

THE OLD SCHOOL DEVOTIONAL

A COMPENDIUM OF CHRISTIAN DEVOTIONAL READINGS
TAKEN FROM 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
AMERICAN PUBLIC SCHOOL READERS
(IN BOTH SENSES OF "TAKEN")

EDITED AND ANNOTATED BY BILL KITCHENS

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An Introduction to The Old School Devotional:

This volume consists of Christian devotional material drawn from Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century American public school 'readers'. These books, for which there is no exact modern equivalent, were the primary educational resource in schools of the day. These selections, and similar Christian oriented literature formed very prominent and substantial parts of the readers, though diminishing toward the end of the 19th Century. By the early Twentieth Century, most such material had been removed from public school books, and by mid-century had disappeared. Therefore, we may correctly state that the devotional material in this volume was 'taken' from public school books in both senses of the word.

Sadly, this wonderful devotional literature that glorifies God and elevates mankind as beings made in His image and capable of high and noble achievements, has been all but totally lost for generations. Sad also (and I say this as one with deep roots in the South), it must be noted that these noble sentiments were not widely taught in the pre-Civil War south, as the ruling aristocracy did not support public education. These readers, and their contents, were chiefly the products of New England Puritanism, where public education was established very early on as necessary to the support of Christian self-government.

In the Puritan mind, as with most of our Founding Fathers, religious piety and political freedom went hand in hand. There is this very important, though largely forgotten characteristic of Puritan belief: the Puritans, generally speaking, were of the Post-Millennial mind set. They believed that the second coming of Christ would be after the "Millennial" period during which the world would be converted to Christianity and righteousness would reign on earth. In those days of triumphant European and American 'Christendom', global missionary efforts, and rise of democratic government, it seemed a logical conclusion. We see those expectations in many of these selections, especially *The Final Triumph of the Gospel*. The events of the later part of the 19th and early 20th Centuries seriously degraded that expectation however, and today, most Christians who long for the 'Millennium' are Pre-Millennial, expecting the world to be a Godless, dying place when Christ returns to personally establish His reign.

The Puritans were not simply a small group of religious dissenters in America, but were a major political/social force in England, with counterparts throughout the Christian world. The century long Civil War in England between the Puritans fighting for religious freedom and

Parliamentary government versus the Royalist supporters of a ruling aristocracy and state controlled church set the stage for the America that was to come. When the Royalists ruled in England, Puritans fled to New England. When the Puritan side ruled in England, Royalists fled to Virginia. They formed an uneasy truce in America, but conflict between the two ideologies, in new forms, still defines the political landscape. Students in public schools of the 19th Century were very aware of that historic conflict.

In large part due to the influence of 'Yankee' publishing houses with their chief market in the north-east, the Puritan outlook spread across the United States, outside the deep south. In the wake of the War and Reconstruction, however, the nation became more unified in educational opportunity with Puritan ideology, through the book publishers, still leading it for a while, until "Progressive" thought eclipsed it around the end of the Nineteenth Century.

Some of these selections may seem odd material to call "devotional"; but I believe that we may rightly call this wide range of literary styles "devotional". Devotion is an emotional response in the heart of the reader or hearer that draws him closer to the object of his devotion. Devotional feelings may be awe-full (as in 'filled with awe' at the greatness and goodness of our Creator), worshipful, joyful, inspiring, even emotions of fear and lamentation may be seen as devotional ("Twas grace that taught my heart to fear"). These emotions can be elicited by many literary approaches including poetic, biographical, allegorical, fictional, expository and apologetic, and 'didactic'— the simple straight-forward teaching of moral and religious principles.

All these forms of devotional material populated public school books at one time, and the people of America were blessed from it. Bear in mind also, that the 'standard method' of teaching during the period of these books was for the student to read aloud, or to recite from memory, to the class, which doubtless enhanced the experience to both reader and hearer.

You may notice that the punctuation of many of these selections is not according to today's grammatical system. As they were to be spoken aloud, they included "rhetorical punctuation", such as ? or ! in the middle of sentences, as vocalization instructions for the reader. Also, use of the comma, which would be called 'comma faults' by many grammarians today, was rhetorical punctuation to emphasize a pause, rather than to simply separate independent clauses. I often punctuate that way myself, as though

I am speaking what I write. Many of the books contained elaborate systems of diacritical marking to aid the reader. I have kept only a small portion of the rhetorical punctuation, some instances simply as curiosities and others in cases where 'correcting' the grammar would be complicated.

You may notice, too, that these selections are randomly distributed as to time period, whether poetry, prose, didactic, etc., and long and short pieces. This is not designed as a daily devotional, with a constant length per reading; that would have been impractical given the diversity of the selections. Instead, it is arranged to give a varied reading experience for as long as one cares to continue.

Yet one more note, in those other times, publishers were not as diligent in ascribing authorship as today. Some of the books do not assign authorship to any of their selections. Some such pieces I have identified as "unattributed". Other readers gave only a last name. I have identified as many of the last names as I could, sometimes with the notation of a presumed identification. Those selections whose authors are listed as "Anonymous" in the originals are so identified in this collection.

Discovering these forgotten treasures of Christian devotion has been a blessing for me. Now, I pray that you, my dear readers, in discovering them, may also be blessed.

Bill

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NUMBER 1

Let's begin with the firsts — the first selection in this devotional (which quite appropriately happens to be about a devotional spirit), the first Lesson in the old reader from which it was taken, and the *American First Class Book*; the first American public school reader proudly proclaiming to be “*better adapted, ...to the state of society in this country*” than previous, more British oriented textbooks. In the year 1823, the School Committee of Boston ordered that this book “*be hereafter used in the publick schools instead of Scott's Lessons.*” The Editor, John Pierpont, was a prominent Boston pastor and man of letters. This reader had a profound influence on public school education in early America, both as a model of content and format, and in forming a philosophy of public education; which is another reason I chose it to open this volume of devotional material ‘taken from public schools’.

I should note here also, that in this case, the “*First Class Book*” is the most advanced reader in ungraded schools; rather than a ‘first grade reader’. These early schools usually had only eight years of instruction, so we might consider it an eighth grade reader. In other cases, as I will note, the ‘third’ or ‘fifth’ reader is the advanced reader in the series. In later readers, the “First Reader” is the first reader.

This first selection, in the language of its day, is “*didactick*”; that is, primarily for teaching devotion, rather than practicing devotion, and may seem rather dry; but it seems an appropriate introduction to this volume. A fair number of the selections contained herein could be considered didactic pieces, along with the more familiar devotional styles, which throws an interesting light on the early days of American public education; education was for salvation! Private education in the ante-bellum south , on the other hand, was to equip young elites for their positions of rule.

As I noted in the copyright information, all these selections are transcribed from originals in my personal collection. This particular copy of the reader has had an interesting history. A very old label reveals that it once belonged to the *Institute of 1770* at Harvard University; an institution boasting memberships of five Presidents from John Adams to JFK, and countless lesser movers and shakers of the American scene. Now known as *The Hasty Pudding Institute of 1770*, and most noted as a venue for frivolous to bawdy college theatricals, the *Institute* once had an elevated literary purpose, but which, like the book itself, was not thought worthy of retaining.

A DEVOTIONAL SPIRIT RECOMMENDED TO THE YOUNG

Cappe*

Devotion is a delicate and tender plant; as much as it is our duty and our interest to be possessed of it, it is not easily acquired, neither can it be carelessly maintained. It must be long tended, diligently cultivated and affectionately cherished, before it will have struck its roots so deep as to grow up and flourish in our hearts. And all along, till it attains to its perfect vigor and maturity in heaven, it needs to be defended from the adverse influences of things seen and temporal, of a vain imagination and an earthly mind.

The best season for acquiring the spirit of devotion is in early life; it is then attained with the greatest facility, and at that season there are more peculiar motives for the cultivation of it. Would you be sure of giving unto God his right, and of rendering to the great Creator and Governor of the world the glory due unto his name, begin to do it soon; before the glittering vanities of life have dazzled and enslaved your imagination, before the sordid interests of this world have gotten possession of your soul, before the habits of ambition, or of avarice, or of voluptuousness, or of dissipation, have enthralled you. While your minds are yet free, and your hearts yet tender, present them unto God.

It will be a sacrifice superlatively acceptable unto him, and not less advantageous to yourselves. Beseech him that he will direct and prosper your endeavors to acquire, to keep alive, and to improve, the genuine spirit of devotion. Entreat him that he will give you to behold himself in whatever you see, and to discern providence in all the events that you observe, or that you experience. Put your hearts into his hands, and implore him (if imploring it can be called), to lay them open unto all the blessed influences of the revelations he has made of himself, and of his will, in his works, or in his ways, or in his word. Implore him to give you and preserve to you, the liveliest sensibility to all things spiritual and divine; and while thus you ask it, seek for it, in the conscientious use of the appointed means of grace, and by every method that intelligence and prudence and experience recommend to you.

Let it be a perpetual object with you every day, to be improving in this heavenly temper. The spirit of devotion will be very hard to kindle in the frozen bosom of old age, and not very easy to introduce through the giddy heads into the busy hearts of manhood or advanced youth. If you wish, then, to reach that better world, where devotion, pure and ardent, is one of the most striking characters of its inhabitants, and, at the same time, one of the most essential ingredients in the happiness that they enjoy, you cannot be too early, and you cannot be too constant, in your endeavors to acquire and maintain the spirit of devotion.

It is an acquisition that is well worth all that it can cost you to attain it; for if the genuine spirit of devotion occupies your heart, it will preserve you from the corruptions you will find in the world. It will give you courage to be singular, when to do your duty it will be necessary to be singular, it will make all your duties easy, and most of them it will make pleasant to you; it will shed the sweetest light upon the pleasing scenes and incidents of life, and will diffuse its cheering rays even over the darkest and most gloomy.

The pleasure that you may take will be infinitely more enjoyed by you, if God, the Author of them, has possession of your hearts. And the pains you cannot shun will be far less grievous to you, if God, who maketh darkness and createth evil (the troubles that try men's souls), be regarded by you as the wise and kind Dispenser of your lot. "Remember," then, while you are yet entering upon life, "remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil day comes, and the years draw nigh, in which ye shall say, I have no pleasure in them." Those will be bad days to acquire and cultivate the spirit of devotion; but the spirit of devotion acquired and cultivated and confirmed before, will convert those bad days into good ones.

If you would be happy when you die, be pious while you live. If you would be cheerful when you are old, be religious while you are young. These objects you will acknowledge are well worthy of your pursuit; and to your own convictions I appeal, that there are no other means by which you can attain these objects. To those who have let that golden opportunity slip by them; whose youth is past, and the spirit of devotion not attained; whose manhood is arrived, and that temper not yet formed; whose old age is come, and their hearts still sensual, frivolous, and vain; I have no comfort to administer, for I have no authority to comfort you. Your best friends can only pity you and pray for you, that God will take away your stony hearts, and give you hearts of flesh. He can do it, no doubt; will he do it, is the question. Never, my young friends, never let that question be asked concerning you. Surely you do not envy their condition, concerning whom it may be justly asked. Take heed that you do not come into their place.

To conclude: do not fear to admit the sentiments, and to cultivate the spirit of devotion; there is nothing tedious, dull, or irksome in it. It is pleasant even as pleasure's self. Though I am about to adopt the language of the poet, it is not the language of imagination merely that I speak; what has been said of liberty, with some degree of truth, may, with the most perfect truth be said of the genuine spirit of devotion, it alleviates trouble and enhances pleasure,

"It makes the gloomy face of nature gay,
"Gives beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day."

The American First Class Book, 1823

*Cappe was not further identified, but is probably the Rev. Newcome Cappe, a prominent 18th Century Protestant dissenter from the Church of England.

NUMBER 2

The following selection is from the 'iconic' *McGuffey's Reader* series. Though never the best of the readers, McGuffey's Readers were popular in their day, in large part because they were among the less expensive readers, and available in paper bindings. This mid-19th Century book represents the height of the series, for like the other readers, it declined over the latter part of the 19th Century, though not as fast as some of the other readers.

SONG OF THE STARS

Bryant*

When the radiant morn of creation broke,
 And the world in the smile of God awoke,
 And the empty realms of darkness and death
 Were moved through their depths by his mighty breath,
 And orbs of beauty, and spheres of flame,
 From the void abyss, by myriads came,
 Through the widening waste of space to play,

Their silver voices in chorus rang;
 And this was the song the bright ones sung.
 "Away, away! Through the wide, wide sky,
 The fair blue fields that before us lie,
 Each sun with the worlds that round us roll,
 Each planet poised on her turning pole,
 With her isles of green, and her clouds of white,
 And her waters that lie, like fluid light.

"For the source of glory uncovers his face,
 And the brightness o'erflows unbounded space,
 And we drink, as we go, the luminous tides,
 In our ruddy air and our blooming sides.
 Lo! yonder the living splendors play;
 Away on our joyous path, away!

"Look, look, through our glittering ranks afar,
 In the infinite azure, star after star,
 How they brighten and bloom as they swiftly pass!
 How the verdure runs o'er each rolling mass!
 And the path of the gentle winds is seen,
 Where the small waves dance, and the young woods lean.

“And see! Where the brighter day-beams pour,
How the rainbows hang in the sunny shower;
And the morn and the eve with their pomp of hues;
Shift o'er the bright planets, and shed their dews;
And twixt them both on the gleaming ground,
With her shadowy course, the night goes round!

“Away! Away! In our blossoming bowers,
In the soft air, wrapping these spheres of ours,
Inn the seas and fountains that shine with morn,
See, love is brooding, and life is born,
And breathing myriads are breaking from night.
Glide on, the glory and gladness sent
To the farthest wall of the firmament,
The boundless visible smile of Him,
To the vail (valley) of whose brow our lamps are dim.”

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

*William Cullen Bryant, 1794-1878, was a popular American poet, still much in his prime when this book came out.

This particular volume carries the inscription: "Eddie P. Downing's Book, Presented by his Pa, Nov. 10th 1854" (written with quite a flourish).

NUMBER 3

RESIGNATION TO GOD'S WILL

Sarah Adams*

He sendeth sun, he sendeth shower,
Alike they're needful to the flower;
And joys and tears alike are sent
To give the soul fit nourishment.
As comes to me or cloud or sun.
Father! Thy will, not mine be done.

Can loving children e'er reprove
With murmurs whom they trust and love?
Creator, I would ever be
A trusting, loving child to thee;
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father! Thy will, not mine, be done.

O, ne'er will I at life repine;
Enough that thou hast made it mine.
Where falls the shadow cold of death,
I yet will sing, with parting breath,
As comes to me or shade or sun.
Father! Thy will, not mine, be done.

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

*Sarah Flower Adams, 1805-1848, an English poet and hymn writer best known for the words to "*Nearer My God To Thee*". Adams, but for her faith, had a rather tragic and brief life. She was orphaned early, became deaf, and, with her sister, subject to poor health. The sister eventually became invalid, and Sarah, though married, cared for her until the sister passed away. Sarah, herself, passed away shortly afterward.

This was an excellent reader, very large (478 pages, no illustrations) and advanced, used nationally, including by California prior to the state publishing its own textbooks in the 1880's.

NUMBER 4

FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL

Dr. J. M. Mason*

If we have tasted that he is gracious, if we look back with horror and transport upon the wretchedness and the wrath which we have escaped, with anxiety shall we not hasten to the aid of our fellow men, who are sitting in the region and shadow of death." What zeal will be too ardent; what labor too persevering; what sacrifice too costly, if by any means we may tell them of Jesus and the resurrection, and the life eternal! Who shall be daunted by difficulties, or deterred by discouragement? If but one Pagan should be brought, savingly, by your instrumentality to the knowledge of God, and the kingdom of heaven, will you, my brethren, have an ample recompense? Is there here a man who would give up all for lost because some favorite hope has been disappointed? or regrets the worldly substance which he has expended on so divine enterprise?

Shame on thy coward spirit and thine avaricious heart! Do the Holy Scriptures, does the experience of the ages, does the nature of things justify the expectation, that we shall carry war into the central regions of delusion and crime, without opposition, without trial? Show me a plan which encounters not fierce resistance from the Prince of Darkness and his allies in the human heart, and I will show you a plan which never came from the inspiration of God.

If missionary efforts suffer occasional embarrassments; if impressions on the heathen be less speedy, and powerful, and extensive than fond wishes have anticipated; if particular parts of the great system of operation be, at times, disconcerted; if any of the "ministers of grace" fall a sacrifice to the violence of those whom they go to bless "in the name of the Lord," these are events which ought to exercise our faith and patience; to wean us from self-sufficiency: to teach us where our strength lies, and where our dependence must be fixed; but not to enfeeble hope, nor relax diligence.

Let us not "despise the day of small things." Let us not overlook, as an unimportant matter, the very existence of that missionary spirit which has already awakened Christians in different countries from their long and dishonorable slumbers, and bids fair to produce, in due season, "a general movement of the church upon earth." Let us not for one instant harbor the ungracious thought, that the prayers, and tears, and the wrestlings of those

who "make mention of the Lord," form no link in that vast chain of events by which he will establish, and "will make Jerusalem a praise, in the earth."

That dispensation which of all others is most repulsive to flesh and blood, the violent death of faithful missionaries, should animate Christians with new resolution. "Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints." The cry of martyred blood ascends to the heavens; it enters into "the ears of the Lord of Sabbath." It will give him no rest till he "rain down righteousness" upon the land where it has been shed, and which it has sealed as a future conquest for Him who in his "majesty rides prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness."

For the world, indeed, and also for the church, many calamities and trials are in store, before the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, 'that "all flesh shall see it together." "I will shake all nations', and the desire of all nations shall come." The vials of wrath which are now running', and others which remain to be poured out', must be exhausted. The "supper of the great God" must be prepared', and his "strange work" have its course. Yet the missionary cause must ultimately succeed. It is the cause of God', and shall prevail. The days, O brethren', roll rapidly on', when the shout of the isles shall swell the thunder of the continent', when the Thames' and the Danube', when the Tiber' and the Rhine', shall call upon the Euphrates', and the Ganges', and the Nile'; and the loud concert shall be joined by the Hudson', the Mississippi', and the Amazon', singing with one heart and one voice, Alleluia! Salvation! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!

The Reader's Guide, 1839

*This is undoubtedly John Mitchell Mason, 1770-1829, a prominent American Preacher, theologian, and educator. Mason, a Reformed Presbyterian, was a champion of theological education in early America, serving in Columbia College (now University) and Dickinson College. He pastored in New York City, but gained some national status with a public prayer for the people of Philadelphia during a Yellow Fever epidemic.

NUMBER 5

MARKS OF BENEVOLENT INTENTION

Unattributed Short Selection

How many clear marks of benevolent intention appear everywhere around us! What a profusion of beauty and ornament is poured forth on the face of nature! What a magnificent spectacle presented to the view of man! What supply contrived for his wants! What a variety of objects set before him, to gratify his senses, to employ his understanding, to entertain his imagination, to cheer and gladden his heart!

Murray's English Reader, 1814

This reader is the earliest of the collection and somewhat foundational to later English literature. Lindley Murray (1746 -1826), an American Quaker who moved to England, became known as the "Father of English Grammar", and his works were the go-to resources on grammatical questions during the 19th Century. He describes this reader as '*Pieces in prose and poetry selected from the best writers, designed to assist young persons to read with propriety and effect: to improve their language and sentiments; and to inculcate some of the most important principles of piety and virtue, with a few preliminary observations on the principles of good reading.*'

The publisher, too, (see Bibliography) is deserving of note. Paraclete Potter was something of a pioneering newspaper man and publisher in, then remote, Poughkeepsie, NY, far up the Hudson River from New York City.

NUMBER 6

THE OLD MAN IN A MODEL CHURCH

John H. Yates*

Well, wife, I've found the model church! I worshiped there to-day!
It made me think of good old times, before my hairs were gray;
The meetin'-house was fixed up more than they were years ago,
But then I felt, when I went in, it wasn't built for show.

The sexton didn't seat me away back by the door;
He knew that I was old and deaf, as well as old and poor;
He must have been a Christian, for he led me boldly through
The long aisle of that crowded church to find a pleasant pew.

I wish you'd heard the singin'; it had the old-time ring;
The preacher said, with trumpet voice, "Let all the people sing!"
The tune was "Coronation," and the music upward rolled,
Till I thought I heard the angels striking all their harps of gold.

My deafness seemed to melt away; my spirit caught the fire;
I joined my feeble, trembling voice with that melodious choir,
And sang as in my youthful days: "Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of all."

I tell you, wife, it did me good to sing that hymn once more;
I felt like some wrecked mariner who gets a glimpse of shore;
I almost wanted to lay down this weather-beaten form,
And anchor in that blessed port, forever from the storm.

The preaching'? Well, I can't just tell all that the preacher said;
I know it wasn't written; I know it wasn't read;
He hadn't time to read it, for the lightnin' of his eye
Went flashin' 'long from pew to pew, nor passed a sinner by.

The sermon wasn't flowery; 't was simple Gospel truth;
It fitted poor old men like me; it fitted hopeful youth;
'T was full of consolation for weary hearts that bleed;
'T was full of invitations to Christ and not to creed.

How swift the golden minutes fled, within that holy place;
How brightly beamed the light of heaven from every happy face;

Again I longed for that sweet time, when friend shall meet with friend,
"Where congregations ne'er break up, and Sabbaths have no end."

I hope to meet that minister - that congregation, too -
In that dear home beyond the stars that shine from heaven's blue.
I doubt not I'll remember, beyond life's evenin' gray,
The happy hour of worship in that model church to-day.

Dear wife, the fight will soon be fought, the victory soon be won;
The shinin' goal is just ahead; the race is nearly run;
O'er the river we are nearin', they are throngin' to the shore,
To shout our safe arrival where the weary weep no more.

Excelsior Fifth Reader, 1897

* Rev. John Henry Yates (1837-1900) was an American Baptist minister and poet, many of whose poems were produced as hymns. This poem, sung as a ballad, was so popular that the famous singer Ira. D. Sankey hired Yates to write exclusively for him.

This volume is stamped: "I came from City Book Store, (Richmond & Frazier), 16 S. Main St., Ft. Prescott, Kan."

NUMBER 7

ETERNITY

Unattributed

Eternity is a depth which no geometry can measure, no arithmetic calculate, no imagination conceive, no rhetoric describe. The eye of a dying Christian seems gifted to penetrate depths hid from the wisdom of philosophy. It looks athwart the dark valley without dismay, cheered by the bright scene beyond. It looks with a kind of chastened impatience to that land where happiness will be holiness perfected. There all the promises of the Gospel will be accomplished. There afflicted virtue will rejoice at its past trials, and acknowledge their subservience to its present bliss. There the secret self-denial of the righteous shall be recognized and rewarded; and all the hopes of the Christian shall there have complete consummation.

Emerson's First Class Reader, 1833

This is a relatively small, but tightly packed, leather bound volume, with tiny type and no illustrations. It is the upper level reader in a three book series.

NUMBER 8

AN APPEAL IN BEHALF OF VIRTUE

Horace Mann*

...know you not that there are forms of loftier beauty than any which ever shone in the galleries of art; souls, *souls*, created in the very likeness of God, but now faded, blackened, defiled, deformed, yet still capable of renovation, still capable of being appareled in such celestial covering, and of bearing such a divine impress, as no skill of human artist can ever emulate?

...

Each day is a tablet which is put in your hands, unmarked by a single line. Your thoughts, your resolves, your deeds, for that day, are engraven upon it; it is then taken away and deposited in the chambers of the indestructible past. There, by an irreversible law of God, it must remain forever; nor time, nor decay, nor man, nor angels, can obliterate a word of its eternal record. Let that record be your glory, and not your shame, forever.

...

Grasp, then, this conception of your high destiny. Embody it in deeds. Your power to fulfill it is the choicest boon of heaven; and ere the habits, the morals, the institutions of society, pass beyond your reach forever, redeem them from all pollution, cast out from them the seeds of death and every element of decay, and imbue them with the immortal strength of knowledge, purity, and temperance.

Excelsior Fifth Reader, 1897

*Horace Mann, 1796-1859, was an American politician and ardent promoter of public education. We can see in this piece, what his conception of education was. Several of his works are included in the old readers.

These are short selections from a lengthy piece. The *Excelsior Reader* was one of the relatively few published in the heartland, Topeka, KS, rather than the big publishing centers of the east.

NUMBER 9

GRATITUDE

Addison*

When all thy mercies, O my God
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise.

O how shall words with equal warmth,
The gratitude declare,
That grows within my ravish'd heart?
But thou canst read it there.

Thy providence my life sustain'd,
And all my wants redrest
When in the silent womb I lay,
And hung upon the breast.

To all my weak complaints and cries
Thy mercy leant an ear,
Ere my feeble thoughts had learn'd
To form themselves in pray'r.

Un-number'd comforts to my soul
Thy tender care bestow'd,
Before my infant heart conceiv'd
From whom these comforts flow'd.

When in the slipp'ry paths of youth,
With heedless steps, I ran,
Thine arm, unseen, convey'd me safe,
And led me up to man.

Through hidden dangers, toils, and deaths,
It gently cleared my way;
And through the pleasing snares of vice,
More to be feared than they.

When worn with sickness, oft hast thou,
With health renewed my face,

And when in sin and sorrows sunk,
Reviv'd my soul with grace.

The bounteous hand with worldly bliss,
Has made my cup run o'er;
And in a kind and faithful friend,
Has doubled all my store.

Ten thousand thousand precious gifts
My daily thanks employ;
Nor is the least, a cheerful heart
That tastes those gifts with joy.
Through ev'ry period of my life,
Thy goodness I'll pursue;
And after death, in distant worlds,
The glorious theme renew.

When nature fails, and day and night
Divide thy works no more,
My ever-grateful heart, O Lord!
Thy mercy shall adore.

Through all eternity, to thee
A joyful song I'll raise
For O! eternity's too short
To utter all thy praise.

Murray's English Reader, 1814

* Joseph Addison, 1672-1792, was an English writer in many venues, and co-founder and publisher of *The Spectator*, a ground breaking early periodical designed to bring humor, popular philosophy, and sound morality into British middle class homes— the homes of the common people.

The eldest son of a prominent pastor, Addison was very much an evangelist, and member of the Whig Party (the political party of the Puritans) who held several government posts when the Whigs were in power.

NUMBER 10

“BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN.”

Anonymous

Oh, deem not they are blest alone
Whose lives a peaceful tenor keep;
The Power who pities man, has shown
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again
The lids that overflow with tears;
And weary hours of woe and pain
Are promises of happier years.

There is a day of sunny rest
For every dark and troubled night;
And grief may hide, an evening guest,
But joy shall come with early light.

And thou, who, o'er thy friends low bier,
sheddest the bitter drops like rain,
Hope that a brighter, happier sphere,
Will give him to thy arms again.

Nor let the good man's trust depart,
Though life its common gifts deny,
Though with a pierced and broken heart,
And spurned of men, he goes to die.

For God has marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every secret tear,
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
For all his children suffer here.

Reader's Manual, 1839

This, and its companion book, *The Reader's Guide*, were wonderful little readers, with some material very much like the Sunday School literature of the day.

NUMBER 11

SHORT SELECTIONS

Henry Ward Beecher*

Would that I could break this Gospel as a bread of life to all of you! My best presentations of it to you are so incomplete! Sometimes, when I am alone, I have such sweet and rapturous visions of the love of God and the truths of His word, that I think if I could speak to you then, I should move your hearts. I am like a child, who, walking forth some sunny summer's morning, sees grass and flowers all shining with drops of dew, that reflect every hue of the rainbow. "Oh!" he cries, "I'll carry these beautiful things to my mother," and eagerly shakes them off into his little palm. But the charm is gone - they are no more water-pearls.

The man who carries a lantern in a dark night can have friends all around him, walking safely by the help of its rays, and he be not defrauded (misled). So he who has the God-given light of hope in his breast, can help on many others in this world's darkness, not to his own loss, but to his precious gain.

As a rose after a shower, bent down by tear-drops, waits for a passing breeze or a kindly hand to shake its branches, that, lightened, it may stand once more upon its stem, - so one who is bowed down with affliction longs for a friend to lift him out of his sorrow, and bid him once more rejoice. Happy is the man who has that in his soul which acts upon the dejected like April airs upon violet roots.

Have you ever seen a cactus growing? What a dry, ugly, spiny thing it is! But suppose a gardener takes it when just sprouting forth with buds, and let it stand a week or two, and then brings it to you, and lo! it is a blaze of light, glorious above all flowers. So the poor and lowly, when God's time comes, and they begin to stand up and blossom, how beautiful they will be!

I think that in the life to come my heart will have feelings like God's. The little bell that a babe can hold in its fingers may strike the same note as the great bell of Moscow. Its note may be soft as a bird's whisper, and yet it is the same. And so God may have a feeling, and I, standing next to him, shall have the same feeling. Where he loves, I shall love. All the processes of the Divine mind will be reflected in mine. And there will be this companionship with him in eternity. What else can be the meaning of those expressions that all we have is Christ's, and God is ours, and we are the heirs of God? To

inherit God – who can conceive of it? It is the growing marvel, and will be the growing wonder of eternity.

We are glad that there is a bosom of God to which we can go and find refuge. As prisoners in castles look out of their gated windows at the smiling landscape, where the sun comes and goes, so we from this life, as from dungeon bars, look forth to the heavenly land, and are refreshed with sweet visions of the home that shall be ours when we are free.

The National Fifth Reader, 1873

*Beecher was an American Congregational (the old Puritan church) Minister, and ardent abolitionist. He was the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of the immensely influential anti-slavery novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

The National Fifth Reader, along with the very similar *Sargent's Fifth Reader*, were two of the best advanced readers ever in use in American public schools. Among other places, they were in use in California public schools, until California began publishing its own textbooks in the 1880's.

NUMBER 12

A CHILD'S PRAYER
M. Betham-Edwards*

God make my life a little light
Within the world to glow;
A tiny flame that burneth bright,
Wherever I may go.

God make my life a little flower,
That giveth joy to all,
Content to bloom in native bower,
Although its place be small.
God, make my life a little song
That comforteth the sad,
That helpeth others to be strong
And makes the singer glad.

God make my life a little staff,
Whereon the weak may rest,
That so, what health and strength I have,
May serve my neighbor best.

The Howe Second Reader, 1909

*Matilda Betham-Edwards was an English poet, travel writer, and author of popular children's books.

The *Howe Readers* were a popular series after the Civil War, especially in the south and midwest. They held a Christian character longer than most of readers popular in the northeast, a testament to the rapid decline of the New England Puritan/Congregational Church into theological Liberalism. In this series, the fifth reader was the advanced reader, so this was for rather young children.

NUMBER 13

THE PURITANS

Macaulay*

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to enjoy him, was with them the great end of existence.

They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The differences between the greatest and meanest (least) of mankind seemed to vanish when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from Him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but his favor; and, confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world.

If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God; if their names were not found in the registers of heraldry, they felt assured that they were recorded in the Book of Life; if their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials (servants), legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems, crowns of glory which should not fade away!

On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt; for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language - nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged - on whose slightest actions the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest - who had been destined before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away.

Events which short sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes, had been ordained on his (the least believer's) account. For his sake, empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed; for his sake, the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the evangelist and the harp of the prophet. He had been rescued by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe; he had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, and the dead had arisen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of the expiring God!

National Fifth Reader, 1866

*Thomas Babington Macaulay was an English orator, poet, politician, and considered one of the greatest English essayists of the Nineteenth Century.

Recall that the Puritans (those wishing to "purify" the Church of England) were a major force in England, one side in the English Civil War, not just a few religious dissenters who came to America. The Puritans gave America its distinctive character, despite the efforts of the Royalists in the southern colonies to maintain the old class system.

NUMBER 14

ON THE USES OF KNOWLEDGE

Alison*

The first end to which all wisdom or knowledge ought to be employed, is to illustrate the wisdom or goodness of the Father of nature. Every science that is cultivated by men, leads naturally to religious thought, from the study of the plant that grows beneath our feet, to that of the Host of Heaven above us, who perform their stated revolutions in majestic silence, amid the expanse of infinity. When, in the youth of Moses, "the Lord appeared to him in Horeb," a voice was heard, saying, draw nigh hither, and put off thy shoes from thy feet; for the place where thou standest is holy ground." It is with such a reverential awe that every great or elevated mind will approach to the study of nature, and with such feelings of adoration and gratitude, that he will receive the illumination that gradually opens upon his soul.

It is not the lifeless mass of matter, he will then feel, that he is examining, it is the mighty machine of Eternal Wisdom: the workmanship of Him, "in whom everything lives, and moves, and has its being." Under an aspect of this kind, it is impossible to pursue knowledge without mingling with the most elevated sentiments of devotion; it is impossible to perceive the laws of nature without perceiving, at the same time, the presences, and the Providence of the Lawgiver; and thus it is, that, in every age, the evidences of religion have advanced with the progress of true philosophy; and that science, in erecting a monument to herself, has, at the same time, erected an altar to the Deity.

The knowledge of nature is not exhausted. There are many great discoveries yet awaiting the labors of science; and with them, there are also awaiting to humanity many additional proofs of the wisdom and benevolence "of Him who made us." To the hope of these great discoveries, few, indeed, can pretend (aspire); yet, let it ever be remembered, that he who can trace any one new fact, or can exemplify any one new instance of divine wisdom or benevolence in the system of nature, has not lived in vain; that he has added to the sum of human knowledge; and, what is far more, that he has added to the evidence of those greater truths, upon which the happiness of time and eternity depends.

The second great end to which all knowledge ought to be employed, is to the welfare of humanity. Every science is the foundation of some art, beneficial to men; and while the study of it leads us to see the beneficence of the laws of nature, it calls upon us also to follow the great end of the

Father of nature in their employment and application. I need not say what a field is thus opened up to the benevolence of knowledge: I need not tell you, that in every department of learning there is good to be done to mankind. I need not remind you, that the age in which we live has given us the noblest examples of this kind, and that science now finds its greatest glory in improving the condition, or in allaying the miseries of humanity. But there is one thing of which it is proper ever to remind you, because the modesty of knowledge often leads us to forget it, and that is, that the power of scientific benevolence is far greater than that of all others, to the welfare of society.

The benevolence of the great, or the opulent, however eminent it may be, perishes with themselves. The benevolence even of sovereigns is limited to the narrow boundary of human life; and, not infrequently, is succeeded by different and discordant counsels. But the benevolence of knowledge is of a kind as extensive as the race of man, and as permanent as the existence of society. He, in whatever situation he may be, who, in the study of science, has discovered a new way of alleviating pain, or of remedying disease; who has described a wiser method of preventing poverty, or of shielding misfortune; who has suggested additional means of increasing or improving the beneficent productions of nature, has left a memorial of himself, which can never be forgotten; which will communicate happiness to ages yet unborn; and which, in the emphatic language of scripture, renders him a "fellow worker" with God himself, in the improvement of his Creation.

The third great end of all knowledge is the improvement and exaltation (lifting up) of our own minds. It was the voice of the apostle, "What manner of men ought ye to be, to whom the truths of the Gospel have come?" It is the voice of nature also, "What manner of men ought you to be, to whom the treasures of wisdom are opened?" Of all the spectacles, indeed, which life can offer us, there is none more painful, or unnatural, than the union of vice with knowledge. It counteracts the great designs of God in the distribution of wisdom; and it assimilates men, not to the usual characters of human frailty, but to those dark and malignant spirits who fell from Heaven, and who excel in knowledge, only that they may employ it in malevolence.

To the wise and virtuous man, on the contrary, to him, whose moral attainments have kept pace with his intellectual, and who has employed the great talent with which he is entrusted to the glory of God, and to the good of humanity, are presented the sublimest prospects that mortality can know. "In my father's house," says our Savior, "are many mansions;" mansions, we

may dare to interpret, fitted to the different powers life has acquired, and to the uses to which they have been applied.

Of that great scene, indeed, which awaits all, whether ignorant or wise, it becomes us to think with reverential awe. Yet we know, "that it will then be well with the good, though it will not be well with the wicked;" and we are led, by an instinctive anticipation, to suppose that they who have here excelled in wisdom and benevolence, will be rewarded with higher objects, upon which they may be employed, and admitted into nearer prospects of the government of Eternal Wisdom. "In his light they shall see light." "They shall see Him, not as through a glass, darkly; but as he is. They shall know, even as they themselves are known."

The American First Class Book, 1823

*Alison is not further identified in this volume; however he is probably the Rev. Francis Alison, 1705-1779, an Irish born Presbyterian minister, scholar, highly influential teacher and writer in the field of moral philosophy. He pastored several New England churches, most notably the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. Alison is best known, however, for his teaching at New England colleges, and his leading role in the establishment of the University of Delaware.

NUMBER 15

DIVINE CARE AND PROTECTION: A HYMN

Anonymous

There springs to light no beauteous flower
That speaks not of its Maker's care;
What though it blooms but one short hour,
Its dewy fragrance fill the air.

No mountain pine, amid the sky,
Exalts its storm defying head
Unsheltered, when the whirlwinds fly,
By him whose hand their fury sped.

The bee, that stores his curious cell
With the sweet treasures of the rose,
Seems in his happy toil to tell
The fountain whence such bounty flows.

The condor, mightier than the king
Of all the plumed tribes, may soar
Yet God sustains his rushing wing,
And guides him by the rocky shore.

The dazzling myriads of the stream,
The monsters of the soundless deep,
Beneath his eye may sport and gleam,
Or in their waters safely sleep.

There's not an object on this earth
Too humble or too vast for Him
Who called each insect form to birth,
And clothed with light the cherubin.

Reader's Manual, 1841

NUMBER 16

A PSALM OF LIFE

Longfellow*

Tell me not in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returneth,
Was not written of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end and way,
But to act, that tomorrow
Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like the dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no future, howe'er pleasant,
Let the dead past bury its dead!
Act!—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'er head.

Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time.

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and wait.

McGuffey's New Sixth Eclectic Reader, 1857

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807-1882, a great American poet, whose poetry tended very much toward Christian themes.

NUMBER 17

TRUE FORTITUDE

Blair (No further identification)

All who have been distinguished as servants of God, or benefactors of men; all who, in perilous situations, have acted their part with such honor as to render their names illustrious through succeeding ages, have been eminent for fortitude of mind. Of this we have one conspicuous example in the apostle Paul, whom it will be instructive for us to view in a remarkable occurrence of his life. After long acting as the apostle of the Gentiles, his mission called him to go to Jerusalem, where he knew he was to encounter the utmost violence of his enemies. Just before he set sail, he called together the elders of his favorite church at Ephesus; and in a pathetic (emotional) speech, which does great honor to his character, gave them his last farewell.

Deeply affected by their knowledge of the certain dangers to which he was exposing himself, all the assembly were filled with distress, and melted into tears. The circumstances were such, as might have been conveyed dejection even to a resolute mind; and would have totally overwhelmed the feeble. "They all wept sore, and fell upon Paul's neck, and kissed him; sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more."

What were then the sentiments, what was the language, of this great and good man? Hear the words which spoke his firm and undaunted mind. "Behold, I go bound in the Spirit, to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these move me: neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." There was uttered the voice, there breathed the spirit, of a brave and virtuous man. Such a man knows not what it is to shrink from danger, when conscience points out his path. In that path he is determined to walk; let the consequences be what they may.

This was the magnanimous behavior of that great apostle, when he had persecution and distress full in view. Attend now to the sentiments of the same excellent man, when the time of his last suffering approached; and remark the majesty, and the ease, with which he looked on death. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought

the good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." How many years of life does such a dying moment overbalance? Who would not choose, in this manner, to go off the stage, with such a song of triumph in his mouth, rather than prolong his existence through a wretched old age, stained with sin and shame?

Murray's English Reader, 1814

NUMBER 18

THE CREATION

Anonymous

Twas God who made the world so fair,
The shining sun, the sky, the air;
Twas God who made the sea, the ground,
And all the things we see around.

When he began this world to make,
These are the mighty words he spake:
“Let there be light!” His voice was heard,
And then the light of day appeared.

The angels saw the light arise,
And with their praises filled the skies.:
“How great or God! How wise! How strong!”
Such is their never ending song.

Harper's Fourth Reader, 1872

Harper's Fourth was one of the post-Civil War readers that show a definite decline in Christian content, but still could be considered culturally Christian.

NUMBER 19

SOLILOQUY ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

Joseph Addison*

Scene: Cato, alone, sitting in a thoughtful posture; in his hand Plato's book on the immortality of the soul; a drawn sword on the table beside him.

Cato. It must be so; Plato, thou reasonest well!
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or, whence this secret dread and inward horror,
Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! Thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!
The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me;
But shadows, clouds and darkness rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a Power above us,
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud
Through her works) he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in must be happy.
But when? Or where? This world was made for Caesar.
I'm weary of conjectures - this must end them.
Thus am I doubly armed: my death and life,
My bane¹ and antidote² are both before me.
This¹, in a moment, brings me to an end;
But this² informs me that I shall never die.
The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the Sun himself
Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth;
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.

The American First Class Reader, 1823

NUMBER 20

THE JEWISH REVELATION

Dr. Noyes*

The peculiar religious character of the Psalms, which distinguishes them from the productions of other nations of antiquity, is well worthy of the attention of such as are disposed to doubt the reality of the Jewish revelation. I do not refer to the prophetic character, which some of them are supposed to possess, but to the comparative purity and fervor of religious feeling, which they manifest; the sublimity and justness of the views of the Deity, and of his government of the world, which they present; and the clear perception of a spiritual good, infinitely to be preferred to any external possession, which is found in them. Let them be considered as the fruit of the principles of the Jewish religion, as they existed in the minds of pious Israelites, and do they not bear delightful testimony to the reality of the successive revelations, alleged to have been made to the Hebrew nation, and of the peculiar relation which the Most high is said to have sustained towards them?

Let the unbeliever compare the productions of the Hebrew poets, with those of the most enlightened periods of Grecian literature. Let him explain, how it happened, that in the most celebrated cities of antiquity, which human reason had adorned with the most splendid trophies of art, whose architecture it is now thought high praise to imitate well, whose sculpture almost gave life to marble, whose poetry has never been surpassed, and whose eloquence has never been equaled, a religion prevailed, so absurd and frivolous as to be beneath the contempt of a child, at the present day; while in an obscure corner of the world, in a nation in some respects imperfectly civilized, were breathed forth those strains of devotion, which now animate the hearts of millions, and are the vehicle of their feelings to the throne of God. Let him say, if there be not some ground for the conclusion, that whilst the corner-stone of the heathen systems of religion, was unassisted human reason, that of the Jewish was an immediate revelation from the Father of lights.

The American Common-School Reader and Speaker, 1844

*No further identification.

NUMBER 21

A PRAYER
Thomson*

Father of light and life! Thou God Supreme!
O, teach me what is good! Teach me thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit, and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure,—
Sacred, substantial, never fading bliss!

Sargent's Fifth Reader, 1854

*No further identification.

NUMBER 22

LOVE DUE TO THE CREATOR

G. Griffin*

Ask ye why He claims our love!
O answer, all ye winds of even,
O answer ye lights above,
That watch in yonder darkening heaven;
Thou earth, in vernal radiance gay
As when His angels first arrayed thee,
And thou, O deep tongued ocean, say
Why man should love the mind that made thee.

There's not a flower that decks the vale,
There's not a beam that lights the mountain,
There's not a shrub that scents the gale,
There's not a wind that stirs the fountain;
There's not a hue that paints the rose,
There's not a leaf around us lying,
But in its use or beauty shows
True love to us, and love undying!

Sargent's Fifth Reader, 1854

*No further identification of this author.

NUMBER 23

THE CHILD AND THE SKEPTIC

Anonymous

A little girl was sitting beside a cottage door, on a sultry summer day. The Bible was lying on her knee, and she was reading from its pages, when there passed a traveler, who begged a glass of water, and a seat to rest himself, for he was faint and weary.

“Come in, sir,” said the little maiden, “and I will get you a glass of water. Will you take a seat and rest yourself a while? Mother is always glad to do what she can to cheer a weary traveler.” And while the man drank, and chatted merrily with her, she took her seat again at the cottage door, the bible on her knee.

At length the traveler, quite refreshed, arose to depart. Now it happened that he was a skeptic—that is, he did not believe the bible. So he said, “What, child! Are you still reading the Bible? I suppose it is your lesson.” “Oh no, “ said the little girl: “it is no lesson. I have no task to learn, but I love to read the good book.”

“And why, my little girl,” said he, “do you love that book? Why, this pleasant day, are you sitting here, and reading over its pages?” She looked up with surprise. “Why love the Bible, do you ask? I hope you are not angry, sir but I thought everybody loves this holy book.”

The skeptic smiled at this answer, but made no reply: but as he traveled on, he thought much about what the little girl had said. It was a strange answer,' said he. “And why do I not love the Bible too?” he said to himself with a sigh.

He reflected; he resolved: he looked at his own heart within, and he lifted up his thoughts in prayer to God above. He began to read the Bible; he confessed its truth; and with sincere love he worshiped the God who made him. He who had been a proud skeptic, lived and labored many a year after this—a Bible-loving man.

Harper's Fourth Reader, 1872

NUMBER 24

EVIDENCE OF A CREATOR

John Tillotson*

How often might a man, after he had jumbled a set of letters in a bag, fling them upon the ground before they would fall out into an exact poem, yea, or so much as make a good discourse in prose! And may not a little book be as easily made by chance, as this great volume of the world? - How long might a man be in sprinkling colors upon a canvas with a careless hand, before they could happen to make the exact picture of a man!

And is a man easier made by chance than this picture! - How long might twenty thousand blind men, which should be sent out from the several remote parts of England, wander up and down before they would all meet upon Salisbury Plains, and fall into rank and file in the exact order of an army! And yet this is much easier to be imagined, than how the innumerable blind parts of matter should rendezvous themselves into a world.

National Fifth Reader, 1873

*John Tillotston, Archbishop of Canterbury, born in 1630 and died in 1694. His sermons were very popular and widely read for generations. This one informs us that the arguments of atheists against Divine Creation are not freshly plucked from the fields of science.

NUMBER 25

HYMN OF THE VAUDOIS¹ MOUNTAINEERS

Felicia Hemans*

For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!
Thou hast made thy children mighty,
By the touch of the mountain sod.
Thou hast fix'd our ark of refuge
Where the spoiler's foot ne'er trod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

We are watchers of a beacon
Whose light must never die;
We are guardians of an altar
'Midst the silence of the sky:
The rocks yield founts of courage,
Struck forth as by thy rod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

For the dark resounding caverns,
Where thy still small voice is heard;
For the strong pines of the forests,
That by thy breath are stir'd:
For the storms on whose free pinions
Thy spirit walks abroad:
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

The royal eagle darteth
On his quarry from the heights,
And the stag that knows no master,
Seeks there his wild delights;
But we for thy communion,
Have sought the mountain sod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

The banner of the chieftain,
Far far below us waves;
The war horse of the spearman
Cannot reach our lofty caves:
Thy dark clouds wrap the threshold
Of freedom's last abode;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

For the shadow of thy presence,
Round our camp of rock outspread;
For the stern defiles of battle,
Bearing record of our dead;
For the snows and for the torrents,
For the free heart's burial sod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

Sargent's Fifth Reader, 1854

*Felicia Dorothea Hemans, 1793-1835, was an English poet of some renown in her day, often mixing political commentary (as here) with her poetry. During the Napoleonic Wars (contemporary with much of her life), Switzerland and Alpine northern Italy, the land of the Vaudois, was brutally invaded and occupied by the French.

1. The Vaudois, also known as the Waldensians, were a 12th Century Proto-Reformation Christian sect persecuted to near extinction by the Duke of Saxony at the behest of the Roman Catholic Church. They sought sanctuary in the remote Alpine mountains of Switzerland and northern Italy, where they survived and eventually merged into the Swiss Calvinist tradition.

NUMBER 26

OBJECT IN READING

Anonymous*

To become wiser and more intellectual beings; to know more and more of all that our Creator has given us the power to know, of nature, of the mind, of the eternal principles of truth and virtue; to add continually to the stock of just and valuable ideas, and to the power of just reasoning upon them; to cultivate all our faculties, throughout the whole of life, as if it were a school to fit us for a nobler action and a higher advancement in some loftier sphere,—these should be the objects in Reading.

Emerson's First Class Reader, 1833

A short excerpt from the excerpt in the reader.

*From the *Christian Reader*, another instance of the connection between the public schools and the wider Christian community.

NUMBER 27

THE GLORY OF GOD IN CREATION
Moore*

Thou art, O God! the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see;
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflections caught from thee.
Where'er we turn, thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are thine.

When day, with farewell beam, delays
Among the opening clouds of even,
And we can almost think we can gaze
Through opening vistas into heaven,
Those hues that make the sun's decline
So soft, so radiant, Lord, are thine.

When night, with wings of starry gloom,
O'ershadows all the earth and skies,
Like some dark, beauteous bird, whose plume
Is sparkling with unnumbered eyes,
That sacred gloom, those fires divine,
So grand, so countless, Lord, are thine.

When youthful Spring around us breathes,
Thy Spirit warms her fragrant sigh.
And every flower that Summer wreathes
Is born beneath Thy kindling eye:
Where'er we turn, thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are thine.

Monroe's Sixth Reader, 1872

*Thomas Moore, 1779-1852, an Irish poet and hymnist. This piece is titled as it was in the reader, but it is a famous hymn entitled "All Things are Of God."

NUMBER 28

AN INVOCATION

Bryant*

O North, with all thy vales of green!
O South, with all thy palms!
From peopled towns and fields between
Uplift the voice of psalms.
Raise, ancient East! The anthem high,
And let the youthful West reply.

Lo! in the clouds of heaven appears
God's well-beloved Son.
He brings a train of brighter years;
His kingdom is begun.
He comes a guilty world to bless
With mercy, truth, and righteousness.

O Father! Haste the promised hour,
When at his feet shall lie
All rule, authority, and power,
Beneath the ample sky;
When he shall reign from pole to pole,
The Lord of every human soul:

When all shall heed the words He said,
Amid their daily cares,
And by the loving life He led
Shall strive to pattern theirs;
And He who conquered death shall win
The mightier conquest over sin.

Webster-Franklin Fifth Reader

*William Cullen Bryant, 1794-1878, a leading American poet of the 19th Century, also a New York newspaper editor. It is inescapable to our notice that the famed American poets of by-gone days were unabashedly Christian.

NUMBER 29

ABSALOM
N. P. Willis*

Based upon 2 Samuel 18:33
The last eight stanzas only.

The soldiers of the king trod to and fro,
Clad in the garb of battle; and their chief,
The mighty Joab, stood beside the bier,
And gazed upon the dark pall steadfastly,
As if he feared the slumberer might stir.
A slow step startled him. He grasped his blade
As if a trumpet rang; but the bent form
Of David entered, and he gave command
In a low tone, to his few followers,
And left him with his dead.

The King stood still
Till the last echo died; then throwing off
The sackcloth from his brow, and laying back
The pall from the still features of his child,
He bowed his head upon him, and broke forth
In the restless eloquence of woe:

“Alas! my noble boy, that thou shouldst die!
Thou, who wert made so beautifully fair!
That death should settle in thy glorious eye,
And leave his stillness in this clustering hair.
How could he mark thee for the silent tomb -
My proud boy, Absalom!

“Cold is thy brow, my son! and I am chill.
As to my bosom I have tried to press thee,
How was I wont to feel my pulses thrill,
Like a rich harp-string, yearning to caress thee,
And hear thy sweet *‘My Father!’* from these dumb
And cold lips, Absalom!

“The grave hath won thee. I shall hear the gush
Of music, and the voices of the young’
And life shall pass me in the mantling blush,
And the dark tresses to the soft winds flung;
But thou no more, with thy sweet voice, shalt come
To meet me, Absalom!

“And, oh! when I am stricken, and my heart,
Like a bruised reed, is waiting to be broken,
How will its love for thee, as I depart,
Yearn for thine ear to drink its last deep token!
It were so sweet, amid death’s gathering gloom,
To see thee, Absalom!

“And now, farewell! ‘Tis hard to give thee up,
With death so like a gentle slumber on thee -
And thy dark sin! - oh, I could drink the cup,
If from this woe its bitterness had won thee.
May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,
My erring Absalom!

He covered up his face, and bowed himself
A moment on his child: then, giving him
A look of melting tenderness, he clasped
His hands convulsively, as if in prayer;
And, as if strength were given him of God
He rose up calmly, and composed the pall
Firmly and decently, and left him there,
As if his rest had been a breathing sleep.

Appleton’s Fifth Reader, 1878

*No further identification.

NUMBER 30

THE FINAL JUDGMENT

Anonymous

Before that assembly every man's good deeds will be declared, and his secret sins disclosed. As no elevation of rank will give a title to respect, no obscurity of condition shall exclude the just from public honor, or screen the guilty from public shame. Opulence will find itself no longer powerful; poverty will be no longer weak. Birth will no longer be distinguished; meanness (of low position) will no longer pass unnoticed. The rich and the poor will indeed strangely mingle together; all the inequalities of the present life shall disappear, and the conqueror and his captive; the monarch and his subject; the lord and his vassals; the statesman and the peasant; the philosopher and the unlettered shall find their distinctions to have been mere illusions.

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

NUMBER 31

ADVANTAGE OF HAVING CHRIST FOR OUR KING

Dwight*

Nay, the present moment, and every moment when present, is fraught with consequences incapable of being estimated by any finite understanding. On time, Eternity hangs. As we live here, we shall live hereafter. If our time be well employed, and our talents well used, it will be well with us in the end.

But if we abuse both here, it will be ill with us hereafter. The present moment is important, chiefly, as it affects those which are future; begins or strengthens an evil, or virtuous habit; depraves or amends the soul; hardens or softens the heart; and contributes, in this way, to advance us towards heaven, or towards hell.

There is no man who is not better or worse today, by means of what he thought, designed, or did, yesterday. The present day, therefore, is not only important in itself, as a season for which we must give an account, but because of the influence which it will have on the events of the morrow.

Thus circumstanced, frail, irresolute, wandering, wicked, exposed to immense dangers, and yet capable of immense enjoyments; how infinitely desirable it is, that we should have such a friend as Christ. In his mind are treasured up all the means of happiness which we need; the immense power, knowledge and goodness, the unchangeable truth, faithfulness and mercy, which, and only which, can provide and secure for us immortal blessings, or preserve us from evils which know no end.

In all places, he is present; over all things he rules with an irresistible dominion. No being, no event, can be hidden from his eye. No enemy, however insidious, or however powerful, can escape from his hand. His disposition is written in letters of blood on the cross. He who died, that all sinners might live; he who prayed for his murderers while imbruing (soaking) their hands in his blood; can need, can add, no proofs of his compassion for men.

This glorious Redeemer is, also, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Such a friend to man, as he was when he hung on the cross, he will be throughout eternity; and to every one who sincerely desires an interest in

his goodwill, he will manifest his friendship in an endless succession of blessings.

While we wander through the wilderness of life amid so many wants, how desirable must it be to find a friend, able and willing to furnish the needed supplies? Amid so many enemies and dangers, how desirable must it be to find a friend, able and willing to furnish the needed protection? Amid so many temptations, to watch over us? amid so many sorrows, to relieve us? in solitude to be our companion? in difficulties, our helper? in despondence, our support? in disease, our physician? in death, our hope, resurrection, and life?

In a word, how desirable must it be to find a friend, who, throughout all the strange, discouraging state of the present life, will give us peace, consolation and joy, and cause all things, even the most untoward (unforeseen) and perplexing, to work together for our good?

On a dying bed especially, when our flesh and our hearts must fail of course; our earthly friends yield us little consolation, and no hope; and the world itself retire from our view, how delightful will such a friend be? Then the soul, uncertain, alone, hovering over the form which it has so long inhabited, and stretching its wings for its flight into the unknown vast, will sigh, and pant for an arm on which it may lean, and a bosom on which it may safely recline. But there, Christ is present with all his tenderness, and all his power. With one hand he holds the anchor of hope; and with the other he points the way to heaven.

In the final resurrection, when the universe shall rend asunder, and the elements of this great world shall rush together with immense confusion and ruin, how supporting, how ravishing will it be, when we awake from our final sleep, and ascend from the dust in which our bodies have been so long buried, to find this glorious Redeemer re-fashioning our vile bodies like unto his glorious body, and reuniting them to our minds, purified and immortal?

With what emotions shall we arise, and stand, and behold the Judge descend in the glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels? With what emotions will we see the same unchangeable and everlasting friend, placing on us his right hand in glory and honor, which kings covet in vain, and before which all earthly grandeur shall be forgotten? With what melody will the voice of the redeemer bust on our ears, when he proclaims, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?

How will the soul distend with transport (swell with joy), when, accompanied by the Church of the first-born, and surrounded by Thrones, Principalities, and Powers, it shall begin its flight towards the highest heavens, to meet his Father and our Father, his God and our God?

What an eternal heaven will dawn in the mind when we shall be presented before the throne of Jehovah, and settled amidst our own brethren in our immortal inheritance, and our final home; and behold all our sins washed away, our trials ended, our dangers escaped, our sorrows left behind us, and our rewards begun, in that world, where all things are ever new, delightful and divine.

The Reader's Guide, 1839

*Timothy Dwight (1752-1817) - Congregationalist (Puritan) minister, President of Yale University, and a leader of "The Second Great Awakening" in America. Dwight's maternal grandfather was Jonathan Edwards, one of the greatest early American preachers and theologians, and perhaps the greatest force in the First Great Awakening.

NUMBER 32

A CHILD'S THOUGHT OF GOD
Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

They say that God lives very high;
But if you look above the pines
You cannot see our God. And why?

And if you dig down in the mines
You never see him in the gold,
Though from Him all that's glory shines.

God is good, He wears a fold
Of heaven and earth across His face—
Like secrets kept, for love, untold.

But still I feel that His embrace
Slides down by thrills, through all things made,
Through sight and sound of every place:

As if my tender mother laid
On my shut lips, her kisses' pressure,
Half-waking me at night; and said,
“Who kissed you through the dark, dear guesser?”

The Howe Fifth Reader, 1909

*Mrs. Browning, 1806-1861, was one of Britain's most distinguished poets. As with American poets, distinguished British poets of the age were also Christian.

NUMBER 33

SAFETY IN GOD

Isaac Watts*

God is the refuge of his saints,
When storms of sharp distress invade;
Ere we can offer our complaints,
Behold him present with his aid.

Let mountains from their seats be hurled
Down to the deep, and buried there;
Convulsions shake the solid world,
Our faith shall never yield to fear.

The Reader's Guide, 1839

*Isaac Watts, 1674 -1748, was a child prodigy and one of the great preachers, theologians and hymn writers of 18th Century England. He was a 'Dissenter' from the Church of England and had a great influence upon the American Puritan Church.

NUMBER 34

PRESS ON
Park Benjamin*

Press on! There's no such word as fail!
 Press nobly on! The goal is near!
 Ascend the mountain! Breast the gale!
 Look upward, onward!,—never fear!
 Why shouldst thou faint? Heaven smiles above,
 Though storm and vapor intervene;
 That sun shines on, whose name is Love,
 Serenely o'er Life's shadowed scene.

Press on! Surmount the rocky steps,
 Climb boldly o'er the torrent's arch;
 He fails alone who feebly creeps;
 He wins who dares the hero's march.
 Be thou a hero! Let thy might
 Tramp on eternal snows its way,
 And through the ebony wall of night
 Hew down a passage unto day.

Press on! If once and twice thy feet
 Slip back and stumble, harder try;
 From him who never dreads to meet
 Danger and death, they're sure to fly.
 To coward ranks the bullet speeds,
 While on their breasts, who never quail,
 Gleams, guardian of chivalric deeds,
 Bright courage, like a coat of mail.

Press on! If fortune play thee false
 Today, tomorrow she'll be true;
 Whom now she sinks, she now exalts,
 Taking old gifts, and granting new.
 The wisdom of the present hour
 Makes up for follies past and gone;
 To weakness strength succeeds, and power
 From frailty springs. Press on! Press on!

Press bravely on! And reach the goal,
And gain the prize, and wear the crown!
Faint not! For to the steadfast soul
Come wealth, and honor, and renown.
To thine own self be true, and keep
Thy mind from sloth, and thy heart from soil;
Press on! And thou shalt surely reap
A heavenly harvest for thy toil.

Webster-Franklin Fifth Reader

*Park Benjamin Sr., 1809-1864, an American journalist, poet, and founder of several newspapers.

NUMBER 35

ADVICE TO THE YOUNG

E. H. Chapin*

Young friends, in whatever pursuits you may engage, you must not forget that the lawful objects of human efforts are but means to higher results and nobler ends. Start not forward in life with the idea of becoming mere seekers of pleasure, - sportive butterflies searching for gaudy flowers. Consider and act with reference to the true ends of existence.

This world is but the vestibule (entrance hall) of an immortal life. Every action of your life touches on some chord that will vibrate in eternity. These thoughts and motives within you stir the pulses of a deathless spirit. Act not, then, as mere creatures of this life, who, for a little while, are to walk the valleys and the hills, to enjoy the sunshine and to breathe the air, and then pass away and be no more; but *act* as immortals, with an *aim* and a *purpose* worthy of your high nature.

Set before you, as the chief object to be obtained, an *end* that is superior to any on earth, - *a desirable end*, A PERFECT END. Labor to accomplish a work which shall survive unchanged and beautiful, when time shall have withered the garland of youth, when thrones of power and monuments of art shall have crumbled into ashes; and finally, aim to achieve something, which, when these our mutable and perishing voices are hushed forever, shall live amid the songs and triumphs of IMMORTALITY.

Well will it be for you, if you have a *guide* within, which will aid you in every issue, which will arm you in every temptation, and comfort you in every sorrow. Consult, then, that Volume whose precepts will never fail you. Consult it with deep aspiration after the true and good, and it shall illuminate your understanding with divine realities.

Open your soul, and it shall breathe into it a holy influence, and fill all its wants. Bind it close to your hearts; it will be a shield against all the assaults of evil. Read it in the lonely hour of desertion; it will be the best of companions. Open it when the voyage of life is troubled; it is a sure chart. Study it in poverty; it will unhoard to you inexhaustible riches. Commune with it in sickness; it contains the medicine of the soul. Clasp it when dying, it is the charter of immortality.

Raub's Normal Fifth Reader, 1878

*Edwin Hubbell Chapin, 1814-1880, was an influential American Preacher, poet, writer and editor.

A "Normal School" was a more advanced school for training teachers.

NUMBER 36

BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC
Julia Ward Howe*

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He has loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners¹, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat.
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me;
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

The Excelsior Fifth Reader, 1897

* Mrs. Howe was an American poet, abolitionist and suffragist. This song, also known as "*Mine Eyes have Seen the Glory*", is most recognized as the battle hymn of the Union Army in the American Civil War,

Though it does contain martial and partisan imagery, it is fundamentally a Christian message intertwining imagery of the Civil War with the coming of Christ. *Mine Eyes have Seen the Glory* has been a fixture in many church hymnals for generations. It is ironic that even today it is a popular hymn in the south, though in the Southern Baptist Hymnal the third stanza referring to the "fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel" (bayonets) is omitted.

The *Excelsior Fifth Reader* was one of the relatively few heartland readers, published in Topeka, KS.

1. Those contemptuous of God.

NUMBER 37

THE BIBLE: THE BEST OF CLASSICS

Thomas S. Grimke*

There is a classic, the best the world has ever seen, the noblest that has ever honored and dignified the language of mortals. If we look into its antiquity, we discover a title to our veneration unrivaled in the history of literature. If we have respect to its evidences, they are found in the testimony of miracle and prophecy; in the ministry of man, of nature, and angels, yea, even of "God", manifest in the flesh," of "God blessed forever."

If we consider its authenticity, no other pages have survived the lapse of time that can compare with it. If we examine its authority, for it speaks as never man spoke, we discover it came from heaven in vision, and prophecy, under the sanction of Him who is Creator of all things, and giver of every good and perfect gift. If we reflect on its truths, they are lovely and spotless, sublime and holy as God himself, unchangeable in his nature, durable as his righteous dominion, and versatile as the moral condition of mankind. If we regard the value of its treasures, we must estimate them, not like the relics of classical antiquity, by the perishable glory and beauty, virtue and happiness of the world, but by the enduring perfection and supreme felicity of an eternal kingdom. If we inquire who are the men that have recorded its truths, vindicated its rights, and illustrated the excellence of its scheme, from the depths of ages and from the living world, from the populous continent and the isles of the sea, comes forth the answer: "The patriarch and the prophet, the evangelist and the martyr."

If we look abroad through the world of men, the victims of folly or vice, the prey of cruelty, of injustice, and inquire what are its benefits even in this temporal state, the great and the humble, the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak, the learned and the ignorant reply, as with one voice, that humility and resignation, purity, order, and peace, faith, hope, and charity, are its blessings upon earth.

And, if raising our eyes from time to eternity; from the world of mortals to the world of just men made perfect; from the visible creation, marvelous, beautiful, and glorious as it is, to the invisible creation of angels and seraphs; from the footstool of God to the throne of God himself, we ask, what are the blessings that flow from this single volume, let the question be answered by the pen of the evangelist, the harp of the prophet, and the records of the book of life.

California Third Reader, 1886

*Thomas Smith Grimke (1786 -1834, when he died of cholera), was a distinguished jurist, Christian scholar, and writer in South Carolina. He was also involved in several social movements of the day, including temperance, and sending freed slaves to Liberia.

NUMBER 38

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

Longfellow*

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and brawny hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat;
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys,
He hears his daughter's voice
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,

How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees the task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought!

California State Series, Third Reader, 1886

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807-1882, professor at Harvard, and considered one of the greatest American poets. This poem was carried in most of the readers published of the latter 19th Century. Though a long poem,, we can see the Christian emphasis clearly.

NUMBER 39

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. MASON

Mason*

Take, holy earth! all that my soul holds dear;
Take that best gift, which heaven so lately gave.
To Bristol's fount¹ I bore, with trembling care,
Her faded form. She bow'd to taste the wave,

And died. Does youth, does beauty read the line.
Does sympathetic fear their breast alarm?
Speak, dead Maria! breathe a strain divine;
E'en from the grave thou shalt have power to charm.

Bid them to be chaste, be innocent like thee:
Bid them in duty's sphere, as meekly move:
And if as fair, from vanity as free,
As firm in friendship, and as fond in love:

Tell them, though tis an awful thing to die,
('Twas e'en to thee) yet the dread path once trod,
Heaven lifts its everlasting portals high,
And bids the "pure in heart behold their God."

Scott's Lessons on Elocution, 1820

*Probably Rev. John M. Mason (see *Final Triumph of the Gospel*)

1. Bristol, an English seaside city known for hot mineral water springs, once purported to have medicinal properties.

Scott's Lessons in Elocution was a very early textbook used in Boston Schools, but was deemed "Too English" for a textbook in America. Like other readers of the day, perhaps more so, it was primarily a lesson book on public speaking, the content of the reader being of secondary importance. That emphasis began to reverse over the next few decades.

NUMBER 40

THE BLIND PREACHER
 Rev. L. T. Kosegarten*

Blind with old age, the venerable Bede¹
 Ceased not, for that, to preach and publish forth
 The news from heaven – the tidings of great joy.
 From town to town, – through all the villages, –
 With trusty guidance, roamed the aged saint,
 And preached the word with all the fire of youth.

One day, his boy had led him to a vale
 That lay all thickly sowed with might rocks.
 In mischief, more than malice, spake the boy:
 “Most reverend father, there are many men
 Assembled here, who wait to hear thy voice.”
 The blind old man, so bowed, straightway rose up,
 Chose him his text, expounded, then applied:
 Exhorted, warned, rebuked, and comforted,
 So fervently, that soon the gushing tears
 Streamed thick and fast down his hoary beard.

When, at the close, as seemeth always meet,
 He prayed, “Our Father,” and pronounced aloud,
 “Thine is the kingdom and the power, thine
 The glory now, and through eternity,”
 At once there rang, through all the echoing vale,
 A sound of many voices, crying,
 “Amen! most reverend sire, Amen! Amen!”

Trembling with terror and remorse, the boy
 Knelt before the saint, and owned his sin;
 “Son,” said the old man, “hast thou, then, ne’er read,
 ‘When men are dumb, the stones shall cry aloud’
 Henceforth, mock not, son, the word of God!
 Living it is, and mighty, cutting sharp,
 Like a two-edged sword. And when the heart
 Of flesh grows hard and stubborn like the stone,
 A heart of flesh shall stir in stones themselves.”

Hilliard’s First Reader, 1855

* Ludwig Gothard Kosegarten, 1758-1818, was a German poet and Lutheran pastor. This poem was translated from the German by Rev. C. T. Brooks

1. Bede, 673-735, was a Benedictine monk in Northumbria, part of present day England. He is revered as one of the few great scholars who helped keep learning alive in western Europe during the "Dark Ages".

NUMBER 41

THE BURIAL OF MOSES
Mrs. Cecil Frances Alexander*

*“And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor;
but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day.” – Deuteronomy XXXIV.6*

By Nebo’s lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan’s wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave.

And no man dug that sepulcher,
And no man saw it e’er:
For the angels of God upturned the sod,
And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
That ever passed on earth;
But no man heard the trampling,
Or saw the train go forth.

...

In the deep grave, without a name,
Whence his uncoffined clay
Shall break again – most wondrous thought! –
Before the judgment day,
And stand with glory wrapped around
On the hills he never trod,
And speak of the strife that won our life
With the Incarnate Son of God.

O, lonely tomb in Moab’s land,
O dark Bethpeor’s hill,
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still.
God hath his mysteries of grace –
Ways that we cannot tell;
He hides them deep, like the secret sleep
Of him He loved so well.

Webster-Franklin Fifth Reader, 1871

*Mrs. Alexander, 1823-95, was a well known British poet and hymnist, wife of the Anglican Archbishop of Armaugh, and beloved for her charitable work. Her hymn “All Creatures Bright And Beautiful” is her best known in this country. The above selection is a short excerpt from this rather long poem.

NUMBER 42

ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

Addison

I was yesterday walking alone, in one of my friend's woods, and lost myself in it very agreeably as I was running over, in my mind, the several arguments that established this great point, which is the basis of morality and the source of all the pleasing hopes and secret joys, that can arise in the heart of a reasonable creature. I consider these several proofs drawn,

First, from the nature of the soul itself, and particularly its immateriality; which though not absolutely necessary to the eternity of its duration, has, I think, been evinced to almost a demonstration.

Secondly, from its passions and sentiments' as particularly, from its love of existence; its horror of annihilation; and its hopes of immortality; with the secret satisfaction which it finds in the practice of virtue; and the uneasiness which follows upon the commission of vice.

Thirdly, from the nature of the Supreme Being, whose justice, goodness, wisdom, and veracity, are all concerned in this point.

But among these, and other excellent arguments, for the immortality of the soul, there is one drawn from the perpetual progress of the soul to its perfection, without a possibility of ever arriving at it; which is a hint that I do not remember to have seen opened and improved by others, who have written on this subject, though it seems to me to carry a very great weight with it.

How can it enter into the thoughts of man, that the soul, which is capable of immense perfections, and of receiving new improvements to all eternity, shall fall away into nothing, almost as soon as it is created?

Are such abilities made up for no purpose? A brute (animal) arrives at a point of perfection that he can never pass. In a few years, he has all the endowments he is capable of; and were he to live ten thousand years more, would be the same thing he is at present. Were a human soul thus at a stand in her accomplishments; were her faculties to be full blown, and incapable of further enlargements: I could imagine she might fall away insensibly, and drop at once into a state of annihilation. But can we believe a thinking

being, that is in a perpetual progress of improvement, and traveling on from perfection to perfection, after having looked abroad into the works of her Creator, and made a few discoveries of his infinite goodness, wisdom, and power, must perish at her first setting out, and in the very beginning of her inquiries?

Man, considered only in his present state, seems sent into the world merely to propagate his kind. He provides himself with a successor; and immediately quits his post to make room for him. He does not seem to have been born to enjoy life, but to deliver it down to others. This is surprising to consider in animals, which are formed for our use, and which can finish their business in a short life. The silkworm, after having spun her task, lays her eggs and dies. But a man cannot take his full measure of knowledge, has not time to subdue his passions, establish his soul in virtue, and come up to the perfection of his nature, before he is hurried off the stage.

Would an infinitely wise Being make such glorious creatures for so mean (small) a purpose? Can he take delight in the production of such abortive intelligences, such short lived reasonable beings? Would he give us talents that are not to be exerted? capacities that are never to be gratified?

How would we find that wisdom which shines through all his works, in the formation of man, without looking on this world, as only a nursery for the next; and without believing that the several generations of rational creatures, who rise up and disappear in such quick successions, are only to receive their first rudiments of existence here, and afterwards to be transplanted into a more friendly climate, where they may spread and flourish to all eternity.

There is not, in my opinion, a more pleasing and triumphant consideration in religion, than this of the perpetual progress, which the soul makes towards the perfection of its nature, without ever arriving at a period in it. To look upon the soul as going on from strength to strength; to consider that she is to shine forever with new accessions of glory, and brighten to all eternity; that she will still be adding virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge; carries in it something wonderfully agreeable to that ambition, which is natural to the mind of man. Nay, it must be a prospect pleasing to to God himself, to see his creation forever beautifying in his eyes; and drawing nearer to him by greater degrees of resemblance.

Methinks this single consideration, of the progress of a finite spirit to perfection, will be sufficient to extinguish all envy in inferior natures, and all contempt in superior. That cherub that now appears as a god to to a

human soul, knows very well that the period will come about in eternity, when the human soul shall be as perfect as he himself now is; nay, when she shall look down upon that degree of perfection as she now falls short of it. It is true, the higher nature still advances, and by that means preserves his distance and superiority in the scale of being; but he knows that, how high soever the station is of which he stands possessed at present, the inferior nature will at length mount up to it; and shine forth in the same degree of glory.

With what astonishment and veneration may we look into our own souls, where there are such hidden stores of virtue and knowledge, such inexhausted sources of perfection! We know not yet what we shall be; nor will it ever enter into the heart of man, to conceive the glory that will be always in reserve for him. The soul, considered with his Creator, is like one of those mathematical lines, that may draw nearer to another for all eternity, without a possibility of touching it; and can there be a thought so transporting, as to consider ourselves in these perpetual approaches to Him, who is the standard, not only of perfection but of happiness!

Murray's English Reader, 1814

NUMBER 43

DEATH OF THE YOUNG AND FAIR

Bryant*

She died in beauty, like a rose blown from its parent stem;
She died in beauty, like a pearl dropped from some diadem;
She died in beauty, like a lay (poem) along a moonlit lake;
She died in beauty, like the song of birds amid the brake;
She died in beauty, like the snow on flowers dissolved away;
She died in beauty, like a star lost on the brow of day;—
She lives in glory, like Night's gems set round the silver moon;
She lives in glory, like the sun amid the blue of June.

Sargent's Fifth Reader, 1854

*William Cullen Bryant, a leading American poet in the 19th Century.

NUMBER 44

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

Anonymous

"Say, what is hope?" I asked an ancient sage,
With tottering gate, and head quite white with age; -
"Hope!" he replied, " 'tis but a meteor ray,
A breath, a dream, the phantom of a day."

I asked the mariner on ocean's wave,
Where many thousands find an early grave; -
"My hope," he said, lies on that distant strand,
The happy spot, I call my native land."

I asked the warrior on the tented plain,
Now strewn with bodies of the conquered slain; -
"My hope," he said, "consists in high renown,
In wreaths of laurels, or in mural crown."

I asked the airy sons of folly gay,
The bright ephemera of fashion's ray; -
"Hope is the sun of life, his quickening power
Gilds as they pass each tiresome, ling'ring hour."

I asked an aged worldling who had run
His giddy race, - his course was well nigh done; -
With haggard looks he gazed on all around,
And dashed fair pleasure's chalice on the ground,
And in tones of deepest misery,
"What's hope! alas! there is no hope for me.
Oh! 'tis a bubble, false, delusive, fair, -
Inflated but to burst in wild despair!"

I asked an aged Christian, and his eye
Beamed with unearthly luster in reply; -
"Hope is my anchor, steadfast, sure, and strong,
In many sorrows, and in trials long;
Although, I am a worm of feeble dust,
On this Almighty Rock, I place my trust.

"But when my earthly pilgrimage is o'er,
And I shall reach yon blest, celestial shore,

Then veiled from weeping mortals' finite sight,
Hope shall be lost in full, supreme delight; -
And every passion shall be hushed to bliss,
In pure, ecstatic, lasting happiness."

Sanders' Fifth Reader, 1855

The term "mural crown" refers to the ancient Roman practice of awarding a golden crown to the one who first scales the wall of a besieged city and plants Rome's banner ("mural" comes from a Latin term for 'wall').

This volume is embossed with the name of a stationer on "Cumberlant (Yes, with a T) St., Lebanon, PA; and inscribed with "Elizabeth Seltzer's Book; November 15th A.D. 1853".

NUMBER 45

SELFISHNESS REPROVED

Pope*

Has God, thou fool! worked solely for thy good,
Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
For him as kindly spreads the flowery lawn.
Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
Loves of his own, and raptures swell the note.
The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?
The birds of heaven shall vindicate their grain.
Thine the full harvest of the golden year?
Part pays, and justly the deserving steer.
The hog, that plows not, nor obeys thy call,
Lives on the labor of the lord of all.

Know, nature's children all divide her care;
The fur that warms a monarch, warmed a bear.
While man exclaims, "See all things for my use!"
"See man for mine!" replies a pampered goose.
And just as short of reason he must fall,
Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

...

Murray's English Reader, 1814

*Alexander Pope, 1688-1724, one of the greatest English poets of the 18th. Century.

This is only a short excerpt from a much longer piece.

NUMBER 46

SHORT SELECTIONS FROM MURRAY'S ENGLISH READER

Unattributed

The hope of future happiness is a perpetual source of consolation to good men. Under trouble, it soothes their minds; amidst temptation, it supports their virtue; and, in their dying moments, enables them to say, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?"

The quote is from 1 Corinthians, Chapter 15.

The religion of Christ not only arms us with fortitude against the approach of evil; but supposing evils to fall upon us with their heaviest pressure, it lightens the load by many consolations to which others are strangers. While bad men trace, in the calamities with which they are visited, the hand of an offended Sovereign, Christians are taught to view them as the well intended chastisements of a merciful father. They hear amidst them, that still, small voice, which a good conscience brings to their ear: "Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God."

That every day brings its pains and sorrows is universally experienced, and almost universally confessed. But let us not attend only to mournful truths; if we look impartially about us, we shall find that every day has likewise its pleasures and its joys.

No one ought to consider himself as insignificant in the sight of his creator. In our several stations we are all sent forth to be laborers in the vineyard of our heavenly Father. Every man has his work allotted, his talent committed to him, by the due improvement of which he may, in one way or another, serve God, promote virtue, and be useful in the world.

Murray's English Reader, 1814

Most of this old reader is composed of admonitions such as these, which were taken from different longer discourses.

NUMBER 47

CULTIVATION OF THE MIND

S. Reed (No further identification)

It was the design of Providence that the infant mind should possess the germ (seed or beginning) of every science. If it were not so, the sciences could hardly be learned. The care of God provides for the flower of the field, a place wherein it may grow, regale the sense with its fragrance, and delight the soul with its beauty. Is his providence less active over those to whom this flower offers its incense?—No. The soil which produces the vine in its most healthy luxuriance, is not better adapted to that end, than the world we inhabit, to draw forth the latent energies of the soul, and fill them with life and vigor. As well might the eye see without light, or the ear hear without sound, as the human mind be healthy and athletic without descending into the natural world, and breathing the mountain air.

Is there aught in Eloquence which warms the heart? She draws her fire from natural imagery. Is there aught in Poetry to enliven the imagination? There, is the secret of all her power. Is there aught in Science to add strength and dignity to the human mind? The natural world is the only body, of which she is the soul. In books, science is presented to the eye of the pupil, as it were, in a dried and preserved state. The time may come, when the instructor may take him by the hand, and lead him by the running streams, and teach him all the principles of Science as she comes from her Maker; as he would smell the fragrance of the rose, without gathering it.

The love of nature; this adaptation of man to the place assigned him by his heavenly Father; this fullness of the mind as it descends into the works of God,—is something, which has been felt by everyone,—though to an imperfect degree,—and therefore needs no explanation. It is the part of science, that this be no longer a blind affection; but that the mind be opened to a just perception of what it is, which it loves.

The affection, which the lover first feels for his future wife, may be attended only by a general sense of her external beauty; but his mind gradually opens to a perception of the peculiar (exclusive) features of the soul, of which the external appearance is only an image. So it is with nature. Do we love to gaze on the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets? This affection contains in its bosom the whole science of astronomy, as the seed contains the future tree. It is the office of the instructor to give it an existence and a

name, by making known laws, which govern the motions of the heavenly bodies to each other, and their uses.

Have we felt delight in beholding the animal creation,—in watching their pastimes and their labors? It is the office of the instructor to give birth to this affection, by describing the different classes of animals, with their peculiar characteristics, which inhabit the earth, the air, and the sea. Have we known the inexpressible pleasure of beholding the beauties of the vegetable world? This affection can only expand in the science of botany. Thus it is, that the love of nature in the mass may become the love of all the sciences, and the mind will grow and bring forth fruit from its own inherent power of development.

The American Common-School Reader and Speaker, 1844

NUMBER 48

GOD HAS COUNTED ALL

Anonymous

Knowest thou how many stars
There are shining in the sky?
Knowest thou how many clouds
Every day go floating by?
God, the Lord, has counted all.
He would miss one, should fall.

Knowest thou how many flies
There are sporting in the sun?
How many fishes in the water?
God has counted everyone.
Every one He called by name
When into the world it came.

Knowest how many children
Close their eyes in sleep at night,
And without a care or trouble
Wake up with the morning light?
God in heaven each name can tell;
Knows *thee* too, and loves thee well.

Harper's Fourth Reader, 1872

NUMBER 49

ON THE DEATH OF CHRIST

Blair (not otherwise identified)

The redemption of man is one of the most glorious works of the Almighty. If the hour of the creation of the world was great and illustrious; that hour, when, from the dark and formless mass, this fair system of nature arose at the divine command; when “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy:” - no less illustrious is the hour of the restoration of the world; the hour when, from condemnation and misery, it emerged into happiness and peace. With less external majesty it was attended, but is, on that account, the more wonderful, that, under an appearance so simple such great events were covered.

In the hour of Christ’s death, the long series of prophecies, visions, types, and figures, was accomplished. This was the center in which they all met; this, the point towards which they had tended and verged, throughout the course of so many generations. You behold the law and the prophets standing, if we may so speak, at the foot of the cross, and doing homage. You behold Moses and Aaron bearing the ark of the covenant; David and Elijah presenting the oracle of testimony. You behold all the priests and sacrifices, all the rites and ordinances, all the types and symbols, assembled together to receive their consummation.

Without the death of Christ, the worship and ceremonies of the law would have remained a pompous but unmeaning institution. In the hour, in which he was crucified, “the book with the seven seals” was opened. Every rite assumed its significance; every prediction met its event; every symbol displayed its correspondence.

This was the hour of the abolition of the Law, and the introduction of the Gospel; the hour of terminating the old, and the beginning of the new dispensation of religious knowledge and worship throughout the earth. Viewed in this light, it forms the most august era which is to be found in the history of mankind. When Christ was suffering on the cross, we are informed by one of the Evangelists, that he said, “I thirst;” and that they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it to his mouth. After he had tasted the vinegar, knowing that all things were now accomplished, and the scripture fulfilled, he said “It is finished,” that is, this offered draught was the last circumstance, predicted by an ancient prophet, that remained to be fulfilled.

The vision and the prophecy are now sealed; the Mosaic dispensation is closed. "And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." – Significantly was the veil of the temple rent in this hour; for the glory then departed from between the cherubims. The legal high priest delivered up his Urim and Thumim, his breastplate, his robes, and his incense; and Christ stood forth as the great High Priest of all succeeding generations. By that one sacrifice which he now offered, he abolished sacrifices forever. Altars on which the fire had blazed for ages, were now to smoke no more. Victims were no more to bleed. "Not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with his own blood, he now entered into the holy place, there to appear in the presence of God for us."

This was the hour of association and union to all the worshipers of God. When Christ said, "It is finished," he threw down the wall of partition, which had for so long divided the Gentile from the Jew. He gathered into one, all the faithful, out of every kindred and people. He proclaimed the hour to be come, when the knowledge of the true God should no longer be confined to one nation, nor his worship to one temple; but over all the earth, the worshipers of the father should "serve him in spirit and in truth." From that hour, they who dwelt in the "uttermost ends of the earth, strangers to the covenant of promise," began to be "brought nigh." In that hour, the light of the gospel dawned from afar on the British Islands.

This was the hour of Christ's triumph over all the powers of darkness; the hour in which he overthrew dominions and thrones, "led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." The contest which the kingdom of darkness had long maintained against the kingdom of light, was now brought to its crisis. The period was come, when "the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent." For many ages, the most gross superstition had filled the earth. "The glory of the incorruptible God was," everywhere, except in the land of Judea, "changed into images made like to corruptible man, and of birds, and beasts, and creeping things." The world, which the Almighty created for himself, seemed to have become a temple of idols. Even to vice and passions, altars were raised; and what was entitled religion, was, in effect, a discipline of impurity.

In the midst of this universal darkness, Satan had erected his throne; and the learned and polished, as well as the savage nations, bowed down before him. But at the hour when Christ appeared on the cross, the signal of his defeat was given. His kingdom suddenly departed from him; the reign of idolatry passed away; for he was "beheld to fall like lightning from heaven." In that hour, the foundation of every Pagan temple shook; the

statue of every false god tottered on its base; the priest fled from his falling shrine; and the heathen oracles became dumb forever.

Death, also, the last foe to man, was the victim of this hour. The formidable appearance of the specter remained, but his dart was taken away: for in that hour when Christ expiated guilt, he disarmed death, by securing the resurrection of the just. When he said to his penitent fellow-sufferer, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise," he announced to all his followers, the certainty of heavenly bliss. He declared "the cherubims" to be dismissed, and the "flaming sword" to be sheathed, which had been appointed, at the fall, "to keep from man the way of the tree of life." Faith, before this period, had been the hope, indistinct had been the prospect, which even good men enjoyed of the heavenly kingdom. "life and immortality were now brought to light."

From the hill of Calvary, the first clear and certain view was given to the world, of the everlasting mansions. Since that hour, they have been the perpetual consolation of believers in Christ. Under trouble, they soothe their minds: amidst temptations, they support virtue; and, in their dying moments, enable them to say, "O death! Where is thy sting? O grave! Where is thy victory?"

Scott's Lessons in Elocution

Scott's Lessons, as you may recall, was the reader replaced by Boston Public Schools in 1823 with *The American First Class Book*. Though printed in America, it was virtually indistinguishable from books printed for English schools and thought too English.

NUMBER 50

A FATHER'S BLESSING

Anonymous

My father raised his trembling hand,
And laid it upon my head;
"God bless thee, O my son, my son!"
Most tenderly he said.

He died and left no wealth of gold:
But still I was his heir;
For that rich blessing which he gave
Became a fortune rare.

Now, in my weary hours of toil
To earn my daily bread,
It gladdens me in thought to feel
His hand upon my head.

Though many years of busy life
Have passed away since then,
Yet when I bring that scene to mind,
I'm but a child again.

Harper's Fourth Reader, 1872

NUMBER 51

DEMORALIZATION CONSEQUENT ON IRRELIGION

W. E. Channing*

Once let men thoroughly believe that secret crimes have no witness but the perpetrator; that human existence has no purpose, and human virtue no unfailing friend; that this brief life is everything to us, and that death is total, everlasting extinction; once let men thoroughly abandon religion, and who can conceive or describe the extent of the desolation which would follow! We hope, perhaps, that human laws and natural sympathy would hold society together. As reasonably, we might believe that were the sun quenched in the heavens, our torches would illuminate, and our fires quicken and fertilize the creation! What is there in human nature to awaken respect and tenderness, if man be the unprotected insect of a day? And what is he more, if atheism be true? Erase all thought and fear of God from a community, and selfishness and sensuality would absorb the whole man. Appetite, knowing no restraint, and poverty and suffering having no solace of hope, would trample in scorn on the restraints of human laws. Virtue, duty, principle, would be mocked and spurned as unmeaning sounds. A sordid self-interest would supplant every other feeling, and man would become, in fact, what the theory of atheism declares him to be - a companion for brutes.

Pacific Coast Series, Fifth Reader, 1874

*William Ellery Channing, an American preacher, writer, and theologian, influential in the founding of Unitarianism. The views expressed here vary greatly with later Unitarian beliefs.

This was a small auxiliary reader published in San Francisco, containing, among the usual type material, a few pieces specifically of interest to California children. It preceded California publishing its own textbooks by only a few years.

NUMBER 52

THE SEASONS

Melmoth*

Among the great blessings and wonders of the creation may be classed the regularities of times and seasons. Immediately after the flood, the sacred promise was made to man, that seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, should continue to the very end of all things. Accordingly, in obedience to that promise, the rotation is constantly presenting us with some useful and agreeable alteration; and all the pleasing novelty of life arises from these natural changes; nor are we less indebted to them for many of its solid comforts. It has been frequently the task of the moralist and poet, to mark, in polished periods (periodicals), the particular charms and conveniences of every change; and, indeed, such discriminate observations upon natural variety, cannot be undelightful; since the blessing, which every month brings along with it, is a fresh instance of the wisdom and bounty of that Providence, which regulates the glories of the year.

Murray's English Reader, 1814

*Not further identified, but probably William Melmoth, 1665-1743, an English lawyer and author of popular Christian devotional works in his day.

NUMBER 53

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

George Gordon (Lord Byron)

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath flown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

And there laid the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And their idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

Appleton's Fifth Reader

(Based upon 2 Kings 19:35)

NUMBER 54

HOPE AND GLOOM

Whittier

The night is mother of the day,
The winter of the spring,
And ever upon old decay,
The greenest mosses cling.
Behind the cloud the starlight lurks,
Thro' showers the sunbeams fall;
For God, who loveth all his works,
Hath left his hope with all.

Sargent's Fifth Reader, 1854

NUMBER 55

DISCIPLINE
Unattributed

A block of marble caught the glance of
Of Buonarotti's* eyes,
Which brightened in their solemn deeps,
Like meteor lightened skies,
And one who stood beside him listened,
Smiling as he heard;
For "I will make an angel of it,"
Was the sculptor's word.

And mallet and chisel sharp
The stubborn block assailed,
And blow by blow, and pang by pang,
The prisoner unveiled.
A brow was lifted, high and pure;
The waking eyes outshone;
And as the master sharply wrought,
A smile broke through the stone!

Beneath the chisel's edge the hair
Escaped in flowing rings;
And, plume by plume, was slowly freed
The sweep of half furred wings.
The stately bust and graceful limbs
Their marble fetters shed,
And where the shapeless block had been,
An angel stood instead!

O blows that smite! O hurts that pierce
This shrinking heart of mine!
What are ye but the master's tools,
Forming a work divine?
O hope that crumbles at my feet!
O joy that mocks and flies!
What are ye but the clogs that bind
My spirit from the skies!

Sculptor of souls! I lift to Thee
Encumbered heart and hands;

Spare not the chisel, set me free,
However dear the bands.
How blest, if all these seeming ills,
Which draw my thoughts to Thee,
Should only prove that thou wilt make
An Angel out of me!

Monroe's Sixth Reader

*Michelangelo Buonarotti, one of the greatest Renaissance artists.

NUMBER 56

DIVERSITY OF THE HUMAN CHARACTER

Pope*

Virtuous and vicious every man must be,
 Few in the extreme, but all in the degree;
 The rogue and fool by fits, are fair and wise,
 And e'en the best, by fits what they despise.
 'Tis but by part we follow good or ill,
 For Vice or Virtue, **Self** directs it still:
 Each individual seeks a several goal;
 But Heaven's great view is one, and that the whole.
 That counterworks each folly and caprice;
 That disappoints th' effect of every vice;
 That happy frailties to all ranks applied -
 Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,
 fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,
 To kings presumption, and to crowds belief.
 That Virtue's end from vanity can raise,
 That seeks no interest, no reward but praise;
 And build on wants and on defects of mind,
 The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.

Heaven, forming each on other to depend,
 A master, or a servant, or a friend,
 Bids each on other for assistance call,
 Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.
 Wants, frailties, passions, closer still allay
 The common int'rest or endear the tie.
 To those we owe true friendship, love sincere,
 Each home felt joy that life inherits here;
 Yet from the same, we learn, in its decline,
 Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign.
 Taught, half by reason, half by mere decay,
 To welcome death and calmly pass away.
 See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
 The sot (drunkard) a hero, lunatic a king;
 The starving chymist in his golden views¹
 Supremely blest, the poet in his muse (musing or thought).

See some strange comfort every state attend,
And pride, bestow'd on all, a common friend;
See some fit passion ev'ry age supply,
Hope travels through, nor quits us when we die.

Behold the child, by nature's kindly law,
Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw;
Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,
A little louder, but as empty quite;
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,
And toys and counters are the toys of age:
Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before,
Till tir'd he sleeps and life's poor play is o'er.

Meanwhile, opinion gilds, with varying rays,
Those painted clouds that beautify our days;
Each want of happiness by hope supplied,
And each vacuity of sense by pride.
These build as fast as knowledge can destroy.
In folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy:
One prospect lost, another still we gain,
And not a vanity is given in vain:
Even mean self-love becomes, by force divine,
The scale to measure others' wants by thine.
See! and confess, one comfort still must rise;
'Tis this: Though man's a fool, yet God is wise.

Scott's Lessons on Elocution

*Alexander Pope, English poet and satirist, 1688-1744

1. Archaic spelling of 'chemist'; an alchemist, dreaming of turning lead into gold.

NUMBER 57

EXCELLENCE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Beattie (No further identification)

Is it bigotry to believe the sublime truths of the gospel with full assurance of faith? I glory in such bigotry. I would not part with it for a thousand worlds. I congratulate the man who is possessed of it; for amidst all the vicissitudes and calamities of the present state, that man enjoys an inexhaustible fund of consolation, of which it is not in the power of fortune to deprive him.

There is not a book on earth so favorable to all the kind, and all the sublime affections; or so unfriendly to hatred and persecution, to tyranny, to injustice, and every sort of malevolence, as the gospel. It breathes nothing throughout, but mercy, benevolence and peace.

Murray's English Reader, 1814

NUMBER 58

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

Anonymous

The regeneration of the moral nature of man, effected by the coming of the Redeemer, was to exhibit itself in the bosom of Christianity by a new life and by manners unknown to the corruption of ancient society. The picture of the rising church forms a striking contrast between the virtues inspired by the doctrine of the Gospel and the vices of the pagan world. The church of Jerusalem began with three thousand converts. They prayed and held communion together in the breaking of bread. They placed their goods in common and sold their inheritances to distribute the price among their brethren. Their mode of life, which conformed to the counsels of evangelic perfection, has been well depicted by the apologists of the first centuries.

“Among us,” says Athenagoras, “will be found the ignorant and the poor, laborers and old women, who cannot, perhaps, prove by reasoning, the truth of our doctrine; they do not enter into discussions, but they do good works. Loving our neighbor as ourselves, we have learned not to strike those who strike us; not to go to law against those who have robbed us; if any one gives us a blow on one cheek we present the other; if they ask us of our coat, we offer them also our cloak. Allowing for the difference of years, we consider some as our children, others as our brethren and sisters. The most aged we honor as our fathers and mothers. The hope of another life makes us despise the present, even in the midst of legal pleasures. Marriage with us is a holy vocation, which imparts the necessary grace to bring up children in the fear of the Lord.

“We have renounced your bloody spectacles, being persuaded that there is very little difference between looking at murder and committing it. The pagans expose (abandon outside) their children to get rid of them, we consider this action as homicide.” “We are accused of being factious,” says Tertullian, “the fractiousness of Christians is to be united in the same religion, in the same morals, in the same hope. We conspire to pray to God in common and to read the Holy Scriptures. If any one of us has sinned, he is deprived of communion and forbidden to take part in our assemblies of prayer until he has done penance. Old men, whose wisdom merits this honor, preside at our meetings. Every one contributes a monthly sum according to his means and inclination. This treasure serves to feed the needy and bury the poor, support orphans, shipwrecked sufferers, exiles, and those condemned for the cause of Christ to the mines or to prisons. Our

repasts in common are explained by their name of *agape*, which signifies charity.”

Prayer and the study of the Holy Scriptures were the constant occupation of every Christian family. Many saints of the primitive ages have been found buried with the book of the Gospels on their breast. The austerity of their lives fostered the spirit of prayer amongst them.

Generally, all who assisted at the celebration of the holy mass, communicated (received communion); even children received the celebration of the altar. The *agape*, which followed the celebration of the holy mysteries, was an ordinary repast, composed of offerings from the faithful. “I have examined the conduct of the Christians,” writes Pliny to Trajan, both of whom were heathens: “they are accustomed to assemble on a certain day before sunrise and to sing hymns in honor of Christ, whom they worship as a god. They bind themselves by an oath to avoid all crimes; to commit no fraud, adultery, nor robbery; never to break their word nor violate a trust.”

St. Justin, in his first apology (a defense of Christian doctrine), writes thus: “We have among us men who formerly were violent and passionate, but are now humble and patient, converted by the exemplary life of the Christians or by their integrity in business.... We do not receive the Eucharist as common bread, nor as an ordinary beverage; but as by the word of God Jesus Christ was incarnate and took upon Himself flesh and blood for our salvation, thus the bread and wine, sanctified by the prayer of His word, become the flesh and blood of the same Jesus Christ incarnate, and so becomes flesh and blood by its transformation into our food.”¹

Antoninus, a heathen emperor, found himself obliged to acknowledge the virtues of the Christians. Writing to the governors of the provinces, he says: “You, who never cease to torment those people, to accuse their doctrines of atheism, and to impute to them crimes for which you can furnish no proof, beware, lest instead of bringing them to better ways of thinking, you do but render them more obstinate; for they desire less to live than to die for their God. As they are always ready to give up their lives rather than submit to your will, they seem to remain victors in their combats with you.

As for the earthquakes, past or present, be advised, and compare your conduct with that of the Christians. When these misfortunes occur, you become entirely discouraged, while the Christians, on the contrary, feel their confidence in their God redoubled. In the midst of public calamity, you seem to have no confidence in the gods; you neglect their worship and forge

their divinity; but when the Christians honor their God, you become envious and put them to death." It was as much by the pure lives of the early Christians as by their preaching that the heathen was converted to Christianity.

Catholic National Series, Fifth Reader, 1876

One of the great distinction of American freedom is that Catholic families were allowed to send their children to their own schools, rather than force them into the very Protestant public schools of the day.

NUMBER 59

ELIJAH ON MOUNT HOREB

Krummacher

“Go forth,” it had been said to Elijah, “and stand upon the mount before the Lord.” The prophet hears it, and leaves his cave; and no sooner has he gone forth, than signs occur which announce to him the approach of the Almighty. The sacred historian here, indeed, depicts in simple language, a most sublime scene.

The first sign was a tremendous wind. Just before, probably, the deepest silence had prevailed throughout the dreary wilderness. The mountain-tempest breaks forth, and the bursting rocks thunder, as if the four winds, having been confined there, had in an instant broken from their prisons to fight together. The clouds are driven about in the sky, like squadrons of combatants rushing to the conflict. The sandy desert is like a raging sea, tossing, tossing its curling billows to the sky. Sinai is agitated, as if the terrors of the law-giving were renewing around it. The prophet feels the majesty of Jehovah; it is awful and appalling. It is not a feeling of peace, and of the Lord’s blissful nearness, which possesses Elijah’s soul in this tremendous scene; it is rather a feeling of distressing distance; “a strong wind went before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind.”

The terrors of an earthquake next ensue. The very foundations of the hills shake and are removed. The mountains and the rocks which were rent by the mighty wind, threaten now to fall upon one another. Hills sink down, and valleys rise; chasms yawn, and horrible depths unfold, as if the earth were removed out of his place.

The prophet, surrounded by the ruins of nature, feels still more of that divine majesty, which “looketh upon the earth, and it trembleth.” But he remains without any gracious communication of Jehovah in the inner man. The earthquake was only the second herald of the Deity. It went before the Lord, “but the Lord was not in the earthquake.”

When this had ceased, an awful fire passes by. As the winds had done before, so now the flames come upon him from every side, and the deepest shades of night are turned into the light of day. Elijah, lost in adoring astonishment, beholds the awfully sublime spectacle, and the inmost sensation of his heart must have been that of surprise and dread; but he

enjoys, as yet, no delightful sensation of the divine presence; “the Lord was not in the fire.”

The fire disappears, and tranquility, like the stillness of the sanctuary, spreads gradually over all nature; and it seems as if every hill and dale, yea, the whole earth and shies, lay in silent homage at the footstool of eternal Majesty. The very mountains seemed to worship; the whole scene is hushed to profound peace; and now, he hears a “still small voice.” “And it was so, when Elijah heard it, he wrapt his face in his mantle,” in token of reverential awe and adoring wonder, and went forth, “and stood at the entrance of the cave.”

McGuffey’s Fifth Reader, 1844

This is an exposition based upon the 19th Chapter of 1 Kings

NUMBER 60

THE SPACIOUS FIRMAMENT

Joseph Addison*

The spacious firmament on high
With all the blue ethereal sky
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land,
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And, nightly, to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth;
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
move round the dark terrestrial ball, -
What though no real voice nor sound
Amid their radiant orbs be found, -
In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice
Forever singing, as they shine,
"The hand that made us is divine."

California State Series, Third Reader, 1886

Joseph Addison, 1672-1719, was an English writer, principally of secular works, though from the point of view of Christian morality and Puritan political ideology.

This was the first generation of California state produced readers, and the last truly Christian reader in use in California public schools.

NUMBER 61

SPEAK TRUTH

Anonymous

Eternity is a depth which no geometry can measure, no arithmetic calculate, no imagination conceive, no rhetoric describe. The eye of a dying Christian seems gifted to penetrate depths hid from the wisdom of philosophy. It looks athwart the dark valley without dismay, cheered by the bright scene beyond. It looks with a kind of chastened impatience to that land where happiness will be holiness perfected. There all the promises of the Gospel will be accomplished. There afflicted virtue will rejoice at its past trials, and acknowledge their subservience to its present bliss. There the secret self-denial of the righteous shall be recognized and rewarded; and all the hopes of the Christian shall there have complete consummation.

It cannot be that earth is man's only abiding place. It cannot be that our life is a bubble, cast up by the ocean of eternity, to float a moment upon the waves, and sink into nothingness. Else why is it, that the high and glorious aspirations, which leap like angels from the temple of our hearts, are forever wandering about unsatisfied? Why is it that the rainbow and the cloud come over us with a beauty that is not of this earth, and then pass off and leave us to muse upon their faded loveliness? Why is it that the stars which 'hold their festival around the midnight throne,' are set above the grasp of our limited faculties; forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory.

And finally, why is it that bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view and then taken from us; leaving the thousand streams of our affections to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our hearts? We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades - where the stars will be spread out before us like islands that slumber on the ocean, and where the beautiful beings, which here pass before us like shadows, will stay in our presence forever.

Emerson's First Class Reader, 1833

NUMBER 62

ADVANCE
D. F. McCarthy*

God bade the Sun with golden step sublime

Advance!

He whispered in the listening ear of Time,

Advance!

He bade the guiding Spirit of the stars,
With lightening speed, in silver-shining cars,
Along the bright floor of his azure hall

Advance!

The river at its bubbling fountain cries,

Advance!

The clouds proclaim, like heralds, through the skies,

Advance!

Throughout the world, the mighty Master's laws
Allow not one brief moment's little pause;
The earth is full of life, the swelling seeds

Advance!

And summer hours, like flowery harnessed steeds,

Advance!

To man's most wondrous hand the same voice cried,

Advance!

Go, clear the woods, and o'er the bounding tide

Advance!

Go, draw the marble from its secret bed,
And make the cedar bend its giant head;
Let domes and columns through the wandering air

Advance!

The world, O man, is thine. But, wouldst thou share,—

Advance!

Unto the soul of man the same voice spoke,

Advance!

From out the chaos thunder-like it broke,

Advance!

Go, track the comet in its wheeling race,
And drag the lightening from its hiding place;

Fro out the night of ignorance and tears,
Advance!
For love and hope, borne by the coming years,
Advance!

All heard, and some obeyed the great command,
Advance!
It passed along from listening land to land,
Advance!
The strong grew stronger, and the weak grew strong,
And passed the war cry of the world along—
Awake, ye nations, know your powers and rights,
Advance!
Through hope and work, to freedom's new delights
Advance!

Knowledge came down, and waved her steady torch,
Advance!
Sages proclaimed, 'neath many a marble porch,
Advance!
As rapid lightening leaps from peak to peak,
The Gaul, the Goth, The Roman, and the Greek,
The painted Briton, caught on the winged word,
Advance!
The earth grew young, and carolled as a bird,
Advance!

Sargent's First-Class Reader

*Probably Denis Florence McCarthy, 1817-1882, an Irish poet, biographer, and translator of Spanish literature.

NUMBER 63

GOD HAS COUNTED ALL

Anonymous

Knowest thou how many stars
There are shining in the sky?
Knowest thou how many clouds
Every day go floating by?
God, the Lord has counted all;
He would miss one, should it fall.

Knowest thou how many flies
There are sporting in the sun?
How many fishes in the water?
God has counted every one.
Every one he called by name
When into the world it came.

Knowest how many children
Close their eyes in sleep at night,
And without a care or trouble
Wake up with the morning light?
God in heaven each mane can tell;
Knows thee too, and loves thee well.

Harper's Fourth Reader

NUMBER 64

THE ETERNITY OF GOD

Greenwood*

The eternity of God is a subject of contemplation, which, at the same time that it overwhelms as with astonishment and awe, affords us an immovable ground of confidence in the midst of a changing world. All things which surround us, all these dying, mouldering inhabitants of time, must have had a Creator, for the plain reason that they could not have created themselves. And their Creator must have existed from all eternity, for the plain reason that the first cause must necessarily be uncaused. As we cannot suppose a beginning without a cause of existence, that which is the cause of all existence must be self-existent, and could have had no beginning. And as it had no beginning, so also, as it is beyond the reach of all influence and control, as it is independent and almighty, it will have no end.

Here then is a support which will never fail, here is a foundation which can never be moved – the everlasting Creator of countless worlds, “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity.” What a sublime conception! He inhabits eternity, occupies this inconceivable duration, pervades and fills, throughout, this boundless dwelling. Ages on ages before even the dust of which we are formed was created, he had existed in infinite majesty, and ages on ages will roll away, after we have all returned to the dust whence we were taken, and still he will exist in infinite majesty, living in the eternity of his own nature, reigning in the plenitude of his own omnipotence, forever sending forth the word which forms, supports, and governs all things, commanding new-created light to shine on new-created worlds, and raising up new-created generations to inhabit them.

The compilation of these glorious attributes of God is fitted to excite in our minds the most animating and consoling reflections. Standing, as we are, amid the ruins of time, and the wrecks of mortality, where everything about us is created and dependent, proceeding from nothing, and hastening to destruction, we rejoice that something is presented to our view, which has stood from everlasting, and will remain forever.

When we have looked on the pleasures of life, and they have vanished away; when we have looked on the works of nature, and perceived that they were changing; on the monuments of art, and seen that they would not stand; on our friends, and they have fled while we were gazing; on ourselves, and felt that we were as fleeting as they. When we have looked on every object to

which we could turn our anxious eyes, and they have all told us that they could give us no hope nor support, because they were feeble themselves, we can look up to the throne of God: change and decay have never reached that; the revolution of ages has never moved it. The waves of an eternity have been rushing past it, but it has remained unshaken; the waves of another eternity are rushing toward it, but it is fixed, and can never be disturbed.

And blessed be God, who has assured us by a revelation from himself, that the throne of eternity is likewise a throne of mercy and love; who has permitted and invited us to repose ourselves and our hopes on that which alone is everlasting and unchangeable.

We shall shortly finish our allotted time on earth, even if it should be unusually prolonged. We shall leave behind us all which is now familiar and beloved, and a world of other days and other men will be entirely ignorant that once we lived. But the same unalterable Being will still preside over the universe, through all its changes, and from his remembrance we shall never be blotted. We can never be where he is not, nor where he sees, and loves, and upholds us not. He is our Father and our God forever. He takes us from Earth that he may lead us to heaven, that he may refine our nature from all the principles of corruption, share with us his own immortality, admit us to his everlasting habitation, and crown us with his eternity.

The Reader's Guide, 1839

*No further identification.

This particular volume is inscribed (with a very stylish flourish) "Richard Gay's Book, East Granby, CA". What a trip that book must have had!

NUMBER 65

MERCY
Shakespeare

The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle dew from heaven,
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mighty; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown:
His scepter shows the force of temporal power
Wherein doth set the dread of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptered sway:
It is enthroned in the heart of kings;
It is an attribute of God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice.

Emerson's First Class Reader, 1833

From the play: *The Merchant of Venice*.

William Shakespeare should need no introduction, and this is one of the best known lines from his plays. The idea of mercy as an attribute of God is exclusively from the Judeo-Christian tradition.

NUMBER 66

THE FIRST PRAYER IN CONGRESS

Rev. Jacob Duche*

O Lord, our Heavenly Father, high and mighty King of kings, and Lord of lords, who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers of the earth, and reignest with power supreme and uncontrolled over all the kingdoms, empires, and governments, look down in mercy, we beseech Thee, on the American States, who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor, and thrown themselves on thy gracious protection, desiring to be henceforth dependent only on Thee. To Thee they have appealed for the righteousness of their cause; to Thee do they look up for that countenance and support which Thou alone canst give. Take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, unto Thy nuturing care. Give them wisdom in council and valor in the field. Defeat the malice of our adversaries; convince them of the unrighteousness of their course, and, if they still persist in sanguinary (bloody) purposes, oh! let the voice of Thine own unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle. Be Thou present, O God of wisdom, and direct the councils of this honorable assembly.

Enable them to settle things on the best and surest foundations, that the scenes of blood may be speedily closed, and order, harmony, and peace may be effectually restored, and truth and justice, religion and piety prevail and flourish among Thy people. Preserve the health of their bodies and the vigor of their minds; shower down upon them and the millions they here represent, such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world, and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come. All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Saviour. Amen

Raub's Normal Fifth Reader, 1878

*Rev. Duche, an Anglican minister, gave this prayer to the First Continental Congress in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, September 1774.

A "Normal School" was a school for training teachers, but not like a university education, its graduates taught in the public schools which usually provided only eight years of instruction in ungraded classrooms.

NUMBER 67

GOD IS ALL IN ALL

Convers Francis*

Every moment of our lives, we breathe, stand, or move in the temple of the Most High; for the whole universe is that temple. Wherever we go, the testimony to His power, the impress of His hand are there.

Ask of the bright worlds around us, as they roll in the everlasting harmony of their circles; and they shall tell you of Him, whose power launched them in their courses.

Ask of the mountains, that lift their heads among and above the clouds; and the bleak summit of one shall seem to call aloud to the snow clad top of another, in proclaiming their testimony to the Agency which has laid their deep foundations.

Ask of ocean's water; and the roar of their boundless waves shall chant from shore to shore a hymn of ascription to that Being, who hath said, "Hitherto shall ye come and no further."

Ask of the rivers; as they roll onward to the sea, do they not bear along their ceaseless tribute to the ever-working Energy, which struck upon their fountains and poured them down through the valleys?

Ask of every region of the earth, from the burning equator to the icy pole, from the rock bound coast to the plain covered with luxuriant vegetation; and will you not find on them all the record of the Creator's presence?

Ask of the countless tribes of plants and animals; and shall they not testify to the action of the great Source of Life?

Yes, from every portion, from every department of nature, comes the same voice: everywhere we hear Thy name, O God; everywhere we see Thy love. Creation, in all its depth and height, is the manifestation of Thy Spirit, and without Thee the world were dark and dead.

The universe is to us as the burning bush which the Hebrew leader saw: God is ever present in it, for it burns with His glory, and the ground on which we stand is always holy.

Monroe's Sixth Reader, 1872

*Convers Francis was an American writer, Unitarian minister, and professor at Harvard.

NUMBER 68

GOD IN NATURE

Edwin H. Chapin*

The grandest scale on which the operation of a Providence appears is the entire system of the natural world. It is true that here is the field from which, in theory, many seem to exclude the notion of a Providence. They speak of Nature as a stupendous machine, wound up and running by its own vitality, - an automaton which, by a kind of clock-work, simulates a life, and an intelligence that are really absent from it. Or, if they do not deny the operation of a Divine Providence, they refer to what are termed "the laws of nature" in such a manner as to shut off the immediate agency of God.

But what is a law of nature, except a fixed way in which the Creator works? The finest element that the chemist can detect - the subtle, immaterial force whatever it may be - is not the law, but merely an expression of the law. And in the last analysis we cannot separate law from the operation of intelligent will.

I do not say that God acts only through nature, or that God is identical with nature; but in a profound sense it is true that nature is Providence. God, who in essence is distinct from his works, is perpetually in his works. And so every night and every day his providence is illustrated before us. His beneficence streams out from the morning sun, and his love looks down upon us from the starry eyes of midnight. It is his solicitude that wraps us in the air, and the pressure of his hand, so to speak, that keeps our pulses beating.

O, it is a great thing to realize that the Divine Power is always working; that nature, in every valve and every artery, is full of the presence of God! It is a great thing to conceive of providence as both general and special, comprehending immensity in its plan, yet sustaining the frailest being, and elaborating the humblest form. Take up as much as you can, in your imagination, the great circle of existence. How wide its sweep! How immeasurable its currents! And are there some who tell us that God cares only for the grand whole, and has no regard for details, - that is beneath the majesty of his nature, the dignity of his scheme?

I say, again, that the nature is providence; and this tells us a different story. For it is full of minute ministrations, as though the Divine solicitude were concentrated upon the insect or the worm; so that whatever thing you

observe, it seems as though the universe were concentrated and arranged for that alone.

And the sublimities of God's glory beam upon us in his care for the little, as well as in his adjustments of the great; in the comfort which surrounds the little wood-bird and blesses the denizen of a single leaf, as well as in happiness that streams through the hierarchies of being that cluster and swarm in yon forests of the firmament; in the skill displayed in the spider's eye, in the beauty that quivers upon the butterfly's wing, as in the splendors that emboss the chariot wheels of night, or glitter in the sandals of the morning.

Franklin Sixth Reader

*Chapin was a Universalist clergyman and noted orator in New York State in the mid-Nineteenth Century.

NUMBER 69

HOW DREADFUL IS THIS PLACE¹

Mrs. E. C. Steadman*

"How dreadful is this place!" for God is here!
His name is graven on the eternal rocks,
As with an iron pen and diamond point;
While their unceasing floods his voice proclaim,
Oft as their thunder shakes the distant hills.

O! if the forest trees, which have grown old
In viewing all the wonders of the scene,
Do tremble still, and cast to earth their leaves,
Familiar as they are with things sublime,
Shall not the timid stranger here unloose
His sandals, ere he treads on "holy ground,"
And bow in humble worship to his God?

For unto such as do approach with awe,
This bright creation of the Immortal Mind
Methinks there comes, amid the deafening roar
Of "many waters," yet a "still small voice,"
Which saith, "Ye children of the dust, fear not,
Know that this God, this awful God, is *yours!*"

Yes, here have wrath and peace together met,
Justice and mercy sweetly embraced;
For o'er the terrors of the angry flood,
The bow of promise and of beauty hangs,
When in the sunbeams, with its matchless hues,
Or as a silver arch on evening's brow,
Saying, "God's works are marvelous and great,
But ah! when understood, his name is Love."

Sander's Fourth Reader, 1842

*Laura Hyde Woolworth Stedman (died 1905) a prominent NY socialite, and a poet.

1. This poem contains several Scriptural references, this one being the words of Jacob, in Genesis 28:17.

NUMBER 70

GOD, THE CREATOR

Fenelon*

Cast your eyes upon the earth that supports us; raise them to this immense canopy of the heavens that surrounds us,—these fathomless abysses of air and water, and these countless stars that give us light. Who is it that has suspended this globe of earth? Who has laid its foundations? If it were harder, its bosom could not be laid open by man for cultivation; if it were less firm it could not support the weight of his footsteps. From it proceed the most precious things: this earth, so mean (lowly) and unformed, is transformed into thousands of beautiful objects, that delight our eyes. In the course of one year, it becomes branches, buds, leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds; thus renewing its bountiful favors to man. Nothing exhausts it. After yielding, for so many ages, its treasures, it experiences no decay; it does not grow old; it still pours forth riches from its bosom.

Who has stretched over our heads this vast and glorious arch? What sublime objects are there! An all-powerful Hand has presented this grand spectacle to our vision. What does the regular succession of day and night teach us? The sun has never omitted, for so many ages, to shed his blessing upon us. The dawn never fails to announce the day; and “the sun”, says the Holy Book, “knows his going down.” Thus, it enlightens alternately, both sides of the world, and sheds its rays on all. Day is the time for society and employment,. Night folds the world in darkness, finishes our labors, and softens our troubles. It suspends, it calms everything. It sheds round us silence and sleep; it rests our bodies, it revives our spirits. Then day returns, and recalls man to labor, and reanimates all nature.

But besides the constant course of the sun, that produces day and night; during six months it approaches one pole, and during the other six, the opposite one. By this beautiful order, one sun answers for the whole world. If the sun, at the same distance, were larger, it would light the whole world, but it would consume with its heat. If it were smaller, the earth would be all ice, and could not be inhabited by men.

What compass has been stretched from heaven to earth and taken such just measurements? The changes of the sun make the variety of the seasons, which we find so delightful. The Hand that guides this glorious work must be as skillful as it is powerful, to have made it so simple, yet so effectual; so constant and so beneficent.

The American Common-School Reader and Speaker, 1844

*Not further identified, but most probably the French Archbishop François Fénelon, 1648-1717, a prominent Roman Catholic theologian, scholar, and writer.

NUMBER 71

THE HOMES OF THE PEOPLE

Henry Woodfin Grady*

I went to Washington the other day, and I stood on the Capitol Hill; my heart beat quick as I looked at the towering marble of my country's Capitol and the mist gathered in my eyes as I thought of its tremendous significance, and the armies and the treasury, and the judges and the President, and the Congress and the courts, and all that was gathered there. And I felt the sun in all its course could not look down on a better sight than the majestic home of a republic that had taught the world its best lessons of liberty. And I felt that if honor and justice abided therein, the world would at last owe that great house in which the ark of the covenant of my country is lodged, its final uplifting and its regeneration.

Two days afterward, I went to visit a friend in the country, a modest man, with a quiet country home. It was just a simple, unpretentious house, set about with big trees, encircled in meadow and field rich with the promise of harvest. The fragrance of the pink and the hollyhock in the front yard was mingled with the aroma of the orchard and of the gardens, and resonant with the cluck of poultry and the hum of bees.

Inside was quiet, cleanliness, thrift, and comfort. There was the old clock that welcomed, in steady measure, every newcomer to the family, that had ticked the solemn requiem of the dead, and had kept company with the watcher at the bedside. There were the big, restful beds and the open fireplace, and the old family Bible, thumbed with the fingers of hands long since still, and wet with the tears of eyes long since closed, beholding the simple annals of the family and the heart and conscience of the home.

Outside, there stood my friend, the master, a simple upright man, with no mortgage on his roof, no lien on his growing crops, master of his land and master of himself. There was his old father, an aged, trembling man, but happy in the heart and home of his son. And as they started to their home, the hands of the old man went down on the young man's shoulder, laying there the unspeakable blessing of the honored and grateful father and enobling it with the knighthood of the fifth commandment.

And as they reached the door the old mother came with the sunset falling fair on her face, and lighting up her deep patient eyes, while her lips, trembling with the rich music of her heart, bade her husband and son

welcome to their home. Beyond was the housewife, busy with her household cares, clean of heart and conscience, the buckler and help meet of her husband. Down the lane came the children, trooping home after the cows, seeking as truant birds do the quiet of their home nest.

And I saw the night come down on that house, falling gently as the wings of the unseen dove. And the old man - while a startled bird called from the forest, and the trees were shrill with the cricket's cry and the stars were swarming in the sky - got the family around him, and, taking the old Bible from the table, called them to their knees, and the little baby hiding in the folds of its mother's dress, while he closed the record of that simple day by calling God's benediction on that family and that home.

And while I gazed, the vision of the marble Capitol faded. Forgotten were its treasures and its majesty, and I said, "Oh, surely here in the homes of the people are lodged at last the strength and responsibility of this government, the hope and the promise of this republic."

Howe Fifth Reader, 1907

*Grady, 1851-1889, was a American journalist and orator of the "New South" after the Civil War. There is only one mention of God, and two passing mentions of the Bible in this selection, yet its content is thoroughly Christian.

NUMBER 72

GOOD ADVICE

Anonymous

God is the kindest and best of beings. He is our Father. He approves us when we do well; he pities us when we err; and he desires to make us happy forever. How greatly should we love so kind and good a Father! and how careful should we be to serve and please him!

Never insult the unfortunate, especially when they implore relief or assistance. If you cannot grant their requests, refuse them mildly and tenderly. If you feel compassion for them, (and what good heart can behold distress without feeling compassion?) be not ashamed to express it.

Listen to the affectionate counsels of your parents; treasure up their precepts; respect their riper judgment; and enjoy, with gratitude and delight, the advantages resulting from their society.. Bind to your bosom, by the most endearing ties, your brothers and sisters; cherish them as your best companions, through the variegated journey of life; and suffer no jealousies and contentions to interrupt the harmony, which should ever reign amongst you.

They who are accustomed to view their companions in the most favorable light, are like persons who dwell amidst those beautiful scenes of nature, on which the eye rests with pleasure. Suspicious persons resemble the traveler in the wilderness, who sees no objects around him, but what are either dreary or terrible.

Murray, Introduction to the English Reader, 1819

NUMBER 73

IMMORTALITY—THE REWARD OF VIRTUE

Lindsay (No further identification)

The doctrines of that philosophy, which despises equally the probabilities of reason and the truths of revelation, are beyond description dreadful. They bring death to the soul here, by threatening it with a death hereafter. They distinguish all rising energies of the mind, and all the tenderest sympathies of the heart.

If I can believe these doctrines, then I must believe, that the first and strongest of all desires, the desire of living, has been given only that the thought of its final disappointment may destroy all the relish of its present gratification. Then must I believe, that the human soul, which in this state, can but just expand its germ, and put forth its blossoms, shall never realize its flattering promises of a harvest to come. Then must I believe, that all the best affections of nature obtain a sweet, but temporary and precarious indulgence, in the intercourses of friendship, and the endearments of domestic life, only that the idea of everlasting separation may come home upon the soul in more tremendous horror.

What is there—in the name of wisdom, what is there in the short and interrupted enjoyments of humanity, that could compensate for the anxiety and pain, which such ideas must occasion to the thoughtful, especially in those hours of sorrow, when all other consolations are unavailing, if not aided by the consolations of religion?

For myself, I would rather dream—if it were nothing but dreaming—I would rather dream a thousand and a thousand times the dream of immortality, than wake once to the reality, supposing it to be one, which would draw a terrific gloom over all those prospects, that mitigate the evils and enhance the joys of man. But a reality it cannot be, if there is a just and merciful God, who rules the universe, and has given to us the word of life.

Infidel, cease! tread not with daring step and cruel purpose, that hallowed ground, which upholds, and upholds well, whatever wisdom or affection values most. Respect, at least, the sensibilities of a wounded spirit, and leave to the mourner in Zion, O! leave him that faith, which alone can reconcile him to the death of others, which can alone fortify his courage in the prospect of his own, which alone can fill his heart with peace and joy in believing.

But why bespeak the forbearance of infidelity, when we may securely defy its most inveterate enmity? We are covered with the armor of God—we wield the weapons of everlasting truth. We stand upon that rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. We know in whom we have believed, and that He is able to keep the good thing which we commit to

Him, til the fair dawning of that morn, which shall give us back all that has been pleasing to the eye of fancy, or dear to the heart of affection.

Yes, ye venerable worthies! who have enlightened and improved the world, it was with this prospect before you, that ye consumed the midnight oil in laborious studies—that ye exhausted the energies of your minds, and the strength of your bodies, in illustrating important truths, and communicating useful knowledge.

Ye too, who have suffered persecution for the sake of righteousness, who have nobly thought, and bravely died in the defense of truth—yes, ye fanned your holy ambition, ye nerved your high and generous resolves, by the desire and hope of that divine approbation, which will crown your labors with eternal triumph.

Ye shall not lose your expectation. We shall see you owned and proclaimed, in the middle of the assembled universe, by Him who was himself a voluntary victim to his love of truth and human happiness. We shall see you receive the crown of righteousness from His hands, whose doctrines inspired you with high purposes; whose spirit guided you in the execution of them, whose example taught you to labor and suffer for God and eternity.

And ye, whose silent virtues have adorned Christianity in the more humble walks of private life; whose gentle spirits and kind attentions have smoothed the brow of care, and sweetened the cup of enjoyment, and cheered the circle of domestic relations, ye shall not be forgotten by Him, who answered so well the prophet's description: who fed his flock like a shepherd; who gathered the lambs with his arm, and carried them in his bosom, and gently led those that were with young. He, who was meek and lowly in heart—who delighted in encouraging the timid, and confirming the doubtful—will bring you safely to the peaceful mansions of his Father's house, and restore to your sight, to your everlasting society, those objects, without which heaven itself would be but half a heaven to the heart of sensibility.

The Emerson First Class Reader, 1833

The preceding selection is the final one in the Emerson Reader; and a very suitable selection for closing out the book, and probably the student's public school career. It does, however, extol virtue (works) at the expense of grace through faith.

NUMBER 74

HYMN AT THE CONSECRATION OF A CEMETERY

Rev. William Newell*

Changing, fading, falling, flying
From the homes that gave them birth,
Autumn leaves, in beauty dying,
Seek the mother breast of earth.

Soon shall all the songless wood
Shiver in the deepening snow,
Mourning in its solitude,
Like some Rachel in her woe

Slowly sinks the evening sun,
Softly wanes the cheerful light,
And - the twelve hours' labor done -
onward sweeps the solemn night.

So on many a home of gladness
Falls, O Death, thy winter gloom;
Stands there still in doubt and sadness
Many a Mary at the tomb.

But the genial spring, returning,
Will the sylvan pomp renew,
And the new-born flame of morning
Kindle rainbows in the dew.

So shall God, his promise keeping,
To the world by Jesus given,
Wake our loved ones, sweetly sleeping,
At the breaking dawn of heaven.

Light from darkness! Life from death!
Dies the body, not the soul;
From the chrysalis beneath
Soars the spirit to its goal

Father, when the mourners come
With the slowly moving bier,
Weeping at the open tomb
For the lovely and the dear, -

Breathe into the bleeding heart
Hopes that die not with the dead;
And the peace of Christ impart
When the joys of life have fled!

Hilliard's First Class Reader, 1855

*Probably William Newell, 1804-1881, a longtime pastor in Cambridge, MA,
and hymnist.

NUMBER 75

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

Buckminster*

The value of Christian faith may be estimated from the consolations it affords. Who would look back upon the history of the world with the eye of incredulity, after having once read it with the eye of faith? To the man of faith it is the story of God's operations. To the unbeliever it is only the record of the strange sports of a race of agents (independent actors), as uncontrolled, as they are unaccountable. To the man of faith every portion of history is part of a vast plan, conceived ages ago, in the mind of Omnipotence, which has been fitted precisely to the period it was intended to occupy.

The whole series of events forms a magnificent and symmetrical fabric to the eye of pious contemplation; and though the dome be in the clouds, and the top, from its loftiness, be indescribable to mortal vision, yet the foundations are so deep and solid, that we are sure they are intended to support something permanent and grand.

To the skeptic all the events of all the ages of the world are but a scattered crowd of useless and undigested materials. In his mind, all is darkness, all is incomprehensible. The light of prophecy illuminates not to him the obscurity of ancient annals. He sees in them neither design nor operation, neither tendencies nor conclusions. To him the wonderful knowledge of one people is just as interesting as the desperate ignorance of another. In the deliverance, which God has sometimes wrought for the oppressed, he sees nothing but fact; and in the oppression and decline of haughty empires, nothing but the common accidents of national fortune.

Going about to account for events, according to what he calls general laws, he never for a moment considers that all laws, whether physical, political, or moral, imply a legislator, and are contrived to serve some purpose. Because he cannot always, by his short-sighted vision, discover the tendencies of the mighty events of which this earth has been the theater, he looks on the drama of existence around him as proceeding without a plan.

Is that principle, then, of no importance, which raises man above what his eyes see, or his ears hear, or his touch feels, at present, and shows him the vast chain of human events, fastened eternally to the throne of God, and

returning, after embracing the universe, again to link itself to the footstool of Omnipotence?

Would you know the value of this principle of faith to the bereaved? Go, and follow a corpse to the grave. See the body deposited there, and hear the earth thrown in upon all that remains of your friend. Return now, if you will, and brood over the lesson which your senses have given you, and derive from it what consolation you can. You have learned nothing but an unconsoling fact. No voice of comfort issues from the tomb. All is still, there, and blank and lifeless, and has been so for ages.

You see nothing but bodies dissolving and successively mingling with the clods which cover them, the grass growing over the spot, and the trees waving in sullen majesty over this region of eternal silence. And what is there more? Nothing? - Come, faith, and people these deserts! Come, and reanimate those regions of forgetfulness! Mothers! take again your children to your arms, for they are living. Sons! your aged parents are coming forth in the vigor of regenerated years. Friends! behold, your dearest connections are waiting to embrace you. The tombs are burst. Generations, long since lost in slumbers, are awaking. They are coming from the east and the west, from the north and from the south, to constitute the community of the blessed.

But it is not in the loss of friends alone, that faith furnishes consolations, which are inestimable. With a man of faith, not an affliction is lost, not a change is unimproved. He studies his own history with pleasure, and finds it full of instruction. The dark passages of his life are illuminated with hope; and he sees that, although he has passed through many dreary defiles (valleys), yet they have opened at last into brighter regions of existence. He recalls, with a species of wondering gratitude, periods of his life, when all its events seemed to conspire against him. Hemmed-in by straitened (tight) circumstances, wearied with repeated blows of unexpected misfortune, and exhausted with the painful anticipation of more, he recollects years, when the ordinary love of life could not have retained him in the world.

Many a time he might have wished to lay down his being in disgust, had not something more than the senses provide us with kept up the elasticity of his mind. He yet lives, and has found that light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

The man of faith discovers some gracious purpose in every combination of circumstances. Wherever he finds himself, he knows that he has a destination - he has, therefore, a duty. Every event has, in his eye, a

tendency and an aim. Nothing is accidental, nothing without a purpose, nothing unattended with benevolent consequences. Everything on earth is probationary, nothing ultimate. He is poor - perhaps his plan has been defeated - he finds it difficult to provide for the exigencies of life - sickness is permitted to invade the quiet of his household - long confinement imprisons his activity, and cuts short the exertions on which so many depend - something apparently unlucky mars his best plans - new failures and embarrassments among his friends present themselves, and throw additional obstructions in his way - the world looks on, and says all these things are against him.

Some wait coolly for the hour, when he shall sink under the complicated embarrassments of his cruel fortune. Others, of a kinder spirit, regard him with compassion, and wonder how he can sustain such a variety of woe. A few there are, a very few I fear, who can understand something of the serenity of his mind, and comprehend something of the nature of his fortitude. There are those, whose sympathetic piety can read and interpret the characters of resignation on his brow. There are those, in fine (in conclusion), who have felt the influence of faith.

In this influence there is nothing mysterious, nothing romantic (imaginary), nothing of which the highest reason may be ashamed. It shows the Christian his God, in all the mild majesty of his personal character. It shows you God, disposing in still and benevolent wisdom the events of every individual's life, pressing the pious spirit with the weight of calamity to increase the elasticity (ability to spring back into shape) of the mind, producing characters of unexpected worth by unexpected misfortune, invigorating certain virtues by peculiar probations (trials), thus breaking the fetters which bind us to temporal things, and from seeming evil still educating (extracting) good. And better thence again, and better still, in infinite progression.

When the sun of believers' hopes, according to common calculations, is set, to the eye of faith it is still visible. When much of the rest of the world is in darkness, the high ground of faith is illuminated with the brightness of religious consolation.

Come, now, my incredulous friends, and follow me to the bed of a dying believer. Would you see, in what peace a Christian can die? Watch the last gleams of thought which stream from his dying eyes. Do you see anything like apprehension?

The world, it is true, begins to shut in. The shadows of evening collect around his senses. A dark mist thickens and rests upon the objects which have hitherto engaged his observation. The countenances of his friends become more indistinct. The sweet expressions of love and friendship are no longer intelligible. His ear wakes no more at the well known voice of his children, and the soothing accents of tender affection die away, unheard, upon his decaying senses. To him the spectacle of human life is drawing to its close, and the curtain is descending, which shuts out this earth, its actors, and its scenes. He is no longer interested in all that is done under the sun.

The American First Class Book

*Otherwise unidentified, but probably Joseph Stevens Buckminster (1784-1812), an influential Unitarian minister in Boston, noted for his eloquence in the pulpit.

NUMBER 76

IMPORTANCE OF VIRTUE

Price*

Virtue is of intrinsic value, and good desert (to gain), and of indispensable obligation; not the creature of will, but necessary and immutable; not local or temporary, but of equal extent and antiquity with the Divine mind; not a mode of sensation, but everlasting truth; not dependent on power, but the guide of all power. Virtue is the fountain of honor and esteem, and the source of all beauty, order and happiness, in nature. It is what confers value on all the other endowments and qualities of a reasonable being, to which they ought to be absolutely subservient; and without which, the more eminent they are, the more hideous deformities, and the greater curses they become.

The use of it is not confined to any one stage of our existence, or to any particular situation we can be in, but reaches through all the periods and circumstances of our beings. Many of the endowments and talents we now possess, and of which we are too apt to be proud, will cease entirely with the present state; but this will be our ornament and dignity, in every future state, to which we may be removed. Beauty and wit will die, learning will vanish away, and all the arts of life soon forgot; but virtue will remain forever. This unites us to the whole rational creation; and fits us for conversing with any order of superior natures, and for a place in any part of God's works. It procures the approbation and love of all good beings, and renders them our allies and friends.

But what is of unspeakably greater consequence, is, that it makes God our friend, assimilates and unites our minds to his, and engages his Almighty power in our defense. Superior beings of all ranks are bound by it, no less than ourselves. It has the same authority in all worlds that it has in this. The farther any being is advanced in excellence and perfection, the greater its attachment to it, and the more he is under its influence. To say no more, it is the law of the whole universe, it stands first in the estimation of the Deity; its original to his nature, and it is the very object that makes him lovely.

Such is the importance of virtue. Of what consequence, therefore, is it that we practice it? There is no argument or motive, in any respect fitted to influence a reasonable mind, which does not call us to this. One virtuous disposition of soul, is preferable to the greatest natural accomplishments and abilities, and of more value than all the treasures of the world - if you are wise, then study virtue, and condemn everything that can come in competition with it. Remember that this alone is honor, glory, wealth and happiness. Secure this and you secure everything. Lose this, and you lose everything.

Scott's Lessons in Elocution, 1820

*No further identification.

NUMBER 77

INCENTIVES TO YOUTHFUL DEVOTIONS

Taylor (No further identification)

I honestly wish that I could induce all young persons to divest religion of every gloomy and repulsive association; to feel that it does not consist, as some would fain (maliciously) represent it, in solemn looks and a sanctified demeanor, or in an affected fondness for long sermons or long prayers; but that, properly understood, it is—and especially for the young—a cheerful and lightsome spirit, reposing with affectionate confidence in an Almighty Father, unalloyed with fear, unshaken by distrust.

Would you have within your bosoms, that peace which the world can neither give, nor take away? Would (you) possess a source of the purest and sweetest pleasures? Would (you) have the highest of all blessings, a disposition to relish, in their highest perfection, all the innocent and rational enjoyments of life? Then let me conjure you to cherish a spirit of devotion; a simple-hearted, fervent, and affectionate piety. Accustom yourselves to conceive of God as a merciful and gracious parent, continually looking down upon you with the tenderest concern, and inviting you to be good, only that you may become everlastingly happy. Consider yourselves as placed upon earth for the express purpose of doing the will of God; and remember, if this be your constant object, whatever trials, disappointments, and sorrows you may be doomed to experience, you will be sustained under them all by the noblest consolations.

With a view of keeping up a perpetual sense of your dependence upon God, never omit to seek him habitually in prayer, and to connect the thought of him with all that is affecting or impressive, in the events of your lives; with all that is stupendous, and vast, and beautiful in the productions of his creative power and skill. Whatever excites you; whatever in the world of nature, or the world of man, strikes you as new and extraordinary; refer it all to God; discover in it some token of his providence, some proof of his goodness; convert it into some fresh occasion of praising and blessing his holy and venerable name. Do not regard the exercise of devotion as a bare duty, which has merit in itself however it is performed, but recur (return in thought) to them as a privilege and a happiness which ennobles and purifies your nature, and binds you, by the holiest of ties, to the greatest and best of all beings.

When you consider what God is, and what he has done; when you cast your eyes over the broad field of creation, which he has replenished with so many curious and beautiful objects, or raise them to the brilliant canopy of heaven, where other worlds, and systems of worlds, beam upon the wondering view; when day and night, and summer and winter, and seed-time and harvest; when the things nearest and most familiar to you, the very structure of your own bodily frame, and that principle of conscious life and intelligence which glows within you; all speak to you of God, and call upon your awakened hearts to tremble and adore; when a Being thus vast, thus awful (awe inspiring), you are permitted to approach in prayer; when you are encouraged to address him by the endearing name of a Father in heaven, and with all the confidence and ingenuousness of affectionate children, to tell him your wants and your fears, to implore his forgiveness, and earnestly to beseech him for a continuance of his mercies. You cannot, my young friends, if you have any feeling, any seriousness about you, regard the exercises of devotion as a task; but must rejoice in it as an unspeakable privilege to hold direct intercourse with that great and good Being, that unseen but universal Spirit, to whose presence all things in heaven and on earth bear witness, and in whom we all live, and move, and have our being.

Thus excite and cherish the spirit of devotion. Whenever any thing touches your hearts, or powerfully appeals to your moral feelings, give way to the impulse of the occasion, and send up a silent prayer to the Power who hears you in secret. And, in your daily addresses to God, do not confine yourselves to any stated form of words, which may be repeated mechanically without any concurrence of the heart or of the head; but after having reviewed the mercies of your particular condition; after having collected your thoughts, and endeavored to ascertain the wants and weaknesses of your own character; give utterance, in the simple and unstudied language which comes spontaneously to the lips, to all those emotions of gratitude and holy fear, of submission and trust, which cannot fail to arise in your hearts, when you have previously reflected what you are, and find yourself alone in the presence of an Almighty God.

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

NUMBER 78

SHORT SELECTIONS BY ADDISON

Addison*

HYMN

How are thy servants blest, O Lord! How sure is their defense!
Eternal wisdom is their guide, their help (is) Omnipotence.
In foreign realms and lands remote, supported by their care,
Through burning climes I passed unhurt, and breathed the tainted air.

...

In midst of dangers, fears, and death, thy goodness I'll adore,
And praise thee for thy mercies past, and humbly hope for more.
My life, if thou preservest my life, thy sacrifice shall be;
And death, if death must be my doom, shall join my soul to thee.

Two stanzas of a five stanza hymn.

PROVIDENCE INSCRUTABLE

The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate:
Puzzled in mazes and perplexed with errors (our errors),
Our understanding traces them in vain.
Lost and bewildered in the fruitless search;
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
Nor where the regular confusion ends.

Sargent's Fifth Reader

*Joseph Addison, 1672-1719, see GRATITUDE for a more complete biography.

NUMBER 79

INFLUENCE OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

William Hazlitt*

The translation of the Bible was the chief engine in the great work. It threw open, (as) by a secret spring, the rich treasures of religion and morality, which had been there locked up as in a shrine. It revealed the visions of the prophets, and conveyed the lessons of inspired teachers to the meanest (least) of the people. It gave them a common interest in a common cause. Their hearts burned within them as they read. It gave a mind to the people by giving them common subjects of thought and feeling. It cemented their union of character and sentiment; it created endless diversity and collusion of opinion. They found objects to employ their faculties, and a motive, in the magnitude of the consequences attached to them, to exert the utmost eagerness in the pursuit of truth, and the most daring intrepidity in maintaining it.

Religious controversy sharpens the understanding by the subtlety and remoteness of the topics it discusses, and embraces the will by their infinite importance. We perceive in the history of this period a nervous masculine intellect. No levity, no feebleness, no indifference; or, if there were, it is a relaxation from the intense activity which gives a tone to its general character. But there is a gravity approaching piety, a seriousness of impression, a conscientious severity of argument, an habitual fervor and enthusiasm, in their method of handling almost every subject.

The debates of the schoolmen¹ were sharp and subtle enough, but they wanted (lacked) interest and grandeur, and were, besides, confined to a few; they did not affect the general mass of the community. But the Bible was thrown open to all ranks and conditions "to run and read," with its wonderful table of contents from Genesis to the Revelation. Every village in England would present the scene so well described in Burns' "Cotter's Saturday Night."²

I can not think that all this variety and weight of knowledge could be thrown in all at once upon the mind of the people and not make some impression upon it, the traces of which might be discerned in the manners and literature of the age.

Appeltons' Fifth Reader, 1878

*William Hazlitt, 1778-1830, an English 'man of letters' prominent in several fields of writing.

1. Church scholars of the Middle Ages.
2. Robert Burns's poem about a poor peasant family ('cotters' given a cottage on an estate in return for work) gathering around the fireside for a reading of the Bible.

NUMBER 80

INTO THE BETTER LAND

Abram J. Ryan*

Out of the shadows of sadness,
Into the sunshine of gladness,
 Into the light of the blest;
Out of a land very dreary,
Out of the world very weary,
 Into the rapture of rest.

Out of today's sin and sorrow,
Into a blissful tomorrow,
 Into a day without gloom;
Out of a land filled with sighing,
Land of the dead and dying,
 Into a land without tomb.

Out of a life of commotion,
Tempest-swept oft as the ocean,
 Dark with the wrecks drifting o'er,
Into a land calm and quiet,
Never a storm cometh nigh it,
 Never a wreck on its shore.

Out of a land in whose bowers
Perish all the flowers,
 Out of the land of decay,
Into the Eden where fairest
Of flowerets, ans sweetest and rarest,
 Never shall wither away.

Out of the world of the wailing,
Thronged with the anguished and ailing,
 Out of the world of the sad,
Into the world that rejoices;
World of bright visions and voices;
 Into the world of the glad.

Out of a life ever mournful,
Out of a life very lornful (lonely),

Where in bleak exile we roam,
Into a joy-land above us,
Where there's a Father to love us;
Into our home - "Sweet Home."

Harper's Fifth Reader, 1889

*Ryan, 1839-1886, was an Irish-American priest and poet.

NUMBER 81

THE JEWISH REVELATION

Dr. Noyes*

The peculiar religious character of the Psalms, which distinguishes them from the productions of other nations of antiquity, is well worthy of the attention of such as are disposed to doubt the reality of the Jewish revelation. I do not refer to the prophetic character, which some of them are supposed to possess, but to the comparative purity and fervor of religious feeling, which they manifest; the sublimity and justness of the views of the Deity, and of his government of the world, which they present; and the clear perception of a spiritual good, infinitely to be preferred to any external possession, which is found in them. Let them be considered as the fruit of the principles of the Jewish religion, as they existed in the minds of pious Israelites, and do they not bear delightful testimony to the reality of the successive revelations, alleged to have been made to the Hebrew nation, and of the peculiar relation which the Most high is said to have sustained towards them?

Let the unbeliever compare the productions of the Hebrew poets, with those of the most enlightened periods of Grecian literature. Let him explain, how it happened, that in the most celebrated cities of antiquity, which human reason had adorned with the most splendid trophies of art, whose architecture it is now thought high praise to imitate well, whose sculpture almost gave life to marble, whose poetry has never been surpassed, and whose eloquence has never been equaled, a religion prevailed, so absurd and frivolous as to be beneath the contempt of a child, at the present day; while in an obscure corner of the world, in a nation in some respects imperfectly civilized, were breathed forth those strains of devotion, which now animate the hearts of millions, and are the vehicle of their feelings to the throne of God. Let him say, if there be not some ground for the conclusion, that whilst the corner-stone of the heathen systems of religion, was unassisted human reason, that of the Jewish was an immediate revelation from the Father of lights.

The American Common-School Reader and Speaker, 1844

*No further identification.

NUMBER 82

THE KING OF GLORY
Psalm XXIV

First Voice

The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof,
The world and they that dwell therein;
For he hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.

Second Voice

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
Or who shall stand in his holy place?

Third Voice

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart,
Who hath not lifted up his heart in vanity,
He shall receive the blessing from the Lord,
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

All

Lift up your heads, O ye gates!
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors!
And the King of Glory shall come in.

Fourth Voice

Who is the King of Glory?

Fifth Voice

The Lord strong and mighty;
The Lord mighty in battle.

All

Lift up your heads, O ye gates!
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors!
And the King of Glory shall come in.

Sixth Voice

The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.

All

Lift up your heads, O ye gates!
Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors!
And the King of Glory shall come in.

Monroe's Sixth Reader, 1872

NUMBER 83

LIFE, A MIGHTY RIVER

Bishop Heber

Life bears us on, like the current of a mighty river. Our boat at first glides down the narrow channel, through the playful murmurings of the little brook, and the windings of its happy border. The trees shed their blossoms over our young heads, the flowers on the brink seem to offer themselves to our hands; we are happy in hope, and we grasp eagerly at the beauties around us; but the stream hurries us on, and still our hands are empty.

Our course in youth and manhood is along a wider and deeper flood, and amid objects more striking and magnificent. We are animated by the moving picture of enjoyment and industry which pass before us; we are excited by some short-lived success, or depressed and made miserable by some equally short-lived disappointment. But our energy and our dependence are both in vain. The stream bears us on, and our joys and our griefs are alike left behind us.

We may be shipwrecked, but we cannot anchor; our voyage may be hastened, but it cannot be delayed; whether rough or smooth, the river hastens toward its home, till the roaring of the ocean is in our ears, and the tossing of the waves is beneath our keel, and the land lessens from our eyes, and the floods are lifted up around us, and we take our last leave of the earth, and its inhabitants, and of our further voyage there is not witness but the Infinite and Eternal.

California Third Reader, 1886

*Reginald Heber, 1783-1826, an English churchman, hymnist, poet, and general 'man of letters'. He was appointed Bishop of Calcutta at an early age, but overwork, harsh conditions, and disease overtook him in only three years.

This was the first advanced reader published by the state of California, and the last to adhere to the great Christian traditions of earlier readers in use in the state.

NUMBER 84

THIS LIFE'S EXPERIENCES POINT TO ANOTHER

Professor Wilson (no further identification)

O, my friends, if this winged and swift life be all our life, what a mournful taste have we of a *possible* happiness! We have, as it were, from some cold and dark edge of a bright world, just looked in and been plucked away again! Have we come to experience pleasure by fits and glimpses, but intertwined with pain, burdensome labor, weariness, and indifference? Have we come to try the solace of a warm, fearless, and confiding affection, to be then chilled or blighted by bitterness, by separation, by change of heart, or by the dread sunderer of love— Death?

Have we found the gladness and the strength of knowledge, when some rays of truth flashed in on our souls, in the midst of error and uncertainty, or amidst continuous, necessitated, unproductive avocations of the understanding; and is that all? Have we felt in fortunate hour the charm of the beautiful, that invests us with a mantle the visible creation, or have we found ourselves lifted above the earth by sudden apprehensions of sublimity (glimpses of Divine glory), - have we had the consciousness of such feelings, which seemed to tell us as if they might themselves make up a life, - almost an angel's life, - and were they "instant come and instant gone"? Have we known the consolation of *doing right*, in the midst of much that we have done wrong, and was that also a coruscation (flash) of a transient sunshine?

Have we lifted up our thoughts to see Him who is Love, Light, and Truth, and Bliss, to be in the next instant plunged into the darkness of annihilation? Have all these things been but flowers that we have pulled by the side of a hard and tedious way, and that, after gladdening us for a brief season with hue and color, wither in our hands, and are like ourselves - nothing?

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

NUMBER 85

REFLECTIONS ON THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Dodderidge*

What abundant reason have we to thank God, that this large and instructive discourse of our blessed Redeemer is so particularly recorded by the sacred historian. Let everyone that "hath ears to hear" attend to it; for surely no man ever spoke as our Lord did on this occasion. Let us fix our minds in a posture of humble attention that we may "receive the law from his mouth."

He opened it with blessings, repeated and most important blessings. But on whom are they pronounced? and whom are we taught to think the happiest of mankind? The meek and the humble; the penitent and the merciful; the peaceful and the pure; those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; those that labor, but faint not, under persecution! Lord! how different are thy maxims from those of the children of this world! They call the proud happy; and admire the gay, the rich, the powerful, and the victorious.

But let a vain world take its gaudy trifles, and dress up the foolish creatures that pursue them. May our souls share in that happiness, which the Son of God came to recommend and to procure! May we obtain mercy of the Lord: may we be owned as his children; enjoy his presence; and inherit his kingdom! With these enjoyments and these hopes, we will cheerfully welcome the lowest, or the most painful circumstances.

Let us be animated to cultivate those admirable virtues, which are here recommended to us; this humility and meekness; this penitent sense of sin; this ardent desire after righteousness; this compassion and purity; this peacefulness and fortitude of soul; and, in a word, this universal goodness which becomes us, as we sustain the character of "the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world."

Is there not a reason to lament, that we answer the character no better? is there not reason to exclaim with a good man in former times, "Blessed Lord! either these are not thy words, or we are not Christians!" Oh season our hearts more effectually with thy grace! Pour forth that divine oil on our lamps! Then shall the flame brighten; then shall the ancient honors of thy religion be revived; and multitudes be awakened and animated by the luster of it, "to glorify our Father in heaven."

Murray's English Reader

*No further identification.

NUMBER 86

MAN VIEWED AS AN IMMORTAL BEING

*Dick's Philosophy of Religion**

When we consider our brethren of the human family in the light of *immortal* intelligences, and look forward to the scenes of the eternal world, a crowd of interesting reflections naturally arises in the mind. A wide and unbounded prospect opens before us. Amidst new creations, and the revolutions of systems and worlds, new displays of the Creator's power and providence burst upon the view. We behold ourselves placed on a theater of action and enjoyment, and passing through "scenes and changes" which bear no resemblance to the transactions and events of this sublunary (under the sun) world.

We behold ourselves mingling with beings of a superior order, cultivating nobler affections, and engaged in more sublime employments than those which now occupy our attention. We behold ourselves associated with men of all nations and kindreds, and with those who lived in the remotest periods of time. Millions of years roll on after millions, our capacities and powers of intellect are still expanding, and new scenes of beauty and magnificence are perpetually bursting on the astonished mind, without any prospect of terminations.

Amidst those eternal scenes we shall, doubtless, enter into the most intimate connections with persons whom we have never seen, from whom we are now separated by continents and oceans, with those whose bodies are now moldering in the dust, with those who have not yet entered on the stage of existence, and those with whom we now refuse to associate on account of their rank, and station, and religious opinions. That man into whose dwelling we would, at present, not deign to enter, and with whom we should abhor to mingle in the public services of religion, may then be one of our chief companions in the regions of bliss, in directing and expanding our views of the glory and magnificence of God.

That man we now hate and despise, and whose offers of assistance we should treat with disdain, may in that happier world be a principal agent in the opening to our view new sources of contemplation and delight. That servant whom we now treat as a being of inferior species, at whom we frown and scold with feelings of proud superiority, may be our instructor and director, and in every way our superior, in that region where earthly distinctions are unknown. That humble instructor whom we now despise,

and whose sentiments we treat with contempt, may, in that world of intelligence and love, be our teacher, and our guide to direct our views of the attributes of the Deity, of the arrangements of his providence, and of the glories of his empire.

There the prince may yield precedence to his subjects, the master to the slave, the peer to the humble peasant. For no preeminence of birth, fortune, or learning, no excellence but that which is founded on holiness and virtue, on moral and intellectual endowments, will have any place in the arrangements of that world where human distinctions are forever abolished and unknown. And shall we now refuse to acknowledge those who are to be our friends and companions in that future world? It is not agreeable to the dictates of reason, and to the voice of God, that we should regard them with complacency, whatever be the garb they now wear, whatever be their color or features, and in whatever island or continent they may now reside.

The Reader's Manual, 1839

*Thomas Dick, 1774-1853, a Scottish theologian and prolific writer, and very popular in early American readers.

NUMBER 87

RESOLUTION OF RUTH

Anonymous

Farewell? O no! it may not be;
My firm resolve is heard on high:
I will not breathe farewell to thee,
Save only in my dying sigh.

I know not, that I now could bear
Forever from thy side to part,
And live without a friend to share
The treasured sadness of my heart.
I did not love, in former years,
To leave thee solitary now,
When sorrow dims thine eyes with tears,
And shades the beauty of thy brow,
I'll share the trial and pain;
And strong the furnace fires must be,
To melt away the willing chain
That binds a daughter's heart to thee.

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

An excerpt from a much longer piece in the Reader; originally from the *Christian Examiner*, and another example of the connection of public schools and the wider Christian culture. No author given.

NUMBER 88

MATERNAL AFFECTION

Scrap Book (Not otherwise identified)

Woman's charms are certainly many and powerful. The expanding rose just bursting into beauty has an irresistible bewitchingness; —the blooming bride led triumphantly to the hymeneal (wedding) altar awakens admiration and interest, and the blush of her cheek fills with delight; —but the charm of maternity is more sublime than all these. Heaven has imprinted in the mother's face something beyond this world, something which claims kindred with the skies, —the angelic smile, the tender look, the waking, watchful eye which keeps its fond vigil over the slumbering babe.

These are objects which neither the pencil nor the chisel can touch, which poetry fails to exalt, which the most eloquent tongue in vain would eulogize, and on which all description becomes ineffective. In the heart of man lies this lovely picture; it lives in his sympathies; it reigns in his affections; his eye looks round in vain for such another object on earth.

Maternity, ecstatic sound! so twined round our hearts, that they must cease to throb ere we forget it! 'Tis our first love; 'tis part of our religion. Nature has set the mother upon such a pinnacle, that our infant eyes and arms are first uplifted to it; we cling to it in manhood; we almost worship it in old age. He who can enter an apartment, and behold the tender babe feeding on its mother's beauty —nourished by the tide of life which flows through her generous veins, without a panting bosom and a grateful eye, is no man, but a monster, —He who can approach the cradle of sleeping innocence without thinking that "Of such is the kingdom of heaven!" or see the fond parent hung over its beauties, and half retain her breath lest she should break its slumbers, without a veneration beyond all common feeling, is to be avoided in every intercourse of life, and is fit only for the shadow of darkness and the solitude of the desert.

American First Class Book, 1823

NUMBER 89

GOD SEEN IN ALL THINGS

Moore*

Thou art, O God! the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see;
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflections caught from thee.
Where'er we turn, thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are thine.

When day, with farewell beam, delays
Among the golden clouds of even,
And we can almost think we gaze
Through opening vistas into heaven;
Those hues that make the sun's decline
So soft, so radiant, Lord! are thine.

...

When youthful spring around us breathes,
Thy spirit warms her fragrant sigh;
And every flower, that summer wreathes,
Is born beneath thy kindling eye.
Where ere we turn, thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are thine.

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

*No further identification, but probably Thomas Moore, 1779-1852, an Irish poet and hymnist.

NUMBER 90

THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL

Hoffman*

“Let there be light!” the Eternal spoke,
And from the abyss where darkness rode,
The earliest dawn of nature broke,
And light around creation flowed.
The glad earth smiled to see the day,
The first born day, - come blushing in:
The young earth smiled to shed its ray
Upon a world touched by sin.

“Let there be light!” O’er heaven and earth,
The God who first the day beam poured,
Uttered again His fiat forth,
And shed the Gospel’s light abroad;
And, like the dawn, its cheering rays
On rich and poor were meant to fall,
Inspiring their Redeemer’s praise,
In lowly cot and lordly hall.

Sanders Fifth Reader, 1855

*No further identification.

NUMBER 91

SHORT SELECTIONS

unattributed

It cannot be that earth is man's only abiding place. It cannot be that our life is a bubble, cast up by the ocean of eternity, to float a moment upon the waves, and sink into nothingness. Else why is it, that the high and glorious aspirations, which leap like angels from the temple of our hearts, are forever wandering about unsatisfied? Why is it that the rainbow and the cloud come over us with a beauty that is not of this earth, and then pass off and leave us to muse upon their faded loveliness? Why is it that the stars which 'hold their festival around the midnight throne,' are set above the grasp of our limited faculties; forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory.

...

And finally, why is it that bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view and then taken from us; leaving the thousand streams of our affections to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our hearts? We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth. There is a realm where the rainbow never fades - where the stars will be spread out before us like islands that slumber on the ocean, and where the beautiful beings, which here pass before us like shadows, will stay in our presence forever.

Emerson's First Class Reader

NUMBER 92

ON THE PLEASURE OF ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE

Alison*

In every period of life, the acquisition of knowledge is one of the most pleasing employments of the human mind. But in youth, there are many circumstances which make it productive of higher enjoyment. It is then that everything has the charm of novelty; that curiosity and fancy are awake; and the heart swells with the anticipations of future eminence and utility. Even in those lower branches of instruction which we call mere accomplishments, there is something always pleasing to the young in their acquisition. They seem to become every well-educated person; they adorn, if they do not dignify humanity; and, what is far more, while they give an elegant employment to the hours of leisure and relaxation, they afford a means of contributing to the purity and innocence of domestic life.

But in the acquisition of knowledge of the higher kind, the hours when the young gradually begin the study of the laws of nature, and of the faculties of the human mind, or the magnificent revelations of the Gospel, there is a pleasure of a sublimer nature. The cloud, which, in their infant years, seemed to cover nature from their view, begins gradually to resolve. The world in which they are placed, opens with all its wonders upon their eye; their powers of attention and observation seem to expand with the scene before them; and while they see; for the first time, the immensity of the universe of God, and mark the majestic simplicity of those laws by which its operations are conducted, they feel as if they were awakened to a higher species of being, and admitted into nearer intercourse with the Author of Nature.

It is this period, accordingly, more than all others, that determines our hopes or fears of the future fate of the young. To feel no joy in such pursuits;— to listen carelessly to the voice which brings such magnificent instruction; to see the veil raised which conceals the counsels of the Deity, and to show no emotion at the discovery, are symptoms of a weak and torpid spirit,—of a mind unworthy of the advantages it possesses, and fitted only for the humility of sensual and ignoble pleasure. Of those, on the contrary, who distinguish themselves by the love of knowledge,—who follow with ardor the career that is open to them, we are apt to form the most honorable presages. It is the character which is natural to youth, and which, therefore, promises well of their maturity. We foresee for them, at least, a

life of pure and virtuous enjoyment, and we are willing to anticipate no common share of future usefulness and splendor.

...

The American First Class Book, 1823

*Alison is not further identified in this volume; however he is probably the Rev. Francis Alison, 1705-1779, an Irish born Philadelphia Presbyterian minister, scholar, highly influential teacher and writer in the field of moral philosophy.

NUMBER 93

THE MEN TO MAKE A STATE

G. W. Doane*

The men who make a state must be intelligent men.

I do not mean that they must know that two and two make four; or that six percent a year is half percent a month. I take a wider and higher range. I limit myself to no mere utilitarian intelligence. This has its place. And this will come almost unsought. The contact of the rough and rugged world will force man to it in self-defense. The lust for worldly gain will drag men to it for self-aggrandizement. But men so made, will never make a state. The intelligence which that demands, will take a wider and a higher range. Its study will be man. It will make history its cheap experience. It will read hearts. It will know men. It will first know itself. What else can govern men?

The right of suffrage (the vote) is a fearful thing. It calls for wisdom, and discretion, and intelligence of no ordinary standard. It takes in, at every exercise, the interests of all the nation. Its results reach forward through time into eternity. Its discharge must be accounted for among the dread responsibilities of the great day of judgment. Who will go to it blindly? Who will go to it passionately? Who will go to it as a sycophant, a tool, a slave? These are not the men to make a state.

The men to make a state must be honest men.

I do not mean men that would never steal. I do not mean men that would scorn to cheat in making change. I mean men with a single face. I mean men with a single eye. I mean men with a single tongue. I mean men that consider always what is right, and do it at whatever cost. I mean men ...no king on earth can buy. Men that are in the market for the highest bidder; men that make politics their trade, and look to office for a living; men that will crawl where they cannot climb; these are not the men to make a state.

The men to make a state must be brave men.

I do not mean the men who pick a quarrel. I do not mean the men that carry daggers. I do not mean the men who call themselves hard names; Bouncers, Killers, and the like. I mean the men that walk with open face and unprotected breast. I mean the men who dare to stand alone. I mean the men that are today where they were yesterday, and will be tomorrow. I

mean the men that can stand still and take the storm. I mean the men that are afraid to kill, but not afraid to die. The man that calls hard names and uses threats; the man that stabs, in secret, with his tongue or with his pen; the man that moves a mob to deeds of violence and self-destruction; the man that freely offers his last drop of blood, but never sheds his first – these are not the men to make a state.

The men to make a state must be religious men.

States are from God. States are dependent upon God. States are accountable to God. To leave God out of states, is to be Atheists. I do not mean that men must cant (spout pious platitudes). I do not mean that men must wear long faces. I do not mean that men must talk of conscience, while they take your spoons. Someone shrewdly called hypocrisy, “the tribute that vice pays to virtue.” These masks and visors, in like manner, are the forced concession which a moral nature makes to him, whom, at the same time, it dishonors. I speak of men who feel and own (acknowledge) a God. I speak of men who feel and own their sins. I speak of men who think the Cross no shame. I speak of men who have it in their heart as well as on their brow. The men that own no future, the men that trample on the Bible, the men that never pray, are not the men to make a state.

The men to make a state are made by faith.

A man that has no faith, is just so much flesh. His heart – a muscle, nothing more. He has no past for reverence; no future for reliance. He lives. So does a clam. Both die. Such men can never make a state. There must be faith, which furnishes the fulcrum Archimedes could not find, for the long lever that should move the world. There must be faith to look through clouds and storms up to the sun that shine as cheerily on high as on creation's morning. There must be faith that can lay hold on heaven, and let the earth swing from beneath it, if God will. There must be faith that can afford to sink the present in the future; and let time go, in its strong grasp upon eternity. This is the way men are made, to make a state.

The men, to make a state, are made by self denial.

The willow dallies with the water, and is fanned forever by its coolest breeze, and draws its waves up in continual pulses of refreshment and delight; and is a willow, after all. An acorn has been loosened, some autumnal morning, by a squirrel's foot. It finds a nest in some rude cleft of an old granite rock, where there is scarcely earth to cover it. It knows no shelter, and it feels no shade. It squares itself against the storms. It

shoulders through the blast. It asks no favor, and gives none. It grapples with the rock. It crowds up towards the sun. It is an oak. It has been seventy years an oak. It will be an oak for seven times seventy years; unless you need a man-of-war to thunder at the foe that shows a flag upon the shore, where freemen dwell. And then, you take no willow in its daintiness and gracefulness; but that old, hardy, storm-stayed and storm-strengthened oak. So are the men made that will make a state.

The men to make a state, are themselves made by obedience.

Obedience is the health of human hearts; obedience to God, obedience to father and to mother, who are, to children, in the place of God; obedience to teachers and masters, who are in place of father and mother; obedience to spiritual pastors, who are God's ministers; and the powers that be, which are ordained by God. Obedience is but self government in action; and he can never govern men who does not govern first himself. Only such men can make a state.

Raub's Normal Fifth Reader, 1878

*George Washington Doane, born 1799 and still alive when *Raub's Fifth Reader* was published, was a poet, a professor at Trinity College, and later, Bishop of New Jersey.

Albert N. Raub, author of the book, was Principal of the Central State Normal School in Lock Haven, PA.; a school for training teachers.

NUMBER 94

THE ROSE OF SHARON

Anonymous

The rose that blooms in yonder vale
With fragrance scents the air;
But Sharon's rose is sweeter still
Its blossoms are more fair.

This plant, derived from Paradise,
Delights in sacred ground;
On Zion's hill, by Siloa's brook,
On Bethlehem's plain 'tis found.

Wet with those dews of love divine,
Which once on Herman fell -
Warmed by the Sun of righteousness -
It buds and blossoms well.

Tend, then, this plant with pious care,
Nor think the labor vain;
It is an emblem of the heart
Where heavenly graces reign.

The Reader's Guide, 1839

NUMBER 95

DISTINCTION BETWEEN MIND AND MATERIAL FORMS

Channing*

When we look at the organized productions of nature, we see that they require only a limited amount of time, and most of them a very short time, to reach their perfection, and accomplish their end. Take, for example, that noble production, a tree. Having reached a certain height, and borne leaves, flowers, and fruit, it has nothing more to do. Its powers are fully developed; it has no hidden capacities, of which its buds and fruit are only the beginnings and pledges. Its design is fulfilled; the principle of life within it can effect no more.

Not so the mind. We can never say of this, as of the full grown tree in autumn, it has answered its end; it has done its work, its capacity is exhausted. On the contrary, the nature, powers, desires, and purposes of the mind are all undefined. We never feel, when a great intellect has risen to an original thought, or a vast discovery, that it has accomplished its whole purpose, reached its bound, and can yield no other or higher fruits. On the contrary, our conviction of its resources is enlarged; we discern more of its affinity to the inexhaustible intelligence of its Author. In every step of its progress, we see a new impulse gained, and the pledge of nobler acquirements.

So, when a pure and resolute mind has made some great sacrifice to truth and duty, has manifested its attachment to God and man in singular trials, we do not feel as if the whole energy of virtuous people were now put forth, as if the measure of excellence were filled, as if the maturest fruits were now borne, and henceforth the soul could only repeat itself. We feel, on the contrary, that virtue by illustrious efforts replenishes instead of wasting its life; that the mind, by perseverance in well doing, instead of sinking into a mechanical tameness, is able to conceive of higher duties, is armed for a nobler daring, and grows more efficient in charity. The mind, by going forward, does not reach insurmountable prison walls, but learns more and more the boundlessness of its powers, and for the range for which it was created.

Let me place this topic in another light, which may show, even more strongly, the contrast of the mind with the noblest productions of matter. My meaning may be best conveyed by reverting to the tree. We consider the tree having answered its highest purpose when it yields a particular fruit.

We judge of its perfection by a fixed, positive, definite product. The mind, however, in proportion to its improvement becomes conscious that its perfection consists not in fixed, prescribed effects, not in exact and defined attainments, but in an original, creative, unconfined energy, which yields new products, which carries into it new fields of thought, and new efforts for religion and humanity.

This truth indeed is so obvious, that even the least improved may discern it. You all feel that the most perfect mind is not that which works in a prescribed way, which thinks and acts according to prescribed rules, but that which has a spring of action in itself, which combines anew the knowledge received from other minds, which explores its hidden and multiplied relations, and gives it forth in fresh and higher forms. The perfection of the tree, then, lies in a precise or definite product. That of the mind lies in an indefinite and boundless energy. The first implies limits. To set limits to the mind would destroy that original power in which its perfection consists.

Here, then, we observe a distinction between material forms and the mind; and from the destruction of the first, which, as we see, attain perfection and fulfill their purpose in a limited duration, we cannot argue to the destruction of the last, which plainly possesses the capacity of a progress without end.

We have pointed out one contrast between the mind and material forms. The latter, we have seen, by their nature have bounds. The tree, in a short time, and by rising and spreading a short distance, accomplishes its end. I now add, that the system of nature to which the tree belongs requires that it should stop where it does. Were it to grow forever, it would be an infinite mischief. A single plant, endued with the principle of unlimited expansion, would in the progress of centuries overshadow nations, and exclude every other growth - would exhaust the earth's whole fertility. Material forms, then, must have narrow bounds, and their usefulness requires that their life and growth should often be arrested, even before reaching the limits prescribed by nature.

But the infinite expansion of the mind, instead of warring with and counteracting the system of creation, harmonizes with and perfects it. One tree, should it grow forever, would exclude other forms of vegetable life. One mind, in proportion to its expansion, awakens, and in a sense creates other minds. It multiplies, instead of exhausting, the nutrient which other understandings need. A mind, the more it has of intellectual and moral life,

the more it spreads life and power around it. It is an ever-enlarging source of thought and love.

Let me here add, that the mind, by unlimited growth, not only yields a greater amount of good to other beings, but produces continually new forms of good. This is an important distinction. Were the tree to spread indefinitely, it would abound more in fruit, but in fruit of the same kind; and, by excluding every other growth, it would destroy the variety of products, which now contribute to health and enjoyment.

But the mind, in its progress, is perpetually yielding new fruits, new forms of thought, and virtue, and sanctity. It always contains within itself the germs of higher influences than it has ever put forth, the buds of fruits which it has never borne. Thus the very reason which requires the limitation of material forms - I mean the good of the whole system - sees to require the unlimited growth of mind.

Hilliard's First Class Reader, 1855

*William Ellery Channing, 1780-1842, son of a prominent New England family, was a theologian of immense importance. He might well be called the greatest champion of Unitarianism, but I doubt that he would be pleased with the fruit that came from his labors. He had a brilliant mind, and recognized "its affinity to the inexhaustible intelligence of its Author".

NUMBER 96

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE ATTAINABLE BY ALL
Wordsworth*

The primal duties shine aloft, like stars;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scattered at the feet of man like flowers;
The generous inclination, the just rule,
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts,
No mystery is here, no special boon
For high and not for low, for proudly graced
And not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends
To heaven as lightly from the cottage hearth
As from the haughty palace. He whose soul
Ponders this true equality may walk
The fields of earth with gratitude and hope.

Sargent's Fifth Reader

*William Wordsworth, 1770-1850, an English poet and Poet Laureate.

NUMBER 97

MILTON ON HIS BLINDNESS

Elizabeth Lloyd (no further identification)

I am old and blind!
Men point at me as smitten by God's frown:
Afflicted and deserted of my kind,
Yet am I not cast down.

I am weak, yet strong:
I murmur not that I no longer see:
Poor, old, and helpless, I the more belong,
Father Supreme, to thee.

O merciful One!
When men are farthest, thou art most near;
When friends pass by, my weakness to shun,
Thy chariot I hear.

Thy glorious face
Is leaning toward me, and its holy light
Shines upon my lonely dwelling place, -
And there is no more night.

On bended knee
I recognize thy purpose, clearly shown;
My vision thou hast dimmed, that I may see
Thyself, thyself alone.

I have naught to fear;
This darkness is the shadow of thy wing;
Beneath it I am almost sacred, - here
Can come no evil thing.

O I seem to stand
Trembling! where foot of mortal ne'er hath been,
Wrapped in the radiance from thy sinless land,
Which eye hath never seen.

Visions come and go;
Shapes of resplendent beauty round me throng;
From angel lips I seem to hear the flow
Of soft and holy song.

It is nothing now,
When Heaven is opening on my sightless eyes,
When airs from Paradise refresh my brow, -
That earth in darkness lies.

Howe Fifth Reader, 1909

NUMBER 98

GOD IS EVERYWHERE
Hutton*

Oh! show me where is He,
The high and holy One,
To whom thou bend'st the knee,
And pray'st, "Thy will be done!"
I hear thy song of praise,
And lo! no *form* is near;
Thine *eyes* I see thee raise,
But where doth God appear?
Oh! teach me who *is* God,
And where his glories shine,
That I may kneel and pray,
And call *thy* Father *mine*.

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

*No further identification.

NUMBER 99

INCENTIVES TO DEVOTION

H. K. White*

Lo! the unlettered hind¹, who never knew
 To raise his mind excursive, to the heights
 Of abstract contemplation, as he sits
 On the green hillock by the hedge-row side,
 What time the insect swarms are murmuring,
 And marks in silent thought, the broken clouds,
 That fringe, with loveliest hues, the evening sky,
 Feels in his soul the hand of nature rouse
 The thrill of gratitude, to him who formed
 The goodly prospect; he beholds the God
 Throne'd in the west; and his reposing ear
 Hears sounds angelic in the fitful breeze,
 That float through the neighboring copse or fairy brake²,
 Or lingers playful, on the haunted stream.

Go to the cotter³ to his winter fire,
 When, o'er the moors the loud blast whistles shrill,
 And the hoarse ban-dog⁴ bays the icy moon;
 Mark with what awe he lists the wild uproar,
 Silent, and big with thought; and hear him bless
 The God that rides on the tempestuous clouds,
 For his snug hearth, and all his little joys.
 Hear him compare his happier lot, with his
 Who bends his way across the wintry wolds,
 A poor night traveler, while the dismal snow
 Beats in his face, and dubious of his path,
 He stops, and thinks, in every lengthening blast,
 He hears some village mastiff's distant howl,
 And sees far streaming some lone cottage light:
 Then, undeceived, upturns his streaming eyes,
 And clasps his shivering hands, or overpowered,
 Sinks to the frozen ground, weighted down with sleep,
 From which the hapless wretch shall never wake.

Thus the poor rustic warms his heart with praise,
 And glowing gratitude; he turns to bless
 With honest warmth, his Maker and his God.

And shall it ever be said, that a poor hind,
Nursed in the lap of ignorance, and bred
In want and labor, glows with noble zeal
To laud his maker's attributes, while he
Whom starry science in her cradle rocked,
And Castaly enchastened⁵ with its dews,
Closes his eye upon the holy word;
And, blind to all but ignorance and pride,
Dares to declare his infidelity,
And openly contemn the Lord of Hosts!

Oh! I would walk
A weary journey to the furthest verge
Of the big world, to kiss that good man's hand,
Who in the blaze of wisdom and of art,
Preserves a lowly mind; and to his Hod,
Feeling the sense of his own littleness,
Is as a child in meek simplicity!
What is the pomp of earning? The parade
Of letters and of tongues? Even as the mists
Of the gray morn before the rising sun,
That pass away and perish. Earthly things
Are but the transient pageants of an hour;
And earthly pride is like the passing flower,
That springs to fall, and blossoms but to die.

The American First Class Book, 1823

1. In this sense, a farm hand.
2. Small spots of heavily wooded land.
3. Cottager, one who dwells in a cottage rented from a hereditary land owner.
4. A guard dog, usually a mastiff, released at night.
5. A mythological well whose waters are enlightening.

*Henry Kirke White (1785-1806) was an English poet. He died very young, at twenty-one.

NUMBER 100

IF I LIVE TILL SUNDOWN

Henry Woodfin Grady

A soldier lay wounded on a hard fought field; the roar of the battle had died away, and he rested in the deadly stillness of its aftermath. Not a sound was heard as he lay there sorely smitten and speechless but the shriek of wounded and the sigh of the dying soul as it escaped from the tumult of earth into the unspeakable peace of the stars.

Off over the field flickered the lanterns of the surgeons and the litter bearers, searching that they might take away those whose lives could be saved, and leave in sorrow those who were doomed to die with pleading eyes through the darkness. This poor soldier watched, unable to turn or speak as the lanterns grew near. At last the light flashed in his face, and the surgeon, with kindly face, bent over him, hesitated a moment, shook his head, and was gone, leaving the poor fellow alone with death. He watched in patient agony as they went on from one part of the field to another.

As they came back the surgeon bent over him again. "I believe if this poor fellow lives till sundown tomorrow he will get well." And again leaving him, not with death, but with hope. All night long these words fell into his heart as as the dews fell from the stars upon his lips, "If he but lives till sundown, he will get well."

He turned his weary head to the east and watched for the coming sun. At last the stars went out, the east trembled with radiance, and the sun, slowly lifting above the horizon, tinged his pallid face with flame. He watched it inch by inch as it climbed slowly up the heavens. He thought of his life, its hopes and ambitions, its sweetness and its raptures, and he fortified his soul against despair until the sun had reached high noon. It sloped down its slow descent, and his life was ebbing away and his heart was faltering, and he needed stronger stimulants to make him stand the struggle until the end of the day had come. He thought of his far off home, the blessed house resting in tranquil peace with the roses climbing to its door, and the trees whispering to its windows, and dozing in the sunshine, the orchard, and the little brook running like a silver thread through the forest.

"If I live till sundown, I shall see it again. I shall walk down the shady lane; I shall open the battered gate, and the mocking-bird will call to me from the orchard, and I shall drink again at the old mossy spring."

And he thought of the wife who had come from the neighboring farmhouse and put her hand shyly in his, and brought sweetness to his life and light to his home.

“If I live till sundown, I shall look back once more into her deep and loving eyes, and press her brown head once more to my aching breast.”

And he thought of his old father, patient in prayer, bending lower and lower every day under the his load of sorrow and old age.

“If I but live till sundown, I shall see him again and wind my strong arm about his feeble body, and his hands shall rest upon my head, while the unspeakable healing of his blessing falls into my heart.”

And he thought of the little children that clambered on his knees and dangled their little hands into his heartstrings, making to him such music as the world shall not equal or heaven surpass.

“If I live till sundown, they shall again find my parched lips with their warm mouths, and their little fingers shall run once more over my face.”

And he then thought of his old mother, who gathered these children about her, and breathed her old heart afresh in their brightness and attuned her old lips anew to their prattle, that she might live till her big boy came home.

“If I live till sundown, I shall see her again, and I will rest my head at the old place on her knees, and weep away all memory of this desolate night.” And the Son of God, who had died for men, bending down from the stars, put the hand that had been nailed to the cross on ebbing life and held the staunch until the sun went down and the stars came out and shone down in the brave man’s heart and blurred in his glistening eyes, and the lanterns of the surgeons came and he was taken from death to life.

Howe Fifth Reader, 1909

This book, I found in an old trunk from my parents basement. It, and this piece especially, spurred my interest in collecting these old readers.

NUMBER 101

THE SOUL'S DEFIANCE

Anonymous

I said to Sorrow's awful storm,
That beat against my breast,
Rage on—thou may'st destroy this form,
And lay it low at rest,
But still the spirit, that now brooks
Thy tempest raging high,
Undaunted on its fury looks
With steadfast eye.

I said to Penury's meager train,
Come on—your threats I brave;
My poor last life-drop you may drain,
And crush me to the grave,
Yet still the spirit that endures,
Shall mock your face the while,
And meet each cold, cold grasp of yours
With bitter smile.

I said to cold Neglect and Scorn,
Pass on—I heed you not;
You may pursue me till my form
And being are forgot,
Yet still the spirit, which you see
Undaunted by your wiles,
Draws from its own nobility
Its high-born smiles.

I said to Friendship's menaced blow,
Strike deep—my heart shall bear;
Thou canst but add one bitter woe
To those already there;
Yet still the spirit that sustains
This last severe distress,
Shall smile upon its keenest pains
And scornful redress.

I said to Death's uplifted dart,
Aim sure—O, why delay?
Thou wilt not find a fearful heart—
A weak reluctant prey;
For still the spirit, firm and free,
Triumphant in the last dismay,
Wrapt in its own eternity,
Shall smiling pass away.

The Reader's Guide, 1839

NUMBER 102

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL SCENERY

Dewey*

Whatever leads the mind habitually to the Author of the universe; whatever mingles the voice of nature with the inspiration of the Gospel; whatever teaches us to see all the changes of the world, the varied goodness of *Him*, in whom “we live, and move, and have our being,” brings us nearer to the spirit of the Savior of mankind. But it is not only as encouraging as a sincere *devotion*, that these reflections are favorable to Christianity; there is something, moreover, *peculiarly* allied to its spirit in such observations of external nature.

When our Savior prepared himself for his temptation, his agony, and death, he retired to the wilderness of Judea, to inhale, we may venture to believe, a holier spirit amid its solitary scenes, and to approach to a nearer communion with his Father, amid the sublimest¹ of his works. It is with similar feelings, and to worship the same Father, that the Christian is permitted to enter the temple of nature, and, by the spirit of his religion, there is a language infused into the objects which she presents, unknown to the worshiper of former times.

To all, indeed, the same objects appear, the same sun shines, the same heavens are open; but to the Christian alone it is permitted to know the *Author* of these things; to see his spirit “move in the breeze, and blossom in the spring;” and to read, in the changes which occur in the material world, the varied expression of eternal love. It is from the influence of Christianity, accordingly, that the key has been given to the signs of nature. It was only when the *spirit of God* moved upon the face of the deep, that order and beauty were seen in the world.

It is, accordingly, peculiarly well worthy of observation, that the *beauty of nature*, as felt in modern times, seems to have been almost unknown to the writers of antiquity. They described, occasionally, the scenes in which they dwelt; but, – if we except Virgil, whose gentle mind seems to have anticipated, in this instance, the influence of the Gospel, – never with any deep feeling of their beauty. *Then*, as *now*, the citadel of Athens looked upon the evening sun, and her temples flamed in his setting beam; but what Athenian writer ever described the matchless glories of the scene? *Then*, as *now*, the silvery clouds of the Aegean sea rolled round her verdant isles,

and sported in the azure vault of heaven; but what Grecian poet has been inspired by the sight?

The Italian lakes spread their waves beneath a cloudless sky, and all that is lovely in nature was gathered around them; yet even Eustace tells us, that a few detached lines is all that is left in regard to them by the Roman poets.

The Alps *themselves*,
“

*The palaces of nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche - the thunderbolt of snow,”*

even *these*, the most glorious objects which the eye of man can behold, were regarded by the ancients with sentiments only of dismay or horror; as a barrier from hostile nations, or as the dwelling of barbarous tribes. The torch of religion had not then lightened the face of nature; they knew not the language which she spoke, nor felt that holy spirit, which, to the Christian, gives the *sublimity* of these scenes.

There is something, therefore, in religious reflections on the objects or the changes of nature, which is peculiarly fitting in a Christian teacher. No man will impress them on his heart without becoming happier and better, without feeling warmer gratitude for the beneficence of nature, and deeper thankfulness for the means of knowing the Author of this beneficence which revelation has afforded. “Behold the lilies of the field,” says our Savior: “they toil not, neither do they spin; yet, verily I say unto you, that even *Solomon*, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.” In these words, we perceive the deep sense which he entertained of the beauty even of the minutest of the works of nature.

If the admiration of external objects is not directly made the object of his precepts (teachings), it is not, on that account, the less allied to the spirit of religion; it springs from the revelation which he has made, and grows with the spirit which he inculcates.

The cultivation of this feeling, we may suppose, is purposefully left to the human mind, that man may be induced to follow it from the charms which novelty confers; and the sentiments which it awakens are not expressly enjoined, that they may be enjoyed as the spontaneous growth of our own imagination. While they seem, however, to spring unbidden in the mind, they are, in fact, produced by the spirit of religion; and those who imagine

that they are not the fit subject of Christian instruction, are ignorant of the secret workings, and finer analogies, of the faith which they profess.

McGuffey's, Fifth Reader, 1844

* Not otherwise identified, but probably Orville Dewey.

1. This entire piece revolves around the rather complex idea of the 'sublime'. We consider something as 'sublime' (great scenes, or music, or thoughts) when it gives us the feeling that we are lifted out of the material world into another, and higher, world.

NUMBER 103

ALL THAT IS GOOD IS PRACTICAL
unattributed

It is common for men to say that such and such things are perfectly right, very desirable, - but, unfortunately, they are not practicable. Oh no. Those things which are not practicable are not desirable. There is nothing really beneficial that does not lie within the reach of an informed understanding and a well-directed pursuit. There is nothing that God has judged good for us that He has not given us the means to accomplish, both in the natural and moral world. If we cry like children for the moon, like children we must cry on.

...

How often do we sigh for opportunities of doing good, whilst we neglect the openings of Providence in little things which would frequently lead to the accomplishment of most important usefulness! Dr. (Samuel) Johnson used to say, "He who waits to do a great deal of good at once, will never do any." Good is done by degrees.

Monroe's Sixth Reader

NUMBER 104

RELIGION ESSENTIAL TO MORALITY

George Washington

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it be simply asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles.

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

NUMBER 105

UNAPPRECIATED OBLIGATIONS

Sir. A. Park*

We live in the midst of blessings till we are utterly insensible of their greatness, and of the source from whence they flow. We speak of our civilization, our arts, our freedom, our laws, and forget entirely how large a share is due to Christianity. Blot Christianity out of man's history, and what would his laws have been, what his civilization? Christianity is mixed up with our very being and our very life; there is not a familiar object around us which does not wear a different aspect because the light of Christian love is upon it, not a law which does not owe its truth and gentleness to Christianity, not a custom which cannot be traced, in all its holy, beautiful parts, to the Gospel.

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

*No further identification.

Park describes what was once called 'Christendom', and somewhat synonymous with 'European', and 'white', and 'western civilization'. By the 16th Century, Christendom was forging ahead of the rest of the world dramatically, especially in science and industry. And these nations of Christendom were dominant in the world until the late 20th Century. During this period of racial/cultural dominance, many Europeans began to consider their dominance as of racial/genetic origin. Park confronts that attitude with another explanation of the rise of the western Christian world.

Kipling also reminds us of that in the following piece.

NUMBER 106

RECESSIONAL¹
Rudyard Kipling*

God of our fathers, known of old -
 Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
 Dominion over palm and pine -
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget - lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies -
 The captains and the kings depart,
Still stands Thine ancient Sacrifice,
 An humble and a contrite heart -
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget - lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away -
 On dune and headland sinks the fire;
Lo! all our pomp of yesterday
 Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget - lest we forget!

If drunk with sight of power, we loose
 Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe -
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
 Or lesser breeds, without the law -
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget - lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts its trust
 In reeking tube, and iron shard -
All valiant dust, that builds on dust,
 And guarding calls not Thee to guard -
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord!

California State Series: Eight Year Literature Reader, 1917

*Kipling is one of the greatest British poets and novelists of the 19th Century, much of whose work was set in the British colonial world of the day.

1. [This poem was written in 1897 for the close of the great festival held to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the coronation of Queen Victoria. The poem is really a prayer, and its title singularly appropriate; for the recessional hymn in church services is the hymn that concludes the services. The poem appeared just at the close of the great festival. Its effect was instant and tremendous.]

NUMBER 107

JOYS OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE

South (no further identification)

The testimony of a good conscience will make the comforts of heaven descend upon a man's weary head, like a refreshing dew or shower upon a parched land. It will give him lively earnestness and secret anticipations of approaching joy; it will bid his soul go out of the body undauntedly, and lift up his head with confidence before saints and angels. The comfort which it conveys is greater than the capacities of mortality can appreciate, mighty and unspeakable, and not to be understood till it is felt.

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

NUMBER 108

ON THE STUDY OF GOD'S WORKS

Carl von Linnaeus*

The just relations of all created things to one another prove them to be the work of one Almighty Designer. The great globe may be considered as a museum, furnished forth with the works of the Supreme Being; man being placed in the midst of it, as alone capable of comprehending and valuing it. And, if this be true, as certainly it is, what then becomes man's duty? Moralists and divines, with nature herself, testify that the purpose of so much beauty and perfection being made manifest to man is that he may study and celebrate the works of God. If we have no faith in the things which are seen, how should we believe those which are not seen? The man who takes no interest in the contemplation of the marvels of God's external universe resembles those animals which, wandering in the woods, are fattened with acorns, but never look upwards to the tree which affords them food, much less have they an idea of the beneficent Author of the tree and its fruit. Whoever shall regard with contempt the economy of the Creator here, is as truly impious as the man who takes no thought of the future.

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

*Linnaeus, 1707-1708, was a Swedish naturalist and pioneer in the field of biology. He refers to the efficient way all systems work together; as by design.

Linnaeus informs us that even centuries ago, the arguments of atheists against the rightful rule of God as Creator are basically the same as today.

NUMBER 109

THE MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION

Sir Humphrey Davy*

I envy no quality of mind or intellect in others, be it genius, power, wit, or fancy; but, if I could choose what would be most delightful, and I believe most useful to me, I should prefer a firm religious belief to every other blessing; for it makes life a discipline of goodness; creates new hopes when all earthly hopes vanish; and throws over the decay, the destruction of existence, the most gorgeous of all lights; awakens life even in death, and from corruption and decay calls up beauty and divinity; makes an instrument of fortune (happenstance), and shame the ladder of ascent to Paradise; and, far above all combinations of earthly hopes, calls up the most delightful visions of palms and amaranths, the gardens of the blest, the security of everlasting joys, where the sensualist and the skeptic view only gloom, decay, annihilation, and despair.

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

*Davy was a pioneering British chemist and inventor who discovered several new elements. At one time, men of science were almost universally Christian, as the Judeo-Christian revelation taught man that there was a Creator who designed order into the creation, and endowed man with the intelligence to discover and use it.

NUMBER 110

DEATH

Orville Dewey*

O, death! dark hour to hopeless unbelief! hour to which, in that creed of despair, no hour shall succeed! being's last hour! to whose appalling darkness even the shadows of an avenging retribution were brightness and relief - death! - what art thou to the Christian's assurance? Great hour! answer to life's prayer; great hour that shall break asunder the bond of life's mystery; hour of release from life's burden; hour of reunion with the loved and lost, - what mighty hopes hasten to their fulfillment in thee! What longings, what aspirations, breathed in the still night, beneath the silent stars; what dread emotions of curiosity; what deep meditations of joy; what hallowed impossibilities shadowing forth realities of the soul, all verge to their culmination in thee! O, death! the Christian's death! What art thou, but a gate of life, a portal of heaven, the threshold of eternity!

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

*Dewey was a prominent early Unitarian minister; a time in the history of Unitarianism vastly different from later periods.

NUMBER 111

THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER

De Lamennais*

There are some who say, "What good to pray? God is too far above us to hear creatures so insignificant." And who made these creatures so insignificant? Who but God has given them thought, sentiment, and the faculty of speech? And if He has been this good towards them, was it to abandon them afterwards, and repel them far from Him? Verily, I say to you, whoever says in his heart that God despises his work, the same blasphemes God. There are others who say, "What good to pray to God? Does not God know better than we what we have need of?"

Yes; God knows better than you what you have need of, and that is why He would have you ask it of Him; for God himself is your first need, and to pray to God is to begin to possess God. The father knoweth the needs of his son; must the son therefore never make a request of his father, nor thank him for his benefits? There sometimes passes over the land a wind which dries the plants, and then we see their withered stems droop towards the earth; but, moistened by the dew, they recover their freshness, and lift up their languishing heads.

The world has its scorching winds which pass over the soul of man, and make it arid. Prayer is the dew which refreshes the soul.

Sargent's Standard Fifth Reader, 1854

*Félicité Robert de Lamennais, a French Catholic priest, theologian, and writer who was a very prominent and controversial figure during the Restoration of the French Monarchy after Napoleon.

NUMBER 112

MORTALITY AND IMMORTALITY

Mrs. Anna Letitia Barbauld*

MORTALITY

I have seen the rose in its beauty; it spread its leaves to the morning sun. I returned: it was dying on the stalk; the grace of the form was gone, its loveliness was vanished away; its leaves were scattered on the ground, and no one gathered them again.

A stately tree grew on the plain; its branches were covered with verdure; its boughs spread wide, and made a goodly shadow; the trunk was like a strong pillar; the roots were like crooked fangs. I returned: the verdure was nipped by the east wind; the branches were lopped away by the ax; the worm had made its way into the trunk, and the heart thereof was decayed; it moldered away, and fell to the ground.

I have seen the insects sporting in the sunshine, and darting along the streams, their wings glittered with gold and purple; their bodies shone like the green emerald; they were more numerous than I could count; their motions were quicker than my eye could glance. I returned: they were brushed into the pool; they were perishing with the evening breeze; the swallow had devoured them, the pike had seized them; there were found none of so great a multitude.

I have seen man in the pride of his strength; his cheeks glowing with beauty, his limbs full of activity; he leaped; he ran; he rejoiced in that he was more than those. I returned: he lay stiff and cold upon the bare ground; his feet could no longer move, nor his hands stretch themselves out; his life was departed from him; and the breath was gone out of his nostrils.

Therefore do I weep because death is in the world; the spoiler is among the works of God: all that is made must be destroyed; all that is born must die: let me alone, for I will weep yet longer.

IMMORTALITY

I have seen the flower withering on the stalk, and its bright leaves spread on the ground. I looked again; it sprung forth afresh; its stem was crowned with new buds, and its sweetness filled the air.

I have seen the sun set in the west, and shades of night shut in the wide horizon; there was no color, nor shape, nor beauty, nor music; gloom and darkness brooded around. I looked again: the sun broke from the east, and glided past the mountain tops; the lark rose to meet him from her low nest, and the shades of darkness fled away.

I have seen the insect being come to its full size, languish, and refuse to eat; it spun itself a tomb, and was shrouded in the silken cone; it lay without feet or shape, or power to move. I looked again: it had burst its tomb; it was full of life, and sailed on colored wings through the soft air; it rejoiced in its new being.

Thus shall it be with thee, O man! and so shall thy life be renewed. Beauty shall spring out of ashes, and life out of the dust. A little while shalt thou lie in the ground, as the seed lies in the bosom of the earth: but thou shalt be raised again; and thou shalt never die anymore.

California Third Reader, 1886

*Mrs. Barauld, 1743-1825, was an English, poet, essayist, and all around "Woman of Letters".

This is the last of the truly Christian public school books in California.

NUMBER 113

ON HIS BLINDNESS

John Milton*

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly; thousands do his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

Howe Fifth Reader, 1909

*Milton, 1608-1674, holds places of prominence in both English Literature and in English Political History. First coming of note as a poet in his youth, Milton later dedicated his pen, with all his might, to the Puritan/Parliamentary side in the English Civil War, and he rose to prominence. After the death of Cromwell and the restoration of the Monarchy, blind from overuse of his eyes, he was proscribed, reduced to poverty, sometimes imprisoned, but always in possession of an overcoming spirit. In his last years, he reverted to poetry, dictating his most notable poetic works.

NUMBER 114

MOUNT AUBURN

Joseph Story*

A rural cemetery seems to combine in itself all the advantages which can be composed to gratify human feelings, or tranquilize human fears; to secure the best religious influences, and to cherish all those associations which cast a cheerful light over the darkness of the grave.

And what spot can be more appropriate for this purpose? Nature seems to point it out, with significant energy, as the favorite retirement of the dead. There are around her all the varied features of her beauty and grandeur – the forest crowned height, the abrupt acclivity, the sheltered valley, the deep glen, the grassy glade, and the silent grove. Here are the lofty oak, the beech, that “wreathes its old, fantastic roots so high,” the rustling pine, and the drooping willow; the tree that sheds its pale leaves with every autumn, a fit emblem of our own transitory bloom; and the evergreen, with its perennial shoots, instructing us that “the wintry blast of death kills not the buds of virtue.” Here is the thick shrubbery to protect and conceal the new-made grave; and there is the wild flower creeping along the narrow path, and planting its seeds in the upturned earth.

All around us there breathes a solemn calm, as if we were in the bosom of the wilderness, broken only by the breeze as it murmurs through the tops of the forest, or by the notes of the warbler, pouring forth his matin or his evening song.

...

Within the flight of one half century, how many of the great, the good, and the wise will be gathered here! How many in the loveliness of infancy, the beauty of youth, the vigor of manhood, and the maturity of age, will lie down here, and dwell in the bosom of their mother earth! The rich and the poor, the gay and the wretched, the favorites of thousands, and the forsaker of the world, the stranger in his solitary grave, and the patriarch surrounded by the kindred of a long lineage! How many will here bury their brightest hopes, or blasted expectations! How many bitter tears will here be shed! How many agonizing sighs will here be heaved! How many trembling feet will cross the pathways, and, returning, leave behind them the dearest objects of their reverence or their love!

And if this were all, sad indeed, and funereal, would be our thoughts; gloomy indeed would be those shades, and desolate these prospects.

But – thanks be to God – the evils which he permits have their attendant mercies, and are blessings in disguise. The bruised reed will not be laid utterly prostrate. The wounded heart will not always bleed. The voice of consolation will spring up in the midst of the silence of these regions of death. The mourner will revisit these shades with a secret, though melancholy pleasure. The hand of friendship will delight to cherish the flowers and the shrubs that fringe the lowly grave or the sculptured monument. The earliest beams of the morning will play upon these summits with a refreshing cheerfulness, and the lingering tints of evening hover on them with a tranquilizing glow.

Spring will invite hither the footsteps of the young by its opening foliage, and autumn detain the contemplative by its latest bloom. The votary of learning and science will here learn to elevate his genius by the holiest studies. The devout will here offer up the silent tribute of pity, or the prayer of gratitude. The rivalries of the world will here drop from the heart; the spirit of forgiveness will gather new impulses; the selfishness of avarice will be checked; the restlessness of ambition will be rebuked; vanity will let fall its plumes; and pride, as it sees “what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue,” will acknowledge the value of virtue as far, immeasurably far, beyond that of fame.

But that which will be ever present, pervading these shades like the noonday sun, and shedding cheerfulness around, is the consciousness, the irrepressible consciousness, amidst all these lessons of human mortality, of the higher truth, that we are beings, not of time, but of eternity; that “this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality;” that this is but the threshold and starting-point of an existence, compared with whose duration the ocean is as but a drop – nay, the whole creation an evanescent quantity.

Hilliard's First Class Reader, 1855

*Story was a Massachusetts attorney, Harvard Law School professor, Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court, is buried at the cemetery described in this selection.

NUMBER 115

LIBERTY
Addison

Meanwhile, we'll sacrifice to liberty.
Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The generous plan of power delivered down,
From age to age, by your renowned forefathers,
(So dearly bought, the price of so much blood;)
O let it never perish in your hands,
But piously transmit it to your children.
Do thou, great Liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defense.

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

NUMBER 116

MOUNT TABOR

J. T. Headley*

What strange contrasts this earth of ours presents! Noonday and midnight are not more opposite than the scenes that are constantly passing before our eyes. Truth and falsehood walk side by side through our streets, and vice and virtue meet and pass every hour of the day. The hut of the starving stands in the shadow of the palace of the wealthy, and the carriage of Dives (the rich) every day throws the dust of its glittering wheels over the tattered garments of Lazarus.

Health and sickness lie down in the same apartment; joy and grief look out of the same window; and hope and despair dwell under the same roof. The cry of the infant, and the groan of the dying, rise together from the same dwelling; the funeral procession treads close on the heels of the bridal party, and the tones of the lute and viol, have scarcely died away before the requiem for the dead comes swelling after. Oh! the beautiful and deformed, the pure and corrupt, joy and sorrow, ecstasies and agonies, life and death, are strangely blended on this our restless planet.

What different events have transpired on the same spot! Where the smoke of the Indian's wigwam arose, and the stealthy tread of the wolf and panther, was heard over the autumn leaves at twilight, the population of New York now surges along. Where once Tyre, the queen of the sea, stood, fishermen are spreading their nets on the desolate rocks, and the bright waves are rolling over its marble columns. In the empty apartments of Edom, the fox makes his den, and the dust of the desert is sifting over the forsaken ruins of Palmyra.

The owl hoots in the ancient halls of kings, and the wind of the summer night, makes sad music through the rents of the once gorgeous palaces. The Arab spurs his steed along the streets of ancient Jerusalem, or scornfully stands and curls his lip at the pilgrim pressing wearily to the sepulcher of the Savior. The Muezzin's voice rings over the bones of the prophets, and the desert wind heaps the dust above the foundations of the seven churches of Asia. O, how good and evil, light and darkness, chase each other over the world!

Forty-seven years ago, a form was seen standing on Mount Tabor, with which the world has since become familiar. It was a bright spring morning, and as he sat on his steed in the clear sunlight, his eye rested on a scene in the vale below, which was sublime and appalling enough to quicken the pulsations of the calmest heart. That form was Napoleon Bonaparte; and the scene before him, the fierce and terrible "Battle of Mount Tabor".

(I am excising a lengthy and emotive description of the Battle in which Napoleon's forces decisively defeated those of the Turkish Sultan.)

As the sun went down over the plains of Palestine, and twilight shed its dim ray over the rent, and trodden, and dead-covered field, a sulphurous cloud hung around the summit of Mount Tabor. The smoke of battle had settled there where once the cloud of glory rested, while groans, and shrieks, and cries, rent the air. Nazareth, Jordan, and Mount Tabor! what spots for battle-fields!

Roll back eighteen centuries, and again view that Mount. The day is bright and beautiful, as on the day of battle, and the same rich oriental landscape is smiling in the same sun. There is Nazareth, with its busy population, — the same Nazareth, from which Kleber marched his army; and there is Jordan, rolling its bright waters along, — the same Jordan, along whose banks charged the glittering squadrons of Murat's cavalry; and there is Mount Tabor, — the same, on which Bonaparte stood with his cannon; and the same beautiful plain where rolled the smoke of battle, and struggled thirty thousand men in mortal combat.

But how different is the scene that is passing there. The Son of God stands on that height, and casts his eye over the quiet valley, through which Jordan winds its silvery current. Three friends are beside Him. They have walked together up the toilsome way, and now they stand, mere specks on the distant summit. Far away to the north-west, shines the blue Mediterranean, all around is the great plain of Esdraelon and Galilee, eastward the Lake of Tiberias dots the landscape while Mount Carmel lifts its naked summit in the distance.

But the glorious landscape at their feet is forgotten in a sublimer scene that is passing before them. The son of Mary — the carpenter of Nazareth — the wanderer, with whom they have traveled on foot many a weary league, in all the intimacy of companions and friends, begins to change before their eyes. (Read the 17th Chapter of Matthew) Over his garments is spreading a strange light, steadily brightening into intenser beauty, till that form glows with such splendor that it seems to waver to and fro, and dissolve in the still radiance.

The three astonished friends gaze on it in speechless admiration, then turn to that familiar face. But lo! a greater change has passed over it. That sad and solemn countenance which has been so often seen stooping over the couch of the dying, entering the door of the hut of poverty, passing through the streets of Jerusalem, and pausing by the weary way-side, eye bedewed with the tears of pity, now burns like the sun in his mid-day splendor. Meekness has given way to majesty, sadness to dazzling glory, the look of pity to the grandeur of God.

The still radiance of Heaven sits on that serene brow, and all around that divine form flows an atmosphere of strange and wondrous beauty. Heaven

has poured its brightness over that consecrated spot, and on the beams of light, which glitter there, Moses and Elias have descended, and, wrapped in the same shining vestments, stand beside him. Wonder follows wonder, for those three glittering forms are talking with each other, and amid the thrilling accents are heard the words: "Mount Olivet", "Calvary" - "the agony and the death of the crucifixion!"

No wonder a sudden fear came over Peter, that paralyzed his tongue, and crushed him to the earth, when, in the midst of his speech, he saw a cloud descend like a falling star from heaven, and, bright and dazzling, balance itself over those forms of light, while from its bright foldings came a voice, saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him!"

How long the vision lasted we can tell; but all that night did Jesus, with his friends, stay on that lonely mountain. Of the conversation that passed between them there, we know nothing; but little sleep, we imagine, visited their eyes that night; and as they sat on the high summit, and watched the stars, as they rose one after another above the horizon, and gazed on the moon as she poured her light over the dim and darkened landscape, words were spoken, that seemed born of Heaven, and truths never to be forgotten were uttered in the ears of the subdued and reverent disciples.

O, how different is Heaven and earth! Can there be a stronger contrast than the BATTLE and TRANSFIGURATION of Mount Tabor? One shudders to think of Bonaparte and the Son of God on the same mountain; one with his warring cannon by his side, and the other with Moses and Elias just from Heaven. But no after desecration can destroy the first consecration of Mount Tabor; for, surrounded with the glory of Heaven, and honored with the wondrous scene of the TRANSFIGURATION, it stands a SACRED MOUNTAIN on earth.

Sander's Fifth Reader, 1855

*Probably Joel Tyler Headley, 1814-1897, an American historian, newspaper editor, and adventurer, who was first trained for the ministry.

NUMBER 117

NOT ENOUGH TO BE SINCERE

Henry Ward Beecher*

It is often said, it is no matter what a man believes if he is only sincere. This is true of all minor truths, and false of all truths whose nature it is to fashion a man's life. It will make no difference in a man's harvest whether he thinks turnips have more saccharine matter than potatoes - whether corn is better than wheat. But let the man sincerely believe that seed planted without plowing is as good as seed planted with, that January is as favorable for seed-sowing as April, and that cockle-seed will produce as good a harvest as wheat, and will it make no difference? A child might as well think he could reverse that ponderous marine engine which, day and night, in calm and storm, plows its way across the deep, by sincerely taking hold of the paddle-wheel, as a man might think he could reverse the action of the elements of God's moral government through a misguided sincerity. They will roll over such a one, and overwhelm him in endless ruin.

Pacific Coast Series Fifth Reader

*Henry Ward Beecher was one of the most prominent preachers of his day, a leading abolitionist, and brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe who wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin".

This small reader was a supplement printed especially for California schools, with some content especially pertinent to California. It preceded California publishing its own textbooks.

NUMBER 118

GOOD ADVICE

Anonymous

God is the kindest and best of beings. He is our Father. He approves us when we do well; he pities us when we err; and he desires to make us happy forever. How greatly should we love so kind and good a Father! and how careful should we be to serve and please him!

Never insult the unfortunate, especially when they implore relief or assistance. If you cannot grant their requests, refuse them mildly and tenderly. If you feel compassion for them, (and what good heart can behold distress without feeling compassion?) be not ashamed to express it.

Listen to the affectionate counsels of your parents; treasure up their precepts; respect their riper judgment; and enjoy, with gratitude and delight, the advantages resulting from their society. Bind to your bosom, by the most endearing ties, your brothers and sisters; cherish them as your best companions, through the variegated journey of life; and suffer no jealousies and contentions to interrupt the harmony, which should ever reign amongst you.

They who are accustomed to view their companions in the most favorable light, are like persons who dwell amidst those beautiful scenes of nature, on which the eye rests with pleasure. Suspicious persons resemble the traveler in the wilderness, who sees no objects around him, but what are either dreary or terrible.

Murray, Introduction to the English Reader, 1819

This is a slim volume, described as a remedial reader to "improve the younger class of learners" in preparation for Murray's English Reader. It is essentially the same reader as Murray's popular reader published in England. School books written, as well as published, in America began to be widely available about this time and soon displaced the English books.

This is the oldest of the readers included in this work, and I want to point out one feature of these oldest readers. While 'direct moral teaching' fell increasing out of favor in later books, we might consider that virtually all the oldest readers' content was 'direct moral teaching', as we see here.

NUMBER 119

MUSIC

J. L. Spalding, Bishop of Peoria*

“The beginning of literature,” says Emerson, “is the prayers of a people, and they are always hymns.” Music is poetry in tones. It is the language of feeling, the universal language of man. The cry of joy and of sorrow, of triumph and of despair, of ecstasy and of agony, is understood by all because it is the voice of nature. The strong emotions of the heart all seek expression in modulation of sound; and religious sentiment is both awakened and calmed by music which lifts the soul out of the world of sense and elevates it toward the infinite and invisible.

Nearer than anything else, it expresses the inner relations and nature of beings; the universal order and harmony which is found even in seemingly discordant and jarring elements. It is the most spiritual of arts, and more than any other is degraded when perverted to low and sensuous uses.

Music is the food of the soul in all its most exalted moods. No other art has such power to minister to the sublime dreams and limitless desires of the heart which aspires to God; and therefore is it held that man who has not music in himself is fit for base purposes and is but sluggish earth. Without its softening and spiritualizing influence we grow wooden and coarse. At its call the universal harmonies of nature stir within us - “birds, voices, instruments, winds, waters, all agree.”

There is doubtless a music as vast as creation, embracing all sounds, all noises in their numberless combinations, and rising from the bosom of discord in boundless and harmonious swell - the hymn which the universe chants to God. From the dew-drop, that murmurs its inward delight as it kisses the rose-leaf, to the deep and infinite voice of the ocean, sounding like the heart-pant of creation for rest; from the reed that sighs upon the river bank, to the sad and solemn wail of the primeval forest; from the bee that sings upon the wing among the flowers, to the lion who goeth forth into the desert alone and awakens the sleeping echoes of the everlasting hills; from the nightingale who disburdens his full throat of all its music, to man, whose very soul rises on the palpitating bosom of song from the world up to God’s heaven - all nature is vocal in a divine concert. “There is music in all things, if men had ears.”

Music gives repose like prayer or the presence of friends, because it satisfies the heart. "The soul," says Joubert, "sings to itself of all beauty." Silence is golden only to those who have power to hear divine melodies – songs of angels and symphonies of heaven. Silence is the setting of music, its light and background: and therefore melody is sweetest in solitude. Song is the voice of prayer, which is the breathing of the soul in God's presence. Did not the angels sing when Christ was born, and shall man be dumb now that he lives and conquers and is adored? God is essential harmony, the works of his hand are harmonious, and his great precept is love, which is the source and soul and highest expression of harmony. The soul that loves, sings for joy and gratitude.

What sound more heavenly does hill or vale prolong or multiply than the voice of the bell, filling the air, far and near, with benediction, until, as the last peal dies away, heaven and earth grow still and the Lord's day is sanctified? It has a human sense and sympathy. Now it rings out strong and clear like a shout from the heart of a boy; and now its mellow notes dwell and linger like sweet memories of childhood. In the solemn night it seems God's warning voice; and then, pitiless as fate, it beats with iron stroke the hours that make the little life of man.

The organ, the master-instrument, is the voice of the Christian Church, sounding like an echo from the mystic and hidden world. How full and deep and strong it rolls out its great volume of sound – an ocean of melody! Now it bursts forth with irresistible power like the hosts of stars when they wheeled into their orbits and shouted to God; and now, with a veiled and mysterious harmony, it wraps itself around the soul, shuts out all noise, and composes it to sweet, heavenly contemplation. It is tender as a mother's yearning, and fierce as the deaf and raging sea; sad as angel's sighs for souls that are lost; plaintive and pitiful as the cry of repentant sinners; and then its notes faint and die, until we hear their echoes from the eternal shore, where they grow forever and forever.

With the falling day we enter the great cathedral's sacred gloom, and at once are in a vast solitude. The huge pillars rise in giant strength, upholding the high vault already shrouded in the gathering darkness, and silence sits mute in the wide aisle. Suddenly we have been carried into another world, peopled with other beings. We cease to note the passage of time; and earth, with its garish light and distressing noises, has become a dream. As the eye grows accustomed to the gloom we are able to observe the massive building. Its walls rise like the sides of a steep mountain, and in the aisles there is the loneliness and mystery of deep valleys into which the sunlight never falls.

From these adamantine (diamond like) flanks countless beings start forth, until the whole edifice is peopled with fantastic forms, upon which falls the mystic light, reflected from the countenances of angels, patriarchs, apostles, who from celestial windows look down upon this new-born world. In the distance we see the glimmering taper that burns before God's presence, and then suddenly a great volume of sound, like the divine breath infusing life into these inanimate objects, rolls over us, and every stone from pavement to vaulted roof thrills and vibrates; each sculptured image and pictured saint is vocal; and from on high the angels lend their voices, until the soul, trembling on the wings of hope and love, is borne upward with this heavenly harmony, and, entranced in prayer, worships the Invisible alone.

Harper's Fifth Reader

*John L. Spaulding, 1840-1916, was born in what was then a frontier area, and worked to develop a Catholic education system in the mid-continent region. He was the first Bishop of the Diocese of Peoria.

NUMBER 120

LIFE

Anonymous

The mere lapse of years is not life. To eat, and drink, and sleep; to be exposed to darkness and the light; to pace around the mill of habit and turn the wheel of wealth; to make reason our book-keeper, and turn thought into an implement of trade - this is not life. In all this, but a poor fraction of the consciousness of humanity is awakened; and the sanctities still slumber which make it most worth while to be.

Knowledge, truth, love, beauty, goodness, faith, alone give vitality to the mechanism of existence. The laugh of mirth which vibrates through the heart; the tears which freshen the dry wastes within; the music which brings childhood back; the prayer that calls the future near; the doubt which makes us meditate; the death which startles us with mystery; the hardships that force us to struggle; the anxiety that ends in trust - these are the true nourishments of our natural being.

Pacific Coast Series, Fifth Reader, 1874

NUMBER 121

KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM

Cowper

Knowledge and Wisdom, far from being one,
Have ofttimes no connection. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom, in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge - a rude, unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which Wisdom builds,
Till smoothed, and squared, and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems to enrich.
Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

Sargent's Fifth Reader, 1854

*William Cowper (pronounced Cooper), 1731-1800, was an English poet and hymnist.

NUMBER 122

SONGS OF THE NIGHT

Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon*

The world hath its night. It seemeth that it should have one. The sun shineth by day, and men go forth to their labors; but they grow weary, and nightfall cometh on, like a sweet boon from heaven.

The darkness draweth the curtains, and shutteth out the light, which might prevent our eyes from slumber; while the sweet, calm stillness of the night permits us to rest upon the lap of ease, and there forget awhile our cares, until the morning sun appeareth, and an angel puts his hand upon the curtain, and undraws it once again, touches our eyelids, and bids us rise, and proceed to the labors of the day.

Night is one of the greatest blessings men enjoy; we have many reasons to thank God for it. Yet night to many is a gloomy season. There is the "pestilence that walketh in darkness;" there is the "terror by night;" there is the dread of robbers and fell disease, with all those fears that the timorous know, when they have no light wherewith they can discern objects.

It is then they fancy that spiritual creatures walk the earth; though, if they knew rightly, they would find it to be true that "millions of spiritual creatures walk this earth unseen, both when we sleep and when we wake;" and that at all times they are round about us - not more by night than by day.

Night is the season of terror and alarm to most men. Yet even night has its songs. Have you never stood by the seaside at night, and heard the pebbles sing, and the waves chant God's glories?? Or have you never risen from your couch, and thrown up the window of your chamber, and listened there?

Listened to what? Silence - save now and then a murmuring sound, which seems sweet music then. And have you not fancied that you heard the harp of God playing in heaven? Did you not conceive that yon stars, those eyes of God, looking down on you, were also mouths of song - that every star was singing for God's glory, singing as it shown, its mighty Maker, and his lawful, well deserved praise?

Night hath its songs. We need not much poetry in our spirit to catch the song of the night, and hear the spheres as they chant praises which are loud to the heart, though they are silent to the ear, - the praises of the mighty God, who bears up the unpillared arch of heaven and moves the stars in their courses.

California Third Reader, 1886

*Rev. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, 1834-1892, was an English Baptist Preacher and writer of great influence in his day, and whose sermons are still popular.

NUMBER 123

THE PLEASURES OF RELIGION

Smith (No further identification)

A righteous man is a happy man, because he is a free man, and the servant to no inward lust. He can act up to his own decisions, and when he sees what is right, he can do it. He has found from experience, that the impulse of passions may be withstood, till the resistance becomes habitually strong, and the passion habitually weak.

...

The truly happy man is he, who has early discovered, that he carries within his own bosom his worst enemies, that the contest must be manfully entered into; that if righteousness does not save him from his sinful appetites, they will rule him, up to the moment of the grave; that they will bend him down to the earth, and tear, and rend him like the bad spirits in scripture; that his fame will be sullied, his mind and body wasted away, and his substance destroyed.

...

A religious man is happy because he is secure; because it is not in the power of accident, or circumstance, to disclose any secret guilt; as he is, he has long been; he can refer to the blameless tenor of years; to a mind long exercised in avoiding offense towards God, and towards man! His present enjoyments are never polluted by bitter remembrances of the past; whatever he has of honor, or consideration among men, he has it honestly, and safely; it does not depend upon their ignorance, nor upon his dexterity, nor upon any fortunate combination of events.

The more men know him, the more they love him; the more they try him, the more plainly they are convinced that he follows after righteousness as the truest wisdom, and that this feeling is the plain and simple key to all his actions. Herein it is that the sinner so grossly miscalculates his happiness, and that he is so bitterly taunted by the great masters of ethics in the scriptures; that he has lost that, in which the pleasantness and comfort of righteousness principally consists; the inviolable feeling of security by which it is accompanied.

The First Class Reader, 1845

NUMBER 124

PROFANITY REPROVED

Dwight*

How wonderful a specimen of human corruption is presented in the so general profanation of the name of God, exhibited in light-minded cursing and swearing! How perfectly at a loss is Reason for a motive to originate, and explain this conduct! Why should the name of the Creator be treated with irreverence? Why should not anything else be uttered by man, if we consider him merely as a rational being with out recurring at all to his moral and accountable character, rather than language of this nature? Certainly, it contributes not in the least degree, to the advancement of any purpose; unless that purpose is mere profaneness?

Anger, one would suppose, would naturally vent itself in expressions of resentment against the person who had provoked us. But this person is always a fellow creature; a man like ourselves. In what way, or in what degree, is God concerned in this matter? What has the passion, what has the provocation to do with Him, his name or his character? Why do we affront and injure him, because a creature, infinitely unlike him, has affronted and injured us?

I know that custom, also, is pleaded as an extenuation, and perhaps as an explanation, of this crime. But how came such a custom to exist? How came any rational being ever to think of profaning the name of God? How came any other rational being to follow him in this wickedness? Whence was it that so many millions of those who ought to be rational beings, have followed them both? What end can it have furnished? What taste can it have gratified? What desire, what affection, can it have indulged? What end can the profane person have proposed to himself?

Can any explanation be given of this conduct, except that it springs from love to wickedness itself? From a heart fixedly opposed to its Maker; pleased with affronting him; loving to abuse his character, and to malign his glorious agency? A heart in which sin is gratuitous; by which, in juster language nothing is gained, much is plainly lost, and everything is hazarded? What, beside the love of sinning; what, but the peculiar turpitude of the character, can be the source, or the explanation, of this conduct?

Ask yourselves what you gain; what you expect to gain; what do you not lose. Remember that you lose your reputation, at least in the minds of all

the wise and good, and all the blessings of their company and friendship; that you sacrifice your piece of mind; you break down all those principles on which virtue may be grafted, and with them every rational hope of eternal life; that you are rapidly becoming more and more corrupted, day by day; and that with this deplorable character, you are preparing to go to the judgment. Think what it will be to swear, and curse, to mock God; and insult your Redeemer through life; to carry your oaths and curses to a dying bed; to enter eternity with blasphemies in your mouths; and to stand before the final bar, when the last sound of profaneness has scarcely died upon your tongues.

The Reader's Guide, 1839

*Dwight - otherwise unidentified, but probably Timothy Dwight, 1752-1817, an American minister, theologian and writer, and president of Yale University.

NUMBER 125

PRAYER

Alfred Lord Tennyson*

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep and goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not their hands in prayer
Both for themselves and for those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

California State Series, Eighth Literature Reader, 1917

*Tennyson, 1809-1892, was one of the great poets of the English language. These are the last words of King Arthur in Tennyson's *The Death of Arthur*, which itself is part of a much larger epic poem, *The Idylls of the King*. There are obvious Biblical references making *Idylls* something of, but not strictly, a Christian allegory.

NUMBER 126

FAITH

Original Hymns for Sabbath Schools

There is a flower, a holy one,
That blossoms on my path;
No need of dew or daily sun,
Or falling showers it hath;
It blooms as brightly on the storm,
As on the cloudless day,
And rears unharmed its humble form,
When others fade away.

That plant is Faith; its holy leaves
Reviving odors shed
Upon the lowly place of grief,
Or mansions of the dead.
God is its sun; his living light
In happy hours he lends,
And silently, in sorrow's night,
Religion's dew descends.

Plant of my soul, be fading things
By other hands caress'd;
But through life's weary wanderings,
I'll bear thee in my breast;
And when the icy power shall chill
The fountains of my breath,
Thy loveliness shall cheer me still,
E'en the hour of death.

The Reader's Manual, 1839

This book is a particularly good example of the cross-over of Sunday School literature and public school books in the early days of public schools.

NUMBER 127I HAVE SEEN AN END OF ALL PERFECTION¹

Mrs. Sigourney*

I have seen a man in the glory of his days, and the pride of his strength. He was built like the tall cedar that lifts its head above the forest trees,—like the strong oak that strikes its roots deeply into the earth. He feared no danger; he felt no sickness; he wondered that any should groan or sigh at pain. His mind was vigorous like his body; he was perplexed at no intricacy; he was daunted at no difficulty; into hidden things he searched, and what was crooked he made plain.

He went forth fearlessly upon the face of the mighty deep; he surveyed the nations of the earth; he measured the distances of the stars, and called them by their names; he gloried in the extent of his knowledge,—in the vigor of his understanding, and strove to search even into what the Almighty had concealed. And when I looked on him, I said, "What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a God!"

I returned,—his look was no more lofty, nor his step proud; his frame was like some ruined tower; his hairs were white and scattered; and his eyes gazed vacantly upon what was passing around him. The vigor of his intellect was wasted, and of all he had gained by study nothing remained. He feared when there was no danger, and when there was no sorrow he wept. His memory was decayed and treacherous, and showed him only broken images of the glory that was departed.

His house was to him like a strange land, and his friends were counted as his enemies; and he thought himself strong and healthful, while his foot tottered on the verge of the grave. He said of his son, "He is my brother;" of his daughter, "I know her not;" and he inquired what was his own name. And one who supported his last steps, and ministered to his many wants, said to me as I looked upon the melancholy scene, "Let thine heart receive instruction, for thou hast seen an end of all earthly perfection."

I have seen a beautiful female treading the first stages of youth, and entering joyfully into the pleasures of life. The glance of her eye was variable and sweet, and on her cheek trembled something like the first blush of the morning; her lips moved, and there was harmony; and when

she floated in the dance, her light form, like the aspen, seemed to move with every breeze. I returned, but she was not in the dance; I sought her in the gay circle of her companions, but I found her not. Her eyes sparkled not there,—the music of her voice was silent,—she rejoiced on earth no more.

I saw a train, sable and slow-paced who bore sadly to an opened grave what once was animated and beautiful. They paused as they approached, and a voice broke the awful silence: "Mingle ashes with ashes, and dust with its original dust. To the earth, whence it was taken, consign we the body of our sister." They covered her with the damp soil, and the cold clods of the valley; and the worms crowded into her silent abode. Yet one sad mourner lingered to cast himself upon the grave; and as he wept, he said, "There is no beauty, nor grace, nor loveliness, that continueth in man; for this is the end of all his glory and perfection."

I have seen an infant with a fair brow, and a frame like polished ivory. Its limbs pliant in its sports, it rejoiced, and again it wept; but whether its glowing cheek dimpled with smiles, or its blue eye was brilliant with tears, still I said to my heart, "It is beautiful." It was like the first pure blossom, which some cherished plant shot forth, whose cup is filled with a dew-drop, and whose head reclines upon its parent stem.

I again saw this child, when the lamp of reason first dawned in its mind. Its soul was gentle and peaceful; its eyes sparkled with joy, as it looked round on this good and pleasant world. It ran swiftly in the ways of knowledge; it bowed its ear to instruction; it stood like a lamb before its teacher. It was not proud, nor envious nor stubborn; and it had not heard of the vanities and vices of the world. And when I looked upon it I remembered that our Savior had said, "Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

But the scene was changed,— and I saw a man whom the world called honorable, and many waited for his smile. They pointed out the fields that were his, and talked of the silver and gold that he had gathered; they admired the stateliness of his domes, and extolled the honor of his family. And his heart answered secretly, "By my wisdom have I gotten all this:—" so he returned no thanks to God, neither did he fear or serve Him.

And as I passed along, I heard the complaints of the laborers who reaped down his fields, and the cries of the poor, whose covering he had taken away; but the sound of feasting and revelry was in his apartments, and the unfed beggar came tottering from his door. But he considered not that the cries of the oppressed were continually entering into the ears of the Most

High. And when I knew that this man was once the teachable child that I had loved, the beautiful infant that I had gazed upon with delight, I said in my bitterness, "I have seen an end to all perfection:" and I laid my mouth in the dust.

Sanders Fourth Reader, 1844

1. Psalm 119:96

*Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney, 1791-1865, was a prolific and well loved poet, and author of hundreds of books and articles in periodicals of the day. She was also noted as a champion for education of the deaf.

NUMBER 128

HYMNS

H. W. Beecher*

The discovery of a statue, a vase, or even of a cameo, inspires art-critics and collectors with enthusiastic industry, to search whether it be a copy or an original, of what age, and by what artist. But I think that a heart-hymn, sprung from the soul's deepest life, and which is, as it were, the words of the heart in those hours of transfiguration in which it beholds God, and heavenly angels, is nobler by far than any old simulacrum (image), or carved ring, or heathen head, however exquisite in lines and features!

To trace back a hymn to its source, to return upon the path along which it has trodden on its mission of mercy through generations, to witness its changes, its obscurations and reappearances, is a work of the truest religious enthusiasm, and far surpasses in importance the tracing of the ideas of mere art. For hymns are the exponents of the inmost piety of the Church. They are crystalline tears, or blossoms of joy, or holy prayers, or incarnated raptures. They are the jewels which the Church has worn: the pearls, the diamonds and precious stones, formed into amulets more potent against sorrow and sadness than the most famous charms of wizard or magician. And he who knows the way that hymns flowed, knows where the blood of piety ran, and can trace its veins and arteries to the very heart.

No other composition is like an experimental hymn. It is not a mere poetic impulse. It is not a thought, a fancy, a feeling threaded upon words. It is the voice of experience speaking from the soul a few words that condense and often represent a whole life. It is the life, too, not of the natural feelings growing wild, but of regenerated feeling, inspired by God to a heavenly destiny, and making its way through troubles and hindrances, through joys and victories, dark or light, sad or serene, yet always struggling forward. Forty years the heart may have been in battle, and one verse shall express the fruit of the whole.

One great hope may come to fruit only at the end of many years, and as the ripening of a hundred experiences. As there be flowers that drink up the dews of spring and summer, and feed upon all the rains, and, only just before the winter comes, burst forth into bloom, so it is with some of the noblest blossoms of the soul. The bolt that prostrated Saul gave him the exceeding brightness of Christ; and so some hymns could never have been written but for a heart-stroke that well-nigh crushed out the life. It is cleft

in two by bereavement, and out of the rift comes forth, as by resurrection, the form and voice that shall never die out of the world. Angels sat at the grave's mouth; and so hymns are the angels that rise up out of our griefs and darkness and dismay.

Thus born, a hymn is one of those silent ministers which God sends to those who are to be heirs of salvation. It enters into the tender imagination of childhood, and casts down upon the chambers of its thought a holy radiance which shall never quite depart. It goes with the Christian, singing to him all the way, as if it were the airy voice of some guardian spirit. When darkness of trouble, settling fast, is shutting out every star, a hymn burst through and brings light like a torch. It abides by our side in sickness. It goes forth with us in joy to syllable that joy.

And thus, after a time, we clothe a hymn with the memories and associations of our own life. It is garlanded with flowers which grew in our hearts. Born of the experience of one mind, it becomes the unconscious record of many minds. We sang it, perhaps, the morning that our child died. We sang this one on that Sabbath evening when, after ten years, the family were once more all together. There be hymns that were sung while the mother lay a-dying; that were sung when the child, just converted, was filling the family with the joy of Christ new-born, and laid, not now in a manger, but in a heart. And thus sprung from a wondrous life, they lead a life yet more wonderful. When they first come to us they are like the single strokes of a bell ringing down to us from above; but, at length, a single hymn becomes a whole chime of bells, mingling and discoursing to us the harmonies of life's Christian experience.

And oftentimes, when in the mountain country, far from noise and interruption, we wrought upon these hymns for our vacation tasks, we almost forgot the living world, and were lifted up by noble lyrics as upon mighty wings, and went back to the days when Christ sang with his disciples, when the disciples sang too, as in our churches they have almost ceased to do. Oh! but for one moment even, to have sat transfixed, and to have listened to the hymn that Christ sang and to the singing! But the olive-trees did not hear his murmured notes more clearly than, rapt in imagination, we have heard them!

There, too, are the hymns of St. Ambrose¹ and many others, that rose up like birds in the early centuries, and have come flying and singing all the way down to us. Their wing is untired yet, nor is the voice less sweet now than it was a thousand years ago. Though they sometimes disappeared, they never sank; but, as engineers for destruction send bombs that, rising high

up in wide curves, over-leap great spaces and drop down in a distant spot, so God, in times of darkness, seems to have caught up these hymns, spanning long periods of time, and letting them fall at distant eras, not for explosion and wounding, but for healing and consolation.

There are crusaders' hymns, that rolled forth their truths upon the oriental air, while a thousand horses' hoofs kept time below, and ten thousand palm-leaves whispered and kept time above! Other hymns, fulfilling the promise of God that His saints should mount up with wings as eagles, have borne up the sorrows, the desires, and the aspirations of the poor, the oppressed, and the persecuted, of Huguenots, of Covenanters, and of Puritans and winged them to the bosom of God.

In our own time, and in the familiar experiences of daily life, how are hymns mossed over and vine-clad with domestic associations! One hymn hath opened the morning in ten thousand families, and dear children with sweet voices have charmed the evening in a thousand places with the utterance of another. Nor do I know of any steps now left on earth by which one may so soon rise above trouble or weariness as the verses of a hymn and the notes of a tune. And if the angels, that Jacob saw, sang when they appeared, then I know that the ladder which he beheld was but the scale of divine music let sown from heaven to earth.

The National Fifth Reader, 1873.

*Henry Ward Beecher was one of the most prominent preachers of his day, a leading abolitionist, and brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe who wrote "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*".

1. St. Ambrose: a celebrated Christian father, was probably born at Treves, in 340 AD. After a careful education at Rome, he practiced with great success, as an advocate, at Milan; and about 370 AD was appointed prefect of the provinces of Liguria and Aemilia, whose seat of government was Milan. He was appointed Bishop of Milan in 374 AD; and finally acquired so much influence, that after the massacre of Thessalonica in 390, he refused the Emperor Theodosius to the Church of Milan for a period of eight months, and then caused him to perform a public penance. Ambrose was a man of eloquence, firmness, and ability. The best edition of his works is that of the Benedictines.

2. "Plymouth Collection of Hymns and Tunes," published in 1855.

NUMBER 129

PRAYER

Original Hymns for Sabbath Schools

Glad hearts to thee we bring;
With joy thy name we sing,
 Father above;
Creation praises thee;
O'er all around we see
 Tokens of love.

Thou who in heaven art,
To us that grace impart,
 Our master knew;
Aid us like him to live,
To thee our young hearts give,
 Thou only true.

Giver of all our powers,
Now in life's morning hours,
 May they be thine,
Pure and from error free,
An offering worthy thee,
 Parent divine.

Unite our souls in love;
Smile on us from above,
 'Till life be o'er;
Then gather us to Thee,
In thine own fold to be,
 For evermore.

Reader's Manual, 1839

NUMBER 130

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS

Longfellow*

There is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

“Shall I have naught that is fair?” saith he;
“Have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again.”

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

“My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,”
The reaper said, and smiled;
“Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where he was once a child.

“They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care;
And saints, upon their garments white,
These sacred blossoms wear.”

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
‘Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

Appleton’s Fifth Reader

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a prominent American poet of the 19th Century.

NUMBER 131

THE REFORM THAT IS NEEDED

Rev. Horace Bushnell*

It is getting to be a great hope of our time, that society is about to slide into something better, by a course of natural progress, - by the advance of education, by great public reforms, by courses of self-culture, and philanthropic practice. We have a new gospel that corresponds, - a gospel that preaches not so much a faith in God's salvation as a faith in human nature, - an attenuated, moralizing gospel, that proposes development, not regeneration; that shows men how to grow better, how to cultivate their amiable instincts, how to be rational in their own light, and govern themselves by their own power.

Sometimes it is given as the true problem, how to reform the shape and reconstruct the style of their heads! Alas, that we are taken, or can be, with so great a folly! How plain it is that no such gospel meets our want! What can it do for us but turn us away, more and more fatally, from that gospel of the Son of God which is our only hope? Man, as a ruin, going after development and progress and philanthropy and social culture, and by this firefly glimmer, to make a day of glory!

And this is the doctrine that proposes shortly to restore society, to settle the passion, regenerate the affection, re-glorify the thought, fill the aspiration of a desiring and disjointed world. As if any being but God had power to grapple with these human disorders; as if man or society, crazed and maddened by the demoniacal frenzy of sin, were going to rebuild the state of order, and reconstruct the harmony of nature by such kind of desultry (superficial) counsel and unsteady application as it can manage to enforce in its own cause; going to do this miracle by its science, its compacts, and self-executed reforms!

As soon will the desolations of Karnak (ancient Egyptian ruins) gather up their fragments and reconstruct the proportions out of which they have fallen. No; it is not progress, not reforms, that are wanted as any principal thing. Nothing meets our case, but to come unto God and be medicated in him; to be born of God, and so, by his regenerative power, to be set in heaven's own order. He alone can rebuild the ruin, he alone set up the glorious temple of the mind, and those divine affinities in us that raven with immortal hunger; he alone can satisfy them in the bestowment of himself!

The Franklin Sixth Reader, 1874

*Bushnell, 1802-1876, was an American Congregational (the old Puritan Church) minister.

NUMBER 132

RELIGION, THE GUARDIAN OF THE SOUL

Orville Dewey*

One of the circumstances of our moral condition, is danger. Religion, then, should be a guardian, and a vigilant guardian; and let us be assured that the Gospel is such. Such, emphatically do we need. If we cannot bear a religion that admonishes us, watches over us, warns us, restrains us; let us be assured that we cannot bear a religion that will save us. Religion should be the keeper of the soul; and without such a keeper, in the slow and undermining process of temptation, or amidst the sudden and strong assaults of passion, it will be overcome and lost.

Again, the human condition is one of weakness. There are weak points, where religion should be stationed to support and strengthen us. Points, did I say? Are we not encompassed with weakness? Where, in the whole circle of our spiritual interests and affections, are we not exposed, and vulnerable? Where have we not need to set up the barriers of habit, and to build the strongest defenses, with which resolutions, and vows, and prayers, can surround us? Where, and wherein, I ask again, is any man safe? What virtue of any man, is secure from frailty? What strong purpose of his, is not liable to failure? What affection of his heart can say, "I have strength, I am established, and nothing can move me?"

How weak is man in trouble, in perplexity, in doubt;—how weak in affliction, or when sickness bows the spirit, or when approaching death is unloosing all the bands of his self-reliance! And whose spirit does not sometimes faint under its *intrinsic* weakness, under its *native* frailty, and under the burden and pressure of its necessities?

Religion, then, should bring supply, and support, and strength. And it thus meets a universal want. Every mind needs the stability which principle gives; needs the comfort which piety gives; needs it continually, in all the varying experience of life.

The American Common-School Reader and Speaker, 1844

*Dewey, 1794-1882, was a New England educator, writer, lecturer, and Unitarian minister.

NUMBER 133

THE SABBATH BELL

Anonymous

Hark! the deep toned bell is calling,
Come, O come!
Weary ones where'er you wander,
Come, O come!
Louder now and louder pealing,
On the heart that voice is stealing,
Come, nor longer roam.

Now, again, its tones are pealing,
Come, O come!
In the sacred temple kneeling,
Seek thy home;
Come, and round the altar bending,
Love the place where God, descending,
Calls the spirit home.

Still the echoed voice is ringing,
Come, O come!
Every heart pure incense bringing,
Hither come!
Father, round thy footstool bending,
May our souls, to heaven ascending,
Find in thee a home!

California Third Reader, 1886

NUMBER 134

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

Henry Kirke White

When marshaled on the nightly plain,
The glittering host bestud the sky;
One star alone, of all the train,
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.
Hark! Hark! to God the chorus breaks,
From every host, from every gem;
But one alone, the Savior speaks,
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once, on the raging seas I rode;
The storm was loud, the night was dark,
The ocean yawned, and rudely blowed
The wind that tossed my foundering bark;
Deep horror then my vitals froze,
Death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem;
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the star of Bethlehem.

It was my guide, my light, my all,
It bade my dark forebodings cease,
And through the storm and danger's thrall,
It led me to the port of peace.
Now, safely moored, my perils o'er,
I'll sing, first in night's diadem,
Forever and evermore,
The Star, the Star of Bethlehem.

California Fifth Reader, 1886

"Mr. White was the son of butcher in Nottingham, England. He passed away at age twenty-one while studying for the ministry; but his poems were widely admired."

NUMBER 135

THE SUN AS AN EXHIBITION OF
 THE GRANDEUR OF OMNIPOTENCE
*Dick's Celestial Scenery**

What a glorious idea, then, does such an object as the sun present to us of the Grandeur of the Deity and the Energies of Omnipotence! There is no single object within the range of our knowledge that affords a more striking and august emblem of its Great Creator. In its luster, in its magnitude, in its energy, in its boundless influence, and its beneficial effects on this earth, and on surrounding worlds, there is a more bright display of Divine perfection than in any other material being with which we are acquainted:

“Great source of day, best image here below
 Of thy Creator – ever pouring wide,
 From world to world, the vital ocean round –
 On Nature write, with every beam, his praise!”

Could such a magnificent orb have been produced by a fortuitous concourse of atoms, and placed in its proper position to distribute light and attractive influence to the worlds which roll around it? Could chance have directed the distance at which it should be placed from the respective planets, or the size to which it should be expanded, in order to diffuse its energies to the remotest part of the universe? Could chance have impressed upon it the laws requisite for sustaining in their courses all the bodies dependent on it, or have endowed it with a source of illumination which has been preserved in action from age to age? To affirm such positions would be to undermine and annihilate the principles of all our reasonings.

The existence of the sun proves the existence of an Eternal and Supreme Divinity, and at the same time demonstrates his omnipotent power, his uncontrollable agency, the depths of his wisdom, and the riches of his beneficence. If such a luminary be so glorious and incomprehensible, what must its Great Creator be? If its splendor be so dazzling to our eyes, and its magnitude so overpowering to our imagination, what must He be who lighted up that magnificent orb, and bade a retinue of worlds revolve around it? who “dwells in light inaccessible, to which no mortal eye can approach?” If the sun is only one of many myriads of similar globes dispersed throughout the illimitable tracts of creation, how great, how glorious, how far surpassing human comprehension, must be the plans and

attributes of the infinite and eternal Creator? “His greatness unsearchable, and his ways past finding out?”

Could we thoroughly comprehend the depths of his perfections, or the grandeur of his empire, he would cease to be God, or we should cease to be limited and dependent beings. But, in presenting to our view such magnificent objects, it is evidently his intention that we should rise in our contemplations from the effect to the cause, from the creature to the Creator, from the visible splendors and magnificence of creation to the invisible glories of Him who sits on the throne of the universe, “whose kingdom ruleth over all, and before whom all nations are counted as less than nothing and vanity.”

The Reader’s Manual, 1839

**[Celestial Scenery, or The wonders of the planetary system displayed : illustrating the perfections of deity and a plurality of worlds, by Rev. Thomas Dick, 1774-1853.]*

NUMBER 136

WORDS OF STRENGTH

Johann C. F. Schiller*

There are three lessons I would write,
Three words as with a burning pen,
In tracings of eternal light,
Upon the hearts of men.

Have hope! Though clouds environ now,
And gladness hides her face in scorn,
Put thou the shadow from thy brow,
No night but has its morn.

Have faith! Where'er thy bark is driven -
The calm's disport, the tempest's mirth; -
Know this - God rules the hosts of heaven,
The inhabitants of earth.

Have love! Not love alone for one,
But, man as man thy brother call,
And scatter like the circling sun,
Thy charities on all.

Thus grave these lessons on thy soul -
Hope, Faith, and Love - and thou shalt find
Strength when life's surges rudest roll,
Light when thou else wert blind.

California State Series, Third Reader, 1886

*Schiller, 1759-1805, is widely considered the greatest poet, dramatist, and historian of late 18th Century Germany. He was training to be a Lutheran priest, but switched to medicine, becoming a military doctor. He later switched his focus to a literary career. Verdi adapted several of Schiller's play's into celebrated operas.

NUMBER 137

THE BLIND PREACHER

William Wirt*

As I traveled through the county of Orange, my eye was caught by a cluster of horses tied near a ruinous, old, wooden house in the forest, not far from the roadside. Having frequently seen such objects before, in traveling through these States, I had no difficulty in understanding that this was a place of religious worship.

Devotion alone should have stopped me to join in the duties of the congregation; but I must confess that curiosity to hear the preacher of such a wilderness was not the least of my motives. On entering, I was struck with his preternatural appearance. He was a tall and very spare old man; his head, which was covered with a white linen cap, his shriveled hands, and his voice, were all shaking under the influence of a palsy; and a few moments ascertained to me that he was perfectly blind.

The first emotions that touched my breast were those of mingled pity and veneration. But how soon were all my feelings changed: The lips of Plato were never more worthy of a prognostic swarm of bees than were the lips of this holy man! It was a day of the administration of the sacrament; and his subject was, of course, the passion of our Savior. I had heard the subject handled a thousand times; I had thought it exhausted long ago. Little did I suppose, that, in the wild woods of America, I was to meet with a man whose eloquence would give to this topic a new and more sublime pathos than I had ever before witnessed.

As he descended from the pulpit, to distribute the mystic symbols, there was a peculiar, a more than human solemnity in his air and manners, which made my blood run cold, and my whole frame shiver. He then drew a picture of the sufferings of our Savior; his trial before Pilate; his ascent up Calvary; his crucifixion. I knew the whole history; but never until then had I heard the circumstances so selected, so arranged, so colored. It was all new; and I seemed to have heard it for the first time in my life. His enunciation was so deliberate that his voice trembled on every syllable; and every heart in the assembly trembled in unison.

His peculiar phrases had that force of description that the original scene appeared to be at that moment acting before our eyes. We saw the very faces of the Jews; the staring, frightful distortions of malice and rage. We

saw the buffet; my soul kindled with a flame of indignation; and my hands were involuntarily and convulsively clinched.

But when he came to touch on the patience, the forgiving meekness of our Saviour; when he drew, to the life, his voice breathing to God a soft and gentle prayer of pardon on his enemies, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," the voice of the preacher, which had all along faltered, grew fainter, until, his utterance being entirely obstructed by the force of his feelings, he raised his handkerchief to his eyes, and burst into a loud and irrepressible flood of grief. The effect was inconceivable. The whole house resounded with the mingled groans, sobs, and shrieks of the congregation.

It was some time before the tumult had subsided, so far as to permit him to proceed. Indeed, judging by the usual, but fallacious standard of my own weakness, I began to be very uneasy for the situation of the preacher. For I could not conceive how he would be able to let his audience down from the height to which he had would them, without, impairing the solemnity and dignity of the subject, or perhaps shocking them by the abruptness of his fall. But, no: the descent was as beautiful and sublime as the elevation had been rapid and enthusiastic.

The first sentence with which he broke the awful silence was a quotation from Rousseau: "Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus Christ like a God!" I despair of giving you any idea of the effect produced by this short sentence, unless you could perfectly conceive the whole manner of the man, as well as the peculiar crisis in the discourse. Never before did I completely understand what Demosthenes meant by laying such stress on delivery.

You are to bring before you the venerable figure of the preacher; his blindness, constantly recalling to your recollection old Homer, Ossian, and Milton, and associating with his performance the melancholy grandeur of their geniuses; you are to imagine that you hear his slow, solemn, well-accented enunciation, and his voice of affecting, trembling melody; you are to remember the pitch of passion and enthusiasm to which the congregation were raised; and then the few moments of portentous, death-like silence which reigned throughout the house; the preacher, removing his white handkerchief from his aged face (even yet wet from the recent torrent of his tears), and slowly stretching forth the palsied hand which held it, begins the sentence, "Socrates died like a philosopher" - then, pausing, raising his other, pressing them both, clasped together, with warmth and energy, to his breast, lifting his "sightless balls" to heaven, and pouring his whole soul into his tremulous voice - "but Jesus Christ - like a God!"

This man has been before my imagination almost ever since. A thousand times, as I rode along, I dropped the reins of my bridle, stretched forth my hand, and tried to imitate his quotation from Rousseau' a thousand times I abandoned the attempt in despair, and felt persuaded that his peculiar manner and power arose from an energy of soul which nature could give, but which no human being could justly copy. As I recall, at this moment, several of his awfully striking attitudes, the chilling tide with which my blood begins to pour along my arteries, reminds me of the emotions produced by the first sight of Gray's introductory picture of his Bard.

The Pacific Coast Fifth Reader, 1874

1. The foregoing selection, all that is given in the textbook, is about half of Letter Number Seven from Wirt's, *The Letters of a British Spy*. Gray's "Bard" is a reference to Thomas Gray's poem, *The Bard*. Though not included in the original, I am including the relevant section below, along with another short section identifying the "Blind Preacher" as James Waddell, an Irish-American scholar and tutor to prominent Virginians, and later, renowned as an eloquent preacher, after going blind in middle age. Wirt's account constitutes the only written record of Waddell's sermons. Gray's introductory picture of his Bard:

"On a rock, whose haughty brow,
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Rob'd in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood;
(Loose his beard and hoary hair
Streamed, like a meteor, to the troubled air:)
And with a poet's hand and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre."

Guess my surprise, when, on my arrival at Richmond, and mentioning the name of this man, I found not one person who had ever before heard of JAMES WADDELL!"

The remainder of the "Letter" is devoted to criticizing Virginia's lack of regard for Waddell's sermonizing, said by Wirt, President James Madison, and others to be among the finest ever delivered.

*William Wirt, a prominent American writer, politician, and longest serving U. S. Attorney General.

NUMBER 138

THE CREATOR

Anonymous

Come, and I will show you what is beautiful. It is a rose fully blown. See how she sits upon her mossy stem, the queen of flowers. Her leaves glow like fire. The air is filled with her sweet odor. She is the delight of every eye.

But there is one fairer than the rose. He that made the rose is more beautiful than the rose. He is altogether lovely. He is the delight of every heart.

I will show you what is strong. The lion is strong. When he raiseth himself up from his lair, when he shaketh his mane, when the voice of his roaring is heard, the cattle of the field fly, and the wild beasts of the desert hide themselves; for he is terrible.

But He who made the lion is stronger than the lion. He can do all things. He gave us life, and in a moment, can take it away, and no one can save us from His hand.

I will show you what is glorious. The sun is glorious. When he shineth in the clear sky, when he sitteth on his throne in the heavens, and looketh abroad over the earth, he is the most glorious and excellent object the eye can behold.

But He who made the sun is more glorious than the sun. The eye cannot look on His dazzling brightness. He seeth all dark places, by night as well as by day. The light of His countenance is over all the world.

This great Being is God. He made all things, but He is more excellent than all that He has made. He is the Creator, they are the (created). They may be beautiful, but He is beauty. They may be strong, but He is strength. They may be perfect, but he is perfection.

California State Series, Third Reader, 1886

NUMBER 139

THE GRAVE
James Montgomery*

There is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found;
They softly lie, and sweetly sleep,
Low in the ground.

The storm that wrecks the winter sky
No more disturbs their deep repose
Than summer evening's latest sigh,
That shuts the rose.

I long to lay this painful head
And aching heart beneath the soil -
To slumber in that dreamless bed
From all my toil.

For misery stole me at my birth,
And cast em helpless in the wild.
I perish - oh, my mother earth,
Take home thy child!

On thy dear lap these limbs reclined,
Shall gently molder into thee;
Nor leave one wretched trace behind
Resembling me.

Hark! a strange sound affrights mine ear;
My pulse, my brain runs wild! I rave!
Ah, who art thou whose voice I hear?
"I am the Grave!

"The Grave, that never spoke before,
Hath found, at last, a tongue to chide:
O Listen! I will speak no more -
Be silent, pride!

"Art thou a wretch of hope forlorn,
The victim of consuming care?

Is thy distracted conscience torn
By fell despair?

Do foul deeds of former times
Wring with remorse thy guilty breast?
And ghosts of unforgiven crimes
Murder thy rest?

“Lashed by the furies of the mind,
From wrath and vengeance wouldst thou flee?
Ah! think not, hope not, fool, to find
A friend in me!

“I charge thee, live - repent and pray!
In dust thine infamy deplore!
There yet is mercy. Go thy way,
And sin no more.

“Whatever thy lot, whoe'er thou be,
Confess thy folly - kiss the rod,
And in thy chastening sorrows see
The hand of God.

“A bruised reed He will not break:
Afflictions all His children feel;
He wounds them for His mercy's sake -
He wounds to heal!

“Humbled beneath his mighty hand,
Prostrate His providence adore.
‘Tis done! - Arise! He bids thee stand,
To fall no more.

“Now, traveler in the vale of tears,
To realms of everlasting light,
Through Time's dark wilderness of years
Pursue thy flight!

“There is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found:
And while the moldering ashes sleep
Low in the ground,

“The soul, of origin divine
God’s glorious image, freed from clay,
In heaven’s eternal sphere shall shine,
A star of day!

“The sun is but a spark of fire,
A transient meteor in the sky;
The soul, immortal as its sire,
Shall never die.”

Appleton’s Fifth Reader, 1889

*Montgomery, 1717-1854, was a Scottish poet, hymn writer, and editor, and an advocate for the abolition of slavery, and for child labor laws. He was the son of Moravian Missionaries who died on the mission field.

NUMBER 140

THE GRAVE

Washington Irving*

The sorrow for the dead is the only sorrow from which we refuse to be divorced. Every other wound we seek to heal; every other affliction, to forget: but this wound we consider it a duty to keep open. The affliction we cherish, and brood over in solitude. Where is the mother, who would willingly forget the infant that has perished like a blossom in her arms, though every recollection is a pang? Where is the child, that would willingly forget a tender parent, though to remember be but to lament? Who, even in the hour of agony, would forget the friend, over whom he mourns?

No, the love which survives the tomb, is one of the noblest attributes of the soul. If it has its woes, it has likewise its delights; and when the overwhelming burst of grief is calmed into the gentle tear of recollection; when the sudden anguish, and the convulsive agony over the present ruins of all that we most loved, is softened away into pensive meditation on all that it was, in the days of its loveliness, who would root out such a sorrow from the heart? Though it may, sometimes, through a passing cloud over the bright hour of gaiety, or spread a deeper sadness over the hour of gloom, yet, who would exchange it, even for the song of pleasure, or the burst of revelry? No, there is a voice from the tomb sweeter than song. There is a remembrance of the dead, to which we turn, even from the arms of the living.

Oh, the grave! the grave! It buries every error, covers every defect, extinguishes every resentment! From its peaceful bosom, spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave, even of an enemy, and not feel a compunctious throb, that he should have warred with the poor handful of earth that lies moldering before him?

But the grave of those we loved, what a place for meditation! There it is, that we call up, in long review, the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us, almost unheeded, in the daily intercourse of intimacy; there it is, that we dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn, awful tenderness of the passing scene; the bed of death, with all its stifled griefs, its noiseless attendance, its mute, watchful assiduities (kindnesses)! the last testimonies of expiring love! the feeble, fluttering, thrilling, - oh, how thrilling - pressure of the hand! the last fond look of the glazing eye turning upon us, even from the threshold of existence! the faint,

faltering accents, struggling in death to give us one more assurance of affection!

Ay, go to the grave of buried love, and meditate! There settle the account with thy conscience, for every past benefit unrequited; every past endearment unregarded, of that departed being, who can never - never - never return to be soothed by thy contrition! If thou art a child, and hast ever added a sorrow to the soul, or a furrow to the silvered brow of an affectionate parent; if thou art a husband, and hast ever caused the fond bosom that ventured into happiness in thy arms, to doubt one moment of thy kindness or thy truth; if thou art a friend, and hast wronged, in thought, or word, or deed, the spirit that generously confided in thee; if thou hast given one unmerited pang to that true heart, which now lies cold and still beneath thy feet; then be sure, that thou wilt lie down sorrowing and repentant on the grave, and utter the unheard groan, and pour the unavailing tear; more deep, more bitter, because unheard and unavailing.

Then wave thy chaplet of flowers, and strew the beauties of nature upon the grave; console thy broken spirit, if thou canst, with these tender, yet futile tributes of regret; but take warning, by the bitterness of this, thy contrite affliction over the dead, and henceforth, be more faithful and affectionate in the discharge of thy duties to the living.

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

*Irving, 1783-1859, was an American writer of renown in several fields, but is best known for his stories, *Rip van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.

NUMBER 141

THE HOME OF MY CHILDHOOD

Dr. J. G. Holland*

I recall a home, long since left behind in the journey of life; and its memory floats back to me with a shower of emotions and thoughts towards whose precious fall my heart opens itself greedily, like a thirsty flower. It is a home among the mountains - humble and lowly - but priceless in its wealth of associations.

The waterfall sings again in my ears, as it used to sing through the dreamy, mysterious nights. The rose at the gate, the patch of tansy under the window, the neighboring orchard, the old elm, the grand machinery of storms and showers, the smithy under the hill that flamed with a strange light through the dull winter evenings, the wood-pile at the door, the ghostly white birches on the hill, and the dim blue haze upon the retiring mountains - all these come back to me with an appeal which touches my heart and moistens my eyes.

I sit again in the doorway at summer nightfall, eating my bread and milk, looking off upon the darkening landscape, and listening to the shouts of boys upon the hillside, calling or driving home the reluctant herds. I watch again the devious way of the dusty night-hawk along the twilight sky, and listen to his measured note, and the breezy boom that accompanies his headlong plunge toward the earth.

Even the old barn, crazy in every timber and gaping at every joint, has charms for me. I try again the breathless leap from the great beams into the bay. I sit again on the threshold of the widely open doors - open to the soft south wind of spring - and watch the cattle, whose faces look half human to me, as they sun themselves and peacefully ruminant (cud-chewing), while, drop by drop, the dissolving snow from the roof drills holes through the eaves, down into the oozing offal (waster matter) of the yard.

The first little lambs of the season toddle by the side of their dams, and utter their feeble bleatings, while the flock nibble at the hayrick, or a pair of rival wethers (male sheep) try the strength of their skulls in an encounter, half in earnest and half in play. The proud old rooster crows upon his homely throne, and some delighted member of his silly family leaves her nest and tells to her mates that there is another egg in the world.

The old horse whinnies in his stall, and calls to me for food. I look up to the roof and think of last year's swallows - soon to return again - and catch a glimpse of angular sky through the diamond-shaped opening through which they went and came. How, I know not, and can not tell, but that old barn is a part of myself - it has entered into my like and given me growth and wealth.

But I look into the house again where the life abides which has appropriated these things, and finds among them its home. The hour of evening has come, the lamps are lighted, and a good man in middle life - though very old he seems to me - takes down the well worn Bible, and reads a chapter from its hallowed pages.

A sweet woman sits at his side, with my sleepy head upon her knee, and my brothers and sisters are grouped reverently around. I do not understand the words, but I have been told that they are the word of God, and I believe it. The long chapter ends, and then we all kneel down, and good man prays.

I fall asleep with my head in the chair; and the next morning remember nothing of the way in which I went to bed. After breakfast the Bible is taken down again, and the good man prays, and again and again is the worship repeated, through all the days of many golden years.

The pleasant converse of the fireside, the simple songs of home, the words of encouragement as I bend over my school tasks, the kiss as I lie down to rest, the patient bearing with the freaks (something unusual or abnormal) of my restless nature, the gentle counsel mingled with reproofs and approvals, the sympathy that meets and assuages (softens) every sorrow and sweetens every little success - all these return to me amid the responsibilities which press upon me now, and I feel as if I had once lived in heaven, and straying, had lost my way.

California State Series, Third Reader, 1886

*Josiah Holland, 1819 - 1881, was most noted as an American novelist and poet. He came from a background of poverty to graduate from medical school, but soon embarked upon a literary career.

NUMBER 142

THE INQUIRY
Charles Mackay

Tell me, ye winged winds, that round my pathway roar,
Do ye know some spot where mortals weep no more?
Some lone and pleasant dell, some valley in the west,
Where, free from toil and pain, the weary soul may rest?
The loud wind dwindled to a whisper low,
And sighed for pity as it answered - "No."

Tell me, thou mighty deep, whose billows round me play,
Know'st thou some favored spot, some island far away,
Where weary man may find the bliss for which he sighs, -
Where sorrow never lives, and friendship never dies?
The loud waves, rolling in perpetual flow,
Stopped for a while, and sighed to answer - "No."

And thou, serenest moon, that, with such lovely face,
Dost look upon the earth, asleep in night's embrace;
Tell me, in all thy round, hast thou not seen some spot,
Where miserable man might find a happier lot?
Behind a cloud the moon withdrew in woe,
And a voice, sweet, but sad, responded - "No."

Tell me, my secret soul; - oh! tell me, Hope and faith,
Is there no resting place from sorrow, sin, and death? -
Is there no happy spot, where mortals may be blessed,
Where grief may find a balm, and weariness a rest?
Faith, Hope, and Love, best boons to mortals given,
Waved their bright wings, and whispered - "Yes, in Heaven!"

National Fifth Reader, 1866

*Charles Mackay, 1814-1889, was a Scottish poet, song writer and novelist.

NUMBER 143

THE PENITENT SON AT THE DEATHBED OF HIS FATHER

Wilson (No further identification)

[Note from the reader: *In reading this piece, the faltering voice of a dying man, the stifled accents of his contrite son, the stern expression of the minister, and the affectionate tones of the (son's) wife, should all be represented.*]

Ere the psalm was yet over, the door was opened, and a tall, fine-looking man entered, but with a lowering, dark countenance, seemingly in sorrow, in misery, and remorse. Agitated, confounded, and awe-struck by the melancholy and dirge-like music, he sat down on a chair, and looked with a ghastly face toward his father's deathbed.

When the psalm ceased, the father said with a solemn voice, "My son, thou art come in time to receive thy father's blessing. May the remembrance of what shall happen in this room, win thee from the error of thy ways. Thou art here to witness the mercy of thy God and Savior, whom thou hast denied."

The minister looked, if not with a stern, yet with an upbraiding countenance, on the young man, who had not recovered his speech, and said, "William!, for three years past your shadow has not darkened the door of the house of God. They who fear not the thunder, may tremble at the still small voice; now is the hour for repentance, that your father's spirit may carry up to Heaven tidings of a contrite soul, saved from the company of sinners."

The young man, with much effort, advanced to the bedside, and at last found voice to say, "Father, I am not without the affections of nature, and I hurried home as soon as I heard that the minister had been seen riding toward our house. I hope that you will yet recover, and if I have ever made you unhappy, I ask your forgiveness, for though I do not think as you do on matters of religion, I have a human heart. Father, I may have been unkind, but I am not cruel. I ask your forgiveness."

"Come nearer to me, William, kneel down by the bedside, and let my hand find the head of my beloved son; for blindness is coming fast upon me. Thou wast my firstborn, and thou art my only living son. All thy brothers and sisters are lying in the churchyard, beside her whose sweet face thine own,

William, did once so resemble. Long wast thou the joy, the pride,—aye, too much the pride of my soul.

"If thy heart has since been changed, God may inspire it again with right thoughts. Could I die for thy sake,—could I purchase thy salvation with the outpouring of my blood,—but this the Son of God has done for *thee*, who hast denied Him! I have sorely wept for thee,—aye, William, when there was no one near me,— even as David wept for Absalom,—for thee, my son, my son!"

long, deep groan was the only reply; but the whole body of the kneeling man was convulsed; and it was easy to see his sufferings, his contrition, his remorse, and his despair. The pastor said, with a sterner voice and austerer countenance than were natural for him, "Know you, whose hand is now lying on your rebellious head? But what signifies the word '*father*' to him who has denied God, the Father of us all?"

"Oh! press him not so hardly," said the weeping wife, coming from a dark corner of the room, where she had tried to conceal herself in grief, fear, and shame; "spare, oh! spare my husband, —he has ever been kind to me;" and with that she knelt down beside him, with her long, soft, white arms, mournfully, and affectionately laid across his neck.

"Go thou likewise, my sweet little Jamie," said the dying man, "go even out of my bosom, and kneel down beside thy father and thy mother, so that I may bless you all at once." The child did as that solemn voice commanded, and knelt down somewhat timidly by his father's side; nor did that unhappy man decline encircling in his arms the child, too much neglected, but still dear to him as his own blood, in spite of the deadening and debasing influence of infidelity.

"Put the word of God into the hands of my son, and let him read aloud to his dying father, the 25th, 26th, and 27th verses of the gospel according to St. John."

The pastor went up to the kneelers, and with a voice of pity, condolence, and pardon, said, "There was a time when, William, none could read the scriptures better than couldst thou,—can it be that the son of my friend hath forgotten the lessons of his youth?"

He had not forgotten them; there was no need for the repentant sinner to raise his eyes from the bedside. The sacred stream of the gospel had worn a channel in his heart, and the waters were again flowing. With a choked

voice he said, "Jesus said unto her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believeth thou this?' She saith unto Him, 'Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.'"

"That is not an unbeliever's voice," said the dying man, triumphantly; "nor, William, hast thou an unbeliever's heart. Say that thou believest in what thou hast now read, and thy father shall die happy!"

"I do believe; and as thou forgivest me, so may I be forgiven by my Father, who is in heaven."

The father seemed like a man suddenly inspired with a new life. His faded eyes kindled, his pale cheek glowed, his palsied hand seemed to wax strong, and his voice was clear as that of manhood in its prime. "Into thy hands, O God, I commit my spirit." And so saying, he gently sunk back on his pillow, and I heard a sigh.

There was then a long deep silence; and the father, and mother, and child, rose from their knees. The eyes of us all were turned toward the white, placid face of the figure now stretched in everlasting rest; and without lamentations, save the lamentations of the resigned soul, we stood around the deathbed of the father.

Sander's Fourth Reader, 1842

NUMBER 144

THE UNBELIEVER

Chalmers*

I pity the unbeliever - one who can gaze upon the grandeur and glory, and beauty of the natural universe and behold not the touches of His finger, who is over, and with, and above all; from my very heart I do commiserate his condition.

The unbeliever! one whose intellect the light of revelation never penetrated; who can gaze upon the sun, and moon, and stars, and upon the unfading and imperishable sky, spread out so magnificently above him, and say all this is the work of chance. The heart of such a being is a drear and cheerless void. In him, mind - the god-like gift of intellect, is debased - destroyed; all is dark - a fearful chaotic labyrinth - ray-less - cheerless - hopeless!

No gleam of light from heaven, penetrates the blackness of the horrible delusion; no voice from the Eternal bids the desponding heart rejoice. No fancied tones from the harps of seraphim arouse the dull spirit from its lethargy, or allay the consuming fever of the brain. The wreck of mind is utterly remedy-less; reason is prostrate; and passion, prejudice, and superstition, have reared their temple on the ruins of his intellect.

I pity the unbeliever. What to him is the revelation from on high, but a sealed book? He sees nothing above, or around, or beneath him, that evinces the existence of a God; and he denies - yea, while standing on the footstool of Omnipotence, and gazing upon the dazzling throne of Jehovah, he shuts his intellect to the light of reason, and *denies there is a God*.

Emerson's First-Class Reader, 1845

*Thomas Chalmers, 1780-1847, was a prominent Scottish church leader, theologian, mathematician, and chemist. He was well known for advocating the compatibility of science and Christianity.

NUMBER 145

THE PROBLEM OF CREATION

Gen. O. M. Mitchell*

If we look out upon the starry heavens by which we are surrounded, we find them diversified in every possible way. Our own mighty stellar system takes upon itself the form of a flat disc, which may be compared to a mighty ring breaking into two distinct branches, severed from each other, the interior with stars less densely populous than upon the exterior. But take the telescope and go beyond this; and here you find, coming out from the depths of space, universes of every possible shape and fashion; some of them assuming a globular form, and, when we apply the highest possible penetrating power of the telescope, breaking into ten thousand brilliant stars, all crushed and condenses into one luminous, bright, and magnificent center.

But look yet farther. Away yonder, in the distance, you behold a faint, hazy, nebulous ring of light, the interior almost entirely dark, but the exterior ring-shaped, and exhibiting to the eye, under the most powerful telescope, the fact that it may be resolved entirely into stars, producing a universe somewhat analogous to the one we inhabit. Go yet deeper into space, and there you will behold another universe - voluminous scrolls of light, glittering with beauty, flashing with splendor, and sweeping a curve of most extraordinary form, and of most tremendous outlines.

Thus we may pass from planet to planet, from sun to sun, from system to system. We may reach beyond the limits of this mighty stellar cluster with which we are allied. We may find other island universes sweeping through space. The great unfinished problem still remains - Whence came this universe? Have all these stars which glitter in the heavens been shining from all eternity? Has our globe been rolling around the sun for ceaseless ages? Whence, whence this magnificent architecture, whose architraves rise in splendor before us in every direction? Is it all the work of chance? I answer, No. It is not the work of chance.

Who shall reveal to us the true cosmogony of the universe by which we are surrounded? Is it the work of an Omnipotent Architect? If so, who is this August Being? Go with me to-night, in imagination, and stand with old Paul, the great Apostle, upon Mars' Hill, and there look around you as he did. Here rises that magnificent building, the Parthenon, sacred to Minerva, the Goddess of Wisdom. There towers her colossal statue, rising in its majesty

above the city of which she was the guardian - the first object to catch the rays of the rising, and the last to be kissed by the rays of the setting sun. There are the temples of all the gods; and there are the shrines of every divinity.

And yet I tell you these gods and these divinities, though created under the inspiring fire of poetic fancy and Greek imagination, never reared the stupendous structure by which we are surrounded. The Olympian Jove never built these heavens. The wisdom of Minerva never organized these magnificent systems. I say with St. Paul, "O Athenians, in all things I find you too superstitious; for in passing along your streets, I find an altar inscribed to the Unknown God - Him whom ye ignorantly worship; and this is the God I declare unto you - the God that made heaven and earth, who dwells not in temples made with hands."

No, here is the temple of our Divinity. Around us and above us rise sun and system, cluster and universe. And I doubt not that in every region of this vast empire of God, hymns of praise and anthems of glory are rising and reverberating from sun to sun and from system to system - heard by Omnipotence alone across immensity and through eternity!

Raub's Normal Fifth Reader

*Mitchel was a Professor of Astronomy and a well known lecturer before the Civil War. As a graduate of West Point (where he had also taught mathematics), he went into the U.S. Army at the outbreak of the Civil War, and was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General.

NUMBER 146

TIME
Mardon*

I asked an Aged Man, a man of cares,
Wrinkled, and curved, and white with hoary hairs
'Time is the warp of life,' he said, 'O tell
The young, the fair, the gay, to weave it well!'

I asked the aged Venerable Dead,
Sages who wrote, and warriors who have bled;
From the cold grave a hollow murmur flowed,
'Time sowed the seed we reap in this abode.'

I asked a dying Sinner, ere the tide
Of life had left his veins; 'Time,' he replied -
'I've lost it! Ah, the treasure!' - and he died.

I asked the Golden Sun and Silver Spheres,
Those bright chronometers of days and years;
They answered, 'Time is but a meteor glare,
And bids us for Eternity prepare.'

I asked the Seasons in their annual round,
Which beautify and desolate the ground;
And they replied (no oracle more wise)
' 'Tis folly's loss, and virtue's highest prize.'

I asked a Spirit Lost; but oh! the shriek
That pierced my soul! I shudder while I speak.
It cried - 'A particle, a speck, a mite
Of endless years, duration infinite!'

Of things inanimate, my dial (sundial) I
Consulted, and it made me this reply:
'Time is the season fair of living well,
The path of Glory, or the path of Hell.'

I asked my Bible, and methinks it said,
'Time is the present hour, the past is fled'
Live! live today! Tomorrow never yet
On any human being rose or set.'

I asked Old Father Time himself at last;
But in a moment he flew quickly past;
His chariot was a cloud; the viewless wind
His noiseless steeds, which left no trace behind.

I asked the Mighty Angel¹, who shall stand
One foot on sea, and one on solid land;
'By heaven,' he cried, 'I swear the mystery's o'er,
Time was!' he cried; but Time shall be no more.'

Emerson's First-Class Reader

*No further identification

1. Revelation 10:5.

NUMBER 147

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREACHING OF WHITFIELD* Miss Francis (otherwise unidentified)

There was nothing in the appearance of this extraordinary man which would lead you to suppose that a Felix (Roman governor) could tremble before him. "He was something above the middle stature, well proportioned, and remarkable for a native gracefulness of manner. His complexion was very fair, his features regular, and his dark eyes small and lively. In recovering from the measles, he had contracted a squint with one of them; but his peculiarity rather rendered the expression of his countenance more memorable, than in any degree lessened the effect of its uncommon sweetness.

His voice excelled, both in melody and compass; and its fine modulations were happily accompanied by that grace of action, which he possessed in an eminent degree, and which has been said to be the chief requirement for an orator." To have seen him when he first commenced, one would have thought him anything but enthusiastic and glowing; but as he proceeded, his heart warmed with his subject, and his manner became impetuous and animated, till, forgetful of everything around him, he seemed to kneel at the throne of Jehovah, and to beseech in agony for his fellow beings.

After he had finished his prayer, he knelt for a long time in profound silence; and so powerfully had it affected the most heartless of this audience, that a stillness like that of the tomb pervaded the whole house. Before he commenced his sermon, long, darkening columns crowded the bright, sunny sky of the morning, and swept their shadows over the building in fearful augury (foretelling) of the storm.

His text was, "Strive to enter into the strait (narrow) gate; for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." "See that emblem of human life," said he, pointing to a shadow that was flitting across the floor. "It passed for a moment, and concealed the brightness of heaven from our view; - but it is gone. And where will ye be, my hearers, when your lives have passed away like the dark cloud?"

Oh, my dear friends, I see thousands sitting attentive, with their eyes fixed on the poor unworthy preacher. In a few days we shall all meet at the judgment seat of Christ. We shall form a part of that vast assembly that will gather before the throne; and every eye will behold the Judge. With a voice whose call you must abide and answer, he will inquire whether on earth ye strove to enter in at the strait gate; whether you were supremely devoted to God! whether your hearts were absorbed in him.

My blood runs cold when I think how many of you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Oh what a plea can you make before the Judge of the whole earth? Can you say it has been your whole endeavor to mortify

(discipline) the flesh with its affections and lusts? that your life has been one long effort to do the will of God? No! you must answer, I made myself easy in the world by flattering myself that all would end well; but I have deceived my own soul, and am lost.

“You, O false and hollow Christian, of what avail will it be that you have done many things; that you have read much in the sacred word; that you have had long prayers; that you have attended religious duties, and appeared holy in the eyes of men? What will all this be, if, instead of loving him supremely, you have been supposing you should exalt yourself in heaven, by acts really polluted and unholy?”

“And you, rich man, wherefore (why) do you hazard your silver? wherefore count the price you have received for him whom you every day crucify in your love of gain? Why, that, when you are too poor to buy a drop of cool water, your beloved son may be rolled to hell in his chariot pillowed and cushioned around him.”

His eye gradually lighted up as he proceeded, till, towards the close, it seemed to sparkle with celestial fire.

“Oh, sinners!” he exclaimed, “by all your hopes of happiness, I beseech you to repent. Let not the wrath of God be awakened. Let not the fires of eternity be kindled against you. “SEE THERE!” said he, pointing to the lightning which played on the corner of the pulpit. “ ‘Tis a glance from the angry eye of Jehovah! – Hark!” continued he, raising his finger in a listening attitude, as the distant thunder grew louder and louder, and broke in one tremendous crash over the building. “It was the voice of the Almighty as he passed by in his anger!”

As the sound died away, he covered his face with his hands, and knelt beside the pulpit, apparently lost in inward and intense prayer. The storm passed rapidly away, and the sun, bursting forth in his might, threw across the heavens a magnificent arch of peace. Rising, and pointing to the beautiful object, he exclaimed, “Look upon the rainbow, and praise him that made it. Very beautiful it is in the brightness thereof. It compasseth the heavens about with glory, and the hands of the Most High have bended it.”

The Reader's Guide, 1839

*George Whitfield was an Anglican, later Methodist, minister and traveling evangelist whose spellbinding preaching helped initiate the Great Awakening prior to the American Revolution.

NUMBER 148

MIGHT OF GOD
Henry Kirke White*

The Lord our God is full of might,
The winds obey His will;
He speaks, and in his heavenly height,
The rolling sun stands still.

Rebel, ye waves, and o'er the land
With threatening aspect roar;
The Lord uplifts His awful hand,
And chains ye to the shore.

Ye winds of night, your force combine;
Without His high behest,
Ye shall not in the lofty pine,
Disturb the sparrow's nest.

His voice sublime is heard afar,
In distant peal it dies;
He yokes the whirlwind to His car,
And sweeps the howling skies.

Ye nations bend, in reverence bend;
Ye monarchs, wait His nod;
And bid the choral song ascend,
To celebrate your God.

Sander's Fourth Reader, 1842

*Mr. White was the son of a butcher in Nottingham, England. He passed away at age twenty-one while studying for the ministry; but his poems were widely admired.

NUMBER 149

TRIAL OF THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM

W. B. Collyer*

It is impossible to pass through Canaan without turning aside to the land of Moriah, and contemplating the scared mountain, on which a patriarch's faith triumphed over a father's feelings. According to the promise of God, Isaac was born when Abraham was a hundred years old. He had seen his son preserved from the perils of infancy. His mother had gazed with unspeakable pleasure upon her child, the son of her vows, who was now fast pressing toward manhood. The parents of this amiable youth were looking forward to a peaceful dismissal of the toils of life, and to a happy termination of a tranquil old age.

Abraham "planted a grove in Beersheba" and rested under its shadow. This quiet retreat, alas! is not impervious to sorrow! This delightful serenity resembles the stillness of the air, which usually produces a tempest,—it bodes approaching trial. "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, 'Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee of'."

What a command was this! To stain his hand with the blood of a lamb which he had fed, would be a task to a feeling mind; but the requisition is for a "Son."

To select one from a numerous family, would be a cruel effort. Let the mother look round upon her children, when they are assembled before her like a flock, and say which she could spare from among them! But, the demand is, "Take thine *only* son,"—in whom the life of both parents is bound up. To part with an only child for a season, opens the fountain of a mother's tears, and adds to the gray hairs of his father. To lose him by death, is to cause them to go bitterly in the anguish of their soul all their days. What was it, then, to offer an only son as a sacrifice, and to be himself the priest who should plunge the knife into his bosom?

But he obeys,—obeys without a murmur! He rises early in the morning to immolate his child, and to offer, on the altar of God, all that he held most dear in this world. On the third day, the destined mountain marks its elevation along the line of the horizon, and meets the eye of the afflicted

parent. The servants are not permitted to witness the awful scene, the solemnity of which they might disturb by lamentations,—or the execution of which they might prevent by force,—or, lacking their master's faith, might draw from it inferences unfavorable to religion.

At this moment, to awaken in his bosom extreme torture, "Isaac spake unto Abraham, his father, and said, 'My father;' and he said 'Here am I my son.' And he said 'Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' And Abraham said, 'My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering;' so they went both of them together."

But we will no longer attempt to scent the violet, and to paint the rainbow. We must draw a veil over the scene; for who can enter into a father's anguish, as he raised his hand against his child? And who shall be bold enough to attempt a description of his rapture, when Heaven, which had put his faith to so severe trial, commanded him to forbear, and indeed provided itself a victim?

Sander's Fourth Reader, 1842

*William Bengo Collyer, 1782-1854, an English minister and hymnist.

NUMBER 150

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE

Dewey*

To the reflecting mind, especially if it be touched with any influences of religious contemplation or poetic sensibilities, there is nothing more extraordinary than to observe with what obtuse, dull and common-place impressions, most men pass through this wonderful life, which Heaven has ordained for us.

Life, which, to such a mind (the reflecting mind), means everything momentous, mysterious, prophetic, monitory (cautionary), trying to the reflections, and touching to the heart; to the many, is but a round of cares and toils, of familiar pursuits and formal actions. Their fathers have lived; their children will live after them; the way is plain; the boundaries are definite; the business is obvious; and this, to them, is life.

...

But life indeed - the intellectual life, struggling with its earthly load, coming, it knows not whence, going, it knows not whither, with an eternity unimaginable behind it, with an eternity to be experienced before it, with all its strange and mystic remembrances, now exploring its past years, as if they were periods before the flood, and then gathering them within a space as brief and unsubstantial, as if they were the dream of a day—with all of its dark and its bright visions of mortal fear and hope; life, such a life, is full of mysteries. In the simplest actions, indeed, as well as in the loftiest contemplations, in the most ordinary feelings, as well as in the most abstruse speculations, mysteries meet us everywhere, mingle with all our employments, terminate all our views.

The bare art of walking has enough in it to fill us with astonishment. If we were brought into existence in the full maturity of our faculties, if experience had not made us dull, as well as confident, we should feel a strange thrilling doubt, when we took one step, whether another would follow. We should pause at every step, with awe and wonder of that familiar action.

For who knows anything of the mysterious connection and process, by which the invisible governs the visible frame? Who has seen the silent and swift messengers, which the mind sends out to the subject members of the body? Philosophers have reasoned upon this, and have talked of nerves, and have talked of delicate fluids, as transmitting the mandates of the will; but

they have known nothing. No eye of man, nor penetrating glance of his understanding, has searched out those hidden channels, those secret agencies of the soul in its mortal tenement.

Man, indeed, can construct machinery, curious, complicated and delicate, though far less so than that of the human frame, and with the aid of certain other contrivances and powers, he can cause it to be moved; but to cause it to move itself, to impart it with an intelligent power, to direct its motions whithersoever it will, this is the mysterious work of God.**

Nay, the bare connection of mind and matter, is itself a mystery. The extremes of the creation are brought together, its most opposite and incongruous elements are blended, not only in perfect harmony, but in the most intimate sympathy. Celestial life and light mingle and sympathize, with dark, dull and senseless matter. The boundless thought hath bodily organs. That, which in a moment glances through the immeasurable hosts of heaven, hath its abode within the narrow bounds of nerves, and limbs, and senses.

...

The clay beneath our feet is built up into the palace of the soul. The sordid dust we tread upon, forms, in the mystic frame of our humanity, the dwelling place of high reasoning thoughts, fashions the chamber of imagery, and moulds the heart that beats with every lofty and generous affection. Yes, the feelings that soar to heaven, the virtue that is to win the heavenly crown, flows in the life blood, that, in itself, is as senseless as the soil from which it derives its nourishment. Who shall explain to us this mysterious union—tell us where sensation ends and thought begins, or where organization passes into life?

Turn to what pursuit of science, or point of observation we will, it is still the same. In every department and study, we come to a region into which our inquiries cannot penetrate. Everywhere our thoughts run into the vast, the indefinite, the incomprehensible; time stretches to eternity, calculation to 'numbers without number,' being to Infinite Greatness. Every path of our reflection brings us, at length, to the shrine of the unknown and the unfathomable, where we must sit down, and receive with devout and childlike meekness, if we receive at all, the voice of the oracle within.

...

Nor is there a plant so humble, no hyssop by the wall, nor flower nor weed in the garden that springeth from the bosom of the earth, but it is an organized and living mystery. The secrets of the abyss are not more

inscrutable than the work that is wrought in its hidden germ. The going ons of the heavens are not more incomprehensible than its growth, as it waves in the breeze. Its life, that which constitutes its life, who can tell what it is?

The functions that constitute its growth, flower and fruit, the processes of secretion, the organs or the affinities, by which every part receives the material that answers its purpose, who can unfold or explain them? Yes, the simplest spire of grass has wonders in it, in which the wisest philosopher may find a reason for humility, and the proudest skeptic an argument for (to rebut) his faith.

Life, I repeat—and I say, let the dull in thought, let the children be roused by the reflection—life is full of mysteries. If we were wandering through the purlieus (open spaces) of a vast palace, and we found there a closed door, or an inaccessible entrance, over which the word "Mystery" was written, how would our curiosity be awakened by the inscription!

Life is such a wandering: the world is such a structure, and over many a door forbidding all entrance, and over many a mazy labyrinth, is written the startling inscription, that tells us of our ignorance, and announces to us unseen and unimaginable wonders. The ground we tread upon is not dull, cold soil, not the mere paved way, on which the footsteps of the weary and busy are hastening, not the mere arena, on which the war of mercantile competition is waged; but we tread upon enchanted ground.

The means of communication with the outward scene, are all mysteries. The organ that collects within it the agitated waves of the air, the chambers of sound that lie beyond it, after all dissection and analysis, are still labrynth and regions of mystery.

That little orb, the eye, which gathers in the boundless landscape at a glance, which in an instant measures the near and the distant, the vast and the minute, which brings knowledge from ten thousand objects in one commanding act of vision—what a mystery is that!

...

And there are mysteries, too, thickly strewed all along the *moral* path of this wonderful being. There are 'mysteries of our holy religion.' Miracles of power, giving attestations to its truth, ushered into this world. Wonders of heavenly mercy are displayed in its successive triumphs over the human soul. Gracious interpositions, too, of the teaching spirit, and a succoring Providence, help the infirmities and struggles of the faithful.

And the results, moreover, this great and solemn trial of human nature, that is passing on earth, are as mysterious as the process—the heavenly interposition and the human effort,—and these too, alike mysterious—the heavenly interposition—certain but indefinable: the human will strangely balanced somewhere, but nobody can tell where, between necessity and freedom.

Goodness, in the heart, is a mystery. No language can define it, which does not equally need definition. No man can *tell* what it is. No man can know but by an inward experience, in reality, inexpressible. Goodness is a breath of the soul, we know not from whence: it cometh and it goeth, like 'the wind that bloweth where it listeth;' it is the inspiration of the Almighty.

And sin!—how great and tremendous is that mystery! That beneath these serene and pure heavens, which beam with the benignity of their Maker: that amidst the fair earth, amidst ten thousand forms of perfection, the spoiler should have gone forth to mar and to crush the noblest and fairest—that is the 'mystery of iniquity that has been hidden from the ages,' and is not yet fully unfolded.

Emerson's First Class Reader, 1833

*Probably Orville Dewey, 1794-1882, a New England Unitarian minister.

This volume is of a later edition, 1845.

NUMBER 151

TO BE WISE
Unattributed

To be wise in our own eyes, to be wise in the opinion of the world, and to be wise in the sight of our Creator, are three things so very different, as rarely to coincide.

Though religion removes not all the evils of life, though it promises no continuance of undisturbed prosperity, (which indeed it were not salutary for man always to enjoy,) yet, if it mitigates the evils which necessarily belong to our state, it may justly be said to give "rest to them who labor and are heavy laden."

How many clear marks of benevolent intention appear everywhere around us! What a profusion of beauty and ornament is poured forth on the face of nature! What a magnificent spectacle presented to the view of man! What supply contrived for his wants! What a variety of objects set before him, to gratify his senses, to employ his understanding, to entertain his imagination, to cheer and gladden his heart!

The hope of future happiness is a perpetual source of consolation to good men. Under trouble, it soothes their minds; amidst temptation, it supports their virtue; and, in their dying moments, enables them to say, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?"

No one ought to consider himself as insignificant in the sight of his creator. In our several stations we are all sent forth to be laborers in the vineyard of our heavenly Father. Every man has his work allotted, his talent committed to him, by the due improvement of which he may, in one way or another, serve God, promote virtue, and be useful in the world.

Murray's English Reader, 1814

A collection of short pieces from the reader.

NUMBER 152THE SUBLIMITY OF MOUNTAIN SCENERY¹

Croly*

Of all the sights that nature offers to the eye and mind of man, mountains have always stirred my strongest feelings. I have seen the ocean when it was turned up from the bottom by tempests, and noon was like the night with the conflict of the billows, and the storm that tore and scattered them in mist and foam across the sky.

I have seen the desert rise around me; calmly in the midst of thousands paralyzed by fear, and uttering cries of horror. I have contemplated the sandy pillars coming like the advance of some gigantic city of conflagration, flying across the wilderness, every column glowing with intense fire, and every blast charged with death; the sky vaulted with gloom,—the earth a furnace. But with me, the mountain,—in tempest or in calm,—the throne of the Thunderer, or when the evening sun paints its dells and declivities with colors, dipped in heaven,—has been the source of the most absorbing sensations.

There stands magnitude, giving the instant impression of a power above man; grandeur that defies decay; antiquity that tells of ages unnumbered; beauty that the touch of time makes only more beautiful; use exhaustless for the service of man; strength imperishable as the globe; the monument of eternity,—the truest emblem of that ever-living, unchangeable, irresistible Majesty,—by whom, and for whom, all things were made!

Sander's Fourth Reader, 1842

*George Croly, 1780-1860, was an Irish clergyman, poet, hymnist, and writer in several genres both sacred and secular. Besides his hymns he is best known for his novel *Tarry Thou Till I Come*, also known as *Salathiel, The Wandering Jew*. Compared favorably to Lew Wallace's *Ben-Hur* in its day, *Salathiel* was made into several movies, and imitated in many others. Excerpts from *Salathiel* are included in some of the old readers as fine examples of descriptive imagery.

1. From 'sublime' a term applied to something, a scene of nature in this case, which elicits an emotion of contact with another and higher world.

NUMBER 153CHRIST IN THE TEMPEST
John Greenleaf Whittier*

Storm on the midnight waters! The vast sky
 Is stooping with the thunder. Cloud on cloud
 Reels heavily in the darkness, like a shroud
 Shook by some warning spirit from the high
 And terrible wall of Heaven. The mighty wave
 Tosses beneath its shadow, like the bold
 Uphevings of a giant from the grave,
 Which bound him prematurely to his cold
 And desolate bosom. Lo—they mingle now—
 Tempest and heaving wave, along whose brow
 Trembles the lightning from its thick cloud fold.

And it is very terrible! The roar
 Ascendeth unto Heaven, and thunders back
 Like a response of demons, from the black
 Rifts of the hanging tempests—yawning o'er
 The wild waves in their torment. Hard! the cry
 Of the strong man in peril, piercing through
 The uproar of the waters and the sky;
 As the rent bark one moment rides to view,
 On the tall billows, with the thunder cloud
 Closing around, above her like a shroud!

He stood upon the reeling deck—His form
 Made visible by the lightning, and his brow,
 Uncovered to the visiting of the storm,
 Told of a triumph man may never know—
 Power underived and mighty.— *'Peace be still!'*
 The great waves heard him, and the storm's loud tone
 Went moaning into silence at his will:
 And the thick clouds, where yet the lightning shone,
 And slept the latent thunder, rolled away
 Until no trace of tempest lurked behind,
 Changing upon the pinions of the wind
 To stormless wanderers, beautiful and gay.

Dread Ruler of the tempest! Thou, before
 Whose presence boweth the uprisen storm—

To whom the waves do homage, round the shore
Of many an island empire!—if the form
Of the frail dust beneath thine eye, may claim
Thy infinite regard—oh, breathe upon
The storm and darkness of man's soul, the same
Quiet, and peace, and humbleness, which came
O'er the roused waters. where thy voice had gone,
A minister of power—to conquer in thy name.

Emerson's First Class Reader, 1833

*John G. Whittier, 1807-1892, was a New England Quaker poet.

NUMBER 154

ORIGIN OF PROPERTY

From Blackstone*

In the beginning of the world, we are informed by holy writ, the all-bountiful Creator gave to man “dominion over all the earth; and over the fishes of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moved upon the earth.” This is the only true and solid foundation of man’s dominion over external things, whatever airy, metaphysical notions may have been started by fanciful writers on the subject. The earth, therefore, and all things therein, are the general property of mankind, exclusive of other beings, from the immediate gift of the Creator. And while the earth continued bare of inhabitants, it is reasonable to suppose that all was in common among them, and that every one took from the common stock, to his own use, such things as his immediate necessities required.

These general notions of property were then sufficient to answer all purposes of human life; and might, perhaps, still have answered them, had it been possible for mankind to remain in a state of primeval simplicity, in which “all things were common to him.” Not that this communion of goods seems ever to have been applicable, even in the earlier stages, to aught but the *substance* of the thing; nor could it be extended to the *use* of it. For, by the law of nature and reason, he who first began to use it, acquired therein, a kind of transient property, that lasted so long as he was using it, and no longer. Or, to speak with greater precision, the *right* of possession continued for the same time, only, that the *act* of possession lasted.

Thus, the ground was in common, and no part of it was the property of any man in particular; yet, whoever was in the occupation of any determined spot of it, for rest, for shade, or the like, acquired for the time, a sort of ownership, from which, it would have been unjust and contrary to the law of, to have driven him by force; but the instant he quitted the use of occupation of it, another might seize it without injustice. Thus, also, a vine or a tree might be said to be in common, as all men were equally entitled to its produce; and yet, any private individual might gain the sole property of the fruit which he had gained for his own repast – a doctrine well illustrated by Cicero, who compares the world to a great theater which is common to the public, and yet the place any man has taken, is, for the time, his own.

But when mankind increased in number, craft, and ambition, it became necessary to entertain conceptions of a more permanent dominion; and to appropriate to individuals not the immediate *use* only, but the very *substance* of the thing to be used. Otherwise, innumerable tumults must have arisen, and the good order of the world been continually broken and disturbed, while a variety of persons were striving who should get the first occupation of the same thing, or disputing which of them had actually gained it. As human life grew more and more refined, many conveniences were devised to render it more easy, commodious, and agreeable; as habitations for shelter and safety, and raiment for warmth and decency. But no man would be at the trouble to provide either, so long as he had only an usufructuary¹ property in them, which was to cease the instant that he quitted possession; if, as soon as he walked out of his tent or pulled off his garment, the next stranger who came by would have a right to inhabit the one and wear the other.

In the case of habitations, in particular, it was natural to observe that even the brute creation, to whom everything else was in common, maintained a kind of permanent property in their dwellings, especially for the protection of their young; that the birds of the air had nests, and the beasts of the fields had caverns, the invasion of which they esteemed a very flagrant injustice, and in the preservation of which, they would sacrifice their lives. Hence a property was soon established in every man's house and homestead; which seem to have been originally mere temporary huts or movable cabins, suited to the design of providence for the more speedily peopling the earth, and to the wandering life of the owners, before any extensive property in the soil or ground was established.

There can be no doubt but that movables of every kind became sooner appropriated than the permanent, substantial soil; partly because they were more susceptible of a long occupancy, which might be continued for months together, without any sensible interruption, and at length, by usage, ripen into an established right; but principally, because few of them could be fit for use, till improved and meliorated by the bodily labor of the occupant; which bodily labor, bestowed upon any subject that lay in common to all men, is universally allowed to give the fairest and most reasonable title to an exclusive property therein.

The article of food was a more immediate call, and therefore a more early consideration. Such as were not contented with the spontaneous products of the earth, sought for a more solid refreshment in the flesh of beasts, which they obtained by hunting. But the frequent disappointments incident to that method of provision, induced them to gather together such animals

as were more tame and sequacious nature², and to establish a more permanent property in their flocks and herds, in order to sustain themselves in a less precarious manner, partly by the milk of the dams, and partly by the flesh of the young.

The support of their cattle, made the article of *water* also a very important point. And, therefore, the book of Genesis, (the most venerable monument of antiquity, considered merely with a view to history,) will furnish us with frequent instances of violent contentions concerning wells; the exclusive property of which appears to have been established in the first digger or occupant, even in places where the ground and herbage remained yet in common. Thus, we find Abraham, who was but a sojourner, asserting his right to a well in the country of Abimelech, and exacting an oath for security, "because he had digged that well." And Isaac, about ninety years afterward, reclaimed this his father's property; and, after much contention with the philistines, was suffered to enjoy it in peace.

All this while, the soil and pasture of the earth, remained still in common as before, and open to every occupant; except, perhaps, in the neighborhood of towns, where the necessity of a sole and exclusive property in lands, (for the sake of agriculture,) was earlier felt, and therefore more readily complied with. Otherwise, when the multitude of men and cattle had consumed every convenience on one spot of ground, it was deemed a natural right to seize upon, and occupy such other lands, as would more easily supply their necessities.

We have a striking example of this, in the history of Abraham and his nephew Lot. When their joint substance became so great, that pasture and other conveniences grew scarce, the natural consequence was, that a strife arose between their servants; so that it was no longer practicable to dwell together. This contention, Abraham thus endeavored to compose: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee. Is not the whole of the land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." This plainly implies an acknowledged right in either, to occupy whatever ground he pleased, that was not preoccupied by other tribes. "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, even as the garden of the Lord. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan, and journeyed east; and Abraham dwelt in the land of Canaan."

As the world grew by degrees more populous, it daily became more difficult to find out new spots to inhabit, without encroaching upon former

occupants; and, by constantly occupying the same individual spot, the fruits of the earth were consumed, and its spontaneous products destroyed, without any provision for future supply or succession. It, therefore, became necessary to pursue some regular method of providing a constant subsistence; and this necessity produced, or at least promoted and encouraged the art of agriculture. And the art of agriculture, by a regular connection and consequence, introduced and established the idea of a more permanent property in the soil, than had hitherto been received and adopted.

It was clear, that the earth would not produce her fruits in sufficient quantities without the assistance of tillage; but who would be at the pains of tilling it, if another might watch an opportunity to seize upon and enjoy the product of his industry, art, and labor? Had not, therefore, a separate property in lands, as well as movables, been vested in some individuals, the world might have continued a forest, and men have been mere animals of prey. Whereas, now, (so generously has providence interwoven our duty and our happiness together,) the result of this necessity has been the ennobling of the human species, by giving it opportunities of improving its *rational*, as well as of exerting its *natural* faculties.

Necessity begat property; and, in order to insure that property, recourse was had to civil society, which brought along with it a long train of inseparable concomitants; states, government, laws, punishments, and the public exercise of religious duties. Thus connected together, it was found that a part only of society was sufficient to provide, by their manual labor, for the necessary subsistence of all; and leisure was given to others to cultivate the human mind, to invent useful arts, and to lay the foundations of science.

McGuffey's New Sixth Reader, 1857

* William Blackstone (1723-1780) was a prominent English legal scholar and jurist. His *Commentaries on the English Law* were the foundation of British and American jurisprudence for more than a century, and are still influential today in "originalist" legal interpretations.

1. The meaning of usufructuary is a temporary right of usage.
2. Animals with a sequacious nature readily stay together and follow a leader - sheep, cattle, goats, etc.

NUMBER 155

PILGRIM'S SONG
George Whitfield

Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things,
Towards heaven, thy native place.
Sun, and moon, and stars decay—
Time shall soon this earth remove—
Rise, my soul, and haste away
To seats prepared above.

The Reader's Guide

*George Whitfield was an Anglican, later Methodist, minister and traveling evangelist whose spellbinding preaching helped initiate the Great Awakening prior to the American Revolution.

NUMBER 156

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Jane Taylor*

In a remote period of antiquity, when the supernatural and the marvelous obtained a readier credence than now, it was fabled, that a stranger of extraordinary appearance was observed passing the streets of one of the magnificent cities of the east, remarking, with an eye of intelligent curiosity, every surrounding object.

Several individuals, gathering about him, questioned him concerning his country and his business; but they presently perceived that he was unacquainted with their language, and he soon discovered himself to be equally ignorant of the most common usages of society. At the same time, the dignity and intelligence of his air and demeanor, forbade the idea of his being either a barbarian or a lunatic.

When, at length, he understood their signs, that they wished to be informed whence he came, he pointed with great significance to the sky; upon which, the crowd, concluding him to be one of their deities, were proceeding to pay him divine honors; but he no sooner comprehended their design, than he rejected it with horror; and bending his knees and raising his hands toward heaven, in the attitude of prayer, gave them to understand that he also was a worshiper of the powers above.

After a time, it is said, the mysterious stranger accepted the hospitalities of one of the nobles of the city; under whose roof he applied himself with great diligence to the acquirement of the language, in which he made such surprising proficiency, that, in a few days, he was able to hold intelligent intercourse with those around him.

The noble host now resolved to take an early opportunity of satisfying his curiosity respecting the country and quality of his guest; and upon his expressing his desire, the stranger assured him, that he would answer his inquiries that evening, after sunset. Accordingly, as night approached, he led him forth upon the balconies of the palace, which overlooked the wealthy and populous city. Innumerable lights from the busy streets and

splendid palaces, were now reflected in the dark bosom of its noble river; where stately vessels, laden with rich merchandise from all parts of the known world, lay anchored in the port. This was a city in which the voice of the harp and the viol, and the sound of the millstone, were continually heard; and craftsmen of all kinds of craft were there; and the light of a candle was seen in every dwelling; and the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride were heard there.

The stranger mused a while upon the glittering scene; and listened to the confused murmur of mingling sounds. Then, suddenly raising his eyes to the starry firmament, he fixed them with an expressive gesture, on the the beautiful evening star, which was just sinking behind a dark grove, that surrounded one of the principal temples of the city. “Marvel not,” said he to his host, “that I am wont to gaze with fond affection on yon silvery star. That was my home; yes, I was lately an inhabitant of that tranquil planet; from whence a vain curiosity has tempted me to wander.

Often I beheld, with wondering admiration, this brilliant world of yours, even one of the brightest gems of our firmament, and the ardent desire I had long felt to know something of its condition, was at length unexpectedly gratified. I received permission and power from above to traverse the mighty void, and to direct my course to this distant sphere. To that permission, however, one condition was annexed, to which my eagerness for the enterprise induced me to hastily consent—namely, that I must thenceforth remain an inhabitant of this strange earth, and undergo all the vicissitudes to which its natives are subject. Tell me, therefore, I pray you, what is the lot of man; and explain more fully than I yet understand, all that I see and hear around me.”

“Truly, sir,” replied the astonished noble, “although I am altogether unacquainted with the manners and customs, products and privileges of your country, yet methinks, I cannot but congratulate you on your arrival in our world; especially since it has been your good fortune to alight on a part of it, affording such various sources of enjoyment, as our opulent and luxuriant city. And be assured it will be my pride and pleasure, to introduce you to all that is most worthy the attention of such a distinguished foreigner.”

Our adventurer, accordingly, was presently initiated into those arts of luxury and pleasure, which were well understood. He was introduced by his obliging friend to their public games and festivals; to their theatrical diversions and convivial assemblies; and, in a short time, he began to feel some relish for amusements, the meaning of which, at first, he could scarcely comprehend. The next lesson which became desirable to impart to him, was the necessity of acquiring wealth, as the only means of obtaining pleasure.

This fact was no sooner understood by the stranger, than he gratefully accepted the offer of his friendly host, to place him in a situation in which he might amass riches. To this object he began to apply himself with diligence; and soon became, in some measure, reconciled to the manners and customs of our planet, strangely as they differed from those of his own.

He had been but a few weeks diligently engaged in his new plans for the acquisition of wealth, when, walking in the cool of the day with his friend, in the outskirts of the city, his attentions was arrested by the appearance of a spacious enclosure near which they passed. He inquired the use to which it was appropriated. "it is," replied the nobleman, "a place of public internment." "I do not understand you," replied the stranger. "It is the place," repeated his friend, "where we bury our dead." "Excuse me, sir," replied his companion, with some embarrassment, "I must trouble you to explain yourself further."

The nobleman repeated the information in still plainer terms. "I am still at a loss to comprehend you perfectly," said the stranger, turning deadly pale. "This must relate to something of which I was not only totally ignorant in my own world, but of which I have, as yet, had no intimation in yours. I pray you, therefore, to satisfy my curiosity; for if I have any clue to your meaning, this, surely, is a matter of more mighty concern, than any to which you have hitherto directed me."

"My good friend," replied the nobleman, "you must indeed be a novice among us, if you have yet to learn that we must all, sooner or later, submit to take our place in these dismal abodes. Nor will I deny, that it is one of the least desirable of the circumstances which appertain to our condition; for which reason it is rarely referred to in polished society; and this accounts for your being hitherto uninformed on the subject. But truly, sir, if the

inhabitants of the place from whence you came are not liable to a similar misfortune, I advise you to betake yourself back again with all speed; for be assured there is no escape here, nor could I guaranty your safety even for a single hour.”

“Alas!” replied the adventurer, “I must submit to the conditions of my enterprise, of which, till now, I little understood the import. But explain to me, I beseech you, something more of the nature and consequence of this wondrous change, and tell me at what period it commonly happens to man.” While he thus spake, his voice faltered, and his whole frame shook violently; his countenance was as pale as death. By this time his companion, finding the discourse becoming more serious than was agreeable, declared he must refer him to the priests for further information, this subject being very much out of his province.

“How!” exclaimed the stranger, “then I cannot have understood you. Do the priests only die? Are you not to die also?” His friend, evading these questions, hastily conducted his importunate (imploring) companion to one of their magnificent temples, where he gladly consigned him to the instructions of the priesthood. The emotion, which the stranger had betrayed when he received the first idea of his death, was yet slight in comparison with that which he experienced as soon as he gathered, from the discourses of the the priests, some notions of immortality, and of the alternative of happiness or misery in a future state. But this agony of mind was exchanged for transport, when he learned that, by the performance of certain duties before death, the state of happiness might be secured.

His eagerness to learn the nature of these terms, excited the surprise and even the contempt of his sacred teachers. They advised him to remain satisfied for the present with the instructions he had received, and to defer the remainder of the discussion till tomorrow. “How!” exclaimed the novice, “say ye not that death may come at any hour? May it not come this hour? And what if it should come, before I have performed these conditions? O! withhold not the excellent knowledge from me, a single moment!”

The priests, suppressing a smile at his simplicity, proceeded to explain their theology to the attentive auditor (listener). But who can describe the ecstasy of his happiness, when he was given to understand the required conditions were, generally, of easy and pleasant performance, and the occasional difficulties, which

might attend them, would entirely cease with the short term of his earthly existence. "If, then, I understand you rightly," said he to his instructors, "this event you call death, and which seems in itself strange and terrible, is most desirable and blissful. What a favor is this which has been granted to me, in being sent to inhabit a planet in which I can die!"

The priests again exchanged smiles with each other; but their ridicule was wholly lost on the enraptured stranger. When the first transports of his emotion had subsided, he began to reflect with more uneasiness on the time he had already lost since his arrival.

"Alas! what have I been doing?" exclaimed he. "This gold which I have been collecting, tell me, reverend priests, will it avail me anything when the thirty or forty years are expired, which you say I may possibly sojourn on your planet?" "Nay," replied the priests, "but verily you will find it of excellent use so long as you remain in it."

"A very little of it will suffice me," replied he; "for consider how soon this period will be past. What avails it what my condition may be for so short a season? I will betake myself from this hour, to the grand concerns of which you have so charitably informed me."

Accordingly, from that period, continued the legend, the stranger devoted himself to the performance of those conditions on which, he was told, his future welfare depended; but, in so doing, he had an opposition to encounter wholly unexpected, and for which he was at a loss even to account. By thus devoting his chief attention to his chief interests, he excited the surprise, the contempt, and even the enmity of most of the inhabitants of the city; and they rarely mentioned him but with a term of reproach, which has been variously rendered in all the modern languages.

Nothing could equal the stranger's surprise at this circumstance; as well as that of his fellow citizens' appearing, generally, so extremely indifferent as they did, to their own interests. That they should have so little prudence and forethought, as to provide only for the necessities and pleasures, for that short part

of their existence in which they were to remain on this planet, he but consider as the effect of disordered intellect; so that he even returned their incivilities to himself with affectionate expostulation accompanied by lively emotions of compassion and amazement.

If ever he was tempted for a moment to violate any of the conditions of his future happiness, he bewailed his own madness with agonizing emotions; and to all the invitations he received from others to do anything inconsistent with his real interests, he had but one answer—"Oh," he would say, "I am to die, I am to die."

McGuffey's Fifth Reader, 1844

1. Bear in mind that this 'fable' or "legend" is an allegory (a type of metaphor), not a theological statement. It was meant simply to illustrate the folly of concentrating upon the temporal and ignoring the eternal. It presents the picture of salvation by works, which is not a Scriptural view. That potential misrepresentation of the basic Christian doctrine of 'salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ' is corrected in other selections in the old reader, especially "Paul's Defense before King Agrippa" extracted from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles.

*A popular writer of stories such as this.

NUMBER 157

THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

James R. Lowell*

And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays;
Whether we look or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten,
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest -
In the nice ear of Nature, which song is the best?

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
Everything is upward striving;
Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue -
'Tis the natural way of living:
What wonder if Sir Launfal now
Remembered the keeping of his vow.

"My golden spurs now bring to me,
And bring to me my richest mail,
For to-morrow I go over land and sea

In search of the Holy Grail;
 Shall never a bed for me be spread,
 Nor shall a pillow be under my head,
 Till I begin my vow to keep;
 Here on the rushes will I sleep,
 And perchance there may come a vision true
 Ere day create the world anew."
 Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,
 Slumber fell like a cloud on him,
 And into his soul the vision flew.

The crows flapped over by twos and threes,
 In the pool drownd the cattle up to their knees,
 The little birds sang as if it were
 The one day of summer in all the year,
 And the very leaves seemed to sing on the trees;
 The castle alone in the landscape lay
 Like an outpost of winter, dull and gray;
 Twas the proudest hall in the North Country,
 And never its gates might opened be,

Save to a lord or lady of high degree;
 Summer besieged it on every side,
 But the churlish stone her assaults defied;
 She could not scale the chilly wall,
 Though round it for leagues her pavilions tall
 Stretched left and right,
 Over the hills and out of sight;
 Green and broad was every tent,
 And out of each a murmur went
 Till the breeze fell off at night.

The drawbridge dropped with a surly clang,
 And through the dark arch a charger sprang,
 Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden knight,
 In his gilded mail, that flamed so bright
 It seemed the dark castle had gathered all
 Those shafts the fierce sun had shot over its wall
 In his siege of three hundred summers long,
 And, binding them all in one blazing sheaf,
 Had cast them forth: so, young and strong,
 And lightsome as a locust leaf,
 Sir Launfal flashed forth in his unscarred mail,

To seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.
As Sir Launfal made morn through the darksome gate,
He was 'ware of a leper crouched by the same,
Who begged with his hand and moaned as he sate;
And a loathing over Sir Launfal came;
The sunshine went out of his soul with a thrill,
The flesh 'neath his armour 'gan shrink and crawl,
And midway its leap his heart stood still
Like a frozen waterfall;
For this man, so foul and bent of stature,
Rasped harshly against his dainty nature,
And seemed the one blot on the summer morn—
So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.

The leper raised not the gold from the dust:
"Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor,
Though I turn me empty from his door;
That is no true alms which the hand can hold;
He gives nothing but worthless gold
Who gives from a sense of duty;
But he who gives a slender mite,
And gives to that which is out of sight,
That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty
Which runs through all and doth all unite -
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,
The heart outstretches its eager palms,
For a god goes with it and makes it store
To the soul that was starving in darkness before."

Within the hall are song and laughter,
The cheeks of Christmas glow red and jolly,
And sprouting in every corbel and rafter
With lightsome green of ivy and holly.
But the wind without was eager and sharp,
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,
And rattles and wrings
The icy strings,
Singing in dreary monotone,
A Christmas carol of its own,
Whose burden still, as he might guess,
Was — "Shelterless, shelterless, shelterless!"

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard gate,
For another heir in his earldom sate;
An old, bent man, worn out and frail,
He came back from seeking the Holy Grail;
Little he wrecked of his earldom's loss,
No more on his surcoat was blazoned the cross,
But deep in his soul the sign he wore,
The badge of the suffering and the poor.

Sir Launfal's raiment thin and spare
Was idle mail 'gainst the barbed air,
For it was just at the Christmas time;
So he mused, as he sat, of a sunnier clime,
And sought for a shelter from cold and snow
In the light and warmth of long ago;
He sees the snake-like caravan crawl
O'er the edge of the desert, black and small,
Then nearer and nearer, till, one by one,
He can count the camels in the sun,
As over the red-hot sands they pass
To where, in its slender necklace of grass,
The little spring laughed and leapt in the shade
And waved its signal of palms.

"For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an alms;"
The happy camels may reach the spring,
But Sir Launfal sees only the gruesome thing,
The leper, lank as the rain-blanch'd bone,
That cowers beside him, a thing as lone
And white as the ice-isles of Northern seas
In the desolate horror of his disease.

And Sir Launfal said: "I behold in thee
An image of Him who died on the tree;
Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns,
Thou also hast had the world's buffets and scorns,
And to thy life were not denied
The wounds in the hands and feet and side:
Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me;
Behold, through him I give to Thee!"

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes
And looked at Sir Launfal, and straightway he

Remembered in what a haughtier guise
He had flung an alms to leprosy,
When he girt his young life up in gilded mail
And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.
The heart within him was ashes and dust;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet's brink,
And gave the leper to eat and drink;
"Twas a moldy crust of coarse brown bread,
"Twas water out of a wooden bowl —
Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper fed,
And was red wine he drank with his thirsty soul.

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast face,
A light shone round about the place;
The leper no longer crouched at his side,
But stood before him glorified,
Shining and tall and fair and straight
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate
Himself the Gate whereby men can
Enter the temple of God in Man.

His words were shed softer than leaves from the pine,
And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on the brine,
Which mingle their softness and quiet in one
With the shaggy unrest they float down upon;
And the voice that was calmer than silence said,
"Lo! it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes, without avail,
Thou has spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold it is here — this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now;
This crust is my body, broken for thee,
This water his blood that died on the tree;
The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In what so we share with another's need;
Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three —
Himself, his hungry neighbor, and me."

Sir Launfal awoke as from a swoon:
"The Grail in my castle here is found!"

Hang my idle armor up on the wall,
Let it be the spider's banquet hall;
He must be fenced with stronger mail
Who would seek and find the Holy Grail."

The castle gate stands open now,
And the wanderer is welcome to the hall
As the hang-bird is to the elm-tree bough;
No longer scowl the turrets tall,
The summer's long siege at last is o'er;
When the first poor outcast went in at the door
She entered with him in disguise,
And mastered the fortress by surprise;
There is no spot she loves so well on ground,
She lingers and smiles there the whole year round;
The meanest (poorest) of serf on Sir Launfal's land
Has hall and bower at his command,
and there is no poor man in the North Country
But is lord of the earldom as much as he.

The Excelsior Fifth Reader, 1897

*James Russel Lowell (1819-1891) was a prominent New England poet and general "man of letters".

NUMBER 158

EXCERPT FROM LINCOLN'S SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Abraham Lincoln*

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan - to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

Pacific Coast Series, Fifth Reader, 1874

*Lincoln, of course, was our President during the Civil War.

NUMBER 159

PUBLIC FAITH

Ames*

To expatiate (speak) on the value of faith may pass with some men for declamation (empty rhetoric) - to such men I have nothing to say. To others I will argue - can any circumstance mark upon a people more turpitude and debasement? Can any thing tend more to make men think themselves mean, or degrade to a lower point their estimation of virtue, and their standard of action?

It would not merely demoralize mankind, it tends to break all the ligaments of society, to dissolve that mysterious charm which attracts individuals to the nation, and to inspire in its stead a repulsive sense of shame and disgust.

.....

It is thus we obey the laws of society, because they are the laws of virtue. In their authority we see, not the array of force and terror, but the venerable image of our country's honor. Every good citizen makes that honor his own, and cherishes it not only as precious, but as sacred. He is willing to risk his life in its defense, and is conscious that he gains protection while he gives it.

For, what rights of a citizen will be deemed inviolable, when a state renounces the principles that constitute their security? ...

Emerson's First-Class Reader, 1833

Some short excerpts.

*No further identificaton

NUMBER 160

FROM LIFE WITHOUT FREEDOM

Thomas Moore*

From life without freedom, oh! who would not fly?
For one day of freedom, oh! who would not die?
Hark, hark! 'tis the the trumpet, the call of the brave,
The death song of tyrants, and dirge of the slave.
Our country lies bleeding, oh! fly to her aid;
One arm that defends is worth hosts that invade.

In death's kindly bosom our last hope remains;
The dead fear no tyrants; the grave has no chains.
On, on to the combat! the heroes that bleed
For virtue and mankind are heroes indeed!
And oh! even if Freedom from this world be driven,
Despair not - at least we shall find her in heaven!

Pacific Coast Series, Fifth Reader, 1874

*Moore was an Irish poet, singer, song writer, and champion of Irish nationalism in the early 19th Century.

NUMBER 161

MY MOTHER'S HANDS

Anonymous

Such beautiful, beautiful hands!
They're neither white nor small;
And you, I know, would scarcely think
That they are fair at all.
I've looked on hands whose form and hue
A sculptor's dream might be;
Yet are those aged, wrinkled hands
More beautiful to me.

Such beautiful, beautiful hands!
Though heart were weary and sad,
Those patient hands kept toiling on,
That the children might be glad.
I always weep, as, looking back
To childhood's distant day,
I think how those hands rested not
When mine were at their play.

Such beautiful, beautiful hands!
They're growing feeble now,
For time and pain have left mark
On hands, and heart, and brow.
Alas! alas! the nearing time,
And the sad, sad day to me,
When 'neath the daisies, out of sight,
These hands will folded be.

But oh! beyond this shadow-land,
Where all is bright and fair,
I know full well these dear old hands
Will palms of victory bear;
Where crystal streams through endless years
Flow over golden sands,
And where the old grow young again,
I'll clasp my mother's hands.

McGuffey's Fifth Eclectic Reader, Revised Edition. 1879.

NUMBER 162

EXCERPTS FROM THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER
S. T. Coleridge*

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But, or ever a prayer had gushed,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

...
Oh, wedding guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

...
Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou wedding guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man, and bird, and beast.

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

Pacific Coast Series, Fifth Reader, 1874

*Samuel Taylor Coleridge was an English poet, known for brilliance and imagination in his early years, but his life and art were destroyed by opium addiction. Some of his opium dreams may color even his early work like the macabre imagery in the *Mariner*.

These are only a few scattered selections from the very long poem.

NUMBER 163

MOSS SIDE

Attributed to John Wilson*

Gilbert Ainslie was a poor man; and he had been a poor man all the days of his life, which were not few, for his thin hair was now waxing gray. He had been born and bred on the small moorland farm which he now occupied; and he hoped to die there, as his father and grandfather had done before him, leaving a family just above the more bitter wants of this world. Labor, hard and unremitting, had been his lot in life; but although sometimes severely tired, he had never repined (complained); and through all the mist, and gloom, and even the storms that had assailed him, he had lived on, from year to year, in that calm and resigned contentment, which unconsciously cheers the hearthstone of the blameless poor.

With his own hands he had ploughed, sowed, and reaped his often scanty harvest, assisted, as they grew up, by three sons, who, even in boyhood, were happy to work along with their father in the fields. Out of doors or in, Gilbert Ainslie was never idle. The spade, the shears, the plough-shaft, the sickle, and the flail, all came readily to hands that grasped them well; and not a morsel of food was eaten under his roof, or a garment worn there, that was not honestly, severely, nobly earned.

Gilbert Ainslie was a slave, but it was for them he loved with a sober and deep affection. The thralldom (servitude) under which he lived God had imposed, and it only served to give his character a shade of silent gravity, but not austere; to make his smiles fewer, but more heartfelt; to calm his soul at grace before and after meals; and to kindle it in morning and evening prayer.

There is no need to tell the character of the wife of such a man. Meek and thoughtful, yet gladsome and gay withal, her heaven was in her house; and her gentler and weaker hands helped to bar the door against want. Of ten children that had been born to them, they had lost three; and as they had fed, clothed, and educated them respectably, so did they give them who died a respectable funeral. The living did not grudge to give up, for a while, some of their daily comforts, for the sake of the dead; and bought, with the little sums which their industry had saved, decent mournings, worn on Sabbath, and then carefully laid by. Of the seven that survived, two sons were farm-servants in the neighborhood, while three daughters and two

sons remained at home, growing, or grown up, a small, happy, hardworking household.

Many cottages there are in Scotland like Moss-side, and many such humble and virtuous cottagers as were now beneath its roof of straw. The eye of the passing traveler may mark them, or mark them not, but they stand peacefully in thousands over all the land; and most beautiful do they make it, through all its wide valleys and narrow glens, - its low holms encircled by the rocky walls of some bonny burn¹, - its green mounts elated with their little crowning groves of plane-trees (hardy, long lived Northern European trees), - its yellow corn fields, - its bare, pastoral hillsides, and all its healthy moors (rolling, infertile land covered in native grasses, shrubs, and moss), on whose black bosom lie shining or concealed glades of excessive verdure (vegetation), inhabited by flowers, and visited only by the far-flying bees.

Moss-side was not beautiful to a hasty or careless eye; but when looked on and surveyed, it seemed a pleasant dwelling. Its roof, overgrown with grass and moss, was almost as green as the ground out of which its weather-stained walls appeared to grow. The moss behind it was separated from a little garden, by a narrow slip of arable land, the dark color of which showed that it had been won from the wild by patient industry, and by patient industry retained. It required a bright sunny day to make Moss-side fair; but then it was fair indeed; and when the little brown moorland birds were singing their short songs among the rushes and the heather, or a lark, perhaps lured thither by some green barley field for its undisturbed nest, rose singing all over the enlivened solitude, the little bleak farm smiled like the paradise of poverty, sad and affecting in its lone and extreme simplicity.

The boys and girls had made some plots of flowers among the vegetables that the little garden supplied for their homely meals; pinks and carnations, brought from walled gardens of rich men farther down in the cultivated strath (wider valley), grew here with somewhat diminished luster; a bright show of tulips had a strange beauty in the midst of the moorland; and the smell of roses mixed well with that of the clover, the beautiful fair clover that loves the soil and the air of Scotland, and gives the rich and balmy milk to the poor man's lips.

In this cottage, Gilbert's youngest child, a girl about nine years of age, had been lying for a week in a fever. It was now Saturday evening, and the ninth day of the disease. Was she to live or die? It seemed as if a very few hours were between the innocent creature and Heaven. All the symptoms were there of approaching death. The parents knew well the change that comes

over the human face, whether it be in infancy, youth, or prime, just before the departure of the spirit; and as they stood together before Margaret's bed, it seemed to them that the fatal shadow had fallen upon her features.

The surgeon of the parish lived some miles distant, but they expected him now every moment, and many a wistful look was directed by tearful eyes along the moor. The daughter who was out at service, came anxiously home on this night, the only one that could be allowed her, for the poor must work in their grief, and hired servants must do their duty to those whose bread they eat, even when nature is sick, - sick at heart. Another of the daughters came in from the potato field beyond the brae (hillside), with what was to be their frugal supper.

The calm noiseless spirit of life was in and around the house, while death seemed to be dealing with one who, a few days ago, was like light upon the floor, and the sound of music that had always breathed up when most wanted; glad and joyous in common talk, sweet, silvery, and mournful, when it joined in hymn or psalm.

One after the other, they all continued going up to the bedside, and then coming away sobbing or silent, to see their merry little sister, who used to keep dancing all day like a butterfly in a meadow field, or like a butterfly with shut wings on a flower, trifling for a while in the silence of her joy, now tossing restlessly on her bed, and scarcely sensible to the words of endearment whispered around her, or the kisses dropt with tears, in spite of themselves, on her burning forehead.

Utter poverty often kills the affections; but a deep, constant, and common feeling of this world's hardships, and an equal participation in all those struggles by which they may be softened, unite husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, in thoughtful and subdued tenderness, making them happy indeed while the circle round the fire is unbroken, and yet preparing them every day to bear the separation, when some one or other is taken slowly or suddenly away. Their souls are not moved by fits and starts, although, indeed, nature sometimes will wrestle with necessity; and there is a wise moderation both in the joy and the grief of the intelligent poor, which keeps lasting trouble away from their earthly lot, and prepares them silently and unconsciously for Heaven.

"Do you think the child is dying?" said Gilbert with a calm voice to the surgeon, who, on his wearied horse, had just arrived from another sickbed, over the misty range of hills; and had been looking steadfastly for some minutes on the little patient. The humane man knew the family well, in the

midst of whom he had been standing, and replied, "While there is life there is hope; but my pretty little Margaret is, I fear, in the last extremity." There were no loud lamentation at those words - all had before known, though they would not confess to themselves what they were now told - and though the certainty that was in the words of the skillful man made their hearts beat for a little with sicker throbbings, made their faces paler, yet death had been before in this house, and in this case he came, as he always does, in awe, but not in terror.

There were wandering, and wavering, and dreamy delirious phantasies in the brain of the innocent child; but the few words she indistinctly uttered were affecting, not rending to the heart, for it was plain that she thought herself herding her sheep in the green, silent pastures, and sitting wrapped in her plaid (large shawl) upon the sunny side of the Birk-knowe (a prominent hill). She was too much exhausted - there was too little life - too little breath in her heart, to frame a tune; but some of her words seemed to be from favorite old songs; and at last her mother wept, and turned aside her face, when the child, whose blue eyes were shut, and her lips almost still, breathed out these lines of the beautiful twenty-third psalm:

The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want.

He makes me down to lie

In pastures green; he leadeth me

The quiet waters by.

The child was now left with none but her mother by the bedside, for it was said to be best so; and Gilbert and his family sat down round the kitchen fire, for a while, in silence. In about a quarter of an hour, they began to rise calmly, and each go to his allotted work. One of the daughters went forth with the pail to milk the cow, and another begun to set the table in the middle of the floor for supper, covering it with a white cloth. Gilbert viewed the usual household arrangements with a solemn and untroubled eye; and there was almost the faint light of a grateful smile on his cheek, as he said to the worthy surgeon, "You will partake of our fare after your day's travel and toil on humanity."

In a short, silent half hour, the potatoes and oat-cakes, butter and milk were on board; and Gilbert, lifting up his toil-hardened, but manly hand, with a slow motion, at which the room was as hushed as if it had been empty, closed his eyes in reverence, and asked a blessing. There was a little stool, on which no one sat, by the old man's side. It had been put there unwittingly, when the other seats were all placed in their usual order; but the golden head that was wont to rise at that part of the table was now

wanting. There was silence – not a word was said – their meal was before them, – God had been thanked, and they began to eat.

While they were at their silent meal, a horseman came galloping to the door, and, with a loud voice, called out that he had been sent express with a letter to Gilbert Ainsle; at the same time rudely, and with an oath, demanded a dram for his trouble. The eldest son, a lad of eighteen, fiercely seized the bridle of his horse, and turned his head away from the door. The rider, somewhat alarmed at the flushed face of the powerful stripling (young man), threw down the letter and rode off.

Gilbert took the letter from his son's hand, casting, at the same time, a half upbraiding look on his face that was returning to its former color. "I feared, " – said the youth, with a tear in his eye, "I feared that the brute's voice, and the trampling of the horse's feet would have disturbed her." Gilbert held the letter hesitatingly in his hand, as if afraid, at that moment, to read it; at length, he said aloud to the surgeon: "You know that I am a poor man, and debt, if justly incurred, and punctually paid when due, is no dishonor." Both his hand and his voice shook slightly as he spoke; but he opened the letter from the lawyer, and read it in silence.

At this moment his wife came from her child's bedside and looking anxiously at her husband, told him "not mind about the money, that no man, who knew him, would arrest his goods, or put him into prison. Though, dear me, it is cruel to be put to it thus, when our bairn ('born', child) is dying, and when, if it be the Lord's will, she should have a decent burial, poor innocent, like them that went before her." Gilbert continued reading the letter with a face on which no emotion could be discovered; and then, folding it up, he gave it to his wife, told her she might read it if she chose, and then put it in his desk in the room, beside the poor dear bairn. She took it, from him, without reading it, and crushed it into her bosom; for she turned her ear towards her child, and, thinking she heard it stir, ran out hastily to its bedside.

Another hour of trial passed, and the child was still swimming for its life. The very dogs knew there was grief in the house, and lay without stirring, as if hiding themselves, below the long table at the window. One sister sat with an unfinished gown on her knees, that she had been sewing for the dear child, and still continued at the hopeless work, she scarcely knew why; and often, often, putting up her hand to wipe away a tear.

"What is that?" said the old man to his eldest daughter: "What is that you are laying on the shelf?" She could scarcely reply that it was a ribbon and

an ivory comb that she had bought for little Margaret, against the night of the dancing school ball.

And, at these words, the father could not restrain a long, deep, and bitter groan; at which the boy, nearest in age to his dying sister, looked up, weeping in his face, and letting the tattered book of old ballads, which he had been pouring over, but not reading, fall out of his hands, he rose from his seat, and, going into his father's bosom, kissed him, and asked God to bless him; for the holy heart of the boy was moved within him; and the old man, as he embraced him, felt that, in his innocence and simplicity, he was indeed a comforter.

"The lord giveth and the Lord taketh away," said the old man; "blessed be the name of the Lord."

The outer door gently opened, and he, whose presence had, in former years, brought peace and resignation hither when their hearts had been tried, even as they now were tried, stood before them. On the night before the Sabbath, the minister of Auchindown never left his manse (parsonage), except, as now, to visit the sick or dying bed.

Scarcely could Gilbert reply to his first question about his child, when the surgeon came from the bedroom and said, "Margaret seems lifted up by God's hand above death and the grave; I think she will recover. She has fallen asleep; and when she awakes, I hope - I believe - that the danger will be past, and that your child will live."

They were all prepared for death; but now they were found unprepared for life. One wept that had, till then, locked up all her tears within her heart; another gave a short, palpitating shriek; and the tender hearted Isabel, who had nursed the child when she was a baby, fainted away. The youngest brother gave way to gladsome smiles; and, calling out his dog Hector, who used to sport with him and his little sister on the moor, he told the tidings to the dumb, irrational creature, whose eyes, it is certain, sparkled with a sort of joy.

The clock, for some days, had been prevented from striking the hours; but the silent fingers pointed to the hour of nine; and that, in the cottage of Gilbert Ainslie, was the stated hour of family worship. His own honored minister took the book;

*He waled (chose) a portion with judicious care:
And let us worship God, he said, with solemn air.*

A chapter was read – a prayer said; – and so, too, was sung a psalm; but it was sung low, and with suppressed voices, lest the child’s saving sleep might be broken; and now and then the female voices trembled, or some one of them ceased altogether; for there had been tribulation and anguish, and now hope and faith were tried in the joy of thanksgiving.

The child still slept; and its sleep seemed more sound and deep. It appeared almost certain that the crisis was over, and that the flower was not to fade. “Children,” said Gilbert, “our happiness is in the love we bear to one another; and our duty is in submitting to and serving God. Gracious, indeed, has he been unto us. Is not the recovery of our little darling, dancing, Margaret, worth all the gold that was ever mined? If we had had thousands of thousands, would we not have filled up her grave with the worthless dross of gold, rather than that she should have gone down there with her sweet face and all her rosy smiles?” There was no reply; but a joyful sobbing all over the room.

“Never mind the letter, nor the debt, father,” said the eldest daughter. “We have all some little things of our own – a few pounds – and we shall be able to raise as much as will keep arrest and prison at a distance. Or if they do take our furniture out of the house, all except Margaret’s bed, who cares? We will sleep on the floor; and there are potatoes in the field, and clear water in the spring. We need for nothing, want nothing; blessed be God for all his mercies.”

Gilbert went into the sickroom, and got the letter from his wife, who was sitting at the head of the bed, watching, with a heart blessed beyond all bliss, the calm and regular breathings of her child. “This letter,” he said mildly, “is not from a hard creditor. Come with me while I read it to our children.” The letter was read aloud, and it was fitted to diffuse pleasure and satisfaction through the dwelling of poverty. It was from an executor to the will of a distant relative, who had left Gilbert Ainsle fifteen hundred pounds.

“This sum,” said Gilbert, “is a large one to folks like us, but not, I hope, large enough to turn our heads, or make us think ourselves all lords and ladies. It will do more, far more, than put me fairly above the world at last. I believe, that with it, I may buy this very farm, on which my forefathers have toiled. But God, whose Providence has sent this temporal blessing, may send wisdom and prudence how to use it, and humble and grateful hearts to us all.”

“You will be able to send me to school all the year round now father,” said the youngest boy. “And you may leave the flail to your sons now, father,” said the eldest. “You may hold the plough still, for you draw a straighter furrow than any of us; but hard work is for young sinews; and you may sit now oftener in your armchair by the ingle (fireplace). You will not need to rise now in the dark, cold, and snowy winter mornings, and keep thrashing corn in the barn for hours by candle light, before the late dawning.”

There was silence, gladness, and sorrow, and but little sleep in Moss-side, between the rising and setting of the stars, that were now out in thousands, clear, bright, and sparkling over the unclouded sky. Those who had lain down for an hour or two in bed, could scarcely be said to have slept; and when, about morning, little Margaret awoke, an altered creature, pale, languid, and unable to turn herself on her lowly bed, but with meaning in her eyes, memory in her mind, affection in her heart, and coolness in all her veins, a happy group were watching the first faint smile that broke over her features; and never did one who stood there forget that Sabbath morning, on which she seemed to look round upon them all with a gaze of fair and sweet bewilderment, like one half conscious of having been rescued from the power of the grave.

The American First Class Reader, 1823

* John Wilson (1785-1854) was a Scottish writer whose works often were published under pseudonyms.

1. Small islands (holms) in low lying pasture land surrounded by pretty brooks (bonny burns).

NUMBER 164

THE PRESENT AGE

Channing

The Present Age! In these brief words, what a world of thought is comprehended! what infinite movement! what joys and sorrows! what hope and despair! what faith and doubt! what silent grief and loud lament! what fierce conflicts and subtle schemes of policy! what private and public revolutions! In the period, through which many of us have passed, what thrones have been shaken! what hearts have bled! what millions have been butchered by their fellows! what hopes of philanthropy, have been blighted! and, at the same time, what magnificent enterprises have been achieved! what new provinces won to science and art! what rights and liberties secured to nations!

It is a privilege to have lived in an age so stirring, so eventful. It is an age never to be forgotten. Its voice of warning and encouragement, is never to die. Its impression on history indelible. Amidst its events, the American Revolution, - the first distinct, solemn assertion of the rights of man, - and the French Revolution, that volcanic force which shook the earth to its center, are never to pass from men's minds.

...

There is, however, something greater in the age than in its greatest men; it is the appearance of a new power in the world, - the appearance of the multitude of men on that stage where as yet the few have acted their parts alone. This influence is to endure to the end of time. What more of the present is to survive? Perhaps much, of which we now take no note. The glory of an age is often hidden from itself.

Perhaps some word has been spoken in our day, which we have not deigned to hear, but which is to grow clearer and louder through all ages. Perhaps some silent thinker among us, is at work in his closet, whose name is to fill the earth. Perhaps there sleeps in his cradle some reformer who is to move the church and the world, - who is to open a new era in history. - who is to fire the human soul with new hope and new daring.

What else is there to survive the age? That which the age has little thought of, but which is living in us all, - the SOUL, the Immortal Spirit. Of this all ages are the unfoldings, and it is greater than all. We must not feel, in the contemplation of the vast movements of our own and former times, as if we ourselves were nothing. I repeat it, we are greater than all. We are to survive our age, - to comprehend it, and to pronounce its sentence. As yet, however, we are encompassed with darkness. The issues of our time, how obscure! The future, into which it opens, who of us can foresee? To the Father of all ages, I commit this future with humble, yet courageous and unfaltering hope.

Sanders Fifth Reader, 1855.

NUMBER 165

THE TWO WEAVERS
Hannah More*

As at their work two weavers sat,
Beguiling time with friendly chat,
They touched upon the price of meat,
So high, a weaver scarce could eat.

"What with my brats and sickly wife,"
Quoth Dick, "I's almost tired of life;
So hard my work, so poor my fare,
'T is more than mortal man can bear.

"How glorious is the rich man's state!
His house so fine! his wealth so great!
Heaven is unjust, you must agree;
Why all to him? why none to me?"

"In spite of what the Scripture teaches,
In spite of all the parson preaches,
This world (indeed I've thought so long)
Is ruled, methinks, extremely wrong.

"Where'er I look, however I range,
'Tis all confused, and hard, and strange;
The good are troubled and oppress'd
And all the wicked are the bless'd."

Quoth John, "Our ignorance is the cause
Why thus we blame our Maker's laws;
Parts of his ways alone we know;
'T is all that man can see below.

"Seest thou that carpet, not half done,
Which thou, dear Dick, hast well begun?
Behold the wild confusion there,
So rude the mass, it makes one stare!

"A stranger, ignorant of the trade,
Would say, no meaning's there convey'd;
For where's the middle, where's the border?
Thy carpet now is all disorder."

Quoth Dick, "My work is yet in bits,
But still, in every part it fits;
Besides, you reason like a lout -

Why, man, that *carpet's inside out.*"

Says John, "Thou say'st the thing I mean,
And now I hope to cure thy spleen;
This world, which clouds thy soul with doubt,
Is but a carpet inside out.

"As when we view these shreds and ends,
We know not what the whole intents;
So, when on earth things look but odd,
They're working still some scheme of God.

"No plan, no pattern, can we trace;
All wants proportion, truth, and grace,
The motley mixture we deride,
Nor see the beauteous upper side.

"But when we reach that world of light,
And view those works of God aright,
Then shall we see the whole design,
and own the workman is divine.

"What now seem random strokes, will there
All order and design appear,
Then shall we praise what here we spurned,
For then the carpet shall be turned."

"Thou'rt right," quoth Dick, "no more I'll grumble
That this sad world's so strange a jumble,
My impious doubts are put to flight,
For my own carpet sets me right."

Raub's Normal Fifth Reader, 1878

*No additional identification.

NUMBER 166

THE TWO ROADS

Jean Paul Frederic Richter*

It was New Year's night. An aged man was standing at a window. He raised his mournful eyes towards the deep blue sky, where the stars were floating like white lilies on the surface of a clear, calm lake. Then he cast them on the earth, where few more hopeless beings than himself now moved towards their certain goal - the tomb. Already he had passed sixty of the stages which lead to it, and he had brought from his journey nothing but errors and remorse. His health was destroyed, his mind vacant, his heart sorrowful, and his old age devoid of comfort.

The days of his youth rose up in a vision before him, and he recalled the solemn moment when his father had placed him at the entrance of two roads - one leading into a peaceful, sunny land, covered with a fertile harvest, and resounding with soft, sweet songs; the other leading the wanderer into a deep, dark cave, whence there was no issue, where poison flowed instead of water, and where serpents hissed and crawled.

He looked towards the sky, and cried out in his agony, "O youth return! O my father, place me once more at the entrance to life, that I may choose the better way!" But his father and the days of his youth had both passed away.

He saw wandering lights float away over dark marshes, and then disappear. These were the days of his wasted life. He saw a star fall from heaven, and vanish in darkness. This was an emblem of himself; and the sharp arrows of unavailing remorse struck home to his heart. Then he remembered his early companions, who entered life with him, but who, having trod the paths of virtue and of labor, were now honored and happy on this New Year's night.

The clock in the high church tower struck, and the sound, falling on his ear, recalled his parents' early love for him, their erring son; the lessons they had taught him, the prayers they had offered up in his behalf. Overwhelmed with shame and grief, he dared no longer look towards that heaven where his father dwelt; his darkened eyes dropped tears, and with one despairing effort, he cried aloud, "Come back my early days! Come back!"

And his youth did return; for all this was but a dream which had visited his slumbers on New Year's night. He was still young; his faults alone were real. He thanked God fervently that time was still his own; that he had not yet entered the deep, dark cavern, but that he was free to tread the road leading to the peaceful land where sunny harvests wave.

Ye who still linger on the threshold of life, doubting which path to choose, remember that, when years are passed, and your feet stumble on the dark mountain, you will cry bitterly, but cry in vain, "O youth return! O, give me back my early days!"

Webster-Franklin Fifth Reader, 1871

Richter, 1763-1825, was a German writer.

NUMBER 167

THE VOICES OF THE DEAD

Orville Dewey

The world is filled with the voices of the dead. They speak not from the public records of the great world only, but from the private history of our own experience. They speak to us in a thousand remembrances, in a thousand incidents, events, and associations. They speak to us, not only from their silent graves, but from the throng of life. Though they are invisible, yet life is filled with their presence. They are with us by the silent fireside and in the secluded chamber. They are with us in the paths of society, and in the crowded assemblies of men.

They speak to us from the lonely way-side; and they speak to us from the venerable walls that echo to the steps of a multitude, and to the voice of prayer. Go where we will, the dead are with us. We live, we converse with those who once lived and conversed with us. Their well-remembered tone mingles with the whispering breeze, with the sound of the falling leaf, with the jubilee shout of the spring-time. The earth is filled with their shadowy train.

But there are more substantial expressions of the presence of the dead with the living. The earth is filled with the labors, the works, of the dead. Almost all the literature in the world, the discoveries of science, the glories of art, the ever-enduring temples, the dwelling places of generations, the comforts and improvement of life, the languages, the maxims, the opinions of the living, the very frame-work of society, the institutions of nations, the fabrics of empires, - all are the works of the dead; by these, they who are dead yet speak.

Life, - busy, eager, craving, importunate, absorbing life, - yet what is its sphere compared with the empire of death? What is the sphere of visible, compared with the vast empire of invisible, life? A moment in time; a speck in immensity; a shadow amidst enduring and unchangeable realities; a breath of existence amidst the ages and regions of undying life! They live, - they live indeed, whom, we call dead. They live in our thoughts; they live in our blessings; they live in our life, - "death hath no power over them."

The effect of a last sickness to develop and perfect the virtues of our friends, is often so striking and beautiful, as to seem more than a compensation for all the sufferings of disease. How often does that touching decay, that gradual unclothing of the mortal body, seem to be a putting on the garments of immortal beauty and life!

That pale cheek; that placid brow; that sweet serenity spread over the whole countenance; that spiritual, almost supernatural brightness of the eye, as if light from another world shone through it; that noble and touching

disinterestedness of the parting spirit, which utters no complaint, which breathes no sigh, which speaks no word of fear nor apprehension to wound its friend, which is calm and cheerful, amidst daily declining strength and the sure approach to death; and then, at length, that last, firm, triumphant, consoling discourse, and that last look of all mortal tenderness and immortal trust; what hallowed memories are these to soothe, to purify, to enrapture surviving love!

Death, too, set a seal upon the excellence that sickness unfolds and consecrates. There is no living virtue, concerning which, such is our frailty, we must not fear that it may fall; or at least, that it may somewhat fail from its steadfastness. It is a painful, it is a just fear, in the bosoms of the best and purest beings on earth, that some dreadful lapse may come over them, or over those whom they hold in the highest reverence.

But death, fearful, mighty as is its power, is yet a power that is subject to virtue. It gives victory to virtue. It brings relief to the heart from its profoundest fear. Yes, death, dark power of earth though it seems, does yet inspire virtue, as it were, in Heaven. It sets it up on high, for eternal admiration. It fixes its places never more to be changes; as a star to shine onward, and onward, through the depths of the everlasting ages.

In life there are many things which interfere with a just estimate of the virtues of others. There are, in some cases, jealousies and misconstructions, and there are false appearances, there are veils upon the heart that hide its most secret workings and its sweetest affections from us; there are earthly clouds that come between us and the excellence that we love. So that it is not, perhaps, till a friend is taken from us that we entirely feel his value, and appreciate his worth. The vision is loveliest at its vanishing away; and we perceive not, perhaps, till we see the parting wing, that an angel has been with us!

Yet if we are not, in any degree, blind to the excellence we possess, if we do feel all the value of the treasure which our affections hold dear, - yet, how does that earthly excellence take not only a permanent, but a saintly character, as it passes beyond the bounds of mortal frailty and imperfection! How does death enshrine it, for a homage, more reverential and holy than is ever given to living worth!

Sanders Fifth Reader

NUMBER 168

TRIAL OF THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM

W. B. Collyer*

It is impossible to pass through Canaan without turning aside to the land of Moriah, and contemplating the scared mountain, on which a patriarch's faith triumphed over a father's feelings. According to the promise of God, Isaac was born when Abraham was a hundred years old. He had seen his son preserved from the perils of infancy. His mother had gazed with unspeakable pleasure upon her child, the son of her vows, who was now fast pressing toward manhood. The parents of this amiable youth were looking forward to a peaceful dismissal of the toils of life, and to a happy termination of a tranquil old age.

Abraham "planted a grove in Beersheba" and rested under its shadow. This quiet retreat, alas! is not impervious to sorrow! This delightful serenity resembles the stillness of the air, which usually produces a tempest,—it bodes approaching trial. "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, 'Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I shall tell thee of.'"

What a command was this! To stain his hand with the blood of a lamb which he had fed, would be a task to a feeling mind; but the requisition is for a "Son."

To select one from a numerous family, would be a cruel effort. Let the mother look round upon her children, when they are assembled before her like a flock, and say which she could spare from among them! But, the demand is, "Take thine *only* son,"—in whom the life of both parents is bound up. To part with an only child for a season, opens the fountain of a mother's tears, and adds to the gray hairs of his father. To lose him by death, is to cause them to go bitterly in the anguish of their soul all their days. What was it, then, to offer an only son as a sacrifice, and to be himself the priest who should plunge the knife into his bosom?

But he obeys,—obeys without a murmur! He rises early in the morning to immolate his child, and to offer, on the altar of God, all that he held most dear in this world. On the third day, the destined mountain marks its elevation along the line of the horizon, and meets the eye of the afflicted parent. The servants are not permitted to witness the awful scene, the solemnity of

which they might disturb by lamentations,—or the execution of which they might prevent by force,—or, lacking their master's faith, might draw from it inferences unfavorable to religion.

At this moment, to awaken in his bosom extreme torture, "Isaac spake unto Abraham, his father, and said, 'My father;' and he said 'Here am I my son.' And he said 'Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' And Abraham said, 'My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering;' so they went both of them together."

But we will no longer attempt to scent the violet, and to paint the rainbow. We must draw a veil over the scene; for who can enter into a father's anguish, as he raised his hand against his child? And who shall be bold enough to attempt a description of his rapture, when Heaven, which had put his faith to so severe trial, commanded him to forbear, and indeed provided itself a victim?

Sander's Fourth Reader, 1842

*William Bengo Collyer, 1782-1854, an English minister and hymnist.

NUMBER 169

TRUE GREATNESS (an excerpt)

Charles Sumner*

God only is great! is the admired and triumphant exclamation with which Masillon commences his funeral discourse on the deceased monarch of France, called in his own age 'Louis the Great'. It is in the attributes of God that we are to find the elements of true greatness. Man is great by the godlike qualities of justice, benevolence, knowledge, and power. And as justice and benevolence are higher than knowledge and power, so are the just and benevolent higher than those who are intelligent and powerful only.

Should all these qualities auspiciously combine in one person on earth, then we might look to behold a mortal, supremely endowed, reflecting the image of his maker. But even knowledge and power, without those higher attributes, cannot constitute true greatness. It is by his goodness that God is most truly known; so, also, is the great man. When Moses said unto the lord: "Show me thy glory," the Lord said: "I will make all my goodness pass before thee."

It will be easy now to distinguish between those who are only memorable in the world's annals and those who are truly great. If we pass in review the historic names to whom flattery or a false appreciation (understanding) of character has expressly awarded this title, we shall find its grievous ineptitude.

Alexander, drunk with victory and wine, whose remains after death, at the early age of thirty-two, were borne on a golden car through conquered Asia, was not truly great. Caesar, the ravager of distant lands, and the trampler upon the liberties of his own country, with an unsurpassed combination of intelligence and power, was not truly great. Peter of Russia, the organizer of the material prosperity of his country, the murder of his own son - despotic, inexorable, unnatural, vulgar, was not truly great.

Frederic of Prussia, the heartless and consummate general, skilled in the barbarous art of war, who played the game of robbery with "human lives for dice," was not truly great. Surely there is no Christian grandeur in their careers. None of the beatitudes showered upon them a blessed influence. They were not poor in spirit, or meek, or merciful, or pure in heart. They did not hunger and thirst after justice. They were not peacemakers. They did not suffer persecution for justice's sake.

It is men like these that the good Abbé St. Pierre of France, in works that deserve well of mankind, has termed *illustrious* in contradistinction to *great*. Their influence has been extensive, their power mighty, their names have been famous: but they were groveling, selfish, and inhuman in their aims, with little of love to God, and less to man.

...

Pacific Coast Series, Fifth Reader

*Sumner was an American lawyer, orator, writer, and politician of the Civil War era.

NUMBER 170

UNITED AT LAST
Anonymous

"O mother! What do they mean by blue?
And what do they mean by gray?"
Was heard from the lips of a little child
As she bounded in from play.
The mother's eyes filled up with tears;
She turned to her darling fair,
And smoothed away from the sunny brow
Its treasure of golden hair.

"Why, mother's eyes are blue, my sweet,
And grandpa's hair is gray,
And the love we bear our darling child
Grows stronger every day."
"But what did they mean?" persisted the child;
"For I saw two cripples to-day,
And one of them said he fought for the blue,
The other, he fought for the gray.

"Now he of the blue had lost a leg,
And the other had but one arm,
And both seemed worn and weary and sad,
Yet their greeting was kind and warm.
They told of the battles in days gone by,
Till it made my young blood thrill;
The leg was lost in the Wilderness fight,
And the arm on Malvern Hill.

"They sat on the stone by the farm-yard gate,
And talked for an hour or more,
Till their eyes grew bright and their hearts seemed
Warm
With fighting their battles o'er;
And they parted at last with a friendly grasp,
In a kindly, brotherly way,
Each calling on God to speed the time
Uniting the blue and the gray."

Then the mother thought of other days -
Two stalwart boys from her riven (torn);
How they knelt at her side and lispingly prayed,
"Our Father which art in heaven;"
How one wore the gray and the other the blue;
How they passed away from sight,

And had gone to the land where gray and blue
Are merged in colors of light.

And she answered her darling with golden hair,
While her heart was sadly wrung
With the thoughts awakened in that sad hour
By her innocent, prattling tongue:
"The blue and the gray are the colors of God,
They are seen in the sky at even,
And many a noble, gallant soul
Has found them a passport to heaven."

New National Fourth Reader, 1884

NUMBER 171

THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

E. Cooper*

The true Christian must show that he is in *earnest* about religion. In the management of his worldly affairs, he must let it be clearly seen, that he is not influenced by a worldly mind; that his heart is not upon earth; that he pursues his worldly calling from a principle of duty, not from a sordid love of gain; and that, in truth, his treasures are in heaven. He must, therefore not only “provide things honest in the sight of all men;” not only avoid everything which is fraudulent and unjust in his dealings with others; not only openly protest against those iniquitous practices which the custom of trade too frequently countenances and approves;—but, also, he must “let his moderation be known unto all men.”

He must not push his gains with seeming eagerness, even to the utmost lawful extent. He must exercise forbearance. He must be content with moderate profits. He must sometimes even forgo advantages, which, in themselves, he might innocently take, lest he should seem to give any ground for suspecting that his heart is secretly set upon these things.

Thus, also, with respect to worldly pleasures; he must endeavor to convince men that the pleasures which religion furnishes, are far greater than those which the world can yield. While, therefore, he conscientiously keeps from joining in those trifling, and, too often, profane amusements, in which ungodly men profess to seek their happiness, he must yet labor to show, that, in keeping from those things, he is, in respect to real happiness, no loser, but even a gainer by religion. He must avoid everything which may look like moroseness and gloom. He must cultivate a cheerfulness of spirit. He must endeavor to show, in his whole deportment, the contentment and tranquility which naturally flow from heavenly affections, from a mind at peace with God, and from a hope full of immortality.

The spirit which Christianity enjoins and produces, is so widely different from the spirit of the world, and so immensely superior to it, that, it cannot fail of being noticed, so it cannot fail of being admired, even by those who are strangers to its power. Do you ask in what particulars this spirit shows itself? I answer, in the exercise of humility, of meekness, of gentleness; in patient bearing of injuries, in a readiness to forgive offenses; in a uniform endeavor to overcome evil with good; in self-denial and

disinterestedness (impartiality); in universal kindness and courtesy; in slowness to wrath, in an unwillingness to hear or speak evil of others; in a forwardness to defend, to advise, and to assist them, in loving our enemies; in blessing them that curse us; in doing good to them that curse us; in doing good to them that hate us. These are genuine fruits of true Christianity.

The Christian must “let his light shine before men,” by discharging in a faithful, a diligent, and a consistent manner, the personal and particular duties of his station. As a member of society, he must be distinguished by a blameless and an inoffensive conduct; by a simplicity and an ingenuousness of character, free from every degree of guile; by uprightness and fidelity in all his engagements. As a neighbor, he must be kind, friendly, and accommodating. His discourse must be mild and instructive. He must labor to prevent quarrels, to reconcile those who differ, to comfort the afflicted. In short, he must be “ready for every good work;” and all his dealings with others must show the Heavenly Principle, which dwells and works in his heart.

The American Common-School Reader and Speaker, 1844

*No further identification.

NUMBER 172

THE EVILS OF COVETOUSNESS

Dick's Essay on Covetousness

The records of history, as I have had occasion to notice, contain little else than the disgusting details of the mischiefs and the miseries inflicted on the world by the ambition and rapaciousness of mankind. The earth, which might long ago have been transformed into a scene of fertility and beauty by the benevolent agency of human beings, has, in most of its regions, been turned into a scene of desolation by destroying armies, prowling over every country in quest for plunder. Such is the insatiable appetite of *avarice*, that, not contented with "devouring widow's houses," spoiling the weak and defenseless in her native land, she has aimed at enriching herself with the plunder of Empires. Like hell and the grave, "she has enlarged her desire, and opened her mouth without measure; and the glory, the multitude and the pomp" of temples, cities, kingdoms and continents, have become a prey to her ever-craving appetite, and been swallowed up and devoured.

Yet, after all, she is never satisfied, and the whole earth becomes too narrow a theater for her rapacity and ambition. Alexander, in the mad career of his conquests, subdued and plundered the greater part of the known world, and had the riches and splendor of its most magnificent cities at his command; yet, when he had finished his course, he sat down and wept like a crocodile, because he had access to no other world that might serve as a theater for warfare and plunder. Thus it is that avarice would never curb her boundless desires till she had glutted herself not only with the spoils of this terrestrial region, but with the treasures of the universe; yet, like hell and destruction, she would never be satisfied.

Nor would ambition - her kinsfolk and companion - ever cease its career, till it had subdued every order of intellectual existence, ascended to the throne of the Most High, and seized the reins of universal government.

It would be needless to bring forward illustrations of this topic, or to attempt to show that the covetous and ambitious principle has been the main cause of the wholesale destruction of mankind, and the wide spread of human misery, for almost the whole of the records of history contain little else than a continued series of illustrations on this point; and I have already, under the first head, selected a few examples, which might be multiplied a thousand fold.

But I cannot help pausing a little to reflect on the numerous evils, and the incalculable misery which this unholy affection has produced in the world. Could we take only a bird's eye view of its operations and effects, beginning at the first apostasy of man, and tracing him down the stream of time to the present day - and could we, at the same time, stretch our eyes over the

globe, from north to south, and from east to west, and contemplate the miseries which have followed in its train in every land – what an awful and revolting picture would be presented to the view! But there is no eye save that of Omniscience, which could take in th thousandth part of the widely-extended miseries and desolations which it has in every age produced.

During the period which intervened from the fall of man to the deluge, this principle appears to have operated on an extensive scale, for we are told, that “the wickedness of man was great,” and that “*the earth was filled with violence,*” – evidently implying that the strong and powerful were continually engaged in seizing on the wealth and possessions of the weak and defenseless, oppressing the poor, the widow, and the fatherless, plundering cities, desolating fields, and carrying bloodshed and ruin through every land – till the state of society rose to such a pitch of depravity, as rendered it expedient that they should be swept at once, with an overflowing flood, from the face of creation.

After the deluge, it was not long before the lust of ambition began again to display itself, by an inordinate desire after wealth and aggrandizement; and, hence, wars were recommenced among almost every tribe, and they have continued, in constant succession, throughout every generation, to the present day.

...

Reader's Manual, 1839

*Thomas Dick, an early Nineteenth Century Scottish Astronomer, Churchman, and popular philosopher who had considerable influence both in the realms of science and religion. His popular works, aside from astronomy, include *Philosophy of a Future State*, and *The Christian Philosopher, or the Connection of Science and Philosophy with Religion*.

NUMBER 173

THE PAUPER'S DEATH-BED

Caroline A. B. Southey

Tread softly - bow the head -
 In reverent silence bow!
No passing bell doth toll,
Yet an immortal soul
 Is passing now.

Stranger, however great,
 With lowly reverence bow;
There's one in that poor shed -
 Greater than thou.

Beneath that beggar's roof,
 Lo! Death doth keep his state.
Enter - no crowds attend;
Enter - no guards defend
 This palace gate.

That pavement, damp and cold,
 No smiling courtiers tread;
One silent woman stands,
 Lifting with meager hands
 A dying head.

No mingling voices sound -
 An infant wail alone;
A sob suppressed - again
That short, deep gasp, and then
 The parting groan.

O change! O wondrous change!
 Burst are the prison bars!
This moment there so low,
So agonized, and now
 Beyond the stars!

O change - stupendous change!
 There lies the soulless clod;
The sun eternal breaks,
The new immortal wakes -
 Wakes with his God!

Appleton's Fifth Reader

*An English poetess in the late 8th and early 19th Centuries, and wife of the Poet Laureate.

NUMBER 174

THE CONQUEROR'S GRAVE

William Cullen Bryant*

Within this lowly grave a conqueror lies;
And yet the monument proclaims it not,
Nor round the sleeper's name hath chisel wrought
The emblems of a fame that never dies -
Ivy and amaranth in a graceful sheaf
Twined with the laurel's fair, imperial leaf.

 A simple name alone,
 To the great world unknown,
Is graven here, and wild flowers rising round,
Meek meadow-sweet and violets of the ground,
Lean lovingly against the humble stone.

Here, in the quiet earth, they laid apart
No man of iron mold and bloody hands,
Who sought to wreak upon the cowering lands
The passions that consumed his restless heart;
But one of tender spirit and delicate frame,
 Gentlest in mien and mind
 Of gentle womankind,
Timidly shrinking from the breath of blame;
One in whose eyes the smile of kindness made
Its haunt, like flowers by sunny brooks in May:
Yet at the thought of others' pain, a shade
Of sweeter sadness chased the smile away.

Nor deem that when the hand that molds here
Was raised in menace, realms chilled with fear,
And armies mustered at the sign, as when
Clouds rise before the rainy east, -
Gray captains leading bands of veteran men
And fiery youths to be the vulture's feast.
Not thus were waged the mighty wars that gave
The victory to her who fills this grave;
 Alone her task was wrought;
 Alone her battle fought;
Through that long strife her constant hope was staid
On God alone, nor looked for other aid.

She meets the hosts of sorrow with a look
That altered not beneath the frown they wore;
And soon the lowering brood were tamed, and took
Meekly her gentle rule, and frowned no more.
Her soft hand put aside the assaults of wrath,

And calmly broke in twain
The fiery shafts of pain,
And rent the nets of passion from her path.
By that victorious hand despair was slain:
With love she vanquished hate, and overcame
Evil with good in her great Master's name.

Her glory is not of this shadowy state,
Glory that with the fleeting season dies;
But when she entered at the sapphire gate,
What joy was radiant in celestial eyes!
How heaven's bright depths with resounding welcomes rung,
And flowers of heaven by shining hands were flung!
And He who, long before,
Pain, scorn, and sorrow bore,
The mighty Sufferer, with aspect sweet,
He who, returning glorious from the grave,
Dragged death, disarmed, in chains, a crouching slave.

See, as I linger here, the sun grows low;
Cool airs are murmuring that the night is near.
O gentle sleeper, from thy grave I go
Consoled, though sad, in hope, and yet in fear.
Brief is the time, I know,
The warfare scarce begun;
Yet all may win the triumphs thou hast won;
Still flows the fount whose waters strengthened thee.
The victors' names are yet too few to fill
Heaven's mighty roll; the glorious armory
That ministered to thee is open still.

National Fifth Reader

*American poet and journalist.

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