MY VALENTINE.

Oh, yes, I have chosen my valentine—
I have chosen forever and aye;
And now, at the feet of my lady-love,
I hasten my gifts to lay.

I have been afar, 'tho the ends of the earth,
For a sapphire of glorious blue;
And down to the depths of the ocean cave
For a pearl of tender hue.

The rare, red gold from the darkling mine,
That never had seen the light,
I have laid by the side of my priceless store,
To gladden my lady's sight.

And, lest she should wonder, my peerless queen,
The meaning of these I bring,
I have whispered the gem from the mermaid's home,
My story of love to sing.

To tell how the gold, the rare, red gold,
That knoweth no sad decay,
Is the type of a love that never shall change,
But lasteth forever and aye.

The fountain of hope from the ends of the earth
Shall speak to my darling for me,
Of a home one day in a cloudless land,
Where partings never shall be.

You ask where I hasten to meet my love
And what is her rank and fame?
My boyhood's home is the trysting-place,
And mother my lady's name.

MANGOLDS' VALENTINE

"There's nothing against the Mangolds as I know of," the jolly storekeeper at the Prairie Rock settlement remarked, "but it's plain they don't amount to much."

"That's so," spoke up one of the settlers who were warming themselves at the stove on an early February evening. "They make the two little fellows do all the work. I've never seen the father anywhere's."

"Neither have I," said the storekeeper. "They came here in September; the first we see of 'em was noticing the whitetopped camper's wagon standing on the section of government land near the cabin that the Biagg boys left when they found the land wasn't first-class. The two boys have been here for a few things and always paid for what little they got; but they wouldn't talk much. I guess they're pretty hard up, and I've thought I'd go over and see 'em, but I never got to it."

The other men agreed with this history of the family, and remarked that they, too, had thought of going to see the family, but had never carried out their purpose.

One had passed the cabin about a month before; he had seen a woman through the window, but nothing more was known of them. They were evidently the one family of delinquents in a prosperous community of settlers.

"Nice, open winter," remarked Squire Gillett, as they all rose to go.

"Yes," said the storekeeper. "Plows'll be going next week, though the nights are kind of chilly yet."

"If the Mangolds expect to hold government land, they must get some plowing done right off."

"Correct. Too bad the old man puts it all on those two boys."

Buttoning up their heavy coats, the settlers mounted their ponies, and rode homeward together.

"There's the two boys now," remarked Squire Gillett, when they had ridden two miles or more across the brown prairie. Looking off to the west, they saw two small boys mounted on large, rawboned work-horses, their outlines distinct against the sunset sky.

The two boys were jogging along slowly and in silence. Their slender forms seemed oddly in contrast with the size of the horses they were riding. They shivered in the raw evening air. Heavy clouds were coming up in great black masses from the northeast.

"We must hurry, Joe," said one of the boys, "or we'll get wet."

"I suppose so, for our coats aren't quite waterproof," said the other.

"Say, Clive," Joe went on, after a moment's silence, "don't you think it's been a pretty lonesome winter?"

Joe nodded three or four times, rather ruefully.

"I shall be glad enough when spring comes," he continued, "for then papa can get out of doors and see folks."

"He's pretty sick, don't you think?"

"Yes, Joe, but mamma says he's feeling better, and if we're brave, strong boys, he'll get well again."

"But the plowing? Can we do it all?"

"Do it? We've got to do it, and there are only a few days left before the time will be up, and if we don't have it done we shall lose the claim. It's too bad the harness broke this afternoon, but if the storekeeper has some straps, we'll be all right."

The horses had started into a gallop, and the boys bobbed awkwardly in their seats. Over the swells, down the grassy slopes they went, and then, with a still faster pace, whirled down another declivity, and crashed through the dead sunflower stalks and tumbleweeds that covered the bottom of the slough.

They had gone but a few yards here when the horses suddenly stopped, and sent the young riders sliding forward to the animals' shoulders and manes.

The object which had stopped them was a large and dilapidated "prairie schooner," which stood at the side of the trail. The horses that had been attached to it browsed upon the dead weeds.

A camp-fire had been started beside the wagon, and near it, his hands holding his head and his elbows on his knees, was a flannel-shirted and unkempt man.

He did not look up until the boys called to him, and then he raised a worn, anxious, hopeless face.

"Anything the matter?" Joe asked.

"Yes, something's the matter. It's the little one." He motioned toward the wagon.

"Sick?" asked Joe.

"Yes, and maybe dying. I've come for days from the West, calculating to take the child home to the old folks in Missouri, but the little codger couldn't stand the journey."

The boys stopped to ground, and by the light of the fire approached the back part of the wagon. They drew aside the cover and let the firelight into the interior.

A child, hardly more than a baby, was moaning on the bed of straw within.

"Can't we help you?" asked Joe, anxiously.

"I don't know. I've tried to find a doctor, but I don't seem to make out. Maybe the folks are afraid of me. Anyhow, they don't seem to want me around, and now I've clean lost my way."

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said Joe. "We'll take you home. Papa can doctor people."

"But the harness, Joe?" said Clive.

"That's so; I forgot it. Well, I'll tell you: You drive home with the man, and I'll go to the store. I aint afraid."

In a few minutes the emigrant was on the road toward the Mangold cabin with Clive, while Joe, his courage just a little weakened by the appearance of the still darkening sky, was riding rapidly in the other direction.

"My goodness, who's this!" exclaimed the storekeeper, as he was putting up the blinds of the lonely prairie store for the night. He could hardly believe his eyes when the young rider presented himself.

"And you've come all this alone?" he said, when he had heard Joe's story. "Well, my boy, you must be a good one, Look here! I'm going home with you."

He put on his overcoat, and wrapped a shawl about the slender boy's shoulders.

"Come," he said, picking up a bundle which Joe thought was certainly too large to contain nothing more than the piece of harness, "let's go."

Together they mounted the horse, and through the falling rain the two rode on mile after mile, the steady swish of the horse's feet through the dead grasses being the only sound to break the stillness of the night.

At last the faint light in the cabin of the Mangolds shone across the plain, and a few moments afterward the storekeeper and the boy had entered the house.

"I tell you what," said the storekeeper the next evening, when a group of settlers had again gathered about his fire, "it wasn't a pleasant sight. There was the baby moaning and suffering, while the little woman was trying to comfort it. She in the other corner was the gold himself."

"The old man, eh?" said the Squire.

"He's sick, boys, pretty sick. He's been a kind of doctor in the East, but was ordered out here for his health. He hasn't been able to go about any since he came, and his brave little wife and the two boys have looked after everything."

"That's it, eh?"

"Yes. And besides that, out of all of us they were the ones to take care of the camper. The poor fellow was about discouraged, and it was a godsend to him that the boys came across him, for the baby'd surely died right there in the ravine.

"Before'n that, boys, I found out that the plowing that has to be done on the claim to hold it from the Government ain't near finished. Those children have been trying to do it, and they've got only a few acres plowed. The times expires on the fifteenth of the month,—that's day after to-morrow,—and the claim's likely to be jumped by some outsider."

"I know two fellows who've got their eyes on it," said the Squire. "They've been wanting it for some time, and are going to make a break whenever they can. They're sharp, and I think they've got wind somehow that the railroad's going to strike through that quarter section."

"It'll be tough on the Mangolds to lose their claim," slowly droned out a lank herder, who was occupying the top of a sugar-barrel; "but then they don't amount to much in the settlement, and the Hay boys being hustlers——"

He got no farther. The look that the storekeeper gave him quite upset him, and he relapsed into silence.

Then a very important conference was held between the storekeeper and the other settlers; and after it the party separated with smiling faces.

The rain had cleared the atmosphere, and next morning the sky gleamed in such blue splendor as only prairie skies can know. The air was full of the softness and warmth of an early spring morning in Southern Kansas.

At an early hour there were seen here and there wagons wending their way along the prairie. In each wagon was a plow or a harrow, and in some of them were heaps of corn and other provisions.

Clive and Joe looked out of the Mangold cabin, and noticed that the horses' heads were all facing them.

"Let's hurry and hitch up," said Joe, "and get to plowing. All the folks are coming by here, and we ought to be at work."

They ran out and began harnessing the horses to the plow, the stranger emigrant looking on dolefully.

It was the storekeeper, with a grin on his face.

"All you have to do is to-day," he went on, "is to boss. We'll do the work. Now, say, whereabouts you want your forty acres plowed?"

Joe, bewildered, looked around upon the gathering teams, and pointed to a tract around which the boys had made several straggling furrows.

"All right. Now, fellows, hurry up!" shouted the storekeeper.

There was a great rattling of chains and much laughter, as team after team went into position to the corner of the field, presently to send a long chocolate ribbon of sod rolling after as it took its way around the great square piece of prairie.

"Twenty-four of them," said Mrs. Mangold, counting, with extended finger, her worn face lighting up with astonishment. The strange visitation, and the pile of provisions brought by the settlers, had almost overwhelmed her.

Following the plows were harrows; and the land rapidly took on the appearance of a field long tilled. The sun was half-way across the sky, when all stopped at a signal from the storekeeper.

"Boys," he said, when the men had gathered around, "now let's eat dinner, and then we'll finish. But while we're finishing how would it do for some one to go to the village and bring out a certificate of entry on the claim? That'll make it all sure. By that time he will be able to prove that the required plowing is done, you see."

The proposition was received with a shout of approval.

"I'll go," said the lank herder, who had been completely converted to the Mangold side.

So he had the fastest pony in the neighborhood he was allowed to take the trip.

Just before the sun reached the horizon, the square of prairie sod had been blotted out.

The party gathered around the cabin in the twilight, the herder rode up, his horse white with foam. He held a large official envelope in his hand.

"February the fourteenth," read the storekeeper, aloud, beginning the certificate. "Boys," he said, with a laugh, looking up, "this is St. Valentine's Day."

"That's so," said several of the settlers.

"Tell you what let's do," proposed Squire Gillett; "let's give the certificate to the woman for a valentine!"

Gathering together, with the Squire at their head, they knocked at the door of the cabin. Mrs. Mangold opening it, and the pale face of her husband was seen behind her shoulder.

Squire Gillett made a very handsome little speech, and presented her with the certificate as a valentine, accompanying his formal words with some hearty praise of the brave boys.

"And the little fellow," he said, "how is he?"

"Much better," said Mrs. Mangold. "His father will leave him here and come back in the summer to get him. It will be safer for him to travel then."

Then she faltered a little. "I—I—can not thank you enough, gentlemen, for this—valentine," she said, "but you know how grateful we must feel."

"Tut—tut—tut," called out the storekeeper. "No thanking. We ought to be ashamed of ourselves that we didn't help you before, oughtn't we, boys?"

"Of course we had," they all said.

"And before we go, let's give three cheers for the little woman."

The cheers went up, heartily.

"Now three for the boys," said the squire.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!"

"And three for the baby," added the lank herder

The cheers went up again.

As the wagons rattled away in the darkness, there was great happiness in the Mangold cabin. There was happiness among the departing visitors, too; and the start they had given the stranded family enabled its members to become as prosperous and as hearty as the rest of the community.—Youth's Companion.

THERE is a judge in St. Louis who deserves well of the women of America. His name is Withrow, and we give it so that the women may know to whom they are indebted for a ruling which is of great value to them. In a recent divorce case before this judge it was shown that the husband who brought the suit had been separated for some time from his wife, and that he had left his wife on account of her extreme jealousy of him. It was further shown that prior to the separation the wife had frequent occasion to reprove the husband for not paying enough attention to her and too much to other ladies, and that her throwing a mirror at him, which was one of the charges brought by the husband, was occasioned by his dancing too frequently and too affectionately with a young lady after the separation. The court denied the divorce, and held that the wife's jealousy was justifiable, and her throwing of the mirror, under the circumstances, excusable. "As a married man," the judge said, "living separate and apart from his wife, his conduct should have been such as not to have given her any just cause of complaint." This will not only console deserted wives, but serve as a warning to deserting husbands.

"ONE person instantly killed and twenty-three persons wounded, several seriously, and at least one fatally." This in the city of Chicago and at a grade crossing. The street-car is on the track at grade. A locomotive is advancing at forty miles an hour within the city limits. It also runs at grade. There is a collision—two persons killed and twenty-three persons wounded. This isn't the first horror of the kind in Chicago. It will not be the last. These grade crossings are man-killers. The victim falls singly sometimes. At others down go a multitude of poor human beings, crushed, maimed, bleeding, dead, dying, while the car of juggernaut rolls on. The steam-car company pays its dividends of 6 or 8 per cent. on its tremendously watered stock and the street-car company harvests its 20 per cent. In Chicago human life is cheap. It is accorded no more sanctity within the shadow of 500 city churches than if it were struggling in the heart of Africa.

THE will contesters in New York want a little Michigan law. One will is being contested on the ground, mainly, that the testator kept a diary in which he made entries indicative of an unsound mind. One of them, produced in evidence for the purpose of proving his incapacity, was a reference to his sister-in-law as his "dear wife's kind and useful sister;" and another stated that he cleaned his teeth after breakfast without taking them out. Other evidence was that the "kind and useful" sister-in-law gave him to read a volume entitled "Readings for Lent" and that he preferred "Peck's Bad Boy." This last item of evidence really has some force; but under the late Michigan ruling a merely depraved taste is not a sufficient ground for holding a man incapable of making a valid will.

THE genius who has invented "India rubber" war ships is skipping around at a lively rate just now, in the hope of getting his invention adopted. He claims that an armor of rubber seven feet thick on a naval vessel would cause the largest projectile which could be fired at it to rebound with such velocity that it would do more damage to the ship which fired it than to the one fired against. Vessels armored this way and provided with towers which can be telescoped to the surface of the deck at a moment's notice, certainly ought to be nearly impregnable. But why not put all the gunners and other fighters in a 12-inch rubber coating also?

THE most recent addition to the repertory of popular, or rather of unpopular, phrases comes from Judge Hugg, of N. Y. who rises to remark that "public opinion is anarchy." All the same, public opinion has been known to unseat cantankerous or corrupt lawmaking Judges before now in a very peaceful and lawful manner.

HERBERT SPENCER has declared his belief that music, properly employed, is a means to health. But somehow about thirty years ago when the boys sang "John Brown's Body," it was rather unhealthy—for the other fellows.

AS YET no one has said that the death of Prince Albert Victor was due to the cigarette habit.

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

LESSONS DRAWN FROM NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

The Many Ways in Which Men and Women Degrade Themselves to the Level of Brutes—Intemperance, Drugs, Idleness, Luxury, Unbelief.

Living Like Brutes.

Dr. Talmage chose as his text the humiliation of the Babylonish King who being destitute of religion sank to the level of the brute. Daniel iv. 28, "All this came upon the King Nebuchadnezzar"

Col. Rawlinson, the oriental traveler, says that the exhumed bricks, not only of Babylon, but of 100 towns in an area of 100 miles in length and thirty in breadth, are inscribed with the name of Nebuchadnezzar. He was a great warrior and at the glance of his sword nations prostrated themselves. He was a great King and built a city reservoir ninety miles in circumference and 120 feet deep, and constructed a hanging garden 400 feet square and seventy-five feet high, some say to please Amuhia, his wife, who had been born among the hills, and others say to get a pleasure ground free from the mosquitoes, which afflict the levels.

I think from his character the latter reason may have impelled him as much as the former. When he conquered King Zedekiah, so as to have no more trouble with him, he put his eyes out—a most barbarous way of incapacitating an enemy. But Babylon was a great place, the houses surrounded by gardens and the housetops were connected with each other by bridges, and one day Nebuchadnezzar walked out on those suspension bridges and showed, perhaps to a royal visitor, the vastness of his realm as the sun kindles the domes with glistenings almost insufferable and the great streets thunder up their pomp into the ear of the monarch, and armed towers stand around adorned with spoils of conquered empires.

Nebuchadnezzar waves his hand above the stupendous scene and exclaims, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the Kingdom by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" In other words: "What a great man I am. Babylon was not anything until I adorned it. See those water works; see those gardens; see those forts. I did all this. I shall never be forgotten. Why, my name is on every brick in all those walls. Just look at me. I am more than a man."

But in an instant all that splendor is gone from his vision, for a voice calls from the Heavens, saying, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the Kingdom is departed from thee, and they shall drive thee from men and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth to whomsoever he will."

One hour from the time he made the boast he is on his way to the fields a maniac, and rushing into the forests he becomes as one of the beasts, and is after awhile covered with eagles' feathers for protection from the cold, and his nails grow to look like birds' claws, in order that he may dig the earth for roots and climb the trees for nuts.

The mental disaster that seized him was what the Greeks called lycanthropy, by which a man imagines himself a beast and prefers to go out and mingle with brutes. He who had been eating pomegranates and apricots off of plates of gold inlaid with amethyst and diamond, and drinking the richest wines from golden royal vases, browsing on grass, and struck by the horn of the ox as he contends for a better tuft of the pasturage, and instead of an orchestra on benches of ivory playing the national airs, now listening to the moan and bellow and grunt of the beasts. This is not hard for me to believe, for the forms of dementia are innumerable.

I look over the pasture fields of folly and sin and find many groveling who ought to be erect. Oh, men and women, go back to your thrones! A young man ran away from home and broke his widowed mother's heart. Fourteen years passed, and he returned and came to the window where his old mother was sitting. She looked up and immediately recognized him and said: "Oh, Robert, Robert! Come in!" "No!" said he. "Mother, I shall never come in till I hear you say you forgive me." Her answer was: "Robert I have forgiven you long ago. There is nothing to forgive now except that you staid away so long."

My hearers, forgiveness has been ready for you a good while. With more than a mother's tenderness God will take you back. They are waiting for you up in the palace. Nebuchadnezzar was the son of Nabopolassar, who ruled before him, and you are the child of a King!

The next thought that presses into my mind from the contemplation of the incident is that conviction is not conversion. Who is this monarch that makes the boast about Babylon? The very man who, under the revelation of dreams that Daniel made from Heaven, deeply humbled himself, while he confessed that God is a God of Gods and a Lord of Lords, yet behold that the humbling and arousing which he before felt did not result in a radical change.

There is no mistake more frequent than of supposing conviction a synonym for conversion. Conviction is merely a sight of sin; conversion is a view of pardon. Conviction is merely alarm; conversion is confidence. Conviction is dissatisfaction with depravity; conversion is a turning away from it. Conviction is a sword wound; conversion is the healing. Conviction is the fever of thirst; conversion is the slaking of that thirst. Conviction is the pain; conversion is the medicine that cures it. Thousands have experienced the former and never experienced the latter.

There are multitudes who think that as soon as a man is serious he is fit for profession of religion. What if a man should only think seriously of being a merchant; would that make him a merchant? What if a man should only think seriously of being a lawyer; would that make him a lawyer? What if a man should only think seriously of being a Christian; would that make him a Christian? Felix was convicted but not converted. The jailer was convicted before he got out of bed, but not converted until at the advice of Paul he believed in Christ. Are you convicted but not converted?

Learn also from my subject that pride is the precursor of overthrow. Pride is a commander well plumed and caparisoned, but it leads forth a dark and frowning host. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." The arrows from the Almighty's quiver are apt to strike a man when on the wing. Goliath shakes his great spear in defiance, but the smooth stones from the brook make him stagger and fall like an ox under a butcher's bludgeon. He who is down cannot fall. Vessels scudding under bare poles do not feel the force of the storm.

What are those three sleds that have just come into the court of a miserable hotel in Warsaw, Poland, on the cold night of December the 10th, 1812? Who are they, who those sleds have entered, and the servant is trying to build for them a fire with some green wood? Napoleon, with six attendants, on retreat from Moscow. The fire amid the green wood has gone out, and the Emperor is walking the floor to keep from freezing.

Then bounding into his sled, the thermometer 26 degrees below zero, he disappears in the darkness. He who a little before had an army under his command, together with other troops offered by other nations, in all 1,187,000 men, now retreating through that December night with three sleds, and those of his army not dead under the snow, reduced for food to a handful of rye dough, seasoned with gunpowder for lack of salt, and a mouthful of horseflesh. From what a height to what a depth! Nebuchadnezzar in the palace; Nebuchadnezzar forsaken in the fields.

Again learn from the misfortune of the King of Babylon what a terrible thing is the loss of reason. There is no calamity that can possibly befall us in this world great as the derangement of intellect—to have the body of a man and yet to fall even below the instincts of a brute. In this world of sad sights the saddest is the idiot's stare. In this world awful sounds the most awful is the maniac's laugh. He shall tread on rocks, when hundreds go down never to rise, and other hundreds drag their mangled and shivering bodies up the wintry beach, is nothing compared to foundering of intellects full of vast hopes and attainments and capacities. Christ's heart went out to those who were epileptic, and lunatic, and all, or maniacs cutting themselves among the tombs.

We are accustomed to be more grateful for physical health than for the proper working of our mind. We are apt to take it for granted that the intellect which has served us so well will always be faithful. We forget that an engine with such tremendous power, when the throttle valve shuts, was not made of iron and such swiftness of motion and the least impediment might put it out of gear, could only be kept in proper balance by a divine hand. No human power could engineer this train of immortal faculties.

How strange it is that our memory, on whose shoulders all the successes and misfortunes and occurrences of a lifetime are placed, should not at other break down, and that the scales of judgment, which have been weighing so much and so long, should not lose their adjustment, and that fancy which holds a dangerous wand, should not sometimes maliciously wave it, bringing into the heart forebodings and hallucinations the most appalling. It is not strange that the expectations of this intellect should not be dashed to pieces on its disappointments?

Though so delicately attuned, this instrument of untold harmonies plays on, though fear shocks it, and vexations rack it, and sorrow and joy and loss and gain in quick succession beat out of it their dirge or draw from it their anthem. At morning and at night, when in your prayer, you rehearse the objects of your thanksgiving, next to your salvation by Jesus Christ, praise the Lord for the preservation of your reason.

How many fine intellects are being destroyed by anodynes and anæsthetics, which were given by Providence for occasional use in alleviation of pain or insomnia and which are now continuously after awhile capture and destroy. Chloral, cocaine, bromide of potassium, opium and whole shelves of seductive etceteras that help turn Nebuchadnezzars into imbecility or madness. Do not trifle with opiates that benumb the brain. If you cannot live without the perpetual and unfailing use of them, you had better die. Better die a sane man than live a fool. What right have you to kill your brain and put in wild jangle your nervous system? But rum is the cause of more insanity than anything else. There is nothing like rum to put a man, like Nebuchadnezzar, down on all fours.

Again, learn how quickly from the wheel of fortune, from the high up to how far down went Nebuchadnezzar. Those now in places of position and power, even though they should live, will in a few years be disregarded, while some, who this day are obscure and poverty stricken, will ride up on the shoulders of the people to take their turn at admiration and the spoils of office. Oh, how quickly the wheel turns! Ballot boxes are the steps on which men come down as often as they go up. Of those who were a few years ago successful in the accumulation of property how few have not met with reverses of fortune, while many of those who were straitened in circumstances now hold the bonds and the bank keys of the Nation and win the most bows on the exchange.

Of all fickle people in the world Fortune is the most fickle. Every day she changes her mind, and woe to that man who puts any confidence in what she promises. Some day she will smile on you, you go up and she laughs when you come down. Oh, trust not a moment your heart's affections to this changeable world. Anchor your soul in God. From Christ's love gather your joy. Then come sorrow or gladness, success or defeat, riches or poverty, honor or disgrace, health or sickness, life or death, time or eternity, all are yours and we are Christ's and Christ is God's.

Learn also from my subject the comforting truth that afflictions are arrested as soon as they have accomplished their mission. For seven years did Nebuchadnezzar dwell among the beasts of the field, but at the expiration of that time his reason returned, and as soon as with proper humility he acknowledged the God of Heaven he was brought back to his palace and reinstated in his former affluence and power. Now it does seem that the heavy trials sometimes of us it is as though they had no limit. We exclaim, "All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me," but forget that the depth of that sea and the power of that billow are definitely determined.

The defeats and sorrows of life have sometimes been the greatest advantage. It was because Dante failed as a statesman that he gave up politics and wrote his immortal "Divinia Commedia." It was a violent thunderstorm that first set Martin Luther seriously thinking, and the thunder of this world's disaster has started many a reformation. James Y. Simpson went from a surgeon's operating table to experiment and see if he could not find something that would alleviate human pain and he kept on until he had discovered chloroform as an anæsthetic, and the story of distress has almost always been followed by the story of rescue.

For many years after Shakspeare's death his work was so little appreciated that in 1666 there was only one edition of his works, and that of only 300 copies, in existence, and that edition was nearly all burned in the great London fire. But forty-eight copies had been sold out of the edition, and those forty-eight copies saved Shakspeare for all nations and all time. Your suppression on a smaller scale may last a good while, but for all you are worth you will yet shine out on earth or in Heaven.

Again, learn from my subject that connected with the most distressing judgments of God there are displays of divine mercy. God might justly have left Nebuchadnezzar in the field, but infinite compassion brought him back to the palace. No sooner was Eden blasted than a blessing followed on the heels of the curse promising the coming of One who would destroy sin and make the whole world a paradise. The deluge descends, but not until Noah had invited the people into the ark. The destroying angel comes upon Egypt for the smiting of the first born, but left unmolested every house whose door was sprinkled with the blood of sacrifice.

Fiery tempests bear down upon Sodom, but not until two angels have warned Lot and his family to flee from the destruction. Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, but not until Jeremiah had sounded an alarm, bidding them turn from their abominations. On the darkest cloud of wrath there is a rainbow of mercy. Zechariah in his prophetic vision beheld four chariots, symbolical of God's government.

The first chariot was drawn by red horses. They indicated the wars that were coming. The second chariot was drawn by black horses. They indicated the coming of a famine and pestilence. The third chariot was drawn by white horses. They indicated the spotless purity of God's conquests. But, mark well that the fourth chariot was drawn by horses "grisled and bay," denoting that mercy was mixed with all the desolating judgments of God. Sinai cannot thunder so loud as to drown the invitations of Calvary. The Lord utters the admonition, "The wages of sin is death," but exhaustless mercy responds, "Deliver him from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom."

Hide thee quick in the rock, Christ Jesus. Let not this insignificant "Now" absorb thee more than the great hereafter. The path leading to this side of the grave is only a few furlongs, but the path which commences at the other side of it is without end. The powers of darkness gather about your soul, and the temptations of an evil heart and the alurements of the world I know are trying to drown the voice of the preacher, but taking hold of the silver trumpet of the Gospel which made Felix tremble, and at the Pentecost brought 3,000 souls out of their sepulcher, I would blow one long, loud blast, crying, "Whosoever will, let him come."

Take this goodly religion which has done so much for me that I can commend it all. Without it I should have gone the whole downward career. Stolid and phlegmatic natures going astray do not go so far, but natures like mine, sanguine, intense, emotional, optimistic, social to the last degree and echoing to all the heights and depths of mirth, if they get off the track they go with one wild leap to hell. As to the restraining power of this religion upon a mercurial temperament, I testify. This is not abstraction or something taken from books. I speak of what I know. Go out and see all who have tried this religion and ask them how it works.

Three young men in a factory came out on the Lord's side, but two of them, overcome by the jeers of their comrades, went back and joined the scoffers. The one held on to his Christian hope, and one day when they pressed him hard and were telling how much infidelity had done for the world, and that Christianity had done nothing, the persecuted Christian turned upon them, and pointing to Henry and George, who had for a little while followed Christ, and then turned back, he said:

"You have tried your principles on them and know what they have done for them. When they tried to serve Christ they were civil, good tempered, kind husbands and fathers. They were cheerful, industrious and ready to oblige. What have you made them? Look and see. They are cast down and cross; their mouths are full of cursing and filthiness; they are drunk every week; their children had clothed, their wives broken hearted, their homes wretched. That is what your principles have done. Now I have tried Christ and His religion and what has it done for me? You know well what I used to be. There was none of you that could drink so much, swear so desperately and fight so mercilessly. I had no money and nobody would trust me. My wife was ill-used. I was ill-natured, hateful, and hating. What has religion done for me? Thank God, I am not afraid to put it to you. Am I not a happier man than I was? Am I not a better workman and a kinder companion? Would I once have put up with what I now bear from you? I could beat any of you as easily now as ever. Why don't I? Do you ever hear a foul word from my mouth? Do you catch me at a public house? Has anybody a score against me? Go and ask my neighbor if I am not altered for the better. Go and ask my wife. Let my house bear witness. God be praised, here is what Christianity has done for me; there is what infidelity has done for Henry and George."

Out of this audience I could gather a thousand men and women who could tell you as thrilling a story as that as to what religion has done for them. And, if times of persecution should come as of old, and they may come, there are a thousand here who would for Christ's sake as cheerfully walk into the furnace of fire as though it were an arbor of thyme and honeysuckle, and face the lions as though they were lambs frisking on the hillside, and wade down into the deep waters which are to submerge them as happily as ever at Narragansett beach they took the surf at a summer bathing.

Come up and join those on the way to a palace. What an absurd thing for a king to be eating grass. Instead of living on the poor fodder that the world affords come and sit among the princes of God at the royal banquet and hear the bands play: "Eat, O Friends! Drink, O Beloved!" Here is a crown, wear it. Here is a scepter, sway it. Here is a throne, mount it. This is your hour, improve it.

EVERY State has its "favorite son," but only one has its favorite daughter—state of matrimony.—*The Keg.*