

## TOPICS OF THE TIME.

[We print below two editorials, entitled "The Lesson of the Year" and "Poverty as a Discipline," written by Doctor Holland for the December number of THE CENTURY MAGAZINE. That on "Poverty as a Discipline" is unfinished and unrevised, but we print it just as it was written, adding a quotation from President Garfield, of which Doctor Holland intended to make use.]

### The Lesson of the Year.

THE assassination of President Garfield was, without question, the most impressive event of the year, and one of the most impressive that has occurred within the memory of men now living. Never, perhaps, from so small a motive was a man struck down from so high a place. All the accompaniments of his death were impressive in the most profound degree.

The open attack upon his life; his long suffering, borne with heroic patience; the intense interest in the progress of his illness felt all over the civilized world; his removal to the ocean amid the hushed hearts and voices of millions of men; his death and burial amid symbols of mourning that blackened a continent and even darkened the air across the sea; the unprecedented expressions of grief and sympathy that came from other governments and peoples,—all contributed to make this death of our chief magistrate one of the most striking events of history. There are some points of this great tragedy which may profitably be recalled, with reference to the lesson they convey, and we propose to do this here.

First, we suppose it is true that there was never so much and such earnest prayer offered for one man's life as was offered, during his illness, for that of the President. And it did not avail anything. Let us have a word about this. The people did not know that they were praying for a dead man. There was undoubtedly never a moment, from the time the President was shot until he died, that he could have been saved without the performance of a miracle, and this was not prayed for. The people did not dream of asking for the performance of a miracle. They would have presumed to ask for nothing more than the illumination of the minds of those who had the President in their care and under their treatment, and for the forwarding of all those processes of healing established by nature and exercised within an organization not injured beyond the possibility of restoration. There is no doubt that many of the earnest petitioners for the President's cure were disappointed, and received a shock to their faith, on the denial of their prayers; and to these so much, at least, as this ought to be said: the earnest prayers of a great nation that turned unitedly to God in its distress are certain of an answer.

In the first place, the universal turning of the eyes Godward for help is an invaluable good in itself. The death of the President, or, rather, his long dying, was the cause of the revivification of the relig-

ious life of the country. Men were taught to pray by their great desire and their conscious helplessness. What every Christian man is bound to believe and assert is that all this tide of earnest prayer shall return to the nation in blessings equivalent to that which was sought. How this sad event has unified the national feeling! How can we be sufficiently grateful for this? The North and South came nearer together over the coffin of the lamented President than they had done since the war. It is quite possible that death has accomplished this much-desired result more surely than life would have done.

When the assassination took place we were in the beginnings of a fierce factional strife, instituted to break down the President's power. How far this strife would have gone in breaking the influence of the Administration we can never know, of course, but we can see that the prime mover in this most inexcusable factional strife has been politically slain, and that he who proposed to control the Senate of the United States, the Administration, and his own State, could make no headway against a dying man.

If he ever enter politics again, it will not be as dictator to his party, but as a humble and loyal servitor. If this death of the President shall serve, in any notable degree, to kill the power of the political machine, as represented by such men as Roscoe Conkling, he will not have died in vain, and the people who prayed for the President's life will have received a large installment of the equivalent of that life.

Again, the foreign participation in the profound interest excited by this calamity was a great good, not easily to be measured in all its relations and bearings. President Garfield was a man of the people, who rose, by sheer force of genius and character, to the highest place a human being can occupy. He was not the tool of a party. He had not sought the place to which he was elected. He was thoroughly educated for any political position, and he became President because he was our best man.

These facts had come to be recognized all over Europe, so that when he was stricken down the shock was felt from highest to humblest, from the heads of governments to the lowest of their peoples. The expressions of grief and sympathy that came from all these were an honor alike to the great Republic, and to the manhood which that Republic, in harmony with its ideal standards and theories, had elevated to its highest place. The death of the President has turned the hearts of the nations to us as no other event has done during the last century, so that his months of suffering may have won for us more than a life of service would have done.

A most valuable part of the lesson conveyed by the President's death relates to the vice-presidential office. It is devoutly to be hoped that Vice-President Arthur will follow loyally in the footsteps of his great predecessor. If he shall do so, we may practically have our President with us during the period of this Administration, so that we shall be deprived of no great

blessing by his death. The Being to whom we prayed so earnestly could not give us back a life destroyed, but he could, and we believe He will, perpetuate its influence through the term of the President's successor. Still we have had a great scare, and the circumstances from which it rose are not likely to be repeated. This one lesson we have learned—that the nomination of a vice-president by a party convention is no light matter. Such a nomination is never to be made to satisfy a faction, or to oil the wheels of a party machine. Just as much care should be taken to get a first-class man for the second place on the ticket as for the first. No man ever took the presidential chair with a fairer prospect of long life than President Garfield, but he was no proof against the assassin's bullet, and his work passed over to a man who began his term of office without the slightest expectation of ever occupying the White House. We have no wish to be offensive to a man who has undertaken to bear a great burden, to which he has been unexpectedly, and, we believe, unwillingly called, but, as a people, we have learned from him and the circumstances by which he is surrounded that too much care in the choice of a vice-president cannot possibly be taken. If the death of the President has impressed this important truth upon the country, then another great good has been bestowed upon it. Of this thing we are certain, viz. : that no nation can pray for a great good, as ours has done, and be refused.

The nation did not get just what it asked for, because it could not be granted, but we believe it has secured by its prayers an equivalent good, and that out of the death of the President will come a great treasure of peace, harmony, and prosperity. The nation is better for this death, which has so stirred and affected it, and in a sense the great, good man has died for us. Death alone could have sufficiently emphasized the lesson of his life, harmonized our jealousies and strifes, attracted to us the sympathy of the world, and brought some of our political methods to the test which proves their unworthiness.

#### Poverty as a Discipline.

WE often hear it said of a man that he has had great advantages. We have meant by this simply the advantages which wealth could buy—university training, travel, high society, unlimited books, etc. It is not often that we hear poverty spoken of as an advantage, yet we believe it to be demonstrably true that, of all the advantages which come to any young man, this is the greatest. The young man who is saved from the effort of making his own way in the world and the necessity of establishing his own position, is denied the most powerful stimulus to labor and development. The young men who are coming every year out of the colleges and the professional schools of the country, and starting into active life, will win success or sink into failure mainly in accordance with the amount of stimulus under which their education has been acquired. If they have been obliged to labor until they have learned the value of money; if they have been forced into close economies, and learned, also, how difficult it is to keep it; if they have grown up with the consciousness upon them that everything they hope

for in the world must be won by their own unaided force and industry; if they have acquired thrifty habits and self-helpfulness and self-trust,—they enter life with great and most assuring advantages. No amount of wealth given to a young man can possibly give him so good a prospect of a true success as poverty that has secured such advantages as these.

Twice within the easy memory of this generation a man who started at the lowest extreme of the social scale has risen to be the President of the United States. Abraham Lincoln rose from his nest of leaves in a Western log-cabin to be twice the elected ruler of the nation, at a most momentous period of the national history, traversing in the passage every degree of the social scale. The poor frontiersman's child, the flat-boatman, the day-laborer, the indigent student, the humble country lawyer, the politician, the stump-speaker, the legislator, the statesman, the President, and chief of one of the greatest armies the world has ever seen,—who believes for a moment that, had he been rich at the start, he would have ended where he did? It was the discipline of poverty that made him what he was. It gave him a profound sympathy with the people, most of whom are engaged in a struggle with poverty from the cradle to the grave. It stimulated and trained his powers to their highest development, and it helped him to form those habits of industry and economy that are essential to the best success.

James A. Garfield, whom we have just laid in the tomb with tears of affectionate reverence, was another instance of the beneficent influences of poverty. He rose from as low a place as Lincoln, and took even a higher flight than he. The most brilliant man who ever occupied the Presidential chair, and rapidly becoming the most admired and best beloved ruler in the world, he was mourned when, in realizing one of the many coincidences that existed between his life and that of Lincoln, he was murdered by an assassin, as man was never mourned before. His marvelous accomplishments and powers won for him the respect of the great, and his sympathy with the humble drew to him the hearts of the world. \* \* \*

“Poverty is uncomfortable, as I can testify; but nine times out of ten, the best thing that can happen to a young man is to be tossed overboard and compelled to sink or swim for himself. In all my acquaintance, I never knew a man to be drowned who was worth the saving.”—JAMES A. GARFIELD.

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#### Doctor Holland.

DOCTOR HOLLAND'S death, though occurring at a time when years of mental vigor and usefulness might fairly have been hoped for, was still delayed till his life had reached a singular completeness. He had accomplished nearly every desire of his heart. His life had grown broader and richer to its close. Though keenly sensitive to sharp criticism, and often suffering from it, still he was buoyed up through all his busy career by the grateful affection of untold thousands and the love of all who were near him. He lived long enough not only to be able to say honestly that he had forgiven all his en-

THE following is from a sermon preached October 16th, in Grace Church, New York, by Rev. Henry C. Potter, D. D. :

"And here it is, in the light of these words of His own, that we come to understand the meaning of the cross of Christ. If love is to be the king of your life and mine, my brothers, if with us here, amid all the strife and rivalry that make up our week-day world, the voice that bids us love is to be regnant over all other voices, somewhere or other there must be the spell that compels us to do so. An apostle had found that spell when he wrote 'The love of Christ constraineth me,' and other men than he, aye, a mighty multitude whom no man can number, have looked also into the face crowned with thorns, and have learned there how to love !

"More than any other, it is the lesson for which our time is waiting. Oh, how clever, how persistent, how aggressive we Americans are ! It is simply true that there is no conceivable enterprise demanding capital, courage, the sacrifice of time and strength, which would not, if it were proposed to-morrow, find a host of investors and followers. But the quieter, larger courage that, deep in the love of God and man, gives itself to brighten and enrich and purify the sum of human life—that is not so common. The apostolic spirit that sent men forth aflame with a love of souls that would not let them rest—it is this that we need to have rekindled. Not by capital, not by culture, not by conquest, does any nation or any character become really noble or enduringly great, but rather by alliance with His life who gave the world, anew, the great commandment, and then translated it by His cross.

"One such character I desire to mention here this morning, just because, to so many of us, its influence has perhaps been so little known and so imperfectly appreciated. A man of letters died in this city during the past week who, though he came here ten years ago from New England, was perhaps known personally to but few of this congregation. I speak of the late Dr. J. G. Holland, for some time the editor of a monthly magazine in this city, and for the greater part of his life an assiduous and prolific writer.

"He was a man of good gifts, consecrated by a great motive. Of clear and vigorous intellect, he was best of all, like Noah of old, a preacher of righteousness, and one of rare power and singular sweetness. Writing of plain and homely themes, he never touched one of them that he did not ennoble; and over all that he wrote there breathed the spirit of one who loved God, and who, therefore, like Ben Adhem, "loved his

fellow-man." His writings found an acceptance which has often puzzled the critics, and confounded the literary prophets. But their secret was not far to seek. They helped men. They lifted them up. They rebuked meanness. They encouraged all nobler aspirations. They were always a word for "God and the right," spoken with courage, but spoken most of all in a tone of manly and brotherly sympathy that could not be misunderstood. In a word, this large influence (to which for one I gladly own to having been a debtor) owed its power for good,—a power steadfast and wide-spreading, I believe, as yet beyond adequate estimate,—to a character touched itself by the spell of a divine love, and lifted by that spell into a throne of happy and wholesome influence over the hearts and lives of other men."

#### Communication.

"THE SO-CALLED VENUS OF MELOS."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CENTURY MAGAZINE.

DEAR SIR: Since writing the article on this subject in the November number of your magazine, I have visited the museum at Naples to examine the statue called the Capuan Venus, and find, as I had supposed, that the arms are a modern restoration, having been broken off nearly at the same points as those of the Melian statue. I found, also, a terracotta statuette which very closely corresponds with the latter, holding an apple in the left hand, but with the wings of Victory.

No critic of my theory can be more aware of the gaps in my demonstration than I am; but, in all investigations where the actual proof is wanting, the highest probability stands its next friend; and this, I confidently maintain, ranges itself on my side. No other theory so fully accounts for all the facts. I do not ignore the known fact that the original Niké Apteros, like the original Athena Polias, was in wood; but there is no evidence that, like that sacred image, it was taken from the Acropolis on the Persian invasion, and it was probably, therefore, destroyed at that time with the temple. The latter, we know by the frieze, was reconstructed after the victories over the Persians, and, if we may judge from the style of the frieze, after the Parthenon. The substitution of a new statue for the wooden one lost would most naturally fall on the school of Scopas. Pausanias mentions the temple, but says nothing of the statue in his enumeration of those he saw on the Acropolis—conclusive proof that neither the original nor a substitute was there at the time of his visit.

Yours truly,

W. J. STILLMAN.

#### LITERATURE.

##### Garfield's Words.\*

IMMEDIATELY after the death of Abraham Lincoln, the wise and witty sayings of the man who had been,

\* Garfield's Words: Suggestive Passages from the Public and Private Writings of James Abram Garfield. Compiled by William Ralston Balch. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Company.

before he became President, a sort of Socrates of the prairies, were gathered and printed with the title: "The President's Words." That book is in some regards the raciest and most truly American thing that has been printed, not excepting the "Biglow Papers." What was done for Lincoln, Mr. Balch has done for Garfield. Lincoln's sayings have more

humor and a deeper pathos, Garfield's are naturally more philosophical, are broader in their range, and have more rhetorical poise. There are, however, strong points of resemblance. Both speak sententiously, wittily, and with marked common-sense. Garfield has the finish of the schools, Lincoln the laconic terseness of the up-country. Lincoln appeals oftener and more directly to feeling, Garfield touches profounder questions and sheds more light on principles.

If James A. Garfield had had the good luck to represent a district fronting on Massachusetts Bay, instead of one on the south shore of Lake Erie, he would not have had to wait for the presidency and martyrdom to bring into relief his gift for "saying things." It is hard for us here, in the sea-board cities, to realize that the good gifts of broad statesmanship and the genius for felicitous utterance may come from the Galilee beyond the mountains. Athens holds the pen, but she records few heroes besides those of Athens. For a decade, at least, Garfield has been making perhaps the wisest, broadest, and most influential speeches uttered in either house of Congress; but his recognition was tardy. His speeches always attracted attention, but how few of us, here in the centers of thought, recognized the fact that one of the most highly cultivated men in the nation, the peer of our best statesmen, was the representative from the Western Reserve! Some of the sentences in this most valuable little book seem to shine with General Garfield's own experience of the world. "Things don't turn up in this world until somebody turns them up," he says, and we hear the echo of his boyish perseverance in the sentence. There are maxims here that indicate the very secret of his success. "Be fit for more than the thing you are now doing." "If you are not too large for the place you are too small for it." "Do not, I beseech you, be content to enter upon any business which does not require and compel constant intellectual growth." "If the power to do hard work is not talent, it is the best possible substitute for it." He says: "I never meet a ragged boy in the street without feeling that I may owe him a salute, for I know not what possibilities are buttoned up under his coat." And here is a generalized confession: "To every man of great original power there comes, in early youth, a moment of sudden discovery—of self-recognition—when his own nature is revealed to himself, when he catches for the first time a strain of that immortal song to which his own spirit answers, and which becomes thenceforth and forever the inspiration of his life—

"Like noble music unto noble words."

And the following extract from his oration on the death of Mr. Starkweather is strangely pathetic when we remember the revelation of character which Garfield's own sufferings brought to the nation: "I have sometimes thought that we cannot know any man thoroughly well while he is in perfect health. As the ebb-tide discloses the real lines of the shore and the bed of the sea, so feebleness, sickness, and pain bring out the real character of a man."

These pages are full of disclosures of Garfield's knightly spirit, as, for instance, the saying: "If there be one thing upon this earth that mankind love and admire better than another, it is a brave man—it is a

man who dares to look the devil in the face and tell him he is a devil." And this: "I am glad to have the opportunity of standing up against a rabble of men who hasten to make weathercocks of themselves." "I have always said that my whole public life was an experiment to determine whether an intelligent people would sustain a man in acting sensibly on each proposition that arose, and in doing nothing for mere show or demagogical effect." "It is not manly to lie even about Satan." "I would rather be defeated than make capital out of my religion." "The men who succeed best in public life are those who take the risk of standing by their own convictions." "The great Carlyle has said that the best gift God ever gave to man was an eye that could really see; I venture to add that an equally rare and not less important gift is the courage to tell what one sees."

What an insight we get into his character from this sentence out of a private letter, written on the first day of 1867, in the exciting times of Andrew Johnson!—"I am trying to do two things: dare to be a radical and not be a fool, which, if I may judge by the exhibitions around me, is a matter of no small difficulty." So do we find the secret of his freshness and continual growth in his constant self-culture, as here disclosed. "I must do something to keep my thoughts fresh and growing. I dread nothing so much as falling into a rut and feeling myself becoming a fossil." This last is from a private letter, and contains the only confusing juncture of different metaphors that we have met in Garfield's writing.

In the very interesting but all too brief sketch with which the editor introduces the book, we see the steady widening of his vision under the influence of his growing culture. He read James Freeman Clarke's "Ten Great Religions" several times, and felt then that he had hitherto seen religion too narrowly. But he writes to Dr. Boynton: "I hope I have lost none of my desire to be a true man, and keep ever before me the character of the great Nazarene." His recipe for cheerfulness, in a private letter in 1874, is: "To look upon life with a view of doing as much good to others as possible, and, as far as possible, to strip ourselves of what the French call egoism." We remember that when Garfield went into the war the soldiers called him "the praying colonel," and if his religious life was less in people's eye at a later period, it was none the less a strong force in molding him to a high ideal. "The worst days of darkness through which I have ever passed have been greatly alleviated by throwing myself with all my energy into some work relating to others." This is true Christian consolation. And again: "It is one of the precious mysteries of sorrow that it finds solace in unselfish thought."

But it is in his statesmanship that we recognize the real largeness of the man. The roots of his arguments take hold of the history of the race, and the whole nature of men. "There can be no permanent disfranchised peasantry in the United States," he said more than twenty years ago. How swiftly does his honest heart and clear head go to the root of the financial question when he denounces "all methods of paying debts by sleight-of-hand." "Financial subjects," he says, "are nuts and clover for demagogues." The argument for governmental education is put into seven

words: "School-houses are less expensive than rebellions." And the economical relations of the working-man are all in this: "The laborer has but one commodity to sell—his day's work. It is his sole reliance. He must sell it to-day, or it is lost forever."

His views of our history were large, untouched with partisan or sectional narrowness, and going straight to the core of the matter. "Virginia and Massachusetts were two focal centers from which sprang the life-forces of this republic. They were, in many ways, complements of each other, each supplying what the other lacked, and both uniting to endow the republic with its noblest and most enduring qualities." Here, again, is a truth proven by American history in the earliest colonial times as strongly as by recent events: "Emigration follows the path of liberty." A general principle of statesmanship of the most far-reaching application is this: "Whatever the people can do without legislation will be better done than by the intervention of the State or nation."

He judges all things largely. Of John Stuart Mill, he says: "I can't see that he ever came to comprehend human life as a reality." His views of education were exceedingly broad—abreast those of the foremost and wisest educational reformers of our time. The sharp criticisms of some prevalent methods to be found in the extracts under this head would be most wholesome if the men who need them were likely ever to see them. We have room for but one significant remark: "It is to me a perpetual wonder that any child's love of knowledge survives the outrages of the school-house."

#### Gladden's "The Lord's Prayer."\*

MR. RUSKIN, in some pithy letters addressed to the English clergy, made the inquiry, "Can this Gospel of Christ be put into such plain words and short terms that a plain man can understand it?" and suggested that this might be reached by "explaining in their completeness and life the terms of the Lord's Prayer." Mr. Gladden has acted upon this suggestion, and the result is an admirably simple and effective presentation of what may be called the substance of religion. Few preachers speak the speech of the common people as he does. His sermons have in a rare degree the quality of genuineness. Not one word has the false ring of cant or sentimentality. He uses illustrations freely, and always to illustrate, never to adorn. There is plainness of style, but there is richness of substance—the richness which comes from carrying the great simple truths of religion into the boundless field of individual and social conduct. As to the substance of the teaching, it may be described as the doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount closely applied to American communities in this present year of grace.

\* The Lord's Prayer. Seven Homilies. By Washington Gladden. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

The stress is thrown upon practical conduct, but there is a pervading atmosphere of reverence and trust; the ethical and the spiritual quality are closely blended. It is a strong, manly, helpful book.

In the break-up of old beliefs, it is the men who in their own lives dig down afresh to the springs of faith, hope, and love who can speak the living word to the people. Such preachers are necessarily few, and their most effective access to the great constituency who need them is no longer by the voice, but through the press. Mr. Gladden is one of the most effective and most useful of these pen-preachers. There may be men more eminent for originality, for philosophical and poetical genius, but he unites the great qualities of absolute sincerity, near and first-hand acquaintance with spiritual realities, and the simple, direct way of speech which the multitude understands.

We should also note that Mr. Gladden's theological position is in the ranks of liberal orthodoxy, and that he illustrates the best characteristic methods prevalent among that school of teachers. They have felt the influences of modern thought, and accepted new conclusions to an extent which they seldom define with much exactness to their hearers, or perhaps to themselves. Their general aim is to draw both from older and newer ways of thought those elements which, in their immediate application, are practical and fructifying. Their concern is almost wholly with the practical conduct of life, using the phrase in its large sense to include obedience and trust toward a higher power. They are apt to speak with a good deal of positiveness, as of things certain and indisputable. By this strongly affirmative quality they sometimes go rather one side of the more thoughtful and inquiring class of minds, but they exactly hit the want of the average man. The mass of mankind, whether they acknowledge it or not, rest in religion, as in most other things, upon authority. They must of necessity take the word of some one who they suppose knows better than they do. Men are at this time more sensitive than ever to the voice of a teacher which rings with the clear tones of a deep personal confidence in his own message. It is a most trying combination of functions which requires a preacher to be at once a student of truth and a guide to his flock, at a time when so profound a recasting of thought is going on, and so much uncertainty rests upon its ultimate issues. To the mind of the preacher who is both thoughtful and earnest, there is at times something like a conflict between love of truth and love of his people. If he speaks too positively, he misrepresents his own mind; if with too much qualification, he perplexes those whom he wants to help. The best of the liberal orthodox, like Phillips Brooks and Washington Gladden, extend their emphasis not only to the ethical and spiritual realities of earthly life, but to the personality and fatherhood of God, the providential government of the world, the life beyond death, and the authority of Jesus Christ.