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Md.

COMING.

"At eve, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning."

"It may be in the even,
When the work of the day is done,
And you have time to sit in twilight
And watch the sinking sun;
While the long, bright day dies slowly
Over the sea,
And the hour grows quiet and holy
With thoughts of me:
While you hear the village children
Passing along the street,
Among those thronging footsteps
May come the sound of My feet.
Therefore I tell you, watch
By the light of the evening star,
When the room is growing dusky
As the clouds afar.
Let the door be on the latch
In your home;
For it may be through the gleaming
I will come.

"It may be when the midnight
Is heavy upon the land,
And the black waves lying dumbly
Along the sand;
When the mooless night draws close,
And the lights are out in the house;
When the fires burn low and red,
And the watch is ticking loudly
Beside the bed
Though you sleep, tired out, on your couch,
Still your heart must wait and watch
In the dark room;
For it may be at midnight
I will come.

"It may be at the cock-crow,
When the night is dying slowly
In the sky,
And the sea looks calm and holy,
Waiting for the dawn,
Of the golden sun,
Which draweth nigh;
When the mists are on the valleys, shading
The river chill,
And my morning star is fading, fading
Over the hill--
Behold I say unto you, watch;
Let the door be on the latch
In your home,
In the chill before the dawning,
Between the night and morning,
I may come.

"It may be in the morning,
When the sun is bright and strong,
And the dew is glittering sharply
Over the little town;
When the waves are laughing loudly
Along the shore,
When the little birds are singing sweetly
About the door;
With the long day's work before you,
You rise up with the sun,
And the neighbors come in to talk a little
Of all that must be done.
But remember that I may be the next
To come in at the door,
To call you from all your busy work
For evermore.
As you work, your heart must watch,
For the door is on the latch
In your room,
And it may be in the morning
I will come."

So he passed down my cottage garden
By the path that leads to the sea,
Till He came to the turn of the little road,
Where the birch and laburnum tree
Lean over and arch the way;
There I saw Him a moment stay,
And turn once more to me
As I wept at the cottage door,
And lift up His hands in blessing,
Then I saw His face no more.

And I stood still in the doorway,
Leaning against the wall,
Not heeding the fair, white roses,
Though I crushed them and let them fall;
Only looking down the pathway,
And looking toward the sea,
And wondering, and wondering
When he would come back to me;
Till I was aware of an angel
Who was going swiftly by,
With the gladness of one who goeth
In the light of God Most High.

He passed the end of the cottage,
Toward the garden gate,
(I suppose He was come down
At the setting of the sun,
To comfort some one in the village
Whose dwelling was desolate,)
And he passed before the door
Beside my place,
And the likeness of a smile
Was on his face.
"Weep not," he said, "for unto you is given
To watch for the coming of His feet
Who is the glory of our blessed heaven;
The work and watching will be very sweet,
Even in an earthly home;
And in such an hour as you think not
He will come."

So I am watching quietly
Every day
Whenever the sun shines brightly
I rise and say:
"Surely it is the shining of His face!"
And look unto the gates of His high place
Beyond the sea;
For I know he is coming shortly
To summon me.
And when a shadow falls across the window
Of my room,
Where I am working my appointed task,
I lift my head to watch the door, and ask
If He is come.
And the angel answers sweetly
In my home:
"Only a few more shadows,
And He will come."

Methodism in the United States.

BY G. R. CROOKS, D. D.

The statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church for 1876 show no serious diminution of its rapid growth. The total number of members at the close of the year was 1,386,802; the total of probationers was 226,758, making a grand total of 1,613,560. The net increase of members and probationers for the year is 33,001;—the net increase of the same for the past ten years is 581,376. The preachers are either itinerant or local; the former are pastors, the latter preach as they have opportunity, and without compensation. The present number of itinerants is 11,361, and local preachers, 12,509. The total increase of preachers, travelling and local, in ten years, has been 7,692. The travelling preachers are distributed into 88 annual Conferences, and receive their appointments from 11 bishops. The Methodist Episcopacy is not diocesan; the bishops have equal authority in all the Conferences; to each is assigned every year a certain number of Conferences by the vote of the Episcopal Board.

For the accommodation of this great multitude of members, there are 15,634 churches, valued at at little less than seventy millions of dollars; for the use of the preachers there are 5,077 parsonages of the value of nine and a half millions. The increase of the churches in the past ten years has been 5,172; the increase in the number of parsonages 1,763. An increase of but one church was reported for 1876; in prosperous years the number of new churches built is about one a day.

The Southern Methodist Episcopal Church has 3,271 travelling preachers, 5,462 local preachers, and 715,951 members. There are no probationers in the Southern Church, candidates for membership being received at once on profession of faith.—There are two African Methodist Churches one of which is distinguished from the other by the word "Zion" in its title. Their members are reported to be over four hundred thousand in number. There is also a "colored Methodist Episcopal Church of America," with 80,000 members. Altogether there are five hundred thousand colored Methodists in the United States.—The minor Methodist bodies aggregate about three hundred thousand communicants. The total number of Methodist communicants in our country is stated by the "Almanac" for 1877, to be 3,197,947, and the total throughout the world, 4,172,579. The number of sittings in Methodist churches in the United States, as reported by the government census of 1870, is six millions. Relatively to the entire population, Methodists are most numerous in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa. The number of communicants in the six New England States is considerably over 110,000. At the New York Methodist State Convention held in 1871, the total number of members in the State was reported to be 182,416. Methodist communicants in New Jersey are about 56,000, and in Pennsylvania 150,000.

These great results have been achieved in a little more than a century. In 1776 Methodists were scarcely known in the thirteen colonies. Professor Diman, in his comprehensive review of religion, prepared for the Centennial number of the *North American Review*, quotes from an election sermon preached in 1783 by Dr. Stiles, President of Yale College. The topic of the sermon was the "Future Glory of the United States."

"When we look forward," said the famous President, "and see this country increased to forty or fifty millions, while we see all the religious sects increased into respectable bodies, we shall doubtless find the united body of the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches making an equal figure with any two of them. There are Westleians, and Menonists, and others, all of which will make a very inconsiderable amount in comparison with those who will give the religious complexion to America."

Prophecy for uninspired human beings is always hazardous. New times bring in new forces, and the failure of President Stiles to measure accurately the religious forces which were to be operative in the country for a century is by no means unprecedented. In this day the churches of the United States stood as to numbers in the following order: Congregational, Baptist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, German Reformed and Roman Catholic.—They now stand: Methodist, Baptist, Roman Catholic*, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Congregational, Protestant Episcopal, and Reformed.

When we inquire into the causes of this rapid expansion of Methodism we do not find it easy to determine them with accuracy. Methodists usually attribute the success of their Church to their Arminian theology and their itinerant ministry; but the almost equally extraordinary phenomenon of Baptist growth cannot be explained in any such way. The Baptists are nearly all Calvanistic in theology and without exception Congregational in polity. These two great denominations the opposites of each other in distinctive doctrine and polity have had like success in securing numbers. Moreover, the Moravians, who came into the country before the Metodists, and who were Mr. Wesley's teachers in doctrine are still a small community. The causes of the progress of Methodism are rather to be sought in the spirit which has animated its propogators and in their mode of presenting Christianity. The early Methodist ministers were evangelists. They appealed less to the logical faculty than to the sensibilities. Their theology was the theology of the heart. Christianity was apprehended by them as a living power, and proclaimed as such to the people. We do not mean that Methodism was without a system of dogmatic ideas, for its theology was very sharply defined. Methodist ministers, however, put in the forefront of all their preaching Christianity as the conscious experience of a divine life, and exhorted their hearers to become at once partakers of this experience. They proclaimed with a confidence that nothing could shake, that conversion might be and should be instantaneous, and labored for immediate results in the conversion of men. Added to this was a popular style of oratory. The employment of lay preachers by Mr. Wesley brought into the pulpit a directness and force which were in strong contrast with the polish and exactness of the prevalent style, but were nevertheless exceedingly effective. The same characteristics which have made Mr. Moody's preaching so phenomenal, were to be found in the early itinerants who grew up under the direction of Mr. Wesley in England and of Bishop Asbury in America.

The changes which have taken place in Methodism in the United States have been in the direction of greater conformity to the habits and usages of the evangelical bodies in the midst of which it works and lives. If it has affected them, it has in turn been affected by them. More and more it ceases to be peculiar, and continually adds to its agencies from the rich stores of the experience of Protestantism. Objections to the special training of ministers have disappeared, and Theological and Biblical schools have, since 1856, been rapidly established. Laymen have been admitted to a share in the church government, which has thus ceased to be hierarcial. In adopting this measure, the Methodist Episcopal Church has accepted a fundamental principle of Protestantism which had for a long time, out of regard to the itinerancy, been imperfectly reorganized. The itinerancy itself tends slowly to become less itinerant. The pastoral term has been extended first to two years, then to three, until now the question of the removal of all limitations has been agitated. Class-meetings are still maintained, but attendance upon them has ceased to be a condition of membership. Trained ministers increase in number; the literary spirit becomes more distinctly manifest. Out of an itinerant evangelism have grown compact churches, which, though distinct, have, in their later years, become wholly fraternal.

Fifty years ago a breach was made in the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the question of "Lay Delegation." The "Radicals," as they were called in that day, organized the Methodist Protestant Church. This breach has been healed, and friendly relations have been restored. Justice is now done to the good men who were ranged on both sides of this controversy. In 1844 the Church was divided again by the question of the connection of the Episcopacy with slavery. Nearly half of the communicants entered the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1876, terms of settlement of all disputed questions were happily determined by "a commission chosen for that purpose, and fraternal relations restored. The feeling between the two Churches is cordial; whether fraternity will grow into union time only can show. Nor would it be wise to assert with confidence the future of this family of Churches. The example of President Stiles is a warning of which Methodists may well take heed. It will be sufficient for them if, they "thank God and take courage."

* The Catholic population of the country is 6,000,000; we estimate population to be about the same, or a little more.—*N. Y. Observer.*

Inspiration of the Bible.

Open the Bible, examine the fifty sacred authors therein from Moses—who wrote in the wilderness 400 years before the siege of Troy—to the fisherman son of Zebedee, who wrote 1500 years later in Ephesus and Patmos, under the reign of Domitian, and you will find none of those mistakes which the science of every country detects in the works of preceding generations. Carefully go through the Bible from Genises to Revelations, in search of such faults, and, as you carry on the investigation, remember that it is a book which treats of everything, which describes nature, which recounts its wonders, which records its creation, which tells us of the formation of the heavens, of the light, of the waters, of the air, of the mountains, of animals, and of plants; that is a book which acquaints us with the first revolutions of the world, and which foretells also its last; that it is a book which describes them with circumstantial details, invests them with sublime poetry, and chants them in fervent melodies; that it is a book replete with Eastern imagry, full of majesty, variety and boldness; that it is a book which treats of the earth and things visible and at the same time of the celestial world and things invisible; that it is a book in which nearly fifty writers, of every degree of cultivation, of every order, of every condition, and seperated from one another by 1,500 years, have been engaged; that it is a book written variously in the centre of Asia, in the sands of Arabia, in the deserts of Judea in the porches of the Jewish Temple and in the rustic schools of the prophets of Bethel and Jericho, in the magnificent palaces of Babylon, and on the idolatrous banks of Chebar, and afterwards in the centre of western civilization, in the midst of the Jews and their ignorant councils, among Polytheism and its idols, and, as it were, in the bosom of Pantheism and its foolish philosophy; that it is a book whose first writer was, during forty years, brought up among the magicians of Egypt, who regarded the sun, planets and elements as endowed with intelligence, reacting upon and governing our world by their continual evaporation; and that it is a book whose first pages preceded by more than 900 years the most ancient philosophers of Greece and Asia—Thales, Pythagoras, Zaleucus, Xenophon, and Confucios; that it is a book which carries its records into the scenes of the invisible world, the hierarchy of angels, the latest periods of futurity, and the glorious consummation of all things. Well, search in its 50 authors, its 66 books, its 1,189 chapters, 31,173 verses—search for a single one of the thousand errors which every ancient and modern author abounds when they speak of the heavens or of the earth, of their revolutions or their elements, and you will fail to find it ....It never does violence to facts, nor to the principles of sound natural philosophy. Never in one single instance will you find it in opposition to the just ideas which science has given us regarding the form of our globe, its magnitude, and its glory.... There is therefore, no physical error whatever in the Scriptures; and this transcendent fact, which becomes more admirable in proportion as it is made the subject of closer investigation, is a striking proof of the inspiration which dictated them even to their least expressions.—*Gaussen.*

Jerusalem.

Charles Warren Stoddard's View of Jerusalem—The Panorama from the Mount of Olives—The Mohammedans' Holy of Holies.

JERUSALEM, Dec. 5, 1876.

In a moment we were upon the ground, leading our animals towards the gate, the most precious gate, that opens upon Gethsemane. "The King walks when he comes to Zion." At the worn threshhold the guards presented arms, a respect due to his official rank. The muskets rang upon the pavement as we passed out of the gloomy gateway into the narrow street.—It is but a step to the Via Dolorosa! None of us had yet spoken. As we recognized localities familiar to us from earliest childhood by reason of prints and pictures, we sometimes exchanged glances. We were each paler than common; a kind of nervous chill seemed to have seized us. Passing up the Via Dolorosa, under the Ecce Homo Arch, we reached the hospice, whose charity had already set our rooms in order, and laid the cloth for our meal.

Standing upon the Mount of Olives, with the familiar panorama of Jerusalem before you, the first object that attracts the eye, and the one that is sure to hold it longest, is the Haramesh-Sherfs—the field of the Mosque of Omar. It is bordered on two sides by the ancient and picturesque walls of the city. It hangs upon the brink of the valley of the Kedron (Jehosaphat), a narrow and not very deep ravine, dotted with Moslem tombs. It absorbs for the time the attention of the pilgrim, who in imagination is carried back to the very beginning of history. Mount Zion, though it overtops the world in our imagination, is only a little hill. The platform of the Temple is partly artificial, the southeast corner being supported by a hundred massive columns, twenty-eight feet in height. The roof is covered with soil and grass.—It is a part of the great field of the Temple, stretching out to the city wall above the Kedron Valley. These vaults are called Solomon's stables. Tradition, that runs wild in the Orient, and embarrasses history whenever it is possible, ascribes the origin of these subterranean chambers to demons. The enclosed field, with its beautiful mosque, its cypresses, olives, prayer shrines, its "golden gate," long since walled up, and which will not again be opened till Christ and Mohammed returned to Jerusalem to judge the world together; with its long rows of buildings on the north and west, the colonades, the deep porches, the latticed windows clinging to the wall like huge bird-cages, and with its lesser mosque El Aksa, near the southern wall—is there a corner of the earth more crowded with interest than this? Here Abraham offered sacrifice; David raised an altar; Solomon, as if by enchantment, conjured his marvellous temple; a second sprang from the ruins of the first; a third, King Herod's, followed and much of the last is preserved to this day. For these structures the little mountain was built and over Jehosophat on the east, over Hinnom on the south, and over the valley of Tyropœon on the west. In looking out upon Olivet, Christ once walked. At the temple gates sat the money changers and the sellers of doves and ewe lambs, and in those days the gold and precious stones that decorated the sacred edifice must have glowed like sacrificial fires in the glory of the sun that rose and set on Jerusalem. Then came Hadrian's Temple to Jupiter, with its profane gods, and after that the mosque, which we now see, a spot which has ever been regarded by the Moslems as the holiest of all places after Mecca. Eight gates in the western wall of the Haramesh-Sherfs admit you to the green enclosure. These gates stand open; people continually swarm in and out. The irregular quadrangle within the gates is about 530 yards in breadth. The surface is much broken by buildings, many of them excessively small, scattered about apparently quite by accident, and no two bearing the slightest relationship to each other. The trees, also, seem to have grown by chance. There is a total lack of harmony in the grouping of the buildings. An air of desolation broods over the place; it looks as if it had been destroyed again and again. Women might wail among these stones, and men rend their garments.

At one or two of the small shrines in the field, which were like empty niches with their backs turned to Mecca, Mohammedans were prostrated in prayer. A blue cloud of pigeons whirled over our heads and buried themselves among the projecting cases of the deep windows in the wall. We looked across the broad inclosure and saw in the centre of it a temple so exquisitely proportioned, so splendidly tinted, that one might imagine it some fairy pleasure-house cut from a single gem. On a pedestal stands the flat-roofed octagon, pierced with elaborately ornamented windows, decorated with marble panels and porcelain tiles, the whole looking as fine as ivory. A dome seems to float in the air above this mysterious chamber—a dome crusted with tiles tinted with all the changeful shades of orange, violet and green; a dome that in the sunshine is as splendid as the breast of a peacock. It is Kubbet-es-Sahnra (the Dome of the Rock), the Mohammedan's Holy of Holies! Under the arcades without the building will hang the scales on the judgment day; within lies the rock itself—a rock so sacred that no foot treads it. We are only permitted to approach it with our shoes off, and so late as the Crimean war it was worth a Christian life to seek admission here. The Jews have never sought it, it is said, as they dread the possibility of treading upon the "Holy of Holies."—*San Francisco Chronicle.*

Irritating Days.

There are times when everything seems to go wrong. From seven o'clock in the morning till ten o'clock in the evening affairs are in a twist. You rise in the morning and the room is cold, and a button is off, and the beefsteak is tough, and the stoves smoke, and the pipes burst, and you start down the street nettled from head to foot. All day long things are adverse.—Insinuations, petty losses, meanness on the part of customers. The ink bottle upsets and spoils the carpet. Some one gives a wrong turn to the damper and the gas escapes. An agent comes in determined to insure your life, when it is already insured for more than it is worth and you are afraid some one will knock you on the head to get the price of your policy; but he sticks to you showing you pictures of old Time and the hour glass and death's scythe and a skelton, making it quite certain that you will die before your time unless you take papers in his company. Besides this, you have a cold in your head, and a grain of dirt in your eye, and you are a walking uneasiness. The day is out of joint and no surgeon can set it.

The probability is that if you were to look at the weather-vane you would find that the wind is northeast, and you might remember that you have lost much sleep lately. It might happen to be that you are out of joint instead of the day. Be careful and not write many letters while you are in that irritated mood. You will pen somethings that you will be sorry for afterward.

Let us remember that these spiked nettles of life are part of our discipline. Life would get nauseating if it were all honey. The table would be poorly set that had oh it nothing but treacle. We need a little vinegar, mustard, pepper and horseradish, that brings the tears even when we do not feel pathetic. If this world were all smoothness, we should never be ready for emigration to a higher and better. Blustering March and sweeping April pepare us for a shining May. This world is a hitching-post. Instead of tying fast on the cold mountains, he had better whip up and hasten toward the warm inn, where our goods friends are looking out of the window watching to see us come up.—*Talmage.*

THE NAMES OF NAILS.—The terms "four-penny,' 'six-penny,' 'ten-penny,' etc., as applied to nails, mean this: 'Four-penny' means four pounds to the thousand nails, 'six-penny' six pounds to the thousand, and so on. It is an old English term and meant, at first, "ten pound' nails (the thousand being understood); but the old Englishman clipped it to "ten-pun'; and from that to ten-punny; and so it degenerated, until 'penny' was substituted for 'pound.' So, when you ask for four-penny nails, nowadays, you want those a thousand of which will weigh four pounds; but in these degenerate times, we question whether you will get as many as a thousand in that weight. When a thousand nails weigh less than one pound, they are called tacks, brads, etc., and are reckoned by ounces (to the thousand); so you will see "8-oz,' '10-oz,' 16-oz,' etc., on papers of tacks.

A clergyman in northern Indiana ascended the pulpit the other Sunday and said: "No man can serve the Lord while he has the jumping toothache. I therefore dismiss the congregation."

Why are ladies kissing each other an emblem of christianity? Because they are doing unto each other as they would men should do unto them.

The Lawyer and the Thief.

Some time ago, while a lawyer was attending court in an interior county, he was applied to by a singular specimen of humanity, charged with grand larceny to defend him. The lawyer very naturally inquired what crime he was accused of.—The party accused replied that somebody had been mean enough to charge him with stealing $150 in bills and got him indicted.

"Are you guilty?" asked the lawyer.

"That's none of your business," replied the accused. "They say that makes no difference with you, whether a man is guilty or not, you will contrive to dig him out some way. So, don't talk any more about guilt till you hear what the jury says.'

"Well what about the pay?' said the lawyer.

"You just hold on till the trial is over; give K——(the complainant) fits on the cross-examination and that other fellow he has got to back him up, and you'll have no trouble about the pay.'

The trial commenced, and proved to be a somewhat protracted and exciting one. The District Attorney proved that the money in question was composed of two fifty-dollar bills on a certain bank, and the remainder all in ten-dollar bills, all of which were wrapped up in a piece of oil silk. The jury, after listening to the counsel in the case and receiving the charge of the judge, retired, and soon returned with a verdict of not guilty. The accused, who was greatly elated over the result of the trial and the effort of his counsel, invited the latter into one of the vacant jury-rooms. As soon as they were alone, he slapped his counsel on the shoulder, and exclaimed:

"Free as water, ain't I? What's the use trying a man for stealing when you're around? Now I s'pose you want your pay.'

"Yes, have you got anything to pay with?' said the lawyer.

"Lend me your knife and we'll see about that.'

The lawyer, slightly startled at such a proposition, rather reluctantly complied.

The accused immediately commenced ripping and cutting away at the waistband of the pantaloons, and soon produced the roll of bills for the stealing of which he had just been tried wrapped up in the identical piece of oil-silk described by the witnesses for the prosecution, and throwing it down on the table before the astonished lawyer exclaimed:

"There take your pay out of that; I guess there is enough there to pay you tolerably well.'

"What, you villian! you stole that money after all;' said the awyer. "Do you expect I can take any of that money?'

"Stole that money! Why what are you talking about! Didn't them twelve men up stairs here just say I didn't steal it?—What's the use of your trying to raise a question of conscience, after twelve respectable men have given that opinion upon the subject? Take your pay out of that and ask no questions. Don't be modest in taking; I got it easy enough and and you've worked hard enough for it.'

The chap didn't have much change left after the lawyer had satisfied his "conscience" in the premises.

"Beware of Men."

A strange caution this. And yet not needless. A humiliating truth it is that there is a necessity for our being on our guard against our fellow-men, our brethren of the human family,—those who ought ever to be ready to befriend us.—What volumes do these brief words speak our shame! So depraved, so sinful, so devilish even, has man become, that his brother man must beware of him. He must even be vigilant, lest he be wronged by him in some way and by some means.

Let it be said, indeed, that this caution is not needful with respect to all. There are noble exceptions. There are those in whom we may confide. There are those who would no sooner wrong us than they would wrong themselves. But such are the exception, and not the rule. The caution, to beware of men is of general, though not of universal application. O, what an untold amount of wrong is perpetrated by the race one upon another! How true those oft-quoted words of Burns:

"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn."

To specify all the methods of abuse and unkindness would be an almost endless task. In inflicting these, every commandment of the second table of the decalogue is violated in a thousand forms. Every newspaper that we read contains a long sad chapter of man's misdoings towards his fellow-man. And then the thousandth part is not told. When all shall be revealed in the judgement of the great day, what a disclosure there will be! Alas! that it should be thus. Alas! that every man should not be the friend of his brother man. Alas! that instead of going about doing harm, each and all, like the Saviour, should not go about doing good.

Blessed be God, better times are coming to our sinful, sorrowing world. The glorious gospel is to be preached to every creature. Its benevolent principles are to gain ascendency in human hearts the world over. There is to be a universal prevalence of this holy religion. And blessed times those will be. Universal peace and love will reign. "They shall sit every man under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid." "They shall not hurt, nor destroy in all God's holy mountains.

Notes by a Lady Traveler.

After traveling through seven or eight of the Southern States and seeing more log houses than any others, and hearing constant complaints of unjust taxation and having thorough demonstration of the fact that the people are deprived of many of the comforts that we at the North consider indispensible, I have come to the conclusion the "sunny South" has few charms for me. Yet the air is sweet and balmy now, (the middle of February) and the people sit with open doors and windows. Peach trees are in bloom, the mocking bird is caroling his sweetest notes, and the ever present negro and mule are ploughing the cotton fields for this year's crops. They had an abundance last year. At every station the platforms were loaded with bales of cotton waiting for transportation. In passing through Georgia and Alabama I saw the gray moss peculiar to the Southern swamps in its greatest perfection. We could look through long vistas where those tall trees formed interminable avenues, and the long gray moss which envelops every limb floating and swaying in the light breeze it gave to one's mind the idea of the true poetry of motion, and mingled with these were a variety of evergreens of the brightest hues, together with the beautiful bay tree and live oak. The scene will ever remain in the halls of my memory like a cherished picture. But it is only in these swamps where the malaria broods like a bird of ill omen that this moss is seen in all of its beauty.

In Georgia we passed some thrifty looking plantations, also elegant mansions whose surroundings betoken wealth and culture in the luxuriant and neatly trimmed hedges and shrubbery tastefully disposed over the wide lawn. Through the centre of Mississippi there lies a belt of prairie land that is admirably adapted to cotton raising. Here we travel for many miles beside those level fields stretching off in the distance as far as the eye can reach, no fences or hedges, the dividing line be tween the plantations being in many instances merely a row of trees. The northern portion of the State is marshy and unproductive. For many miles the railroad passes through swamps filled with trees peculiar to the country, that seem stripped of bark and foliage, presenting a bare and gloomy appearance. After leaving Mississippi and coming north through Tennessee we enter the region that is rendered sacred and interesting as historic ground where some of our most important battles were fought during the last war. Vicksburg, Shiloh and Corinth, will live in the memory of all of us who were acquainted with the participants in those dreadful scenes. Here in southern Illinois I see a decided improvement in the farms, and the buildings are of a much better class. Illinois is rich in coal and mineral productions.

I visited the salt wells in this vicinity. On approaching them we could see at a distance tall lighthouse looking structures that we found on nearer approach were buildings to protect the wells, and the machinery to draw up the water. I was quite interested in the process of preparing this very common but very useful commodity for the market. There are some five or six wells here in working order. Although they are quite a distance apart are so managed that the water from all of them runs into one reservoir. From there it is conducted into large vats, where by the process of evaporation it is converted into beautiful pure salt of the best quality. The large heaps lying around are suggestive of something colder than it really is. Here also was stored any number of bright, new barrels ready to receive the saline product. Last year these wells produced about 30,000 barrels. The work is done by negroes, mostly. How wonderful that our Heavenly Father distributes all over His fair heritage this necessary article of food, as well as the luxuries to comfort and sustain His children. It is very interesting to watch the process of crystilization and see the stalactites as they form in rows depending from the bottom of the vats, the light shining through in such a manner as to show their beauty and purity. About a mile from here are extensive coal mines of the bituminous kind, and above the average of the Western bituminous.—They are successfully worked. The amount accessible at a very moderate depth is enormous. The coal is brought directly to the salt works upon an elevated railway and used to heat the salt water. There are numerous coperas springs in this part of the State, also some mineral springs that have attained some celebrity for their healing qualities.

WORDS FOR THE AGED.—"Old age,' says one whose words have survived his name, "is a blessed time when, sins, and mistakes of past life,—too late, indeed, to remedy, but not too late to repent—we may put off earthly garments, one by one, and dress ourselves for heaven. Griefs that are heavy to the young, are to the old calm and almost joyful, as tokens of the near and ever-nearing time when there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither any more pain." Even though walking in darkness for awhile, the aged have the sure promise: "At eventide it shall be light."

A comprehensive school inspector asked an Aberdeen class if any one could tell him anything remarkable in the life of Moses. Boys—"Yes, sir; he was the only man who broke all the commandments at once."