Atlantic states, these responding to a petition addressed to all religious sects, to all political parties. A library and philosophical apparatus were wagoned over the Alleghanies. A committee was sent to England to choose further equipments. When Kentucky came to have a legislature of its own, it decreed that each of the counties in the state should receive six thousand acres of land wherewith to start a seminary; and that all these county seminaries were to train students for this long-dreamed-of central institution. That they might not be sent away — to the North or to Europe. When, at the end of the Civil War, a fresh attempt (and the last) was made to found in reality and in perpetuity a home institution to be as good as the best in the republic, the people rallied as though they had never known defeat. The idea resounded like a great trumpet throughout the land. Individual, legislative, congressional aid — all were poured out lavishly for that one devoted cause.

Sad chapter in the history of the Kentuckians! Perhaps the saddest among the many sad ones.

For such an institution must in time have taught what all its court-houses and all its pulpits — laws human and divine — have not been able to teach: it must have taught the noble commonwealth to cease murdering. Standing there in the heart of the people's land, it must have grown to stand in the heart of their affections: and so standing, to stand for peace. For true learning always stands for peace. Letters always stand for peace. And it is the scholar of the world who has ever come into it as Christ came: to teach that human life is worth saving and must be saved.

VII

The storm approaching David was vaster and came faster.

Several days had passed since his anxious and abruptly terminated interview with his pastor. During the interval he

had addressed no further inquiries to any man touching his religious doubts. A serious sign: for when we cease to carry such burdens to those who wait near by as our recognized counsellors and appointed guides, the inference is that succor for our peculiar need has there been sought in vain. This succor, if existent at all, will be found elsewhere in one of two places: either farther away from home in greater minds whose teaching has not yet reached us; or still nearer home in what remains as the last court of inquiry and decision: in the mind itself. With greater intellects more remote the lad had not yet been put in touch; he had therefore grown reflective, and for nearly a week had been spending the best powers of his unaided thought in self-examination.

He was sitting one morning at his student's table with his Bible and note-book opened before him, wrestling with his problems still. The dormitory was very quiet. A few students remained indoors at work, but most were absent: some gone

into the country to preach trial sermons to trying congregations; some down in the town; some at the college, practising hymns, or rehearsing for society exhibitions; some scattered over the campus, preparing Monday lessons on a spring morning when animal sap stirs intelligently at its sources and sends up its mingled currents of new energy and new lassitude.

David had thrown his window wide open, to let in the fine air; his eyes strayed outward. A few yards away stood a stunted transplanted locust — one of those uncomplaining asses of the vegetable kingdom whose mission in life is to carry whatever man imposes. Year after year this particular tree had remained patiently backed up behind the dormitory, for the bearing of garments to be dusted or dried. More than once during the winter, the lad had gazed out of his snow-crusted panes at this dwarfed donkey of the woods, its feet buried deep in ashes, its body covered with kitchen wash-rags and Bible students'

frozen underwear. He had reasoned that such soil and such servitude had killed it.

But as he looked out of his window now, his eyes caught sight of the early faltering green in which this exile of the forest was still struggling to clothe itself — its own life vestments. Its enforced and artificial function as a human clothes-horse had indeed nearly destroyed it; but wherever a bud survived, there its true office in nature was asserted, its ancient kind declared, its growth stubbornly resumed.

The moment for the lad may have been one of those in the development of the young when they suddenly behold familiar objects as with eyes more clearly opened; when the neutral becomes the decisive; when the sermon is found in the stone. As he now took curious cognizance of the budding wood which he, seeing it only in winter, had supposed could not bud again, he fell to marvelling how constant each separate thing in nature is to its own life and how sole is its obligation to live that

life only. All that a locust had to do in the world was to be a locust; and be a locust it would though it perished in the attempt. It drew back with no hesitation, was racked with no doubt, puzzled with no necessity of preference. It knew absolutely the law of its own being and knew absolutely nothing else; found under that law its liberty, found under that liberty its life.

"But I," he reflected, "am that which was never sown and never grown before. All the ages of time, all the generations of men, have not fixed any type of life for me. What I am to become I must myself each instant choose; and having chosen, I can never know that I have chosen best. Often I do know that what I have selected I must discard. And yet no one choice can ever be replaced by its rejected fellow; the better chance lost once, is lost eternally. Within the limits of a locust, how little may the individual wander; within the limits of the wide and erring human, what may not a man become! What now am I becom-

ing? What shall I now choose — as my second choice?"

A certain homely parallel between the tree and himself began to shape itself before his thought: how he, too, had been dug up far away — had, in a sense, voluntarily dug himself up — and been transplanted in the college campus; how, ever since being placed there, the different sectarian churches of the town had, without exception, begun to pin on the branches of his mind the many-shaped garments of their dogmas, until by this time he appeared to himself as completely draped as the little locust after a heavy dormitory washing. There was this terrible difference, however: that the garments hung on the tree were anon removed; but these doctrines and dogmas were fastened to his mind to stay — as the very foliage of his thought — as the living leaves of Divine Truth. He was forbidden to strip off one of those sacred leaves. He was told to live and to breathe his religious life through them, and to grow only where they hung.

The lad declared finally to himself this morning, that realize his religious life through those dogmas he never could; that it was useless any longer to try. Little by little they would as certainly kill him in growth and spirit as the rags had killed the locust in sap and bud. Whatever they might be to others — and he judged no man — for him with his peculiar nature they could never be life-vestments; they would become his spiritual grave-clothes.

The parallel went a little way further: that scant faltering green! that unconquerable effort of the tree to assert despite all deadening experiences its old wildwood state! Could he do the like, could he go back to his? Yearning, sad, immeasurable filled him as he now recalled the simple faith of what had already seemed to him his childhood. Through the mist blinding his vision, through the doubts blinding his brain, still could he see it lying there clear in the near distance! "No," he cried, "into whatsoever future

I may be driven to enter, closed against me is the peace of my past. Return thither my eyes ever will, my feet never!

"But as I was true to myself then, let me be true now. If I cannot believe what I formerly believed, let me determine quickly what I *can* believe. The Truth, the Law — I must find these and quickly!"

From all of which, though thus obscurely set forth, it will be divined that the lad had now reached, indeed for some days had stood halting, at one of the great partings of the ways: when the whole of Life's road can be walked in by us no longer; when we must elect the half we shall henceforth follow, and having taken it, ever afterward perhaps look yearningly back upon the other as a lost trail of the mind.

The parting of the ways where he had thus faltered, summing up his bewilderment, and crying aloud for fresh directions, was one immemorially old in the history of man: the splitting of Life's single road into

the by-paths of Doubt and Faith. Until within less than a year, his entire youth had been passed in the possession of what he esteemed true religion. Brought from the country into the town, where each of the many churches was proclaiming itself the sole incarnation of this and all others the embodiment of something false, he had, after months of distracted wandering among their contradictory clamors, passed as so many have passed before him into that state of mind which rejects them all and asks whether such a thing as true religion anywhere exists.

The parting of Life's road at Doubt and Faith! How many pilgrim feet throughout the ages, toiling devoutly thus far, have shrunk back before that unexpected and appalling sign! Disciples of the living Lord, saints, philosophers, scholars, priests, knights, statesmen — what a throng! What thoughts there born, prayers there ended, vows there broken, light there breaking, hearts there torn in twain! Mighty mountain rock! rising full in the road of