

GOD'S GOODNESS.

BY JOHN DE WITT.

How bright the sunshine seems to be,
The soft, still air impresses me,
With awe, for Him who lets me see
Such love and bounty rare.
My soul within me seems to burn,
I long o' live that I may learn
To try, and make some slight return
For all my Father's care.

Proud thoughts of self I'll cast aside,
Humility try not to abide,
I'll be the Bible's my guide,
And live for God and man.
Yet, I am weak and I may fail,
My efforts prove of no avail,
And make me bitterly bewail
That ever I began.

Not so, I'm faithless soul. To-day
God will provide for you a way
If you'll trust him and will pray
For help and mercy seek.
His presence always is most felt
When at the cross we humbly kneel,
Our pride all gone, with cold heart melt,
Acknowledging we're weak.

He knew our weakness and he gave
His best loved son that He might save
Us, both from death and from the grave
By conquering our woes' foes.
My obligation's still the same,
His praise shall ever be my theme,
To dwell with my con'tant dream,
When death mine eyes shall close.

A TALE OF TERROR.

BY JAMES SEYMOUR.

Some years ago (said my friend, a real estate agent) I had an office on La Salle street, Chicago. To it came Mrs. Capel, whom I had known in Boston. She wanted a house. I had one on my list in Halsted street. Her family consisted of herself, a child between 6 and 7, and a servant. I rented the dwelling, but was astonished in about ten days to find her back. She stated that a portion of the premises which she did not require she had locked. By some supernatural cause the doors would fly open. She had heard some rumors in the neighborhood that the house was haunted, but paid no attention to such superstitious gossip. Then she proceeded to tell the following singular story, which I will give in her own words:

"One night as Margaret, the servant, and I went up stairs I saw the door at the head stood open. We went into the extension. All was quiet, the dust lay thick on the floor and the spiders had spun the webs across the wall, and one huge mesh work lay directly across the narrow, crooked stairs that led downward. I remember thinking as we descended that it would be a terrible place for anyone to fall. At the foot was a bit of cracked and broken flagging, and as I looked at it I fancied involuntarily the dull, sickening thud of a heavy body thrown from above the stones. The thought was so real that it made me shudder in spite of myself, but I shook it off as unhealthy and morbid. We securely fastened both doors and I began to hope that we should be troubled by no more mysteries.

"On Saturday evening, wishing to finish a piece of work with which I was busy, I sent Margaret to put Alice to bed instead of going myself as usual. The room in which I was sitting was not directly beneath the bed-room, and I did not hear the girl's footsteps when she left the chamber to come down. I noticed that she remained away for a longer time than common, but I supposed that the child had proved wakeful and difficult to get to sleep, and I thought little of her absence. The sound of a heavy fall on the stairs suddenly startled me. Rushing out I saw the door at their head again wide open, a blackness so dense that it seemed like a curtain, palpable to the touch, shut off all that might be beyond, and at the foot of the steps lay Margaret in a swoon. It was the sound of her fall that I had heard. As I approached her I found that her consciousness was beginning to return, and, at the same instant, my ears caught a faint, soft rustle in the darkness above, and the door closed with a hard slam that resounded through the house. My foot was on the lowest step. I would have reentered it in another second, but Margaret caught my dress.

"For the love of God, don't go," she whispered; "what you'll see there isn't what He meant should ever be," and she held me with a force of which I would not have believed her capable in her weakness.

"Promise me, promise me," she whispered. "And seeing that it was the only way to calm her, I promised not to attempt to enter the extension that night.

"I helped her into her own room, shocked at the state in which I found one usually so calm and self-controlled, and I passed the hours till daylight in watching alternately with her and with Alice, who was restless and feverish and muttered to herself in her sleep. Once more that night the door opened and shut with the same loud noise as before, but otherwise we were undisturbed. The strangeness of our situation did not frighten me. I felt myself mystified, defiant, enraged by the events which had taken place since I entered the house, and I was glad that Margaret did not seem inclined to speak or to tell me of the cause of her downfall. She did not close her eyes, but lay with her eyes fixed on the opposite wall. Toward dawn she suddenly broke the long silence by saying, musingly:

"We don't know what has been done in the old time by them that lived here, nor what their punishment is."

"Hush, hush!" I answered, unwilling to encourage her talking, and to change the unwholesome current of her thoughts I drew aside the window-curtain. A faint, pallid light was already tingeing the east, the token of the coming day. The night seemed to calm the girl's worn-out nerves. She drew a long, weary sigh like a tired child, and in a few moments dropped into a deep sleep. When Alice awoke on Sunday morning she proved so feverish that I kept her in bed, and a question which she asked me in the course of the morning frightened me with the idea that she must be worse than I had thought.

"Mamma," she asked, "who is the pretty young lady that stands sometimes in the door at the head of the stairs, and looks at me so with her great dark eyes? I kept thinking of her all the time; she seems so sad and sorrowful that I can't forget about her."

"I supposed the child was light-headed from fever, and gave her some trifling answer. About ten o'clock, as I was passing through the upper hall, I saw that mysterious door swing back upon its hinges flat against the wall, exposing the pallid blackness of the evening before. I did not hesitate. Fortunately my feet were clad in slippers which muffled my footfall, and, making as little noise as

possible, I stepped to the landing, mounted the half a dozen stairs on the opposite side, and advanced some paces in the darkness along the hallway of the extension, when I could touch with my hand the casing at the top of the narrow, crooked stairway I have before mentioned. I paused, and, leaning against the wall, turned so as to command a view of the door which I judged must still be open, since I had not heard it shut. Strangely enough, I could see nothing in any direction. I knew that a lamp was burning dimly in our upper hall, in a straight line from my standing place, but not a gleam penetrated to me. The darkness hung upon me like a corporeal weight, and I gasped for breath with a sense of suffocation in its density.

"I stood thus for some moments. I wished I had brought a light. The beating of my heart seemed like a companion in my solitude, and I remember laying my hand upon it to feel its pulsations. Then slowly, slowly, out of the thick air, there grew upon me a horror, an unspeakable, awful consciousness of the presence of the Invisible which froze my blood, and chilled my life at its core. My body seemed turned to stone. All its activity was paralyzed, and had I sought to turn and flee, I knew my muscles would have failed to do my bidding, and my feet have sunk under me. I was powerless to open my lips. Only my mind was free as air to receive in every fiber this sense of uttermost terror for that instant. Fear held dominion over me. Fear, such as I had never dreamed of, ruled in every atom of my being. The sound of the shutting of a door resounded in my ears like an unexpected thing, a faint light flitted for an instant along the wall, and in its momentary gleam I saw a woman's face, a wicked face, and a girl's form, a shadow crouched at my side. The light was gone, but there still hung in my ears a long, low sob, like the cry of a lost soul, and the sickening noise of a fall on the stones below.

"It must have been some time after this that Margaret found me sitting on our stairs below the closed door. How I came there I do not know. She did not speak to me, for I think she knew by my face what had happened, and she followed her instinct in treating me much as I had treated her. As soon as any power of action returned to me, I resolved upon quitting the house instantly, and set about reparations for our departure with a feverish activity. I could not be easy so long as we remained in the building, and we spent the few days necessary for the packing of the furniture at Leland's Hotel, visiting the house as little as possible and never remaining over night. Margaret went to her mother's to stay till she could recover from the shock to her nerves and be fit for work."

"I knew it would be useless to try and persuade Mrs. Capel that all she had experienced was but the illusions of an overwrought imagination. I released her, therefore, from the engagement, and determined to inspect the building for my own satisfaction. An old doctor who resided on West Monroe street, in the neighborhood, told me that the last permanent occupants of the house, before it began to bear so evil a reputation, had been two women, a mother and daughter. The mother, a widow, owned the place. She was a fierce-tempered, hard woman, who seemed possessed, as the gossips said, by a spirit of unnatural hatred toward her daughter, a girl with a certain sad beauty of her own, as the doctor described her to me, but not right in her mind. She was not an idiot, but "lacking," the doctor termed it. As she grew into womanhood her mental deficiencies increased, and the mother, fiercely proud in her way, could not endure the spectacle of her child's misfortune. She would have hidden her away from the world, but the girl rebelled. There were taunts, quarrels, sometimes blows, between the two, and the mother, defiant and furious, locked her daughter in the rear part of the building. Here the tragedy of her life played itself out, and here she was found one morning by the servant, who slept in a remote attic, lying dead at the foot of the stairs. How she came by her death no one knew. There was nothing to directly incriminate the mother, and the inquest that was held resulted in a verdict of "accidental death." The mother herself died soon after, leaving her property to a distant cousin, who reaped little benefit from the house, since it soon became impossible to let it.

"The doctor's account seemed to lend weight to the statement of Mrs. Capel. I entirely disbelieve in the supernatural, and, after making an examination of the premises, was on the point of leaving, when I noticed a panel in the open door that had a peculiar surface. As I stood watching it, while night-shades were falling, the outlines of two figures became more and more visible. One was that of a middle-aged woman, with a hard, fierce face, while the other was that of a young girl in a crouching attitude. When the door was closed the panel could not be seen except from the extension. I examined the framework of the door, and found it to be in a rickety condition. A gust of wind from a special quarter striking the framework threw the door sufficiently aslant to free the bolt from the clasp and allow the door to swing open into the hall, and reveal the painted panel. On subsequent inquiry, I found that the extension had at one time been occupied by an artist, who, doubtless, hearing of the tragedy as related by the doctor, had painted the scene on the panel. I also discovered that the artist had been making experiments with phosphorescent paint, and also with a paint that changed color at various degrees of temperature. I had the framework of the door repaired and the panel taken out, and since then no tenant has come to me with ghost stories. I have the panel at home in my parlor. In the dark, when the weather is slightly damp, the two figures come out very distinctly, but at times they are invisible. The luminous paint used is now quite common, but the artist who invented it has no idea of the supernatural sensation this early experiment made on the tenants of the Halsted Street Haunted House."

"REMEMBER to keep the Sabbath holy" should be impressed upon all. The following lines of Sir Mathew Hale show that making it a day of rest is productive of good results:

A Sabbath well spent
Brings a weal of content
And health for the toils of to-morrow;
But a Sabbath profaned,
Whatsoe'er may be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow.

GREAT FIRES OF 1888.

THE WORK OF THE FLAMES IN THE UNITED STATES.

A Decrease in the Losses Over Last Year of \$30,000,000—Statistics of General Interest—The Great Conflagrations and When They Occurred.

The losses by fire in the United States for 1888 were not as large as they were for the previous year. The detailed list of fires where the loss in each case was \$100,000 and upward is as follows:

1. Fire in Peoria, Ill.	300,000
2. Shipper Agricultural Works, San Francisco, Cal.	100,000
21. Niedlinger & Schmidt's malt-house, Rockford, N. Y.	100,000
22. Bogen's Brewery, Fort Wayne, Ind.	100,000
23. Whiting's paper mill, Menasha, Wis.	100,000
28. Klein & Co.'s stocking factory, Cincinnati, Ohio.	100,000
SEPTEMBER	
2. Fire in Baltimore, Md.	\$1,000,000
4. Klauben & Levi's grocery house, San Diego, Cal.	345,000
5. Fire in Baker City, Ore.	200,000
9. Fire in San Francisco, Cal.	1,000,000
11. Fire in Wilmington, Del.	300,000
13. Grand Opera House, Syracuse, N. Y.	300,000
14. Fire in Junction City, Kas.	125,000
14. Fire in Huntington, N. Y.	100,000
14. Fire in Washburn, Wis.	100,000
15. National Flouring Mills, Cleveland, Ohio.	125,000
15. Fire in Spokane Falls, W. T.	100,000
17. Fire in Paducah, Ky.	200,000
22. Elias Brewery, New York.	950,000
27. Fire in Canton, Dak.	100,000
27. Fire in Milwaukee, Wis.	117,000
28. Ohio Mills Tannery, Louisville, Ky.	135,000
29. Ohio Flour Mills, Toledo, Ohio.	125,000
OCTOBER	
1. Ohio Valley Foundry, Bellaire, O., S.	125,000
1. Quinn's dry-goods store, Little Rock, Ark.	100,000
9. Schoenemann's packing-house, Chicago.	125,000
11. Standard Oil Works, Greenpoint, N. Y.	250,000
14. Fire in Winona, Miss.	150,000
16. Pentacost Club House, New York.	150,000
17. Standard Oil Works, Duluth, Minn.	130,000
22. Keeth & Co.'s furniture works, Troy, N. Y.	100,000
31. Fire in Los Angeles, Cal.	100,000
NOVEMBER	
1. Highland Hall, Highland Park, Ill.	\$100,000
4. Monticello Seminary, Godfrey, Ill.	200,000
5. Fire in Mason, Ga.	125,000
8. Indiana Paper Mills, South Bend, Ind.	200,000
9. Wellman's grocery house, Milwaukee, Wis.	100,000
10. Rochester (N. Y.) Steam Gauge Works.	225,000
11. Fire in San Francisco, Cal.	100,000
13. Fire in New York.	500,000
14. Wheeler Elevator, Buffalo, N. Y.	160,000
18. Fire in Carlisle, Pa.	100,000
18. Fire in Little Rock, Ark.	100,000
20. Doris Mansion, St. Louis, Mo.	100,000
22. Fire in Pocatello, City, Md.	500,000
23. Electric Light Works, Fort Wayne, Ind.	300,000
23. Fire in Eureka Springs, Ark.	200,000
23. Fire in New Orleans, La.	100,000
27. Judson Institute, Marion, Ala.	100,000
DECEMBER	
1. Armour & Cudahy packing-house, Omaha, Neb.	\$100,000
3. Fire in Jonesville, Tenn.	100,000
4. Hackley & Hume's lumber yards, Muskegon, Mich.	150,000
4. Fire in New Orleans, La.	800,000
5. Wood, Jenks & Co.'s lumber-yard, Cleveland, Ohio.	115,000
5. Cortland Wagon Works, Cortland, N. Y.	211,000
7. Fire in New York.	250,000
8. Globe Iron Works, Cleveland, Ohio.	10,000
9. Normal School, Lock Haven, Pa.	151,000
13. Fire in Savannah, Ga.	200,000
13. Fire in St. Louis, Mo.	160,000
22. Strobel & Co.'s picture-frame works, Cincinnati, O.	100,000
23. P. Lennox's morocco factory, Lynn, Mass.	250,000
24. Baxter Court Office Building, Nashville, Tenn.	100,000
25. Fire in Marietta, O., Mass.	800,000
25. Fire in Cincinnati, O.	300,000
SUMMARY	
January.....\$7,810,000	October.....\$1,330,000
February.....4,490,000	November.....3,810,000
March.....3,79,000	December.....3,301,000
April.....493,000	
May.....3,130,000	Total 1887.....\$47,470,000
June.....3,025,000	Total 1886.....65,158,000
July.....3,95,000	Total 1885.....40,024,000
August.....3,675,000	Total 1884.....32,466,500
September.....5,387,000	

THE PUBLIC PRINTER.

Numerous Candidates for Mr. Benedict's Position—Meredith Believed to Be the Man.

[Washington special to Detroit Free Press.] The position of Government Printer is one of the most important places that the new President has to fill. The Public Printer has charge of about 2,500 employees and superintends the expenditure of over \$2,000,000 per annum. The office has important duties and extensive patronage.



The Public Printer himself receives a salary of \$4,500, and his principal assistants from \$1,800 to \$3,600 per annum. He has fifteen or twenty good places at his disposal and hundreds of subordinate ones.

The woods are full of men who aspire to succeed Mr. Benedict. Col. W. M. Meredith of Chicago is apparently the most formidable candidate for the position now in the field. He was formerly a member of the Seventeenth Indiana Regiment, which was commanded by Gen. Harrison during the rebellion. He was a candidate for the position of Public Printer in 1881, when Sterling P. Rounds was nominated. Among the names on his petition was that of Benjamin Harrison, then just entering upon his term as Senator. Col. Meredith's friends naturally figure that Harrison's influence ought to be a little more valuable this year than it was when he got left seven years ago. Col. Meredith is receiving the endorsement of the Typographical Unions all over the country, has strong political backing, and it is generally conceded that his chances are first-class.

[From the Decatur (Ill.) Labor Bulletin.] The announcement of the friends of Col. William M. Meredith that they will urge upon Gen. Harrison his appointment as Public Printer has met with a warm response from many of the leading labor organizations of the country. The Colonel is a master in the profession, both as a business and as an art. He was a printer and a soldier by inheritance as well as by practice.

A Buried Steamer.

The steamer Bristol, of the Old Colony line, was burned at her dock at Newport, R. I., and is a total loss. She was from New York, landed all her freight and her Fall River and Boston passengers, and they departed at the usual time for their destination. There were left on board the steamer only a few passengers and their baggage. The passengers had narrow escapes. Insurance, \$300,000, which will cover the loss.

WHERE GOOD-HUMOR WON

How a Drummer Who Kept His Wits and His Temper Made a Success.

"It is great fun for me," said a prominent New York business man the other day, "to recall my early experience on the road in the capacity of a commercial drummer. I remember striking a small village up the Hudson, shortly after starting out. During the evening at the hotel I got into conversation with two or three natives of the village who were standing around the office, and, as is quite customary with young and inexperienced drummers, I began to refer rather boastfully to the achievements I had made in the way of sales. The natives seemed to receive everything in good faith, and one of them proposed as a test of my ability as a salesman that I should go to a store in the village and sell the proprietor, who loudly proclaimed his antipathy to all drummers, a bill