Maria Lynch's Triumph

SHE was the strangest character in town. In fact, she came nearer being two characters than any woman I ever knew.

Maria Lynch in the morning was no more like Maria Lynch in the afternoon than Saturday night was like Sunday. In the morning hours she had no hesitancy about coming down-town in the most frowsy of gowns and with her hair in a mop that defied any man's ingenuity in so ving the prob em of how it was kept up at all.

But in the afternoon! Look at her then. She had good clothes, and if ever a woman in that town knew how to wear them it was Maria. Undoubtedly she was handsome. Her father was a good-for-nothing shoemaker, who got gloriously drunk at the end of one working week, and remained so till the beginning of the next. He was such a particularly disreputable old fellow that no one wondered his daughter should have gotten to be like him at least half the time. When she went to church she went alone, and when she tried to enjoy any social entertainment no one was there to help make things pleasant for her. And she always showed t at she missed these things.

Finally Jim Miller, who was head salesman in Downey's big double store, just cut loose from all restraint and went to the fair with Ma ia. It cost Jim his best girl; but he must have counted on that and been willing to make the change. And Maria was happy.

But she didn't dress up in the morning any more than she used to do. She came down town for the daily marketing just as she always ha l done, and if Jim or any one else had influence to prevail upon her to robe herself in anything more seemly no one ever used that power. She bought goods in Downey's store, and sometimes of Jim, sometimes of the other clerks. She wasn't a bit spoony, though he was inclined to be, even in public. He used to tell her he was madly in love with her and would do anything in the world for her. She believed enough of it at least to go with him wherever he wanted to go. But the office of the marriage license c'erk d'd not seem to be one of these places.

They brought the whole thing to a test finally. It was at the Christmas holidays an l all the town seemed in good humor. The Methodists had arranged to have an immense tree in their house of worship and all the Sunday school chi dren were to have a treat. Grace was one of the teachers, and was chief of the committee to receive people as they arrived and take them to seats.

We had all been watching for this night for a long time. We didn't think Jim would dare to bring Maria right in here where all his folks were members and where Grace was just about supreme. But he did. The place was filling up very fast and all the ushers were as busy as bees, when Grace to k a laughing couple to a choice place she had saved for them, and then turned back all pretty and happy and excited—and there, right in the door, stood Jim with Maria Lynch on his arm. Grace was surprised into ooking first at one of them and then at the other without saying a word. Then she put up both hands to her face for about a second and turned partly around. When she took her hands down she seemed to be all right, and to know just what she wanted to do. But it wasn't to escort them to their seats. It was to walk straight down the aisle, without one sign to them, and to leave them standing there. But that wouldn't do. Others were coming all the time, and Jim knew if he stood there just a moment he had her conquered. So he looked all around the room at the decorations, and said how handsome they were to Maria, for all the world as if he wanted to stop and stand there anyway. Grace knew she must go and get them, but she would not be beaten by that shoemaker's girl—that slouch. She came back smiling, and bowing just as sweet as you please, and said:

"There's just one seat for you here, Mr. Miller. Come along."

Maybe it wasn't a very Christian spirit, and that on Christmas Eve, but it was human nature. She could crush the girl who had taken her lover away, and no wonder she did it. But Jim was game, too. He was in for it, but he couldn't be driven away by anything like that. So he said, real gentle and kind:

"But it will take two seats for us, Miss Fallen."

"Oh," said Grace; "I didn't see anybody with you."

It cut Maria to the quick. But Jim, who knew what to expect if she did take it up, kept her still by moving forward without any usher at all, and Grace fell behind and took the next party to their seats.

Every one had heard it, and poor Maria sat there all through the evening, and knew that people were looking at her and chuckling. She knew lots of them were wishing she had said something to Grace, and maybe they would try to throw them together as the meeting broke up, just to see the fun when two tongues were loosened. That was the most mortifying thing in all the incident. People thought she didn't care.

It was over at last, and then Jim went out just as straight and as proud as if he had had rich Grace Fallen on his arm. And that one night and his treatment of the girl there, where he was strong and she was pitiably weak, did more for him in her eyes and her heart than all the rest of his attentions. It really looked as if Jim cared for her. He went on going with her and people kept on talking about it, as if it was any of their business, till nearly spring. And then one night the climax came.

It was Sunday evening, and all the people who were church-goers were there and were just about ready to sing the last hymn when there was an alarm of fire. The first man to run out of the church door bumped up square against Jim Miller, and the two fell over each other all the way down the steps. Each recognized the other, and both asked where the fire was. No one seemed to know yet, but after a minute all the town could see that it was Downey's big store. The whole inside was full of flames long before Jim or any one else could get there, and no one dared to try and save anything. It burned as if there was oil and turpentine on every square yard of floor in the great building. Poor old man Downey cried like a child and begged them to get in and save the books and cash. For there was no bank in the town at the time and all the merchants kept their own money. But no one could go in, so it had to burn.

After it was all over, and when folks would go to old man Downey and ask him how much he had lost, he would say, "I don't know. Go ask Jim. He kept accounts of everything. I left it all to him. Even Grace, my niece, has lost all she had in the world, for I had most of it in money here in the store, having just sold her farms; and the rest of it was invested in goods, and my notes to her are all burned up in the fire."

He kept getting worse all the time, and finally he had to go to bed, and he was sick for a long time.

Jim Miller said he was going away. He couldn't get as good a situation in town as he had had, and he couldn't take a poorer one. Everybody in town was sorry to see him go, for he had lots of friends, but there didn't seem anything wrong in his going. Finally they began to wonder why he didn't go. He set the time over and over again, and every time he would say something came up that kept him from starting. All at once old man Lynch came up with a reason. Jim had asked Maria to go with him, and she wouldn't go.

But right on the heels of this story, Jim was arrested.

There was an awful storm one night. No such a hurricane had ever gone throug hthat country. While it was clouding up, and before any one thought of its being much of a blow, Jim went down to the Lynch cottage. It was very early, but he wasn't working now, so he could go calling when he liked. Several people saw him go there and several others saw him go away. And right then, when the storm was coming up at its worst we all saw Maria run from her house and go down the street toward Downey's house, where Grace Fallen lived. We crouched along the stone wall in front of Downey's house, and saw Maria try twice to go to the door, but both times the whirlwind threw her to the ground. We tried to get to her, but that seemed impossible for awhile, and then the wind went down for a moment, and the rain fell like a very deluge. In that torrent Maria Lynch got up and walked to the door and knocked, and Grace Fallen came and opened it for her. By this time it was getting very dark, but it was light enough to see that Grace just screamed in hate when she saw Maria, and slammed the door in her face.

Slammed the door in her face on such a night as that! Why, the storm was a perfect terror. It almost swept poor Maria away in the flood as she stood there. Then we got up and went to her and found she was crying as if her heart would break. She was not frightened or angry. She was just grieving. We opened the door and pushed her inside. Every man's house is public property once in a while. There the two girls stood facing each other.

"Grace," said Maria, "I came to tell you that your money is not burned up at all."

"Ch! oh! Where is it?" said Grace. She was as angry as a person could well be, and she hated Maria; but a rich girl's money lies pretty close to her heart. "Where is it?" she said. And she almost put her hands on Maria's wet arms.

But before the answer could come Jim Miller burst open the door and leaped into the room. He was white as a sheet and all panting from a hard run. He stopped with his eyes fairly blazing, and looked from one of the girls to the other. At the start neither of them said a word, and then Maria was the first to break down. She put both of her drenched arms around his drenched neck, and laid her head down on his shoulder, and cried as if there was something terrible the matter. He stood it for a moment, and then he put her away and turned to Grace, and I'll be shot if she didn't fall right into his arms.

That settled Maria. She quit crying on the instant. She stood up straight and as handsome as any woman in that town ever stood—handsomer by far than she would have been if her clothes had not been so wet—and she told Grace to ask Jim where her money was. He would have hit her when she said that if it hadn't been for the rest of us. Old man Downey came into the room and he wanted to know what that was about Grace's money.

"Jim has it," said Maria.

Jim broke from Grace and ran from the room. "He set the store on fire himself and then ran to the church," said Maria to the old man. "He knew if he did that no one would every suspicion him. He has all of your money and all of Grace's tied up in envelopes, just as you left them the night before the fire. He is going to Mexico, and he has been coaxing me to go with him all winter. But"— and here she blushed and began crying again—"but he didn't want to marry me. And when nothing else would move me, and knowing how I hated Grace for insulting me in the church that night, he told me to-day that he had all of Grace's money, and I could have the satisfaction of spending it on myself any way I wanted to, if I would only go with him. And that frightened me so that as soon as he left I came here to tell you about it so you can stop him. He is going on the nine o'clock train, and he has it all strapped on him in a belt."

"JIM HAS THE MONEY."

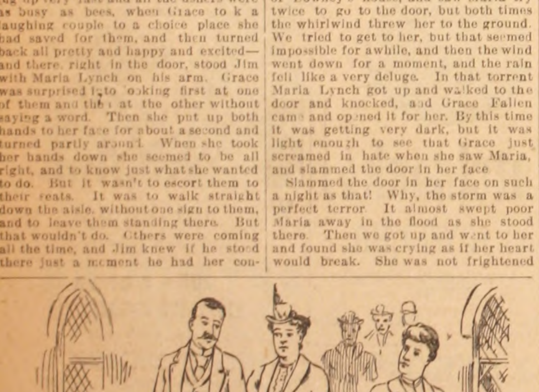
"Why, it's past nine o'clock now," said the old man.

We all ran from the house and headed for the depot. There stood Jim, waiting for the train. The storm had washed out the track, and no regular time could be made for hours after that. When he saw us Jim jumped across the road and ran for the woods. But the whole town was after him and he had to give up. At last he tried to take the belt off and throw it away, but he couldn't even do that, and he was taken with evidence enough to send him to the penitentiary for ten years.

He is there now, and will be for more than a year yet. And do you know that in all that time Maria Lynch has dressed herself up in the morning just the same as in the afternoon, and has been the straightest woman in that town? She softened to Jim as soon as he was in trouble and has stood by him all the time he has been locked up. When he gets out they'll be married, for Jim don't feel any too good for her now, and she loves him so well that she will forgive anything he ever did in his life.

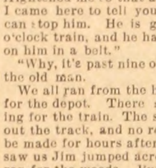
The only trouble was that Jim thought she would care more for her revenge than she would for her honor. He was mistaken. She was so rigid in what she thought the right thing to do that she would have sent him to prison or gone herself rather than see even the girl she hated robbed of a dollar.

And when she does get married there isn't a man nor a woman in that town but will wish her a Godspeed clear from the bottom of their hearts.



"IT WILL TAKE TWO SEATS FOR US.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.



ALL robed in ethereal whiteness
Glides in the first morn of the year,
And round it a wonderful brightness
Is floating in token of cheer.
The glad and the sorrowful-hearted
Alike look for blessings to be,
Ere it join the long ages departed,
Submerged in eternity's sea.

Already the year which has left us
Seems old as the Pyramids are,
It taught, or enriched, or bereft us,
Yet now hath receded as far,
As wholly hath lessened and faded
From vision, and melted from clasp,
As the years which Rome's purple o'er-shaded,
When the world was a toy in her grasp.

Even yesterday past groweth hoary,
Allied to traditions of eld,
Partaking the gloom and the glory
The cycles uncounted have held.
And the new year, with breathless to-morrows,
With raptures and yearnings and sighs,
With passionate blisses and sorrows,
Has Eden's lost youth in our eyes.

Not new, like the coin golden glinting,
Completed, that falls from the mint;
Nor new, like the broidery hinting
Of splendor in every fresh tint;
But new, like the child onward gazing
At life all before it unknown,
Like the prince when the vassals are raising
Their banners in love round his throne.

No word of its words hath been spoken,
No deed of its deeds hath been done;
Nor the bread of its benisons broken,
Nor its battles in bravery won.
Still tarry its songs for the singers,
Still slumber its manifold looms;
Its bells are yet waiting the ringers,
And vacant are standing its tombs.

Though it bear for us wisdom or folly,
In silence it utters no sign;
Through our garlands of cedar and holly
There rustles no message divine,
Save this, that with loyal endeavor,
And heart of all enmity clear,
Who welcomes it gayly may ever
Look forth on a Happy New Year.

Ben Franklin's Heirs.

The fight of the heirs of Ben Franklin for the $100,000 trust fund held by the city of Philadelphia has commenced. The $5,000 left by Franklin in 1790 now amounts to the above sum, and the city wishes to appropriate $75,000 of it to increase the normal school facilities. The city claims that the court had no jurisdiction in the matter, as it had been adjudicated a century ago. A decision will be made soon.

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

AN ELOQUENT DISCOURSE BY THE BROOKLYN DIVINE.

A Magnificent Sermon on the Temptations to Which Young Men Are Subjected—An Exhortation to Hold Fast to the Bible's Truths.

Talmage to Young Men.

Dr. Talmage's text was Proverbs i, 17, "Surely, in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."

Early in the morning I went out with a fowler to catch wild pigeons. We hastened through the mountain gorge and into the forest. We spread out the net, and covered up the edges of it as well as we could. We arranged the call bird, its feet fast and its wings flapping, in invitation to all fowls of Heaven to settle down there. We retired into a booth of branches and leaves and waited. After awhile, looking out of the door of the booth, we saw a flock of birds in the sky. They came nearer and nearer, and after awhile were about to swoop into the net, when suddenly they darted away. Again we waited. After a while we saw another flock of birds. They came nearer and nearer until just at the moment when they were about to swoop they darted away.

The fowler was very much disappointed as well as myself. We said to each other, "What is the matter?" and "Why were not these birds caught?" We went out and examined the net and by a flutter of a branch of a tree part of the net had been conspicuously exposed, and the birds coming very near had seen their peril and darted away. When I saw that I said to the old fowler, "That reminds me of a passage of Scripture: 'Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.'" Now the net in my text stands for temptation.

The call bird of sin tempts men on from point to point and from branch to branch until they are about to drop into the net. If a man finds out in time that it is the temptation of the devil, or that evil men are tempting to capture his soul for time and for eternity, the man steps back. He says, "I am not to be caught in that way; I see what you are about; surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird."

There are two classes of temptations—the superficial and the subterraneous—those above ground, those under ground. If a man could see sin as it is, he would no more embrace it than he would embrace a leper. Sin is a daughter of hell, yet she is garlanded and robed and trinketed. Her voice is a warble. Her cheek is the setting sun. Her forehead is an aurora. She says to men: "Come, walk this path with me. It is thymed and primrosed, and the air is bewitched with the odors of the hanging gardens of Heaven. The rivers are rivers of wine, and all you have to do is to drink them up in chalices that sparkle with diamond and amethyst and chrysoprasus. See! It is all bloom and roseate cloud and Heaven."

Oh, my friends, if for one moment the choiring of all these concerted voices of sin could be hushed, we should see the orchestra of the pit with hot breath blowing through a fiery flute, and the skeleton arms on drums of thunder and darkness beating the chorus, "The end thereof is death."

I want to point out the insidious temptations that are assailing more especially our young men. The only kind of nature comparatively free from temptation, so far as I can judge, is the cold, hard, stingy, mean temperament. What would Satan do with such a man if he got him? Satan is not anxious to get a man who after awhile may dispute with him the realm of everlasting meanness.

It is the generous young man, the ardent young man, the warm hearted young man, the social young man that is in especial peril. A pirate goes out on the sea, and one bright morning he puts the glass to his eye and looks off, and sees an empty vessel floating from port to port. He says, "Never mind; that's no prize for us." But the same morning he puts the glass to his eye, and he sees a vessel coming from Australia laden with gold, or a vessel from the Indies laden with spices. He says, "That's our prize: bear down on it!" Across that unfortunate ship the grappling hooks are thrown. The crew are blindfolded and are compelled to walk the plank.

It is not the empty vessel, but the laden merchantman that is the temptation of the pirate. And a young man empty of head, empty of heart, empty of life—you want no Young Men's Christian Association to keep him safe; he is safe. He will not gamble unless it is with somebody else's stakes. He will not break the Sabbath unless somebody else pays the horse hire. He will not drink unless some one else treats him. He will hang around the bar hour after hour waiting for some generous young man to come in. The generous young man comes in and accosts him and says, "Well, will you have a drink with me to-day?" The man, as though it were a sudden thing for him, says, "Well—well, if you insist on it, I will—I will."

Too mean to go to perdition unless somebody else pays his expenses? For such young men we will not fight. We would no more contend for them than Tartary and Ethiopia would fight as to who should have the great Sahara desert; but for those young men who are buoyant and enthusiastic, those who are determined to do something for time and eternity—for them we will fight, and we now declare everlasting war against all the influences that assail them, and we ask all good men and philanthropists to wheel into line, and all the armies of Heaven to bear down upon the foe, and we pray Almighty God that with the thunderbolts of His wrath He will strike down and consume all these influences that are attempting to destroy the young men for whom Christ died.

The first class of temptations that assaults a young man is led on by the skeptic. He will not admit that he is an infidel or an atheist. Oh, no! he is a "free thinker; he is one of your "liberal" men; he is free and easy in religion. Oh, how liberal he is; he is so "liberal" that he will give away his Bible; he is so "liberal" that he will give away the throne of eternal justice; he is so "liberal" that he would be willing to give God out of the universe; he is so "liberal" that he would give up his own soul and the souls of all his friends. Now what more could you ask in the way of liberality? The victim of this skeptic has probably just come from the country. Through the intervention of friends he has been placed in a shop.

On Saturday the skeptic says to him, "Well, what are you going to do to-morrow?" He says, "I am going to church." "Is it possible?" says the skeptic. "Well, I used to do those things; I was brought up, I suppose, as you were, in a religious family, and I believed all those things, but I got over it; the fact is, since I came to town I have read a great deal, and I have found that there are a great many things in the Bible that are ridiculous. Now, for instance, all that about the serpent being cursed to crawl in the Garden of Eden because it had tempted our first parents; why, you see how absurd it is; you can tell from the very organization of the serpent that it had to crawl; it crawled before it was cursed just as well as it crawled afterward; you can tell from its organization that it crawled. Then all that story about the whale swallowing Jonah, or Jonah swallowing the whale, which was it? It don't make any difference, the thing is absurd; it is ridiculous to suppose that a man could have gone down through the jaws of a sea monster and yet kept his life; why, his respiration would have been hindered; he would have been digested; the gastric juice would have dissolved the fibrine and coagulated albumen, and Jonah would have been changed from prophet into chyle. Then all that story about the miraculous conception—why, it is perfectly disgraceful. Oh, sir! I believe in the light of nature. This is the Nineteenth century. Progress, sir; progress. I don't blame you, but after you have been in town as long as I have you will think just as I do."

Thousands of young men are going down under that process day by day, and there is only here and there a young man who can endure this artillery of scorn. They are giving up their Bibles. The light of nature! They have the light of nature in China; they have it in Hindostan; they have it in Ceylon. Flowers there, stars there, waters there, winds there, but no civilization, no homes, no happiness. Lancets to cut and juggernauts to fall under and hooks to swing on, but no happiness.

Young man, hold on to your Bible. It is the best book you ever owned. It will tell you how to dress, how to bargain, how to walk, how to act, how to live, how to die. Glorious Bible! Whether on parchment or paper, in octavo or duodecimo, on the center table of the drawing-room or in the counting room of the banker. Glorious Bible! Light to our feet and lamp to our path. Hold on to it!

The second class of insidious temptations that comes upon our young men is led on by the dishonest employer. Every commercial establishment is a school. In nine cases out of ten the principles of the employer become the principles of the employee. I ask the older merchants to bear me out in these statements. If, when you were just starting in life—in commercial life—you were told that honesty was not marketable; that, though you might sell all the goods in the shop, you must not sell your conscience; that, while you were to exercise all industry and tact, you were not to sell your conscience; if you were taught that gains gotten by sin were combustible, and at the moment of ignition would be blown on by the breath of God until all the splendid estate would vanish into white ashes scattered in the whirlwind, then that instruction has been to you a precaution and a help ever since.

There are hundreds of commercial establishments in our great cities which are educating a class of young men who will be the honor of the land, and there are other establishments which are educating young men to be nothing but sharpers. What chance is there for a young man who was taught in an establishment that it is right to lie, if it is smart, and that a French label is all that is necessary to make a thing French, and that you ought always to be honest when it pays, and that it is wrong to steal unless you do it well?

Suppose, now, a young man just starting in life, enters a place of that kind where there are ten young men, all drilled in the infamous practices of the establishment. He is ready to be taught. The young man has no theory of commercial ethics. Where is he to get his theory? He will get the theory from his employers. One day he pushes his wit a little beyond what the establishment demands of him, and he fleeces a customer until the clerk is on the verge of being seized by the law. What is done in the establishment? He is not arraigned. The head of the establishment says to him, "Now, be careful; be careful, young man, you might be caught; but really that was splendidly done; you will get along in the world, I warrant you." Then that young man goes up until he becomes head clerk. He has found there is a premium on iniquity.

One morning the employer comes to the establishment. He goes into his counting room and throws up his hands and shouts, "Why, the safe has been robbed!" What is the matter? Nothing; only the clerk who has been practicing a good while on customers is practicing a little on the employer. No new principle introduced into that establishment. It is a poor rule that will not work both ways. You must never steal unless you can do it well. He did it well. I am not taking an abstraction; I am taking a terrible and a crushing fact.

Now here is a young man. Look at him to-day. Look at him five years from now, after he has been under trial in such an establishment. Here he stands in the shop to-day, his cheeks ruddy with the breath of the hills. He unrolls the goods on the counter in gentlemanly style. He commends them to the purchaser. He points out all the good points in the fabric. He effects the sale. The goods are wrapped up, and he dismisses the customer with a cheerful "good morning," and the country merchant departs so impressed with the straightforwardness of the young man that he will come again and again, every spring and every autumn, unless interfered with.

The young man has been now in that establishment five years. He unrolls the goods on the counter. He says to the customer, "Now those are the best goods we have in our establishment." They have better on the next shelf. He says, "We are selling these goods less than cost." They are making 20 per cent. He says "There is nothing like them in all the city." There are fifty shops that want to sell the same thing. He says, "Now, that is a durable article; it will wash." Yes, it will wash out.

The sale is made, the goods are wrapped up, the country merchant goes off feeling that he has an equivalent for his money, and the sharp clerk goes into the private room of the counting house, and he says, "Well I got rid of those goods at last. I really thought we never would sell them. I told him we were selling them less than cost, and he thought he was getting a good bargain. Got rid of them at last." And the head of the firm says, "That's well done, splendidly done!" Meanwhile God has recorded eight lies—four lies against the young man, four lies against his employer, for I undertake to say that the employer is responsible for all the iniquities of his clerks, and all the iniquities of those who are clerks of these clerks, down to the tenth generation, if those employers inculcated iniquitous and damning principles.

I stand before young men this morning who are under this pressure. I say, come out of it. "Oh!" you say, "I can't: I have my widowed mother to support, and if a man loses a situation now he can't get another one." I say, come out of it. Go home to your mother and say to her, "Mother, I can't stay in that shop and be upright; what shall I do?" and if she is worthy of you she will say, "Come out of it, my son—we will just throw ourselves on Him who has promised to be the God of the widow and the fatherless; He will take care of us." And I tell you no young man ever permanently suffered by such a course of conduct.

A man said to his employer, "I can't wash the wagon on Sunday morning; I am willing to wash it on Saturday afternoon, but, sir, you will please excuse me, I can't wash the wagon on Sunday morning." His employer said, "You must wash it; my carriage comes in every Saturday night, and you have got to wash it on Sunday morning." "I can't do it," the man said. They parted. The Lord looked after him. He is worth to-day a hundred fold more than his employer ever was or ever will be, and he saved his soul. Young men, it is safe to do right. There are young men in this house to-day who, under this storm of temptation, are striking deeper and deeper their roots and spreading out broader their branches. They are Daniels in Babylon, they are Josephs in the Egyptian court, they are Pauls amid the wild beasts of Ephesus. I preach to encourage them. Lay hold of God and be faithful.

There is a mistake we make about young men. We put them in two classes; the one class is moral, the other is dissolute. The moral are safe. The dissolute cannot be reclaimed. I deny both propositions. The moral are not safe unless they have laid hold of God, and the dissolute may be reclaimed. I suppose there are self righteous men in this house who feel no need of God, and will not seek after Him, and they will go out in the world, and they will be tempted, and they will be flung down by misfortune, and they will go down, down, down, until some night you will see them going home hooting, raving, shouting blasphemy—going home to their mother, going home to their sister, going home to the young companion to whom, only a little while ago, in the presence of a brilliant assemblage, flashing lights and orange blossoms, and censers swinging in the air, they promised fidelity and purity, and kindness perpetual. As that man reaches the door, she will open it, not with an outcry, but she will stagger back from the door as he comes in, and in her look there will be the prophecy of woes that are coming, want that will shiver in need of fire, hunger that will cry in vain for bread, cruelties that will not leave the heart when they have crushed it, but pinch it again and stab it again, until some night she will open the door of the place where her companion was ruined, and she will fling out her arm from under her ragged shawl and say, with almost omnipotent eloquence: "Give me back my husband! Give me back my protector! Give me back my all! Him the kind heart and gentle words and the manly brow—give him back to me!" And then the wretches, obese and filthy, will push back their matted locks and they will say: "Put her out! Put her out!" Oh! self righteous man, without God you are in peril. Seek after Him to-day. Amid the ten thousand temptations of life there is no safety for a man without God.

Come home, young man, to your father's God. Come home, young man, to your mother's God. Oh! I wish that all the batteries of the Gospel could to-day be unlimbered against all those influences which are taking down so many of our young men. I would like to blow a trumpet of warning, and recruit until this whole audience would march out on a crusade against the evils of society. But let none of us be disheartened.

Oh, Christian workers, my heart is high with hope. The dark horizon is blooming into the morning of which prophets spoke, and of which poets have dreamed, and of which painters have sketched. The world's bridal hour advances. The mountains will kiss the morning radiant and effulgent, and all the waves of the sea will become the crystal keys of a great organ, on which the fingers of everlasting joy shall play the grand march of a world redeemed. Instead of the thorn there shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar there shall come up the myrtle tree, and the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the wood shall clap their hands!

The Mississippi.

We venture to suggest that even if the project of regulating the flow of the Mississippi and its tributaries is possible to modern engineering—and the question is merely one of time, men and money—the strain on the national finances would be beyond all reason, and would favor a ring with opportunities and temptations of unprecedented magnificence. Let any one who doubts spend an hour in studying the habits of the tiniest brooklet, which are in miniature the habits of the Mississippi. Call the great river a mile wide between levees, and the brook a foot wide from bank to bank. A confining levee, or embankment, ten feet high along the river would be represented proportionately in the case of the brook by one less than half an inch high. How much, think you, would the brook be restrained by such a barrier after a sudden thunder shower in the summer or a prolonged rain? The United States Government can do it, of course! It can do anything! and the mere building of a continuous quadruple chain of mountains along the great rivers may be effected if the nation sets about it. Then there is that other pleasant little project which contemplates storage reservoirs, wherein the surplus waters of early spring shall be retained until they are wanted during the drought of summer! If the redoubtable Col. Sellers had thought of the Mississippi he need never have wasted his time in providing eye-water at a dollar a bottle for the 400,000,000 of weak-eyed Asiatics. The whole country is interested in having the river made as useful and as harmless as possible, but the way to do this is to learn the habits of the river, and adapt ourselves and our necessities to its convenience. No strait-jacket can be made that will restrain this giant when he puts forth his strength.
—*The Continent.*