REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject: "Recreations, Good and Bad."

TEXTS: *They that use this world, as not abusing it.*—I. Corinthians vii., 3. *"And it came to pass when their hearts were merry, that they said: Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport."*—Judges xvi., 25.

We are entering the gayest season of the year. The winter opens before us the gates of a thousand amusements, some of them good and some bad. One of my texts will show you that amusements may be destructive, my other text will show that amusements may be under the Divine blessing and direction.

There were three thousand people assembled in the temple of Dagon. They had come to make sport of eyeless Samson. They were all ready for the entertainment. They began to clap and pound, impatient for the amusement to begin, and they cried: "Fetch him out! Fetch him out!" Yonder I see the blind giant coming, led by the hand of a child into the very midst of the temple. At his first appearance there goes up a shout of laughter and derision. The blind old giant pretends he is tired and wants to rest himself against the pillars of the house; so he says to the lad who leads him: "Show me where the main pillars are." The lad does so. Then the strong man puts his right hand on one pillar and his left hand on another pillar, and, with the mightiest push that mortal ever made, throws himself forward until the whole house comes down in thunderous crash, grinding the audience like grapes in a wine press. "And so it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said: Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport."

In other words, there are amusements that are destructive, and bring down disaster and death upon the heads of those who practice them. While they laugh and cheer, they die. The three thousand who perished that day in Gaza are as nothing compared with the tens of thousands who have been destroyed by sinful amusements.

But the other text I have read implies that there is a lawful use of the world, as well as an unlawful abuse of it; and the difference between the man Christian and the man un-Christian is that in the former case the man masters the world, while in the latter case the world masters him. For whom did God make this grand and beautiful world? For whom this wonderful expenditure of color, this gracefulness of line, this mosaic of the ground, this fresco of the sky, this glowing fruitage of orchard and vineyard, this full orchestra of the tempest, in which the tree branches flute and the winds trumpet and the the thunders drum and all the splendors of earth and sky come clashing their cymbals? For whom did God spring the arched bridge of colors resting upon buttresses of broken storm cloud? For whom did he gather the upholstery of fire around the window of the setting sun? For all men, but more especially for his own dear children.

If you build a large mansion and spread a great feast after it to celebrate the completion of the structure, do you allow strangers to come in and occupy the place, while you thrust your own children in the kitchen or the barn or the fields? Oh, no. You say: "I am very glad to see strangers in my mansion, but my own sons and daughters shall have the first right there." Now, God has built this grand mansion of a world, and he has spread a glorious feast in it; and while those who are strangers to his grace may come in, I think that God specially intends to give the advantage to his own children, those who are the sons and the daughters of the Lord Almighty, those who through grace can look up and say: "Abba, Father." You cannot make me believe that God gives more advantages to the world than he gives to the church bought by his own blood. If, therefore, people of the world have looked with dolorous sympathy upon those who make profession of religion, and have said: "Those new converts are going down into privation and into hardship. Why did not they tarry a little longer in the world, and have some of its enjoyments and amusements and recreations?" I say to such men of the world: "You are greatly mistaken," and before I get through I will show that those people who stay out of the kingdom of God have the hardships and self-denials, while those who come in have the joys and the satisfactions.

This morning, in the name of the King of Heaven and earth, I serve a writ of ejectment upon all the sinful and polluted who have squatted on the domain of earthly pleasure as though it belonged to them, while I claim, in behalf of the good and the pure and the true, the eternal inheritance which God has given them.

Hitherto, Christian philanthropists, clerical and lay, have busied themselves chiefly in denouncing sinful recreations; but I feel we have no right to stand before men and women in whose hearts there is a desire for recreation amounting to positive necessity, denouncing this and that and the other thing, when we do not promise to give them something better. God helping me this morning, and with reference to my last account, I shall enter upon a sphere not usual in sermonizing, but a subject which I think ought to be presented at this time. I propose now to lay before you some of the recreations which are not only innocent, but positively helpful and advantageous.

In the first place, I commend, among indoor recreations, music, vocal and instrumental. Among the first things created was the bird, so that the earth might have music at the start. This world, which began with so sweet a serenade, is finally to be demolished amidst the ringing blast of the archangel's trumpet, so that as there was music at the start, there shall be music at the close. While this heavenly art has often been dragged into the uses of superstition and dissipation, we all know it may be the means of high moral culture. Oh, it is a grand thing to have our children brought up amidst the sound of cultured voices and amidst the melody of musical instruments. There is in this art an indescribable fascination for the household. Let all those families who have the means to afford it, have flute or harp, or piano or organ. As soon as the hand is large enough to compass the keys, teach it how to pick out the melody. Let all our young men try this heavenly art upon their nature. Those who have gone into it fully have found in it illimitable recreation and amusement. Dark days, stormy nights, seasons of sickness, business disasters, will do little toward depressing the soul which can gal'op off over musical keys or soar in jubilant lay. It will cure pain. It will rest fatigue. It will quell passion. It will revive health. It will reclaim dissipation. It will strengthen the immortal soul. In the battle of Waterloo, Wellington saw that the Highlanders were falling back; he said: "What is the matter there?" He was told that the band of music had ceased playing, and he called up the pipers and ordered them to strike up an inspiriting air; and no sooner did they strike the air than the Highlanders were rallied and helped to win the day. Oh, ye who have been routed in the conflicts of life, try by the force of music to rally your scattered battalions.

I am glad to know that in our great cities there is hardly a night in which there are not concerts where, with the best musical instruments and the sweetest voices, people may find entertainment. Patronize such entertainments when they are afforded you. Buy season tickets if you can for the "Philharmonic" and the "Handel and Haydn" societies. Feel that the dollar and a half or two dollars that you spend for the purpose of hearing an artist play or sing is a profitable investment. Let your Steinway halls and your academies of music roar with the acclamation of appreciative audiences assembled at the concert or the oratorio.

Still further, I commend as worthy of support the gymnasium. This institution is gaining in favor every year, and I know of nothing more free from dissipation or more calculated to recuperate the physical and mental energies. While there are a good many people who have employed this institution there is a vast number who are ignorant of its excellences. There are men with cramped chests and weak sides and despondent spirits who through the gymnasium might be roused up to exuberance and exhilaration of life. There are many Christian people despondent from year to year who might through such an institution be benefited in their spiritual relations. There are Christian people who seem to think that it is a good sign to be poorly, and because Richard Baxter and Robert Hall were invalids they think that by the same sickliness they may come to the same grandeur of character. I want to tell the Christian people of my congregation that God will hold you responsible for your invalidism if it is your fault and when through right exercise and prudence you might be athletic and well. The effect of the body upon the soul you acknowledge. Put a man of mild disposition upon the animal diet of which the Indian partakes and in a little while his blood will change its chemical proportions. It will become like unto the blood of the lion or the tiger or the bear, while his disposition will change and become fierce, cruel and unrelenting. The body has a powerful effect upon the soul.

There are good people whose ideas of Heaven are all shut out with clouds of tobacco smoke. There are people who dare to shatter the physical vase in which God has put the jewel of eternity. There are men with great hearts and intellects in bodies worn out by their own neglects—magnificent machinery, capable of propelling an Etruria across the Atlantic, yet fastened in a rickety North river propeller. Martin Luther was so mighty for God, first, because he had a noble soul, and secondly, because he had a muscular development which would have enabled him to thrash any five of his persecutors, if it had been Christian so to do. Physical development which merely shows itself in fabulous lifting, or in perilous rope walking, or in pugilistic encounter, excites only our contempt; but we confess to great admiration for the man who has a great soul in an athletic body, every nerve, muscle and bone of which is consecrated to right uses. Oh, it seems to me outrageous that men, through neglect, should allow their physical health to go down beyond repair. A ship which ought, with all sail set and every man at his post, to be carrying a rich cargo for eternity, employing all its men in stopping up leakages! When you may, through the gymnasium, work off your spleen and your querulousness and one-half of your physical and mental ailments, do not turn your back upon such a grand medicament.

Still further: I commend to you a large class of parlor games and recreations. There is a way of making our homes a hundred fold more attractive than they are now. Those parents cannot expect to keep their children away from outside dissipations unless they make the domestic circle brighter than anything they can find outside of it. Do not, then, sit in your home surly and unsympathetic, and with a half condemnatory look, because of the sportfulness of your children. You were young once yourself; let your children be young. Because your eyes are dim and your ankles are stiff do not denounce sportfulness in those upon whose eye there is the first lustre, and in whose foot there is the bounding joy of robust health. I thank God that in our drawing-rooms and in our parlors there are innumerable games and sports which have not upon them the least taint of iniquity. Light up all your homes with innocent hilarities. Do not sit down with the rheumatism, wondering how children can go on so. Rather thank God that their hearts are so light and their laughter is so free, and that their cheeks are so ruddy and that their expectations are so radiant. The night will come soon enough, and the heartbreak, and the pang, and the desolation—it will come soon enough for the dear children. But when the storm actually clouds the sky it will be time enough for you to haul out your reef tackles. Carry, then, into your homes not only the innocent sports and games which are the inventions of our own day, but the games which come down with the sportfulness of all the past ages—chess and charades, and tableaux and battledore, and calisthenics, and lawn tennis and all those amusements which the young people of our homes know so well how to contrive. Then there will be the parlor socialities—groups of people assembled in your homes, with wit and mimicry and joviality, filling the room with joy from the door to the mantel and from the carpet to the ceiling. Oh! is there any exhilaration like a score of genial souls in one room, each one adding a contribution of his own individual merriment to the aggregation of general hilarity?

Suppose you want to go abroad in the city, then you will find the panorama and the art gallery and exquisite collections of pictures. You will find the Metropolitan Museum and the Historical Society rooms full of rare curiosities, and scores of places which can stand plainly the test of what is right and wrong in amusements. You will find the lecturing hall, which has been honored by the names of Agassiz in natural history, Doremus in chemistry, Boynton in geology, Mitchel in astronomy, John B. Gough in moral reform, and scores and hundreds of men who have poured their wit and genius and ingenuity through that particular channel upon the hearts and consciences and imaginations of men, setting this country fifty years farther in advance than it would have been without the lecture platform.

I rejoice in the popularization of outdoor sports. I hail the croquet ground and the fisherman's rod and the sportsman's gun. In our cities life is so unhealthy and unnatural that when the census taker represents a city as having 800,000 inhabitants, there are only 400,000, since it takes at least two men to amount to one man, so depleting and unnerving and exhausting is this metropolitan life. We want more fresh air, more sunlight, more of the abandon of field sports. I cry out for it in behalf of the church of God as well as in behalf of secular interests. I wish that this winter our ponds and our rivers and our Capitoline grounds might be all awake with the heel and the shout of the swift skater. I wish that when the warm weather comes the graceful oar might dip the stream and the evening tide be resonant with boatman's song, the bright prow splitting the crystalline billow. We shall have the smooth and grassy lawn, and we will call out people of all occupations and professions, and ask them to join in the ball player's sport. You will come back from these outdoor exercises and recreations with strength in your arm, and color in your cheek, and a flash in your eye, and courage in your heart. In this great battle that is opening against the kingdom of darkness we want not only a consecrated soul, but a strong arm and stout lungs and a mighty muscle. I bless God that there are so many recreations that have not on them any taint of iniquity; recreations in which we may engage for the strengthening of the body, for the clearing of the intellect, for the illumination of the soul.

There is still another form of recreation which I commend to you, and that is the pleasure of doing good. I have seen young men weak and cross and sour and repelling in their disposition, who, by one heavenly touch, have wakened up and become blessed and buoyant, the ground under their feet and the sky over their heads breaking forth into music. "Oh," says some young man in the house to-day, "I should like that recreation above all others, but I have not the means." My dear brother, let us take an account of stock this morning. You have a large estate, if you only realize it. Two hands. Two feet. You will have, perhaps, during the next year, at least $10 for charitable contribution. You will have twenty-five hundred cheerful looks, if you want to employ them. You will have five thousand pleasant words, if you want to speak them. Now, what an amount that is to start with.

You go out to-morrow morning and you see a case of real destitution by the wayside. You give him two cents. The blind man hears the pennies rattle in his hat, and he says: "Thank you, sir; God bless you." You pass down the street, trying to look indifferent; but you feel from the very depth of your soul a profound satisfaction that you made that man happy. You go on still farther, and find a poor boy with a wheelbarrow, trying to get it up on the curbstone. He fails in the attempt. You say: "Stand back, my lad; let me try." You push it up on the curbstone for him, and pass on. He wonders who that well dressed man was that helped him. You did a kindness to the boy, but you did a great joy to your own soul. You will not get over it all the week.

On the street to-morrow morning you will see a sick man passing along. "Ah," you say, "What can I do to make this man happy? He certainly does not want money; he is not poor; but he is sick." Give him one of those twenty-five hundred cheerful looks that you have garnered up for the whole year. Look joy and hopefulness into his soul. It will thrill him through, and there will be a reaction upon your own soul. Going a little farther on you will come to the store of a friend who is embarrassed in business matters. You will go in and say: What a fine store you have! I think business will brighten up, and you will have more custom after a while. I think there is coming a great prosperity to all the country. Good morning." You pass out. You have helped that young man, and you have helped yourself. And that night you go home; you sit by the fire, you talk a little, you sing a little, you laugh a little: you say: "I really don't know what is the matter with me. I never felt so splendid in my life." I will tell what is the matter with you. You spent only two cents out of the $10; you have contributed one out of twenty-five hundred cheerful looks; you have given ten, fifteen or twenty of the five thousand pleasant words you are going to speak during the year; you have with your own hands helped the boy with the wheelbarrow, and you feel in body, mind and soul the thrill of that recreation. Which do you think was the happier—Col. Gardiner, who sat with his elbow on a table spread with all extravagant viands, looking off at a dog on the rug, saying: "How I would like to change places with him; I be the dog and he be Colonel Gardiner;" or those two Moravian missionaries who wanted to go into the lazaretto for the sake of attending the sick, and they were told: "If you go in there, you will never come out. We never allow any one to come out, for he would bring the contagion." Then they made their wills and went in, first to help the sick and then to die. Which was the happier, Colonel Gardiner or the Moravian missionaries dying for others? Was it all sacrifice when the missionaries wanted to bring the Gospel to the negroes at the Barbadoes, and, being denied the privileges, sold themselves into slavery, standing side by side and lying side by side down in the very ditch of suffering in order that they might bring those men up to life and God and heaven? Oh, there is a thrill in the joy of doing good. It is the most magnificent recreation to which a man ever puts his hand or his head or his heart.

But, before closing, I want to impress upon you that mere secular entertainments are not a fit foundation for your soul to build on.

I was reading of a woman who had gone all the rounds of sinful amusement, and she came to die. She said: "I will die to-night at 6 o'clock." "Oh," they said, "I guess not, you don't seem to be sick." "I shall die at 6 o'clock, and my soul will be lost. I know it will be lost. I have sinned away my day of grace." The noon came. They desired to seek religious counsel.

"Oh," she said, "it is of no use. My day is gone. I have been all the rounds of worldly pleasure, and it is too late. I shall die to night at 6 o'clock." The day wore away, and it came to 4 o'clock, and to 5 o'clock, and she cried out at 5 o'clock: "Destroyed spirits, ye shall not have me yet; it is not 6, it is not 6!" The moments went by, and the shadows began to gather, and the clock struck 6: and while it was striking her soul went. What hour God will call for us I do not know—whether 6 o'clock to-night, or 3 o'clock this afternoon, or at 1 o'clock, or at this moment. Sitting where you are, falling forward, or standing where you are, dropping down, where would you go to?

But our hour for adjourning has already come, and the last hour of our life will soon be here, and from that hour we will review this day's proceedings. It will be a solemn hour. If from our death pillow we have to look back and see a life spent in sinful amusement, there will be a dart that will strike through our soul sharper than the dagger with which Virginius slew his child. The memory of the past will make us quake like Macbeth. The iniquities and rioting through which we have passed will come upon us, weird and skeleton as Meg Merrilles. Death, the old Shylock, will demand and take the remaining pound of flesh and the remaining drop of blood, and upon our last opportunity for repentance, and our last chance for heaven, the curtain will forever drop.

POPULAR SCIENCE.

A new process has been discovered by which the most delicate patterns, even of lace work, can be reproduced in iron by casting the metal on the fabric after the fabric has been carbonized. Moltea iron can be run on the most delicate fiber in the carbonized state without injuring or affecting it.

An important announcement to chemists is the recent synthesis of glucose, or grape-sugar, by Drs. Fischer and Tafel, at the University of Wurzburg. A remarkable attribute of the artificial product is that, unlike other sugars of the same composition, it will not rotate a beam of polarized light.

Contrary to general opinion, leprosy is speading rapidly, according to Dr. Besnier, of the Paris Academy of Medicine. French colonists are fast falling victims. Physicians everywhere are urged to seek a means of abating its ravages. The disease is transmitted by a bacillus resembling that of consumption.

The Royal Society, of London, furnishes some interesting examples of the longevity of men distinguished for scientific work. The average age of the fourteen Fellows who died during the past year was seventy-five years, the youngest—Dr. Wilson Fox—being fifty-six, and the oldest—Admiral Denham and Dr. Richard Quain—being eighty-seven.

During the past two seasons, Mr. E. B. Poulton has made observations which prove that the silk of at least three species of English moths is greatly affected in color by environment at the time of spinning. The cocoons were dark brown when the larvæ had been placed in a black bag or among green leaves, and white when they had been freely exposed to light in the immediate neighborhood of white surfaces.

Indications now point to the existence of a submarine volcanic crater between the Canary Islands and the coast of Portugal. From a cable laying steamer the water was found to measure 1,300 fathoms under the bow and 800 under the stern, showing the ship to be over the edge of a deep depression in the ocean bottom. The well known great inequalities in the bed of the Sea of Lisbon are thought to be due to a submarine chain of mountains.

Instantaneous photography is no longer a question to be determined by study and experiment, but has assumed the place of an accomplished and familiar fact. One of the most interesting achievements in this direction, as described in a London paper, originated in the question as to whether the upper parts of the wheel of a vehicle when in motion travels faster than the lower part. In determining this matter by instantaneous photography, the artist took the photograph of an omnibus wheel en route, and in this photograph, while the lower end of the spokes immediately adjacent to the ground are not perceptibly unsharpened by the motion, the tops of the upper spokes show an angular motion corresponding to about ten degrees. The photograph in this place most successfully expresses the fact that the wheel it represents is in rapid motion.

A Chinese Restaurant.

The pagan restaurant where we cheered but did not inebriate ourselves was daintily clean and handsomely decorated with gold work and flowers. Besides our tea we had nuts, citron, birds nest pudding, and some other preparations mysterious and awful. There was one dish of each kind, out of which all partook harmoniously with little two-pronged brass forks. We, of course, bought the dishes from which we ate, and caused a great deal of gayety among the heathen by refusing to take new ones in place of them. We also have each the autograph of mine host Yum—Hum—Rum—I don't believe I can quite recall it, but anything will do, for I don't believe he can remember such an outlandish name himself. They could not understand much of what he said, but I can't look down on the pagans on that account, for it was just that much more that we made out from them.—*Overland.*

Sunk by a Weasel.

The sloop Favorite, recently wrecked near Orient, L. I., was commanded by Captain Anderson of Lyme, Conn., and was on her way to that port with a cargo of sea-weed. The story is that while loading the weed they loaded with it an animal two feet long known as a beach weasel, and that the animal gnawed a hole in the side of the little craft below the water's edge, causing her to founder during the night. When the boat filled, says the report, the weasel clambered up the rigging, running or swimming from one place to another, until killed by the sailors.

It becomes a wise man to try negotiation before arms.

RELIGIOUS READING.

The Gate of the Year.

"Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness!"—Psalm cvii. 8.

I saw a countless multitude before a golden gate;
I saw their eager earnestness, I saw them watch and wait;
I saw the Porter opening, his gracious form I knew;
And yet, alas! how thoughtlessly that giddy throng passed through.

How few with heartfelt gratitude adored the wondrous grace
That opened thus another year to our unworthy race!
How few were they who turned aside to give Him thanks who stood
And watched, as with a weeping eye, the rushing human flood!

I heard His voice of tenderness, as lovingly He cried,
"Behold My wounded hands and feet; behold My pierced side!
It was for sin I suffered thus, that ye might share My love,
Oh, will ye coldly hasten by, and thus grateful prove?"

I saw the aged trembling come and pass that golden door;
But would they pass the Heavenly Friend, so often passed before?
He looked, He spake, He stretched His hand, as o'er the step they trod;
But no, their eyes were turned to earth: they passed the Son of God!

I saw the young step lightly up: I heard the Saviour say,
"Young man, give Me thy noble life, My blessed will obey;"
And as a maiden hurried through, He drew her near His side,
"Forsake the world's frivolities; I love thee, I have died."

I saw the matron and the sire in life's meridian prime;
I saw the feeble and the strong, pass 'neath the gate of Time,
On, on into another year; and yet, alas! how few
Who even turned a glance on Him whose mercy let them through!

His mercy! yes, 'twas mercy still that let the throng go by;
For at the threshold, scythe in hand, Death lingered ever nigh;
And in the porch I saw a weary pilgrim stay—
Death called him back; he must not pass along that opening way.

O traveler at the golden gate the Saviour speaks to thee;
"Believe My love, believe and live; commit thy soul to Me."
Stay; wilt thou thus begin the year, or shall the Lord be passed?
Nay, at its threshold, trust Him now, lest it should be thy last.

—[William Luff.

Jesus Himself.

One must be impressed with these emphatic words, recorded by St. Luke. The travelers were on their journey to Emmaus. The history informs us that it was "Jesus Himself" that drew near.

We are thankful that He is the same today. Our earthly journey is often one of disappointment. Doubts are suggested by the enemy of our souls; the hopeful signs, from which we had taken such encouragement in our work, are not always fulfilled to human sight; the spiritual blindness of our associates walking at our side sometimes increases our own embarrassment. But our companion is "Jesus Himself." Only let us choose to "follow on" with Him, and very soon our hearts will burn within us as He talks by the way. Such love could not be thus enkindled by the mere memory of what He is in history, or even what He has done for us in the past. "Jesus Himself"—a present, personal Christ—is the traveler's need. Conscious that such a companion is near, our earthly journey no longer seems tedious because of the great joy we have in such fellowship.

The Wisdom of the Shepherds.

There are four things in the conduct of the shepherds to whom the angels announced the birth of Christ, which are to be earnestly commended:

I. As soon as they received the message, they said one to another, "Let us now go and see this thing which the Lord hath made known to us." Whenever truth is urged upon the mind it should be candidly examined at once. When we feel a good impulse within us we may know it is from the same source as the message which came to the shepherds, and if followed, it will lead us to the same Christ.

II. "And they came with haste." They not only resolved to go, but they went and with haste. One decisive act is worth a hundred resolutions. It is better to do the good thing now, than resolve to do it next year. The present moment is vastly better than the more convenient season.

III. "And when they had seen it, they made known abroad what they had found." Many professing Christians keep all they get of Christ to themselves; an easy matter in such cases for they do not get much. How much better like the shepherds to tell it to others in such an earnest way that "all they that heard it wondered."

IV. "And they returned glorifying and praising God." It meant something to them to have found Christ. Their lives were filled with joy and praise, and it might and should be always so. And yet how few Christians' lives really abound in joy. How many are really dark and gloomy. Such lives have room for a great deal more of Christ in them.—[Golden Rule.

Strike for the Spiritual.

Cæsar's word to his conquering legions was, Faciem ferire,—"Strike at the face!" Doubtless, a great deal of preaching is labor lost, because of the neglect to observe the spirit of this ancient motto. They who succeed in a cause are usually the ones who know how to go straight to the heart of the matter, and who do not waste the moment of opportunity in dalliance with the outmost fringes of mere circumstantials.

The spiritual in man is that which is deepest and highest in him, and is infinitely the most potential part of his being. To rescue that from its thralldom to evil, and re-enthrone it in personal righteousness and loyalty to God, is the first as it is the final aim of true preaching. The gospel ministry is a ministry of reconciliation. It is because of the consciously moral, the rational, the spiritual elements of our being, that we are capable of coming into this personal relationship to our Maker and Restorer. The preaching, whatever other qualities it may have, which falls short of reaching the spirit in man, and bringing it into actual reconciliation with the divine Spirit, is but an arrow that drops to the ground this side its mark.

It is an observation often made, that the prevalent preaching of the time is lacking in directness and spirituality. It falls short, or it wanders one side. In the case of many preachers there is nothing so significant as that which they do not say—the things which they slur over and pass by. Doubtless, in numerous instances, this is done because the people like to have it so. Whose is the greater fault, preacher or hearer, we need not say. But sometimes, we are persuaded, if not often, the people wish it were otherwise. They hunger and thirst for that which the preacher does not bring to them. They hunger—hunger perhaps more than they themselves distinctly know—and are not fed. It is not that the minister is "too thoughtful." No minister is too thoughtful, or too high, or too deep and searching in his thought. There is nothing higher, nothing deeper, than the things which pertain to the spiritual within us. More often the trouble is that the preaching is not thoughtful enough. It is, in fact, heedless, evasive, desultory, trivial, without adequate aim and object.

Prohibition Sustained.

The decision of the United States Supreme Court in granting to Prohibition constitutional sanction, should be hailed by our temperance people with much satisfaction, permanently settling, as it does, the validity of a long-vexed question. Upon the strength of the theory that deleterious substances have no right to be sold as articles of food or drink, the Court right ably sustains that position. Would to heaven the cursed dram shops could as easily be disposed of.—*Wes' Grove (Penn.) Independent.*

John Bright, while believing absolute prohibition, for the present at least, impracticable, says in a recent letter: "I suppose all men will admit that it would be a great blessing if the manufacture, sale and use of drinks which intoxicate were abolished.

THE LAKE CRAFT.

HOW TRAFFIC ON THE GREAT LAKES IS CONDUCTED.

Great Vessels and the Work They Do—A Propeller and Its Consort—The Reckless Lake Sailors.

The lake traffic, says Frank Wilkeson, in the New York *Times*, is conducted differently from any other system of transportation on water. The men who engaged in it were forced to compete with skillfully managed railroads for freight, and in addition they had but seven months per year in which to carry on their business and earn a profit on their investments. To earn money in the business, the managers of the lake transportation lines had to be wise and bold and economical. The methods employed to conduct this traffic were constantly improved, until at present they are considered to be almost perfect. But with every improvement made the cost of the vessels increased enormously, until now a steamer and three consorts represent a large fortune. An iron or steel steamer, strong and seaworthy, and with great towing powers to carry 75,000 bushels of wheat and tow three consorts, costs about $175,000. A wooden screw steamer (all steamers engaged in the business are screw steamers) of the same carrying capacity and towing power costs about $125,000. A wooden schooner to carry 75,000 bushels of wheat, or 2,150 tons, costs about $75,000. A steel steamer and three consorts, as now built, represents about $400,000. The schooners are equipped with three or four short, thick masts, to each of which a single immense sail is hung. These sails are generally handled with the aid of a steam winch. The schooners are officered and manned as though they were to sail by themselves, but they do not. They are the consorts of the steamers. The latter vessels in addition to carrying a load of about 75,000 bushels have to tow two, three, and as high as five consorts, each of which carries as much if not more freight than the towing steamer. These propellors are generally equipped with two short masts, which carry enormous sails. Through the deck of the vessel, and close to the stern, a heavy iron or oak post is thrust far downward toward the keel to enable the builders to brace it thoroughly. So solidly is this towing post built into the ship that to tear it out would tear the stern of the vessel away. The post projects above the deck about six feet. One end of a heavy cable is securely fastened to the towing post. The other end is slipped through a longitudinal slot in the stern of the steamer and then passed to the first consort, where it is made fast to a towing post near the bow of that vessel. Similar lines connect the second consort to the first, and the third to the second, and so on down the column. If the wind is favorable the consorts hoist their sails, and the steamer then tows them rapidly up or down the lakes. When the wind is unfavorable or dead ahead, as it generally is, the captain of the propeller sits up o' nights to swear at the schooners and at their captains and crews and cabin boys.

But when a fierce storm arises, and the strain on the towing post is greater than the Captain of the propellor thinks his craft can safely endure, the cable is cast off, and a loud blast of the steam whistle notifies the Captains of the schooners to look out for themselves. The schooners, being seaworthy vessels and ably commanded, generally weather the storm. After casting his consorts loose the Captain of the propellor is assailed by doubts as to the wisdom of his act. He hovers around the abandoned consorts as a hen around her chickens, and he is not happy until he has them in tow again.

The spectacle of a large propeller followed by four consorts, all heavily laden and with sails set, moving down the lakes at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour, is pleasing to anti-monopolists. The five ships carry the wheat that grew on 22,000 acres of productive Dakota wheat land. In their holds is sufficient wheat to load 24 freight trains of 30 cars each, and each car to carry 500 bushels. It is the cheapest transportation known to man. Wheat can be carried from Duluth to Buffalo, a distance of 880 miles, for 3 cents per bushel, and that low rate is profitable, provided an up cargo can be secured.

Annually the fleet engaged in the lake commerce grows more and more efficient. The new boats are larger and more seaworthy than the old ones. The losses of ships on the lakes, which makes a long list as published when the season closes, consist generally of old, worn-out, and rotten vessels that were sent to sea to earn a few dollars—and to scalp some marine insurance company. One afternoon the mate stood by my side when we passed some of these outfits. He pointed toward them with horny index finger.

"Look," he said, "look at that propeller and her tow. They will sink if they encounter a storm. They are unseaworthy. The marine inspector of the port they came from was paid handsomely to rate them. Those vessels were sent to sea to be lost, and they will be wrecked before the season is over. And when they sink or are smashed to bits on a rocky shore a score of brave, hardy sailors will have to battle for their lives, and some of teem will be lost."

"Mate," I asked, "how are sailors induced to ship on such rotten tubs? Will the lake sailors ship on vessels which they know to be unseaworthy?"

"Will they!" he repeated derisively. Well, I should say they would. These lake sailors will ship on anything that floats. As long as there is a plank to stand on they will sail the plank. They are so careless of their lives and so inherently reckless that they would ship to sail a log from New-York to the North Pole. Every year we lose about 500 sailors on these lakes, and nine-tenths of them are lost in trying to sail just such rotten old tubs as those." Here he again pointed at the asthmatical propeller and her consorts. "The vessel inspectors do not receive sufficient pay to place them above temptation. They should be paid from $6,000 to $8,000 per year. Then they would be honest, and these death traps would be ordered to quit sailing, and the rates of marine insurance would be much lower."

The sailors who man the vessels which engage in the lake commerce are among the best in the world. They are brave, reckless men. They sail their vessels until the lakes are ice-bound. Storms have no terrors for them. When freights are high and the business profitable the crews of these ships are willing to sail as long as the officers dare keep the engines going or the sails set. A large portion of these men live on farms during the Winter. They own a few acres of land and their children tend their fields during the Summer, while they sail ships up and down the lakes. There is a fascination about life on the inland water that attracts families of men. If an American begins to follow the water of the lakes his sons are sure to ship as sailors, and their sons after them. The school of the lakes is the best school for producing effective sailors that I know of. Salt water sailors turn up their sunburned noses at fresh water lubbers, as they call them. I know both classes, and I unhesitatingly say that the lake sailors are vastly superior to those who sail in ships which ply between Liverpool and New York—and they are the best of the salt water sailors. The lake sailors are self reliant, resourceful and courageous. They are intelligent, skillful and ambitious. Their duty is to care for and sail the vessels, and they resolutely refuse to handle the cargo or trim the ships. They are well fed and well paid.

A Female Bandit.

The death is announced of one of the most remarkable women that Mexico has ever produced. Notwithstanding her strange and perilous career, she attained a ripe old age, and became one of the wealthiest women in the Republic. This woman was Senora Amastio Rubio de Pascadero. In her early womanhood she devoted her time to robbery, and if half the reports regarding her career are true, it is no wonder that she left a large fortune at her death. One of her notable exploits was a stage robbery in the State of Zacatecas. One night she dressed herself in men's clothing, and mounting a horse, rode from San Antonio to the Zacatecas and Agues Calientes stage road, where she waited in a grove for the south-bound stage to pass. As the postillions came up she commanded them with revolver in hand to stop, put out their torches and fall to the rear of the coach, which was a few yards behind them. She then advanced upon the driver and keeper, who were made to dismount expecting every moment to be shot from ambush, as she kept saying: "Don't shoot unless they resist."

The passengers, eight in number, who were inside the stage, were led to believe from the road agent's talk that an armed party was in the brush, and when she came up and demanded their money, watches and jewelry they lost no time in obeying her. She then bade the passengers good night, and, after admonishing them not to move within half an hour, disappeared within the grove.

During her career she killed a great many men, and for many years was a terror to the people of Sinaloa, Salisco and Sonora. Government troops and State troops chased her, but could never entrap her. It was said that the reason she gave for adopting such a mode of life was the murder by Federal troops of her intended husband years ago, when she was in her teens. She then made a vow that she would kill or ruin five men for every year she lived. She was one of the most noted bandits Mexico ever produced, although she was a woman. Before her death she related her strange history and bequeathed her immense fortune to charities. At her request she was buried beside her dead lover in her native town, San Antonio.—*New York Sun.*

A Jack Rabbit Hunt on a Large Scale.

In the matter of dealing with the devouring jack rabbits, last week witnessed a new departure. On the plains of Tulare county, Cal., near the town of Pixley, a V-shaped fence had been built, with a corral at the apex. Monday morning several hundred people, mostly farmers and their families, assembled to engage in the rabbit drive. No firearms nor dogs were permitted in this hunt; but men, women, and children in vehicles and on horseback, marshaled by J. R. Priest, with Mr. Doran and M. F. Pixley as his aids, formed a semi-circular procession three miles long, and began closing in toward the opening of the V.

As the line of drivers neared the outer ends of the fence, it became apparent that they were herding the hares, not by hundreds, but by thousands; and those who saw the bounding drove of lepores as it swept over the stubble and short alfalfa, where there was no dust, say it was indeed a memorable sight. Great excitement prevailed, and as a rabbit would now and then turn about, bolt through the ranks of yelling enemies, and gallop off across the plain, the wisdom of having barred out guns and pistols began to be evident. As the terrified animals ran down the inside of the fence on the south side they encountered a little enclosure made for a garden. This obstacle occasioned a stampede. Away went hundreds of them, back through the cordon of drivers, and though many were killed, it is estimated that five or six hundred escaped. The main body, however, ran around the projecting fence and kept on down the side of the V to the corral at the apex.

When the doomed creatures had been forced into the corral and the gates closed, the hunters entered with clubs, and about two thousand of the pests were knocked in the head. Enough rabbits were taken alive for shipment, however, to pay all expenses incurred.

The drive was so successful that the managers are already planning another, and such organized campaigns may become quite popular in the most afflicted sections. While they would not wholly exterminate the mischievous gnawers, they might be made the means of thinning them prodigiously, and, as, one of the Visalia papers remarks, "two miles of portable fence for wings and a few rods for corrals would be all that it required, the cost would be slight when divided among those who would be directly benefited, and it could be sold, when no longer needed, for at least half what it cost."—*Pacific Rural Press.*

Johnny's Composition on the Goose.

Gooses are the biggest birds knone to the human eye, and the he one is a gander. The gander is the monark of the air, but the rooster can lik him, cos the rooster he is brave like Gen. Solomon, but the gander isent fighty, more like preachers. The goos is a sailer, but not a wicked one like Jack Brily, which chews tobacko and swears, and every thing, and it has got lethers between its toes for to wolk the wotter liek a thing of life. Ducks thay are sailers too, but the swon has got a long neck like a giraft, and wen it has got a sore throte it is mighty sick. The little gooses is goslums and is green. My sister she see a goslum and she ast Uncle Ned wot made it green, and he said, uncle Ned did, that it was cos it wasent ripe. Then Billy, he spoke up and said wen it was ripe it would be picked.—*San Francisco Examiner.*

A Monster Moose.

A Jumbo moose was recently shot on Spence river in the Dead river region of Maine by one of the famous hunters of those wilds. It was tracked on the stream, chased across the line into Canada and then back into Maine, five days being consumed before the fatal shot was fired. The monster was nine years old, measured nine feet from base of horns to end of tail, stood 22 hands high, had a girth of 9 feet 4 inches and stretched out measured 18 feet from end of nose to end of toes. Its horns spread four feet and the width of palm was 4½ inch.—*Springfield Republican.*

TEMPERANCE.

"'Tis the Hand that Rocks the Cradle."

'Tis the hand that rocks the cradle
Reaching out to save the world,
Flinging to the breeze the banner
Of the home, by love unfurled.

'Tis the mother heart that beats time
With man's noblest thought to-day;
Aye, and mother will that sternly
Puts the nation's sin away.

Never sound of martial music,
Rose as rises home's new song;
For two hundred thousand women
Make her first grand army strong.

The Supreme Court Decision.

This decision is a landmark in the history of Prohibition. Its value cannot be overestimated. The defeat of the liquor men is complete and overwhelming at every point. Leaders among them frankly admit to our reporters that all the Prohibition victories heretofore gained, all combined, have not been so depressing or disastrous to their interests as this one. To the surprise of everyone, the Court was substantially unanimous in its decision, seven to one—the one, Justice Field, dissenting as to several points—and the victory is all the more emphasized by the fact that the Prohibition side of the case was unaccountably neglected by the Attorney General of Kansas, while the liquor side was cared for by several of the ablest lawyers in America.

The decision is nowhere evasive. It touches every essential point with a directness and completeness that leave not a single loop to hang a doubt on. The gravity of the situation was not generally appreciated. Let it be borne in mind that the cases considered had been appealed from the decision of the United States Circuit Court in Kansas, where Judge Brewer held that the Kansas Prohibitory liquor law was unconstitutional, basing his opinion on the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. He held that the law was unconstitutional because it deprived the brewers of their property without compensation. Some of the points raised were novel and doubtful, and gave the Prohibitionists throughout the country no little uneasiness. But the cloud has now broken and the sun shines out bright and glorious. How like clods on the coffin lid of the doomed traffic sound these sentences from the Judge's lips:

"The right to sell liqour is not one of the rights growing out of citizenship of the United States."

"The right to manufacture drink for one's own use is subject to the restriction that it shall not endanger or affect the rights of others. If such manufacture does prejudicially affect the rights and interests of the community, it follows that society has the power to protect itself by legislation against the injurious consequences of that business."

"There is here no justification for holding that the State, under the guise merely of police regulations, is aiming to deprive the citizen of his constitutional rights; for we cannot shut out of view the fact, within the knowledge of all, that the public health, the public morals and the public safety may be endangered by the general use of intoxicating drinks; nor can we ignore the fact, established by statistics, accessable to every one, that the disorder, pauperism and crime prevalent in the country are, in large measure, directly traceable to this evil."

"Such a right [the right to manufacture intoxicating drinks] does not inhere in citizenship. Nor can it be said that Government interferes with or impairs any one's constitutional rights of liberty or of property when it determines that the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks for general or indvidual use as a beverage are or may become hurtful to society and to every member of it, and is, therefore, a business in which no one may lawfully engage."

That there might be no evading of the point, the Court clinched it thus:

"All property in this country is held under the implied obligation that the owner's use of it shall not be injurious to the equal enjoyment of others having an equal right to the enjoyment of their property, nor injurious to the rights of the community."

Nor it is necessary, the Court held, in order to enjoin a place where liquor is made or sold, to have recourse to a trial by jury. We can proceed against it as against any other nuisance.

This decision is a victory from beginning to end. It clears the air. Strange of a judicial decision of the highest court in America, but it has in it the ring and cheer of a battle shout.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!—*The Voice.*

As to Sundry Theories.

The theory that a law is a failure unless it has no violations is an absurd one. No one claims that the laws punishing the various forms of theft are failures because there are frequent violations thereof; no one declares that the statutes punishing adultery are unsuccessful because they are constantly violated, and no one lifts his voice in a loud demand that these laws shall be repealed because they are "failures." It can be asserted, without the slightest fear of successful contradiction, that the prohibitory enactments of the various States are quite as well observed as any laws upon the statute books. The plea fails that they "don't prohibit;" for it is clear to every one that they are well executed as are other penal enactments. Some other reason for calling for a repeal of prohibition must be assigned, if the public is to be influenced and the struggle for a reversal of this legislation is to go on. But what reason can be assigned which has not been advanced and been successfully controverted? We know of none. The plea that prohibition "would injure business" is disproved by the report from Des Moines, by the workings of prohibition in Atlanta and elsewhere. The plea that it "would increase taxes" has also fallen to the ground. The rapid increase of prohibition communities in population and wealth adds to the tax valuation and decreases taxation to the individual. The plea that "prohibition don't prohibit" is shown to be false. What else can the rum power adduce as a pretext on which to ask for a repeal of prohibitory legislation? None, except the real one—money. The men who demand a recognition of the rum traffic are those who make money out of it—the makers and sellers. The rum traffic is the parent of ignorance and poverty, of vice and crime; it adds to the taxes, saps the morals of the community, meddles in politics, and is at war with all that is good in humanity and in civilization; yet, because it is a mine of gold to men whose consciences are sufficiently seared to allow them to follow it, they have the temerity to ask that the legal barriers be broken down that they may renew their devilish work.—*Toledo Blade.*

Liquor Drinking in China.

Count Mickiewicz, who has lately returned from an important business trip to China, in an interview with a representative of the New York *Tribune* is reported as saying that among the better classes of the Chinese people the use of various kinds of intoxicating liquors is almost unknown; that a man who drinks brandy there "is ostracised"; is "placed wholly beyond the pale of decent association"; that "he might as well be dead." "This," he says, "is owing partly to a general distrust of the reliability of persons under the influene of liquor. They are looked upon as we regard those subject to spells of insanity." Then the cost of liquor is so great in comparison with the Chinaman's earnings that "one who does buy it appears in the light of a fool, while the use of it gives to the user a reputation for insanity"; and therefore the "national sentiment is thoroughly against it." He also adds that "the sentiment is the same as to opium with the better classes as in regard to liquor. No self-respecting Chinaman would smoke opium or use it in any form." A few missionaries from among the Chinese of the better class would find a useful field of labor in this country.—*National Advocate.*

Alcohol as a Medicine.

Dr. J. H. Hanaford, writing of alcohol as a medicine, says:

"As an acknowledged poison, it must produce a commotion in the stomach, increasing its activities—though not the digestive process—this action being instituted for the purpose of removing the poison and warding off threatened dangers. An unusual amount of blood, which is the 'life,' is sent to this organ for its relief, as shown by its irritation and, inflammation, often followed by ulceration. Just to the extent that the vital forces are detailed to remove the effects of this poison, the digestive power will be diminished. This excitement may lead to the use of more food, not to be digested, since it impairs the digestive power. Soon, however, in consequence of a partial paralysis of the nerves of the stomach, they call for less food, followed by a diminished nourishment of the body. Its constant use so changes nature as to substitute the demand for stimulants for the normal desire for food."