Andover News.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 28, 1891.

HOW THEY MOVED THE OBELISK.

The Unwritten History of the Engineering Work of Gorringe, Schroder and Price.

Speaking of Engineer Price reminds me of the unwritten history of the removal of "Cleopatra's Needle" from the banks of the old harbor of Alexandria, near the Ramleh Railway Station, writes Colonel J. Milliken in Frank Leslie's *Popular Monthly*. "Squire" Davis, a ship carpenter of Nowank, Conn., and Engineer Price, of Trenton, N. J., arrived in Alexandria about a month before the others of the party. When Commander Gorringe and Lieutenant Schroder arrived, they met with active opposition from the residents of all nationalities, but eventually the American flag was hoisted on the obelisk, and steps were taken towards its change of base.

All the mathematical work, with the direct superintendence of the laborers, was in charge of Lieutenant Schroder.

The entire "needle" was covered with a casing of pine boards by Squire Davis and his gang of Yanks, while Engineer Price and his Maltese machinists placed the trunnions and supports, and did the immense amount of ironwork required.

At last, when everything was clear and the obelisk rested on the supports—like an immense cannon standing perpendicularly on its carriage—Gorringe thought he was ready to turn it down to a horizontal position, which was the first step toward lowering it to the ground; so he invited the principal dignitaries of the city and country to witness the operation. There was a Russian squadron in the harbor at the time, and the Admiral and his officers, with a large "lowering party" of Russian sailors, were on hand. In fact it was a regular Alexandrian holiday, and the good people turned out en masse for the purpose of taking a farewell look at their cherished monument. The blocks and tackle were attached to the top, the Russian sailors laid hold, and when the word was given pulled with a will. As the obelisk swayed a great cheer went up, which a moment later turned into a derisive laughter. It only moved a few feet at the top, and all the hauling of the Russian navy could not budge it further.

Our Americans had made a serious blunder—the bottom of the obelisk was square and flat, as was the top of the forty-ton pedestal, and in raising the monolith sufficient space had not been allowed for the turn. It was a humiliating moment for our gallant commander when he was compelled to dismiss his guests with the obelisk in the position of the Leaning Tower at Pisa. What fun there was that night in Alexandria at his expense, for every patriotic Egyptian rejoiced at his failure. The following morning he had the Italian stonecutters chip off enough from the lower corner next the city to permit the turn. But what Gorringe at the time considered his greatest discomfiture was, in reality, the best bit of luck he could have had; for, as surely as the turn had been made that first day, we should have received "Cleopatra's Needle" in two or more pieces.

Gorringe and Schroder had calculated that they had placed the trunnions at the center of gravity, and consequently fastened only a three-inch rope to the bottom, intending to allow the monolith, evenly balanced, to be gently pulled down to the horizontal. On the first day they had not taken the precaution of making a resting place for it, relying entirely upon the block and tackle below; but as they had a large force of laborers on hand on the morning of the second day, and nothing else for them to do, they set them to build a crib of three-inch planks to the required height. When the sailors started, that afternoon, to pull, the lower rope snapped like pack-thread, and down came the obelisk by the run, smashing the planks and scattering them as though they had been a pile of matches. Their elasticity alone saved it from breaking. Our engineer had miscalculated the center of gravity about fifty tons.

The obelisk was finally lowered into a scow, built under it on ways. Commander Gorringe then invited the officials to see the launch, and there was another Alexandrian laugh at his expense, as it did not take place at the time specified—the scow stuck on the ways. When, by a liberal use of grease, time and jacks, the launch did take place, the guests had departed. It then appeared that another slight miscalculation had been made, as the nose of the scow was run into the bottom of the harbor.

HIDDES away in the New England conservatory, according to a story told in Boston, is a rising star from the South—Miss Will Allen Dromgoole, a feminine little Tennessean, who never meant to mystify Boston and New York editors by masquerading as a man. After she had written about sixty stories, including a serial for the *Youth's Companion*, Mr. Hezekiah Butterworth invited her to come East and make him a visit, thinking her a mature bachelor like himself. She knew this editor of the *Youth's Companion* was a man, but inferring that he was domiciled with a wife, accepted the invitation. After sending up her card at the office of the *Youth's Companion* a mutual enlightenment ensued, which has caused considerable diversion in literary circles.

SUNRISE.

The colors of the morning spread,
Over all the eastern sky.
Pale green and gold and tea-rose red,
And purple of porphyry.
The wet grass glistens like silver thread,
And the still stars fade and die.
The day begins her wistful chase
For the fleeing night to seek,
And the oriole sings his song of grace,
But my heart is weary and weak;
For the thought of one absent face,
And a longing I cannot speak.

—[Detroit Free Press.

EL CAPITAN ORDINARIO.

BY FRANCES ISABEL CURRIE.

If a stenographer had taken verbatim notes of Esteban Garcia's daily conversation he would have had considerable practice in writing the adjectives "magnífico" and "ordinario." The first was always accompanied by an expression of rapt admiration, and was applied to the speaker's own achievements; but when he said "ordinario" he drew down the corners of his mouth and elevated his shoulders to his ears, to express his consuming contempt for common things.

Nature had intended him to be ordinary himself. His name was as multifarious in Spain as Smith is in America. His parents were humble peasants in the province of Madrid. His education had been very superficial, and he had never been taught good manners. If he had made no effort to be conspicuous he would never have been noticed. Rather than appear "ordinario" he had adopted the extraordinary fashions of the sporting fraternity of his province. He emblazoned his person with jewels and medals, and he was commented upon quite as much as he would have been if his antecedents had not been "ordinario."

His life had been extraordinary. He had been an acrobat, a matador, and an aeronaut. He was admirably adapted to each and all of these vocations. He had no physical fear, and his muscles were firm as steel and as elastic as the thews of a panther. He had experienced some frightful falls in his acrobatic and aerostatic careers but his bones were never broken. In his vocation of matador he had been hustled and gored by infuriated bulls, yet he had never lost a day's work by these casualties. He had disdained the use of a basket or car while giving his aerial exhibitions, and had hung from a trapeze depending from the balloon. With one muscular hand he held his own weight while he blew kisses to the spectators from the finger-tips of the other. He had been slammed by the wind against the sides of buildings, and dropped from the balloon into the sea—almost into the smiling jaws of sharks. He had escaped from all these perils unscathed, and appeared in Washington in a new role. He introduced himself to the Spanish Legation as "Captain Esteban Garcia, inventor and master of the science of aerostation."

He had brought a giant balloon, and a model of a flying-machine to this country. This last contrivance was propelled by an electric motor. He claimed that it was no helpless bubble to be tossed by every capricious wind, but a navigable air-ship that could be moved horizontally. It was his ambition to sell it to the War Department of the United States Government. He claimed that it would do away with the necessity of skirmishing parties, and he dilated upon the advantages of taking observation of the enemy at a safe altitude, and of commanding an army by means of signals from a distance of twenty miles.

While his petition was going slowly through the rounds of governmental red-tapism he went to board at Mrs. Otero's.

There was a clever young lady in the boarding-house whose name was May Sheffield. She contributed articles to the Washington journals, and was so bright and vivacious that she at once excited the Spaniard's interest. In a week they were on friendly terms; in two weeks they were almost continually in each other's company; and at the end of three weeks it was generally believed they were engaged.

The girl's parents were dead, and no one owned under obligations to support her, but she had proved that she could take excellent care of herself. She was almost childish in appearance, but she wrote in a masterful manner not in keeping with her youthful face. She was a graceful girl, with yellow hair, and brown intelligent eyes. Certainly she bore no resemblance to the proverbial strong-minded blue-stocking.

At one time the gossips had asserted that Robert Stoddard would marry Miss Sheffield. He was her editor, and was a man of admirable character. He was a tall, powerfully-built fellow, with a strong face and good features. He had been very attentive to May Sheffield, but when he discovered that he could not visit her without finding the aeronaut in her company he discontinued his visits.

In spite of Senor Garcia's inherent vulgarity he soon enjoyed some prestige among his fellow-boarders. He entertained them with accounts of his marvelous exploits, told how he had faced death in every conceivable form, and had been the central figure of every sort of dramatic situation. All this was interesting, even if it was not true.

He was shrewd enough to appreciate Miss Sheffield's talents and to make use of them. He had many schemes for enriching himself, and he discussed his plans with her. He explained the mechanism of his flying machine, and induced her to write a glowing description of it. When the article was finished she had the effrontery to ask Stoddard to print it. He accepted it rather ungraciously, and said editorially that Garcia had yet to demonstrate the practicability of the electric machine. Heretofore balloons had never been successfully raised by electricity. Even Edison had tried the experiment with no good results. If Garcia could do more in this particular than the American electrician Mr. Stoddard's journal would like to know it.

This comment gave the aeronaut more of the notoriety that he craved. He loudly declared that the editorial had been prompted by malice and jealousy. He said that he could perform feats that no other aeronaut could perform, and could manipulate lightning as no other electrician had manipulated it.

He resolved to marry May Sheffield. Previous to meeting her he had intended to marry some rich woman, but he believed that this girl had talents that would be as valuable to him as gold. She had a powerful pen, and readily commanded the attention of the public. He wanted this attention directed to him. He hungered and thirsted for notoriety and believed she would be a reliable advertising medium for him as soon as their interests were identical. To do him justace, this was not his only incentive to marry her. He was sensible of her beauty and charm of manner. What Spanish cavalier could fail to appreciate her eyes, her soft complexion, her perfect mouth? Garcia rejoiced when he reflected that he had routed the American editor from the field.

He persuaded Miss Sheffield to write his biography. Mrs. Otero saw them poring over the manuscript together and called them Othello and Desdemona.

The sketch Miss Sheffield wrote was vivid and dramatic. It began with the daring feats of the acrobat; followed his career to the bull-fight, and told how he sprang into the arena with the grace and litheness of a panther, then described the fearless manner in which he dispatched the mad brutes that would have killed him. Afterward it gave a clear-cut description of his aeronautic performances; and, first and last and all, she extolled his bravery. Garcia trembled when the biography was translated to him. He believed it would make him famous, and it gratified his vanity to know that this brilliant woman could write of him so admiringly.

She had the audaciousness usual with pretty women, so she asked Stoddard to print the biography.

"Do you know that this is true?" he asked. "It is a rule of this office to print nothing that cannot be verified."

"This story can easily be verified," she answered.

"I had it from Senor Garcia's lips. Of course he knows all about his own history."

"Oh, of course!" Stoddard remarked, laconically; "but I think I have heard it mentioned that people do not always tell the truth about their own exploits. Your article is cleverly written, but we can't use it. If the Government purchases the flying-machine we will devote some space to it, but we are not going to advertise the aeronaut gratis."

"You will regret your decision when you see this in some other paper," she persisted. "Why, even Rider Haggard's stories of adventure are tame when compared with Senor Garcia's life. His story is like one of Jules Verne's."

"Like the Baron Munchausen's, you mean," Stoddard commented.

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The biography was not offered to another editor, but was enlarged and printed in pamphlet form. Capt. Garcia proposed to give aerial exhibitions, and the pamplets were to be sold on these occasions. The Government had pronounced his flying machine to be of no practical use, and he had published a card saying that he would demonstrate its practicability. He would give three exhibitions at Meteor Park; first, he would show the public the hot air or primitive system of raising a balloon; then he would make an ascension by means of gas, and finally he would illustrate how the science of aerostatics had progressed by spending two hours in midair in his electric flying machine. He claimed to have studied the wing movements of birds until he had fathomed nature's secret of flying.

Miss Sheffield met Stoddard one day and thanked him for having declined to print the biography. If he had published it in its original form she would have received twenty dollars; under the new arrangement the aeronaut was to pay her one hundred dollars after the first ascension.

"You had better get your money in advance," Stoddard said. "Flying is risky business for any one but angels; and there may not be any second ascension. The first may put a stop to his soaring."

"I prefer to wait until he has been enriched by the gate money."

"But there may not be any gate money," he persisted. "Why should any one buy a ticket to enter an inclosure when he can sit on a neighboring fence and command a fine view of the spectacle? As soon as the balloon rises as high as the wall of the inclosure any beggar outside can see it as well as can the aristocrat in a private box."

Nevertheless, many persons went inside the inclosure to see the captain and his balloon. Stoddard and Miss Sheffield among them. The aeronaut made the ascension while the band played

"Up in a balloon, boys, up in a balloon,
All among the little stars, sailing round the moon."

Stoddard bought one of the pamphlets to read at his leisure. He had given the biography but cursory notice at his office, but his interest in it had increased. As he and Miss Sheffield were leaving the amusement grounds together they saw Mrs. Otero in the crowd. She was talking earnestly to her escort and did not notice their approach.

"The aeronaut and the young lady he means to marry are living in my house," she was saying. "She is a journalist named May Sheffield. They will probably make their wedding-journey in his flying-machine, and if they come down alive she will write up her aerial experience for Mr. Stoddard's paper. By the way, he was in love with her long before she was captivated by this jumping-jack."

Stoddard drew his companion out of reach of Mrs. Otero's voice. His expression was as impenetrable as that of the Sphinx, but the girl's face was flaming, her eyes full of angry tears. He might have doubted Mrs. Otero's words if May Sheffield's crimson face had not confirmed them.

That night he read the biography almost savagely. Viewed in this new light it appeared as if the writer had put her heart in her work, and had glorified every heroic action to which Garcia laid claim. Stoddard distrusted the Spaniard, who had seemed particularly vainglorious on that day.

He remembered that May Sheffield was rather self-willed, and he reflected that she would doubtless marry Garcia if she liked him. She had no relatives to advise her or to inquire into the Spaniard's past history. Stoddard was rather too young and too good-looking to be a model mentor, but he assumed this thankless role, even while he knew that the task he was undertaking was likely to be fruitless. He believed that women made a virtue of clinging to their worthless lovers and vagabond husbands.

The biography told where Garcia had been, and Stoddard cabled to several places specified, for information concerning the Spaniard's character. The answers received stated that the scientific flyer was a swindler, who had stolen an ingenious toy that another man had invented. The machine would float in air, but its motor could raise no greater weight than ten pounds. It was as useless a contrivance as the famous flying-machine made by Darius Green. Wherever Garcia had stopped he had advertised three ascensions to be made by as many different motors. When he had exhibited the hot air and the gas systems of ballooning he invariably ran away. This was necessary, since he could not make an ascension in the electric flying-machine. In several instances he had left with more of the gate-money than legally belonged to him, and a number of irate managers were eager to see him.

On the day appointed for the second ascension, Stoddard went to Miss Sheffield. He knew that Garcia would try to marry her, and, under some pretext, get away before the day of the third performance. Stoddard meant to tell her what he had learned, even if it broke her heart. She probably would not believe him, and would hate him cordially for his interference, but while there was a faint hope of saving her from being snared by an adventurer he must tell her the truth.

He did not find her, but instead found Mrs. Otero in tears. Both the aeronaut and the young lady had moved from the house. Miss Sheffield had gone that morning, and the Spaniard had surreptitiously removed his lugage the night before. It was clear that the couple had eloped, although it was probable that they would remain in the vicinity of Washington until after the ascensions. As Garcia owed Mrs. Otero considerable money she was naturally anxious to see him.

Stoddard also wanted to see him and to trace May Sheffield through him.

Much to his surprise, Stoddard found her at the amusement grounds. When he entered he saw her standing in a remote part of the place, holding a satchel in her hands. The idea occurred to him that she intended to wait there until after the performance, when she and the aeronaut would go away together.

Before the editor reached her side she was accosted by an unpleasant-looking man in seedy garments. He had a cunning, almost crafty expression, and his manner was so significant of secrecy that Stoddard thought he might be an accomplice whom Garcia had chosen to aid in the elopement. He spoke just as Stoddard reached Miss Sheffield's side.

"Are you ready?" he asked. "Have you it here?"

She had taken what appeared to be a letter from her satchel, when Stoddard laid his hand upon her shoulder.

"Do not send it," he said, sternly. "Do nothing before I have talked with you. I have something of terrible importance to tell you."

He had drawn her arm through his, and was half leading, half dragging her from the place, when with her disengaged hand she again offered the man the paper.

"If you take any action now you will regret it all your life." Stoddard's tones were so low that she alone could hear them, but she disregarded his words. "I know that your letter is to Esteban Garcia. I know that you mean to marry him. I have something to tell you that ought to make you think well before you take such an important step. If you refuse to hear me you will ruin your life and mine."

In spite of his commands and assertions she appeared unmoved. She gave the man the letter.

Contrary to Stoddard's expectations, she turned then and gave her attention to him. He saw his advantage and hurried her out of the place. Once she hesitated and would have stopped, but he drew her on toward his carriage. He began to breathe freely when they were on their way to the city. And then he told her all that he had learned about Garcia. She kept her face averted while he talked, but every line in her rigid little figure betrayed the fact that she was listening. He would not spare her; he dared not pity her, but he told the hard facts with a directness that would have been brutal if the necessity had been less urgent.

"You know that I of all men am no scandal-monger," he said. "You know that I would condemn no human creature without proof of his unworthiness. You have no father or brother to guard or caution you, and you should therefore listen to your friends. You should have kept the letter until you heard me."

Her eyes were downcast, her voice preternaturally grave.

"As you are my editor you have an unqualified right to criticise my manuscripts," she said; "but you have no license to intercept my love-letters, to pry over them with a blue pencil, or yet to consign them to the waste-paper basket. You have no right to question my conduct, but I am going to take you into my confidence, and tell you that the paper I gave away in spite of your remonstrances was not a very dangerous document. It was nothing more or less than an empty envelope. I gave it to a deputy-sheriff," she continued, composedly. "He intends to serve an injunction upon Garcia prohibiting him from making an ascension until he has paid one hundred dollars for his biography. I did not know that my lawyer intended to have the paper served to-day, or I would have staid away from the grounds. When I saw the sheriff I divined his purpose, and asked him to put the paper in an envelope. I thought it would thus be less conspicuous to the audience, and I did not wish the aeronaut to be unnecessarily embarrassed. The injunction must have done its work, and the bill must have been paid, for the balloon is in the air."

She was looking back toward Meteor Park, and as her companion was too astonished, too overjoyed to speak, she continued her story:

"I would never have pressed him for the money, but my lawyer manages all matters of business for me, and he has discovered that the Spaniard is constitutionally averse to paying his debts. Now that I have been so frank with you, I would like you to tell me why you thought I was going to elope. I have a satchel with me, but even an old bachelor like you must know that it is not large enough for a bridal trosseau. It holds nothing but the tools of my trade, pencils, envelopes, a writing pad, and a penknife. I was going to 'write up' the ascension."

"You and the aeronaut have both removed your luggage from Mrs. Otero's."

"I know nothing about the aeronaut's luggage, but I removed mine to another house because Mrs. Otero talks too much. She told this at Meteor Park. She said I was engaged to a jumping-jack."

Stoddard had a vague impression that he had been making an ass of himself, but he was too supremely happy to be greatly concerned about it.

"She told one true thing," he said. "She said that I loved you. I am not such a light and airy creature as your ex-lover now sailing over our heads. I am frightfully mundane, and I confess to weighing one hundred and seventy-five pounds. I cannot fly at all. Would I not make a better husband on that account? I want to stay on earth, May, and marry you."

She had known that for a long time, but for some inscrutable reason had tormented him by making him jealous. Now she turned her face toward him. It was womanly and sweet, and her eyes were humid with happy tears.

"Then I am glad you cannot fly," she said.—[Frank Leslie's.

A Buried Georgia Village.

In his historical collections of Georgia, White mentions the unearthing in 1832, by a party of gold miners, of a buried village of log cabins, on Duke's creek, near Mount Yonah. These cabins were about thirty in number, made of hewn logs, and in one was found a willow basket, and in others earthen vessels. These houses were ten feet beneath the surface of the ground, and the large oaks growing upon them, and other evidences, showed that several centuries had elapsed since they were erected. We asked Captain Nichols about this discovery, and he says that it is true, and he has talked with old men who saw the cabins unearthed. His theory of the history of this buried town is a very plausible, and we believe the correct one. The captain says there is a story that DeSoto and his soldiers, in their march to the Mississippi, after reaching the headwaters of the Savannah river, struck across into this valley. This section then was occupied by two very fierce and warlike tribes of Indians, in conflict with each other, but when they heard of the white strangers marching into their country united their armies to resist the invasion. They succeeded in checking DeSoto, who was finally driven upon Yonah, where he fortified himself, and it was his soldiers who built these cabins as a protection against the winter. Captain Nichols says he has himself seen near the cabins, on this side of the mountain, a barricade formed of loose stones, and this is said to have been the work of the adventurous Spaniard and his men. To strengthen this theory, the opal-eyed death-head was found near here, and it is too fine a trinket to have been the handiwork of Indians.—[Atlanta Constitution.

An Historic Sleigh.

Dave Crosby has purchased the old sleigh of the Bonanza Company. This sleigh cost probably carried more wealth in its time than any runnered vehicle in the world. It conveyed in the winter season all of the bullion in the company's days from the mills of the company to the assay office, and from thence to the place of shipment. It has been in active service as bullion carrier for upward of twenty years. The precious metal was transported, if coined into money, would carpet with metallic currency a ten-acre lot, with a residue sufficient to purchase half a dozen seats in the United States Senate.—[Virginia (Nev.) Chronicle.

The trials of duty life are lions which we slain and turned into bee hives.

SUNDAY'S SERMON.

ONE OF REV. DR. TALMAGE'S STERLING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "Handwriting on the Wall."

TEXT: "*In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.*" Daniel v. 30.

After the sight of Babylon had been selected, two million of men were employed for the construction of the wall and principal works. The walls of the city were sixty miles in circumference. They were surrounded by a trench, out of which had been dug the material for the construction of the city. There were twenty-five gates of solid brass on each side of the square city. Between every two gates a great tower sprang up into the heavens. From each of the twenty-five gates on either side a street ran straight through to the gate on the other side, so that there were fifty streets, each fifteen miles long, which gave to the city an appearance of wonderful regularity.

The houses did not join each other on the ground, and between them were gardens and shrubbery. From housetop to housetop bridges swung, over which the inhabitants were accustomed to pass. A branch of the Euphrates went through the city, over which a bridge of marvelous structure was thrown, and under which a tunnel ran. To keep the river from overflowing the city in time of freshet, a great lake was arranged to catch the surplus, in which the water was kept as in a reservoir until times of drought, when it was sent streaming down over the thirsty land. A palace stood at each end of the Euphrates bridge; one palace in the city, three-quarters in compass, and the other palace seven and a half miles in circumference. The wife of Nebuchadnezzar, having been brought up among the mountains of Media, could not stand it in this flat country of Babylon, and so to please her Nebuchadnezzar had a mountain four hundred feet high built in the midst of the city.

This mountain was surrounded by terraces for the support of which great arches were lifted. On the top of these arches flat stones were laid; then a layer of reeds and bitumen; then two rows of bricks, closely cemented; then thick sheets of lead, upon which the soil was placed. The earth here deposited was so deep that the largest trees had room to anchor their roots. All the glory of the flowery tropics was spread out at that tremendous height, until it must have seemed to one below as though the clouds were all in blossom, and the very sky leaned on the shoulder of the cedar. At the top an engine was constructed which drew the water from the Euphrates, far below, and made it spout up amid this garden of the skies. All this to please his wife! I think she must have been pleased.

In the midst of this city stood also the temple of Belus. One of its towers was one-eighth of a mile high, and on the top of it an observatory, which gave the astronomers great advantage, as, being at so great a height, one could easily talk with the stars. This temple was full of cups and statues and censers, all of gold. One image weighed a thousand Babylonish talents, which would be equal to fifty-two million dollars. All this day, but now night was about to come down on Babylon. The shadows of her two hundred and fifty towers began to lengthen. The Euphrates rolled on, touched by the last splendors of the setting sun, and gates of brass burnished and glittering, opened and shut like doors of flame. The hanging gardens of Babylon, wet with the heavy dew, began to pour from starlit flowers and dripping leaf a fragrance for many miles around. The streets of Babylon were lighted for dance and frolic and promenade. The theatres and galleries of art invited the wealth and pomp and grandeur of the city to new entertainments. Scores of men and vassal were mingled in every street; godless mirth, and outrages excess, and splendid wickedness came to the king's palace to do their mightiest deeds of darkness.

A royal feast to-night at the king's palace! Rushing up to the gates are chariots, upholstered with precious cloths from Dedan and drawn by the swift horses of Togarmah, that rear and neigh in the grasp of the charioteers, while a thousand lords dismount, and women dressed in all the splendors of Syrian opulence, and the color blending of agate, and the chastened glow of coral, and the somber glory of Syrian purple, and the princely embroideries brought from afar by Tamis across the desert, and by ships from Tarshish across the sea.

Open wide the gates and let the guests come in. The chamberlains and cup bearers are all ready. Hark to the rustle of the robes, and to the carol of the music! See the sparkle of the jewels! Lift the banners. Fill the cups. Clap the cymbals. Blow the trumpets. Let the night go by with song and dance and ovation, and let the Babylonish tongue be palsied that will not say, "Oh, King Belshazzar, live forever!"

Ah, my friends, it was not any common banquet to which these great people came. All parts of the earth had sent their richest wands to that table. Brackets and chandeliers fashed their light upon tankards of burnished gold. Fruits, ripe and luscious, in baskets of silver, entwined with leaves, plucked from royal conservatories. Vases, inlaid with emerald and ridged with exquisite traceries, filled with wines that were brought from forests of distant lands. Wine brought from the royal vats, foaming in the decanters and bubbling in the chalices. Tufts of cassia and frankincense, waiting their sweetness from wall and table. Gorgeous banners unfolding in the breeze that came through the opened window, bewitched with the perfume of hanging gardens. Fountains throwing up from incisures of ivory in jets of crystal, to fall in clatter on a rain of diamonds and pearls. Statues of mighty men looking down from niches in the wall upon crowns and shields brought from subdued empires. Idols of wonderful work, standing on pedestals of precious stones. Embroideries drooping about the windows and wrapping pillars of cedar, and drifting on floor inlaid with ivory and agate. Music, mingling the thrum of harps, and the clash of cymbals, and the blast of trumpets in one wave of transport that went rippling along the wall, and breathing among the garlands, and pouring down the corridors, and thrilling the souls of a thousand banqueters.

The signal is given, and the lords and ladies, the mighty men and women of the city take their places around the table. Pour out the wine. Let foam and bubble kiss the rim. Stand every one his cup, and drink to the health of the king, Belshazzar! Let the Babylonish tongue be palsied that will not say, "Long live King Belshazzar!" Let the royal beauty gleam to the uplifted chalices, and again and again and again they are emptied. Away with cups from the palace! Tear down to more light, wilder music, sweeter perfume. Lord shouts to lord, captain replies to captain. Goblets are thrown against the walls. Women come in the wildness, and the drunken laugh, and the slavering lip, and the gurgling of idiotic laughter, bursting from the lips of princes, flashed, reeling, together. Shouting, howling with it all I hear: "Hosannah! Long live great Belshazzar!"

What is that on the plastering of the wall? Is it a spirit? Is it a man? Is it God? Large as the black sky, and with the brightness of fiery terror traced, through the darkness, and come to the wall, circling about as though it would write, and then, with sharp tip of flame, engraves on the plastering the doom of the king. The music stops. The goblet falls from the careless grasp. There is a shriek. There is a pallor. There is one thousand voiced shriek of horror. Let Daniel be brought in to read that writing. He comes in. He reads it. "Weighed in the balance and found wanting."

Meanwhile the Assyrians, who for two years had been laying siege to that city, took advantage of that carousal and came in. I hear the feet of the conquerors on the palace stairs. Massive rushes fall with a thousand gleaming knives. Death bursts upon the scene, and I shut the door of that banqueting hall, for I do not want to look. There is nothing there but torn banners, and broken wreaths, and the slush of upset tankards, and the blood of murdered women, and the kicked and tumbled carcass of a dead king. For "in that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain."

I go on to learn that when God writes anything on the wall, a man had better read it as it is. Daniel did not misinterpret or modify the handwriting on the wall. It is all foolishness to expect a minister of the Gospel to preach always things that the people like or the people choose. You say, then, what shall I preach to you to-night? Shall I tell you of the dignity of human nature? Shall I tell you of the wonders that our race has accomplished? No, no! Daniel said, "Thus saith the message that came from God." I will. If there is any message that I can hold up to this lesson, "Accept of Christ and be saved?" I might talk of great many other things, but that is the message, and so I declare it.

Jesus never flattered those to whom He preached. He said to those who had wrong views of sin, and who offended in His sight, "Ye generation of vipers! ye whited sepulchres! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Paul the apostle preached before a man who was sitting on a throne. He began to preach. What subject did he take? Did he say, "Oh! you are a good man, a very fine man, a very noble man?" No; he preached of righteousness to a man who was unrighteous; of temperance to a man who was the victim of lust and appetites; of the judgment to come to a man who was unfit for it. So we must always declare the message that happens to come to us. Daniel must read it as it is. A minister preached before James I. of England, who was James VI. of Scotland. What subject did he take? The king was noted all over the world for his learned disquisitions and wavering in his ideas. What did the minister preach about to this man who was James I. of England and James VI. of Scotland? He took for his text James i., 6: "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed."

Hugh Latimer offened the king by a sermon he preached, and the king said, "Hugh Latimer, I must have an apology." "I will," said Hugh Latimer. So the day was appointed, and the king's chapel was full of lords and dukes, and the mighty men and women of the country. But Hugh Latimer was to apologize. He began his sermon by saying: "Hugh Latimer, bethink thee! Thou art in the presence of thine earthly king, who can destroy thy body and soul in hell fire." Then he preached with appalling directness his sermon of sin.

Another lesson that comes to us. There is a great difference between the opening of the banquet of sin and its close. Young man, if you had looked in upon the banquet in the first few hours, you would have wished you had been invited there, and could sit at the feast. "Oh! the grandeur of Belshazzar's feast!" you would have said; but you look in at the close of the banquet, and your blood curdles with horror. The king of Terrors has there a ghastlier banquet; human blood is the wine, and dying groans are the music. Sin has made itself a king in the earth. It has crowned itself. It has spread a banquet. It invites all the world to come to it. It has hung in its banqueting hall the spoils of all kingdoms and the banners of all nations. It has gathered the music of the world. Turn in from its wealth, the tables and the floors and arches. And yet how often is that banquet broken up, and how horrible is its end! Ever and anon there is a handwriting on the wall. A blow falls. A great spirit is arrested. The knees of wickedness knocked together. God's judgment, like an armed host, breaks in upon the banquet, and that night is Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain.

Here is a young man who says: "I cannot see why they make such a fuss about the intoxicating cup. Why, it is exhilarating! It makes me feel so fine. I can talk better, think better, feel better. I cannot see why people have such a prejudice against it." A few years pass on, and he wakes up and finds himself in the clutches of an evil habit which he tries to break, but cannot; and he cries out: "Oh, Lord God, help me!" It seems as though God would not hear his prayer, and in agony of body and soul he cries out: "It biteth like a serpent, and it stingeth like an adder." How bright it was at the start! How black it was at the last!

Here is a man who begins to read corrupt novels. "They are so charming," says he, "I will go out and see for myself whether all these things are so." He opens the gate of a sinful life. He goes in. A sinful sprite meets him with her wand. She waves her wand, and it is all enchantment. Why, it seems as if the angels of God had poured out phials of perfume in the atmosphere. As he goes on, he finds the hills becoming more radiant with foliage and the ravines more resonant with the falling water. He sees a charming landscape he sees! But that sinful sprite with her wand meets him again; but now she reverses the wand, and all the enchantment is gone. The cup is full of poison. The fruit turns to ashes.

All the leaves of the bower are forked tongues of hissing serpents. The flowing fountains fall back in a dead pool, stenchful with corruption. The luring songs become laughter. Lost spirits gather about him and feel for his heart, and beckon him on with "Hail, brother! Hail, blasted spirit, hail!" He tries to get out. He comes to the front door where he entered, and tries to push it back, but the door turns against him, and the jar of that shutting door he hears the words, "This night is Belshazzar, the king of Chaldeans, slain." Sin may open bright as the morning. It ends dark as the night!

I learn further from this subject that Death sometimes breaks in upon a banquet. Why did he not go down to the prisons in Babylon? There were people there that would like to have died. I suppose there were men and women in torture in that city who would have welcomed Death. But he comes to the palace; and just at the time when the mirth is dashing to the tip-top pitch Death breaks in at the banquet. We have often seen the same thing illustrated. Here is a young man just come from college. He is kind. He is loving. He is enthusiastic. He is eloquent. By one spring he may bound to heights toward which many have been struggling for years. A profession opens before him. He is established in the law. His friends cheer him. Eminent men encourage him.

After a while you may see him standing in the United States senate, or moving a popular assemblage by his eloquence, as trees are moved in a whirlwind. Some night he comes early. A fever on him. Delirium. He is reckless charioteer, seizes the reins of life in madness. Father and mother stand by and see the tide of his life going out to the great ocean. The banquet is coming to an end. The lights of thought and mirth and eloquence are being extinguished. The garlands are snatched from the brow. The vision is gone. Death at the banquet!

We saw the same thing on a larger scale illustrated at the last war in this country. Our whole nation had been sitting at a national banquet—north, south, east and west. Peace and prosperity had spread out their wings over the land. Our ships whitened the seas. Our harvests whitened the hills. What invention was there but our rivers must turn the new wheel and rattle the strange shuttle. What warm fire but our traders must bring them from the Arctic? What fan but our ness must sweep them for the markets. What music but it must sing in our halls. What eloquence but it must speak in our senates. Ho! to the national banquet, reaching from mountain to mountain, and from sea to sea! To prepare that banquet the sheepfolds and the aviaries of the country sent their best treasures. The orchards piled up on the table their sweetest fruits. The presses burst out with new wines. To sit at that table came the yeomanry of New Hampshire, and the lumberman of Maine, and the Carolinian from the rice fields, and the western emigrant from the pines of Oregon, and we were all brothers—brothers at a banquet. Suddenly the feast ended.

What must those mounds thrown up at Chickamauga, Shiloh, Atlanta, Gettysburg, South Mountain? What must those golden grain fields turned into a pasturing ground for cavalry horses? What meant the corn fields gullied with the wheels of the heavy supply train? Why those rivers of tears—those lakes of blood? God was angry! Justice must come. A handwriting on the wall! The nation had been weighed and found wanting. Darkness! Darkness! Woe to the north! Woe to the south! Woe to the east! Woe to the west! Death at the banquet!

I have also to learn from the subject that the destruction of the vicious, and of those who despise God, will be very sudden. The wave of mirth had dashed to the highest point when that Assyrian army broke through. It was unexpected. Suddenly, almost always, comes the doom of those who despise God and defy the laws of men. How was it at the deluge? Do you suppose it came through a long northeast storm, so that people for days before were sure it was coming? No; I suppose the morning was bright, that calmness brooded on the waters; that beauty sat enthroned on the hills, when suddenly the heavens burst, and the mountains sank like anchors into the sea that dashed clear over the Andes and the Himalayas.

The Red Sea was divided. The Egyptians tried to cross it. There could be no danger. The Israelites had just gone through. Where they had gone, why not the Egyptians? Oh! it was such a beautiful walking place! A pavement of tinged shells and pearls; and on either side two great walls of water—solid. There can be no danger. Forward, great hosts of the Egyptians! Clap the cymbals, and blow the trumpets of victory! After them! We will catch them yet, and they shall be destroyed. But the walls begin to totter. They rock! They fall! The rushing waters! The shriek of drowning men! The swimming of the war horses in vain for the shore! The strewing of the great host on the bottom of the sea, or pitched by the angry wave on the beach—a battered, bruised and loathsome wreck! Suddenly destruction came. One hour before they could not have believed it. Destroyed, and without remedy.

I am just setting forth a fact, which you have noticed as well as I. Ananias comes to the apostle. The apostle says, "Did you sell the land for so much?" He says, "Yes." It was a lie. Dead! as quick as that! Sapphira, his wife, comes in. "Did you sell the land for so much?" "Yes." It was a lie; and quick as that she was dead. God's judgments are upon those who despise Him and defy Him. They come suddenly.

The destroying angel went through Egypt. Do you suppose that any of the people knew that he was coming? Did they hear the flap of his great wing? No! no! Suddenly, unexpectedly, he came.

Skilled sportsmen do not like to shoot a bird standing on a spring near by. If they are skilled they pride themselves on taking it on the wing, and they wait till it starts. Death is an old sportsman, and he loves to take men flying under the very sun. He loves to take them on the wing.

Are there any here who are unprepared for the eternal world? Are there any here who have been living without God and without hope? Let me say to you that you had better accept of the Lord Jesus Christ, lest suddenly your last chance be gone. The hunter will cease to breathe, the heart will stop. The time will come when you shall go no more to the office, or to the store, or to the shop. Nothing will be left but Death and Judgment and Eternity. Oh! flee to God this hour! If there be one in this presence who has wandered far away from Christ, though he may not have heard the call of the Gospel for many a year, I invite him now to come and be saved. Flee from thy sin! Flee to the stronghold of the Gospel! Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

Good night, my young friends! May you have rosy sleep, guarded by Him who never slumbers! May you awake in the morning strong and well! But oh! art thou a despiser of God? Is this thy last night on earth? Shouldst thou be awakened in the night by something, thou knowest not what, and there be shadows floating in the room, and a handwriting on the wall, and you feel that your last hour is come, and there be a fainting at the heart, and a tremor in the limb, and a catching of the breath—then thy doom would be but an echo of the words of the text, "In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain."

Hear the invitation of the Gospel! There may be some one in this house to whom I shall never speak again, and therefore let it be in the words of the Gospel, and not in my own, with which I close: "Ho, every one that thirsteth! Come ye to the waters. And he that hath no money come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." "Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Oh! that my Lord Jesus would now make Himself so attractive to your souls that you cannot resist Him; and that, if you have never prayed before, or have not prayed since these days when you knelt down at your mother's knee, then that tonight you might pray, saying:

Just as I am, without one plea
But that the blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

But if you cannot think of so long a prayer as that, I will give you a shorter prayer that you can say, "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" Or, if you cannot think of so long a pr