The Grass of the Fields.

Gather a single blade of grass, and examine for a minute quietly its narrow, sword-shaped stripes of fluted green. Nothing, as it seems, there of notable goodness or beauty. A very little strength, and a very little tallness, and a few delicate long lines melting in a point—not a perfect point neither, but blunt and unfinished, by no means a creditable or apparently much-cared for example of nature's workmanship, made only to be trodden on to-day, and to-morrow to be cast into the oven—and a little pale and hollow stalk, feeble and flacid, leading down to the dull brown fibres of roots. And yet, think of it well, and judge whether of all the gorgeous flowers that beam in summer air, and of all strong and goodly trees, pleasant to the eye or good for food—stately palm and pine, strong ash and oak, scented citron, burdened vine—there be any one so deeply loved, by God so highly graced, as that narrow point of feeble green. And well does it fulfill its mission. Consider what we owe merely to the meadow grass, to the covering of the dark ground by that glorious enamel, by the companies of those soft, and countless, and peaceful spears. The fields! Follow forth but for a little time the thoughts of all that we ought to recognize in these words. All spring and summer is in them—the walks by silent scented paths, the rest in noonday heat, the joy of herds and flocks, the power of all shepherd life and meditation, the life of sunlight upon the world, falling in emerald streaks, and falling in soft blue shadows, where else it would have struck upon dark mould or scorching dust. Pastures beside the pacing brooks, soft banks and knolls of lowly hills, thymy slopes of down, overlooked by the blue line of lifted sea, crisp lawns, all dim with early dew, or smooth in evening warmth of barred sunshine, dinted by hagpy feet any softening in their fall the sound of loving voices—all these are summed in those simple words: and these are not all. Go out in the spring time among the meadows that slope from the shores of the Swiss lakes to the roots of their lower mountains. There, mingled with the taller Gentians and the white Narcissus, the grass grows deep and free; and as you follow the winding mountain paths, beneath arching boughs, all veiled with blossom—paths that forever drop and rise over the green banks and mounds sweeping down in scented undulation steep to the blue water, studded here and there with new-mown heaps filling all the air with fainter sweetness—look up toward the higher hills, where the waves of everlasting green roll silently into their long inlets among the shadows of the pines; and we may perhaps at last know the meaning of those quiet words of the 147th Psalm: "He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains."—*John Ruskin.*

Signs of the Times.

Not only in North Carolina but throughout the South, aye, and the North, the people are being aroused to the necessity of a stop to the terrible moral and physical evils which inevitably follow in the train of Alcohol. The mayor of Philadelphia has enforced the law, absolutely closing all saloons and grogshops on the Sabbath, and with the result, of course, of diminishing the number of arrests on that day. Arkansas wants a prohibition law. The State Temperance Convention of West Virginia met in Parkersburg on the 15th of December last. The object of this meeting was to inaugurate such plans as seem necessary to secure an amendment to the constitution of that State that will forever prohibit the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors within the bounds of Virginia. At this meeting the fact was stated that thirty-seven of the fifty-four counties in the State refuse licenses to men to sell spirituous liquors as a beverage. Resolutions favoring State prohibition were adopted. About one hundred delegates were in attendance, and the temperance work in West Virginia has received a grand impetus. We should have mentioned previously the good work which Bishop Keane is doing, or has done, in securing the closing on the Lord's Day of the liquor shops owned or controlled by Roman Catholics in Richmond, Va.

Our own State prohibition movement, so far as our observation goes, moves on gloriously. In Wilmington the movement is almost volcanic in its suddenness. A few weeks ago it seemed as if there was no bearing up against the tide of intemperance. At that time there was a deep undercurrent, widespread and strong, that needed only the occasion for its manifestation. The eagerness with which the call for the passage of a prohibitory law is signed is astonishing. All religious denominations, all nationalities, all colors and conditions of men favor it. Meetings of the friends of prohibition have been called for Tuesday night, 4th inst., (we write before it is held) at the Opera House for white persons, and at the City Hall for our colored citizens. A number of speeches will be made and delegates appointed, by each of these assemblies, to the State convention at Raleigh on the 12th instant.

The feeling is that something *must* be done, and something that will eradicate the evil. In every city, town, village, hamlet, cross road, where the effort has not been made to get the voice of the people, let there be an effort at once. There is no time to be lost.

The prohibition movement, as thus far developed, is entirely independent of politics, and it is safe to say that neither political party could do a worse thing for itself than to place itself in opposition to the measure. —*N. C. Presbyterian.*

REV. MR. WARE, a member of the Detroit Methodist Episcopal Conference has been deposed because he does not pay his debts. Which we must say we consider a step in the right direction provided also *every member who subscribes to Mr. Ware's salary and failed to pay* was disciplined for *non-payment of debt.* However this may be we take this incident as the text for a brief homily. There are, we fear, a large number of consciences which are very lax in this matter of debt-paying. Accounts are heedlessly entered at the stores and debts increased without reflecting where the pay is to come from and when a settlement is asked for, lo! the debtor awakens to the fact that the money is wanting wherewith to meet the obligation. This destroys character in business circles and though the effect is not so apparent, it destroys reputation and also character in religion.—What will the business men of the world think of the piety of a man who contracts and piles up unpaid and unpayable debts? They consider it a matter of the commonest honesty among themselves to meet obligations and they brand the man who fails. Is religion to be less honest than business? Is the professing Christian to be behind the mere moral man of the world? The type described is guilty of two evils. They virtually *steal,* for they take another's goods without equivalent, and they virtually *lie,* for in procuring goods on credit there is involved an implicit promise of pay. Surely a professing Christian ought to be an honest and truthful man. There is cause to fear that this laxity brings religion into great disrepute among honest and upright men of the world. They ask sneeringly what is the worth of a religion that will not even lead a man to pay an honest debt? And echo answers, what?—*N. C. Presbyterian.*

We have told it before—we will tell it again:

More han tforty-five years ago we heard a Lutheran preacher's sermon in this town on the duty of paying debts, the conclusion of which struck like the cry of fire. He had summed up the proofs from the Bible, and then pitched his voice a few keys higher, as he exclaimed, "No, brethren, the man who lives careless of debts he has made and dying in that condition, will wake up in hell."

"There is no difficulty in the verse you quote: "No man can come unto Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him," except as to the word "can." No man can come to Christ without feeling willing to come, for *willing* is *coming.* But is a sinner ever willing to come to Christ unless God makes him willing? It is a terrible mistake too often made, that coming to Christ is something beyond a real willingness. Coming is not something to *do,* in this case, but something to *be.* Heartily to desire to be at Jesus' feet, is to be there."

If children have two ears that they may hear much and say little, adults have two ears that they may hear both sides before they judge.

"You ask me if everything seems to go wrong with me sometimes? Dear child, I am a true son of Jacob, and every little while cry, "All these things are against me."

Women's Conversation.

What a good thing it would be if women would only speak their minds. There is nothing that honest men desire more than to understand that mysterious race that is so like them and yet so unlike, who shares their homes but not their thoughts, who are so shrewed, so practical and so irrational. The poor men yearn to break down the invisible barrier and see into the real life of those they love so well; but the loved ones smile and chatter and say sweet things, and pretty things, and ingenious things, and things they have borrowed from men and improved in the borrowing, but never one word of the real thoughts that are working in their busy brains. So the men flatter and lie because they think the women like it, and the women accept it all because they think it is man's nature; and the men think the women are empty-headed angels; and the women think men are fine intelligent brutes; and the classes go on loving and despising one another accordingly, and all for the want of a truthfulness in conversation.

RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION DURING 1880.—The Railway Age presents a summary showing the mileage of track actually laid down in the United States during 1880. The footings are astonishing, showing that not less than 7,027 miles of new track were laid during the past twelve months on at least 234 different lines. These figures are greater than for any year since 1871, and the mileage is greater by 54 per cent. than that of 1879. The Age anticipates that final figures will increase the grand total to 7,500 miles, a mileage greater than has been constructed in the United States or any other country in any previous year. The total mileage of the country is 93,704.

Statesville Items.

In the collision that occurred here last week Miss Mattie Jones of Newton, and Mr. Will Meares, of New York, were considerably bruised, but neither was seriously hurt. The collision, it is thought, was the result of carelessness on the part of Halyburton the engineer of the freight train. He says he could not manage his brakes.

The spring term of Simonton Female College opened last Monday with an increased number of scholars on the roll.

Dr. Hugh Kelly, who has been so long confined to his room by a stroke of paralysis, was down town to-day.

Dr. W. M. Campbell is now deprived of the use of his right side and tongue by paralysis. He has not spoken a word for a week. Little hope is entertained of his recovery.—*Charlotte Observer.*

RICE AND COTTON CROPS.—Charleston, S. C. Jan., 13.—The *News and Courier* publishes a summary of the reports received from all sections of the State showing great damage to the cotton and rice crops from protracted wet weather.

It estimates that of the cotton unpicked in December fully one half has been totally lost, while the remainder has been much damaged in quality.

In the sea islands the crops is rotting in the fields, the rice harvest owing mainly to the rainy weather is one of the most unfortunate on record.

Tennyson can take a worthless sheet of paper, and by writing a poem on it make it worth $5,000. That is genius. Mr. Vanderbilt can write fewer words on a smaller sheet, and make it worth $50,000,000; that is capital. *N. Y. World.* And the United States Government can take an ounce and a quarter of gold and stamp upon it an "Eagle-bird" and "Twenty Dollars." That is money. The mechanic can take the material worth $50 and make it worth $100. That is skill. The merchant can take an article worth 25 cents and sell it to you for $1.00. That is business. A lady can purchase a comfortable bonnet for $10, but prefers to pay $100 for one, because it is more stylish. That is foolishness. The ditch-digger works ten hours a day, and shovels out three tons of earth for $1. That is labor.—*Richmond State.*

It is harder to know how to abound than how to be abased.

Things are sometimes at their worst, just before they begin to mend.

The wicked are often nearest to ruin, when they put ruin far from them.

Dare to be truthful, nothing can need a lie.

THE IRISH TROUBLES THREATING.—Longford, Jan. 13.—Three hundred and fifty police and a squadron of dragoons are assembled at Drumlish and the infantry are momentarily expected. When they arrive the whole force will proceed to assist in the serving of ejectment notices on Lord Granarl's property. The people are armed with bludgeons and pitchforks, but the encounter will probably be avoided by the exertions of the parish priest.

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 13.—A dispatch to the *Democrat* from Little Rock, Ark., says the daughter of C. H. Banks, of Mariana, Lea county, was brutally outraged by a colored man yesterday. The negro was arrested and put in jail. Yesterday an infuriated mob surrounded the prison, forced the doors and took the prisoner a short distance from town and literally riddled his body with bullets.

"Political Tyranny in Carolina."

Some time ago a pamphlet bearing the above title was announce for sale in New York, and as it was printed in 1705, it was considered that the State ought to have it in our library as an interesting document throwing light upon an obscure and interesting period of history. By misadventure the book was not then purchased for the State, and Yale College became the purchaser. We are, however, led to believe that either a copy of it or the original pamphlet can be procured, and it will doubtless be a valuable acquisition to the history of that period. It is believed to have been written by De Foe, who was interested in one of the commissions sent to England to represent the case of the Dissenters in Carolina, who were then greatly oppressed, contrary to the intent of the charter granted to the Lords Proprietors.—*News & Obs.*

Advancing.

BY THE REV. CHARLES F. DEEMS, D. D.

We need more positiveness. We need the *habit* of standing by the things that are settled. To that end each man needs to have some things settled for himself. Then, when they *are* settled, he must cling to them, and not to things which are still in question or in doubt.

The trend of modern thought and expression demands attention to this matter. The fashion of thought of late seems to be to regard him the most advanced thinker who has *thought out* the very least. Men's abilities have been measured, not by what they know but by what they do not know; not by what they believe, but by what they doubt. A speaker who harangues on the difficulties which exist in matter and in mind will attract attention and elicit applause, while a teacher who instructs in what is not difficult to comprehend, but which is of inestimable value in practical life, is regared as dull and *unadvanced.*

This cant of "advanced" thinkers is leading multitudes into bogs, into impenetrable forests, into pitfalls. Men must "advance!"

GLADSTONE ON THE IRISH DISTURBANCE.—Gladstone in reply to a delegation of members of the House declared that to give a specific form to existing evils was the first step in dealing with the land question. Remedial measures must come after. It was explained on the part of the deputation that 56 Liberals shared their views and many English and Scotch members expressed sympathy therewith. The members of the deputation dwelt on the necessity for the adoption of their programme. They said if such a measure was passed the tenants, generally, would be satisfied and the agitation would subside. They insisted that a general feeling of insecurity prevailed among the tenants under the existing state of things and that the great majority of landlords would accept their programme. Gladstone replied that the great object of the government was to promote the welfare of the tenants without inflicting injustice on any other section of the public.