

same reason that the world at large is only growing into democracy. It is that democracy has been dwarfed at the roots, and the rule of a limited few established; it is, tritely, the lack of democracy. The general conferences of the Protestant Churches, and the like, have been dominated by the clergy, a self-chosen clergy; for, while individual church organizations have chosen their own pastors, they have been limited in their choice to a self-chosen group of ministers. In the Roman Catholic Church, authority has been much more highly centralized. There can be no doubt that these men, in entering the ministry, have been animated by high ideals of service to humanity, but they have been preachers of The Truth, rather than seekers after the truth. Like the "bench and bar," like men in all walks of life, they have been bound down by accepted beliefs that have been pronounced Truth. Thousands of men and women of character and of interest in the public welfare, feeling the inadequacy of the Church, and seeing no way themselves to better conditions, have drifted away from these organizations.

Now, however, the "rising sun of democracy is rising in the west," and, just as it is shedding its light on bench and bar, and into every corner of the earth, so also is the Church becoming illuminated.

And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught  
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.

Here and there a Crapsey or a Bigelow springs up; everywhere the Churches are adopting new lines of activity, widening their sphere of service to mankind. Only recently, upon the occasion of a civic uprising, I heard the minister of one of our city churches arguing valiantly that "it is perfectly proper for Christian men and women to vote," for, said he, "if you will go to the voting places, the polls where they vote, there you will see every bum and promoter of vice voting whenever they get the chance." Smile if you will, but these are signs of change, and change in the right direction.

There is another reason why the Church will again become an active factor of democracy, namely, the character of the church buildings—neighborhood auditoriums, ideally adapted to democratic gatherings and discussions. When the Church has again entered into the life of the *whole* people, by adapting itself to their needs and aspirations, the churches will become the gathering-places, cradles of democracy.

HARRY W. OLNEY.



### THE MEETING.

Rose E. Sharland in *The Labour Leader*.

His tool-bag was slung on his shoulder,  
He hummed a sweet song as he stepped,  
And looked up the hillside as moulder,  
With bracken by autumn's brush swept.

The flame-yellow gorse-bushes burning,  
To him were the candles of God  
Before some great altar, where, yearning,  
The spirit walked humbly, unshod.

"Get out of the way, you!" came, heated,  
A voice from the depths of a car,  
Wherein a great Bishop was seated,  
Aloof in his splendor, and far.  
He passed: and the fair roadside under  
Was foul as the powdered dust spun,  
Where, lost in a sad smile of wonder,  
Was standing the Carpenter's Son.



### WHAT THE BRAKEMAN OVER-HEARD.

By the Rev. Robert A. Bakeman. This Parable  
Was Sent Out from the Baptist Parsonage  
at East Jaffrey, N. H., Christmas, 1911.

It was flashed by the Associated Press to all the great dailies of the world that Jesus would spend Christmas day in Jaffrey, New Hampshire. And it was further reported that Jaffrey was the only place where he could be seen. Naturally, there arise two questions of absorbing interest—What happened in Jaffrey? and how did the people outside of Jaffrey receive this remarkable announcement? In the first place, just as soon as the news reached town there was a meeting of all the ministers. This sounds dignified, but accuracy really demands the statement that the ministers met without appointment almost in the center of the village while each was hurrying to the home of one of the others. And they tell us that at that meeting the older brethren seemed to have forgotten entirely that there was one among them who was shaky on Regeneration and had publicly admitted his inability to associate the idea of Eternal Torment with his Heavenly Father. So much of a bombshell at the very start did the Associated Press hurl into the midst of a little village nestling peacefully at the foot of Monadnock. And then a mass meeting of all the people in all the churches was held, for the Bishop had telephoned permission to the good Father of the Roman Catholic parish that his people might unite on this occasion with the other churches in the village. Committees were formed to look after every detail. A great chorus choir from all the churches held rehearsals every night, and it is only fair to say that a kind of lofty, holy enthusiasm ran contagiously through the community; the censorious harshness that makes so many lives rasp and scrape, almost entirely vanished and many people took advantage of the few days of grace before the coming of the Master and made a bee-line for the homes of those whom they had wronged and whom they passed each day with lip of scorn and eyes from which the lightning flashed. And outside of Jaffrey, as the news was re-

ceived in city and town, pilgrimages were arranged from every section of the country and from every country in the world. And their objective point was Jaffrey, New Hampshire. The telephone and telegraph wires were buried with messages. The Ark and the Inn were deluged with orders for accommodations. Unheard-of prices were offered for every inch of space that could by the most extravagant use of the imagination be considered a possibility as a place to lodge. Everybody who had a relative that lived within striking distance of Jaffrey was suddenly seized with an overwhelming affection for him—"they had planned to write him for a long time, anyway." And from the outside the movement had taken larger form, for there had come in from other towns and cities and from the kings of finance tremendous contributions, with orders to spare nothing to make the background worthy of the event.

Skilled decorators were sent from the large cities and every house was decked with gorgeous colors and striking inscriptions of welcome to the King of kings. The suggestion was made and received immediate indorsement, that in this triumphal procession, instead of the palm branches, there be spread the whole distance of the line of march the finest of velvet carpeting, and so for days the main street of the village had been closed to travel and now for more than half a mile from church to church there was one vast expanse of rich softness. Christmas Sunday came, and the atmosphere of the crowded village was charged with an intensity that could scarcely be suppressed. The churches did not begin to be large enough to hold those who wished to come, and many a man who had been one of the emigrants from the churches five, ten or twenty years before for one or another of the reasons that have made so many emigrants in those twenty years, made his way back into his old pew. The evening services were not dismissed till midnight, and in the remaining hours a tired but expectant community tried in vain to sleep.

When the first tinges of gold shot through the eastern sky on Christmas morning, from every turnpike and crossroad they came—the winding procession of travelers on foot and in teams. And before the sun had really had time to adjust himself once more to the sight of his western constituents the shriek of the special trains was heard as they pulled up to the depot and emptied themselves of the swarms from the cities. With amazing quickness they lined up many deep along the whole half-mile of carpeted way. The sight was splendid. It could not have failed to have drawn forth a response of appreciation from even a luxury-sated Emperor of the Romans. Close by the station was gathered the committee that was to receive Jesus. They were easily picked out because their breasts were lighted up with badges of solid gold. There

were two Cardinals of the Catholic Church who were allowed on this occasion to wear their red hats, and they held in their hands a memorial to be placed in the hands of Jesus, written by the Pope himself. There were a dozen or more of the uncrowned Bishops of the Protestant Church. The Governor and his staff and the President and his guard represented the State and the Nation. The men of science, too, had their quota with their doctors' robes adorned with red and blue and green and their Phi Beta Kappa keys sufficiently in evidence. And the fraternal orders had brought their grandest potentates, who added their share to the brilliance of the scene with their plumes and uniforms. And so on down the line the great and mighty were given a place on this committee which was to receive with the honor due him, Jesus. Was it any wonder that fevered intensity was everybody's mood when the event that the world had expected from generation to generation for almost two thousand years was about to take place? Even the pure, white beast, with his trappings of beaten gold, who was to bear the Master along the carpeted way, pawed the ground with restlessness. But suddenly every form grew rigid with expectancy. From the distance the clear air brought the sound of a shrill whistle, and around the curve the train came speeding. The signal was given and heads were bared all down the line, the militia came to present, and for a moment nothing was heard but the heart-beats of men. It was as though all nature joined with every creature spontaneously in an invocation upon the scene that was about to be enacted.

And then upon the platform of the car there appeared the form of a man. A hand was raised and immediately every church bell rang out its song of frenzied joy; the thousand voices banked upon the side burst forth with "Joy to the world, the Lord has come: Let earth receive her King." A mighty cheer swept down the line like a wind-storm, but the cheer was frozen in the throats of those who stood near enough to see, for the man who stood upon the platform of the car had bleary eyes and dishevelled hair and the face of the drunken sot, and as they looked he staggered down into their midst, and his feet were just about to touch the carpet of velvet when he was seized by the strong-armed guards and hurled out into the midst of the crowd, which pushed him from side to side and mocked at his embarrassment. And those who had seen it all shuddered as they realized how near the drunkard had come to stepping upon the carpet of velvet "kept for the Master's use."

But now there appeared a foreigner—a weaver in the mill—and when those who lived in the village saw him they jeered again, but the leaders allowed him in silence to make his way through the crowd, taking care only that his feet did not touch the sacred carpet. And following him in quick

succession came a woman from the next town, notorious the country wide as a public property, a woman whose name was handled as carelessly as one would brush the dirt from his coat, whose face bore the unmistakable signs of her trade; and after her a convict just released, with hair still cropped close and wearing the prison-made suit and shoes to remind him of what he was—and is; and last of all there came out through the door a man with ragged clothes and face unshaven and shoes worn to the uppers. And this trio were taken in hand almost before their feet touched the ground and carried toward the little white jail—the only place the hungry man can go; for 'tis against the law for him to ask for bread. Here they could be kept safely until after Jesus had come and gone. For the shock that had come to the crowd at first had given place to wise looks and words. It was easy to see why they were there. They had come to take advantage of the crowd and ply their trade—the harlot to capitalize the passions of men; the convict to steal their possessions, and the tramp in his poverty and rags to excite their sympathy.

The officers had forced their way through the sea of scornful and indifferent faces when a little woman plainly dressed, flushed with excitement, grasped the hand of the harlot, drew her face to hers and whispered in her ear. What she said no one knows save those two and the Father who has the time and the thought to watch even the sparrow as he falls. But as she was dragged away there came over the harlot's face a smile that was not the smile of a harlot—and the same moment from the lips of the little woman came a shout, "There he is!" For as she took her place again in the crowd, in one of the windows of the car she had seen looking at her the radiant face of Jesus! But as she cried out the crowd, startled at first, quickly remembered that she was the woman who had spoken to the harlot, and they smiled the long-suffering smile that the wise and great ones have for those whose minds are feeble, and charitably concluded that the excitement of the day had left her unbalanced.

The bell clanged and the train pulled out with one passenger left on board. And the brakeman who was passing through heard him say: "They didn't want to see me after all. They expected some one else."

The next morning the newspapers of the world came out in black headlines:

**Tremendous Crowds Disappointed!  
Thousands Stand All Christmas Day  
at Jaffrey, New Hampshire, But  
Jesus Fails to Appear!**

But the woman who had pressed the harlot's hand knew that the newspapers of the world were wrong.

## A PARABLE.

By James Russell Lowell.

Said Christ our Lord, "I will go and see  
How the men, my brethren, believe in me."  
He passed not again through the gate of birth,  
But made Himself known to the children of earth.

Then said the chief priests and rulers, and kings,  
"Behold, now, the Giver of all good things;  
Go to, let us welcome with pomp and state  
Him who alone is mighty and great."

With carpets of gold the ground they spread  
Wherever the Son of Man should tread,  
And in palace-chambers lofty and rare  
They lodged him, and served him with kingly fare.

Great organs surged through arches dim  
Their jubilant floods in praise of him;  
And in church, and palace, and judgment-hall,  
He saw his image high over all.

But still, wherever his steps they led,  
The Lord in sorrow bent down his head,  
And from under the heavy foundation-stones,  
The son of Mary heard bitter groans.

And in church, and palace, and judgment-hall,  
He marked great fissures that rent the wall,  
And opened wider and yet more wide  
As the living foundation heaved and sighed.

"Have ye founded your thrones, and altars, then,  
On the bodies and souls of living men?  
And think ye that building shall endure  
Which shelters the noble and crushes the poor?"

"With gates of silver and bars of gold  
Ye have fenced my sheep from their Father's fold;  
I have heard the dropping of their tears  
In heaven these eighteen hundred years."

"O Lord and Master, not ours the guilt,  
We build but as our fathers built;  
Behold thine images, how they stand,  
Sovereign and sole, through all our land.

"Our task is hard,—with sword and flame  
To hold thy earth forever the same,  
And with sharp crooks of steel to keep  
Still, as thou leftest them, thy sheep."

Then Christ sought out an artisan,  
A low-browed, stunted, laggard man,  
And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin  
Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

These set He in the midst of them,  
And as they drew back their garment-hem,  
For fear of defilement, "Lo, here," said he,  
"The images ye have made of me!"



In the city where the wall is jasper and the gates  
are twelve pearls, will there be any villains to labor  
while other men feast?—"Long Will," by Florence  
Converse.