

PULPIT TOPICS.

Mr. Hepworth Pictures the Immensity of Human Capacity.

The limit of your endurance is not yet reached. It is marvellous. You have heard the story of the pilot Maynard. He was pilot between Detroit and Buffalo. One day at noon a sailor came up and told the Captain the hold was on fire. There were hundreds of barrels of pitch and tar on board, and there was no hope of saving the vessel. O the consternation among the 200 passengers! They hurried to the Captain, saying, "What shall we do?" The Captain turned to the pilot and said, "John Maynard, how far are we from land?" "Seven miles." "How long will it take to run there?" "Three-quarters of an hour." "Then head her for shore." And all the passengers hurried forward to catch the first glimpse of land. The pilot was a man of God, and yet an humble one; one who knew no more than to pilot a steamboat. Up to that moment that was the limit of his capabilities. The Captain, standing among the passengers, took his trumpet, and above the crackling of the blaze, cried, "John Maynard!" "Sir," "How does she head?" "Southeast." "Head her south—run her ashore." And all they heard was "Aye, aye, sir," and then in a few minutes the voice of the Captain, "John Maynard!" "Aye, aye, sir." "Can you hold on five minutes longer?" "With God's help I will." And in five minutes they heard the keel grate on the sand and all the passengers were saved. Poor John Maynard dropped from a pilot house which had been burned to a cinder beneath his feet, the wheel charred by the avenging and cruel flame, dead, stone dead, but at his post. O brethren! I take it that when that man went up yonder he was no longer a pilot. No, that man developed powers in that moment that made him equal to a King. He stands now, with his white robe, overlaid with the

The excerpt from Rev. Hepworth's sermon taking John Maynard as a paragon of what man armed with religion is capable of achieving appeared in *The New York Herald* 30 years after publication of the original 1845 sketch and 11 years before Theodor Fontane composed his famous ballad.

CHURCH OF THE DISCIPLES.
THE BOUNDLESSNESS OF HUMAN CAPACITY—
SERMON BY REV. GEORGE H. HEPWORTH.

purple garments that indicate power? My dear friends, I want simply to say to you that that power is not in him alone. I don't believe that there is a man who has not qualities within him slumbering somewhere which would make him strong as Saul was. Brethren, we were born of kings to be kings; we were born of giants to be giants. Golconda and California combined would not satisfy. What does? Would I have led you along this tortuous path unless I could tell you what does? There is none we can all be giants. What is the incentive? Oh, I wish I could make you feel it as I do. This book has given it to me. Jesus Christ speaks to me in such a way that He adds dignity to my character. The one power of this book is its inspiration; not the inspiration of the men who wrote it, but its inspiration to my heart. No man can read it without feeling that he is, indeed, a prince—without feeling that he is able to do God's will, because God says He will help him. No man can be a Christian without strength. Christianity is strength. He says, "Brethren, you are too mighty for Goliath's play; stand on your feet and look at your stature. Work like a god; scorn the base things; work for the higher, and at the last day you shall stand at my throne over the tribes of Israel." O, what a promise this is! Can we have it? Ay, we can. Jesus worked. Jesus was strong and brave at all times, and when He died He did not carry it with Him to heaven; He left it to us. You and I can stand by Christ, and as the woman who touched the hem of His garment and received strength, so you and I can take hold of His hand and we shall become strong. The day of miracles is not yet over. Only trust God, believing Him, doing your best to live like the sons of kings, and behold what is called regeneration shall be realized in your existence.