ONLY A DREAM.

(Abner C. Thomas in New York Standard.)

It was the close of a tiresome day. Vexed and wearied with many cares I had seen my four little ones tucked away in their clean and comfortable beds, and, seated in the great armchair, which is my own special possession, I tried to read a little, but I was so exhausted that I nodded and dreamed.

I was in a little boat on a great river. Clouds of darkness were all around me; the heavens held no stars, and the water on which I sailed was turbulent and black as ink. A shadowy form stood at the prow, and with a single oar and steady strokes propelled me. Amid silence and darkness, and with a feeling of meek submission to whatever might await me, I was ferried over the river of death.

As I reached the further shore I noticed a slight lifting of the clouds. No place for human habitation was in sight and no human companionship seemed available. I felt that a journey was before me and looked around to see what course I should pursue. Two roads started from where I stood, one narrow and steep, but straight and tending toward the right; the other broad and of easy grade and better travelled. The boatman, without a word, intimated by gesture that I would do well to keep to the right, and in a moment I stood alone on the unknown shore.

My feet seemed very heavy; I was broken with burdens and anxious for rest, but in full trust that my Great Father had provided the boat for me, and that one of these roads must lead to His house of many mansions, I chose the narrow road, and laboriously began to climb. This continued for a long time and without apparent change, but at last I came to where the light was better and the air softer and sweeter than it had been at the river side.

Little by little this change became more pronounced. The trees by the wayside were more numerous; the foliage was greener, and I rejoiced within myself because of the pleasant land into which I was being conducted. The road still continued steep, but the light kept growing, as in the early morning of a summer's day, and increased far beyond the glories of the sun until I became conscious that I stood within a short distance of the great and wonderful city whence comes the light to enlighten the nations. The gates of pearl were before me, and here on either side lay the crosses and burdens of multitudes of travellers who had gone before.

My heart was full of thanksgiving then, for, I said within myself, "Here I shall see and know my Father whose care has always blessed me, and here I shall find rest." And so with eager haste to join in the song of blessing and eulogium, I knocked at the great door to crave admission.

The door was promptly opened by a man whose face shone with the glory of a tender affection for his fellow man, and from whose shoulders there sprang a pair of white wings which, when folded, were long enough to touch the ground. He wore a single white garment of a white, soft substance, which looked as if it might be fresh and cool. My own garments of earthly texture had been taken away before I found myself in the boat, and I stood before this beautiful spirit naked and travel soiled.

"Who are you, and where do you come from?" was inquired of me.

I gave my name and said that I came from the city of New York.

"That name is a familiar one to me," said the angel; "we have heard of you and are glad to have you among us. You are known to have been industrious and prudent during your stay on the earth, and we feel that you will be a useful citizen of New Jerusalem."

An invitation was then given me to enter and my eyes were almost blinded with the beauties of the heavenly place. My new friend asked me to come with him into his office to register my name, and, after I had done so, urged that I sit with him awhile.

"You will stay here many years," said he, "and it is important that you should start right, particularly in a social way. You must be very careful as to forming acquaintances, and not attach yourself to undesirable angels."

"You surprise me!" I exclaimed. "Surely all the children of the Great Father are alike here, are they not? I was told that I would find no rich or poor here, and that all could join in praise and in looking upon the throne of the King."

"That is all very well," I was answered. "Of course we understand that we are all children of the King, and many, many years ago the deplorable state of affairs you seem to approve of so much existed in full force. It used to be that distinctions of rank did not obtain, and there were no poor people at all; but we have seen the advantages of class distinctions, and have, by a very simple device, arranged matters on a new and different plan. Why, sir, the time was when you would have to comb your own wings and polish your own harp unless some other angel would do it for you out of love and kindness; for no angel worked except for himself and those he cherished."

"Indeed; and how has this change been brought about?" I asked.

"It could not have been done at all in the early days when the King was able to attend in person to all details of city government and when our population was scanty; but about five hundred years ago our previous loose notions of rights in lands became enlightened. A code of law, in every respect similar to the law of the State of New York, was put in force, and all of our present methods grew out of this simple change. We chose the laws of that State because they were made by the people, who change them according to their pleasure, and we know that they must be just and fair. The city had been very fairly started before that, and it was agreed that all of the land should forthwith be divided up among the people then in the city; the titles thus acquired have ever since been respected, and all ownership must now be traced from them."

"I trust," I remarked, "that in this division some provision was made for me, for the King knew that I was coming, and I came upon his invitation, and I am without purse or scrip. All that I struggled for on the earth, which was not used day by day as I got it, is behind me and will be gathered by I know not whom."

"Oh, no," said the angel, "that would never have done. The people who were here when the land was being divided allotted the property among themselves. If you were not here that is no fault of theirs, and we are satisfied that the private ownership of land leads to private enterprise and hence to public benefit. I confidently expect, within a few centuries, to see you one of our real estate owners, and you will then join in approving the change from the primitive methods which formerly obtained here, and which are still talked of by people on the earth. The first thing you had better do is to find a boarding place, and you can then look around and make up your mind what to do."

"I don't think I want that," said I, "for I find that I neither hunger nor thirst, and the air that blows over the city is so sweet and pleasant that I do not care to be sheltered from it. I think I will go to yonder green knoll, beneath the shade of that wild tree, and there rest and brood upon the blessings that the Great King has cast upon me."

"No," said the angel, "you had better not do that. To be sure, the knoll you speak of is unimproved and no use has ever been made of it, but it forms a part of the estate of a very rich angel named Lazarus, formerly a beggar in Judea, but now one of our most prominent citizens. He would resent any trespass, and I don't think you had better go there."

"Does Lazarus use it?" I inquired.

"Not at all," was the reply, "and he would not know that you were occupying it if it were not for the fact that our police angels are very strictly cautioned not to permit trespassing. I think you'll have to get board, for the regulations against tramps are necessarily very stringent. It is always summer here, and our mild climate encourages tramps amazingly."

"I had hoped to rest," I sighed, "but if work is the rule here and the King wishes me to do so, I will work with the best of you. What industries are permissible?"

"There may be a little trouble about getting work for you," said my companion. "You see, what with the immense pauper immigration into the city, we are very fully supplied with laborers. Just look at that great company of them. They fill our streets and are becoming a sad nuisance."

I looked as I was bid, and there beheld a great number of men and women and children with sad and weary faces.

"The difficulty with all these people is," said my friend, "that they are so lazy and improvident. They try to dictate the amount of wages that they are to get and refuse to submit to the regulations of the employing angels. I fear that the socialistic influence among them is very injurious. There are many industries here, but the principal ones are the raising of flowers and the manufacturing of harps and crowns. Which of these would you prefer to engage in?"

"I know nothing of either," I sadly replied, "for I have been only a lawyer, and I doubt if I could do anything at my profession in a place where I am entirely unknown. But I love flowers, and I would enjoy to delve in the soil which our Great Father has made, and to raise flowers which might beautify the city to His honor and glory. May I not go on some piece of vacant and sterile ground and there strive to do this work?"

My guide laughed at this and said: "Your idea is far more romantic than practical, for the land, as I have already said, is all taken up and divided among others. Your better plan is to seek some work that will not require the use of the ground, for that cannot be had without capital, which you do not possess. You must first get to work and live prudently, and by and by you will be able to save enough to buy yourself a piece of ground. Every angel ought to have some interest in the soil and build himself a home. It makes him a more useful citizen. Now, if you had just a little capital I could suggest a purchase which could not fail to be a good one. Do you see that charming piece of land on the shore of the Jasper Sea?"

I looked and beheld a tract of country so fair that it delighted my eyes, and right adjoining it was a sheet of water as pure as crystal.

"That piece of property," the angel continued, "was purchased many years ago by Judas, formerly of Galilee, for thirty pieces of silver. It was a great bargain at the time, and since then it has largely increased in value, and he has cut it up into plots and will doubtless make an excellent thing out of it. We did not like Judas very much at first; I think there was something unfortunate in his earthly career, but he is certainly an excellent business man, and the exact nature of the criticisms once made against him has gradually been forgotten. He has lived it down, as it were."

"What did Judas do that made this property so valuable?" I inquired.

"I didn't say that Judas did anything," was the answer. "In fact, he has lived out of town a great part of the time because of social reasons; but the population has increased in that vicinity, and the improvements were all made without any effort on his part. Judas is very shrewd at a bargain, you may be sure. He does not offer the whole of it for sale now, but he will sell alternate plots, so that the improvements made on them will enhance the value of the remainder; and if you had anything at all I would strongly advise you to purchase. If you wait only a few years the price will surely advance."

"From what you tell me I should judge that I cannot be allowed to stay in the city unless I can persuade some owner of the land to permit me to do so, and that this can only be done on condition that I shall labor for him. Is this true?" said I.

"Oh well, now," the angel answered, "that is hardly correct, you know. To be sure you cannot stay on private property without compensating the owner. You wouldn't propose to confiscate property, I'm sure. But then the citizens of this city are very charitable, and there are asylums and poor-houses and other places of that kind for the infirm and suffering poor. You will be provided with wings by the King without charge, and these you can hypothecate for any immediate needs and I know that you will get along nicely. Others do. I might mention many cases of citizens of your native place who are doing excellently. There is, for instance, a certain Cornelius, who is a boatman on the Jasper Sea. He started with nothing, but he owns his own boat now and is kept quite busy. He talks about a railroad, the cars to be drawn by poor angels whose wings have been lost by foreclosure, but I fear that the King would object to that. He is very enterprising, Cornelius is."

All of this made me very sad, and I left the angel and walked forth into the street, and into a park around which benches had been placed for homeless wanderers such as I seemed to be. I sat on one of these and wept myself to sleep. I was startled by a touch on my shoulder and fancied that it was from a police angel with a command to "move on," but awaking suddenly I looked up through tearful lashes at the face of my wife, and found that I was still sitting in my chair in my New York home.

I have told the story in my little family, and we all rejoice that it was a dream and that we can still trust in the promises of the Great Father and hope for better things.

A Laughing Plant.

The well-known, and once too popular, intoxicant called "laughing-gas" is the protoxide of nitrogen, an artificial product of the chemist. We do not suppose that the same compound grows in an Arabian bean, but this vegetable seems to have the same merry virtue. Nature is humorous, as well as economical, and likes to surprise science by duplicating its exploits. The laughing plant is not a flower that laughs, but one that creates laughter, if the printed stories of travellers are to be believed. It grows in Arabia, and is called the laughing plant because its seeds produce effects like those produced by laughing gas. The flowers of this wonderful plant are of bright yellow, and the seed pods are soft and woolly, while the seeds resemble black beans, and only two or three grow in a pod. The natives dry and pulverize them, and the powder, if taken in small doses, makes the soberest person behave like a circus clown or a madman; for he will dance, sing and laugh, and cut the most fantastic capers, and be in an uproariously ridiculous condition for about an hour. When the excitement ceases the exhausted exhibitor of the antics falls asleep, and when he awakes he has not the slightest remembrance of his doings.—*Vick's Floral Magazine.*

A Possibility in Mr. Beecher's Case.

It is probable that had Mr. Beecher understood telegraphy he might have communicated with his family after the stroke which rendered him speechless. The contraction of the fingers of his right hand would seem to indicate the possibility that he was conscious, and had he known how to regulate those contractions in the formation of telegraphic signals he could have thus conveyed his thoughts while otherwise utterly powerless. I knew of a case some years ago in which a telegrapher thus communicated with me when we supposed him unconscious. In holding his hand I felt a faint twitching of the muscles of his fingers and recognized telegraphic signals thus made. He was perfectly conscious of what was passing around him, but unable to speak or move a muscle, except the faint contraction of the finger muscles as described. It was a remarkable case and unparalleled so far as I know.—*Boston Globe.*

A Famous Brake.

A correspondent inquires what is meant by the Westinghouse brake. It is a railroad brake, invented by Mr. George Westinghouse twenty or more years ago. It was one of the earliest contrivances by which the engineer can apply the brakes to each of the cars as well as to the engine. The engine of the train carries a tank, in which air is stored at a high pressure, the steam from the engine driving the compressor. A tube runs from the engine the entire length of the train, underneath the cars at the couplings heavy rubber tubes take the place of the iron ones. Under each car is a small chamber, into which, like pistons, run long rods connecting with the brake heads. When the engineer applies the brakes he simply turns a stop cock; the compressed air rushes through the tubes into the chambers below the cars, forces apart the piston heads, and so applies the brakes to the wheels.

Lord Deas on Tobacco.

The late Lord Deas, of Scotland, who died a couple of weeks ago, had an unspeakable dread of an open window and an ungovernable horror at the degrading smell of tobacco. On one occasion there was an undeniable odor of the unpardonable weed. In vain Lord Deas thundered at the officers of the Court. The offender could not be found till, at last, a breathless, white-faced man proclaimed with a shaking voice that he rather thought the smell came from the counsel's room. But Lord Deas, whose nose and whose feeling of etiquette alike protested against such a calumny, made the unhappy man sink into his shoes by fiercely ejaculating, "No such thing! Dae ye mean to tell me that the gentlemen o' the Bar smoke common twist?" His Lordship was undeniably correct.

A Bullet that Soothes.

A German chemist has invented a new kind of anæsthetic bullet, which he urges will, if brought into general use, greatly diminish the horrors of war. The bullet is of a brittle substance, breaking directly when it comes in contact with the object at which it is aimed. It contains a powerful anæsthetic, producing instantaneously complete insensibility, lasting for twelve hours, which, except that the action of the heart continues, is not to be distinguished from death. While in this condition, the German chemist points out, the bodies may be packed in waggons and carried of as prisoners.—*Court Journal.*

A Fleet Owned by Monks.

"I have heard of monks doing many things," says Mr. Labouchere, "but I never heard of them being sailors. It seems, however, that in the White Sea there is a fleet of six steamers, which are owned, officered and manned by monks. They ply between Archangel and the Island of Jolovetsk, where there is a monastery, and their business is to convey pilgrims to the island. As many as 30,000 people annually make the journey between May and September, the only time when the island is accessible."

After J. Lemmon's fine chestnut horse had drawn the hose reel as far as the corner of Sydenham and Princess streets last night it was turned around, when it suddenly saw the steam engine, and was frightened to such an extent that it dropped and died without a kick. Its owner says the fright broke his horse's heart. The animal cost $160.—*Kingston News.*

CURRENT TOPICS.

A DISTINGUISHED French chemist, M. Favier, has invented still another explosive which will make all its predecessors take a back seat. It is nameless as yet, will not explode accidentally, costs one-fifth less than melinite, and is as powerful as the latter, if not more so, and more easily handled. Certainly no well regulated, peaceable nation could be without this article.

MRS. HELEN GOUGAR has sent an open letter to the women of Kansas, who are to vote in the municipal elections, saying "You will be required to give your name. Do not give your husband's name or your pet name, but the one by which you were christened." This first result of the action of the Kansas Government in permitting women to vote goes far towards justifying the experiment.

THE *Paris* reports that the drummers and trumpeters of the German army are hard at work learning the beats and calls of the French troops. It also alleges that in many engagements in the war of 1870 the command to cease firing was often given to the French infantry by German buglers, and that the command to halt, sounded by the same buglers, often stopped a charge of French cavalry and placed them in a position where they could be mowed down.

MR. STOKES, the public analyst of Paddington, Eng., calls attention in his last quarterly report to the necessity for the consumers of tinned foods to eat them the same day that the tins are opened. The foods very rapidly begin to decompose and form the poisonous products known as "ptomaines," especially in hot weather. In one case brought under Mr. Stokes' notice death followed very rapidly after the eating of a somewhat stale sample of tinned lobster.

LORD ROSEBERY, who married a wealthy Jewess of the Rothschild family, took her to India with him. They attended a dinner in Calcutta at which the Duchess of Manchester was seated next to the Rajah of Mozuffernugger. The rajah asked: "And this Lord Rosebery of your great country—has he brought his wives with him?" "S-sh!" exclaimed the Duchess, blushing scarlet. "That's Lady Rosebery over there, next the viceroy!" The Oriental regarded Lady Rosebery for some moments and then remarked with a sigh: "Poor young man! I hope they allow him a nicer one at home!"

FEW Levitical families of our own country and time, says the *Christian Leader*, can show a record of such protracted service as that of the three distinguished brothers, the Bonars. But time is at length beginning to tell on them. Dr. Horatius, known all over Christendom as the greatest living hymn writer of the Christian Church, is about to receive a helper—most likely in Mr. Sloan, of Anderston; and this week we have to record the taking of steps by the kirk session of Free St. Andrew's, Greenock, to secure an assistant for their pastor, Dr. J. J. Bonar, who is now in his 84th year, and who was licensed in 1835. The third brother, Dr. Andrew A. Bonar, the biographer of McCheyne, is still discharging the onerous duties of his important Glasgow pastorate with remarkable vigor.

IT is asserted by some of the highest medical authorities that lime-water and milk are not only food and medicine at an early period of life, but also at a later, when, as in the case of infants, the functions of digestion and assimilation are feeble and easily perverted. It is found that a stomach taxed by gluttony, irritated by improper food, inflamed by alcohol, enfeebled by disease or otherwise unfitted for its duties—as is shown by the various symptoms attendant upon indigestion, dyspepsia, diarrhea, dysentery and fever—will resume its work, and do it energetically, on an exclusive diet of bread and milk and lime-water. A goblet of cow's milk may have four tablespoonfuls of lime-water added to it with good effect; the lime-water may be made by putting a few lumps of unslaked lime into a stone jar and adding water until the lime is slaked and of about the consistence of thick cream—the lime settling and leaving the pure and clean lime-water on the top.

IT will be five years on the 1st of April next since the time when Lord Wolseley took over the office of Adjutant-General to the Forces, says Edmund Yates in the London *World*, and five years are usually the limit of staff employment. In Lord Wolseley's case, however, an exception is very properly to be made, as he has twice vacated his appointment to proceed on service—in 1882 and again in 1885. The time he was absent in Egypt and on the Nile is not to be reckoned, and he is to continue in the undisturbed emoluments of the office for some time to come. It is most fortunate for the army that it possesses such a vigorous Adjutant-General at the present moment, and one so sensible as Lord Wolseley is of our military shortcomings. For "low be it spoken" Lord Wolseley's views as to the state of our army are not to be gauged by his utterances at public banquets.

THE death of Mr. Beecher has served to recall the fact that a good deal of the world's work is being done by men over the age of 70. Conspicuous examples like the Emperor of Germany, who is 90; Von Moltke, who is 86; M. Grevy, who is 76; Mr. Gladstone, who is 77, and Prince Bismarck, who is 71, naturally strikes the mind first; but were a careful investigation to be made of the conduct of great enterprises even in this country, where youth comes early to the front, the number of men born before 1816 who are occupying positions of conspicuous influence would be found to be surprisingly large. In Hamilton we have at least one business man, still actively at work, who is over 80 years of age, and the State of Connecticut possesses in a banker and railroad president, who has passed his 97th birthday, what we take to be the oldest specimen of an active business man in the world.

Notable Criminals.

Talmage said in his lecture the other night, "that the man who can sing, and won't sing, should be sent to Sing-Sing." That would be too severe. It is the man who can't sing, and will sing, and does sing, who ought to be sent to Sing-Sing. P. S.—For ninety-nine years.—*Essex Liberal.*

A window open a slight distance at both top and bottom, and a chimney draught is also open, are the only sure way of keeping pure air in a sleeping-room whose doors are closed.

SCOTT ACT FINES.

It Would Cost the Province $200,000 to Enforce the Scott Act in all the Scott Act Counties.

Mr. H. Totten, of the License Branch, testified before the committee of the Legislature Friday on items in the Public Accounts relating to the enforcement of the Scott Act. He explained that the salary of Mr. Young, Police Magistrate in Halton, had been paid last year by the Government out of the appropriation for his (Mr. Totten's) branch. The reason for this was that when the Scott Act was carried in Halton about five years ago the Government agreed to make an earnest effort to enforce it. Mr. Young was appointed, and his salary at first was paid out of the License Fund, made up of the fees from druggists' licenses and fines for convictions under the Act. But the Dominion Government having taken the fines out of the control of the Province, the Provincial Government, in order to keep faith with Mr. Young, paid his salary. But Mr. Totten stated in reply to a question that he would not recommend the payment in the same way another year. He explained that the difficulty in the enforcement of the Scott Act by the Province lay in the fact that the revenue from fines did not accrue to the Province, and some of the counties demanded these fines to be handed over to them instead of being used to enforce the Act. He declared also that there was great difficulty because of the lack of certain minor but necessary changes in the Act. There were doubts as to a number of points which were exceedingly harassing, hampering very much the action of the officials. In reply to a question he stated that in his opinion it would require $200,000 a year if the Provincial Government undertook to enforce the Scott Act in all the counties in which it had been declared to be in force. The loss through the Act to the Province in license fees and cost of enforcing the Scott Act he estimated at $100,000 a year, while at the same time he did not know of any particular reduction in the cost of administering justice or in the number of offenders against the law as a result of the Act. There were in some Scott Act counties reductions in the number of offenders, but there were reductions in other counties as well. In the course of his evidence Mr. Totten gave a number of facts relating to the administration of the departments and duties of the officers employed.

One Charitable Princess.

There is no member of the royal family who does so much really practical good work as Princess Christian, and it is a real blessing to the poor of Windsor that she should be settled near the town, as she is constantly engaged in laboring for them, and she sets an admirable example to her rich neighbors. There has been much distress in and about Windsor during the winter, and, thanks to a fund raised by Princess Christian, about 5,500 adults and children have received dinners; large quantities of coals and groceries have also been dispensed, and great numbers of blankets have been lent. The Princess has herself presided at most of the seventeen dinners which have been given.—*London Truth.*

An Obliging Guest.

A resident of the provinces has gone to pass a few days with some relatives in Paris. Becoming infatuated with the gay capital, he remained until patience on the part of his hosts ceased to be a virtue.

Too polite to openly remonstrate, they threw out a hint:

"Don't you think, my dear fellow," they said to the bore, "that your wife and children must miss you?"

"No doubt. Thanks for the suggestion; I'll send for them."

Business Difficulties.

The following assignments are reported: Ontario—Caledonia, Mrs. E. Bain, general store; Kirkhill, Duncan McLeod, grocer; Lowville, A. B. Culloden, general store; Renfrew, A. S. McLachlin, tailor. Manitoba—Winnipeg, J. Falconer, dry goods.

Canadian Curiosities.

Chief Justice Macdonald sent Crier O'Brien on a message. On his return Judge Weatherbee fined him $10 for being absent from court.—*Halifax Herald.*

Gilbert Patty, of College Corner, Ind., loved Della, the lovely daughter of farmer W. W. Copstick, and Della loved Gilbert. But her father was down on the young man, and said that he shouldn't have his daughter. So on a recent Sunday, when all the Copsticks were at church save Della, Gilbert drove up in a buggy and Della jumped in beside him, and away they went. But before they could find a Justice to marry them old man Copstick, on a fast horse, overtook them, yanked Della out of the buggy, set her on the horse, and mounting beside her galloped home, leaving Gilbert disconsolate.

GOD BLESS MOTHER.

(George Cooper in Brooklyn Magazine.)

A little child with flaxen hair,
And sunlit eyes, so sweet and fair,
Who kneels, when twilight darkens all,
And from whose loving lips there fall
The accents of this simple prayer:
"God bless!—God bless my mother!"

A youth upon Life's threshold wide,
Who leaves a gentle mother's side,
Yet keeps, enshrined within his breast,
Her words of warning—still the best;
And whispers, when temptation tried
"God bless!—God bless my mother!"

A white-haired man who gazes back
Along life's weary, furrowed track,
And sees one face—an Angel's now!—
Hears words of light that led aright,
And prays, with reverential brow:
"God bless!—God bless my mother!"

In China a son is responsible for the debts of his father, and this responsibility continues to the third generation. This enables a man to borrow money on the strength of having a son. In these parts, it is the son who gets credit on the strength of having a father.

Berlin Catholic papers comment with anger and scorn upon an order issued by Herr Krupp, forbidding the workers employed at Essen to read two local Catholic papers. In his circular Krupp says he considers the papers dangerous to the peaceful relations between employers and their workpeople, and prohibits all of his employees living in his dwellings from either keeping on hand or reading them. His overseers are directed to see that the ukase is carried out.