourselves, and our business here, and the fate of those who are gone, and awakening us out of the luxurious, frivolous, and unreal dream (full nevertheless of hard judgments) in which we have been living so long, to trust in a living Father who is really and practically governing this world and all worlds, and who willeth that none should perish. Letters and Memories. 1855.

Street Arabs. May 13.

One has only to go into the streets of any great city in England to see how we, with all our boast of civilisation, are yet but one step removed from barbarism. Is that a hard word? Only there are the barbarians round us at every street corner -- grown barbarians, it may be, now all but past saving, but bringing into the world young barbarians whom we may yet save, for God wishes us to save them. . . . Do not deceive yourselves about the little dirty, offensive children in the street. If they be offensive to you, they are not to Him who made them. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, their angels do always behold the face of your Father which is in heaven." All Saints' Day Sermons. 1871.

Fellowship of Sorrow. May 14.

How was He,

The blessed One, made perfect? Why, by grief --

The fellowship of voluntary grief --

He read the tear-stained book of poor men's souls,

As we must learn to read it. Lady! lady!

Wear but one robe the less -- forego one meal --

And thou shalt taste the core of many tales,

Which now flit past thee, like a minstrel's songs,

The sweeter for their sadness. Saint's Tragedy, Act ii. Scene v.

1847.

Heaven and Hell. May 15.

Heaven and hell -- the spiritual world -- are they merely invisible places in space which may become visible hereafter? or are they not rather the moral world of right and wrong? Love and righteousness -- is not that the heaven itself wherein God dwells? Hatred and sin -- is not that hell itself, wherein dwells all that is opposed to God? Water of Life Sermons.

The Awfulness of Life. May 16.

Our hearts are dull, and hard, and light, God forgive us! and we forget continually what an earnest, awful world we live in -- a whole eternity waiting for us to be born, and a whole eternity waiting to see what we shall do now we are born. Yes, our hearts are dull, and hard, and light. And therefore Christ sends suffering on us, to teach us what we always gladly forget in comfort and prosperity -- what an awful capacity of suffering we have; and more, what an awful capacity of suffering our fellow-creatures have likewise. . . . We sit at ease too often in a fool's paradise, till God awakens us and tortures us into pity for the torture of others. And so, if we will not acknowledge our brotherhood by any other teaching, He knits us together by the brotherhood of suffering. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1871.

Hope and Fear. May 17.

Every gift of God is good, and given for our happiness, and we sin if we abuse it. To use your fancy to your own misery is to abuse it and to sin. The realm of the possible was given to man to hope and not to fear in. Letters and Memories. 1842.

Cry of the Heart and Reason. May 18.

A living God, a true God, a real God, a God worthy of the name, a God who is working for ever, everywhere, and in all; who hates nothing that He has made, forgets nothing, neglects nothing; a God who satisfies not only the head but the heart, not only the logical intellect but the highest reason -- that pure reason which is one with the conscience and moral sense! For Him we cry out, Him we seek, and if we cannot find Him we know no rest. Water of Life Sermons. 1867.

Speaking the Truth in Love. May 19.

Whenever we are tempted to say more than is needful, let us remember St. John's words (in the only sermon we have on record of his), "Little children, love one another," and ask God for His Holy Spirit, the spirit of love, which, instead of weakening a man's words, makes them all the stronger in the cause of truth, because they are spoken in love. How difficult it is to distinguish between the loving tact, which avoids giving offence to a weaker brother, and the fear of man, which bringeth a snare!MS. Letter. 1842.

Peasant Souls. May 20.

. . . Dull boors

See deeper than we think, and hide within

Those leathern hulls unfathomable truths,

Which we amid thought's glittering mazes lose.

They grind among the iron facts of life,

And have no time for self-deception. Saint's Tragedy, Act iii. Scene ii.

1847.

Death and Everlasting Life. May 21.

Do not rashly count on some sudden radical change happening to you as soon as you die to make you fit for heaven. There is not one word in the Bible which gives us reason to suppose that we shall not be in the next world the same persons that we have made ourselves in this world. . . . What we sow here we shall reap there. And it is good for us to know and face this. Anything is good for us, however unpleasant it may be, which drives us from the only real misery, which is sin and selfishness, to the only true happiness, which is the everlasting life of Christ, a pure, loving, just, generous, useful life of goodness. Good News of God Sermons.

Science and Virtue. May 22.

Science is great; but she is not the greatest. She is an instrument and not a power -- beneficent or deadly, according as she is wielded by the hand of virtue or vice. But her lawful mistress, the only one which can use her aright, the only one under whom she can truly grow and prosper and prove her divine descent, is Virtue, the likeness of Almighty God. Roman and Teuton. 1860.

A Child's Heart. May 23.

"I saw at last! I found out that I had been trying for years which was stronger, God or I; I found out I had been trying whether I could not do well enough without Him; and there I found that I could not -- could not! I felt like a child who had marched off from home, fancying it can find its way, and is lost at once. I did not know that I had a Father in heaven who had been looking after me, when I fancied I was looking after myself. I don't half believe it now." . . . And so the old heart passed away from Thomas Thurnall, and instead of it grew up the heart of a little child. Two Years Ago, chap. xxviii. 1857.

Self-Security. May 24.

Strange it is how mortal man, "who cometh up and is cut down like the flower," can harden himself into a stoical security, and count on the morrow which may never come. Yet so it is, and perhaps if it were not so no work would get done on earth -- at least by the many who know not that God is guiding them, while they fancy they are guiding themselves. Two Years Ago, chap. i. There is a Providence which rules this earth, whose name is neither Political Economy nor Expediency, but the Living God, who makes every right action reward, and every wrong action punish, itself. History Lecture, Cambridge. 1866.

Loss and Gain. May 25.

"He has yet to learn what losing his life to save it means, Amyas. Bad men have taught him (and I fear these Anabaptists and Puritans at home teach little else) that it is the one great business of every man to save his own soul after he dies; every one for himself; and that that, and not divine self-sacrifice, is the one thing needful, and the better part which Mary chose." "I think," said Amyas, "men are enough inclined to be selfish without being taught that." Westward Ho! chap. vii. 1854.

The Law of Righteousness. May 26.

What if I had discovered that one law of the spiritual world, in which all others were contained, was Righteousness? and that disharmony with that law, which we call unspirituality, was not being vulgar, or clumsy, or ill-taught, or unimaginative, or dull; but simply being unrighteous? that righteousness, and it alone, was the beautiful, righteousness the sublime, the heavenly, the God-like -- ay, God Himself? Hypatia, chap. xxvii. 1852.

Human and Divine Love. May 27.

Believe me that he who has been led by love to a human being to understand the mystery of that divine love which fills all heaven and earth, and concentrates itself into an articulate manifestation in the person of Christ, will soon begin to find that he cannot enter into the perfect bliss of that truth without going further, and seeing that the human heart requires some standing-ground for its affection, even for the love of wife and child, deeper and surer than that love, namely, in utter loyalty, resignation, adoring affection to Him in whom all loveliness is concentrated. It is a great mystery. It is a hard lesson. Letters and Memories. 1847.

A High Finish. May 28.

A high artistic finish is important for more reasons than for the mere pleasure it gives. There is something sacramental in perfect metre and rhythm. They are outward and visible signs (most seriously we speak as we say it) of an inward and spiritual grace, namely, of the self-possessed and victorious temper of one who has so far subdued nature as to be able to hear that universal sphere-music of hers, speaking of which Mr. Carlyle says, that "all deepest thoughts instinctively vent themselves in song." *Miscellanies*. 1849.

Our Prayers. May 29.

There can be no objection to praying for certain special things. God forbid! I cannot help doing it, any more than a child in the dark can help calling for its mother. Only it seems to me that when we pray, "Grant this day that we run into no kind of danger," we ought to lay our stress on the "run" rather than on the "danger," to ask God not to take away the danger by altering the course of nature, but to give us light and guidance whereby to avoid it. Letters and Memories. 1860.

Clearing Showers. May 30.

When a stream is swelled by a flood, a shower of rain clears it. So in trouble, when the heart is turbid from the world's admixtures, and the stirring up of the foul particles which will lie at the bottom, nothing but the pure dew of heaven can restore its purity, when God's spirit comes down upon it like a gentle rain!MS. 1843.

Vineyards in Spring. May 31.

Look at the rows of vines, or what will be vines when the summer comes, but are now black, knotted and gnarled clubs, without a sign of life in the seemingly dead stick. One who sees that sight may find a new beauty and meaning in the mystic words, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." It is not merely the connection between branch and stem common to all trees; not merely the exhilarating and seemingly inspiring properties of the grape, which made the very heathen look upon it as the sacred and miraculous fruit, the special gift of God; not merely the pruning out of the unfruitful branches, to be burned as firewood -- not merely these, but the seeming death of the Vine, shorn of all its beauty, its fruitfulness, of every branch and twig which it had borne the year before, and left unsightly and seemingly ruined, to its winter sleep; and then bursting forth again by an irresistible inward life into fresh branches, spreading and trailing far and wide, and tossing their golden tendrils to the sky. This thought surely -- the emblem of the living Church, springing from the corpse of the dead Christ, who yet should rise to be alive for evermore -- enters into, it may be forms an integral part of, the meaning of that prophecy of all prophecies. *Prose Idylls*. 1864.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

MAY 1.

St. Philip and St. James, Apostles and Martyrs. Christ's cross says still, and will say to all Eternity, "Wouldst thou be good? Wouldst thou be like God? Then work and dare, and if need be, suffer for thy fellow-men." On the Cross Christ consecrated, and as it were offered to the Father in His own body, all loving actions, unselfish actions, merciful actions, heroic actions, which man has done or ever will do. From Him, from His spirit, their strength came; and therefore He is not ashamed to call them brethren. He is the King of the noble army of martyrs; of all who suffer for love and truth and justice' sake; and to all such He says, thou hast put on My likeness; thou hast suffered for My sake, and I too have suffered for thy sake, and enabled thee to suffer likewise, and in Me thou too art a Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased. Sermons. Feast of the Ascension. "Lo, I am with you always," said the Blessed One before He ascended to the Father. And this is the Lord who we fancy is gone away far above the stars till the end of time! Oh, my friends, rather bow your heads before Him at this moment! For here He is among us now, listening to every thought of our poor simple hearts. He is where God is, in whom we live, and move, and have our being, and that is everywhere. Do you wish Him to be any nearer? National Sermons. . . . Oh, my Saviour!

My God! where art Thou? That's but a tale about Thee, That crucifix above -- it does but show Thee

As Thou wast once, but not as Thou art now. . . . Saint's Tragedy, Act iv. Scene i.

June.

Three o'clock, upon a still, pure, Midsummer morning. . . . The white glare of dawn, which last night hung high in the north-west, has travelled now to the north-east, and above the wooded wall of the hills the sky is flushing with rose and amber. A long line of gulls goes wailing inland; the rooks come cawing and sporting round the corner at Landcross, while high above them four or five herons flap solemnly along to find their breakfast on the shallows. The pheasants and partridges are clucking merrily in the long wet grass; every copse and hedgerow rings with the voice of birds; but the lark, who has been singing since midnight in the "blank height of the dark," suddenly hushes his carol and drops headlong among the corn, as a broad-winged buzzard swings from some wooded peak into the abyss of the valley, and hangs high-poised above the heavenward songster. The air is full of perfume; sweet clover, new-mown hay, the fragrant breath of kine, the dainty scent of sea-weed, and fresh wet sand. Glorious day, glorious place, "bridal of earth and sky," decked well with bridal garments, bridal perfumes, bridal songs. Westward Ho! chap. xii.

Open Thou mine Eyes. June 1.

I have wandered in the mountains mist-bewildered,

And now a breeze comes, and the veil is lifted;

And priceless flowers, o'er which I trod unheeding, Glean ready for my grasp. Saint's Tragedy, Act
i. Scene ii.

1847.

The Spirit of Romance. June 2.

Some say that the spirit of romance is dead. The spirit of romance will never die as long as there is a man left to see that the world might and can be better, happier, wiser, fairer in all things than it is now. The spirit of romance will never die as long as a man has faith in God to believe that the world will actually be better and fairer than it is now, as long as men have faith, however weak, to believe in the romance of all romances, in the wonder of all wonders, in that of which all poets' dreams have been but childish hints and dim forefeelings -- even "That one divine far-off event

Towards which the whole creation moves, that wonder which our Lord Himself has bade us pray for as for our daily bread, and say, "Father, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."Water of Life Sermons. 1865.

The Everlasting Music. June 3.

All melody and all harmony upon earth, whether in the song of birds, the whisper of the wind, the concourse of voices, or the sounds of those cunning instruments which man has learnt to create, because he is made in the image of Christ, the Word of God, who creates all things; all music upon earth, I say, is beautiful in as far as it is a pattern and type of the everlasting music which is in heaven, which was before all worlds and shall be after them. Good News of God Sermons. 1859.

Gifts are Duties. June 4.

Exceeding gifts from God are not blessings, they are duties, and very solemn and heavy duties. They do not always increase a man's happiness; they always increase his responsibility, the awful account which he must render at last of the talents committed to his charge. They increase, too, his danger. Water of Life Sermons.

Summer Days. June 5.

Now let the young be glad,
Fair girl and gallant lad,
And sun themselves to-day
By lawn and garden gay;
'Tis play befits the noon
Of rosy-girdled June;

.....

The world before them, and above

The light of Universal Love. Installation Ode, Cambridge. 1862.

|Sufficient for the Day.| June 6.

Let us not meddle with the future, and matters which are too high for us, but refrain our souls, and keep them low like little children, content with the day's food, and the day's schooling, and the day's play-hours, sure that the Divine Master knows that all is right, and how to train us, and whither to lead us; though we know not and need not know, save this, that the path by which He is leading each of us, if we will but obey and follow step by step, leads up to everlasting life. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1871.

Secret of Thrift. June 7.

The secret of thrift is knowledge. The more you know the more you can save yourself and that which belongs to you, and can do more work with less effort. Knowledge of domestic economy saves income; knowledge of sanitary laws saves health and life: knowledge of the laws of the intellect saves wear and tear of brain, and knowledge of the laws of the spirit -- what does it not save?Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Out-door Worship. June 8.

In the forest, every branch and leaf, with the thousand living things which cluster on them, all worship, worship, worship with us! Let us go up in the evenings and pray there, with nothing but God's cloud temple between us and His heaven! And His choir of small birds and night crickets and booming beetles, and all happy things who praise Him all night long! And in the still summer noon, too, with the lazy-paced clouds above, and the distant sheep-bell, and the bee humming in the beds of thyme, and one bird making the hollies ring a moment, and then all still -- hushed -- awe-bound, as the great thunder-clouds slide up from the far south! Then, then, to praise God! Ay, even when the heaven is black with wind, the thunder crackling over our heads, then to join in the paeon of the storm-spirits to Him whose pageant of power passes over the earth and harms us not in its mercy! Letters and Memories. 1844.

God's Countenance. June 9.

Study nature as the countenance of God! Try to extract every line of beauty, every association, every moral reflection, every inexpressible feeling from it. Letters and Memories. 1842.

Certain and Uncertain. June 10.

"Life is uncertain," folks say. Life is certain, say I, because God is educating us thereby. But this process of education is so far above our sight that it looks often uncertain and utterly lawless; wherefore fools conceive (as does M. Comte) that there is no Living God, because they cannot condense His formulas into their small smelling-bottles. O glorious thought! that we are under a Father's education, and that He has promised to develop us, and to make us go on from strength to strength. Letters and Memories. 1868.

Sensuality. June 11.

What is sensuality? Not the enjoyment of holy glorious matter, but blindness to its meaning.MS. 1842.

The Journey's End. June 12.

Let us live hard, work hard, go a good pace, get to our journey's end as soon as possible -- then let the post-horse get his shoulder out of the collar. . . . I have lived long enough to feel, like the old post-horse, very thankful as the end draws near. . . . Long life is the last thing that I desire. It may be that, as one grows older, one acquires more and more the painful consciousness of the difference between what ought to be done and what can be done, and sits down more quietly when one gets the wrong side of fifty, to let others start up to do for us things we cannot do for ourselves. But it is the highest pleasure that a man can have who has (to his own exceeding comfort) turned down the hill at last, to believe that younger spirits will rise up after him, and catch the lamp of Truth, as in the old lamp-bearing race of Greece, out of his hand before it expires, and carry it on to the goal with swifter and more even feet. Speech at Lotus Club, New York. 1874.

Punishment Inevitable. June 13.

It is a fact that God does punish here, in this life. He does not, as false preachers say, give over this life to impunity and this world to the devil, and only resume the reigns of moral government and the right of retribution when men die and go into the next world. Here in this life He punishes sin. Slowly but surely God punishes. If any of you doubt my words you have only to commit sin and then see whether your sin will find you out. Sermons on David. 1866.

The Problem Solved. June 14.

After all, the problem of life is not a difficult one, for it solves itself so very soon at best -- by death. Do what is right the best way you can, and wait to the end to know. MS. Letter. But remember that though death may alter our place, it cannot alter our character -- though it may alter our circumstances, it cannot alter ourselves. Discipline and other Sermons.

The Father's Education. June 15.

Sin, [Greek text], is the missing of a mark, the falling short of an ideal; . . . and that each miss brings a penalty, or rather is itself the penalty, is to me the best of news and gives me hope for myself and every human being past, present, and future, for it makes me look on them all as children under a paternal education, who are being taught to become aware of, and use their own powers in God's house, the universe, and for God's work in it; and, in proportion as they do that, they attain salvation,

Letters and Memories. 1852.

Parent and Child. June 16.

Superstition is the child of fear, and fear is the child of ignorance. Lectures on Science and Superstition.

1866.

A Charm of Birds. June 17.

Listen to the charm of birds in any sequestered woodland on a bright forenoon in early summer. As you try to disentangle the medley of sounds, the first, perhaps, which will strike your ear will be the loud, harsh, monotonous, flippant song of the chaffinch, and the metallic clinking of two or three sorts of titmice. But above the tree-tops, rising, hovering, sinking, the woodlark is fluting tender and low. Above the pastures outside the skylark sings -- as he alone can sing; and close by from the hollies rings out the blackbird's tenor -- rollicking, audacious, humorous, all but articulate. From the tree above him rises the treble of the thrush, pure as the song of angels; more pure, perhaps, in tone, though neither so varied nor so rich as the song of the nightingale. And there, in the next holly, is the nightingale himself; now croaking like a frog, now talking aside to his wife, and now bursting out into that song, or cycle of songs, in which if any man find sorrow, he himself surely finds none. . . . In Nature there is nothing melancholy. Prose Idylls. 1866.

Notes of Character. June 18.

Without softness, without repose, and therefore without dignity.MS.

Our Blessed Dead. June 19.

Why should not those who are gone be actually nearer us, not farther from us, in the heavenly world, praying for us, and it may be influencing and guiding us in a hundred ways of which we, in our prison-house of mortality, cannot dream? Yes! Do not be afraid to believe that he whom you have lost is near you, and you near him, and both of you near God, who died on the cross for you. Letters and Memories. 1871.

Silent Influence. June 20.

Violence is not strength, noisiness is not earnestness. Noise is a sign of want of faith, and violence is a sign of weakness. By quiet, modest, silent, private influence we shall win. "Neither strive nor cry nor let your voice be heard in the streets," was good advice of old, and is still. I have seen many a movement succeed by it. I have seen many a movement tried by the other method of striving and crying and making a noise in the streets, but I have never seen one succeed thereby, and never shall. Letters and Memories. 1870.

Chivalry. June 21.

Some say that the age of chivalry is past. The age of chivalry is never past as long as there is a wrong left unredressed on earth, and a man or woman left to say, "I will redress that wrong, or spend my life in the attempt." The age of chivalry is never past as long as men have faith enough in God to say, "God will help me to redress that wrong; or if not me, surely He will help those that come after me. For His eternal will is to overcome evil with good."Water of Life Sermons. 1865.

Nature and Art. June 22.

When once you have learnt the beauty of little mossy banks, and tiny leaves, and flecks of cloud, with what a fulness the glories of Claude, or Ruysdael, or Berghem, will unfold themselves to you! You must know Nature or you cannot know Art. And when you do know Nature you will only prize Art for being like Nature. MS. Letter. 1842.

Simple and Sincere. June 23.

There are those, and, thanks to Almighty God, they are to be numbered by tens of thousands, who will not perplex themselves with questionings; simple, genial hearts, who try to do what good they can in the world, and meddle not with matters too high for them; people whose religion is not abstruse but deep, not noisy but intense, not aggressive but laboriously useful; people who have the same habit of mind as the early Christians seem to have worn, ere yet Catholic truth had been defined in formulae, when the Apostles' Creed was symbol enough for the Church, and men were orthodox in heart rather than exact in head. For such it is enough if a fellow-creature loves Him whom they love, and serves Him whom they serve. Personal affection and loyalty to the same unseen Being is to them a communion of saints both real and actual, in the genial warmth of which all minor differences of opinion vanish. . . .Preface to Tauler's Sermons. 1854.

God's Words. June 24.

Do I mean, then, that this or any text has nothing to do with us? God forbid! I believe that every word of our Lord's has to do with us, and with every human being, for their meaning is infinite, eternal, and inexhaustible. MS. Letter.

Taught by Failure. June 25.

So I am content to have failed. I have learned in the experiment priceless truths concerning myself, my fellow-men, and the city of God, which is eternal in the heavens, for ever coming down among men, and actualising itself more and more in every succeeding age. I only know that I know nothing, but with a hope that Christ, who is the Son of Man, will tell me piecemeal, if I be patient and watchful, what I am and what man is. Letters and Memories. 1857.

Presentiments. June 26.

"I cannot deny," said Claude, "that such things as presentiments may be possible. However miraculous they may seem, are they so very much more so than the daily fact of memory? I can as little guess why we remember the past, as why we may not at times be able to foresee the future." . . . Two Years Ago, chap. xxviii. A thing need not be unreasonable -- that is, contrary to reason -- because it is above and beyond reason, or, at least, our human reason, which at best (as St. Paul says) sees as in a glass darkly. MS. Letter. 1856.

Common Duties. June 27.

But after all, what is speculation to practice? What does God require of us, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Him? The longer I live this seems to me more important, and all other questions less so -- if we can but live the simple right life -- Do the work that's nearest,

Though it's dull at whiles;

Helping, when we meet them,

Lame dogs over stiles. Letters and Memories. 1857.

Lost and Found. June 28.

"My welfare? It is gone!" "So much the better. I never found mine till I lost it." Hypatia, chap. xxvii. 1852.

How to bear Sorrow. June 29.

I believe that the wisest plan is sometimes not to try to bear sorrow -- as long as one is not crippled for one's everyday duties -- but to give way to it utterly and freely. Perhaps sorrow is sent that we may give way to it, and in drinking the cup to the dregs, find some medicine in it itself, which we should not find if we began doctoring ourselves, or letting others doctor us. If we say simply, "I am wretched -- I ought to be wretched;" then we shall perhaps hear a voice, "Who made thee wretched but God? Then what can He mean but thy good?" And if the heart answers impatiently, "My good? I don't want it, I want my love;" perhaps the voice may answer, "Then thou shalt have both in time." Letters and Memories. 1871.

A certain Hope. June 30.

Let us look forward with quiet certainty of hope, day and night; believing, though we can see but little day, that all this tangled web will resolve itself into golden threads of twined, harmonious life, guiding both us, and those we love, together, through this life to that resurrection of the flesh, when we shall at last know the reality and the fulness of life and love. Even so come, Lord Jesus! Letters and Memories. 1844.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

Whit Sunday. Think of the Holy Spirit as a Person having a will of His own, who breatheth whither He listeth, and cannot be confined to any feelings or rules of yours or of any man's, but may meet you in the Sacraments or out of the Sacraments, even as He will, and has methods of comforting and educating you of which you will never dream; One whose will is the same as the will of the Father and of the Son, even a good will. Discipline Sermons. Trinity Sunday. Some things I see clearly and hold with desperate clutch. A Father in heaven for all, a Son of God incarnate for all, and a Spirit of the Father and the Son -- who works to will and to do of His own good pleasure in every human being in whom there is one spark of active good, the least desire to do right or to be of use -- the Fountain of all good on earth. Letters and Memories. JUNE 11.

St. Barnabas, Apostle and Martyr. . . . Which is Love?

To do God's will, or merely suffer it?

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No! I must headlong into seas of toil,

Leap far from self, and spend my soul on others.

For contemplation falls upon the spirit,

Like the chill silence of an autumn sun:

While action, like the roaring south-west wind,

Sweeps laden with elixirs, with rich draughts

Quickening the wombed earth. Saint's Tragedy. JUNE 21.

St. John the Baptist. How shall we picture John the Baptist to ourselves? Great painters have exercised their fancy upon his face, his figure, his actions. The best which I can recollect is Guido's -- of the magnificent lad sitting on the rock, half clad in his camel's-hair robe, his stalwart hand lifted up to denounce he hardly knows what, save that things are going all wrong, utterly wrong to him -- his beautiful mouth open to preach he hardly knows what, save that he has a message from God, of which he is half conscious as yet -- that he is a forerunner, a prophet, a foreteller of something and some one who is to come, and which is very near at hand. The wild rocks are round him, the clear sky over him, and nothing more, . . . and he, the noble and the priest, has thrown off -- not in discontent and desperation (for he was neither democrat nor vulgar demagogue), but in hope and awe -- all his family privileges, all that seems to make life worth having; and there aloft and in the mountains, alone with God and Nature, feeding on locusts and wild honey and clothed in skins, he, like Elijah of old, preaches to a generation sunk in covetousness, party spirit, and superstition -- preaches what? -- The most common -- Morality. Ah, wise politician! ah, clear and rational spirit, who knows and tells others to do the duty which lies

nearest to them! . . . who in the hour of his country's deepest degradation had divine courage to say, our deliverance lies, not in rebellion but in doing right. St. John the Baptist,

All Saints' Day Sermons. JUNE 29.

St. Peter, Apostle and Martyr. God is revealed in the Crucified;

The Crucified must be revealed in me: --

I must put on His righteousness; show forth

His sorrow's glory; hunger, weep with Him;

Taste His keen stripes, and let this aching flesh

Sink through His fiery baptism into death. Saint's Tragedy. St. Peter, as he is drawn in the Gospels and the Acts, is a grand and colossal human figure, every line and feature of which is full of meaning and full of beauty to us. Sermons, Discipline.

July.

It was a day of God. The earth lay like one great emerald, ringed and roofed with sapphire: blue sea, blue mountain, blue sky overhead. There she lay, not sleeping, but basking in her quiet Sabbath joy, as though her two great sisters of the sea and air had washed her weary limbs with holy tears, and purged away the stains of last week's sin and toil, and cooled her hot worn forehead with their pure incense-breath, and folded her within their azure robes, and brooded over her with smiles of pitying love, till she smiled back in answer, and took heart and hope for next week's weary work. Heart and hope for next week's work. -- That was the sermon which it preached to Tom Thurnall, as he stood there alone, a stranger and a wanderer like Ulysses of old: but, like him, self-helpful, cheerful, fate defiant. He was more of a heathen than Ulysses -- for he knew not what Ulysses knew, that a heavenly guide was with him in his wanderings; still less that what he called the malicious sport of fortune was, in truth, the earnest education of a Father. . . . "Brave old world she is after all," he said; "and right well made; and looks right well to-day in her go-to-meeting clothes, and plenty of room and chance for a brave man to earn his bread, if he will but go right on about his business, as the birds and the flowers do, instead of peaking and pining over what people think of him." Two Years Ago, chap. xiv.

Nature and Grace. July 1.

God is the God of Nature as well as the God of Grace. For ever He looks down on all things which He has made; and behold they are very good. And therefore we dare to offer to Him in our churches the most perfect works of naturalistic art, and shape them into copies of whatever beauty He has shown us in man or woman, in cave or mountain-peak, in tree or flower, even in bird or butterfly. But Himself? Who can see Him except the humble and the contrite heart, to whom He reveals Himself as a Spirit to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and not in bread nor wood, nor stone nor gold, nor quintessential diamond?Lecture on Grotts and Groves. 1871.

Love and Book-Learning. July 2.

I see more and more that the knowledge of one human being, such as love alone can give, and the apprehension of our own private duties and relations, is worth more than all the book-learning in the world.MS.

The Ancient Creeds. July 3.

Blessed and delightful it is when we find that even in these new ages the Creeds, which so many fancy to be at their last gasp, are still the finest and highest succour, not merely of the peasant and the outcast, but of the subtle artist and the daring speculator. Blessed it is to find the most cunning poet of our day able to combine the rhythm and melody of modern times with the old truths which gave heart to the martyrs at the stake, to see in the science and the history of the nineteenth century new and living fulfilments of the words which we learnt at our mother's knee! Miscellanies. 1850.

A Master-Truth. July 4.

Every creature of God is good, if it be sanctified with prayer and thanksgiving! This to me is the master-truth of Christianity, the forgetfulness of which is at the root of almost all error. It seems to me that it was to redeem man and the earth that Christ was made man and used the earth! -- that Christianity has never yet been pure, because it never yet, since St. Paul's time, has stood on this as the fundamental truth, and that it has been pure or impure, just in proportion as it has practically and really acknowledged this truth. Letters and Memories. 1842.

English Women. July 5.

Let those who will sneer at the women of England. We who have to do the work and fight the battle of life know the inspiration which we derive from their virtue, their counsel, their tenderness -- and, but too often, from their compassion and their forgiveness. There is, I doubt not, still left in England many a man with chivalry and patriotism enough to challenge the world to show so perfect a specimen of humanity as a cultivated British woman. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Life retouched again. July 6.

Even in the saddest woman's soul there linger snatches of old music, odours of flowers long dead and turned to dust, -- pleasant ghosts, which still keep her mind attuned to that which may be in others, though in her never more; till she can hear her own wedding-hymn re-echoed in the tones of every girl who loves, and see her own wedding-torch re-lighted in the eyes of every bride. Westward Ho! chap. xxix.

Mystery of Life. July 7.

"All things begin in some wonder, and in some wonder end," said St. Augustine, wisest in his day of mortal men. It is a strange thing, and a mystery, how we ever got into this world; a stranger thing still to me how we shall ever get out of this world again. Yet they are common things enough -- birth and death. Good News of God Sermons.

Beauty of Life. July 8.

The Greeks were, as far as we know, the most beautiful race which the world ever saw. Every educated man knows that they were the cleverest of all nations, and, next to his Bible, thanks God for Greek literature. Now the Greeks had made physical, as well as intellectual education a science as well as a study. Their women practised graceful, and in some cases even athletic exercises. They developed, by a free and healthy life, those figures which remain everlasting and unapproachable models of human beauty. Lecture on Thrift. 1869. Study the human figure, both as intrinsically beautiful and as expressing mind. It only expresses the broad natural childish emotions, which are just what we want to return to from our over subtlety. Study "natural language" -- I mean the language of attitude. It is an inexhaustible source of knowledge and delight, and enables one human being to understand another so perfectly. Therefore learn to draw and paint figures. Letters and Memories. 1842.

True Civilisation. July 9.

Civilisation with me shall mean -- not more wealth, more finery, more self-indulgence, even more aesthetic and artistic luxury -- but more virtue, more knowledge, more self-control, even though I earn scanty bread by heavy toil. Lecture on Ancient Civilisation. 1874.

The Church. July 10.

"The Church is a very good thing, and I keep to mine," said Captain Willis, "having served under her Majesty and her Majesty's forefathers, and learned to obey orders, I hope; but don't you think, sir, you're taking it as the Pharisees took the Sabbath Day?" "How then?" "Why, as if man was made for the Church, and not the Church for man." Two Years Ago, chap. ii. 1856.

What does God ask? July 11.

What is this strange thing, without which even the true knowledge of doctrine is of no use? without which either a man or a nation is poor, and blind, and wretched, and naked in soul, notwithstanding all his religion? Isaiah will tell, "Wash you, make you clean, saith the Lord. Do justice to the fatherless, relieve the widow." Church-building and church-going are well, but they are not repentance. Churches are not souls. I ask for your hearts, and you give me fine stones and fine words. I want souls, I want your souls. National Sermons. 1851.

Work or Want. July 12.

Remember that we are in a world where it is not safe to sit under the tree and let the ripe fruit drop into your mouth; where the "competition of species" works with ruthless energy among all ranks of being, from kings upon their thrones to the weed upon the waste; where "he that is not hammer is sure to be anvil;" and "he who will not work neither shall he eat."Ancien Regime. 1867.

True Insight. July 13.

It is easy to see the spiritual beauty of Raffaele's Madonnas, but it requires a deeper and more practised, all-embracing, loving, simple spirituality, to see the same beauty in the face of a worn-out, painful, peasant woman haggling about the price of cottons. Form and colour are but the vehicle for the spirit-meaning. In the "spiritual body" I fancy they will both be united with the meaning -- all and every part and property of man and woman instinct with spirit!MS. 1843.

Retribution inevitable. July 14.

Know this -- that as surely as God sometimes punishes wholesale, so surely is He always punishing in detail. By that infinite concatenation of moral causes and effects, which makes the whole world one mass of special Providences, every sin of ours will punish itself, and probably punish itself in kind. Are we selfish? We shall call out selfishness in others. Do we neglect our duty? Then others will neglect their duty to us. Do we indulge our passions? Then others who depend on us will indulge theirs, to our detriment and misery. All Saints' Day Sermons.

Antinomies. July 15.

Spiritual truths present themselves to us in "antinomies," apparently contradictory pairs, pairs of poles, which, however, do not really contradict, or even limit, each other, but are only correlatives, the existence of the one making the existence of the other necessary, explaining each other, and giving each other a real standing ground and equilibrium. Such an antinomic pair are, "He that loveth not knoweth not God," and "If a man hateth not his father and mother he cannot be My disciple." Letters and Memories. 1848.

False Refinement. July 16.

God's Word, while it alone sanctifies rank and birth, says to all equally, "Ye are brethren, work for each other." Let us then be above rank, and look at men as men, and women as women, and all as God's children. There is a "refinement" which is the invention of that sensual mind, which looks only at the outward and visible sign. MS. Letter. 1843.

Music's Meaning. July 17.

Some quick music is inexpressibly mournful. It seems just like one's own feelings -- exultation and action, with the remembrance of past sorrow wailing up, yet without bitterness, tender in its shrillness, through the mingled tide of present joy; and the notes seem thoughts -- thoughts pure of words; and a spirit seems to call to me in them and cry, "Hast thou not felt all this?" And I start when I find myself answering unconsciously, "Yes, yes, I know it all! Surely we are a part of all we see and hear!" And then, the harmony thickens, and all distinct sound is pressed together and absorbed in a confused paroxysm of delight, where still the female treble and the male bass are distinct for a moment, and then one again -- absorbed into each other's being -- sweetened and strengthened by each other's melody. . . .Letters and Memories. 1842.

Vagueness of Mind. July 18.

By allowing vague inconsistent habits of mind, almost persuaded by every one you love, when you are capable by one decided act of leading them, you may be treading blindfold a terrible path to your own misery. MS. Letter. 1842.

A Faith for Daily Life. July 19.

That is not faith, to see God only in what is strange and rare; but this is faith, to see God in what is most common and simple, to know God's greatness not so much from disorder as from order, not so much from those strange sights in which God seems (but only seems) to break His laws, as from those common ones in which He fulfils His laws. Town and Country Sermons.

Charms of Monotony. July 20.

I delight in that same monotony. It saves curiosity, anxiety, excitement, disappointment, and a host of bad passions. It gives a man the blessed, invigorating feeling that he is at home; that he has roots deep and wide struck down into all he sees, and that only the Being who can do nothing cruel or useless can tear them up. It is pleasant to look down on the same parish day after day, and say I know all that is beneath, and all beneath know me. It is pleasant to see the same trees year after year, the same birds coming back in spring to the same shrubs, the same banks covered by the same flowers. *Prose Idylls*. 1857.

How to attain. July 21.

If our plans are not for time but for eternity, our knowledge, and therefore our love to God, to each other, to everything, will progress for ever. And the attainment of this heavenly wisdom requires neither ecstasy nor revelation, but prayer and watchfulness, and observation, and deep and solemn thought. Two great rules for its attainment are simple enough -- Never forget what and where you are, and grieve not the Holy Spirit, for "If a man will do God's will he shall know of the doctrine." Letters and Memories. 1842.

The Divine Discontent. July 22.

I should like to make every one I meet discontented with themselves; I should like to awaken in them, about their physical, their intellectual, their moral condition, that divine discontent which is the parent first of upward aspiration and then of self-control, thought, effort to fulfil that aspiration even in part. For to be discontented with the divine discontent, and to be ashamed with the noble shame, is the very germ and first upgrowth of all virtue. Lecture on Science of Health. 1872.

Dra et labora. July 23.

"Working is praying," said one of the holiest of men. And he spoke truth; if a man will but do his work from a sense of duty, which is for the sake of God. Sermons.

Distrust and Anarchy. July 24.

Over the greater part of the so-called civilised world is spreading a deep distrust, a deep irreverence of every man towards his neighbour, and a practical unbelief in every man whom you do see, atones for itself by a theoretic belief in an ideal human nature which you do not see. Such a temper of mind, unless it be checked by that which alone can check it, namely, the grace of God, must tend towards sheer anarchy. There is a deeper and uglier anarchy than any mere political anarchy, -- which the abuse of the critical spirit leads to, -- the anarchy of society and of the family, the anarchy of the head and of the heart, which leaves poor human beings as orphans in the wilderness to cry in vain, "What can I know? Whom can I love?" The Critical Spirit. 1871.

A Future Life of Action. July 25.

Why need we suppose that heaven is to be one vast lazy retrospect? Why is not eternity to have action and change, yet both like God, compatible with rest and immutability? This earth is but one minor planet of a minor system. Are there no more worlds? Will there not be incident and action springing from these when the fate of this world is decided? Has the evil one touched this alone? Is it not self-conceit which makes us think the redemption of this earth the one event of eternity? Letters. 1842.

An Ideal Aristocracy. July 26.

We may conceive an Utopia governed by an aristocracy that should be really democratic, which should use, under developed forms, that method which made the mediaeval priesthood the one great democratic institution of old Christendom; bringing to the surface and utilising the talents and virtues of all classes, even the lowest. Lectures on Ancien Regime. 1867.

Our Weapons. July 27.

God, who has been very good to us, will be more good, if we allow Him! Worldly-minded people think they can manage so much better than God. We must trust. Our weapons must be prayer and faith, and our only standard the Bible. As soon as we leave these weapons and take to "knowledge of the world," and other people's clumsy prejudices as our guides, we must inevitably be beaten by the World, which knows how to use its own arms better than we do. What else is meant by becoming as a little child?MS. Letter. 1843.

Uneducated Women. July 28.

Take warning by what you see abroad. In every country where the women are uneducated, unoccupied; where their only literature is French novels or translations of them -- in every one of those countries the women, even to the highest, are the slaves of superstition, and the puppets of priests. In proportion as women are highly educated, family life and family secrets are sacred, and the woman owns allegiance and devotion to no confessor or director, but to her own husband or her own family. Lecture on Thrift. 1860.

Pardon and Cure. July 29.

After the forgiveness of sin must come the cure of sin. And that cure, like most cures, is a long and a painful process. But there is our comfort, there is our hope -- Christ the great Healer, the great Physician, can deliver us, and will deliver us, from the remains of our old sins, the consequences of our own follies. Not, indeed, at once, or by miracle, but by slow education in new and nobler motives, in purer and more unselfish habits. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1861.

Eternal Law. July 30.

The eternal laws of God's providence are still at work, though we may choose to forget them, and the Judge who administers them is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, even Jesus Christ the Lord, the Everlasting Rock, on which all morality and all society is founded. Whosoever shall fall on that Rock, in repentance and humility, shall indeed be broken, but of him it is written, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Discipline and other Sermons. 1866.

God's Mercy or Man's? July 31.

"He fought till he could fight no more, and then died like a hero, with all his wounds in front; and may God have mercy on his soul." "That last was a Popish prayer, Master Frank," said old Mr. Carey. "Most worshipful sir, you surely would not wish God not to have mercy on his soul?" "No -- Eh? Of course not, for that's all settled by now, for he is dead, poor fellow!" "And you can't help being a little fond of him still?" "Eh? Why, I should be a brute if I were not. Fond of him? why, I would sooner have given my forefinger than that he should have gone to the dogs." "Then, my dear sir, if you feel for him still, in spite of all his faults, how do you know that God may not feel for him in spite of all his faults? For my part," said Frank, in his fanciful way, "without believing in that Popish purgatory, I cannot help holding with Plato that such heroical souls, who have wanted but little of true greatness here, are hereafter, by strait discipline, brought to a better mind." Westward Ho! chap. v. 1854.

The Chrysalis State.

You ask, "What is the Good?" I suppose God Himself is the Good; and it is this, in addition to a thousand things, which makes me feel the absolute certainty of a resurrection, and a hope that this, our present life, instead of being an ultimate one, which is to decide our fate for ever, is merely some sort of chrysalis state in which man's faculties are so narrow and cramped, his chances (I speak of the millions, not of units) of knowing the Good so few, that he may have chances hereafter, perhaps continually fresh ones, to all eternity. Letters and Memories. 1852.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

JULY 25.

St. James, Apostle and Martyr. And they will know his worth

Years hence . . .

And crown him martyr; and his name will ring

Through all the shores of earth, and all the stars

Whose eyes are sparkling through their tears to see His triumph, Preacher and Martyr. . .

.

. . . It is over; and the woe that's dead,

Rises next hour a glorious angel. Santa Maura.

August.

"I cannot tell what you say, green leaves,
I cannot tell what you say;
But I know that there is a spirit in you,
And a word in you this day. "I cannot tell what ye say, rosy rocks,
I cannot tell what ye say;
But I know that there is a spirit in you,
And a word in you this day. "I cannot tell what ye say, brown streams,
I cannot tell what ye say;
But I know, in you too, a spirit doth live,
And a word in you this day." "Oh! rose is the colour of love and youth,
And green is the colour of faith and truth,
And brown of the fruitful clay.
The earth is fruitful and faithful and young,
And her bridal morn shall rise erelong,
And you shall know what the rocks and streams
And the laughing green woods say." Dartside, August 1849.

Sight and Insight. August 1.

Do the work that's nearest,
Though it's dull at whiles,
Helping, when you meet them,
Lame dogs over stiles;
See in every hedgerow
Marks of angels' feet,
Epics in each pebble
Underneath our feet. The Invitation. 1857.

Genius and Character. August 2.

I have no respect for genius (I do not even acknowledge its existence) where there is no strength and steadiness of character. If any one pretends to be more than a man he must begin by proving himself a man at all. Two Years Ago, chap. xv.

Nature's Student. August 3.

The perfect naturalist must be of a reverent turn of mind -- giving Nature credit for an inexhaustible fertility and variety, which will keep him his life long, always reverent, yet never superstitious; wondering at the commonest, but not surprised by the most strange; free from the idols of sense and sensuous loveliness; able to see grandeur in the minutest objects, beauty in the most ungainly: estimating each thing not carnally, as the vulgar do, by its size, . . . but spiritually, by the amount of Divine thought revealed to him therein. . . .Glaucus. 1855.

The Masses. August 4.

Though permitted evils should not avenge themselves by any political retribution, yet avenge themselves, if unredressed, they surely will. They affect masses too large, interests too serious, not to make themselves bitterly felt some day. . . . We may choose to look on the masses in the gross as objects for statistics -- and of course, where possible, for profits. There is One above who knows every thirst, and ache, and sorrow, and temptation of each slattern, and gin-drinker, and street-boy. The day will come when He will require an account of these neglects of ours -- not in the gross. *Miscellanies*. 1851. We sit in a cloud, and sing like pictured angels,

And say the world runs smooth -- while right below

Welters the black, fermenting heap of life

On which our State is built. *Saint's Tragedy*, Act ii. Scene v.

Love and Knowledge. August 5.

He who has never loved, what does he know?MS.

Siccum Lumen. August 6.

How shall I get true knowledge? Knowledge which will be really useful, really worth knowing. Knowledge which I shall know accurately and practically too, so that I can use it in daily life, for myself and others? Knowledge too, which shall be clear knowledge, not warped or coloured by my own fancies, passions, prejudices, but pure and calm and sound; Siccum Lumen, "Dry Light," as the greatest of philosophers called it of old. To all such who long for light, that by the light they may live, God answers through His only begotten Son: "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find." Westminster Sermons. 1873.

This World. August 7.

What should the external world be to those who truly love, but the garden in which they are placed, not so much for sustenance or enjoyment of themselves and each other, as to dress it and to keep it -- it to be their subject-matter, not they its tools! In this spirit let us pray "Thy kingdom come."MS. 1842.

The Life of the Spirit. August 8.

The old fairy superstition, the old legends and ballads, the old chronicles of feudal war and chivalry, the earlier moralities and mysteries -- these fed Shakespeare's youth. Why should they not feed our children's? That inborn delight of the young in all that is marvellous and fantastic -- has that a merely evil root? No, surely! it is a most pure part of their spiritual nature; a part of "the heaven which lies about us in our infancy;" angel-wings with which the free child leaps the prison-walls of sense and custom, and the drudgery of earthly life. It is a God-appointed means for keeping alive what noble Wordsworth calls those ". . . obstinate questionings,

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Blank misgivings of a creature

Moving about in worlds not realised."Introductory Lecture, Queen's College.

1848.

A Quiet Depth. August 9.

The deepest affections are those of which we are least conscious -- that is, which produce least startling emotion, and most easy and involuntary practice. MS. 1843.

Acceptable Sacrifices. August 10.

Every time we perform an act of kindness to any human being, ay, even to a dumb animal; every time we conquer our worldliness, love of pleasure, ease, praise, ambition, money, for the sake of doing what our conscience tells us to be our duty, -- we are indeed worshipping God the Father in spirit and in truth, and offering Him a sacrifice which He will surely accept for the sake of His beloved Son, by whose Spirit all good deeds and thoughts are inspired.All Saints' Day Sermons. 1871.

Chivalry. August 11.

Chivalry; an idea which, perfect or imperfect, God forbid that mankind should ever forget till it has become the possession -- as it is the God- given right -- of the poorest slave that ever trudged on foot; and every collier lad shall have become "A very gentle, perfect knight."Lectures on Ancien Regime. 1867.

God waits for Man. August 12.

Patiently, nobly, magnanimously, God waits; waits for the man who is a fool, to find out his own folly; waits for the heart that has tried to find pleasure in everything else, to find out that everything else disappoints, and to come back to Him, the fountain of all wholesome pleasure, the well-spring of all life, fit for a man to live. God condescends to wait for His creature; because what He wants is not His creature's fear, but His creature's love; not only his obedience, but his heart; because He wants him not to come back as a trembling slave to his master, but as a son who has found out at last what a father he has still left him, when all beside has played him false. Let him come back thus. Discipline and other Sermons.

Thrift. August 13.

The secret of thriving is thrift; saving of force; to get as much work as possible done with the least expenditure of power, the least jar and obstruction, the least wear and tear. And the secret of thrift is knowledge. In proportion as you know the laws and nature of a subject, you will be able to work at it easily, surely, rapidly, successfully, instead of wasting your money or your energies in mistaken schemes, irregular efforts, which end in disappointment and exhaustion. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Revelations. August 14.

Only second-rate hearts and minds are melancholy. When we become like little children, our very playfulness tells that we are seeing deep, when we see that God is love in His works as well as in Himself, and we look at Nature as a baby does, as a beautiful mystery which we scarcely wish to solve. And therefore deep things, which the intellect in vain struggles after, will reveal themselves to us. MS. 1842.

Christ comes in many ways. August 15.

Often Christ comes to us in ways in which the world would never recognise Him -- in which perhaps neither you nor I shall recognise Him; but it will be enough, I hope, if we but hear His message, and obey His gracious inspiration, let Him speak through whatever means He will. He may come to us by some crisis in our life, either for sorrow or for bliss. He may come to us by a great failure; by a great disappointment -- to teach the wilful and ambitious soul that not in that direction lies the path of peace; or He may come in some unexpected happiness to teach that same soul that He is able and willing to give abundantly beyond all that we can ask or think. MS. Sermon. 1874.

Lesson of the Cross. August 16.

On the Cross God has sanctified suffering, pain, and sorrow, and made them holy; as holy as health and strength and happiness are. National Sermons. 1851.

The Ideal Unity. August 17.

"Oh, make us one." All the world-generations have but one voice! "How can we become One? at harmony with God and God's universe! Tell us this, and the dreary, dark mystery of life, the bright, sparkling mystery of life, the cloud-chequered, sun-and-shower mystery of life, is solved! for we shall have found one home and one brotherhood, and happy faces will greet us wherever we move, and we shall see God! see Him everywhere, and be ready to wait for the Renewal, for the Kingdom of Christ perfected! We came from Eden, all of us: show us how we may return, hand in hand, husband and wife, parent and child, gathered together from the past and the future, from one creed and another, and take our journey into a far country, which is yet this earth -- a world-migration to the heavenly Canaan, through the Red Sea of Death, back again to the land which was given to our forefathers, and is ours even now, could we but find it!" Letters and Memories. 1843.

Body and Soul. August 18.

The mystics considered the soul, i.e. the intellect, as the "moi" and the body as the "non moi;" and this idea that the body is not self, is the fundamental principle of mysticism and asceticism, and diametrically opposed to the whole doctrines and practice of Scripture. Else why is there a resurrection of the body? and why does the Eucharist "preserve our body and soul to everlasting life?"MS. 1843.

Childlikeness. August 19.

If you wish to be "a little child," study what a little child could understand -- Nature; and do what a little child could do -- love. Feed on Nature. It will digest itself. It did so when you were a little child the first time. Keep a common-place book, and put into it not only facts and thoughts, but observations on form, and colour, and nature, and little sketches, even to the form of beautiful leaves. They will all have their charm . . . all do their work in consolidating your ideas. Put everything into it. . . .Letters and Memories. 1842.

Inspiration. August 20.

Every good deed comes from God. His is the idea, His the inspiration, and His its fulfilment in time; and therefore no good deed but lives and grows with the everlasting life of God Himself.MS.

Lifting of the Veil. August 21.

I seldom pass those hapless loungers who haunt every watering-place without thinking sadly how much more earnest, happier, and better men and women they might be if the veil were but lifted from their eyes, and they could learn to behold that glory of God which is all around them like an atmosphere, while they, unconscious of what and where they are, wrapt up each in his little selfish world of vanity and interest, gaze lazily around them at earth, sea, and sky -- And have no speculation in those eyes

Which they do glare withal Glaucus. 1855.

The Cross--its meaning. August 22.

To take up the cross means, in the minds of most persons, to suffer patiently under affliction. It is a true and sound meaning, but it means more. Why did Christ take up the cross? Not for affliction's sake, or for the cross's sake, as if suffering were a good thing in itself. No. But that He might thereby do good. That the world through Him might be saved. That He might do good at whatever cost or pain to Himself. Sermons.

The Crucifix. August 23.

If I had an image in my room it should be one of Christ glorified, sitting at the right hand of God. The crucifix has been THE image, because the idea of torture and misery has been THE idea in the melancholy and the ferocious (for the two ultimately go together),. . . and thus ascetics became inquisitors. . . .MS. 1843.

Love to God proved. August 24.

Our love to God does not depend upon the emotions of the moment. If you fancy you do not love Him enough, above all when Satan tempts you to look inward, go immediately and minister to others; visit the sick, perform some act of self-sacrifice or thanksgiving. Never mind how dull you may feel while doing it; the fact of your feeling excited proves nothing; the fact of your doing it proves that your will, your spiritual part, is on God's side, however tired or careless the poor flesh may be. The "flesh" must be brought into harmony with the spirit, not only by physical but by intellectual mortification. MS. Letter. 1843.

Training of Beauty. August 25.

There is many a road into our hearts besides our ears and brains; many a sight and sound and scent even, of which we have never thought at all, sinks into our memory and helps to shape our characters; and thus children brought up among beautiful sights and sweet sounds will most likely show the fruits of their nursing by thoughtfulness and affection and nobleness of mind, even by the expression of the countenance. True Words to Brave Men. 1848.

Ignorance of the Cynic. August 26.

Be sure that no one knows so little of his fellow-men as the cynical, misanthropic man, who walks in darkness because he hates his brother. Be sure that the truly wise and understanding man is he who by sympathy puts himself in his neighbours' place; feels with them and for them; sees with their eyes, hears with their ears; and therefore understands them, makes allowances for them, and is merciful to them, even as his Father in heaven is merciful. Westminster Sermons. 1872.

Penitential Prayer. August 27.

Faith in God it is which has made the fifty-first Psalm the model of all true penitence for evermore. Penitential prayers in all ages have too often wanted faith in God, and therefore have been too often prayers to avert punishment. This, this -- the model of all true penitent prayers -- is that of a man who is to be punished, and is content to take his punishment, knowing that he deserves it, and far more besides. Sermons on David. 1866.

A Real Presence. August 28.

Believe the Holy Communion is the sign of Christ's perpetual presence; that when you kneel to receive the bread and wine, Christ is as near you -- spiritually, indeed, and invisibly, but really and truly as near you as those who are kneeling by your side. And if it be so with Christ, then is it so with those who are Christ's, with those whom we love. . . . Surely, like Christ, they may come and go even now, though unseen. Like Christ they may breathe upon our restless hearts and say, "Peace be unto you," and not in vain. For what they did for us when they were on earth they can more fully do now that they are in heaven. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1862.

A Living God. August 29.

Man would never have even dreamed of a Living God had not that Living God been a reality, who did not leave the creature to find his Creator, but stooped from heaven, at the very beginning of our race, to find His creature. Sermons on David. 1866.

Thine, not mine. August 30.

Whensoever you do a thing which you know to be right and good, instead of priding yourself upon it as if the good in it came from you, offer it up to your Heavenly Father, from whom all good things come, and say, "Oh, Lord! the good in this is Thine and not mine; the bad in it is mine and not Thine. I thank Thee for having made me do right, for without Thy help I should have done nothing but wrong. For mine is the laziness, and the weakness, and the selfishness, and the self-conceit; and Thine is the kingdom, for Thou rulest all things; and the power, for Thou doest all things; and the glory, for Thou doest all things well, for ever and ever. Amen."Sermons.

The Unquenchable Fire. August 31.

A fire which cannot be quenched, a worm which cannot die, I see existing, and consider them among the most blessed revelations of the gospel. I fancy I see them burning and devouring everywhere in the spiritual world, as their analogues do in the physical. I know that they have done so on me, and that their operation, though exquisitely painful, is most healthful. I see the world trying to quench and kill them; I know too well that I often do the same ineffectually. But, in the comfort that the worm cannot die and the fire cannot be quenched, I look calmly forward through endless ages to my own future, and the future of that world whereof it is written, "He shall reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet, and death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire." * * * * The Day of the Lord will be revealed in flaming fire, not merely to give new light and a day-spring from on high to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, but to burn up out of sight, and off the universe, the chaff, hay, and stubble which men have built on the One Living Foundation, Christ, in that unquenchable fire, of which it is written that Death and Hell shall one day be cast into it also, to share the fate of all other unnatural and abominable things, and God's universe be -- what it must be some day -- very good. * * * * Because I believe in a God of absolute and unbounded love, therefore I believe in a loving anger of His, which will and must devour and destroy all which is decayed, monstrous, abortive, in His universe, till all enemies shall be put under His feet, to be pardoned surely, if they confess themselves in the wrong and open their eyes to the truth. And God shall be All in All. Those last are wide words. Letters and Sermons. 1856.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

AUGUST 24.

St. Bartholomew, Apostle and Martyr. Blessed are they who once were persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Great indeed is their reward, for it is no less than the very beatific vision to contemplate and adore that supreme moral beauty, of which all earthly beauty, all nature, all art, all poetry, all music, are but phantoms and parables, hints and hopes, dim reflected rays of the clear light of everlasting day. All Saints' Day Sermons.

September.

That poet knew but little of either streams or hearts who wrote -- "Nor ever had the breeze of passion

Stirred her heart's clear depths." The lonely fisher, the lover of streams and living fountains, knows that when the stream stops it is turbid. The deep pools and still flats are always brown -- always dark -- the mud lies in them, the trout sleep in them. When they are clearest they are still tinged brown or gray with some foreign matter held in solution -- the brown of selfish sensuality or the gray of morbid melancholy. But when they are free again! when they hurry over rock and weed and sparkling pebble-shallow, then they are clear! Then all the foreign matter, the defilement which earth pours into them, falls to the ground, and into them the trout work up for life and health and food; and through their swift yet yielding eddies -- moulding themselves to every accident, yet separate and undefiled -- shine up the delicate beauties of the subaqueous world, the Spirit-glories which we can only see in this life through the medium of another human soul, but which we can never see unless that soul is stirred by circumstance into passion and motion and action strong and swift. Only the streams which have undergone long and severe struggles from their very fountain-head have clear pools. MS. 1843.

Goodness. September 1.

Always say to yourself this one thing, "Good I will become, whatever it cost me; and in God's goodness I trust to make me good, for I am sure He wishes to see me good more than I do myself." And you will find that, because you have confessed in that best and most honest of ways that God is good, and have so given Him real glory, and real honour, and real praise, He will save you from the sins which torment you, and you shall never come, either in this world or the world to come, to that worst misery, the being ashamed of yourself. Sermons for the Times. 1855.

Be good to do Good. September 2.

What we wish to do for our fellow-creatures we must do first for ourselves. We can give them nothing save what God has already given us. We must become good before we can make them good, and wise before we can make them wise. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1867.

The Undying I. September 3.

The youngest child, by faith in God his Father, may look upon all heaven and earth and say, "Great and wonderful and awful as this earth and those skies may be, I am more precious in the sight of God than sun and moon and stars; for they are things, but I am a person, a spirit, an immortal soul, made in the likeness of God, redeemed into the likeness of God. This great earth was here thousands and thousands of years before I was born, and it will be here perhaps millions of years after I am dead. But it cannot harm Me, it cannot kill Me. When earth, and sun, and stars have passed away I shall live for ever, for I am the immortal child of an immortal Father, the child of the everlasting God." Sermons for the Times. 1855.

Love and Time. September 4.

Love proves its spiritual origin by rising above time and space and circumstance, wealth and age, and even temporary beauty, at the same time that it alone can perfectly use all those material adjuncts. Being spiritual, it is Lord of matter, and can give and receive from it glory and beauty when it will, and yet live without it. MS. 1843.

Common Duties. September 5.

The only way to regenerate the world is to do the duty which lies nearest us, and not to hunt after grand, far-fetched ones for ourselves. If each drop of rain chose where it should fall, God's showers would not fall as they do now, on the evil and the good alike. I know from the experience of my own heart how galling this doctrine is -- how, like Naaman, one goes away in a rage, because the prophet has not bid us do some great thing, but only to go wash in the nearest brook and be clean. Letters and Memories. 1854.

Despair--Hope. September 6.

Does the age seem to you dark? Do you feel, as I do at times, the awful sadness of that text, "The time shall come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Lord, and shall not see it"? Then remember that The night is never so long

But at last it ringeth for matin song. . . . Even now the dawn is gilding the highest souls, and we are in the night only because we crawl below. Prose Idylls. 1850.

The Critical Spirit. September 7.

"Judge nothing before the time." This is a hard saying. Who can hear it? There never was a time in which the critical spirit was more thoroughly in the ascendant. Every man now is an independent critic. To accept fully, or as it is now called, to follow blindly; to admire heartily, or as it is now called, fanatically -- these are considered signs of weakness or credulity. To believe intensely; to act unhesitatingly; to admire passionately; all this, as the latest slang phrases it, is "bad form"; a proof that a man is not likely to win in the race of this world the prize whereof is, the greatest possible enjoyment with the least possible work. The Critical Spirit. 1871.

Toil and Rest. September 8.

Remember always, toil is the condition of our being. Our sentence is to labour from the cradle to the grave. But there are Sabbaths allowed for the mind as well as the body, when the intellect is stilled, and the emotions alone perform their gentle and involuntary functions. Letters and Memories. 1842.

Storm and Calm. September 9.

Then Amyas told the last scene; how, when they were off the Azores, the storms came on heavier than ever, with terrible seas breaking short and pyramid-wise, till, on the 9th of September, the tiny Squirrel nearly foundered, and yet recovered, and the General (Sir Humphrey Gilbert), sitting abaft with a book in his hand, cried out to us in the Hind, "We are as near heaven by sea as by land," reiterating the same speech well be-seeming a soldier resolute in Jesus Christ, as I can testify he was. Westward Ho! chap. xiii.

On the Heights. September 10.

It is good for a man to have holy and quiet thoughts, and at moments to see into the very deepest meaning of God's word and God's earth, and to have, as it were, heaven opened before his eyes; and it is good for a man sometimes actually to feel his heart overpowered with the glorious majesty of God -- to feel it gushing out with love to his blessed Saviour; but it is not good for him to stop there any more than for the Apostles in the Mount of Transfiguration. Village Sermons. 1849.

In the Valley. September 11.

The disciples had to come down from the Mount and do Christ's work, and so have we. Believe me, one word of warning spoken to keep a little child out of sin, -- one crust of bread given to a beggar-man because he is your brother, for whom Christ died, -- one angry word checked on your lips for the sake of Him who was meek and lowly of heart; any the smallest endeavour to lessen the amount of evil which is in yourselves and those around you, -- is worth all the speculations, and raptures, and visions, and frames, and feelings in the world; for these are the good fruits of faith, whereby alone the tree shall be known whether it be good or evil. Village Sermons. 1849.

Self-Conceit. September 12.

Self-conceit is the very daughter of self-will, and of that loud crying out about I, and me, and mine, which is the very bird-call for all devils, and the broad road which leads to death. Westward Ho! chap. i.

Facing Fact. September 13.

It is good for a man to be brought once, at least, in his life, face to face with fact, ultimate fact, however horrible it may be, and to have to confess to himself shuddering, what things are possible on God's earth, when man has forgotten that his only welfare is in living after the likeness of God. Miscellanies. 1858.

The Heroical Rest. September 14.

Right, lad; the best reward for having wrought well already is to have more to do; and he that has been faithful over a few things must find his account in being made ruler over many things. That is the true and heroical rest which only is worthy of gentlemen and sons of God. As for those who either in this world or in the world to come look for idleness, and hope that God will feed them with pleasant things, as it were with a spoon, Amyas, I count them cowards and base, even though they call themselves saints and elect. Westward Ho! chap. vii. 1855.

Body and Soul. September 15.

Remember that St. Paul always couples with the resurrection and ascension of our bodies in the next life the resurrection and ascension of our souls in this life, for without that, the resurrection of our bodies would be but a resurrection to fresh sin, and therefore to fresh misery and ruin. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1870.

Love in Absence. September 16.

Absence quickens love into consciousness. MS. The baby sings not on its mother's breast;
Nor nightingales who nestle side by side;
Nor I by thine: but let us only part,
Then lips which should but kiss, and so be still,
As having uttered all, must speak again. Sonnet. 1851.

Special Providence. September 17.

If I did not believe in a special Providence, in a perpetual education of men by evil as well as good, by small things as well as great, I could believe nothing. Letters and Memories.

Love of Work. September 18.

"Can you tell me, my pastor, what part of God's likeness clings to a man longest and closest and best? No? Then I will tell you. It is the love of employment. God in heaven must create Himself a universe to work on and love. And now we sons of Adam, the sons of God, cannot rest without our mundus peculiaris of some sort -- our world subjective, as Doctor Musophilus has it. But we can create too, and make our little sphere look as large as a universe."MS. Novel. 1844.

Fret not. September 19.

Fret not, neither be anxious. What God intends to do He will do. And what we ask believing we shall receive. Never let us get into the common trick of calling unbelief resignation, of asking and then, because we have not faith to believe, putting in a "Thy will be done" at the end. Let us make God's will our will, and so say Thy will be done. MS. 1843. Peace! Why these fears?

Life is too short for mean anxieties:

Soul! thou must work, though blindfold. Saint's Tragedy, Act ii. Scene x.

Battle before Victory. September 20.

Whenever you think of our Lord's resurrection and ascension, remember always that the background of His triumph is a tomb. Remember that it is the triumph over suffering; a triumph of One who still bears the prints of the nails in His sacred hands and feet, and the wound of the spear in His side; like many a poor soul who has followed Him, triumphant at last, and yet scarred, and only not maimed in the hard battle of life. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1870.

Night and Growth. September 21.

As in the world of Nature, so it is in the world of men. The night is peopled not merely with phantoms and superstitions and spirits of evil, but under its shadow all sciences, methods, social energies, are taking rest, and growing, and feeding, unknown to themselves. Prose Idylls. 1850.

Passion. September 22.

Self-sacrifice! What is love worth that does not show itself in action? and more, which does not show itself in passion in the true sense of that word: namely, in suffering? in daring, in struggling, in grieving, in agonising, and, if need be, in dying for the object of its love? Every mother will give but one answer to that question. Westminster Sermons. 1870.

Worth of Beauty. September 23.

It is a righteous instinct which bids us welcome and honour beauty, whether in man or woman, as something of real worth -- divine, heavenly, ay, though we know not how, in a most deep sense Eternal; which makes our reason give the lie to all merely logical and sentimental maunderings of moralists about "the fleeting hues of this our painted clay;" and tell men, as the old Hebrew Scriptures told them, that physical beauty is the deepest of all spiritual symbols; and that though beauty without discretion be the jewel of gold in the swine's snout, yet the jewel of gold it is still, the sacrament of an inward beauty, which ought to be, perhaps hereafter may be, fulfilled in spirit and in truth. Hypatia, chap. xxvi. 1852.

Empty Profession. September 24.

What is the sin which most destroys all men and nations? High religious profession, with an ungodly, selfish life. It is the worst and most dangerous of all sins; for it is like a disease which eats out the heart and life without giving pain, so that the sick man never suspects that anything is the matter with him till he finds himself, to his astonishment, at the point of death. National Sermons. 1851.

True Poetry. September 25.

Let us make life one poem -- not of dreams or sentiments -- but of actions, not done Byronically as proofs of genius, but for our own self-education, alone, in secret, awaiting the crisis which shall call us forth to the battle to do just what other people do, only, perhaps, by an utterly different self-education. That is the life of great spirits, after, perhaps, many many years of seclusion, of silent training in the lower paths of God's vineyard, till their hearts have settled into a still, deep, yet swift current, and those who have been faithful over a few things are made rulers over many things. MS. Letter. 1842.

Office of the Clergy. September 26.

There is a Christian as well as political liberty quite consistent with High Church principles, which makes the clergy our teachers -- not the keepers of our consciences but of our creeds. Letters and Memories. 1842.

Opinions are not Knowledge. September 27.

. . . As to self-improvement, the true Catholic mode of learning is to "prove all things," as far as we can, without sin or the danger of it, to "hold fast that which is good." Let us never be afraid of trying anything new, learnt from people of different opinions to our own. And let us never be afraid of changing our opinions. The unwillingness to go back from once declared opinion is a form of pride which haunts some powerful minds: but it is not found in great childlike geniuses. Fools may hold fast to their scanty stock through life, and we must be very cautious in drawing them from it -- for where can they supply its place? Letters and Memories. 1843.

The Worst Punishment. September 28.

God reserves many a sinner for that most awful of all punishments (here) -- impunity. Sermons.

The Divine Order. September 29.

Ah, that God's will were but done on earth as it is in the material heaven overhead, in perfect order and obedience, as the stars roll in their courses, without rest, yet without haste -- as all created things, even the most awful, fire and hail, snow and vapour, wind and storm, fulfil God's word, who hath made them sure for ever and ever, and given them a law which shall not be broken. But above them; above the divine and wonderful order of the material universe, and the winds which are God's angels, and the flames of fire which are His messengers; above all, the prophets and apostles have caught sight of another divine and wonderful order of rational beings, of races loftier and purer than man -- angels and archangels, thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, fulfilling God's will in heaven as it is not, alas! fulfilled on earth. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1867.

True Resignation. September 30.

. . . Christianity heightens as well as deepens the human as well as the divine affections. I am happy, for the less hope, the more faith. . . . God knows what is best for us; we do not. Continual resignation, at last I begin to find, is the secret of continual strength. "Daily dying," as Boehmen interprets it, is the path of daily living. . . . Letters and Memories. 1843.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

SEPTEMBER 21.

St. Matthew, Apostle, Evangelist, and Martyr. There is something higher than happiness. There is blessedness; the blessedness of being good and doing good, of being right and doing right. That blessedness we may have at all times; we may be blest even in anxiety and in sadness; we may be blest, even as the martyrs of old were blest, in agony and death. Water of Life Sermons.

SEPTEMBER 29.

Feast of St. Michael and All Angels. The eternal moral law which held good for the sinless Christ, who, though He were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered, must hold good of you and me, and all moral and rational beings -- yea, for the very angels in heaven. They have not sinned. That we know; and we do not know that they have ever suffered. But this at least we know, that they have submitted. They have obeyed, and have given up their own wills to be ministers of God's will. In them is neither self-will nor selfishness; and, therefore, by faith, that is, by trust and loyalty, they stand. And so, by consenting to lose their individual life of selfishness, they have saved their eternal life in God, the life of blessedness and holiness, just as all evil spirits have lost their eternal life by trying to save their selfish life and be something in themselves and of themselves without respect to God. All Saints' Day Sermons.

October.

A beautiful October morning it was; one of those in which Dame Nature, healthily tired with the revelry of summer, is composing herself, with a quiet satisfied smile, for her winter's sleep. Sheets of dappled cloud were sliding slowly from the west; long bars of hazy blue hung over the southern chalk downs, which gleamed pearly gray beneath the low south-eastern sun. In the vale below, soft white flakes of mist still hung over the water meadows, and barred the dark trunks of the huge elms and poplars, whose fast-yellowing leaves came showering down at every rustle of the western breeze, spotting the grass below. The river swirled along, glassy no more, but dingy gray with autumn rains and rotting leaves. All beyond the garden told of autumn, bright and peaceful even in decay; but up the sunny slope of the garden itself, and to the very window-sill, summer still lingered. The beds of red verbena and geranium were still brilliant, though choked with fallen leaves of acacia and plane; the canary plant, still untouched by frost, twined its delicate green leaves, and more delicate yellow blossoms, through the crimson lace-work of the Virginia creeper; and the great yellow noisette swung its long canes across the window, filling all the air with fruity fragrance. Two Years Ago, chap. i.

Blessing of Daily Work. October 1.

Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do that day which must be done whether you like it or not. Being forced to work, and forced to do your best, will breed in you temperance and self- control, diligence and strength of will, cheerfulness and content, and a hundred virtues which the idle will never know. Town and Country Sermons. 1861.

The Forming Form. October 2.

As the acorn, because God has given it "a forming form," and life after its kind, bears within it not only the builder oak but shade for many a herd, food for countless animals, and at last the gallant ship itself, and the materials of every use to which Nature or Art can put it, and its descendants after it, throughout all time, so does every good deed contain within itself endless and unexpected possibilities of other good, which may and will grow and multiply for ever, in the genial light of Him whose eternal mind conceived it, and whose eternal spirit will for ever quicken it, with that life of which He is the Giver and the Lord. Preface to Tauler's Sermons. 1854.

Special Providences. October 3.

And as for special Providences. I believe that every step I take, every person I meet, every thought which comes into my mind -- which is not sinful -- comes and happens by the perpetual Providence of God watching for ever with Fatherly care over me, and each separate thing that He has made. MS. Letter.

Virtue. October 4.

Nothing, nothing can be a substitute for purity and virtue. Man will always try to find substitutes for it. He will try to find a substitute in superstition, in forms and ceremonies, in voluntary humility and worship of angels, in using vain repetitions, and fancying he will be heard for his much speaking; he will try to find a substitute in intellect, and the worship of intellect and art and poetry, . . . but let no man lay that flattering unction to his soul. Sermons on David. 1866.

God-likeness. October 5.

"We can become like God -- only in proportion as we are of use," said -- -. "I did not see this once. I tried to be good, not knowing what good meant. I tried to be good, because I thought it would pay me in the world to come. But at last I saw that all life, all devotion, all piety, were only worth anything, only Divine, and God-like and God-beloved, as they were means to that one end -- to be of use."Two Years Ago, chap. xix. 1856.

The Refiner's Fire. October 6.

"Not quite that," said Amyas. "He was a meeker man latterly than he used to be. As he said himself once, a better refiner than any whom he had on board had followed him close all the seas over, and purified him in the fire. And gold seven times tried he was when God, having done His work in him, took him home at last."Westward Ho! chap. xiii.

The Prayer of Faith. October 7.

With the prayer of faith we can do anything. Look at Mark xi.24 -- a text that has saved more than one soul from madness in the hour of sorrow; and it is so simple and wide -- wide as eternity, simple as light, true as God Himself. If we are to do great things it must be in the spirit of that text. Verily, when the Son of God cometh shall He find faith in the earth? Letters and Memories. 1843.

Mountain-Ranges. October 8.

We fancy there are many independent sciences, because we stand half-way up on different mountain-peaks, calling to each other from isolated stations. The mists hide from us the foot of the range beneath us, the depths of primary analysis to which none can reach, or we should see that all the peaks were but offsets of one vast mountain-base, and in their inmost root but One! And the clouds which float between us and the heaven shroud from us the sun-lighted caps themselves -- the perfect issues of synthetic science, on which the Sun of Righteousness shines with undimmed lustre -- and keep us from perceiving that the complete practical details of our applied knowledge is all holy and radiant with God's smile. And so, half-way up, on the hillside, beneath a cloudy sky, we build up little earthy hill-cairns of our own petty synthesis, and fancy them Babel-towers whose top shall reach to heaven!MS. Note-book. 1843.

The Temper for Success in Life. October 9.

The men whom I have seen succeed best in life have always been cheerful and hopeful men, who went about their business with a smile on their faces, and took the changes and chances of this mortal life like men, facing rough and smooth alike as it came, and so found the truth of the old proverb that "good times and bad times and all times pass over."MS.

Want of Simplicity. October 10.

Faith and prayer are simple things, . . . but when we begin to want faith, and to assist prayer by our own inventions and to explain away God's providence, then faith and prayer become intricate and uncertain. We cannot serve God and mammon. We must either utterly depend on God (and therefore on our own reason enlightened by His spirit after prayer), or we must utterly depend on the empirical maxims of the world. Choose!MS. Letter.

True Rest. October 11.

What is true rest? To rest from sin, from sorrow, from doubt, from care; this is true rest. Above all, to rest from the worst weariness of all -- knowing one's duty and not being able to do it. That is true rest; the rest of God who works for ever, and yet is at rest for ever; as the stars over our heads move for ever, thousands of miles a day, and yet are at perfect rest, because they move orderly, harmoniously, fulfilling the law which God has given them. Perfect rest in perfect work; that surely is the rest of blessed spirits till the final consummation of all things. Water of Life Sermons. 1867.

God's Image. October 12.

. . . "Honour all men." Every man should be honoured as God's image, in the sense in which Novalis says -- that we touch Heaven when we lay our hand on a human body! . . . The old Homeric Greeks, I think, felt that, and acted up to it, more than any nation. The Patriarchs too seem to have had the same feeling. . . .Letters and Memories. 1843.

Woman's Work. October 13.

Let woman never be persuaded to forget that her calling is not the lower and more earthly one of self-assertion, but the higher and diviner one of self-sacrifice; and let her never desert that higher life which lives in and for others, like her Redeemer and her Lord. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Self-Enjoyment. October 14.

"How do ye expect," said Sandy, "ever to be happy, or strong, or a man at a', as long as ye go on only looking to enjoy yersel -- yersel? Mony was the year I looked for nought but my ain pleasure, and got it too, when it was a' ""Sandy Mackaye, bonny Sandy Mackaye,

There he sits singing the lang simmer day;

Lassies gae to him,

And kiss him, and woo him --

Na bird is so merry as Sandy Mackaye.' An' muckle good cam' o't. Ye may fancy I'm talking like a sour, disappointed auld carle. But I tell ye nay. I've got that's worth living for, though I am downhearted at times, and fancy a's wrong, and there's na hope for us on earth, we be a' sic liars -- a' liars, I think -- I'm a great liar often mysel, especially when I'm praying."Alton Locke, chap. vii.

Temptations of Temperament. October 15.

A man of intense sensibilities, and therefore capable, as is but too notorious, of great crimes as well as of great virtues. Sermons on David. The more delicate and graceful the organisation, the more noble and earnest the nature, the more certain it is, I fear, if neglected, to go astray. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Egotism of Melancholy. October 16.

Morbid melancholy results from subjectivity of mind. The self-contemplating mind, if it be a conscientious and feeling one, must be dissatisfied with what it sees within. Then it begins unconsciously to flatter itself with the idea that it is not the "moi" but the "non moi," the world around, which is evil. Hence comes Manichaeism, Asceticism, and that morbid tone of mind which is so accustomed to look for sorrow that it finds it even in joy -- because it will not confess to itself that sorrow belongs to sin, and that sin belongs to self; and therefore it vents its dissatisfaction on God's earth, and not on itself in repentance and humiliation. The world looks dark. Shall we therefore be dark too? Is it not our business to bring it back to light and joy?MS. Letter. 1843.

Poetry of Doubt. October 17.

The "poetry of doubt" of these days, however pretty, would stand us in little stead if we were threatened by a second Armada. Miscellanies. 1859.

Work of the Physician. October 18.

The question which is forcing itself more and more on the minds of scientific men is not how many diseases are, but how few are not, the consequences of men's ignorance, barbarism, folly, self-indulgence. The medical man is felt more and more to be necessary in health as he is in sickness, to be the fellow-workman not merely of the clergyman, but of the social reformer, the political economist, and the statesman; and the first object of his science to be prevention, and not cure. National Sermons. 1851.

Love Many-sided. October 19.

There are many sides to love -- admiration, reverence, gratitude, pity, affection; they are all different shapes of that one great spirit of love -- the only feeling which will bind a man to do good, not once in a way but habitually. National Sermons. 1851.

The only Path to Light. October 20.

The path by which some come to see the Light, to find the Rock of Ages, is the simple path of honest self-knowledge, self-renunciation, self-restraint, in which every upward step towards right exposes some fresh depth of inward sinfulness, till the once proud man, crushed down by the sense of his own infinite meanness, becomes a little child once more, and casts himself simply on the generosity of Him who made him. And then there may come to him the vision, dim, perhaps, and fitting ill into clumsy words, but clearer, surer, nearer to him than the ground on which he treads, or than the foot which treads it -- the vision of an Everlasting Spiritual Substance, most Human and yet most Divine, who can endure; and who, standing beneath all things, can make their spiritual substance endure likewise, though all worlds and eons, birth and growth and death, matter and space and time, should melt indeed -- And like the baseless fabric of a vision,

Leave not a rack behind. Preface to Tauler's Sermons. 1854.

Proverbs False and True. October 21.

There is no falser proverb than that devil's beatitude, "Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall never be disappointed." Say rather, "Blessed is he who expecteth everything, for he enjoys everything once at least, and if it falls out true, twice also." Prose Idylls. 1857.

True Sisters of Mercy. October 22.

Ah! true Sisters of Mercy! whom the world sneers at as "old maids," if you pour out on cats and dogs and parrots a little of the love that is yearning to spend itself on children of your own. As long as such as you walk this lower world one needs no Butler's Analogy to prove to us that there is another world, where such as you will have a fuller and a fairer (I dare not say a juster) portion. Two Years Ago, chap. xxv. 1856.

The Divine Fire. October 23.

Well spoke the old monks, peaceful, watching life's turmoil, "Eyes which look heavenward,
weeping still we see:

God's love with keen flame purges, like the lightning flash, Gold which is purest, purer still must
be."Saint's Tragedy, Act iii. Scene i.

1847.

The Cross a Token. October 24.

Have patience, have faith, have hope, as thou standest at the foot of Christ's Cross, and holdest fast to it, the anchor of the soul and reason, as well as of the heart. For, however ill the world may go, or seem to go, the Cross is the everlasting token that God so loved the world that He spared not His only-begotten Son, but freely gave Him for it. Whatsoever else is doubtful, that at least is sure -- that good must conquer, because God is good, that evil must perish, because God hates evil, even to the death. Westminster Sermons. 1870.

The True Self-Sacrifice. October 25.

What can a man do more than die for his countrymen? Live for them. It is a longer work, and therefore a more difficult and a nobler one. Two Years Ago, chap. xix. 1856.

Now as Then. October 26.

Men can be as original now as ever, if they had but the courage, even the insight. Heroic souls in old times had no more opportunities than we have; but they used them. There were daring deeds to be done then -- are there none now? Sacrifices to be made -- are there none now? Wrongs to be redrest -- are there none now? Let any one set his heart in these days to do what is right, and nothing else; and it will not be long ere his brow is stamped with all that goes to make up the heroical expression -- with noble indignation, noble self-restraint, great hopes, great sorrows; perhaps even with the print of the martyr's crown of thorns. Two Years Ago, chap. vii. 1856.

One Anchor. October 27.

In such a world as this, with such ugly possibilities hanging over us all, there is but one anchor which will hold, and that is utter trust in God; let us keep that, and we may yet get to our graves without misery though not without sorrow. Letters and Memories. 1871.

Self-Control. October 28.

Settle it in your minds, young people, that the first and the last of all virtues and graces which God can give is Self-Control, as necessary for the saint and the sage lest they become fanatics and pedants, as for the young in the hey-day of youth and health. Sermons on David. 1866.

Nature's Permanence. October 29.

We abolish many things, good and evil, wisely and foolishly, in these fast-going times; but, happily for us, we cannot abolish the blue sky, and the green sea, and the white foam, and the everlasting hills, and the rivers which flow out of their bosoms. They will abolish themselves when their work is done, but not before. And we, who, with all our boasted scientific mastery over Nature, are, from a merely mechanical and carnal point of view, no more than a race of minute parasitic animals burrowing in the fair Earth's skin, had better, instead of boasting of our empire over Nature, take care lest we become too troublesome to Nature, by creating, in our haste and greed, too many great black countries, and too many great dirty warrens of houses, miscalled cities, peopled with savages and imps of our own mis-creation; in which case Nature, so far from allowing us to abolish her, will by her inexorable laws abolish us. MS. Presidential Address. 1871.

The Only Refuge. October 30.

Prayer is the only refuge against the Walpurgis-dance of the witches and the fiends, which at hapless moments whirl unbidden through a mortal brain. Two Years Ago, chap. xix. 1856.

England's Forgotten Worthies. October 31.

Among the higher-hearted of the early voyagers, the grandeur and glory around them had attuned their spirits to itself and kept them in a lofty, heroical, reverent frame of mind; while they knew as little about what they saw in an "artistic" or "critical" point of view as in a scientific one. . . . They gave God thanks and were not astonished. God was great: but that they had discovered long before they came into the tropics. Noble old child-hearted heroes, with just romance and superstition enough about them to keep from that prurient hysterical wonder and enthusiasm which is simply, one often fears, a product of our scepticism! We do not trust enough in God, we do not really believe His power enough, to be ready, as they were, as every one ought to be on a God-made earth, for anything and everything being possible; and then when a wonder is discovered we go into ecstasies and shrieks over it, and take to ourselves credit for being susceptible of so lofty a feeling -- true index, forsooth, of a refined and cultivated mind!! Smile if you will: but those were days (and there never were less superstitious ones) in which Englishmen believed in the living God, and were not ashamed to acknowledge, as a matter of course, His help, and providence, and calling, in the matters of daily life, which we now, in our covert atheism, term "secular and carnal."Westward Ho! chap. xxiii.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

OCTOBER 18.

St. Luke, Physician and Evangelist. It is good to follow Christ in one thing and to follow Him utterly in that. And the physician has set his mind to do one thing -- to hate calmly, but with an internecine hatred, disease and death, and to fight against them to the end. In his exclusive care for the body the physician witnesses unconsciously yet mightily for the soul, for God, for the Bible, for immortality. Is he not witnessing for God when he shows by his acts that he believes God to be a God of life, not of death; of health, not of disease; of order, not of disorder; of joy and strength, not of misery and weakness? Is he not witnessing for Christ when, like Christ, he heals all manner of sickness and disease among the people, and attacks physical evil as the natural foe of man and of the Creator of man? "Water of Life," and other Sermons. OCTOBER 28.

St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles and Martyrs. He that loseth his life shall save it. The end and aim of our life is not happiness but goodness. If goodness comes first, then happiness may come after; but if not, something better than happiness may come, even blessedness. Oh! sad hearts and suffering! look to the Cross. There hung your King! The King of sorrowing souls; and more, the King of Sorrows. Ay, pain and grief, tyranny and desertion, death and hell, -- He has faced them one and all, and tried their strength and taught them His, and conquered them right royally. And since He hung upon that torturing Cross sorrow is divine, -- godlike, as joy itself. All that man's fallen nature dreads and despises God honoured on the Cross, and took unto Himself, and blest and consecrated for ever. . . . And now -- Blessed are tears and shame, blessed are agony and pain; blessed is death, and blest the unknown realms where souls await the Resurrection-day. National Sermons.

November.

"The giant trees are black and still, the tearful sky is dreary gray. All Nature is like the grief of manhood in its soft and thoughtful sternness. Shall I lend myself to its influence, and as the heaven settles down into one misty shroud of 'shrill yet silent tears,' as if veiling her shame in a cloudy mantle, shall I, too, lie down and weep? Why not? for am I not 'a part of all I see'? And even now, in fasting and mortification, am I not sorrowing for my sin and for its dreary chastisement? But shall I then despond and die? "No! Mother Earth, for then I were unworthy of thee and thy God! We may weep, Mother Earth, but we have Faith -- faith which tells us that above the cloudy sky the bright clear sun is shining, and will shine. And we have Hope, Mother Earth -- hope, that as bright days have been, so bright days soon shall be once more! And we have Charity, Mother Earth, and by it we can love all tender things -- ay, and all rugged rocks and dreary moors, for the sake of the glow which has gilded them, and the fertility which will spring even from their sorrow. We will smile through our tears, Mother Earth, for we are not forsaken! We have still light and heat, and till we can bear the sunshine we will glory in the shade!"MS. 1842.

Sympathy of the Dead. November 1.

Believe that those who are gone are nearer us than ever; and that if (as I surely believe) they do sorrow over the mishaps and misdeeds of those whom they leave behind, they do not sorrow in vain. Their sympathy is a further education for them, and a pledge, too, of help -- I believe of final deliverance -- for those on whom they look down in love. Letters and Memories. 1852.

Nature's Parable. November 2.

There is a devil's meaning to everything in nature, and a God's meaning too. As I read nature's parable to-night I find nothing in it but hope. What if there be darkness, the sun will rise to-morrow; what if there seem chaos, the great organic world is still living and growing and feeding, unseen by us all the night through; and every phosphoric atom there below is a sign that in the darkest night there is still the power of light, ready to flash out wherever and however it is stirred. Prose Idylls. 1849.

Passing Onward. November 3.

Liturgies are but temporary expressions of the Church's heart. The Bible is the immutable story of her husband's love. She must go on from grace to grace, and her song must vary from age to age, and her ancient melodies become unfitted to express her feelings; but He is the same for ever. MS. 1842. See how the autumn leaves float by decaying,

Down the wild swirls of the dark-brimming stream;

So fleet the works of men back to their earth again -- Ancient and holy things pass like a dream. A Parable. 1848.

The Divine Intention. November 4.

I am superstitious enough, thank God, to believe that not a stone or a handful of mud gravitates into its place without the will of God; that it was ordained, ages since, into what particular spot each grain of gold should be washed down from an Australian quartz reef, that a certain man might find it at a certain moment and crisis of his life. Science Lectures.

Christ Weeping over Jerusalem. November 5.

That which is true of nations is true of individuals, of each separate human brother of the Son of man. Is there one young life ruined by its own folly -- one young heart broken by its own wilfulness -- or one older life fast losing the finer instincts, the nobler aims of youth, in the restlessness of covetousness, of fashion, of ambition? Is there one such poor soul over whom Christ does not grieve? One to whom, at some supreme crisis of their lives, He does not whisper -- "Ah, beautiful organism -- thou too art a thought of God -- thou too, if thou wert but in harmony with thyself and God, a microcosmic City of God! Ah! that thou hadst known -- even thou -- at least in this thy day -- the things which belong to thy peace"?MS. Sermon. 1874.

Love Expansive. November 6.

The mystics think it wrong to love any created thing, because our whole love should be given to God. But as flame increases by being applied to many objects, so does love. He who loves God most loves God's creatures most, and them for God's sake, and God for their sake. MS. Note-book. 1843.

Still the same. November 7.

Those who die in the fear of God and in the faith of Christ do not really taste death; to them there is no death, but only a change of place, a change of state; they pass at once into some new life, with all their powers, all their feelings, unchanged; still the same living, thinking, active beings which they were here on earth. I say active. Rest they may, rest they will, if they need rest. But what is true rest? Not idleness, but peace of mind. Water of Life Sermons. 1862.

An absolutely Good God. November 8.

Fix in your minds -- or rather ask God to fix in your minds -- this one idea of an absolutely good God; good with all forms of goodness which you respect and love in man; good, as you, and I, and every honest man, understand the plain word good. Slowly you will acquire that grand and all-illuminating idea; slowly and most imperfectly at best: for who is mortal man that he should conceive and comprehend the goodness of the infinitely good God! But see, then, whether, in the light of that one idea, all the old-fashioned Christian ideas about the relation of God to man -- whether Providence, Prayer, Inspiration, Revelation, the Incarnation, the Passion, and the final triumph of the Son of God -- do not seem to you, not merely beautiful, not merely probable, but rational, and logical, and necessary, moral consequences from the one idea of an Absolute and Eternal Goodness, the Living Parent of the universe? Westminster Sermons. 1873.

Nature's Lesson. November 9.

Learn what feelings every object in Nature expresses, but do not let them mould the tone of your mind; else, by allowing a melancholy day to make you melancholy, you worship the creature more than the Creator. MS. Letter. 1842.

Morals and Mind. November 10.

Not upon mind, not upon mind, but upon morals, is human welfare founded. The true subjective history of man is not the history of his thought, but of his conscience: the true objective history of man is not that of his inventions, but of his vices and his virtues. So far from morals depending upon thought, thought, I believe, depends on morals. In proportion as a nation is righteous -- in proportion as common justice is done between man and man, will thought grow rapidly, securely, triumphantly; will its discoveries be cheerfully accepted and faithfully obeyed, to the welfare of the whole common weal. Inaugural Lecture, Cambridge. 1860.

Fastidiousness. November 11.

Do not let us provoke God (though that is really impossible) by complaining of His gifts because they do not come just in the form we should have wished. . . .MS. Letter. 1844.

Unconscious Faith. November 12.

For the rest, Amyas never thought about thinking or felt about feeling; and had no ambition whatsoever beyond pleasing his father and mother, getting by honest means the maximum of "red quarrenders" and mazard cherries, and going to sea when he was big enough. Neither was he what would be nowadays called by many a pious child, for though he said his Creed and Lord's Prayer night and morning, and went to service at the church every forenoon, and read the day's Psalms with his mother every evening, and had learnt from her and his father that it was infinitely noble to do right and infinitely base to do wrong, yet he knew nothing more of theology or of his own soul than is contained in the Church Catechism. Westward Ho! chap. i. 1855.

Silence. November 13.

There are silences more pathetic than all words.MS.

The Nineteenth Century. November 14.

. . . What so maddening as the new motion of our age -- the rush of the express train, when the live iron pants and leaps and roars through the long chalk cutting, and white mounds gleam cold a moment against the sky and vanish; and rocks and grass and bushes fleet by in dim blended lines; and the long hedges revolve like the spokes of a gigantic wheel; and far below meadows and streams and homesteads, with all their lazy old-world life, open for an instant, and then flee away; while awestruck, silent, choked with the mingled sense of pride and helplessness, we are swept on by that great pulse of England's life-blood rushing down her iron veins; and dimly out of the future looms the fulfilment of our primeval mission to conquer and subdue the earth, and space too, and time, and all things -- even hardest of all tasks, yourselves, my cunning brothers; ever learning some fresh lesson, except the hardest one of all, that it is the Spirit of God which giveth you understanding? Yes, great railroads, and great railroad age, who would exchange you, with all your sins, for any other time? For swiftly as rushes matter, more swiftly rushes mind; more swiftly still rushes the heavenly dawn up the eastern sky. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." "Blessed is the servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching." Prose Idylls.

Unreality. November 15.

Those who have had no real sorrows can afford to play with imaginary ones.MS.

The indwelling Light. November 16.

The doctrine of Christ in every man, as the indwelling Word of God, the Light who lights every one who comes into the world, is no peculiar tenet of the Quakers, but one which runs through the whole of the Old and New Testaments, and without which they would both be unintelligible, just as the same doctrine runs through the whole history of the Early Church for the first two centuries, and is the only explanation of them. *Theologica Germanica*. 1854.

Woman's Calling. November 17.

What surely is a woman's calling but to teach man? and to teach him what? To temper his fiercer, coarser, more self-assertive nature by the contact of her gentleness, purity, self-sacrifice. To make him see that not by blare of trumpets, not by noise, wrath, greed, ambition, intrigue, puffery, is good and lasting work to be done on earth; but by wise self-distrust, by silent labour, by lofty self-control, by that charity which hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things; by such an example, in short, as women now in tens of thousands set to those around them; such as they will show more and more, the more their whole womanhood is educated to employ its powers without waste and without haste in harmonious unity. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

Waste. November 18.

Thrift of the heart, thrift of the emotions -- how are they wasted in these days in reading sensation novels! while British literature -- all that the best hearts and intellects among our forefathers have bequeathed to us -- is neglected for light fiction, the reading of which is the worst form of intemperance -- dram-drinking and opium-eating, intellectual and moral. Lecture on Thrift.

True Penance. November 19.

"Senor," said Brimblecombe, "the best way to punish oneself for doing ill seems to me to go and do good; and the best way to find out whether God means you well is to find out whether He will help you to do well."Westward Ho! chap. xxv.

Political Economy of the Future. November 20.

I can conceive a time when, by improved chemical science, every foul vapour which now escapes from the chimney of a manufactory, polluting the air, destroying the vegetation, shall be seized, utilised, converted into some profitable substance, till the black country shall be black no longer, the streams once more crystal clear, the trees once more luxuriant, and the desert, which man has created in his haste and greed, shall in literal fact once more blossom as the rose. And just so can I conceive a time when by a higher civilisation, formed on a political economy more truly scientific, because more truly according to the will of God, our human refuse shall be utilised like our material refuse; when man as man, down to the weakest and most ignorant, shall be found (as he really is) so valuable that it will be worth while to preserve his health, to develop his capabilities, to save him alive, body, intellect, and character, at any cost; because men will see that a man is, after all, the most precious and useful thing on the earth, and that no cost spent on the development of human beings can possibly be thrown away. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1870.

God's Pleasure. November 21.

The world was not made for man: but man, like all the world, was made for God. Not for man's pleasure merely, not for man's use, but for God's pleasure all things are, and for God's pleasure they were, created. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1869.

The Hospital Nurse. November 22.

Fearless, uncomplaining, she "trusted in God and made no haste." She did her work and read her Bible; and read, too, again and again at stolen moments of rest, a book which was to her as the finding of an unknown sister -- Longfellow's "Evangeline." Two Years Ago, chap. xxviii. Let us learn to look on hospitals not as acts of charity, supererogatory benevolences of ours towards those to whom we owe nothing, but as confessions of sin, and worthy fruits of penitence; as poor and late and partial compensation for misery which we might have prevented. National Sermons. 1851.

No Work Lost. November 23.

If you lose heart about your work, remember that none of it is lost -- that the good of every good deed remains and breeds and works on for ever, and that all that fails and is lost is the outside shell of the thing, which, perhaps, might have been better done; but better or worse has nothing to do with the real spiritual good which you have done to men's hearts. Letters and Memories. 1862.

True Temperance. November 24.

What we all want is inward rest; rest of heart and brain; the calm, strong, self-contained, self-denying character, which needs no stimulants, for it has no fits of depression; which needs no narcotics, for it has no fits of excitement; which needs no ascetic restraints, for it is strong enough to use God's gifts without abusing them; the character, in a word, which is truly temperate, not in drink and food merely, but in all desires, thoughts, and actions. Essays. 1873.

A Present Veil. November 25.

What is there in this world worth having without religion? Do you not feel that true religion, even in its most imperfect stage, is not merely an escape from hell after death but the only real state for a man -- the only position to live in in this world -- the only frame of mind which will give anything like happiness here. I cannot help feeling at moments -- if there were no Christ, everything, even the very flowers and insects, and every beautiful object, would be hell now -- dark, blank, hopeless. MS. Letter. 1843.

Cowardice. November 26.

There is but one thing which you have to fear in earth or heaven -- being untrue to your better selves, and therefore untrue to God. If you will not do the thing you know to be right, and say the thing you know to be true, then indeed you are weak. You are a coward; you desert God. True Words for Brave Men.

Blind Faith. November 27.

In Him -- "The Father" -- I can trust, in spite of the horrible things I see happen, in spite of the fact that my own prayers are not answered. I believe that He makes all things work together for the good of the human race, and of me among the rest, as long as I obey His will. I believe He will answer my prayer, not according to the letter, but according to the spirit of it; that if I desire good, I shall find good, though not the good I longed for. MS. Letter. 1862.

Small and Great. November 28.

Begin with small things -- you cannot enter into the presence of another human being without finding there more to do than you or I or any soul will ever learn to do perfectly before we die. Let us be content to do little if God sets us little tasks. It is but pride and self-will which says, "Give me something huge to fight and I shall enjoy that -- but why make me sweep the dust?" Letters and Memories. 1854.

True and False. November 29.

We must remember that dissatisfaction at existing evil (the feeling of all young and ardent minds), the struggle to escape from the "circumstance" of the evil world, has a carnal counterfeit -- the love of novelty, and self-will, and self-conceit, which may thrust us down into the abysses of misrule and uncertainty; as it has done such men as Shelley and Byron; trying vainly every loophole, beating against the prison bars of an imperfect system; neither degraded enough to make themselves a fool's paradise within it, nor wise enough to escape from it through Christ, "the door into the sheepfold," to return when they will, and bring others with them into the serene empyrean of spiritual truth -- truth which explains, and arranges, and hallows, and subdues everything. Letters and Memories. 1842.

The Mind of Christ. November 30.

How can we attain to the blessed and noble state of mind -- the mind of Christ, who must needs be about His Father's business, which is doing good? Only by prayer and practice. There is no more use in praying without practising than there is in practising without praying. You cannot learn to walk without walking; no more can you learn to do good without trying to do good. Sermons for the Times. 1855.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

NOVEMBER 1.

All Saints' Day.

Commemoration of the Blessed Dead. "If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour," said the Blessed One. And if God honours His servants, shall not we honour them likewise? We may not, as our forefathers did blindly, though lovingly, worship them as mediators and lesser gods, and pray to them instead of to their Father in heaven to whose throne of grace we may all come boldly through Christ Jesus, or believe that their relics will work miracles in our behalf, thus honouring the creature instead of the Creator. This we may not do, but we may honour the Creator in His creature, and honour God in those who have lived godly and God-like lives; and when they have passed away from among us -- souls endued by God with manifold virtues and precious gifts of grace -- we may give thanks and say, These, O God, are the fruits of Thy Spirit. Thou honourest them in heaven with Thy approving smile. We will honour them on earth, not merely with our lips, but in our lives. What they were we too might be, if we were as true as they to the inspiration of Thy Spirit. Help us to honour their memories, as Thou and they would have us do, by following their example; by setting them before us, and not only them, but every holy and noble personage of whom we have ever heard, as dim likenesses of Christ -- even as Christ is the likeness of Thee. Amen. MS. Sermon. NOVEMBER 30.

St. Andrew, Apostle and Martyr. Form your own notions about angels and saints in heaven -- as you will, . . . but bear this in mind: that if the saints in heaven live the everlasting life, they must be living a life of usefulness, of love, and of good works. The everlasting life cannot be a selfish, idle life, spent only in individual happiness. Good News of God Sermons.

December.

It chanced upon the merry, merry Christmas eve,

I went sighing past the Church across the moorland dreary: "Oh! never sin and want and woe this earth will leave, And the bells but mock the wailing sound, they sing so cheery. How long, O Lord! how long before Thou come again?"

Still in cellar and in garret, and on moorland dreary, The orphans moan, and widows weep, and poor men toil in vain: Till earth is sick of hope deferred, though Christmas bells be cheery." Then arose a joyous clamour from the wild-fowl on the mere, Beneath the stars across the snow, like clear bells ringing, And a voice within cried, "Listen! Christmas carols even here! Though thou be dumb, yet o'er their work the stars and snows are singing.

Blind! I live, I love, I reign, and all the nations through With the thunder of my judgments even now are ringing; Do thou fulfil thy work but as yon wild-fowl do,

Thou wilt heed no less the wailing, yet hear through it the angels' singing."A Christmas Carol.

The Final Victory. December 1.

I believe that the ancient creed, the eternal gospel, will stand and conquer, and prove its might in this age, as it has in every other for eighteen hundred years, by claiming and subduing and organising those young anarchic forces which now, unconscious of their parentage, rebel against Him to whom they owe their being. Yeast, Preface. 1851.

Drifting away. December 2.

They drift away -- Ah, God! they drift for ever.

.....

I watch them drift -- the old familiar faces,
Till ghosts, not men, fill old beloved places.

.....

Shores, landmarks, beacons drift alike.
Yet overhead the boundless arch of heaven
Still fades to night, still blazes into day.

Ah, God! My God! Thou wilt not drift away!A Fragment. 1867.

Our Father. December 3.

Take your sorrows not to man, but to your Father in heaven. If that name, Father, mean anything, it must mean that He will not turn away from His wandering child in a way in which you would be ashamed to turn away from yours. If there be pity, lasting affection, patience in man, they must have come from Him. They, above all things, must be His likeness. Believe that God possesses them a million times more fully than any human being. Letters and Memories.

Circumstance. December 4.

Our wanton accidents take root, and grow

To vaunt themselves God's laws, until our clothes,

Our gems, and gaudy books, and cushioned litters

Become ourselves, and we would fain forget

There live who need them not. Saint's Tragedy, Act ii. Scene v.

1847.

Duty. December 5.

When a man has once said honestly to himself, "It is my duty;" when that glorious heavenly thought has risen upon his soul, like the sun upon the earth, warming his heart and enlightening it, and making it bring forth all good and noble fruits, then that man will feel a strength come to him and a courage come from God which will conquer all his fears, his selfish love of ease and pleasure, and enable him to bear pain and poverty and death itself, provided he can do what is right, and be found by God working His will where He has put him. Sermons.

Humanity and the Bible. December 6.

He who has an intense perception of humanity must know that Christianity is divine, because it is the only religion which has a perfect perception of human relations, wants, and feelings. None but He who made the heart could have written the Bible. MS. Note-book. 1843.

Music. December 7.

There is music in heaven, because in music there is no self-will. Music goes on certain laws and rules. Man did not make those laws of music, he has only found them out, and if he be self-willed and break them, there is an end of his music instantly; all he brings out is discord and ugly sounds. Music is fit for heaven. Music is a pattern and type of heaven, and of the everlasting life of God which perfect spirits live in heaven; a life of melody and order in themselves; a life of harmony with each other and with God. Good News of God Sermons. 1859.

Waiting. December 8.

Ay -- stay awhile in peace. The storms are still.

Beneath her eider robe the patient earth

Watches in silence for the sun: we'll sit

And gaze up with her at the changeless heaven,

Until this tyranny be overpast. Saint's Tragedy, Act iii. Scene iii.

1847.

True or False Toleration? December 9.

"One thing at least I have learnt," he said, "in all my experiments on poor humanity -- never to see a man do a wrong thing without feeling I could do the same in his place. I used to pride myself on that once, fool that I was, and call it comprehensiveness. I used to make it an excuse for sitting by and seeing the devil have it all his own way, and call that toleration. I will see now whether I cannot turn the said knowledge to a better account, as common sense, patience, and charity, and yet do work of which neither I nor my country need be ashamed."Two Years Ago, chap. xxiii. 1856.

Success and Defeat. December 10.

In many things success at first is dangerous, and defeat an excellent medicine for testing people's honesty -- for setting them honestly to work to see what they want, and what are the best modes of attaining it. Our sound thrashing, as a nation, in the first French war was the making of our armies; and it is good for an idea, as well as for a man, to bear the yoke in his youth. Lectures on Ancien Regime. 1867.

Passing Emotions. December 11.

Beware of depending on your own emotions, which are often but the fallings and risings of the frail flesh, and mistaking them for spiritual feelings and affections! * * * * Think less of what you feel -- even of trying to be anything. Look out of yourself at God. Pray and praise, and God will give you His Spirit often when you feel most dull. MS. Letter. 1842.

Christ's Church. December 12.

. . . What a thought it is that there is a God! a Father, a King! a Husband not of individuals, that is a Popish fancy, which the Puritans have adopted -- but of the Church -- of collective humanity. Let us be content to be members; let us be, if we may, the feet, lowest, hardest worked, trodden on, bleeding, brought into harshest contact with the evil world! Still we are members of Christ's Church! . . .Letters and Memories. 1843.

Confound me not. December 13.

Have charity, have patience, have mercy. Never bring a human being, however silly, ignorant, or weak, above all, any little child, to shame and confusion of face. Never by petulance, by suspicion, by ridicule, even by selfish and silly haste, never, above all, by indulging in the devilish pleasure of a sneer, crush what is finest, and rouse up what is coarsest in the heart of any fellow-creature. Westminster Sermons. 1872.

The Divine Hunger and Thirst. December 14.

God grant us to be among "those who really hunger and thirst after righteousness," and who therefore long to know what righteousness is, that they may copy it -- those who long to be freed not merely from the punishment of sin after they die, but from sin itself while they live on earth, and who therefore wish to know what sin is that they may avoid it. Preface to Tauler's Sermons. 1854.

Religion or Godliness? December 15.

This is the especial curse of our day, that religion does not mean, as it used, the service of God -- the being like God and showing forth God's glory. No, religion means nowadays the art of getting to heaven when we die, and saving our own miserable souls, and getting God's wages without doing God's work -- as if that was godliness, as if that was anything but selfishness, as if selfishness was any the better for being everlasting selfishness! Village Sermons. 1849.

Christ's Coming. December 16.

Christ may come to us when we are fierce and prejudiced, with that still small voice -- so sweet and yet so keen, "Understand those who misunderstand thee. Be fair to those who are unfair to thee. Be just and merciful to those whom thou wouldst like to hate. Forgive and thou shalt be forgiven." He comes to us surely, when we are selfish and luxurious, in every sufferer who needs our help, and says, "If you do good to one of these, my brethren, you do it unto Me." Last Sermon. MS. 1874.

God's Nature. December 17.

When will men open their eyes to the plain axiom that nothing is impossible with God, save that He should transgress His own nature by being unjust and unloving? Preface to Tauler. 1854.

Educators of Men. December 18.

There are those who consider -- and I agree with them -- that the education of boys under the age of twelve years ought to be entrusted, as much as possible, to women. Let me ask -- of what period of youth and manhood does it not hold true? I pity the ignorance and conceit of the man who fancies that he has nothing left to learn from cultivated women. I should have thought that the very mission of woman was to be, in the highest sense, the educator of man, from infancy to old age; that that was the work towards which all the God-given capacities of women pointed. Lecture on Thrift. 1869.

The Earthly Body. December 19.

Let us remember that if the body does feel a burden now (as it must at moments), what a happiness it is to have a body at all: how lonely, cold, barren, would it be to be a "disembodied spirit." As St. Paul says, "Not that we desire to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon" -- to have a spiritual, deathless, griefless life instilled into the body. MS. Letter. 1842.

Home at Last. December 20.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown,
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down;
Creep home and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among:
God grant you find one face there
You loved when all was young.

The Water Babies. 1862.

The Bible. December 21.

The hearts and minds of the sick, the poor, the sorrowing, the truly human, all demand a living God who has revealed Himself in living acts; a God who has taught mankind by facts, not left them to discover Him by theories and sentiments; a Judge, a Father, a Saviour, an Inspirer; in a word, their hearts demand the historic truth of the Bible -- of the Old Testament no less than the New. Sermons on Pentateuch. 1863.

Shaking of Heaven and Earth. December 22.

"Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but heaven" (Hebrews xii.26- 29). This is one of the royal texts of Scripture. It declares one of those great laws of the kingdom of God which may fulfil itself once and again at many eras and by many methods; which fulfilled itself most gloriously in the first century after Christ; again in the fifth century; again at the time of the Crusades; and again at the great Reformation in the sixteenth century, -- and is fulfilling itself again at this very day. Westminster Sermons. 1872.

Self-Respect the Voice of God. December 23.

Never hurt any one's self-respect. Never trample on any soul, though it may be lying in the veriest mire; for that last spark of self-respect is as its only hope, its only chance; the last seed of a new and better life; the voice of God which still whispers to it, "You are not what you ought to be, and you are not what you can be. You are still God's child, still an immortal soul. You may rise yet, and fight a good fight yet, and conquer yet, and be a man yet, after the likeness of God who made you, and Christ who died for you." Oh! why crush that voice in any heart? If you do the poor creature is lost, and lies where he or she falls, and never tries to rise again. Good News of God Sermons. 1859.

Christmas Eve. December 24.

We will have no sad forebodings on the eve of the blessed Christmas-tide. He lives, He loves, He reigns; and all is well; for we are His and He is ours. Two Years Ago, Introduction. 1856.

The Miracle of Christmas Night. December 25.

After the crowning miracle of this most blessed night all miracles are possible. The miracle of Christmas night was possible because God's love was absolute, infinite, unconquerable, able to condescend to anything that good might be done. . . . This Christmas night is the one of all the year which sets a physicist on facing the fact of miracle, and which delivers him from the bonds of sense and custom by reminding him of God made Man. Letters and Memories. 1858.

Redemption. December 26.

All things are blessed now, but sin; for all things, excepting sin, are redeemed by the life and death of the Son of God. Blessed are wisdom and courage, joy and health and beauty, love and marriage, childhood and manhood, corn and wine, fruit and flowers, for Christ redeemed them by His life. . . . Blessed is death, and blest the unknown realms where souls await the Resurrection Day, for Christ redeemed them by His death. Blessed are all days, dark as well as bright, for all are His, and He is ours; and all are ours, and we are His for ever. National Sermons. 1848.

Fellow-workers with Christ. December 27.

To abolish the superstition, the misrule, the vice, the misery of this world. That is what Christ will do in the day when He has put all enemies under His feet. That is what Christ has been doing, step by step, ever since that day when first He came to do His Father's will on earth in great humility. Therefore, that is what we must do, each in our place and station, if we be indeed His subjects, fellow-workers with Him in the improvement of the human race, fellow-soldiers with Him in the battle against evil. All Saints' Day Sermons. 1867.

The bright Pathway. December 28.

There is a healthy ferment of mind in which one struggles through chaos and darkness, by means of a few clues and threads of light -- and -- of one great bright pathway, which I find more and more to be the only escape from infinite confusion and aberration, the only explanation of a thousand human mysteries -- I mean the Incarnation of our Lord -- the fact that there really is -- a God-Man!MS. Letter. 1844.

New Worship. December 29.

Blessed, thrice blessed, is it to find that hero-worship is not yet passed away! that the heart of man still beats young and fresh; that the old tales of David and Jonathan, Damon and Pythias, Socrates and Alcibiades, Shakespeare and his nameless friend, of love "passing the love of woman," ennobled by its own humility, deeper than death and mightier than the grave, can still blossom out, if it be but in one heart here and there, to show man still how, sooner or later, "he that loveth knoweth God, for God is love."Miscellanies. 1850.

Links in the Chain. December 30.

The heart will cry out at times, Oh! blissful future! Oh, dreary present! But let us not repine. What is dreary need not be barren. Nothing need be barren to those who view all things in their real light, as links in the great chain of progression both for themselves and for the Universe. To us all Time should seem so full of life: every moment the grave and the father of unnumbered events and designs in heaven and earth, and the mind of our God Himself -- all things moving smoothly and surely in spite of apparent checks and disappointments towards the appointed end. Letters and Memories. 1844.

Past, Present, Future. December 31.

Surely as the years pass on they ought to have made us better, more useful, more worthy. We may have been disappointed in our lofty ideas of what ought to be done, but we may have gained more clear and practical notions of what can be done. We may have lost in enthusiasm, and yet gained in earnestness. We may have lost in sensibility, yet gained in charity, activity, and power. We may be able to do far less, and yet what we do may be far better done. And our very griefs and disappointments -- have they been useless to us? Surely not. We shall have gained instead of lost by them if the Spirit of God has been working in us. Our sorrows will have wrought in us patience, our patience experience, and that experience hope -- hope that He who has led us thus far will lead us farther still, that He who has taught us in former days precious lessons -- not only by sore temptations but most sacred joys -- will teach us in the days to come fresh lessons by temptations, which we shall be more able to endure; and by joys which, though unlike those of old times, are no less sacred, but sent as lessons to our souls by Him from whom all good gifts come. Water of Life Sermons. Out of God's boundless bosom, the fount of life, we came; through selfish, stormy youth, and contrite tears -- just not too late; through manhood, not altogether useless; through slow and chill old age, we return whence we came, to the bosom of God once more -- to go forth again, it may be, with fresh knowledge and fresh powers, to nobler work. Amen. The Air Mothers. 1869.

SAINTS' DAYS, FASTS, & FESTIVALS.

DECEMBER 21.

St. Thomas, Apostle and Martyr. The spirits of just men made perfect, freed from the fetters of the gross animal body, and now somewhere in that boundless universe in which this earth is but a tiny speck, doing God's will as they longed to do it on earth, with clearer light, fuller faith, deeper love, mightier powers of usefulness! Ah, that we were like unto them! All Saints' Day and other Sermons.

DECEMBER 25.

Christmas Day. Thank God, that One was born, at this same time,

Who did our work for us: we'll talk of Him:

We shall go mad with thinking of ourselves --

We'll talk of Him, and of that new-made star,

Which, as He stooped into the Virgin's side,

From off His finger, like a signet-gem,

He dropped in the empyrean for a sign.

But the first tear He shed at this His birth-hour,

When He crept weeping forth to see our woe,

Fled up to Heaven in mist, and hid for ever

Our sins, our works, and that same new-made star. Saint's Tragedy, Act iv. Scene iv. DECEMBER 26.

St. Stephen, the Martyr. These are the holy ones -- the heroes of mankind, the elect, the aristocracy of grace. They are those who carry the palm branch of triumph, who have come out of great tribulation, who have dared and fought and suffered for God and truth and right; who have resisted unto blood, striving against sin. What should easy-going folk like you and me do but place ourselves with all humility, if but for an hour, where we can look afar off upon our betters, and see what they are like and what they do. All Saints' Day and other Sermons. DECEMBER 27.

St. John, Apostle and Evangelist. And what do they do, these blessed beings? They longed for, toiled for, it may be died for, the true, the beautiful, and the good; they entered while on earth into the mystery and glory of self-sacrifice, and now they find their bliss in gazing on the one perfect and eternal sacrifice, and rejoicing in the thought that it is the cause and ground of the whole universe, even the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. All Saints' Day and other Sermons. DECEMBER 28

Holy Innocents' Day. Christ comes to us in many ways. But most surely does Christ come to us, and often most happily, and most clearly does He speak to us -- in the face of a little child, fresh out of heaven. Ah, let us take heed that we despise not one of these little ones, lest we despise our Lord Himself. For as often as we enter into communion with little children, so often does Christ come to us. So often, as in Judaea of old, does He take a little child and set him in the midst of us, that from its simplicity, docility, and trust -- the restless, the mutinous, and the ambitious may learn the things which belong to their peace -- so often does He say to us, "Except ye be changed and become as this little child, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me. For I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."MS. Last Sermon,

Westminster Abbey, Nov. 30, 1874.

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Footnotes:

{3} The paper edition of this book has blank pages where the owner can write diary notes, etc. This is why the page numbers in the eText often miss out numbers. -- DP. {97} Lines written under a pen and ink drawing of a stormy shoreless sea, with two human beings lashed to a cross floating on the crest of the waves.

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