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THE
FRIENDLY
YEAR



HENRY
VAN DYKE



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The Friendly Year

BY HENRY VAN DYKE

The Unknown Quantity
The Ruling Passion
The Blue Flower



Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land
Days Off
Little Rivers
Fisherman's Luck



Poems, Collection in one volume

The Grand Canyon, and Other Poems
The White Bees, and Other Poems
The Builders, and Other Poems
Music, and Other Poems
The Toiling of Felix, and Other Poems
The House of Rimmon

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS



Photograph by Pirie MacDonald

Faithfully Yours
July 4, 1917. Henry van Dyke

The Friendly Year

Chosen and Arranged from the
Works of
Henry van Dyke, D.C.L. (Oxon.)

By

George Sidney Webster, D.D.

Secretary of The American Seamen's Friend Society

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1917

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Preface

The books of Henry van Dyke are well known to many classes of readers. He has worked in various literary forms: stories, essays, criticism, and poetry. The unity of his work is found in the individuality of a style marked by simplicity, clearness, and directness, and in the manifest influence of "a human aim,—to cheer, console, purify, or ennoble the life of the people."

In making this little year-book of selections, the suggestion of which is entirely my own, I have not sought to illustrate literary qualities, so much as to bring out the dominant note of human friendliness and comradeship, which runs through the writings of an author who knows books well, but who cares more for people.

I hereby express grateful appreciation of the kind courtesy of The Macmillan Company, Harper & Brothers, Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., and The Outlook Company, for permission to use their copyrighted material.

G. S. W.

NEW YORK,
September 21, 1900.

Preface to Revised Edition

The passing years have brought so many friends who have enjoyed these brief selections and also so many new volumes from Dr. van Dyke, that a new edition seemed to be necessary.

From the eight volumes issued since 1900, selections have been chosen, which illustrate more emphatically than those they replace the dominant spirit of a beloved author and loyal friend.

G. S. W.

NEW YORK,
October 1st, 1906.

Preface to Second Revised Edition

The host of friendly readers of Dr. van Dyke's writings rejoice at the international recognition and honours which his distinguished services have brought to him.

The new selections found in this edition are chosen from the nine volumes issued since 1906, and especially exemplify his patriotic spirit.

G. S. W.

NEW YORK,
October 15th, 1917.

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The Roman numerals at the end of each selection will enable the reader to identify, by reference to the foregoing list, the book from which it is taken. The Arabic numerals indicate the page on which the passage or stanza may be found.

The Friendly Bear

The Foot-path to Peace

To be glad of life, because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars; to be contented with your possessions, but not satisfied with yourself until you have made the best of them; to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness, and to fear nothing except cowardice; to be governed by your admirations rather than by your disgusts; to covet nothing that is your neighbour's except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners; to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends, and every day of Christ; and to spend as much time as you can, with body and with spirit, in God's out-of-doors—these are little guide-posts on the foot-path to peace.

The Friendly Bear

January first

Four things a man must learn to do
If he would make his record true :
To think without confusion clearly ;
To love his fellow-men sincerely ;
To act from honest motives purely ;
To trust in God and heaven securely.

*The com-
pass*

—IX, 39.

January second

“ Carry this little flower with you. It’s not the bonniest blossom in Scotland, but it’s the dearest, for the message that it brings. And you will remember that love is not getting, but giving ; not a wild dream of pleasure, and a madness of desire—oh no, love is not that—it is goodness, and honour, and peace, and pure living—yes, love is that ; and it is the best thing in the world, and the thing that lives longest. And that is what I am wishing for you and yours with this bit of white heather.”

*White
heather*

—VI, 114.

January third

*A woman
to love*

TO
A YOUNG WOMAN
OF AN OLD FASHION
WHO LOVES ART
NOT FOR ITS OWN SAKE
BUT BECAUSE IT ENNOBLES LIFE
WHO READS POETRY
NOT TO KILL TIME
BUT TO FILL IT WITH BEAUTIFUL THOUGHTS
AND WHO STILL BELIEVES
IN GOD AND DUTY AND IMMORTAL LOVE
I DEDICATE
THIS BOOK

—II, Dedication.

January fourth

*Brother-
hood*

If I can feel sympathy,—feel it within and without,—then the dew falls and the desert begins to blossom. By sympathy I do not mean merely a fellowship in sorrow, but also, and no less truly, a fellowship in joy—a feeling for which we ought to have an English word. To be glad when your brother men are prosperous and happy, to rejoice in their success, to cheer for their victories; to be compassionate and pitiful when your brother men are distressed and miserable, to grieve over their failures, to help them in their troubles,—this is the fraternal spirit which blesses him who exercises it, and those toward whom it is exercised.—
I, 245.

January fifth

Only a little shrivelled seed,
It might be flower, or grass, or weed ;
Only a box of earth on the edge
Of a narrow, dusty window-ledge ;
Only a few scant summer showers ;
Only a few clear shining hours ;
That was all. Yet God could make
Out of these, for a sick child's sake,
A blossom-wonder, as fair and sweet
As ever broke at an angel's feet.

*A flower
and a soul*

Only a life of barren pain,
Wet with sorrowful tears for rain,
Warmed sometimes by a wandering gleam
Of joy, that seemed but a happy dream ;
A life as common and brown and bare
As the box of earth in the window there ;
Yet it bore, at last, the precious bloom
Of a perfect soul in that narrow room ;
Pure as the snowy leaves that fold
Over the flower's heart of gold.—IX, 41.

January sixth

When our world learns this lesson ; when
pride bows down to meekness, and experience
does homage to innocence ; when every child
is revered as a royal heir of heaven because
it is a brother of the Christ-child—then the
Epiphany will come, and a great light will
lighten the nations.—III, 145.

Epiphany

January seventh

*The faith
that stead-
ies us*

Happy and strong and brave shall we be,—
able to endure all things, and to do all things,—
if we believe that every day, every hour, every
moment of our life is in His hands.—I, 154.

January eighth

*The minor
parts*

It is not required of every man and woman to be, or to do, something great; most of us must content ourselves with taking small parts in the chorus, as far as possible without discord. Shall we have no little lyrics because Homer and Dante have written epics? And because we have heard the great organ at Freiburg, shall the sound of Käthi's zither in the alpine hut please us no more? Even those who have greatness thrust upon them will do well to lay the burden down now and then, and congratulate themselves that they are not altogether answerable for the conduct of the universe, or at least not all the time. "I reckon," said a cow-boy to me one day, as we were riding through the Bad Lands of Dakota, "there's some one bigger than me running this outfit. He can 'tend to it well enough, while I smoke my pipe after the round-up."—VI, 30.

January ninth

Here friendship lights the fire, and every heart, *By the*
Sure of itself and sure of all the rest, *fireside*
Dares to be true, and gladly takes its part
In open converse, bringing forth its best :
Here is sweet music, melting every chain
Of lassitude and pain :
And here, at last, is sleep, the gift of gifts,
The tender nurse, who lifts
The soul grown weary of the waking world,
And lays it, with its thoughts all furled,
Its fears forgotten, and its passions still,
On the deep bosom of the Eternal Will.

—xx, 28.

January tenth

There is no less virtue, but rather more, *Work as*
in events, tasks, duties, obligations, than there *an educator*
is in books. Work itself has a singular
power to unfold and develop our nature.
The difference is not between working people
and thinking people, but between people who
work without thinking and people who think
while they work.—xxi, 20.

January eleventh

*New York
City* Now looking deeper in my dream, I see
A mighty city covering the isle
They call Manhattan, equal in her state
To all the older capitals of earth,—
The gateway city of a golden world,—
A city girt with masts, and crowned with
 spires,
And swarming with a million busy men,
While to her open door across the bay
The ships of all the nations flock like doves.
—XXVIII, 150.

January twelfth

*“America
for me”* I know that Europe’s wonderful, yet some-
 thing seems to lack:
The Past is too much with her, and the
 people looking back.

Oh, it’s home again, and home again,
 America for me!

I want a ship that’s westward bound
 to plough the rolling sea,
To the blessed Land of Room Enough
 beyond the ocean bars,
Where the air is full of sunlight and
 the flag is full of stars.

—XXVIII, 167.

January thirteenth

Let me but love my love without disguise, *Love*
Nor wear a mask of fashion old or new,
Nor wait to speak till I can hear a clue,
Nor play a part to shine in others' eyes,
Nor bow my knees to what my heart denies;
But what I am, to that let me be true,
And let me worship where my love is due,
And so through love and worship let me rise.

For love is but the heart's immortal thirst
To be completely known and all forgiven,
Even as sinful souls that enter Heaven:
So take me, dear, and understand my worst,
And freely pardon it, because confessed,
And let me find in loving thee, my best.
—xx, 51.

January fourteenth

There is something finer than to do right *Joy a test*
against inclination; and that is to have an
inclination to do right. There is something
nobler than reluctant obedience; and that is
joyful obedience. The rank of virtue is not
measured by its disagreeableness, but by its
sweetness to the heart that loves it. The
real test of character is joy. For what you
rejoice in, that you love. And what you
love, that you are like.—xix, 10.

January fifteenth

*The blue
flower*

Then I looked off to the blue hills, shadowy and dreamlike, the boundary of the little world that I knew. And there, in a cleft between the highest peaks I saw a wondrous thing: for the place at which I was looking seemed to come nearer and nearer to me; I saw the trees, the rocks, the ferns, the white road winding before me; the enfolding hills unclosed like leaves, and in the heart of them I saw a Blue Flower, so bright, so beautiful that my eyes filled with tears as I looked. It was like a face that smiled at me and promised something. Then I heard a call, like the note of a trumpet very far away, calling me to come. And as I listened the flower faded into the dimness of the hills.—XVII, 24.

January sixteenth

*Your point
of view*

Learn also how to appraise criticism, to value enmity, to get the good of being blamed and evil spoken of. A soft social life is not likely to be very noble. You can hardly tell whether your faiths and feelings are real until they are attacked.

But take care that you defend them with an open mind and by right reason. You are entitled to a point of view, but not to announce it as the centre of the universe.—XXI, 33.

January seventeenth

“Joy is a duty,”—so with golden lore
The Hebrew rabbis taught in days of yore,
And happy human hearts heard in their speech
Almost the highest wisdom man can reach.

*Joy and
duty*

But one bright peak still rises far above,
And there the Master stands whose name is
Love,
Saying to those whom weary tasks employ:
“Life is divine when Duty is a Joy.”—IX, 51.

January eighteenth

The strength of your life is measured by the strength of your will. But the strength of your will is just the strength of the wish that lies behind it. And the strength of your wish depends upon the sincerity and earnestness and tenacity with which you fix your attention upon the things which are really great and worthy to be loved. This is what the Apostle means when he says, at the close of his description of a life which is strong, and inwardly renewed, and growing in glory even in the midst of affliction,—“while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen.” It is while we look that we learn to love. It is by loving that we learn to seek. And it is in seeking that we find and are blessed.—IV, 75.

*The power
of wishes*

January nineteenth

*Concrete
friendship*

I am no friend to purely psychological attachments. In some unknown future they may be satisfying, but in the present I want your words and your voice, with your thoughts, your looks, and your gestures, to interpret your feelings. The warm, strong grasp of Great-heart's hand is as dear to me as the steadfast fashion of his friendships; the lively, sparkling eyes of the master of Rudder Grange charm me as much as the nimbleness of his fancy; and the firm poise of the Hoosier School-master's shaggy head gives me new confidence in the solidity of his views of life.—VI, 13.

January twentieth

*Patron
saints*

It may be that some saint dearer to you than any whose names are written among the Old Testament worthies—your own faithful mother, the father who prayed with you at the family altar, the friend who walked close beside you in the journey of life—is looking down upon you and watching your path to-day. And of this be sure: If you are following in the footsteps of Christ, if you are trying to do good, if you are sacrificing yourself for others, if you are treading the path of duty and devotion, these are the things which they understand, and for which they bless and love you.—IV, 181.

January twenty-first

Epigrams are worth little for guidance to the perplexed, and less for comfort to the wounded. But the plain, homely sayings which come from a soul that has learned the lesson of patient courage in the school of real experience, fall upon the wound like drops of balsam, and like a soothing lotion upon the eyes smarting and blinded with passion.—VI, 110. *Wit versus wisdom*

January twenty-second

But after all, the very best thing in good talk, and the thing that helps it most, is *friendship*. How it dissolves the barriers that divide us, and loosens all constraint, and diffuses itself like some fine old cordial through all the veins of life—this feeling that we understand and trust each other, and wish each other heartily well! Everything into which it really comes is good. It transforms letter-writing from a task into a pleasure. It makes music a thousand times more sweet. The people who play and sing not *at* us, but *to* us,—how delightful it is to listen to them! Yes, there is a talkability that can express itself even without words. There is an exchange of thought and feeling which is happy alike in speech and in silence. It is quietness pervaded with friendship.—XIII, 70. *Friendly talk*

January twenty-third

*Life-giv-
ing love*

Surely there is nothing else in all the world so life-giving as the knowledge that we are loved. Even in our human relationships, when this knowledge comes to us it lifts us out of the dust and thrills us with vital power. How many a heart has been revived and emancipated, enlarged and ennobled, by knowing that somewhere in the world there was another heart moving toward it in the tenderness and glory of love.—XVIII, 157.

January twenty-fourth

Books

To get the good of the library in the school of life you must bring into it something better than a mere bookish taste. You must bring the power to read, between the lines, behind the words, beyond the horizon of the printed page. Philip's question to the chamberlain of Ethiopia was crucial: "Understandest thou what thou redest?" I want books not to pass the time, but to fill it with beautiful thoughts and images, to enlarge my world, to give me new friends in the spirit, to purify my ideals and make them clear, to show me the local colour of unknown regions and the bright stars of universal truth.—XXI, 18.

January twenty-fifth

The literary life, at its best, is one that demands a clear and steady mind, a free spirit, and great concentration of effort. The cares of a splendid establishment and the distractions of a complicated social life are not likely, in the majority of cases, to make it easier to do the best work. Most of the great books, I suppose, have been written in rather small rooms.—XXII, 133. *Great books and small rooms*

January twenty-sixth

It was a bare, rude place, but the dish of juicy trout was garnished with flowers, each fish holding a big pansy in its mouth, and as the maid set them down before me she wished me “a good appetite,” with the hearty old-fashioned Tyrolese courtesy which still survives in these remote valleys. It is pleasant to travel in a land where the manners are plain and good. If you meet a peasant on the road he says, “God greet you!” if you give a child a couple of kreuzers he folds his hands and says, “God reward you!” and the maid who lights you to bed says, “Good-night, I hope you will sleep well!”—VI, 176. *Manners, plain and good*

January twenty-seventh

God's garden Saints are God's flowers, fragrant souls
That His own hand hath planted,
Not in some far-off heavenly place,
Or solitude enchanted,
But here and there and everywhere,—
In lonely field, or crowded town,
God sees a flower when He looks down.

Some wear the lily's stainless white,
And some the rose of passion,
And some the violet's heavenly blue,
But each in its own fashion,
With silent bloom and soft perfume,
Is praising Him who from above
Beholds each lifted face of love.—IX, 49.

January twenty-eighth

*The wind
and the
rudder*

Here is the sea on which you float, the sea of human life, with its shifting tides and currents. Yonder is the sky that bends above you, the pure and sovereign will of God. Out of that unsearchable heaven comes the breath of the Spirit, like "the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth." If you will spread your sail to catch that breath of life, if you will lay your course and keep your rudder true, you will be carried onward in peace and safety to your desired haven.—IV, 221.

January twenty-ninth

There is no gate into heaven except at the end of the path of duty. There is not even an honoured and peaceful grave for us until we can say with the Master, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."—IV, 186.

*At the end
of the path*

January thirtieth

It is not half as far from Albany to Aberdeen as it is from New York to London. In fact, I venture to say that an American on foot will find himself less a foreigner in Scotland than in any other country in the Old World. There is something warm and hospitable—if he knew the language well enough he would call it *couthy*—in the greeting that he gets from the shepherd on the moor, and the conversation that he holds with the farmer's wife in the stone cottage, where he stops to ask for a drink of milk and a bit of oat-cake. He feels that there must be a drop of Scotch somewhere in his mingled blood, or at least that the texture of his thought and feelings had been partly woven on a Scottish loom—perhaps the Shorter Catechism, or Robert Burns's poems, or the romances of Sir Walter Scott.—VI, 93.

*A drop of
Scotch*

January thirty-first

*Life's ad-
venture*

All faith recognizes that life is a pilgrimage whose course and duration cannot be foreseen. That is true, indeed, whether we acknowledge it or not. Even if a man should fancy that his existence was secure, and that he could direct his own career and predict his own future, experience would teach him his mistake. But the point is that faith recognizes this uncertainty of life at the outset, and in a peculiar way, which transforms it from a curse into a blessing and makes it possible for us even to be glad that we must "go out not knowing whither we go."—IV, 131.

February first

*Making up
our minds*

We say that we "make up our minds" to do a certain thing or not to do it, to resist a certain temptation or to yield to it. It is true. We "make up our minds" in a deeper sense than we remember. In every case the ultimate decision is between two future selves, one with whom the virtue is harmonious, another with whom the vice is consistent. To one of these two figures, dimly concealed behind the action, we move forward. What we forget is, that, when the forward step is taken, the shadow will be *myself*. Character is eternal destiny.—VIII, 29.

February second

Every country—or at least every country that is fit for habitation—has its own rivers; and every river has its own quality; and it is the part of wisdom to know and love as many as you can, seeing each in the fairest possible light, and receiving from each the best that it has to give.—VI, 14. *Traveller's wisdom*

February third

It is with rivers as it is with people: the greatest are not always the most agreeable nor the best to live with. Diogenes must have been an uncomfortable bedfellow; Antinoüs was bored to death in the society of the Emperor Hadrian; and you can imagine much better company for a walking-trip than Napoleon Bonaparte. Semiramis was a lofty queen, but I fancy that Ninus had more than one bad quarter-of-an-hour with her: and in “the spacious times of great Elizabeth” there was many a milkmaid whom the wise man would have chosen for his friend, before the royal red-haired virgin.—VI, 15. *A choice in comrades*

February fourth

Peace

With eager heart and will on fire,
I fought to win my great desire.
"Peace shall be mine," I said; but life
Grew bitter in the endless strife.

My soul was weary, and my pride
Was wounded deep: to Heaven I cried,
"God grant me peace or I must die;"
The dumb stars glittered no reply.

Broken at last, I bowed my head,
Forgetting all myself, and said,
"Whatever comes, His will be done;"
And in that moment peace was won.

—IX, 53

February fifth

*The sweet-
ness of sur-
prise*

A new door of happiness is opened when you go out to hunt for something and discover it with your own eyes. But there is an experience even better than that. When you have stupidly forgotten (or despondently foregone) to look about you for the unclaimed treasures and unearned blessings which are scattered along the by-ways of life, then, sometimes by a special mercy, a small sample of them is quietly laid before you so that you cannot help seeing it, and it brings you back, mighty sweetly, to a sense of the joyful possibilities of living.—XIII, 81.

February sixth

There is magic in words, surely, and many a treasure besides Ali Baba's is unlocked with a verbal key. Some charm in the mere sound, some association with the pleasant past, touches a secret spring. The bars are down; the gate is open; you are made free of all the fields of memory and fancy—by a word.
—VI, 183.

“ *Open
sesame!* ”

February seventh

The word of Jesus in the mind of one who does not do the will of Jesus, lies like seed-corn in a mummy's hand. It is only by dwelling with Him and receiving His character, His personality so profoundly, so vitally that it shall be with us as if, in His own words, we had partaken of His flesh and His blood, as if His sacred humanity had been interwoven with the very fibres of our heart and pulsed with secret power in all our veins,—it is thus only that we can be enabled to see His teaching as it is, and set it forth with luminous conviction to the souls of men.—
VII, 201.

*Learning
by doing*

February eighth

*People
worth
meeting*

What we call society is very narrow. But life is very broad. It includes "the whole world of God's cheerful, fallible men and women." It is not only the famous people and the well-dressed people who are worth meeting. It is everyone who has something to communicate.—XXI, 34.

February ninth

*What is
built into
your house?*

I wonder how often the inhabitant of the snug Queen Anne cottage in the suburbs remembers the picturesque toil and varied hardship that it has cost to hew and drag his walls and floors and pretty peaked roofs out of the backwoods. It might enlarge his home, and make his musings by the winter fireside less commonplace, to give a kindly thought now and then to the long chain of human workers through whose hands the timber of his house has passed, since it first felt the stroke of the axe in the snow-bound winter woods, and floated, through the spring and summer, on far-off lakes and little rivers, *au large*.—VI, 220.

February tenth

The first thing that commended the Church of Jesus to the weary and disheartened world in the early years of her triumph, was her power to make her children happy,—happy in the midst of afflictions, happy in the release from the burden of guilt, happy in the sense of Divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood, happy in Christ's victory over sin and death, happy in the assurance of an endless life. At midnight in the prison, Paul and Silas sang praises, and the prisoners heard them. The lateral force of joy,—that was the power of the Church.—XIX, 8.

*The lateral
force of
joy*

February eleventh

The largest claim that a cheerful man who is also a thoughtful man—a child of hope with his eyes open—dares to make for the world is that it is better than it used to be, and that it has a fair prospect of further improvement. This is meliorism, the philosophy of actual and possible betterment; not a high-stepping, trumpet-blowing, self-flattering creed, immediately available for advertising purposes; but a modest and sober faith, useful for consolation in those hours of despondency and personal disappointment when the grasshopper and the critic both become a burden.—XXII, 6.

*A better
world*

February twelfth

*Lincoln's
birthday*

The unreconstructed and the unreconciled people belong to the soles of the feet. Those who are raised high enough to be able to look over the stone walls, those who are intelligent enough to take a broader view of things than that which is bounded by the lines of any one state or section, understand that the unity of the nation is of the first importance, and are prepared to make those sacrifices and concessions, within the bounds of loyalty, which are necessary for its maintenance, and to cherish that temper of fraternal affection which alone can fill the form of national existence with the warm blood of life. The first man, after the civil war, to recognize this great principle and to act upon it was the head of the nation,—that large and generous soul whose worth was not fully felt until he was taken from his people by the stroke of the assassin, in the very hour when his presence was most needed for the completion of the work of reunion.—
I, 240.

February thirteenth

*Prayer: the
strength of
the weak*

Prayer is the believer's comfort and support, his weapon of defence, his light in darkness, his companionship in solitude, his fountain in the desert, his hope and his deliverance.—
I, 193.

February fourteenth

Have we not all felt the shrinkage of the much-vaunted miracles of science into the veriest kitchen utensils of a comfort-worshipping society? Physical powers have been multiplied by an unknown quantity, but it is a serious question whether moral powers have not had their square root extracted. A man can go from New York to London now in six days. But when he arrives he is no better man than if it had taken him a month. He can talk across three thousand miles of ocean, but he has nothing more to say than when he sent his letter by a sailing-packet. All the inventions in the world will not change man's heart, or

*Shrunken
miracles*

Lift him nearer God-like state.

—II, 288.

February fifteenth

If a king sent a golden cup full of cheering cordial to a weary man, he might well admire the twofold bounty of the royal gift. The beauty of the vessel would make the draught more grateful and refreshing. And if the cup were inexhaustible, if it filled itself anew as often as it touched the lips, then the very shape and adornment of it would become significant and precious. It would be an inestimable possession, a singing goblet, a treasure of life.—xv, 6.

*The blessing of
beauty*

February sixteenth

*The unseen
world*

Beyond our power of vision, poets say,
There is another world of forms unseen,
Yet visible to purer eyes than ours.
And if the crystal of our sight were clear,
We should behold the mountain-slopes of
cloud,
The moving meadows of the untilled sea,
The groves of twilight and the dales of dawn,
And every wide and lonely field of air,
More populous than cities, crowded close
With living creatures of all shapes and hues.
But if that sight were ours, the things that
now
Engage our eyes would seem but dull and dim
Beside the splendors of our new-found world,
And we should be amazed and overwhelmed
Not knowing how to use the plenitude
Of vision.—XIV, 46.

February seventeenth

*First be-
lieve; then
try*

Yes, I know you are trying to be good,—
fitfully, imperfectly, yet still trying. But there
is something else that God would have you do
first. He would have you believe that He
wants you to be good, that He is willing to
help you to be good, that He has sent His Son
to make you good.—IV, 49.

February eighteenth

Every man who will has it in his power to make his life count for something positive in the redemption of society. And this is what every man of moral principle is bound to do if he wants to belong to the salt of the earth. *The salt of the earth*
—XVIII, 73.

February nineteenth

One of the best antidotes and cures of the craze for publicity is a love of poetry and of the things that belong to poetry—the beauty of nature, the sweetness and splendour of the common human affections, and those high thoughts and unselfish aspirations which are the enduring treasures of the soul. It is good to remember that the finest and most beautiful things that can ever come to us cannot possibly be news to the public. It is good to find the zest of life in that part of it which does not need, and will not bear, to be advertised. It is good to talk with our friends, knowing that they will not report us; and to play with the children, knowing that no one is looking at us; and to eat our meat with gladness and singleness of heart.—XXII, 82. *The quiet life*

February twentieth

*True
Americans*

There is a life that is worth living now, as it was worth living in the former days, and that is the honest life, the useful life, the unselfish life, cleansed by devotion to an ideal. There is a battle that is worth fighting now, as it was worth fighting then, and that is the battle for justice and equality. To make our city and our State free in fact as well as in name; to break the rings that strangle real liberty, and to keep them broken; to cleanse, so far as in our power lies, the fountains of our national life from political, commercial, and social corruption; to teach our sons and daughters, by precept and example, the honor of serving such a country as America—that is work worthy of the finest manhood and womanhood.

—XXIV, 70.

February twenty-first

*Might and
right*

If Might made Right, life were a wild-beasts' cage;
If Right made Might, this were the golden age;
But now, until we win the long campaign,
Right must gain Might to conquer and to reign.—XXXII.

February twenty-second

George Washington is the incarnation of the spirit of 1776, and the conclusive answer to all calumniators of the Revolution. No wild fanatic, no reckless socialist or anarchist, but a sober, sane, God-fearing, liberty-loving gentleman, who prized uprightness as the highest honour, and law as the bulwark of freedom, and peace as the greatest blessing, and was willing to live and die to defend them. He had his enemies who accused him of being an aristocrat, a conservative, a friend of the very England he was fighting, and who would have defamed and cast him down if they could. But the men of the Revolution held him up, because he was in their hearts, their hope and their ideal.—XXII, 107.

Washington's birth-day

February twenty-third

The true patriot is he who is as willing to sacrifice his time and strength and property to remove political shame and reform political corruption, as he would be ready to answer the call to battle against a foreign foe. The true patriot is he who works and votes, with the same courage that he would show in arms, in order that the aspirations of a noble people may be embodied in the noblest rulers.—XXII, 108.

The true patriot

February twenty-fourth

*Rendez-
vous*

I count that friendship little worth
Which has not many things untold,
Great longings that no words can hold,
And passion-secrets waiting birth.

Along the slender wires of speech
Some message from the heart is sent ;
But who can tell the whole that's meant ?
Our dearest thoughts are out of reach.

I have not seen thee, though mine eyes
Hold now the image of thy face ;
In vain, through form, I strive to trace
The soul I love : that deeper lies.

A thousand accidents control
Our meeting here. Clasp hand in hand,
And swear to meet me in that land
Where friends hold converse soul to soul.

—IX, 40.

February twenty-fifth

*Eternal
companion-
ship*

The assurance of immortality alone is not enough. For if we are told that we are to live forever and still left without the knowledge of a personal God, eternity stretches before us like a boundless desert, a perpetual and desolate orphanage. It is a Divine companionship that the spirit needs first of all and most deeply.—I, 165.

February twenty-sixth

Just because love is so universal, it is often to one of the other passions that we must look for the distinctive hue, the individual quality of a life-story. Granted, if you will, that everybody must fall in love, or ought to fall in love, How will he do it? And what will he do afterwards? These are questions not without interest to one who watches the human drama as a friend. The answers depend upon those hidden and durable desires, affections, and impulses to which men and women give themselves up for rule and guidance.—XVI, viii. *What kind of love?*

February twenty-seventh

There are two sorts of seeds sown in our remembrance by what we call the hand of fortune, the fruits of which do not wither, but grow sweeter forever and ever. The first is the seed of innocent pleasures, received in gratitude and enjoyed with good companions, of which pleasures we never grow weary of thinking, because they have enriched our hearts. The second is the seed of pure and gentle sorrows, borne in submission and with faithful love, and these also we never forget, but we come to cherish them with gladness instead of grief, because we see them changed into everlasting joys.—XVI, 138. *Seeds of everlasting remembrance*

February twenty-eight

*“ Except
ye become as
little chil-
dren ”*

On the simplest soul that feels the wonder and the hidden glory of the universe, on the child to whom the stars are little windows into heaven, or the poet to whom

“ the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears,”

God looks down with pleasure and approval. For in such a soul He sees the beginning of faith, which is able to pass behind the appearance to the reality, and make its possessor wise unto everlasting life.—IV, 41.

February twenty-ninth

*Nature is
alive*

One side of our nature, no doubt, finds its satisfaction in the regular, the proper, the conventional. But there is another side of our nature, underneath, that takes delight in the strange, the free, the spontaneous. We like to discover what we call a law of Nature, and make our calculations about it, and harness the force which lies behind it for our own purposes. But we taste a different kind of joy when an event occurs which nobody has foreseen or counted upon. It seems like an evidence that there is something in the world which is alive and mysterious and untrammelled.—XIII, 87.

March first

And thou, my country, write it on thy heart, *Sons of*
Thy sons are they who nobly take thy part; *America*
Who dedicates his manhood at thy shrine,
Wherever born, is born a son of thine;
Foreign in name, but not in soul, they come
To find in thee their long-desired home;
Lovers of liberty and haters of disorder,
They shall be built in strength along thy border.
—IX, 82.

March second

When we realize that every liberty, every *“Bought*
privilege, every advantage, that comes to us as *with a*
men and women has been bought with a price, *price”*
—that the dark, subterranean lives of those
who toil day and night in the bowels of the
earth, the perils and hardships of those who
sail to and fro upon the stormy seas, the be-
numbing weariness of those who dig and ditch
and handle dirt, the endless tending of looms
and plying of needles and carrying of burdens
—all this is done and endured and suffered by
our fellow-men, though blindly, for our bene-
fit, and accrues to our advantage,—when we
begin to understand this, a nobler spirit en-
ters into us, the only spirit that can keep our
wealth, our freedom, our culture from being
a curse to us forever, and sinking us into the
ennui of a selfish hell.—IV, 113.

March third

*Faith
visible*

Religion is something which a man cannot invent for himself, nor keep to himself. If it does not show in his conduct it does not exist in his heart. If he has just barely enough of it to save himself alone, it is doubtful whether he has even enough for that. Religion ought to bring out and intensify the flavor of all that is best in manhood, and make it fit, to use Wordsworth's noble phrase—

“For human nature's daily food.”

Good citizens, honest workmen, cheerful comrades, true friends, gentle men—that is what the product of religion should be.—
XVIII, 76.

March fourth

*First-rate
men*

But what means of producing first-rate men has been discovered, except education? I do not mean that kind of education which adorns a chosen few with the tinsel gewgaws of useless accomplishments. I mean that nobler education which aims to draw out and discipline all that is best in manhood—to make the mind clear and firm by study, the body strong and obedient by exercise, the moral sense confident and inflexible by disclosing the eternal principles upon which it rests.—
XXII, 66.

March fifth

Just to give up, and rest
All on a Love secure,
Out of a world that's hard at the best,
Looking to heaven as sure ;
Ever to hope, through cloud and fear,
In darkest night, that the dawn is near ;
Just to wait at the Master's feet—
Surely, now, the bitter is sweet.—IX, 63.

*Bitter-
sweet*

March sixth

The weather-prophet tells us of an approaching storm. It comes according to the programme. We admire the accuracy of the prediction, and congratulate ourselves that we have such a good meteorological service. But when, perchance, a bright, crystalline piece of weather arrives instead of the foretold tempest, do we not feel a secret sense of pleasure which goes beyond our mere comfort in the sunshine? The whole affair is not as easy as a sum in simple addition, after all,—at least not with our present knowledge. It is a good joke on the Weather Bureau. “Aha, Old Probabilities!” we say, “you don't know it all yet; there are still some chances to be taken!”—XIII, 87.

*Wayward
weather*

March seventh

Two

*friends and
a fire*

As for a dog, I am sure that his admiring love for his master is never greater than when they come in together from the hunt, wet and tired, and the man gathers a pile of wood in front of the tent, touches it with a tiny magic wand, and suddenly the clear, consoling flame springs up, saying cheerfully, "Here we are, at home in the forest; come into the warmth; rest, and eat, and sleep." When the weary, shivering dog sees this miracle, he knows that his master is a great man and a lord of things. XIII, 209.

March eighth

*The lustre
of the pearl*

He had taken from a secret resting-place in his bosom the pearl, the last of his jewels. As he looked at it, a mellower lustre, a soft and iridescent light, full of shifting gleams of azure and rose, trembled upon its surface. It seemed to have absorbed some reflection of the colours of the lost sapphire and ruby. So the profound, secret purpose of a noble life draws into itself the memories of past joy and past sorrow. All that has helped it, all that has hindered it, is transfused by a subtle magic into its very essence. It becomes more luminous and precious the longer it is carried close to the warmth of the beating heart.—v, 58.

March ninth

“ And perhaps it seems strange to you also, m’sieu’, that a poor man should be so hungry for children. It is not so everywhere : not in America, I hear. But it is so with us in Canada. I know not a man so poor that he would not feel richer for a child. I know not a man so happy that he would not feel happier with a child in the house. It is the best thing that the good God gives to us ; something to work for ; something to play with. It makes a man more gentle and more strong. And a woman,—her heart is like an empty nest, if she has not a child.”—xvi, 63.

The blessing of children

March tenth

How many of life’s deepest tragedies are only that : no great transgression, no shock of conflict, no sudden catastrophe with its answering thrill of courage and resistance : only a mistake made in the darkness, and under the guidance of what seemed a true and noble motive ; a failure to see the right path at the right moment, and a long wandering beyond it ; a word left unspoken until the ears that should have heard it are sealed, and the tongue that should have spoken it is dumb.—xvi, 207.

Life’s deepest tragedy

March eleventh

*Opportunity or
temptation*

This was the third trial, the ultimate probation, the final and irrevocable choice.

Was it his great opportunity, or his last temptation? He could not tell. One thing only was clear in the darkness of his mind—it was inevitable. And does not the inevitable come from God?

One thing only was sure to his divided heart—to rescue this helpless girl would be a true deed of love. And is not love the light of the soul?

He took the pearl from his bosom. Never had it seemed so luminous, so radiant, so full of tender, living lustre. He laid it in the hand of the slave.

“This is thy ransom, daughter! It is the last of my treasures which I kept for the king.”
—v, 66.

March twelfth

*Peace in a
palace*

It is not until the soul has learned a better wisdom, learned that the human race is one, and that none can really rise by treading on his brother men, learned that true art is not the slave of luxury, but the servant of humanity, learned that happiness is born, not of the lust to possess and enjoy, but of the desire to give and to bless,—then, and not until then, when she brings others with her, can the soul find true rest in her Palace.—II, 45.

March thirteenth

The haste to get riches, the haste to climb upon some pinnacle of worldly renown, the haste to resolve mysteries—from these various kinds of haste are begotten no small part of the miseries and afflictions whereby the children of men are tormented : such as quarrels and strifes among those who would overreach one another in business ; envyings and jealousies among those who would outshine one another in rich apparel and costly equipage ; bloody rebellions and cruel wars among those who would obtain power over their fellow-men ; cloudy disputations and bitter controversies among those who would fain leave no room for modest ignorance and lowly faith among the secrets of religion.—XVI, 128.

*The folly
of haste*

March fourteenth

If we are wise and teachable, we walk with Nature, and let her breathe into our hearts those lessons of humility, and patience, and confidence, and good cheer, and tranquil resignation, and temperate joy, which are her “moral lore,”—lessons which lead her scholars onward through a merry youth, and a strong maturity, and a serene old age, and prepare them by the pure companionship of this world for the enjoyment of a better.—XXI, 29.

*Walking
with
Nature*

March fifteenth

Contrasts

If all the skies were sunshine,
Our faces would be fain
To feel once more upon them
The cooling splash of rain.

If all the world were music,
Our hearts would often long
For one sweet strain of silence,
To break the endless song.

If life were always merry,
Our souls would seek relief,
And rest from weary laughter
In the quiet arms of grief.—IX, 16.

March sixteenth

*The beggar
and the
sixpence*

I am no friend to the people who receive the bounties of Providence without visible gratitude. When the sixpence falls into your hat, you may laugh. When the messenger of an unexpected blessing takes you by the hand and lifts you up and bids you walk, you may leap and run and sing for joy, even as the lame man, whom St. Peter healed, skipped piously and rejoiced aloud as he passed through the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. There is no virtue in solemn indifference. Joy is just as much a duty as beneficence is. Thankfulness is the other side of mercy.—XIII, 26.

March seventeenth

“My son, it may be that the light of truth is in this sign that has appeared in the skies, and then it will surely lead to the Prince and the mighty brightness. Or it may be that it is only a shadow of the light, as Tigranes has said, and then he who follows it will have only a long pilgrimage and an empty search. But it is better to follow even the shadow of the best than to remain content with the worst. And those who would see wonderful things must often be ready to travel alone. I am too old for this journey, but my heart shall be a companion of the pilgrimage day and night, and I shall know the end of thy quest. Go in peace.”—v, 19.

*The ques-
tion and
the quest*

March eighteenth

Moreover, it is not true that a man can dispose of his money *as he chooses*. The purposes for which it can be used are strictly bounded. There are many things that he cannot buy with it; for example, health, long life, wisdom, a cheerful spirit, a clear conscience, peace of mind, a contented heart.

*What
money can-
not buy*

You never see the stock called Happiness quoted on the exchange. How high would it range, think you,—a hundred shares of Happiness Preferred, guaranteed 7%, seller 30? —VIII, 20.

March nineteenth

One world

“The worlds in which we live are two
The world ‘I am’ and the world ‘I do.’”

The worlds in which we live at heart are one,
The world “I am,” the fruit of “I have
done”;

And underneath these worlds of flower and
fruit,

The world “I love”—the only living root.

—xx, 85.

March twentieth

*The Snow-
berry*

One of them is adorned with white pearls
sprinkled lightly over its robe of green. This
is Snowberry, and if you eat of it, you will
grow wise in the wisdom of flowers. You
will know where to find the yellow violet, and
the wake-robin, and the pink lady-slipper,
and the scarlet sage, and the fringed gentian.
You will understand how the buds trust
themselves to the spring in their unfolding,
and how the blossoms trust themselves to the
winter in their withering, and how the busy
hands of Nature are ever weaving the beauti-
ful garment of life out of the strands of
death, and nothing is lost that yields itself to
her quiet handling.—xvii, 130.

March twenty-first

The first day of spring is one thing, and the first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month.

*The year
turns the
corner*

The first day of spring is due to arrive, if the calendar does not break down, about the twenty-first of March, when the earth turns the corner of Sun Alley and starts for Summer Street. But the first spring day is not on the time-table at all. It comes when it is ready, and in the latitude of New York this is usually not till after All Fools' Day.—XIII, 93.

March twenty-second

A river is the most human and companionable of all inanimate things. It has a life, a character, a voice of its own, and is as full of good fellowship as a sugar-maple is of sap. It can talk in various tones, loud or low, and of many subjects, grave and gay. Under favorable circumstances it will even make a shift to sing, not in a fashion that can be reduced to notes and set down in black and white on a sheet of paper, but in a vague, refreshing manner, and to a wandering air that goes

*A river as
a friend*

“Over the hills and far away.”

For real company and friendship, there is nothing outside of the animal kingdom that is comparable to a river.—VI, 9.

March twenty-third

*Gates of
Zion*

The mystery of the heart of mankind, the spiritual airs that breathe through it, the desires and aspirations that impel men in their journeyings, the common hopes that bind them together in companies, the fears and hatreds that array them in warring hosts,—there is no place in the world to-day where you can feel all this so deeply, so inevitably, so overwhelmingly, as at the Gates of Zion.—xxvi, 51.

March twenty-fourth

*America
befriend*

O Lord our God, Thy mighty hand
Hath made our country free;
From all her broad and happy land
May praise arise to Thee.
Fulfill the promise of her youth,
Her liberty defend;
By law and order, love and truth,
America befriend!

Thro' all the waiting land proclaim
Thy gospel of good-will;
And may the music of Thy name
In every bosom thrill.
O'er hill and vale, from sea to sea,
Thy holy reign extend;
By faith and hope and charity,
America befriend!—xxxI, 42.

March twenty-fifth

Who seeks for heaven alone to save his soul, *The way*
May keep the path, but will not reach the goal;
While he who walks in love may wander far,
But God will bring him where the Blessed are.
—IX, 64.

March twenty-sixth

Wondrous power of music! How often *The key of*
has it brought peace, and help, and strength *the heart*
to weary and downcast pilgrims! It penetrates the bosom and unlocks the doors of secret, dumb, self-consuming anguish, so that the sorrow flowing out may leave the soul unburdened and released. It touches the chords of memory, and the cadence of old songs brings back the happy scenes of the past. In the rude mining camp, cut off by the snows of winter, in the narrow cabin of the ship ice-bound in Arctic seas, in the bare, dark rooms of Libby prison where the captive soldiers are trying to beguile the heavy time in company, tears steal down the rough cheeks, and voices quaver with half-pain, half-pleasure, when some one strikes up the familiar notes of "Home, Sweet Home."—I, 163.

March twenty-seventh

*Best
known, best
loved*

Every river that flows is good, and has something worthy to be loved. But those that we love most are always the ones that we have known best,—the stream that ran before our father's door, the current on which we ventured our first boat or cast our first fly, the brook on whose banks we first picked the twinflower of young love. However far we may travel, we come back to Naaman's state of mind: "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?"—vi, 15.

March twenty-eighth

*The peace
of being in
place*

As living beings we are part of a universe of life; as intelligent beings we are in connection with a great circle of conscious intelligences; as spiritual beings we have our place in a moral world controlled and governed by the supreme Spirit. In each of these spheres there is a law, a duty, an obligation, a responsibility, for us. And our felicity lies in the discovery and acknowledgment of those ties which fit us and bind us to take our place, to play our part, to do our work, to 'live our life, where we belong.—IV, 104.

March twenty-ninth

Trees seem to come closer to our life. They are often rooted in our richest feelings, and our sweetest memories, like birds, build nests in their branches. I remember, the last time that I saw James Russell Lowell, (only a few weeks before his musical voice was hushed,) he walked out with me into the quiet garden at Elmwood to say good-by. There was a great horse-chestnut tree beside the house, towering above the gable, and covered with blossoms from base to summit,—a pyramid of green supporting a thousand smaller pyramids of white. The poet looked up at it with his gray, pain-furrowed face, and laid his trembling hand upon the trunk. “I planted the nut,” said he, “from which this tree grew. And my father was with me and showed me how to plant it.”—VI, 10.

*A tree with
deep roots*

March thirtieth

An idea arrives without effort; a form can only be wrought out by patient labour. If your story is worth telling, you ought to love it enough to be willing to work over it until it is true,—true not only to the ideal, but true also to the real. The light is a gift; but the local colour can only be seen by one who looks for it long and steadily.—v, xii.

*Truth in
art*

March thirty-first

One secret

Forget, forget,—
Thou art a child and knowest
So little of thy life! But music tells
One secret of the world thro' which thou
goest
To work with morning song, to rest with
evening bells:
Life is in tune with harmony so deep
That when the notes are lowest
Thou still canst lay thee down in peace
and sleep,
For God will not forget.—xx, 9.

April first

*Love's first
duty*

Surely, if love is supreme, it does not need to wait for anything else to lend it worth and dignity. The very sweetness and power of it lie in the confession of one life as dependent upon another for its fulfilment. It is made strong in its very weakness. It is the only thing, after all, that can break the prison bars and set the heart free from itself. The pride that hinders it, enslaves it. Love's first duty is to be true to itself, in word and deed. Then, having spoken truth and acted verity, it may call on honour to keep it pure and steadfast.—xvi, 209.

April second

These are the things I prize
And hold of dearest worth :
Light of the sapphire skies,
Peace of the silent hills,

*The best
things*

Shelter of forests, comfort of the grass,
Music of birds, murmur of little rills,
Shadow of clouds that swiftly pass,
And, after showers,
The smell of flowers

And of the good brown earth,—
And best of all, along the way, friendship and
mirth.

—XX, 44.

April third

If by chance you pluck the leaves of *Wood-*
Wood-Magic and eat them, you will not *Magic*
know what you have done, but the enchant-
ment of the tree-land will enter your heart
and the charm of the wildwood will flow
through your veins. . . .

At tables spread with dainty fare you will
be hungry for the joy of the hunt, and for
the angler's sylvan feast. In proud cities you
will weary for the sight of a mountain trail ;
in great cathedrals you will think of the long,
arching aisles of the woodland ; and in the
noisy solitude of crowded streets you will
hone after the friendly forest.—XVII, 132.

April fourth

*The first
duty*

“My father,” she answered, “I desire to do the will of God. But how shall I know it? Is it not His first command that we should love and serve Him faithfully in the duty which He has given us? He gave me this light to keep. My father kept it. He is dead. If I am unfaithful what will he say to me? Besides, the supply-boat is coming soon—I have thought of this—when it comes it will bring food. But if the light is out, the boat may be lost. That would be the punishment for my sin. No, *mon père*, we must trust God. He will keep the people. I will keep the light.”—xvi, 286.

April fifth

*The books
that I
want*

I want the books that help me out of the vacancy and despair of a frivolous mind, out of the tangle and confusion of a society that is buried in *bric-à-brac*, out of the meanness of unfeeling mockery and the heaviness of incessant mirth, into a loftier and serener region, where, through the clear air of serious thoughts, I can learn to look soberly and bravely upon the mingled misery and splendour of human existence, and then go down with a cheerful courage to play a man's part in the life which Christ has forever ennobled by his divine presence.—xxii, 171.

April sixth

Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul;
Love is the only angel who can bid the gates unroll:
And when he comes to call thee, arise and follow fast;
His way may lie through darkness, but it leads to light at last.—IX, 48.

*The prison
and the
angel*

April seventh

Is there any reason why our lives should be feeble and stagnant and worthless? Is there any reason why we should not overcome temptation and endure trial, and work the works of God in the world, and come at last to the height of His abode in heaven? Only one,—that we do not know Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Lay hold on Him by faith and all things are possible. Let us clasp the hand of Christ and climb; and as we climb He will lift us out of sin, out of selfishness, out of weakness, out of death, into holiness, into love, into strength, into life, and we shall know the power of His resurrection.—IV, 96.

*Climb, and
be lifted*

April eighth

*Abraham's
oak*

This may not be the very tree that flung its shadow over the tent, but no doubt it is a son or a grandson of that tree, and the acorns that still fall from it may be the seeds of other oaks to shelter future generations of pilgrims; and so throughout the world, the ancient covenant of friendship is unbroken, and man remains a grateful lover of the big, kind trees.—XXVI, 100.

April ninth

*Lupin
and
laurel*

No other time of the year, on our northern Atlantic seaboard, is so alluring, so delicate and subtle in its charm, as that which follows the fading of the bright blue lupins in the meadows and along the banks of the open streams, and precedes the rosy flush of myriad laurels in full bloom on the half-wooded hillsides, and in the forest glades, and under the lofty shadow of the groves of yellow pine. Then, for a little while, the spring delays to bourgeon into summer: the woodland maid lingers at the garden gate of womanhood, reluctant to enter and leave behind the wild sweetness of freedom and uncertainty.—XXV, 141.

April tenth

Dear tranquil Habit, with her silent hands, *Tranquil*
Doth heal our deepest wounds from day *habit*
to day

With cooling, soothing oil, and firmly lay
Around the broken heart her gentle hands.

Her nursing is as calm as Nature's care;
She doth not weep with us; yet none the
less

Her quiet fingers weave forgetfulness,—
We fall asleep in peace when she is there.

—XXVIII, 291.

April eleventh

The heart of the people at large is still *Ideal*
old-fashioned in its adherence to the idea *living*
that every man is responsible to a higher
moral and spiritual power,—that duty is
more than pleasant,—that life cannot be
translated in terms of the five senses, and
that the attempt to do so lowers and de-
grades the man who makes it,—that relig-
ion alone can give an adequate interpre-
tation of life, and that morality alone can
make it worthy of respect and admiration.
This is the characteristic American way of
looking at the complicated and interesting
business of living which we men and women
have upon our hands.—XXVII, 264.

April twelfth

*The puri-
fying hope*

This is what the apostle means by “the power of an endless life.” The passion of immortality is the thing that immortalizes our being. To be in love with heaven is the surest way to be fitted for it. Desire is the magnetic force of character. Character is the compass of life. “He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself.”—VIII, 36.

April thirteenth

*The mark
of the King*

Read the roll of those in every age whom the world has acknowledged as the best Christians, kings and warriors and philosophers, martyrs and heroes and labourers in every noble cause, the purest and the highest of mankind, and you will see that the test by which they are judged, the mark by which they are recognized, is likeness and loyalty to the personal Christ. Then turn to the work which the Church is doing to-day in the lowest and darkest fields of human life, among the submerged classes of our great cities, among the sunken races of heathendom, and you cannot deny that the force of that work to enlighten and uplift, still depends upon the simplicity and reality with which it reveals the person of Jesus to the hearts of men.—VII, 66.

April fourteenth

Even the broken and tumultuous noise
That rises from great cities, where the heart
Of human toil is beating heavily
With ceaseless murmurs of the labouring pulse,
Is not a discord; for it speaks to life
Of life unfeigned, and full of hopes and fears,
And touched through all the trouble of its notes
With something real and therefore glorious.

*The music
in the
tumult*

—XIV, 40.

April fifteenth

“Yes,” she answered, lifting her eyes to his face; “I, too, have felt it, Hermas, this burden, this need, this unsatisfied longing. I think I know what it means. It is gratitude—the language of the heart, the music of happiness. There is no perfect joy without gratitude. But we have never learned it, and the want of it troubles us. It is like being dumb with a heart full of love. We must find the word for it, and say it together. Then we shall be perfectly joined in perfect joy.”—
XI, 47.

Gratitude

April sixteenth

Power

No man in the world to-day has such power as he who can make his fellow-men feel that Christ is a reality.—IV, 244.

April seventeenth

*Prayers
without
words*

Then the moon slips up into the sky from behind the eastern hills, and the fisherman begins to think of home, and of the foolish, fond old rhymes about those whom the moon sees far away, and the stars that have the power to fulfil wishes—as if the celestial bodies knew or cared anything about our small nerve-thrills which we call affection and desires. But if there were Some One above the moon and stars who did know and care, Some One who could see the places and the people that you and I would give so much to see, Some One who could do for them all of kindness that you and I fain would do, Some One able to keep our beloved in perfect peace and watch over the little children sleeping in their beds beyond the sea—what then? Why, then, in the evening hour, one might have thoughts of home that would go across the ocean by way of heaven, and be better than dreams, almost as good as prayers.—VI, 243.

April eighteenth

Companionship is the one thing in the world which is absolutely essential to happiness. The human heart needs fellowship more than anything else, fellowship which is elevated and enduring, stronger and purer than itself, and centered in that which death cannot change. All its springs are in God. Without Him life is a failure and all beyond is a blank.—XVIII, 144.

*The
friendship
of God*

April nineteenth

“Trust me, Scholar, it is the part of wisdom to spend little of your time upon the things that vex and anger you, and much of your time upon the things that bring you quietness and confidence and good cheer. A friend made is better than an enemy punished. There is more of God in the peaceable beauty of this little wood-violet than in all the angry disputations of the sects. We are nearer heaven when we listen to the birds than when we quarrel with our fellow-men. I am sure that none can enter into the spirit of Christ, his evangel, save those who willingly follow his invitation when he says, ‘Come ye yourselves apart into a lonely place, and rest a while.’”—XVI, 136.

*Nature's
invitation*

April twentieth

I

Wings of a dove At sunset, when the rosy light was dying
Far down the pathway of the west,
I saw a lonely dove in silence flying,
To be at rest.

Pilgrim of air, I cried, could I but borrow
Thy wandering wings, thy freedom blest,
I'd fly away from every careful sorrow,
And find my rest.

II

But when the dusk a filmy veil was weaving,
Back came the dove to seek her nest
Deep in the forest where her mate was griev-
ing,—

There was true rest.

Peace, heart of mine! no longer sigh to wan-
der;

Lose not thy life in fruitless quest.

There are no happy islands over yonder;
Come home and rest.—IX, 3.

April twenty-first

Concord

The cottage, no less than the palace, en-
joys the blessings of civil concord and social
harmony. Human life, in every sphere, be-
comes easier and happier and more fruitful, as
men recognize the ties which bind them to
each other, and learn to dwell together in
mutual affection and helpfulness.—I, 245.

April twenty-second

Oh, wot's the use o' "red gods," an' "Pan," *Spring-*
an' all that stuff? *time*

The natcheral facts o' Springtime is wonder-
ful enuff!

An' if there's Someone made 'em, I guess
He understood,

To be alive in Springtime would make a
man feel good.—xxxI, 59.

April twenty-third

The Boy had learned from his mother— *"My*
that God who made and ruled all things *Father"*
was his Father. It was the name she had
taught him to use in his prayers. Not in
the great payers he learned from the book
—the name there was Adonai, the Lord,
the Almighty. But in the little prayers
that he said by himself it was "my Father!"
It made the Boy feel strangely happy and
strong to say that. The whole world seemed
to breathe and glow around him with an
invisible presence. For such a Father, for
the sake of His love and favor, the Boy
felt he could do anything.—xxx, 29.

April twenty-fourth

The larger vision By the breadth of the blue that shines in
silence o'er me,
By the length of the mountain-lines that
stretch before me,
By the height of the cloud that sails, with
rest in motion,
Over the plains and the vales to the measure-
less ocean,
(Oh, how the sight of the things that are
great enlarges the eyes!)
Lead me out of the narrow life, to the peace
of the hills and the skies.—xx, 39.

April twenty-fifth

Good blood “The old Jacques Cartier, the father of
all, when he went home to France, I have
heard that the King made him a lord and
gave him a castle. Why not? He was a
capable man, a brave man; he could sail a
big ship, he could run the rapids of the great
river in his canoe. He could hunt the bear,
the lynx, the carcajou. I suppose all these
men,—marquises and counts and barons,—I
suppose they all lived hard, and slept on the
ground, and used the axe and the paddle when
they came to the woods. It is not the fine
coat that makes the noble. It is the good
blood, the adventure, the brave heart.”—xvi,
222.

April twenty-sixth

What does fatherhood mean? I speak *Heavenly* out the experience of an earthly fatherhood *fatherhood* that has blessed my whole life. It means tenderness, forbearance, watchfulness, firmness to counsel and rebuke, pity for my worst, sympathy for my best, a golden friendship, an undying love. If earthly fatherhood means all that, how much more does heavenly fatherhood mean!—XVIII, 10.

April twenty-seventh

Simplicity, in truth, is less dependent upon *The simple* external things than we imagine. It can live *life* in broadcloth or homespun; it can eat white bread or black. It is not outward, but inward. A certain openness of mind to learn the daily lessons of the school of life; a certain willingness of heart to give and to receive that extra service, that gift beyond the strict measure of debt which makes friendship possible; a certain clearness of spirit to perceive the best in things and people, to love it without fear and to cleave to it without mistrust; a peaceable sureness of affection and taste; a gentle straightforwardness of action; a kind sincerity of speech,—these are the marks of the simple life, which cometh not with observation, for it is within you.—XXI, 36.

April twenty-eighth

*Common
worship*

When a man can willingly forego even the outward services of religion, and stay away from the house of God, and let the seasons of devotion and communion pass by without a thought of regret, his faith and love must be at a low ebb, if indeed they have not altogether dried up and blown away. A living plant seeks water: a living soul longs for the refreshment of the sanctuary.—I, 107.

April twenty-ninth

Education

Surely it would be a good thing, if, in our schools, it could be recognized that a child would far better grow up thinking that the earth is flat, than to remain ignorant of God and moral law and filial duty. And it would be a still better thing, if, in all our homes, there could be a sincere revival of household piety, —piety in the old Roman sense, which means the affectionate reverence of children for parents,—piety in the new Christian sense which means the consecration to the heart of God,—for this would rekindle the flame of devotion upon many a neglected altar, and shed a mild and gracious light through many a gloomy home, making it the brightest, cheerfulest, holiest place on earth.—I, 230.

April thirtieth

But it is not only to the real life of birds and flowers that the little rivers introduce you. They lead you often into familiarity with human nature in undress, rejoicing in the liberty of old clothes, or of none at all. People do not mince along the banks of streams in patent-leather shoes or crepitating silks. Corduroy and homespun and flannel are the stuffs that suit this region; and the frequenters of these paths go their natural gaits, in calf-skin or rubber boots, or bare-footed. The girdle of conventionality is laid aside, and the skirts rise with the spirits.—VI, 25.

*Old clothes
and liberty*

May first

It's little I can tell
About the birds in books;
And yet I know them well,
By their music and their looks:
When May comes down the lane,
Her airy lovers throng
To welcome her with song,
And follow in her train:
Each minstrel weaves his part
In that wild-flowery strain,
And I know them all again
By their echo in my heart.

*The echo
in the heart*

—XIV, 73.

May second

*The oldest
game*

There is a secret pleasure in finding these delicate flowers in the rough heart of the wilderness. It is like discovering the veins of poetry in the character of a guide or a lumberman. And to be able to call the plants by name makes them a hundredfold more sweet and intimate. Naming things is one of the oldest and simplest of human pastimes. Children play at it with their dolls and toy animals. In fact, it was the first game ever played on earth, for the Creator who planted the garden eastward in Eden knew well what would please the childish heart of man, when He brought all the new-made creatures to Adam, "to see what he would call them."—VI, 260.

May third

*When all
things
speak*

God is present with His own people in a sense which belongs to them alone. He is present by the revelations of His glory. They have learned to see His face and hear His voice in the world, so that the stars, which to other men are silent, speak of His wisdom to every faithful heart, and the sea tells of His power, and the fruits and flowers of earth seem to those who love Him as if they were offered by His bountiful hands.—I, 139.

Day fourth

These are the gifts I ask
Of thee, Spirit serene:
Strength for the daily task,
Courage to face the road,
Good cheer to help me bear the traveller's
load,
And, for the hours of rest that come be-
tween,
An inward joy in all things heard and seen.
—xxviii, 60.

*Gifts of
the Spirit*

Day fifth

The mountains that inclose the vale
With walls of granite, steep and high,
Invite the fearless foot to scale
Their stairway toward the sky.
The restless, deep, dividing sea
That flows and foams from shore to shore,
Calls to its sunburned chivalry,
“Push out, set sail, explore!”
The bars of life at which we fret,
That seem to prison and control,
Are but the doors of daring, set
Ajar before the soul.
Say not, “Too poor,” but freely give;
Sigh not, “Too weak,” but boldly try;
You never can begin to live
Until you dare to die.—xxviii, 260.

*Doors of
daring*

May sixth

*The cause
and the
man*

Often does it happen that a man who is engaged in the noblest work needs to be reminded that the cause for which he is labouring is holier than himself.—I, 60.

May seventh

*The pathos
of beauty*

How the heart expands at such a view! Nine miles of shining water lay stretched before us, opening through the mountains that guarded it on both sides with lofty walls of green and gray, ridge over ridge, point beyond point, until the vista ended in

“Yon orange sunset waning slow.”

At a moment like this one feels a sense of exultation. It is a new discovery of the joy of living. And yet, my friend and I confessed to each other there was a tinge of sadness, an inexplicable regret mingled with our joy. Was it the thought of how few human eyes had ever seen that lovely vision? Was it the dim foreboding that we might never see it again? Who can explain the secret pathos of Nature's loveliness? It is a touch of melancholy inherited from our mother Eve. It is an unconscious memory of the lost Paradise. It is the sense that even if we should find another Eden, we would not be fit to enjoy it perfectly, nor stay in it forever.—VI, 210.

May eighth

The evil voices in the souls of men,
Voices of rage and cruelty and fear
Have not dismayed me; for I have perceived
The voices of the good, the kind, the true
Are more in number and excel in strength.
There is more love than hate, more hope than
fear,
In the mixed murmur of the human heart.

Optimism

—XIV, 50.

May ninth

I saw him again at the foot of the pyramids, which lifted their sharp points into the intense saffron glow of the sunset sky, changeless monuments of the perishable glory and the imperishable hope of man. He looked up into the vast countenance of the crouching Sphinx and vainly tried to read the meaning of the calm eyes and smiling mouth. Was it, indeed, the mockery of all effort and all aspiration, as Tigranes had said—the cruel jest of a riddle that has no answer, a search that never can succeed? Or was there a touch of pity and encouragement in that inscrutable smile—a promise that even the defeated should attain a victory, and the disappointed should discover a prize, and the ignorant should be made wise, and the blind should see, and the wandering should come into the haven at last?—v, 54.

*A riddle
and a guess.*

Day tenth

*Wild
flowers*

For my own part, I approve of garden flowers because they are so orderly and so certain; but wild flowers I love, just because there is so much chance about them. Nature is all in favor of certainty in great laws and of uncertainty in small events. You cannot appoint the day and the place for her flower-shows. If you happen to drop in at the right moment she will give you a free admission. But even then it seems as if the table of beauty had been spread for the joy of a higher visitor, and in obedience to secret orders which you have not heard.—XIII, 83.

Day eleventh

*The part-
song of the
seasons*

If men would only hear it! Oh that the deaf ear and the dull heart might be touched and opened to the beautiful speech of the seasons, so that plenty might draw all souls to gratitude, and beauty move all spirits to worship, and every fair landscape, and every overflowing harvest, and every touch of loveliness and grace upon the face of the world, might lift all souls that live and feel from Nature up to Nature's God! This is what He longs for. This is what He means when He tells us, in His impartial sunshine and rain, that He is the Father of all mankind.—IV, 201.

Map twelfth

We are often standing upon the hill of sighs, and looking back to the pleasant places which our feet shall tread no more, recalling the opportunities which have departed, remembering the sweet Sabbaths in the home of childhood, the mornings when we went with the multitude of friends to the house of God, the quiet evenings filled with the voice of sacred song, the days when it seemed easy and natural to be good, when gracious currents of holy influence were bearing us onward, almost without effort, towards a better life.—I, 167.

*The hill of
sighs*

Map thirteenth

The Bible, if indeed it be the true text-book of religion, must contain the answer to man's cry as a sinner to God as a Saviour. It must disclose to man a remedy for the pain, a consolation for the shame, a rescue from the fear, and a confirmation of the secret hope, that he dimly and confusedly feels in the sense of sin. A Bible with no message of deliverance from sin would be a useless luxury in a sinful world. It would lack that quality of perfect fitness to human need which is one of the most luminous evidences of a divine word. The presence of a clear message of salvation is an essential element in the proof of inspiration.—XII, 51.

The Bible

May fourteenth

*An angler's
wish*

When tulips bloom in Union Square,
And timid breaths of vernal air
Go wandering down the dusty town,
Like children lost in Vanity Fair ;

When every long, unlovely row
Of westward houses stands aglow,
And leads the eyes toward sunset skies
Beyond the hills where green trees grow ;

Then weary seems the street parade,
And weary books, and weary trade :
I'm only wishing to go a-fishing ;
For this the month of May was made.

—IX, 6

May fifteenth

*Mutual
blessing*

In our own tongue the word *to bless* is derived from the same root as *blithe* and *bliss*. It conveys the thought of peace and happiness. When we bless God we express the sincere desire that He, as the source of all light and life, as the maker and ruler of the Universe, may ever be filled with infinite calm and joy; that His glory may shine everywhere, and that all His works may praise Him in all places of His dominion. When God blesses us, He promises to satisfy our souls and make us happy.—I, 250.

Map sixteenth

Do you remember that fair little wood of silver birches on the West Branch of the Neversink, somewhat below the place where the Biscuit Brook runs in? There is a mossy terrace raised a couple of feet above the water of a long, still pool; and a very pleasant spot for a friendship-fire on the shingly beach below you; and a plenty of painted trilliums and yellow violets and white foam-flowers to adorn your woodland banquet, if it be spread in the month of May, when Mistress Nature is given over to embroidery.—xvi, 121.

A woodland banquet

Map seventeenth

The real location of a city house depends upon the pictures which hang upon its walls. They are its neighbourhood and its outlook. They confer upon it that touch of life and character, that power to beget love and bind friendship, which a country house receives from its surrounding landscape, the garden that embraces it, the stream that runs near it, and the shaded paths that lead to and from its door.

The magic of pictures

By this magic of pictures my narrow, upright slice of living-space in one of the brown-stone strata on the eastward slope of Manhattan Island is transferred to an open and agreeable site.—xvi, 177.

May eighteenth

The way Who seeks for heaven alone to save his
soul,
May keep the path, but will not reach the
goal;
While he who walks in love may wander
far,
But God will bring him where the Blessed
are.—xxviii, 358.

May nineteenth

*The
helpers* He that turneth from the road to rescue
another,
Turneth toward his goal:
He shall arrive in time by the foot-path
of mercy,
God will be his guide.
He that speaketh comfortable words to
mourners,
Healeth his own hurt:
In the time of grief they will come to his
remembrance,
God will use them for balm.
He that careth for a wounded brother,
Watcheth not alone:
There are three in the darkness together,
And the third is the Lord.
Blessed is the way of the helpers,
The companions of the Christ.—xxviii, 377.

May twentieth

Was it long ago, or was it but yesterday, that we prayed for strength to perform a certain duty, to bear a certain burden, to overcome a certain temptation, and received it? Do we dream that the Divine force was exhausted in answering that one prayer? No more than the great river is exhausted by turning the wheels of one mill. Put it to the proof again with to-day's duty, to-day's burden, to-day's temptation. Thrust yourself further and deeper into the stream of God's power, and feel it again, as you have felt it before, able to do exceeding abundantly. Remember and trust.—IV, 88.

*The force
that fails
not*

May twenty-first

Where you find a flower, you know there must have been a seed. Where you find a river, you know there must be a spring. Where you see a flame, you know there must be a fire. Where you find a man beloved and blessed of God, you know there must be faith. Whether it is recorded or not, whether you can see it or not, it must be there, germ of his virtue, fountain-head of his goodness, living source of warmth and light; for without faith it is impossible to please God.—IV, 31,

*The flower
and the
seed*

Chapter twenty-second

*The work
that en-
dures*

We long to leave something behind us which shall last, some influence of good which shall be transmitted through our children, some impress of character or action which shall endure and perpetuate itself. There is only one way in which we can do this, only one way in which our lives can receive any lasting beauty and dignity; and that is by being taken up into the great plan of God. Then the fragments of broken glass glow with an immortal meaning in the design of His grand mosaic. Then our work is established, because it becomes part of His work.—I, 23.

Chapter twenty-third

*Spiritual
power*

The vision of spiritual power, even as we see it in the imperfect manifestations of human life, is ennobling and uplifting. The rush of courage along the perilous path of duty is finer than the foaming leap of the torrent from the crag. Integrity resisting temptation overtops the mountains in grandeur. Love, giving and blessing without stint, has a beauty and a potency of which the sunlight is but a faint and feeble image. When we see these things they thrill us with joy; they enlarge and enrich our souls.—IV, 80.

May twenty-fourth

Little rivers seem to have the indefinable quality that belongs to certain people in the world,—the power of drawing attention without courting it, the faculty of exciting interest by their very presence and way of doing things.—VI, 19.

*A nameless
charm*

May twenty-fifth

The boy enjoyed this kind of father at the time, and later he came to understand, with a grateful heart, that there is no richer inheritance in all the treasury of unearned blessings. For, after all, the love, the patience, the kindly wisdom of a grown man who can enter into the perplexities and turbulent impulses of a boy's heart, and give him cheerful companionship, and lead him on by free and joyful ways to know and choose the things that are pure and lovely and of good report, make as fair an image as we can find of that loving, patient Wisdom which must be above us all if any good is to come out of our childish race.—VI, 38.

Fatherhood

May twenty-sixth

*God's
altar*

God's altar is in every loyal heart,
And every flame of love that kindles there
Ascends to Him and brightens with His
praise.

There is no other God! But evil Powers
Make war against Him in the darkened
world;

And many temples have been built to them.

—xxviii, 438.

May twenty-seventh

*The un-
seen altar*

Man the maker of cities is also a builder
of altars,

He setteth tables for the gods among his
habitations.

O my God, these are the altars of ignorance:
They are built by thy children who do not
know thee.

Then the Lord mercifully sent his angel
forth to lead me,

And I came through the courts of the tem-
ple to the holy of holies.

Here the multitudes are kneeling in the
silence of the spirit,

They are kneeling at the unseen altar of
the lowly heart.—xxviii, 372.

Day twenty-eight

To those who trust in the Lord and do good, to those who lie down with thoughts of His mercy and truth, it matters not whether they awake in a curtained chamber or in a wild cavern, "the light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing to behold the sun."—I, 50.

*Sleeping
and waking*

Day twenty-ninth

Many people are so afraid to die that they have never begun to live. But courage emancipates us and gives us to ourselves, that we may give ourselves freely and without fear to God. How sweet and clear and steady is the life into which this virtue enters day by day, not merely in those great flashes of excitement which come in the moments of crisis, but in the presence of the hourly perils, the continual conflicts. Not to tremble at the shadows which surround us, not to shrink from the foes who threaten us, not to hesitate and falter and stand despairing still among the perplexities and trials of our life, but to move steadily onward without fear, if only we can keep ourselves without reproach,—surely that is what the Psalmist meant by good courage and strength of heart, and it is a most comfortable, pleasant, peaceful, and happy virtue.—IV, 58.

*Fear not,
but live*

Map thirtieth

*Decoration
Day*

There is considerable talk just now about the New South, as if this were a great discovery which some one had made, or a new region which some fluent orator had created, and as if this discovery or creation would account for the present condition of affairs. But in fact it is just the old South and the old North, anointed with the oil of brotherly love, which has flowed down from the head even to the fringe of the garments.—I, 241.

Map thirty-first

*The better
future*

Do we hear the voices of hope and cheer rising on every side and answering from land to land, proclaiming the promise of a better day in the future than any that have dawned in the past, prophesying through all discouragements and regrets that the course of mankind is not downward but upward, acknowledging that when all men are like Christ earth will be like heaven? It is the divinity of King Jesus, manifested in human flesh, real, living, and eternal, the hope, the joy, the glory of mankind.—I, 126.

June first

Every meadow and every woodland is a college, and every city square is full of teachers. Do you know how the stream flows, how the kingfisher poises above it, how the trout swims in it, how the ferns uncurl along its banks? Do you know the structural aspect of man's temples and palaces and bridges, of nature's mountains and trees and flowers? Do you know the tones and accents of human speech, the songs of birds, the voices of the forests and the sea? If not, you need creative culture to make you a sensitive possessor of the beauty of the world.—
XXII, 234.

*The seeing
eye*

June second

By the faith that the flowers show when they bloom unbidden,
By the calm of the river's flow to a goal that is hidden,
By the trust of the tree that clings to its deep foundation,
By the courage of wild birds' wings on the long migration,
(Wonderful secret of peace that abides in Nature's breast!)

Teach me how to confide, and live my life,
and rest.—XX, 41.

*Nature's
trust*

June third

*Song of a
pilgrim-
soul*

March on, my soul, nor like a laggard stay!
March swiftly on. Yet err not from the way
Where all the nobly wise of old have trod—
The path of faith made by the sons of God.

Follow the marks that they have set beside
The narrow, cloud-swept track, to be thy
guide :

Follow, and honour what the past has gained,
And forward still, that more may be attained.

Something to learn, and something to forget :
Hold fast the good, and seek the better yet :
Press on, and prove the pilgrim-hope of
youth,—

That Creeds are milestones on the road to
Truth.—IX, 57.

June fourth

*Loved into
loving*

The special, personal, elective love of Christ
for His own is not exclusive ; it is magnifi-
cently and illimitably inclusive. He loved
His disciples into loving their fellow-men.
He lifted them into union with God ; but He
did not lift them out of union with the world ;
and every tie that bound them to humanity,
every friendship, every fellowship, every link
of human intercourse, was to be a channel for
the grace of God that bringeth salvation, that
it might appear to all men.—VII, 310.

June fifth

It is said that a friend once asked the great composer Haydn, why his church music was always so full of gladness. He answered, "I cannot make it otherwise. I write according to the thoughts I feel; when I think upon my God, my heart is so full of joy that the notes dance and leap from my pen; and since God has given me a cheerful heart, it will be pardoned me that I serve Him with a cheerful spirit."

*Cheerful
religion*

Pardoned? Nay, it will be praised and rewarded. For God looks with approval, and man turns with gratitude, to every one who shows by a cheerful life that religion is a blessing for this world and the next.—1, 96.

June sixth

A dumb love is acceptable only from the lower animals. God has given us speech that we should call upon His name. Worship is to religion what fragrance is to the flower. . . . Be not ashamed to bow your knees where men can see you. Be not ashamed to sing His praise where men can hear you. There is nothing that can become you so much as to speak well of your heavenly Father.—1, 256.

*Be not
silent*

June seventh

*Thorns and
roses*

The best rose-bush, after all, is not that which has the fewest thorns, but that which bears the finest roses.—XIII, 149.

June eighth

*The river
of dreams*

The river of dreams runs silently down
By a secret way that no man knows ;
But the soul lives on while the dream-
tide flows
Through the gardens bright, or the forests
brown ;
And I think sometimes that our whole
life seems
To be more than half made up of dreams.
For its changing sights, and its passing
shows,
And its morning hopes, and its midnight
fears,
Are left behind with the vanished years.
Onward, with ceaseless motion,
The life-stream flows to the ocean,—
And we follow the tide, awake or asleep,
Till we see the dawn on Love's great
deep,
When the bar at the harbour-mouth is
crossed,
And the river of dreams in the sea is lost.
—XIV, 83.

June ninth

When Christian Theology has fully returned to its vital centre in Christ, and its divided forces are reunited, amid the hostile camps and warring elements of modern society, in a simple and potent ministry of deliverance and blessing to all the oppressed and comfortless "In His Name"; when art has felt the vivid reality and the ideal beauty of this humane gospel of the personal entrance of God into the life of man, and has come back to it for what art needs to-day more than all else—a deep, living, spiritual impulse and inspiration—then art will render a more perfect service to religion, and religion will give a new elevation to art.—III, 109.

Art and religion

June tenth

Men draw a broad line between the public and the private, and think that the evils of society can be cured without paying any attention to the virtues of the household, or that the purity of family life can be maintained without regard to the atmosphere of society. But the Bible teaches us that the public and the private depend upon each other, and that the welfare of the city and the welfare of the home are bound up together.—I, 225.

The city and the home

June eleventh

*Live your
prayers*

There is no good in praying for anything unless you will also try for it. All the sighs and supplications in the world will not bring wisdom to the heart that fills itself with folly every day, or mercy to the soul that sinks itself in sin, or usefulness and honor to the life that wastes itself in vanity and inanity.—I, 21.

June twelfth

*The gates
of hearing*

Through the outer portals of the ear
Only the outer voice of things may pass ;
And through the middle doorways of the mind
Only the half-formed voice of human thoughts,
Uncertain and perplexed with endless doubt ;
But through the inmost gate the spirit hears
The voice of that great Spirit who is Life.
Beneath the tones of living things, He breathes
A deeper tone than ever ear hath heard ;
And underneath the troubled thoughts of men,
He thinks forever, and His thought is peace.
Behold, I touch thee once again, my child :
The third and last of those three hidden gates
That closed around thy soul and shut thee in,
Falls open now, and thou shalt truly hear.

—XIV, 51.

June thirteenth

Thank God we can see, in the glory of morn, *Banners*
The invincible flag that our fathers de- *of free-*
fended; *dom*
And our hearts can repeat what the heroes
have sworn,
That war shall not end till the war-lust
is ended.
Then the bloodthirsty sword shall no longer
be lord
Of the nations oppressed by the conqueror's
horde,
But the banners of freedom shall peace-
fully wave
O'er the world of the free and the lands
of the brave.—XXXII.

June fourteenth

First of the flags of earth to dare *“Old*
A heraldry so high; *Glory”*
First of the flags of earth to bear
The blazons of the sky . . .
O bright flag, O brave flag, O flag to lead
the free!
The hand of God thy colours blent,
And heaven to earth thy glory lent,
To shield the weak, and guide the strong
To make an end of human wrong,
And draw a countless human host to follow
after thee!—XXVIII, 193, 201.

June fifteenth

*A vagrant
wish*

The harvest of the gardens and the orchards, the result of prudent planting and patient cultivation, is full of satisfaction. We anticipate it in due season, and when it comes we fill our mouths and are grateful. But pray, kind Providence, let me slip over the fence out of the garden now and then, to shake a nut-tree that grows untended in the wood. Give me liberty to put off my black coat for a day, and go a-fishing on a free stream, and find by chance a wild strawberry.—XIII, 89.

June sixteenth

*Simplify
your faith*

We must get back from the confusions of theology to the simplicity that is in Christ. We must see clearly that our central message is not the gospel of a system, but the gospel of a Person. We must hold fast the true humanity of Jesus in order that we may know what is meant by His true divinity. We must recognize His supreme authority in the interpretation of the Bible itself. We must accept His revelations of human liberty and divine sovereignty. Above all, we must accept His great truth of election to service as our only salvation from the curse of sin, which is selfishness.—VII, ix.

June seventeenth

Far richer than a thornless rose
Whose branch with beauty never glows,
Is that which every June adorns
With perfect bloom among its thorns.

*Thorn
and rose*

Merely to live without a pain
Is little gladness, little gain,
Ah, welcome joy tho' mixt with grief,—
The thorn-set flower that crowns the leaf.

—XXXI, 52.

June eighteenth

Gerasa was as really a part of God's big world as Shechem or Jezreel or Sychar. It stood in His sight, and He must have regarded the human souls that lived there. He must have cared for them, and watched over them, and judged them equitably, dividing the just from the unjust, the children of love from the children of hate, even as He did with men on the other side of the Jordan, even as He does with all men everywhere to-day. If faith in a God who is the Father and Lord of all mankind means anything it means this: equal care, equal justice, equal mercy for all the world. Gerasa has been forgotten of men, but God never forgot it.—XXVI, 195.

*Divine
equality*

June nineteenth

Matins

Flowers, when the night is done,
Lift their heads to greet the sun;
Sweetest looks and odours raise,
In a silent hymn of praise.

So my heart would turn away
From the darkness to the day;
Lying open, in God's sight,
As a flower in the light.—IX, 11.

June twentieth

*The friend-
ship-fire*

All he needs now, as he sets out to spend a day on the Neversink, or the Willowemoc, or the Shepaug, or the Swiftwater, is a good lunch in his pocket, and a little friendship-fire to burn pleasantly beside him while he eats his frugal fare and prolongs his noonday rest.

This form of fire does less work than any other in the world. Yet it is far from being useless; and I, for one, should be sorry to live without it. Its only use is to make a visible centre of interest where there are two or three anglers eating their lunch together, or to supply a kind of companionship to a lone fisherman. It is kindled and burns for no other purpose than to give you the sense of being at home and at ease. Why the fire should do this, I cannot tell, but it does.—XIII, 226.

June twenty-first

Fiction, like wine, tastes best in the place where it was grown. And the scenery of a foreign land (including architecture, which is artificial landscape) grows less dreamlike and unreal to our perception when we people it with familiar characters from our favourite novels. Even on a first journey we feel ourselves among old friends.—VI, 84.

*Books and
travel*

June twenty-second

In the time of adversity one should prepare for prosperity. I fancy there are a good many people unconsciously repeating the mistake of the Canadian farmer—chopping down all the native growths of life, clearing the ground of all the useless pretty things that seem to cumber it, sacrificing everything to utility and success. We fell the last green tree for the sake of raising an extra hill of potatoes; and never stop to think what an ugly, barren place we may have to sit in while we eat them. The ideals, the attachments—yes, even the dreams of youth are worth saving. For the artificial tastes with which age tries to make good their loss grow very slowly and cast but a slender shade.—VI, 201.

*Save some
trees and
dreams*

June twenty-third

Time

Time is
Too Slow for those who Wait,
Too Swift for those who Fear,
Too Long for those who Grieve,
Too Short for those who Rejoice;
But for those who Love,
Time is not.—xx, 105.

June twenty-fourth

Reliance

Not to the swift, the race :
Not to the strong, the fight :
Not to the righteous, perfect grace :
Not to the wise, the light.

But often faltering feet
Come surest to the goal ;
And they who walk in darkness meet
The sunrise of the soul.

The truth the wise men sought
Was spoken by a child ;
The alabaster box was brought
In trembling hands defiled.

Not from my torch, the gleam,
But from the stars above :
Not from my heart, life's crystal stream,
But from the depths of Love.—xx, 100.

June twenty-fifth

Christianity is complete, and has been so ever since it was embodied in the life of Christ. Every one who has Christ in his heart has the whole of it; nothing can be added, nothing can be taken away. But the understanding of it, the living sense of what it means, comes only by degrees, to different men and to different ages. Even yet, as we gladly believe, the Church has much undiscovered country and many hidden treasures in that territory of truth which she has possessed from the beginning.—III, 48.

*Hidden
treasures*

June twenty-sixth

The first time that I ever heard the skylark was on the great plain of Salisbury. Sheep were feeding and shepherds were watching near by. From the contentment of her lowly nest in the grass the songstress rose on quivering wings, pouring out a perfect flood of joy. With infinite courage the feathered atom breasted the spaces of the sky, as if her music lifted her irresistibly upward. With sublime confidence she passed out of sight into the azure; but not out of hearing, for her cheerful voice fell yet more sweetly through the distance, as if it were saying, "Forever, forever!"—I, 36.

*A skylark
singing*

June twenty-seventh

*Content-
ment*

Why should we be disturbed, and harassed, and filled with gloom, at the chances of commerce and the changes of business? Our peace of mind is worth more than all things else, and this we can keep in a log cabin or in a hut of turf. Is not this the lesson which Christ would have us learn from the lilies and the sparrows? God may give us more or less, but so long as we are content, it will always be enough and we cannot want.—
I, 33.

June twenty-eighth

*The One
Who abides*

The person of Jesus Christ stands solid in the history of man. He is indeed more substantial, more abiding, in human apprehension, than any form of matter, or any mode of force. The conceptions of earth and air and fire and water change and melt around Him, as the clouds melt and change around an everlasting mountain peak. All attempts to resolve Him into a myth, a legend, an idea,—and hundreds of such attempts have been made,—have drifted over the enduring reality of His character and left not a rack behind. The result of all criticism, the final verdict of enlightened common-sense, is that Christ is historical.—VII, 58.

June twenty-ninth

O who will walk a mile with me
Along life's merry way?
A comrade blithe and full of glee,
Who dares to laugh out loud and free,
And let his frolic fancy play,
Like a happy child, through the flowers gay
That fill the field and fringe the way
Where he walks a mile with me.

*A mile
with me*

And who will walk a mile with me
Along life's weary way?
A friend whose heart has eyes to see
The stars shine out o'er the darkening lea,
And the quiet rest at the end o' the day,—
A friend who knows, and dares to say,
The brave, sweet words that cheer the way
Where he walks a mile with me.

With such a comrade, such a friend,
I fain would walk till journeys end,
Through summer sunshine, winter rain,
And then?—Farewell, we shall meet again!

—xx, 75.

June thirtieth

“Ride into the wind,” said Lancelot, “and what chance soever it blows thee, thereby do thy best, as it were the first and the last. Take not thy hand from it until it be fulfilled. So shalt thou most quickly and worthily achieve knighthood.”—xvii, 51.

*Life's ad-
venture*

July first

*The Fresh-
air Fund*

Think of the beautiful charity which carries vast multitudes of little ones every summer out of the crowded city into the fresh air of the country. How did that begin? In the attempt of a country minister to bring a score of poor children to spend a few days in the farm-houses of his scanty parish. What can we do? Nothing. What can God do with us? Anything; whatsoever He will.—IV, 90.

July second

In motion

But wherever you are, and whoever you may be, there is one thing in which you and I are just alike, at this moment, and in all the moments of our existence. We are not at rest; we are on a journey. Our life is not a mere fact; it is a movement, a tendency, a steady, ceaseless progress towards an unseen goal. We are gaining something, or losing something every day. Even when our position and our character seem to remain precisely the same, they are changing. For the mere advance of time is a change. It is not the same thing to have a bare field in January and in July. The season makes the difference. The limitations that are childlike in the child are childish in the man.—VIII, 11.

July third

The inward joy and power of our life, in every sphere, come from the discovery that its highest obligation rests at last upon the law of gratitude. In every tie that binds us we are made free and glad to serve, when we recognize that we have been "bought with a price."—IV, 109.

*Gratitude
as a law*

July fourth

The love of liberty.

There is no deeper passion than this, native to the human heart. To be free, to move in accordance with voluntary choice, to render submission only where it is due, to follow reason and conscience willingly without the compulsion of brute force—this is the instinct of personality. The nobler the race, the more highly developed the individual, the stronger and more ardent does this passion become. It is no mere self-asserting spirit of revolt against lawful authority, no wild, untrammelled desire to fling the reins upon the neck of appetite and indulge the personal impulses without restraint. The lover of liberty is always a lover of law. He desires to follow the best, not the worst; and he rebels, not against the restraints of justice, but against the constraints of power; not against the yoke of service, but against the chains of bondage.—I, 177.

Independence Day

July fifth

*American
ideals*

Democracy can never be extended by force, as you would fling a net over a flock of birds; but give it a chance and it will grow, as a tree grows, by sending down its roots into the heart of humanity and lifting its top toward the light and spreading its arms wider and wider until all the persecuted flocks of heaven find refuge beneath its protecting shade.

The ideal of American manhood, the ideal of American government, the ideal of American glory and influence—these three are the ancestral ideals that have been the strength and prosperity of America through the nineteenth century. Will they endure through the twentieth century?—xxii, 99.

July sixth

*The ascend-
ing path*

If you are looking for that which is best in the men and women with whom you come into contact; if you are seeking also to give them that which is best in yourself; if you are looking for a friendship which shall help you to know yourself as you are and to fulfill yourself as you ought to be; if you are looking for a love which shall not be a flattering dream and a madness of desire, but a true comradeship and a mutual inspiration to all nobility of living, then you are surely on the ascending path.—xviii, 33.

July seventh

“*In la sua voluntate è nostra pace.*”

*The Great
River*

O mighty river! strong, eternal Will,
Wherein the streams of human good and ill
Are onward swept, conflicting, to the sea,
The world is safe because it floats in Thee.

—ix, 66.

July eighth

The psalmists delight in the vision of the world, and their joy quickens their senses to read alike the larger hieroglyphs of glory written in the stars and the delicate tracings of transient beauty on leaf and flower; to hear alike the mighty roaring of the sea and the soft, sweet laughter of the rustling cornfields. But in all these they see and hear the handwriting and the voice of God. It is His presence that makes the world sublime and beautiful. The direct, piercing, elevating sense of this presence simplifies, enlarges, and ennobles their style, and makes it different from other nature-poetry. They never lose themselves, like Theocritus and Wordsworth and Shelley and Tennyson, in the contemplation and description of natural beauty. They see it, but they always see beyond it.—xv, 24.

*Beyond
beauty*

July ninth

*Living at
second hand*

The people who always live in houses, and sleep on beds, and walk on pavements, and buy their food from butchers and bakers and grocers, are not the most blessed inhabitants of this wide and various earth. The circumstances of their existence are too mathematical and secure for perfect contentment. They live at second or third hand. They are boarders in the world. Everything is done for them by somebody else.—XIII, 14.

July tenth

*A defence
of angling*

Suppose the fish is not caught by an angler, what is his alternative fate? He will either perish miserably in the struggles of the crowded net, or die of old age and starvation like the long, lean stragglers which are sometimes found in the shallow pools, or be devoured by a larger fish, or torn to pieces by a seal or an otter. Compared with any of these miserable deaths, the fate of a salmon who is hooked in a clear stream and after a glorious fight receives the happy dispatch at the moment when he touches the shore, is a sort of euthanasia. And, since the fish was made to be man's food, the angler who brings him to the table of destiny in the cleanest, quickest, kindest way is, in fact, his benefactor.—VI, 135.

July eleventh

Imitation may be the sincerest flattery, but imitation never produces the deepest resemblance. The man who imitates is concerned with that which is outward; but kinship of spirit is inward. He who is next of kin to a master-mind will be too great for the work of a copyist; he will be influenced, if at all, unconsciously; and though the intellectual relationship may be expressed also in some external traits of speech and manner, the true likeness will be in the temper of the soul and the sameness of the moral purpose.—II, 93.

*Likeness
without
imitation*

July twelfth

A vessel filled to the brim with water is apt to spill a little when it is shaken. Peter is so full of human nature that, whenever he is excited or agitated, it seems to overflow, and some word or deed comes out, which would be almost childish in its impulsiveness, if it were not for the virile force of the great strong heart behind it. The consequence of this is, that he is more often in trouble, more frequently rebuked and corrected, than any other of the disciples.—IV, 169.

*A saint
with a full
heart*



July thirteenth

America

I love thine inland seas,
Thy groves of giant trees,
Thy rolling plains;
Thy rivers' mighty sweep,
Thy mystic canyons deep,
Thy mountains wild and steep,
All thy domains;

Thy silver Eastern strands,
Thy Golden Gate that stands
Wide to the West;
Thy flowery Southland fair,
Thy sweet and crystal air,—
O land beyond compare,
Thee I love best!—XXVIII, 140.

July fourteenth

France

Give us a name to move the heart
With the strength that noble griefs impart,
A name that speaks of the blood outpoured
To save mankind from the sway of the
sword,—
A name that calls on the world to share
In the burden of sacrificial strife
When the cause at stake is the world's free
life
And the rule of the people everywhere,—
A name like a vow, a name like a prayer.
I give you *France*!—XXXII.

July fifteenth

Christianity is something more than a system of doctrines; it is a life, a tone, a spirit, a great current of memories, beliefs, and hopes flowing through millions of hearts. And he who launches his words upon this current finds that they are carried with a strength beyond his own, and freighted often with a meaning which he himself has not fully understood as it flashed through him.—II, 274.

*The tide of
faith*

July sixteenth

“Born within a lowly stable, where the cattle
round Me stood,
Trained a carpenter in Nazareth, I have toiled,
and found it good.

*The King
of the
workers*

“They who tread the path of labour follow
where My feet have trod;
They who work without complaining do the
holy will of God.

“Where the many toil together, there am I
among My own;
Where the tired workman sleepeth, there am
I with him alone.”—XIV, 22.

July seventeenth

*Whither
bound?*

We cannot divide our work from ourselves, nor isolate our future from our qualities. A ship might as well try to sail north with her jib, and east with her foresail, and south with her mainsail, as a man to go one way in conduct, and another way in character, and another way in destiny.

What we do belongs to what we are; and what we are is what becomes of us.—VIII, 12.

July eighteenth

*Fruit in
old age*

In the secluded garden of Christ's College, at Cambridge, there is a mulberry-tree of which tradition says that it was planted by John Milton in his student days. I remember sitting on the green turf below it, a few years ago, and looking up at the branches, heavy with age and propped on crutches, and wondering to see that the old tree still brought forth fruit. It was not the size nor the quality of the fruit that impressed me. I hardly thought of that. The strange thing, the beautiful thing, was that, after so many years, the tree was yet bearing.—II, 279.

July nineteenth

There are two good rules which ought to be written upon every heart. Never believe anything bad about anybody, unless you positively know that it is true. Never tell even that, unless you feel that it is absolutely necessary, and that God is listening while you tell it.—I, 49.

*Two good
rules*

July twentieth

Talk is that form of human speech which is exempt from all duties, foreign and domestic. It is the nearest thing in the world to thinking and feeling aloud. It is necessarily not for publication—solely an evidence of good faith and mutual kindness. You tell me what you have seen and what you are thinking about, because you take it for granted that it will interest and entertain me; and you listen to my replies and the recital of my adventures and opinions, because you know I like to tell them, and because you find something in them, of one kind or another, that you care to hear. It is a nice game, with easy, simple rules, and endless possibilities of variation. And if we go into it with the right spirit, and play it for love, without heavy stakes, the chances are that if we happen to be fairly talkable people we shall have one of the best things in the world,—a mighty good talk.—XIII, 59.

Talk

July twenty-first

*The point
of view*

Indeed, it is not from the highest peaks, according to my experience, that one gets the grandest prospects, but rather from those of middle height, which are so isolated as to give a wide circle of vision, and from which one can see both the valleys and the summits. Monte Rosa itself gives a less imposing view than the Gorner Grat.

It is possible, in this world, to climb too high for pleasure.—VI, 162.

July twenty-second

“In the shadow of thy wings I take refuge.”

*The pro-
tecting
shadow*

How exquisite is the beauty of this figure, and how perfect is the spiritual repose which it expresses! David was not content with an image drawn from the cavern in which he had found shelter. It was not enough for him to say that the care in which he confided was like the great walls and overarching roof of the cave. He felt that God was nearer than these, that He brooded above His people as a mother-bird covers her nest with her own feathers. High in the air the cruel hawks go sailing by; but they cannot reach the nest; even their black shadows cannot fall upon it so long as it is protected by the shadow of those other, greater wings.—I, 46.

July twenty-third

Now, far beyond all language and all art *The Grand*
In thy wild splendour, Canyon Marvellous, *Canyon*
The secret of thy stillness lies unveiled
In wordless worship! This is holy ground,—
Thou art no grave, no prison, but a shrine.
Garden of Temples filled with Silent Praise,
If God were blind thy Beauty could not be!
—XXXI, 8.

July twenty-fourth

There was something in that land, surely, *The Holy*
some personal and indefinable spirit of *Land*
place, which was known and loved by
prophet and psalmist, and most of all by
Him who spread His table on the green
grass, and taught His disciples while they
walked the narrow paths waist-deep in
rustling wheat, and spoke His messages of
love from a little boat rocking on the lake,
and found His asylum of prayer high on
the mountainside, and kept His parting-
hour with His friends in the moon-silvered
quiet of the garden of olives. That spirit
of place, that soul of the Holy Land, is
what I fain would meet on my pilgrim-
age,—for the sake of Him who interprets it
in love. And I know well where to find it,—
out-of-doors.—XXVI, 6.

July twenty-fifth

The waking of the soul

And it is well also when the spiritual powers are roused with the physical. It is well when the soul is active and excited; moved and thrilled by feeling, as the flowers in the field are stirred by the morning breeze. Then the sweet odours flow out. The bells do not ring until they swing. The birds do not please us until they leave their nests and begin to warble their sweet notes.—I, 50.

July twenty-sixth

Observation as a duty

Do you suppose that this wondrous stage of earth was set, and all the myriad actors on it taught to play their parts, without a spectator in view? Do you think that there is anything better for you and me to do, now and then, than to sit down quietly in a humble seat, and watch a few scenes in the drama? Has it not something to say to us, and do we not understand it best when we have a peaceful heart and free from dolor? That is what *in-dolence* means, and there are no better teachers of it than the light-hearted birds and un-toiling flowers, commended by the wisest of all masters to our consideration; nor can we find a more pleasant pedagogue to lead us to their school than a small, merry brook.—XIII, 194.

July twenty-seventh

Goodness of heart, freedom of spirit, gaiety of temper, and friendliness of disposition,—these are four fine things, and doubtless as acceptable to God as they are agreeable to men. The talkability which springs out of these qualities has its roots in a good soil. On such a plant one need not look for the poison berries of malign discourse, nor for the Dead Sea apples of frivolous mockery. But fair fruit will be there, pleasant to the sight and good for food, brought forth abundantly according to the season.—XIII, 61.

Four fine things

July twenty-eighth

Poets like Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth; novelists like Scott and romancers like Hawthorne; essayists like Bacon, Steele, and Addison; critics of life, unsystematic philosophers, like Carlyle and Ruskin,—all draw upon the Bible as a treasury of illustrations, and use it as a book equally familiar to themselves and to their readers. It is impossible to put too high a value upon such a universal volume, even as a mere literary possession. It forms a bond of sympathy between the most cultivated and the simplest of the people. The same book lies upon the desk of the scholar and in the cupboard of the peasant.—II, 246.

The Bible a bond of sympathy

July twenty-ninth

*Our school-
masters*

Facts are teachers. Experiences are lessons. Friends are guides. Work is a master. Love is an interpreter. Teaching itself is a method of learning. Joy carries a divining rod and discovers fountains. Sorrow is an astronomer and shows us the stars.

What I have lived I really know, and what I really know I partly own; and so, begirt with what I know and what I own, I move through my curriculum, elective and required, gaining nothing but what I learn, at once instructed and examined by every duty and every pleasure.—XXI, 3.

July thirtieth

*Summer
night*

The night deepened around him and the sky hung out its thousand lamps. Odours of the woods floated on the air: the spicy fragrance of the firs; the breath of hidden banks of twin-flower. Musk-rats swam noiselessly in the shadows, diving with a great commotion as the canoe ran upon them suddenly. A horned owl hooted from the branch of a dead pine-tree; far back in the forest a fox barked twice. The moon crept up behind the wall of trees and touched the stream with silver.—XVII, 144.

July thirty-first

It is here, in this quaint and carefully *Geth-*
tended garden, this precious place which *semane*
has been saved alike from the oblivious
trampling of the crowd and from the need-
less imprisonment of four walls and a roof,
it is here in the open air, in the calm glow of
the afternoon, under the shadow of Mount
Zion, that we find for the first time that
which we have come so far to seek,—the
soul of the Holy Land, the inward sense
of the real presence of Jesus.—xxvi, 79.

August first

A deeper crimson in the rose,
A deeper blue in sky and sea,
And ever, as the summer goes,
A deeper loss in losing thee!

Dorothea

A deeper music in the strain
Of hermit-thrush from lonely tree;
And deeper grows the sense of gain
My life has found in having thee.

A deeper love, a deeper rest,
A deeper joy in all I see;
And ever deeper in my breast
A silver song that comes from thee.

—xxxI, 46.

August second

*Spirit of
music*

The instruments were but the tools. The composer was the master-designer. The leader and his orchestra were the weavers of the rich robe of sound, in which alone the hidden spirit of Music, daughter of Psyche and Amor, becomes perceptible to mortal sense.

The smooth and harmonious action of the players seemed to lend a new charm, delicate and indefinable, to the development of the clear and heart-strengthening theme with its subtle variations and its powerful, emphatic close, like the fulness of meaning in the last line of a noble sonnet.

—XXIX, 94.

August third

*The
music-
lover*

But silence alone would not have healed and restored his spirit. It needed the presence of music: tones measured, ordered, and restrained; varied and blended not by chance, but by feeling and reason; sound expressive of the secret life and the rhythmical emotion of the human heart. And this he found flowing all around him, entering deeply into him, filling all the parched and empty channels of his being, as he listened to Beethoven's great Symphony in C Minor.—XXIX, 88.

August fourth

Every moment of life, I suppose, is more or less of a turning-point. Opportunities are swarming around us all the time thicker than gnats at sundown. We walk through a cloud of chances, and if we were always conscious of them they would worry us almost to death.

But happily our sense of uncertainty is soothed and cushioned by habit, so that we can live comfortably with it.—XIII, 35.

*Critical
moments*

August fifth

Music lends a strange sweetness to the remembrance of the past, and makes the troubles of the present heavier, yet easier to bear. And then it borrows the comfort of hope. It drops the threads of sorrow one by one, and catches the sweet beams of light reflected from the future, and weaves them magically in among its harmonies, blending, brightening, softening the mystic web, until we are enclosed, we know not how, in a garment of consolation, and the cold, tired heart finds itself warmed, and rested, and filled with courage. Most gracious ministry of music! Happy are they who know how to exercise it in simplicity and love; happy they whose life-pilgrimage is cheered and lightened by such service.—I, 164.

Music

August sixth

*The liberty
of joy*

“A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” The land of wealth is not the empire of peace. Joy is not bounded on the north by poverty, on the east by obscurity, on the west by simplicity, and on the south by servitude. It runs far over these borders on every side. The lowliest, plainest, narrowest life may be the sweetest.—VII, 289.

August seventh

*The meas-
ure of suc-
cess*

What does it profit a man to be the landed proprietor of countless acres unless he can reap the harvest of delight that blooms from every rood of God’s earth for the seeing eye and the loving spirit? And who can reap that harvest so closely that there shall not be abundant gleaning left for all mankind? The most that a wide principality can yield to its legal owner is a living. But the real owner can gather from a field of golden-rod, shining in the August sunlight, an unearned increment of delight.

We measure success by accumulation. The measure is false. The true measure is appreciation. He who loves most has most.—XIII, 178.

August eighth

You see we are all scholars, boarding scholars, in the House of Life, from the moment when birth matriculates us to the moment when death graduates us. We never really leave the big school, no matter what we do. But my point is this: the lessons that we learn when we do not know that we are studying are often the pleasantest, and not always the least important. There is a benefit as well as a joy in finding out that you can lay down your task for a proper while without being disloyal to your duty. Play-time is a part of school-time, not a break in it.—xxv, 4. *Play-time*

August ninth

Here our white tents are pitched among the trees, with the dear flag of our home flying over them. Here the big stars will look kindly down upon us through the silvery leaves, and the sounds of human turmoil and contention will not trouble us. The distant booming of the bell on the Mount of Olives will mark the night-hours for us, and the long-drawn plaintive call of the muezzin from the minaret of the little mosque at the edge of the grove will wake us to the sunrise.—xxvi, 42. *Jerusalem camp*

August tenth

*A prayer
for light*

Grant us the knowledge that we need
To solve the questions of the mind ;
Light Thou our candle while we read,
And keep our hearts from going blind ;
Enlarge our vision to behold
The wonders Thou hast wrought of old ;
Reveal thyself in every law,
And gild the towers of truth with holy awe.
—IX, 86.

August eleventh

*On the
tablets of
the heart*

Jesus wrote not with a pen upon enduring parchment, nor with a stylus upon imperishable brass :

“ He stooped
And wrote upon *the unrecording ground.*”

He would not leave even a single line of manuscript where His followers could preserve it with literal reverence and worship it as a sacred relic. He chose to inscribe His teaching upon no other leaves than those which are folded within the human soul. He chose to trust His words to the faithful keeping of memory and love ; and He said of them, with sublime confidence, that they should never pass away. He chose that the truth which He declared and the life which He lived should never be divided, but that they should go down together through the ages.—VII, 184.

August twelfth

But when man abides in tents, after the manner of the early patriarchs, the face of the world is renewed. The vagaries of the clouds become significant. You watch the sky with a lover's look, eager to know whether it will smile or frown. When you lie at night upon your bed of boughs and hear the rain pattering on the canvas close above your head, you wonder whether it is a long storm or only a shower.—XIII, 15.

*At the sign
of the
Green Tree*

August thirteenth

There is a beautiful legend in the Itinerary of St. Anthony. An old pilgrim narrates that, every morning at sunrise, a handful of dew floated down from Hermon and fell upon the Church of St. Mary, where it was immediately gathered by the Christian physicians, and was found a sovereign remedy for all diseases. What is this dew but the word of Jesus Christ? "This is my commandment, that ye love one another." It falls from heaven upon the church. But it is not meant for her refreshment alone. It is intended to be a cure for all the evils of society, spreading from heart to heart, from land to land, until the last desert vanishes and the lost Paradise is regained.—I, 246.

*The dew of
Hermon*

August fourteenth

*A whim of
beredity*

The theory that Adam lived out in the woods for some time before he was put into the garden of Eden "to dress it and to keep it" has an air of probability. How else shall we account for the arboreal instincts that cling to his posterity?

There is a wilding strain in our blood that all the civilization in the world will not eradicate. I never knew a real boy—or, for that matter, a girl worth knowing—who would not rather climb a tree, any day, than walk up a golden stairway.—XIII, 84.

August fifteenth

*Martin
Luther on
large pike*

Do you remember Martin Luther's reasoning on the subject of "excellent large pike"? He maintains that God would never have created them so good to the taste, if He had not meant them to be eaten. And for the same reason I conclude that this world would never have been left so full of uncertainties, nor human nature framed so as to find a peculiar joy and exhilaration in meeting them bravely and cheerfully, if it had not been divinely intended that most of our amusement and much of our education should come from this source.—XIII, 10.

August sixteenth

The life of man is a demonstrated daily miracle. It shows that the physical laws which we know and the physical forces which we can measure, are traversed by spiritual laws which we do not know and spiritual forces which we cannot measure. It proves the reality and potency of that which is invisible and imponderable.—XII, 91.

*The daily
miracle*

August seventeenth

There is a peculiar pleasure in doing a thing like this, catching trout in a place where nobody thinks of looking for them, and at an hour when everybody believes they cannot be caught. It is more fun to take one good fish out of an old, fished-out stream, near at hand to the village, than to fill a basket from some far-famed and well-stocked water. It is the unexpected touch that tickles our sense of pleasure. While life lasts, we are always hoping for it and expecting it. There is no country so civilized, no existence so humdrum, that there is not room enough in it somewhere for a lazy, idle brook, an encourager of indolence, with hope of happy surprises.—XIII, 203.

*Unexpected
fortune*

August eighteenth

Personal property

What is property, after all? The law says there are two kinds, real and personal. But it seems to me that the only real property is that which is truly personal, that which we take into our inner life and make our own forever, by understanding and admiration and sympathy and love. This is the only kind of possession that is worth anything.—XIII, 176.

August nineteenth

The unfail- ing foun- tain

All the streams were larger in our boyhood than they are now, except, perhaps, that which flows from the sweetest spring of all, the fountain of love, which John Ridd discovered beside the Bagworthy River,—and I, on the willow-shaded banks of the Patapsco, where the Baltimore girls fish for gudgeons—and you? Come, gentle reader, is there no stream whose name is musical to you, because of a hidden spring of love that you once found on its shore? The waters of that fountain never fail, and in them alone we taste the undiminished fulness of immortal youth.—XIII, 146.

August twentieth

Then come, my friend, forget your foes, and
leave your fears behind, *Luck*
And wander forth to try your luck, with *enough to*
cheerful, quiet mind; *live!*
For be your fortune great or small, you'll take
what God may give,
And all the day your heart shall say, "'Tis
luck enough to live."—xiv, 68.

August twenty-first

Some day, I suppose, all things in the *Mean-*
heavens above, and in the earth beneath, and *while, let*
in the hearts of the men and women who *us play*
dwell between, will be investigated and ex-
plained. We shall live a perfectly ordered
life, with no accidents, happy or unhappy.
Everybody will act according to rule, and
there will be no dotted lines on the map of
human existence, no regions marked "unex-
plored." Perhaps that golden age of the ma-
chine will come, but you and I will hardly
live to see it. And if that seem to you a
matter for tears, you must do your own weep-
ing, for I cannot find it in my heart to add a
single drop of regret.—xiii, 88.

August twenty-second

*What lies
behind
fortune*

When I talk to you of fisherman's luck, I do not forget that there are deeper things behind it. I remember that what we call our fortunes, good or ill, are but the wise dealings and distributions of a Wisdom higher, and a Kindness greater, than our own. And I suppose that their meaning is that we should learn, by all the uncertainties of our life, even the smallest, how to be brave and steady and temperate and hopeful, whatever comes, because we believe that behind it all there lies a purpose of good, and over it all there watches a providence of blessing.—XIII, 30.

August twenty-third

*How to
keep young
forever*

If we can only come back to nature together every year, and consider the flowers and the birds, and confess our faults and mistakes and our unbelief under these silent stars, and hear the river murmuring our absolution, we shall die young, even though we live long : we shall have a treasure of memories which will be like the twin-flower, always a double blossom on a single stem, and carry with us into the unseen world something which will make it worth while to be immortal.—VI, 276.

August twenty-fourth

Favonius has the good sense to talk about himself occasionally and tell his own experience. The man who will not do that must always be a dull companion. Modest egoism is the salt of conversation: you do not want too much of it; but if it is altogether omitted, everything tastes flat.—VI, 133.

*The salt of
conver-
sation*

August twenty-fifth

Every afternoon there were long walks with the Mistress in the old-fashioned garden, where wonderful roses were blooming; or through the dark, fir-shaded den where the wild burn dropped down to join the river: or out upon the high moor under the waning orange sunset. Every night there were luminous and restful talks beside the open fire in the library, when the words came clear and calm from the heart, unperturbed by the vain desire of saying brilliant things, which turns so much of our conversation into a combat of wits instead of an interchange of thoughts. Talk like this is possible only between two. The arrival of a third person sets the lists for a tournament, and offers the prize of approbation for a verbal victory. But where there are only two, the armour is laid aside, and there is no call to thrust and parry.—VI, 108.

*An old
friend*

August twenty-sixth

*The faith
of a doubt-
ing age*

There is a new cry for a Christ who shall fulfil the hopes of all the ages. There is a new love waiting for Him, a new devotion ready to follow His call. Doubt, in its nobler aspect—honest, unwilling, morally earnest doubt—has been a John the Baptist to prepare the way for His coming. The men of to-day are saying, as certain Greeks said of old, “Sirs, we would see Jesus.” The disciple who can lead the questioning spirits to Him, is the man who has the Gospel for an Age of Doubt.—VII, 40.

August twenty-seventh

“The King will follow Christ, and we the King.”

*The leader
as follower*

Compare this line with the words of St. Paul: *Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ.* They teach us that the lasting devotion of men is rendered not to the human, but to the divine, in their heroes. He who would lead others must first learn to follow one who is higher than himself. Without faith it is not only impossible to please God, but also impossible to rule men.—II, 253.

August twenty-eighth

Life is an arrow—therefore you must know
What mark to aim at, how to use the bow—
Then draw it to the head, and let it go!

The arrow

—IX, 65.

August twenty-ninth

In talk it is not correctness of grammar nor elegance of enunciation that charms us; it is spirit, *verve*, the sudden turn of humour, the keen, pungent taste of life. For this reason a touch of dialect, a flavour of brogue, is delightful. Any dialect is classic that has conveyed beautiful thoughts. Who that ever talked with the poet Tennyson, when he let himself go, over the pipes, would miss the savour of his broad-rolling Lincolnshire vowels, now heightening the humour, now deepening the pathos, of his genuine manly speech? There are many good stories lingering in the memories of those who knew Dr. James McCosh, the late president of Princeton University,—stories too good, I fear, to get into a biography; but the best of them, in print, would not have the snap and vigour of the poorest of them, in talk, with his own inimitable Scotch-Irish brogue to set it forth.—
XIII, 67.

*A touch of
the brogue*

August thirtieth

*Hidden
forces*

The forces that impel action reside in temperament. The ideals and convictions that guide it are hidden in the mind and heart. A man moves slowly or swiftly, he does his work weakly or strongly, according to the energy that is in him. But the direction of his life, this way or that way, follows the unseen influence of what he admires and loves and believes in.—XXII, v.

August thirty-first

*An open
secret*

Christ says that it was a Samaritan, a man of property, riding on his own beast and carrying a little spare capital in his pocket, who lifted up the wounded stranger, and gave him oil and wine, and brought him into a place of security, and paid for his support. And to everyone who hears the parable Christ says: "Go thou and do likewise." Here is the open secret of the regeneration of society in the form of a picture.

If we want it in the form of a philosophy, we may get it from St. Paul in five words:

"Let him that stole, steal no more"—that is *reformation*; "but rather let him labour"—that is *industry*; "working with his hands that which is good"—that is *honesty*; "that he may have"—that is *property*; "to give to him that needeth"—that is *charity*.—XXII, 207.

September first

Religion without a great hope would be like an altar without a living fire.—V, 13. *The fire on the altar*

September second

There the workman saw his labour taking form and bearing fruit, *The glory of work*
Like a tree with splendid branches rising from a humble root.

Looking at the distant city, temples, houses, domes, and towers,
Felix cried in exultation: "All the mighty work is ours.

"Every mason in the quarry, every builder on the shore,
Every chopper in the palm-grove, every raftsman at the oar—

"Hewing wood and drawing water, splitting stones and cleaving sod—
All the dusty ranks of labour, in the regiment of God,

"March together toward His triumph, do the task His hands prepare:
Honest toil is holy service; faithful work is praise and prayer."—XIV, 17.

September third

*The lasting
ideal*

The one ideal that is pure and permanent and satisfying, the one ideal that actually has had power to keep itself alive and prove itself victorious over the disintegrating forces of sin and death, is the ideal in Jesus Christ. The men and women who have built upon that foundation have been the best men and women, and have left behind them the most enduring and glorious work, even in the very domain where the human ideals have been erected as supreme.—IV, 250.

September fourth

*Late
blossoms*

There is a breath of fragrance on the cool shady air beside our little stream, that seems familiar. It is the first week of September. Can it be that the twin-flower of June, the delicate *Linnæa borealis*, is blooming again? Yes, here is the threadlike stem lifting its two frail pink bells above the bed of shining leaves. How dear an early flower seems when it comes back again and unfolds its beauty in a St. Martin's summer! How delicate and suggestive is the faint, magical odour! It is like a renewal of the dreams of youth.—VI, 276.

September fifth

A settled, unchangeable, clearly foreseeable order of things does not suit our constitution. It tends to melancholy and a fatty heart. Creatures of habit we are undoubtedly; but it is one of our most fixed habits to be fond of variety. The man who is never surprised does not know the taste of happiness, and unless the unexpected sometimes happen to us, we are most grievously disappointed.—
XIII, 12.

The variable order

September sixth

There are multitudes of people in the world to-day who are steering and sailing for Ophir, simply because it is the land of gold. What will they do if they reach their desired haven? They do not know. They do not even ask the question. They will be rich. They will sit down on their gold.

What is wealth worth?

Let us look our desires squarely in the face! To win riches, to have a certain balance in the bank, and a certain rating on the exchange, is a real object, a definite object; but it is a frightfully small object for the devotion of a human life, and a bitterly disappointing reward for the loss of an immortal soul. If wealth is our desired haven, we may be sure that it will not satisfy us when we reach it.—
VIII, 23.

September seventh

*Vital
power*

My trust was not in princes; for the crown,
The sceptre, and the purple robe are not
Significant of vital power. The man
Who saves his brother-men is he who lives
His life with Nature, takes deep hold on
truth,
And trusts in God.—xxviii, 425.

September eighth

*Home-
sweet-
home*

I read within a poet's book
A word that starred the page:
"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage!"

Yes, that is true, and something more:
You'll find, where'er you roam,
That marble floors and gilded walls
Can never make a home.

But every house where Love abides,
And Friendship is a guest,
Is surely home, and home-sweet-home:
For there the heart can rest.

—xxviii, 261.

September ninth

“Every man is immortal until his work is done.” So long as God has anything for us to do in the world He will take care of us and deliver us from danger. We may lay aside all anxiety and fear. We may rejoice in the stream of inward peace which makes glad the city of God. We may go forth to our labours and our conflicts with good courage and a cheerful heart. Be sure that nothing can harm you while you are with Him.—
I, 142.

*Trust and
work*

September tenth

All through the summer that is past, the sun has been shining and the rain has been falling on the fields without regard to the moral or religious differences of their owners. There is no peculiar blessing on Protestant potatoes. The corn and pumpkins in the stingy farmer's fields are ripening just as surely and just as abundantly as those which have been planted and hoed by the most generous of men. All you have to do is to sow the seed and till the soil, and Nature will do the rest without asking what manner of man you are.—IV, 193.

*Nature's
generosity*

September eleventh

*The soul of
conduct*

Let us never be so foolish as to think that it makes no difference whether we believe or not. Faith is the soul of conduct; faith is the bloom, the breath, the vital power of religion; without it, virtue is the alabaster box, empty; faith is the precious ointment whose fragrance fills the house. Therefore without faith it is impossible to please God.—IV, 47.

September twelfth

*The sadness
of youth*

There is a sadness of youth into which the old cannot enter. It seems to them unreal and causeless. But it is even more bitter and burdensome than the sadness of age. There is a sting of resentment in it, a fever of angry surprise that the world should so soon be a disappointment, and life so early take on the look of a failure. It has little reason in it, perhaps, but it has all the more weariness and gloom, because the man who is oppressed by it feels dimly that it is an unnatural and an unreasonable thing, that he should be separated from the joy of his companions, and tired of living before he has fairly begun to live.—XI, 4.

September thirteenth

Let a man live now in the light of the knowledge that he is to live forever. How it will deepen and strengthen the meaning of his existence, lift him above petty cares and ambitions, and make the things that are worth while precious to his heart! Let him really set his affections on the spiritual side of life, let him endure afflictions patiently because he knows that they are but for a moment, let him think more of the soul than of the body, let him do good to his fellow-men in order to make them sharers of his immortal hope, let him purify his love and friendship that they may be fit for the heavenly life.—XIX, 27. *Immortality*

September fourteenth

I remember an old woodsman in the Adirondack forest who used to say that he wanted to go to the top of a certain mountain as often as possible, because it gave him such a feeling of "heaven-up-histedness." That is an uncouth, humble, eloquent phrase to describe the function of a great literature. *Getting up in the world*

"Unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how mean a thing is man!"

—XXII, 170.

September fifteenth

*The glory
of life*

The glory of our life below
Comes not from what we do, or what we
know,
But dwells forevermore in what we are.
There is an architecture grander far
Than all the fortresses of war,
More inextinguishably bright
Than learning's lonely towers of light.
Framing its walls of faith and hope and love
In deathless souls of men, it lifts above
The frailty of our earthly home
An everlasting dome ;
The sanctuary of the human host,
The living temple of the Holy Ghost.—IX, 84.

September sixteenth

*The
thought of
God*

The thought of the Divine excellence and
beauty, how far it is exalted above us and yet
how sweetly it shines upon us, how it belongs
to the lofty and eternal sphere of heaven, but
also to the lowly and familiar sphere of earth,
how it rises like the sun, far away from us,
and yet sheds its light and joy upon us and
upon every living thing,—this is the most sub-
lime, comforting, and elevating thought that
can ever visit the soul.—I, 51.

September seventeenth

The vision of God in Christ is the greatest gift in the world. It binds those who receive it to the highest and most consecrated life. To behold that vision is to be one of God's elect. But the result of that election depends upon the giving of ourselves to serve the world for Jesus' sake. *Noblesse oblige.*—VII, 316. *Election to service*

September eighteenth

To desire and strive to be of some service to the world, to aim at doing something which shall really increase the happiness and welfare and virtue of mankind,—this is a choice which is possible for all of us; and surely it is a good haven to sail for. *The best choice*

The more we think of it, the more attractive and desirable it becomes. To do some work that is needed, and to do it thoroughly well; to make our toil count for something in adding to the sum total of what is actually profitable for humanity; to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before, or, better still, to make one wholesome idea take root in a mind that was bare and fallow; to make our example count for something on the side of honesty, and cheerfulness, and courage, and good faith, and love,—this is an aim for life which is very wide, as wide as the world, and yet very definite, as clear as light.—VIII, 26.

September nineteenth

*Poetry,
joy, and
love*

After all, the true mission of poetry is to increase joy. It must, indeed, be sensitive to sorrow and acquainted with grief. But it has wings given to it in order that it may bear us up into the ether of gladness.

There is no perfect joy without love. Therefore love-poetry is the best. But the highest of all love-poetry is that which celebrates, with the Psalms,

“ that Love which is and was
My Father and my Brother and my God.”

—xv, 26.

September twentieth

*Faith and
freedom*

Life is self-change to meet environment. Liberty is self-exertion to unfold the soul. The law of natural selection is that those who use a faculty shall expand it, but those who use it not shall lose it. Religion is life, and it must grow under the laws of life. Faith is simply the assertion of spiritual freedom; it is the first adventure of the soul. Make that adventure towards God, make that adventure towards Christ, and the soul will know that it is alive. So it enters upon that upward course which leads through the liberty of the sons of God to the height of heaven,

“ Where love is an unerring light
And joy its own security.”

—vii, 242.

September twenty-first

I do not mean to say that the possession of much money is always a barrier to real wealth of mind and heart. Nor would I maintain that all the poor of this world are rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. But some of them are. And if some of the rich of this world (through the grace of Him with whom all things are possible) are also modest in their tastes, and gentle in their hearts, and open in their minds, and ready to be pleased with un-bought pleasures, they simply share in the best things which are provided for all.—XIII, 177.

*Rich and
poor*

September twenty-second

An honest, earnest, true heart ; a hand that will not stain itself with unjust gain, or hold an unequal balance, or sign a deceitful letter, or draw an unfair contract ; a tongue that will not twist itself to a falsehood or take up an evil report ; a soul that points as true as a compass to the highest ideal of manhood or womanhood,—these are the marks and qualities of God's people everywhere.—I, 66.

*Evidences
of Chris-
tianity.*

September twenty-third

*The Bible
as literature*

As the worshipper in the Temple would observe the art and structure of the carven beams of cedar and the lily-work on the tops of the pillars the more attentively because they beautified the house of his God, so the man who has a religious faith in the Bible will study more eagerly and carefully the literary forms of the book in which the Holy Spirit speaks forever.—xv, 6.

September twenty-fourth

*Talkable,
not talk-
ative*

A talkative person is like an English sparrow,—a bird that cannot sing, and will sing, and ought to be persuaded not to try to sing. But a talkable person has the gift that belongs to the wood-thrush and the veery and the wren, the oriole and the white-throat and the rose-breasted grosbeak, the mocking-bird and the robin (sometimes); and the brown thrush; yes, the brown thrush has it to perfection, if you can catch him alone,—the gift of being interesting, charming, delightful, in the most off-hand and various modes of utterance.—xiii, 57.

September twenty-fifth

Music, in thee we float,
And lose the lonely note
Of self in thy celestial-ordered strain,
Until at last we find
The life to love resigned
In harmony of joy restored again ;
And songs that cheered our mortal days
Break on the coast of light in endless hymns
of praise.—xx, 24.

*Immortal
music*

September twenty-sixth

Look around you in the world and see what way it is that has brought your fellow-men to peace and quietness of heart, to security and honour of life. Is it the way of unbridled self-indulgence, of unscrupulous greed, of aimless indolence? Or is it the way of self-denial, of cheerful industry, of fair dealing, of faithful service? If true honour lies in the respect and grateful love of one's fellow-men, if true success lies in a contented heart and a peaceful conscience, then the men who have reached the highest goal of life are those who have followed most closely the way to which Jesus Christ points us and in which He goes before us.—xix, 73.

*The good
way*

September twenty-seventh

*Small
packages*

Size is not the measure of excellence. Perfection lies in quality, not in quantity. Concentration enhances pleasure, gives it a point, so that it goes deeper.—XIII, 81.

September twenty-eighth

*Tastes
differ*

It was not necessary that everybody should take the same view of life that pleased us. The world would not get on very well without people who preferred parlour-cars to canoes, and patent-leather shoes to India-rubber boots, and ten-course dinners to picnics in the woods. These good people were unconsciously toiling at the hard and necessary work of life in order that we, of the chosen and fortunate few, should be at liberty to enjoy the best things in the world.

Why should we neglect our opportunities, which were also our real duties? The nervous disease of civilization might prevail all around us, but that ought not to destroy our grateful enjoyment of the lucid intervals that were granted to us by a merciful Providence.—XIII, 190.

September twenty-ninth

All around the circle of human doubt and despair, where men and women are going out to enlighten and uplift and comfort and strengthen their fellow-men under the perplexities and burdens of life, we hear the cry for a gospel which shall be divine, and therefore sovereign and unquestionable and sure and victorious. All through the noblest aspirations and efforts and hopes of our age of doubt, we feel the longing, and we hear the demand, for a new inspiration of Christian faith.—VII, 39.

*A stronger
faith*

September thirtieth

The day is coming when all shadows shall depart and light be everywhere. The day is coming when all rebellion shall cease and peace be everywhere. The day is coming when all sorrow shall vanish and joy be everywhere. The day is coming when all discord shall be silent, and angels leaning from the battlements of heaven shall hear but one word encircling earth with music :—

*The com-
ing day*

“ All nations shall call him BLESSED.”

—I, 126.

October first

*The sun-
dial*

The shadow by my finger cast
Divides the future from the past :
Before it, sleeps the unborn hour
In darkness, and beyond thy power :
Behind its unreturning line,
The vanished hour, no longer thine :
One hour alone is in thy hands,—
The NOW on which the shadow stands.

—XX, 116.

October second

*Inward
vision*

Beyond the world of outward perception there is another world of inward vision, and the key to it is imagination. To see things as they are—that is a precious gift. To see things as they were in their beginning, or as they will be in their ending, or as they ought to be in their perfecting; to make the absent, present; to rebuild the past out of a fragment of carven stone; to foresee the future harvest in the grain of wheat in the sower's hand; to visualize the face of the invisible, and enter into the lives of all sorts and conditions of unknown men—that is a far more precious gift.—XXII, 236.

October third

Nothing in the world can so enlarge the heart and set its sympathies free to go out to all men as a true knowledge of Christ and a true devotion to Him. When we enter through Him into the secret of what real love means—when we learn from Him that it is not getting but giving, and that the heart finds its deepest joy in bestowing happiness upon others, then the door is open and we may go out and find pasture.—XVIII, 12.

The open door

October fourth

There is a loftier ambition than merely to stand high in the world. It is to stoop down and lift mankind a little higher. There is a nobler character than that which is merely incorruptible. It is the character which acts as an antidote and preventive of corruption. Fearlessly to speak the words which bear witness to righteousness and truth and purity; patiently to do the deeds which strengthen virtue and kindle hope in your fellow-men; generously to lend a hand to those who are trying to climb upward; faithfully to give your support and your personal help to the efforts which are making to elevate and purify the social life of the world—that is what it means to have salt in your character.—XVIII, 73.

The generosity of true virtue

October fifth

*The great
elegy*

Many beautiful poems, and some so noble that they are forever illustrious, have blossomed in the valley of the shadow of death. But among them all none is more rich in significance, more perfect in beauty of form and spirit, or more luminous with the triumph of light and love over darkness and mortality, than *In Memoriam*, the greatest of English elegies.—II, 131.

October sixth

*Tennyson
in *Lucem
Transitus*,
October 6,
1892*

From the misty shores of midnight, touched
with splendours of the moon,
To the singing tides of heaven, and the light
more clear than noon,
Passed a soul that grew to music till it was
with God in tune.

Brother of the greatest poets, true to nature,
true to art ;

Lover of Immortal Love, uplifter of the hu-
man heart ;

Who shall cheer us with high music, who
shall sing, if thou depart ?

Silence here,—for love is silent, gazing on the
lessening sail ;

Silence here,—for grief is voiceless when the
mighty poets fail ;

Silence here,—but far beyond us, many voices
crying, Hail !—IX, 35.

October seventh

The record of a faith sublime,
And hope, through clouds, far-off discerned;
The incense of a love that burned
Through pain and doubt defying Time:
A light that gleamed across the wave
Of darkness, down the rolling years,
Piercing the heavy mist of tears—
A rainbow shining o'er the grave:
The story of a soul at strife
That learned at last to kiss the rod,
And passed through sorrow up to God,
From living to a higher life.—IX, 46.

“ In memoriam ”

October eighth

If this age of ours, with its renaissance of art and its catholic admiration of the beautiful in all forms, classical and romantic; with its love of science and its joy in mastering the secrets of Nature; with its deep passion of humanity protesting against social wrongs and dreaming of social regeneration; with its introspective spirit searching the springs of character and action; with its profound interest in the problems of the unseen, and its reaction from the theology of the head to the religion of the heart,—if this age of ours is a great age, then Tennyson is a great poet, for he is the clearest, sweetest, strongest voice of the century.—II, 343.

*The age
and the
poet*

October ninth

*Love a
working
force*

The various kinds of energy which are developed from heat are not more real, nor more powerful, than the actual working force which is developed in the world from love in the inner life of man.—XII, 91.

October tenth

*Faith an
adventure*

That is the law of the life of faith. The man who takes a principle into his heart commits himself to an uncertainty, he enters upon an adventure. He must be ready for unexpected calls and new responsibilities.

The Samaritan who rode down from Jerusalem to Jericho had nothing to do in the morning but follow that highway, and take care that his beast did not stumble or hurt itself, or get tired out so that it could not finish the journey. He was just a solitary horseman, and all that he needed to do was to have a good seat in the saddle and a light hand on the bit. But at noon, when he came to the place where that unknown pilgrim lay senseless and bleeding beside the road,—then, in a moment, the Samaritan's duty changed, and God called him to be a rescuer, a nurse, a helper of the wounded.—IV, 140.

October eleventh

Sin is the separation of man from God.

The *sense* of sin is God's unbroken hold upon the heart of man.

The sacrifices on myriad altars bear witness to it. The prayers of penitence rising from all dark corners of the earth bear witness to it. The tremulous homeward turnings of innumerable souls from far countries of misery and loneliness bear witness to it.

“Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son!”

But mark,—he still says, *Father!*—XII, 48.

*Home
thoughts
in a far
country*

October twelfth

We do not dare to think that there is even one forgotten, despised, disowned. God will not let us think so. With clear, sweet, but silent voice, He is assuring every child of man that the heavens above his head are not empty, but filled with the presence of a Divine Father, and that the earth beneath his feet is not a strange and desert place, but the soil of his own home, in which paternal bounty will make provision for his wants. Every ray of sunlight that falls from heaven, every drop of rain that waters the fruitful ground, is saying to the heart of man, “My child, this a Father's impartial kindness sends to thee.”—IV, 200.

*Not one
forgotten*

October thirteenth

*Personal
religion*

This is the true meaning of personal religion : not merely that the faith and love and hope of the believer proceed from a personal source within himself and are independent of all outward circumstances, but that they centre in a Personal Being, who has made us for Himself and bestows Himself upon us. And this truth finds its most perfect disclosure in the incarnation of Jesus Christ.—I, 105.

October fourteenth

*Daily
orders*

For the spiritual as truly as for the temporal life the rule is, “ Nothing venture, nothing win.” And is it not infinitely nobler and more inspiring to enter upon a career like that, —a career which is to run so close to God that He can speak into it and fill it with new meanings, new possibilities, new tasks, at any moment,—is not that infinitely finer and more glorious than to make a contract to do a certain thing for a certain price, as if God were a manufacturer and we were his mill-hands? It seems to me that this is the very proof and bond of friendship with Him, this calling of faith to an unlimited and undefined obedience.—IV, 142.

October fifteenth

We men that go down for a livin' in ships *A sailor's*
to the sea,— *love*

We love it a different way from you poets
that 'bide on the land.

We are fond of it, sure! But, you take it
as comin' from me,

There's a fear and a hate in our love that
a landsman can't understand.

—XXXI, 32.

October sixteenth

Once, when I was hunting in the Bad *American*
Lands of North Dakota, and had lost my *humour*

way, I met a solitary horseman in the
desert and said to him, "I want to go to
the Cannon-ball River." "Well, stranger,"
he answered, looking at me with a solemn
air of friendly interest, "I guess ye can go
if ye want to; there ain't no string on ye."

But when I laughed and said what I really
wanted was that he should show me the
way, he replied, "Why didn't ye say so?"
and rode with me until we struck the trail
to camp.—XXVII, 270.

October seventeenth

*Trying to
be good*

The effort after holiness always intensifies the consciousness of sin. The purest souls are those who cling most closely to God as their Redeemer and Helper. The doctrine of the forgiveness of sins and good hope through grace is most precious to those who are climbing upward, with painful steps, to seek the face of God.—I, 66.

October eighteenth

*Take your
time*

The wild desire to be forever racing against old Father Time is one of the kill-joys of modern life. That ancient traveller is sure to beat you in the long run, and as long as you are trying to rival him, he will make your life a burden. But if you will only acknowledge his superiority and profess that you do not approve of racing after all, he will settle down quietly beside you and jog along like the most companionable of creatures. It is a pleasant pilgrimage in which the journey itself is part of the destination.—VI, 125.

October nineteenth

Not otherwise does God deal with us. He does not show us exactly what it will cost to obey Him. He asks us only to give what He calls for from day to day. Here is one sacrifice right in front of us that we must make now in order to serve God,—some evil habit to be given up, some lust of the flesh to be crucified and slain; and that is our trial for to-day.—*Daily sacrifice*
IV, 136.

October twentieth

The perfect manhood of Him whom all Christendom adores as the Son of God was matured and moulded in the tender shelter of the home. It was there that He felt the influences of truth and grace. To that source we may trace some of the noblest qualities of His human character. And yet, if there is anything which Christendom appears to be in danger of losing, it is the possibility of such a home as that in which Jesus grew to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. *The home*

Is it not true?

“The world is too much with us, late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.”

—III, 232.

October twenty-first

*The
fortress*

Be Thou our strength when war's wild gust
Rages around us, loud and fierce ;
Confirm our souls and let our trust
Be like a wall that none can pierce ;
Give us the courage that prevails,
The steady faith that never fails,
Help us to stand in every fight
Firm as a fortress to defend the right.—IX, 86.

October twenty-second

*Conflicts
and
alliances*

With the materialism, the sensuality, the pride of our age, Christianity stands in conflict. With the altruism, the humanity, the sympathy of our age, Christianity must stand in loving and wise alliance. A simpler creed and a nobler life will prepare the way for a renaissance of religion greater and more potent than the world has known for centuries. It seems as if we stood on the brightening border of the new day. The watchword of its coming is the personal gospel of Jesus Christ, in whom we find the ideal man and the real God.—VII, xi.

October twenty-third

When you have good luck in anything, you ought to be glad. Indeed, if you are not glad, you are not really lucky.—XIII, 27.

*Gladness is
good luck*

October twenty-fourth

You have half forgotten many a famous scene that you travelled far to look upon. You cannot clearly recall the sublime peak of Mont Blanc, the roaring curve of Niagara, the vast dome of St. Peter's. The music of Patti's crystalline voice has left no distinct echo in your remembrance, and the blossoming of the century-plant is dimmer than the shadow of a dream. But there is a nameless valley among the hills where you can still trace every curve of the stream, and see the foam-bells floating on the pool below the bridge, and the long moss wavering in the current. There is a rustic song of a girl passing through the fields at sunset, that still repeats its far-off cadence in your listening ears. There is a small flower trembling on its stem in some hidden nook beneath the open sky, that never withers through all the changing years; the wind passeth over it, but it is not gone—it abides forever in your soul, an amaranthine word of beauty and truth.—VI, 105.

*Little
Memories*

October twenty-fifth

*Life and
love*

“What means the voice of Life?” She answered, “Love!

For love is life, and they who do not love
Are not alive. But every soul that loves,
Lives in the heart of God and hears Him
speak.”—xiv, 53.

October twenty-sixth

*The name
of peace*

John turned to Hermas, and his tone softened as he said: “My son, you have sinned deeper than you know. The word with which you parted so lightly is the keyword of all life and joy and peace. Without it the world has no meaning, and existence no rest, and death no refuge. It is the word that purifies love, and comforts grief, and keeps hope alive forever. It is the most precious thing that ever ear has heard, or mind has known, or heart has conceived. It is the name of Him who has given us life and breath and all things richly to enjoy; the name of Him who, though we may forget Him, never forgets us; the name of Him who pities us as you pity your suffering child; the name of Him who, though we wander far from Him, seeks us in the wilderness, and sent His Son, even as His Son has sent me this night, to breathe again that forgotten name in the heart that is perishing without it. Listen, my son, listen with all your soul to the blessed name of God our Father.”—xi, 69.

October twenty-seventh

That Christ's mission was one of joy and peace needs no proof. The New Testament is a book that throbs and glows with inexpressible gladness. It is the one bright spot in the literature of the first century. The Christians were the happiest people in the world. Poor, they were rich; persecuted, they were exultant; martyred, they were victorious. The secret of Jesus, as they knew it, was a blessed secret. It filled them with the joy of living. Their watchword was, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad."—XII, 101.

Christianity means joy

October twenty-eighth

Remember that in this world every mountain-top of privilege is girdled by the vales of lowly duty.

The mountain and the valley

Remember that the transfiguration of the soul is but the preparation and encouragement for the sacrifice of the life.

Remember that we are not to tarry in the transitory radiance of Mount Hermon, but to press on to the enduring glory of Mount Zion, and that we can only arrive at that final and blessed resting-place by the way of Mount Calvary.—IV, 189.

October twenty-ninth

*Finding a
friend*

A theory of friendship is a good thing for you to have. It is precious. It elevates and cheers your mind. But presently, as you go on your way through the world, you find a friend: one who comes close to you in that mysterious contact of personalities which is the most wonderful thing in the world; one who knows you, cares for you, loves you, gives you the sacred gifts of fellowship and help. Trouble befalls you. Your friend stands by you, strengthens you, counsels you, helps you to fight your way out of that which is conquerable and to endure patiently that which is inevitable.—XVIII, 126.

October thirtieth

*Friendship
realized in
a person*

And now your theories of friendship are translated into your thoughts of your friend. They are clarified, corrected it may be, purified and intensified if your experience is a deep and true one; at all events, they are transformed into something very different from what they were before. Once you reasoned about them; now you feel them. Once they belonged to your philosophy; now they belong to your life. Once you believed in friendship; now you trust your friend.—XVIII, 126.

October thirty-first

Are you richer to day than you were yesterday? No? Then you are a little poorer. Are you better to-day than you were yesterday? No? Then you are a little worse. Are you nearer to your port to-day than you were yesterday? Yes,—you must be a little nearer to some port or other; for since your ship was first launched upon the sea of life, you have never been still for a single moment; the sea is too deep, you could not find an anchorage if you would; there can be no pause until you come into port.—VIII, 11.

“ *En voyage* ”

November first

The things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever,—is not that what our hearts desire and crave? A religion which shall really belong to us, be a part of us, enter into us, abide with us, and not with us only, but with our children, forever. Not many doctrines, but solid. It need not be very wide, but it must be very deep. It must go down to the bottom of our hearts and dwell there as a living certainty.—IV, 231.

*Not wide,
but deep*

November second

*A Novem-
ber daisy*

Once the daisies gold and white
Sea-like through the meadows rolled :
Once my heart could hardly hold
All its pleasures,—I remember,
In the flood of youth's delight
Separate joys were lost to sight.
That was summer ! Now November
Sets the perfect flower apart ;
Gives each blossom of the heart
Meaning, beauty, grace unknown,—
Blooming late and all alone.

—xiv, 76.

November third

*Gratitude
in religion*

The inspiration of the service that we render in this world to our homes, our country, our fellow-men, springs from the recognition that a price has been paid for us ; the vital power of noble conduct rises from the deep fountain of gratitude, which flows not with water, but with warm heart's-blood. How then, shall a like power come into our religion, how shall it be as real, as living, as intimate, as our dearest human tie, unless we know and feel that God has paid a price for us, that He has bought us with His own precious life ?—iv, 116.

November fourth

The Psalms are rightly called lyrics because they are chiefly concerned with the immediate and imaginative expression of real feeling. It is the personal and emotional note that predominates. They are inward, confessional, intense; outpourings of the quickened spirit; self-revelations of the heart. It is for this reason that we should never separate them in our thought from the actual human life out of which they sprang. We must feel the warm pulse of humanity in them in order to comprehend their meaning and eternal worth. So far as we can connect them with the actual experience of men, this will help us to appreciate their reality and power.—xv, 15.

*Poetry, the
flower of
real life*

November fifth

“Public office is a public trust.” The discharge of duty to one’s fellow-men, the work of resisting violence and maintaining order and righting the wrongs of the oppressed, is higher and holier than the following of visions. The service of man is the best worship of God.—II, 178.

*The service
of man, the
worship of
God*

November sixth

*Gifts of
nature*

The results of education and social discipline in humanity are fine. It is a good thing that we can count upon them. But at the same time let us rejoice in the play of native traits and individual vagaries. Cultivated manners are admirable, yet there is a sudden touch of inborn grace and courtesy that goes beyond them all. No array of accomplishments can rival the charm of an unsuspected gift of nature, brought suddenly to light. I once heard a peasant girl singing down the Traunthal, and the echo of her song outlives, in the hearing of my heart, all memories of the grand opera.—XIII, 88.

November seventh

*Wishes
mould our
world*

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he, and so is his world. For those whose thoughts are earthly and sensual, this is a beast's world. For those whose thoughts are high and noble and heroic, it is a hero's world. The strength of wishes transforms the very stuff of our existence, and moulds it to the form of our heart's inmost desire and hope.—VIII, 35.

November eighth

The Christ of the Gospels is bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, mind of our mind, heart of our heart. He is in subjection to His parents as a child. He grows to manhood. His character is unfolded and perfected by discipline. He labours for daily bread, and prays for Divine grace. He hungers, and thirsts, and sleeps, and rejoices, and weeps. He is anointed with the Spirit for His ministry. He is tempted. He is lonely and disappointed. He asks for information. He confesses ignorance. He interprets the facts of nature and life with a prophetic insight.—VII, 144.

*The human
life of God*

November ninth

Anything that a telescope could discover among the stars, anything that logic could define and explain and fit into an exact philosophical system, would not be God. For it belongs to His very essence that He transcends our thought, and that His judgments are unsearchable and His ways past finding out. We do not know anything about God unless we know that we cannot know Him perfectly.—IV, 216.

*The divine
mystery*

November tenth

*The joy of
living*

Jesus does not differ from other masters in that He teaches us to scorn earthly felicity. The divine difference is that He teaches us how to attain earthly felicity, under all circumstances, in prosperity and in adversity, in sickness and in health, in solitude and in society, by taking His yoke upon us, and doing the will of God, and so finding rest unto our souls. That is the debt which every child of God owes not only to God, but also to his own soul,—to find the real joy of living.—VII, 293.

November eleventh

*Love leads
on*

The truth is that love, considered merely as the preference of one person for another of the opposite sex, is not “the greatest thing in the world.” It becomes great only when it leads on, as it often does, to heroism and self-sacrifice and fidelity. Its chief value for art (the interpreter) lies not in itself, but in its quickening relation to the other elements of life. It must be seen and shown in its due proportion, and in harmony with the broader landscape.—XIII, 102.

November twelfth

Nay, I wrong you, little flower,
Reading mournful mood of mine
In your looks, that give no sign
Of a spirit dark and cheerless :
You possess the heavenly power
That rejoices in the hour,
Glad, contented, free, and fearless,—
Lifts a sunny face to heaven
When a sunny day is given ;
Makes a summer of its own,
Blooming late and all alone.—xiv, 75.

*St. Mar-
tin's little
summer*

November thirteenth

Men have assured us, in these latter days, that faith and art have parted company ; that faith is dead, and art must live for itself alone. But while they were saying these things in melancholy essays and trivial verses, which denied a spiritual immortality and had small prospect of a literary one, the two highest artists of the century, Tennyson and Browning, were setting their music to the key-note of an endless life, and prophesying with the harp, according as it is written : *I believe, and therefore sing.*—II, 301.

*Art and
faith*

November fourteenth

In quietness and confidence

This fair tree that shadows us from the sun hath grown many years in its place without more unhappiness than the loss of its leaves in winter, which the succeeding season doth generously repair; and shall we be less contented in the place where God hath planted us? or shall there go less time to the making of a man than to the growth of a tree? This stream floweth wimpling and laughing down to the great sea which it knoweth not; yet it doth not fret because the future is hidden; and doubtless it were wise in us to accept the mysteries of life as cheerfully and go forward with a merry heart, considering that we know enough to make us happy and keep us honest for to-day. A man should be well content if he can see so far ahead of him as the next bend in the stream. What lies beyond, let him trust in the hand of God.—xvi, 129.

November fifteenth

One mark of a good friend

It is one mark of a good friend that he makes you wish to be at your best while you are with him. The blessed persons who have this influence are made in the likeness of that heavenly Friend whose presence is at once a stimulus and a help to purity of heart and nobleness of demeanor.—xviii, 141.

November sixteenth

To my mind the most beautiful of all the references to the New Testament is the passage in *In Memoriam* which describes the reunion of Mary and Lazarus after his return from the grave. With what a human interest does the poet clothe the familiar story! How reverently and yet with what natural and simple pathos does he touch upon the more intimate relations of the three persons who are the chief actors! The question which has come a thousand times to every one that has lost a dear friend,—the question whether love survives in the other world, whether those who have gone before miss those who are left behind and have any knowledge of their grief,—this is the suggestion which brings the story home to us and makes it seem real and living.—II, 258.

“ *How fares it with the happy dead?* ”

November seventeenth

The true lover of the Bible has an interest in all the elements of its life as an immortal book. He wishes to discern, and rightly to appreciate, the method of its history, the spirit of its philosophy, the significance of its fiction, the power of its eloquence, and the charm of its poetry. He wishes this all the more because he finds in it something which is not in any other book: a vision of God, a hope for man, and an inspiration to righteousness which are evidently divine.—xv, 6.

The Bible many-sided

November eighteenth

*When men
live as they
pray*

When a Christian means one whose word is his bond, who can be trusted with untold treasure without fear of his stealing, whose praise is an honour and whose friendship is a jewel of priceless value; one who does his duty towards his fellow-men as a service to his God; one whom you can more certainly trust to paint your house, or make your clothes, or draw your will, or take care of the health of your family, because he is a Christian; one whose outward integrity is the proof of inward purity,—then the church will have great praise and large triumph.—I, 66.

November nineteenth

*Solomon's
choice*

If God says to us, in the bright promise of youth, "Ask what I shall give thee," let us make the best choice, and answer, "Give me grace to know thy Son, the Christ, and to grow like Him; for that is the true wisdom which leads to eternal life, and that is the true royalty which brings dominion over self, and that is the true happiness which flows unsought from fellowship with the Divine Life." —IV, 165.

November twentieth

Christ is the Light of all Scripture. Christ is the Master of holy reason. Christ is the sole Lord and Life of the true Church. By His word we test all doctrines, conclusions, and commands. On His word we build all faith. This is *the* source of authority in the kingdom of heaven. Let us neither forget nor hesitate to appeal to it always with untrembling certainty and positive conviction.—VII, 199.

*The source
of author-
ity*

November twenty-first

To be sure of God, most wise, most mighty, most holy, most loving, our Father in heaven and on earth ; to be sure of Christ, divine and human, our Brother and our Master, the pattern of excellence and the Redeemer from sin, the Saviour of all who trust in Him ; to be sure of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Guide, the Purifier, given to all who ask for Him ; to be sure of immortality, an endless life in which nothing can separate us from the love of God,—let us concentrate our faith upon these things.—IV, 231.

*Concen-
trate your
faith*

November twenty-second

*The
hearthstone*

When the logs are burning free,
Then the fire is full of glee :
When each heart gives out its best.
Then the talk is full of zest :
Light your fire and never fear,
Life was made for love and cheer.

—xx, 113.

November twenty-third

*A giver
of joy*

The strongest impulse in his nature was to be a giver of entertainment, a source of joy in others, a recognized element of delight in the little world where he moved. He had the artistic temperament in its most primitive and naïve form. Nothing pleased him so much as the act of pleasing. Music was the means which Nature had given him to fulfil this desire. He played, as you might say, out of a certain kind of selfishness, because he enjoyed making other people happy. He was selfish enough, in his way, to want the pleasure of making everybody feel the same delight that he felt in the clear tones, the merry cadences, the tender and caressing flow of his violin.—xvi, 33.

November twenty-fourth

This was all that we saw of the wedding *Wedding*
at Kafr Kennâ—just a vivid, mysterious *at Cana*
flash of human figures, drawn together by
the primal impulse and longing of our
common nature, garbed and ordered by
the social customs which make different
lands and ages seem strange to each other,
and moving across the narrow stage of
Time into the dimness of that Arab village,
where Jesus and His mother and His dis-
ciples were guests at a wedding long ago.

—XXVI, 238.

November twenty-fifth

Whatever gifts and mercies to my lot may *Gratitude*
fall,

I would not measure

As worth a certain price in praise, or great
or small;

But take and use them all with simple
pleasure.

For when we gladly eat our daily bread,
we bless

The Hand that feeds us;

And when we tread the road of Life in
cheerfulness,

Our very heart-beats praise the Love
that leads us.

—XXVIII, 315.

November twenty-sixth

*The sun
behind the
sunlight*

Behind every manifestation of spiritual life there is the Spirit. Behind Christianity there is Christ. Behind Christ there is God. For He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person; and the power that works in Him, the power that has raised Him from the dead and set Him at God's right hand in heavenly places, is the power that is saving every one that believeth, and reconciling the world to God. When we know that, despair ceases to exist, and joy fills the heart with music.—IV, 94.

November twenty-seventh

*Unseen
foundations*

There are many noble principles and beautiful characters unconsciously built upon a Christian foundation, laid by a mother's prayers, a father's example, though the builder may not know or acknowledge it. Yes, there are even larger edifices, societies, nations, it may be, which are unconsciously based upon the moral ideal which is in Christ, and which silently acknowledge Christianity as the law of laws, even though God be not named in their constitution. They are like the villages in Egypt which were unwittingly erected upon the massive foundations of some ancient temple.—IV, 247.

November twenty-eighth

But how close together are the fountains of grief and gladness! How often the flood of tears mingles with the stream of rejoicing! The festival which is all brightness to the young, brings to the old, memories of loss and sadness. Christmas and Thanksgiving Day, with all their merriment and laughter, awaken echoes in the house, in the heart, which whisper "Nevermore;" and the joy of the present seems to fade and grow dull compared with the joy that has departed. The past wins

*The sadness
of festivals*

"A glory from its being far,
And orbs into the perfect star
We saw not when we moved therein."

—I, 207.

November twenty-ninth

There are many kinds of love, as many kinds of light,
And every kind of love makes a glory in the night.
There is love that stirs the heart, and love that gives it rest,
But the love that leads life upward is the noblest and the best.—IX, 52.

*Loving up-
wards*

November thirtieth

Two paths

There are two paths in love and friendship. One leads downward, with pride and folly, selfishness and lust as guides, toward the earthly, the sensual, and at last the devilish. The other leads upward, with purity and honour, generosity and self-sacrifice as guides, toward the celestial, the ideal, the God-like. Love is a fire; sometimes it kindles a harbor light to guide the heart to peace; sometimes it kindles a false beacon to lure the heart to wreck. There is a friendship which saves, and there is a friendship which ruins.
—XVIII, 32.

December first

*The only
real heaven
begins on
earth*

I believe in a church which goes out, through Christ and with Christ, to seek and to save the lost. I believe in a Christianity which is a giving, forgiving, sympathizing, sacrificing, self-forgetting, and happy life of ministry to the souls of others. And I believe that the perfection and everlasting continuance of that life is the joy of heaven.

“ Rejoice, we are allied
To that which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive ;
A spark disturbs our clod—
Nearer we held of God
Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I must believe.”

—XVIII, 14.

December second

And now that his story is told, what does it mean?

The meaning and the story

How can I tell? What does life mean? If the meaning could be put into a sentence there would be no need of telling the story.—v, xii.

December third

You tell me that it matters not whether the hand that guides the plough be pure and clean, or wicked and defiled. Nature feels alike and will do alike for both. I say, Not if God is behind Nature, not if Nature is the expression of his will. He may do alike, but He does not feel alike. As well say that He who made light and darkness cannot distinguish between them, as that He whose will is the moral law ever forgets it, ignores it, casts it aside, in any sphere or mode of his action. Evermore He loves the good, the true, the noble. Evermore He hates the base, the false, the evil. Evermore iniquity is an abomination unto Him, and righteousness is his delight.—IV, 197.

Nature is impartial, but God cares

December fourth

*Visions for
guidance*

We are on a path which leads upward, by sure and steady steps, when we begin to look at our future selves with eyes of noble hope and clear purpose, and see our figures climbing, with patient, dauntless effort, towards the heights of true manhood and womanhood. Visions like these are Joseph's dreams. They are stars for guidance. They are sheaves of promise. The very memory of them, if we cherish it, is a power of pure restraint and generous inspiration.—VIII, 30.

December fifth

*The spirit
behind the
face*

The moment we see God behind the face of Nature,—the moment we believe that this vast and marvellous procession of seasons and causes and changes, this array of interworking forces, is directed and controlled by a Supreme, Omniscient, Holy Spirit, whose will is manifest in the springing of the seed, the ripening of the fruit, the fading of the leaf, the shining of the sun, and the falling of the rain,—this indifference becomes incomprehensible and impossible. It cannot be that God is indifferent. It cannot be that He cares not whether the dwellers upon his earth are wicked or righteous, foul or pure, selfish or generous.—IV, 196.

December sixth

To see Christ as the true Son of God and the brother of all men, is to be sure that the soul is free, and that God is good, and that the end of life is noble service.—VII, xvi.

*Sure of
three
things*

December seventh

Here are two women going down to work among the sick and the poor. One goes because there is a fashion of it, because she would fain have the credit which belongs to the lady bountiful. She moves among them like an iceberg, and they hate her. She brings a chill with her which all her coals and blankets can never warm away. The other goes because she believes in it, believes that God wants her to do it, believes that the sorrowful and the distressed are Christ's brethren, and that she is bound to them, and that they have immortal souls which she may win for Him. She moves among them like a sister of Jesus and a friend of God; and of her the Master says, "Inasmuch as she hath done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, she hath done it unto me."—IV, 46.

*A differ-
ence in good
deeds*

December eighth

*Into wiser
hands*

For what is it that faith does with these lives of ours? It just takes them up out of our weak, trembling, uncertain control and puts them into the hands of God. It makes them a part of his great plan. It binds them fast to his pure and loving will, and fills them with his life.—IV, 131.

December ninth

*A word of
Jesus*

Hear the Master's risen word!
Delving spades have set it free,—
Wake! the world has need of thee,—
Rise, and let thy voice be heard,
Like a fountain disinterred,
Upward springing, singing, sparkling;
Through the doubtful shadows darkling;
Till the clouds of pain and rage
Brooding o'er the toiling age,
As with rifts of light are stirred
By the music of the Word;
Gospel for the heavy-laden, answer to the
labourer's cry;
“*Raise the stone, and thou shalt find Me:
cleave the wood, and there am I.*”

—XIV, 5.

December tenth

Is there anything that pleases you more than to be trusted,—to have even a little child look up into your face, and put out its hand to meet yours, and come to you confidingly? By so much as God is better than you are, by so much more does He love to be trusted. . . . There is a hand stretched out to you,—a hand with a wound in the palm of it. Reach out the hand of your faith to clasp it, and cling to it, for without faith it is impossible to please God.—IV, 48.

*The joy of
being
trusted*

December eleventh

The humanity of Jesus was not the veiling but the unveiling of the divine glory. The limitations, temptations, and sufferings of manhood were the conditions under which alone Christ could accomplish the greatest work of the Deity,—the redemption of a sinful race. The seat of the divine revelation and the centre of the divine atonement was and is the human life of God.—VII, 149.

*The hu-
manity of
Jesus*

December twelfth

Life

Let me but live my life from year to year,
With forward face and unreluctant soul ;
Not hurrying to, nor turning from, the goal ;
Not mourning for the things that disappear
In the dim past, nor holding back in fear
From what the future veils ; but with a
whole
And happy heart, that pays its toll
To Youth and Age, and travels on with cheer.

So let the way wind up the hill or down,
O'er rough or smooth, the journey will be
joy :
Still seeking what I sought when but a boy,
New friendship, high adventure, and a crown,
My heart will keep the courage of the quest,
And hope the road's last turn will be the best.

—xx, 50.

December thirteenth

Be yourself

Individualism is a fatal poison. But individuality is the salt of common life. You may have to live in a crowd, but you do not have to live like it, nor subsist on its food. You may have your own orchard. You may drink at a hidden spring. Be yourself if you would serve others.—xxi, 33.

December fourteenth

The sense of sin, is not by any means a hopeless thing. It is an evidence of life, in its very pain; of enlightenment, in its very shame; of nearness to God, in its very humiliation before Him.—XII, 34.

*Pain, a
proof of life*

December fifteenth

We must ask if we would receive, we must seek if we would find. We must knock if we desire to have the door of heaven opened to us.

*The in-
stinct of
prayer*

Prayer is something that no man can understand; there is a mystery about it. We cannot explain how the voice of a mortal creature should have any influence upon the immortal God; how there should be any connection between the supplications which are wrung from our hearts by the pressure of want and danger and the fulfilment of those vast designs which have been formed from all eternity. But however that may be, prayer is an instinct of the human heart, and the religion which did not provide for it would be no religion at all.—I, 198.

December sixteenth

*Petrified
joy*

We often fancy, in this world, that beautiful and pleasant things would satisfy us better if they could be continued, without change, forever. We regret the ending of a good 'day off.' We are sorry to be 'coming out of the woods' instead of 'going in.' And that regret is perfectly natural and all right. It is part of the condition on which we receive our happiness. The mistake lies in wishing to escape from it by a petrification of our joys. The stone forest in Arizona will never decay, but it is no place for a man to set up his tents forever.

—xxv, 317.

December seventeenth

*A new
vision*

It was in the quest of this Jesus, in the hope of somehow drawing nearer to Him, that we made our pilgrimage to the Holy Land. And now, in the cool of the evening at Cæsarea Philippi, we ask ourselves whether our desire has been granted, our hope fulfilled?

Yes, more richly, more wonderfully than we dared to dream. For we have found a new vision of Christ, simpler, clearer, more satisfying, in the freedom and reality of God's out-of-doors.—xxvi, 285.

December eighteenth

Are you willing to stoop down and consider the needs and the desires of little children ; to remember the weakness and loneliness of people who are growing old ; to stop asking how much your friends love you, and ask yourself whether you love them enough ; to bear in mind the things that other people have to bear on their hearts ; to try to understand what those who live in the same house with you really want, without waiting for them to tell you ; to trim your lamp so that it will give more light and less smoke, and to carry it in front so that your shadow will fall behind you ; to make a grave for your ugly thoughts, and a garden for your kindly feelings, with the gate open—are you willing to do these things even for a day ? Then you can keep Christmas.—XXIII, 47.

*Christmas
coming*

December nineteenth

In the outer circles, cheerful greetings, courtesy, consideration ; in the inner circles, sympathetic interest, hearty congratulations, honest encouragement ; in the inmost circle, comradeship, helpfulness, tenderness,—

*Christmas-
living is
Christmas-
giving*

“ Beautiful friendship tried by sun and wind
Durable from the daily dust of life.”

After all, Christmas-living is the best kind of Christmas-giving.—XXIII, 40.

December twentieth

*One side of
religion*

“Look you, my friends,” said Winfried, “how sweet and peaceful is this convent to-night, on the eve of the nativity of the Prince of Peace! It is a garden full of flowers in the heart of winter; a nest among the branches of a great tree shaken by the winds; a still haven on the edge of a tempestuous sea. And this is what religion means for those who are chosen and called to quietude and prayer and meditation.”—x, 16.

December twenty-first

*The other
side of re-
ligion*

“But out yonder in the wide forest, who knows what storms are raving to-night in the hearts of men, though all the woods are still? Who knows what haunts of wrath and cruelty and fear are closed to-night against the advent of the Prince of Peace? And shall I tell you what religion means to those who are called and chosen to dare and to fight, and to conquer the world for Christ? It means to launch out into the deep. It means to go against the strongholds of the adversary. It means to struggle to win an entrance for their Master everywhere.”—x, 17.

December twenty-second

Joy is essential to true religion. A gloomy religion is far from God. A sad gospel is a contradiction in terms, like a black sun. "Behold," said the angel, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." And that message was simply the news of a great power which had appeared in the world for salvation.—IV, 93.

No sad gospel

December twenty-third

Christmas is truly the festival of childhood; but it should also be the festival of motherhood, for the child, even the holiest, is not divided from the mother. We may learn to think of infancy as sacred in the light that flows from the manger-cradle of Jesus. Yet it seems to me we cannot receive that truth perfectly unless we first learn to think of motherhood as holy in the memory of her whose virginal and stainless love found favour with God to receive and guard and cherish the Son of the Highest.—III, 43.

The festival of motherhood

December twenty-fourth

*The first
Christmas-
tree*

“And here,” said he, as his eyes fell on a young fir-tree, standing straight and green, with its top pointing towards the stars, amid the divided ruins of the fallen oak, “here is the living tree, with no stain of blood upon it, that shall be the sign of your new worship. See how it points to the sky. Let us call it the tree of the Christ-child. Take it up and carry it to the chieftain’s hall. You shall go no more into the shadows of the forest to keep your feasts with secret rites of shame. You shall keep them at home, with laughter and song and rites of love. The thunder-oak has fallen, and I think the day is coming when there shall not be a home in all Germany where the children are not gathered around the green fir-tree to rejoice in the birth-night of Christ.”—x, 72.

December twenty-fifth

Christmas

Could every time-worn heart but see Thee
once again,
A happy human child, among the homes of
men,
The age of doubt would pass,—the vision of
Thy face
Would silently restore the childhood of the
race. —IX, 59.

December twenty-sixth

The birth of Jesus is the sunrise of the Bible. Towards this point the aspirations of the prophets and the poems of the psalmists were directed as the heads of flowers are turned towards the dawn. From this point a new day began to flow very silently over the world—a day of faith and freedom, a day of hope and love. When we remember the high meaning that has come into human life and the clear light that has flooded softly down from the manger-cradle in Bethlehem of Judea, we do not wonder that mankind has learned to reckon history from the birthday of Jesus, and to date all events by the years before or after the Nativity of Christ.—III, 47.

*Anno
Domini*

December twenty-seventh

Modern art, splendidly equipped and full of skill, waits for an inspiration to use its powers nobly. Modern beneficence, practical and energetic, lacks too often the ideal touch, the sense of beauty. Both these priceless gifts, and who can tell how many more, may be received again when the heart of our doubting age, still cherishing a deep love of faith and a strong belief in love, comes back to kneel at the manger-cradle where a little babe reveals the philanthropy of God.—III, x.

*Art and
beneficence*

December twenty-eighth

*Novels that
strengthen
the reader*

I do not ask my novelist to define and discuss his doctrinal position, or to tell me what religious denomination he belongs to. I ask him only to show me good as good and evil as evil; to quicken my love for those who do their best, and deepen my scorn for those who do their worst; to give me a warmer sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men who are sincere and loyal and kind; to strengthen my faith that life is worth living even while he helps me to realize how hard it is to live; to leave me my optimism, but not to leave it stone-blind; not to depress me with cheap cynicism, but to nourish and confirm my heart in Sir Walter Scott's manly faith, that "to every duty performed there is attached an inward satisfaction which deepens with the difficulty of the task and is its best reward."—XXII, 163.

December twenty-ninth

*Thy neigh-
bour as thy-
self*

Life teaches all but the obstinate and mean how to find a place in a free and noble state and grow therein. A true love of others is the counterpart of a right love of self; that is, a love for the better part, the finer, nobler self, the man that is

“to arise in me,
That the man that I am may cease to be.”

—XXI, 32.

December thirtieth

The day is coming when the great ship of the world, guided by the hand of the Son of God, shall float out of the clouds and storms, out of the shadows and conflicts, into the perfect light of love, and God shall be all in all. The tide that bears the world to that glorious end is the sovereignty of God.—VII, 279.

*The ship
and the
tide*

December thirty-first

There seems to be a natural instinct which makes us desire that every religious service should end with a blessing. For nothing is more grateful and quieting to the heart than

*A benedic-
tion*

“the benediction
That follows after prayer.”

After this old fashion would I close my book. The faces of my readers are unknown to me, even as the pilgrims who called through the darkness were unknown to the watchmen upon the Temple walls. But whoever you are, at least a benediction shall go after you. Your life is a pilgrimage. May mercy follow you out of Zion, and peace bring you to your home!

—I, 259.

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