

distances and separations in society and churches hold us apart; but spiritually and unseen, all that are born of God, gather together day by day at this One Fountain of life. And it is the one Christ who from his abundance quenches the thirst of all. And from being really one in Christ, and from this real life from this one Fountain, in spite of differences, believers on earth derive each day anew, the power of unity by which to realize and to work out the kingdom of heaven on the earth.

But it must be an act of faith. It says: "They make of him a well." It does not go of itself. Thousands upon thousands, alas, come and go, without ever having known, admired, and quenched their thirst from, this Fountain. The act of faith alone brings one into fellowship with this Fountain. Christ wants to be accepted. By faith we must make him our Well. It is with this also as it is in the mountain village. Sometimes there lives a rich man in such a village. He has dug a well in his own yard for himself. He has no need, therefore, mornings and evenings to go to the village well. But the others, the poor people, have no such well of their own. Hence it also applies here: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they go out after the Fountain of life, hence theirs is the kingdom of God.

69

"BY MY GOD I LEAP OVER A WALL."

When God had created the first human pair, no dangers threatened them in Paradise. Neither the elements of nature, nor wild animals, nor climate, nor any disease, exposed them to any

risks. All Paradise was with them. It was altogether pleasure without burden. At one point only they were in danger. That was their spiritual estate. In this they were vulnerable. If the soul fell down they were gone; unless God saved them, they were gone forever.

The curse, which came upon the earth immediately after they had fallen, showed at once that pandemonium had been let loose against them, and that the whole creation, as it were, had entered into conclave to destroy them. When we think how absolutely helpless these two people stood, almost without clothing and entirely unfortified, in the face of these unloosed and raving forces of world and nature, we feel at once that absolutely nothing would have come of them, and that they would have met death at once, if only in maw of lion or tiger, had not from the side of God secret, wondrous grace watched over them.

How human life saves itself now need not be asked. We now face the evil and destructive forces of nature strongly fortified in every way, and it is an exception when a flood surprises, a hurricane destroys, an epidemic works havoc, or wild animals carry off human victims. But of all the means of resistance, which are at our disposal, Adam and Eve had none, and they were but with each other. This makes it so wonderful that our race was not at once destroyed, that it maintained itself, that it increased and obtained the upper hand. For many centuries indeed after Paradise had disappeared, man was forced to wage war to the death with the wild forces of destruction, and to this day the names of a Nimrod and of a Hercules are alive in the memory of nations, as

of heroes who knew how to restrain the monster of destruction. Most people live upon their common strength. Weaklings live beneath themselves. But there have always been a few, who have excelled themselves. And later generations have honored these heroes as men, who have achieved the superhuman, and who by efforts born from almost superhuman inspiration have left behind a blessing for the entire human race. When difficulty faced them as a wall, and others remained standing before it, they knew how to get over it, and make a way for those who followed after.

When the fight with the monster of elements and forces of nature had so far led to victory, that with much caution and watchfulness, normal human life became possible to a certain extent, Satan set up men against themselves, and an entirely new struggle was born, even of man against man. The evil game of Cain and Abel. To despoil each other of goods, to aim at one another's life, to subject as slave another to oneself. Now pandemonium no longer of nature, but of human evil broke loose in the bosom of humanity itself. The misery that has overtaken our race by this second conflict is nameless. First lust of robbery and murder among each other of man against man, of house against house. And from this, war of nation against nation, of people against people. And then, again, heroes have arisen. Men who excelled others and themselves. A Samson and David, a Prince William and Prince Maurice. **Heroes, who, under high inspiration** have broken resistance and have delivered their people. Again the Wall, against which every other man dashed his head, but over which they

leaped. And thus came about deliverance of the people. And thus the names of these heroes are held in lasting honor. Not by our race as a whole, but by the people whose deliverance they have wrought.

Meanwhile a third struggle had begun. Not against nature, and not against the lust of robbery and murder of a fellowman, but the conflict between the kingdoms of the world and the kingdom of heaven. The grace of God descending, the light of God inshining, in order to bring the children of men to the inheritance of the children of God. And face to face with this, the power of Satan, sin and world, to destroy the cause of God in the earth. And again there have been heroes, who, excelling others and themselves, have stood their ground where others fainted. Again the wall, which inexorably foiled the many, but over which enthusiastically they leaped. A Noah, an Abraham, an Isaiah, presently the martyrs and the Apostles, and after them a Luther and a Calvin. Again this same high inspiration. The wall at last thrown down. And their names held in grateful remembrance, not by a single people, and not by the whole race, but by the generation of all the children of God. At the center of this conflict was the Lion from Judah's tribe; the supreme Leader and Finisher of the faith, the Son of God and the Son of Man, the vanquisher of death in his glorious resurrection. Here God in him, he himself God, and therefore the wall of sin and death forever demolished by him, and the way opened to everlasting peace.

Now consider our struggle. It is threefold. There is the struggle against the forces of nature

in sickness and in threatening destruction; the struggle for existence and a living. The struggle against our fellowmen, when they do us wrong, slander us and threaten our rights and liberties. And thirdly the struggle against the powers of Satan, sin and the world, in behalf of God's glory, the cause of the Lord, and the soul's salvation. From the combination of these three powers that are arrayed against us spring all our woes and miseries, all our sorrows and anxieties. Man has a struggle on earth. It is not equally severe in every case, but it frequently appears that with some individuals it is a struggle against hellish powers. In the face of it one stands cowardly and powerless; larger numbers struggle with little more than ordinary effort; but there are always a few who face the fight with the uncommon courage of heroes and they triumph by faith. Again the wall; before which others falter but over which they know how to leap. They do it with their God and in his Name, and leave a blessing behind them for all their house and times.

What is the secret of the courage and power that overcomes in the case of these heroes and heroines? Of course they excelled themselves, that is to say, they knew how to apply a power of will, which really far outreached their own strength. This high power comes not from without, but from within; from their fixed heart, from their soul taking hold of itself, from the spirit that is in them. By comparison one perceives something of this high tension in the man who runs amuck, in the drunkard, in the insane, in the man who is carried away by his passion. Everyone runs out

of the way of him who runs amuck, because it is known that no one can face him. He is thrown by a shot from a gun. Three officers of police are unable sometimes to overpower a subject of delirium tremens. It takes the straight-jacket at times to render insane people powerless, which shows what gigantic strength they are able to develop. And in a fit of passion many an excited person has withstood three men and thrown them. All these are exhibits of human misery, but in every one of them, there is gigantic development of strength, because a something within was able to cause such tension of spirit, and through their spirit of their muscles, as passes all measure.

But even as such muscular tension can spring from evil excitement and overexertion of the spirit, so by an inner tension of the Holy Spirit the soul can double its strength, yea, increase it threefold times. Not from human misery this time, but from sacred exaltation for the sake of resisting human woe. Then there is the wall again. The wall of injustice perpetrated against us, of trouble that overwhelms us, of sorrow that can not be borne, of opposition that threatens to undo us, of sin that aims at our descent into hell. A wall that must be demolished, or broken through, except we be lost. Then heroic courage must show itself. Not that of wild, ungovernable tension, but the pure, calm, persistent courage of the hero, who never gives in, and in God's strength overcomes. Then we make true for ourselves what the Psalmist sang (18:29): "By my God have I leaped over a wall." And "by my God" does not mean to say by the help of God, or by a Divine miracle, but it signifies: With God in my heart,

through this highest inspiration, which the inworking of the Holy Ghost alone can bring about in my soul, I know that it is God's will, and that it must be done. And then it is, if you like, a miracle, for then you do and suffer that which far supersedes your own strength. But the wall yields, it breaks, and you leap over. And on the other side of it you kneel down to ascribe praise and honor to him who has enabled you to do the superhuman.

70

“MINE EYES ARE EVER TOWARD
THE LORD.”

In the *Te Deum* the church sings: “To Thee all angels cry aloud: . . . To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim: continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory.” Continually, i. e. without ceasing, without pauses, always the never-ending ascent of the hymn of praise from angelic choirs before God. This unbroken, continuous, unchanging and fixed permanency of things is the peculiar characteristic of the world before God's throne. In the house of the Father there is no time, but eternity, and therefore there is no breaking down of life in a night, no transition from morning to midday, but it remains eternal morning. There is no standing still and beginning again. No stopping and resuming. No intermezzo of rest or relaxation. But life, ever springing up and coming back to itself, without waste of power, and consequently without need of change. There is no more development, hence transition from one condition into another is unthinkable. No break or disturbance mars the ful-