

RELIGIOUS COLUMN.

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO ALL DENOMINATIONS.

Gems in the Coronet of Love—Not Profession of Faith, but Earnestness of Soul, that Makes Us Christians—Short Sermons.



Those in Our Charge. EXPERIENCE proves that we may make or mar the characters of those placed by nature in our charge. The inherited traits are strong; the influence of surroundings is stronger. In the first few years the seed is sown that shall grow into a faint fruit tree or into a deadly vine, which shall blast the child's life.

They are better than all the ballads That ever were sung or said. For they are living poems, And all the rest are dead.

Sincerity in Religion. "The just shall live by faith."—II. Romans, I, 17.

It is not what we profess that makes us Christians, but the sincerity of motive, and the earnestness of desire; these qualities refine the soul, prepare the mind for the reception of divine grace, and tend towards the cultivation of the heart. Indifference leads to the wild tempestuous sea of atheism as sure as the river leads to and is lost in the mighty ocean. Religion is the knowledge and the love of God, but this knowledge does not consist merely in superficial ideas of Christian principles. It involves a deep and sincere conviction of the intellect regarding the fundamental truths of God as revealed by Jesus Christ. This knowledge, which comes to us by revelation, whether through tradition or the scriptures, begets in us a fervent love of God, which is strengthened and increased in proportion to the sincerity of our faith. God despises the lukewarm heart, we are told, also that "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and none but the violent shall carry it away." This warning clearly indicates the necessity for action. To be practical Christians, sincerely seeking after the truth and persistently fighting against the evils that surround us. St. Paul continually admonishes us in his epistles against the danger of becoming sluggish in fulfilling our religious duties and most emphatically insists that we not only should believe but still more that we should practice what we believe, thereby manifesting our sincerity. Indeed, if we are sincere and earnest Christians we shall not only regard it as our duty to emulate all Christian virtues, and endeavor to perform the various requirements of our religious station, but we shall likewise be most anxious to promote God's glory and increase our own faith, by striving constantly after spiritual sanctity and unceasingly strengthening our convictions by an exemplary vigilance, following the sacred precept "Watch and pray."

Encouraging the Minister. Be not afraid to speak to those who have helped you in any way. Tell them plainly what they have done for you. You do not know what a help and an encouragement it will be to them. There are altogether too many who follow the same course as that taken by the man of whom Dean Hoyle in his "Recollections" tells the following story: When I first went to Bridgenorth, I found myself in the house of a very thoughtful man, who told me that he owed his soul to two sermons preached in my church by my predecessor. "I was a regular infidel," he said, "and I went after many years to the church. There I heard a sermon that gave me a week's misery. The next Sunday I went again, and heard another. Those two sermons set me to thinking. I began to read the Bible, and at last I found peace." "You went and told that clergyman, I hope, and encouraged him in his work?" "I," he said, "Oh, no, I never spoke to him in my life."—Ex.

Easiness of Spirit. The fully sanctified have an easiness of manner and spirit that they never would have had but for the operation of the holy spirit on their hearts. True easiness of spirit is not the work of culture, but the work of the grace of God. It is quietness of soul, but it is that quietness of soul that is wrought only by the grace of God. The grace of God checks our natural haste, frees us from the activities of nature and curbs our impulsive spirits, so as to keep us quiet and make us easy in our manners and ways even in time of excitement. Let us seek to get this easiness of spirit. This easiness of spirit will not rob us of zeal and earnestness in our religious work. It will rather make us more in earnest. There is

what may be called an easy earnestness of soul, which frees us from awkwardness in our work. This easiness of spirit should be seen in our homes, in the church, in company, in our business life and everywhere else.

A Persistent Junior. Rev. S. H. Polk, of Ben, Tenn., reports a case of a little girl in his church who desired to join the Endeavor Society, but her parents were slow to give their consent. Finally she said to her mother:

"Mamma, find me a prayer in the Bible, and I'll have a meeting of my own. If you will not let me go to the church!" Meanwhile, the parents looked on in amazement while the little girl sang a song, read a few verses of Scripture, and knelt down and read the prayer her mother had selected. It is needless to say that she was at once given permission to join the society, in which she is now one of the most faithful workers. Mr. Polk says: "So, parents, let the little children work for Jesus, that they may be more useful when they get older. I give this little story in hope that it may keep parents from objecting to their children attending the Christian Endeavor. This little girl is only 9 years old."—Cumberland Presbyterian.

Jack the Soldier. "Can't do it. It's against orders. I'm a soldier now," said one newsboy to another. "Yes, you look like a soldier!" was the mocking reply. "I am, though, all the same," and Jack straightened himself and looked steadily into Jim's eyes. "Jesus is my Captain, and I'm goin' to do everything on the square after this, 'cause He says so."

"That won't last long," said Jim. "Just wait till you're in bad luck and awful hungry, and you'll look something fast enough." "No, my Captain says, 'Don't steal, and I won't.' What I can't earn I'll go without, and if I'm likely to steal at any time I'll just call it Him. He's always watchin' to see if any of His soldiers need help. He'll help me to do anything He's told me to do."

Wise Jack! He had learned the secret of a happy, useful Christian life, and of standing by His Captain.—Christian Advocate.

Soul Satisfaction. Soul satisfaction is the thing above all others to be desired, because it is the most valuable and is within the reach of all. Many desire wealth and say poor; they crave reputation, and are dishonored; they thirst for knowledge, and remain comparatively ignorant. But the soul that hungers and thirsts after righteousness, after a clearer faith, a brighter hope, a holier joy, a diviner reverence, shall in due time attain to the height of full soul satisfaction in regard to these things. "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness." The awakening time is coming for all souls that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for God has said "They shall be filled."

Homeless. The saddest thing I can imagine is a homeless man. One who has no abiding place; one who cannot stop without some one bidding him move on; for whom in all the earth there is no welcome resting place which he can call home and where love shares and softens his sorrows. Sadder than this is the homeless, homeless soul. While you are planning for the body think of the soul. Make provisions for it by accepting God's merciful bounty for forgiveness and faith.—Rev. F. E. Smiley.

Sympathy. There are those who never take a stone out of the way, never put any light into darkness, never any comfort into sorrow. But there are those, too, who have much of the milk of human kindness, whose hearts are tuned to the key of tenderness, whose faces beam and scatter sunshine.—Rev. W. H. Moore.

Bits of Things. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. Find your place, fill your place, and lo, the kingdom of God. Every little Christian duty is a big argument for foreign missions. Just trace it and see! The Bible is the mirror before which every one can see himself unless he is spiritually blind. According as God alone is more and more our true portion, so is our progress in holiness. The one who gives up easy in his religious duties makes poor progress in his Christian life. Music makes the soul and lifts it high, and wings it with sublime desires and fits it to bespeak the Deity.—Addison. The grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for.—Addison. Virtue consists in doing our duty in the several relations we sustain, in respect to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to God, as known from reason, conscience and revelation. A man may think he has faith, may say he has faith, and yet be without faith. But if his life is pure and holy and earnest, he knows that he has genuine faith, "faith which worketh by love." When one is in a foreign country he feels himself to be a representative of his own, and wishes to honor it by being worthy of it. Our citizenship is in heaven, and we should so live as to honor that better country. How many lay up riches which they never enjoy, to provide for exigencies that never happen, to prevent troubles that never come, sacrificing present comfort and enjoyment in guarding against the wants of a period they may never live to see.—Jay.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

SERMON DELIVERED IN WASHINGTON LAST SUNDAY.

Beware of the Special Allurements of the Season—Parents Should Make Home Attractive—Arm the Young Against Temptations—Run Horrors.

The Opening Winter. Last Sunday Dr. Talmage chose as the subject of his sermon "The Opening Winter." Although the cold comes earlier or later, according to the latitude, this sermon is sooner or later as appropriate everywhere as it is in Washington. The text selected will be found in Titus III, 12, "I have determined there to winter." Paul was not independent of the seasons. He sent for his overcoat to Troas on a memorable occasion. And now in the text he is making arrangements for the approaching cold weather and makes an appointment with Titus to meet him at Neapolis, saying, "I have determined there to winter." Well, this is the 8th day of December and the second Sabbath of winter. We have had a few shrill, sharp blasts already, forewarners of whole regiments of storms and tempests. No one here needs to be told that we are in the opening gates of the winter. This season is not only a test of one's physical endurance, but in our great cities is a test of moral character. A vast number of people have by one winter of dissipation been destroyed and forever. Seated in our houses on some stormy night, the winds howling outside, we imagine the shipping helplessly driven on the coast, but any winter night, if our ears were good enough, we could hear the crash of a thousand moral shipwrecks. There are many people who came to the cities on the 1st of September who will be blasted by the 1st of March. At this season of the year temptations are especially rampant. Now that the long winter evenings have come, there are many who will employ them in dissipation, in idle gossiping, in Christian work, in the strengthening and ennobling of moral character, and this winter to many of you will be the brightest and the best of all your lives, and in anticipation I congratulate you. But to others it may not have such effect, and I charge you, my beloved, look out where you spend your winter nights.

Evil Allurements. In the first place, I have to remark that at this season of the year the evil allurements are especially busy. There is not very much temptation for a man to plunge in on a hot night amid blazing gaslights and to breathe the feverish air of an assemblage, but in the cold nights Satan gathers a great harvest. At such times the groggishness in one night make more than in four or five nights in summer. At such times the playbills of low places of entertainment seem especially attractive, and the acting is especially impressive and the applause especially bewitching. Many a man who has kept right all the rest of the year will be captured now, and though last autumn he came from the country, and there was lustre in the eye, and there were roses in the cheek and elasticity in the step, by the time the spring hour has come you will find him in the street and say to your friends: "What's the matter with that man? How differently he looks from what he looked last September!" Shame of one winter's dissipation. At this time of the year there are many entertainments. If we rightly employ them and they are of the right kind, they enlarge our socialities, allow us to make important acquaintances, build up in our morals and help up in a thousand ways. I can scarcely think of anything better than good neighborhood. But there are those entertainments from which others will be broken down in health, and though at the opening of the year their prospects were bright, at the close of the season they will be in the hands of the doctors or sleeping in the cemetery. The certificate of death will be made out, and the physician, to save the feelings of the family, will call the disease by a Latin name. But the doctor knows, and everybody knows, they died of too many leaves. Away with all these wine drinking convivialities. How dare you, the father of a family, tempt the appetites of the young people? Perhaps at the entertainment, to save the feelings of the minister or some other weak temperance man, you leave the decanter in a side room, and only a few people are invited there to partake, but it is easy enough to know when you come out by the glare of your eye and the stench of your breath that you have been serving the devil.

Practice Self Control. Men sometimes excuse themselves and say after late suppers it is necessary to take some sort of stimulant to aid digestion. My plain opinion is that if you have no more self control than to stuff yourself until your digestive organs refuse their office you had better not call yourself a man, but class yourself among the beasts that perish. At this season of the year the Young Men's Christian Associations of the land send out circulars asking the pastors to speak a word on this subject, and so I sound in your ear the words of the Lord God Almighty, "Woe unto him that putteth the bottle to his neighbor's lips." Rejoice that you have come to the glad winter months that remind you of the times when in your childhood you were shone on by the face of father, mother, brothers, sisters, some of them, almost none to meet you with a "Happy New Year," or a "Merry Christmas." But again and again have we seen on New Year's day the sons of some of the best families drunk, and young men have excused themselves by the fact that the wine cup has been offered by the ladies, and again and again it has been found out that a lady's hand has kindled the young man's thirst for strong drink, and long after all the attractions of the holiday have passed that same woman crouches in her rage, and her husband and her weep under the uplifted hand of the drunken monster to whom she had passed the fascinating cup on New Year's day. If we want to go to ruin, let us go alone and not take others with us. Can we not sacrifice our feelings if need be? When the good ship London went down, the captain was told that he might escape in one of the lifeboats. "No," he replied, "I'll go down with the passengers." All the world applauded his heroism. And can we not sacrifice our tastes and our appetites for the rescue of others? Surely it is not a very great sacrifice. Oh, it is not a very great sacrifice of the holiday the poison of adders! Mix not with the white sugar of the cup the snow

of this awful leprosy! Mar not the clatter of the cutlery of the festive occasion with the clank of a madman's chain! Pass down the street and look into the pawnbroker's window. Elegant watch, elegant furs, elegant flute, elegant shoes, elegant scarf, elegant books, elegant mementoes. You sometimes see people with pleasure countenances looking into such a window. When I look into a pawnbroker's window, it seems to me as if I had looked into the window of hell. To whom did that watch belong? To a drunkard. To whom did those furs belong? To a drunkard's wife. To whom did those shoes belong? To a drunkard's child. I take the three brazen balls at the doorway of a pawnbroker's shop and I clank them together, sounding the knell of the drunkard's soul. A pawnbroker's shop is only one of the eddies in the great torrent of municipal drunkenness. "Oh," says some one, "I don't patronize such things. I have destroyed no young man by such influences. I only take ale, and it will take a great amount of ale to intoxicate." Yes, but I tell you there is not a drunkard in America that did not begin with ale. Three X's I do not know what they mean. Three X's on the brewer's dray, three X's on the door of the gin-shop, three X's on the side of the bottle, Three X's. I asked a nun, He could not tell. I asked another what is the meaning of the three X's. He could not tell me. Then I made up my mind that the three X's were an allegory, and that they meant thirty heartaches, thirty agonies, thirty broken up households, thirty prospects of a drunkard's grave, thirty ways to perdition. Three X's. If I were going to write a story, the first chapter I would call "Three X's" and the last chapter I would call "The Pawnbroker's Shop." Oh, beware of your influence.

Curse of Modern Society. The winter season is especially full of temptation, because of the long evenings allowing such full swing for evil indulgences. You can scarcely expect a young man to go into his room and sit there from 7 to 11 o'clock in the evening reading Motley's "Dutch Republic" or John Foster's essays. It would be a very beautiful thing for him to do, but he will not do it. The most of our young men are busy in offices, in factories, in bank houses, in stores, in shops, and when evening comes they want the fresh air and they want sightseeing, and they must have it, they will have it, and they ought to have it. Most of the men here assembled will have three or four evenings of leisure on the winter nights. After tea, the man puts on his hat and coat, and he goes out. One form of allurements says, "Come in here." Satan says: "It is best for you to go in. You ought not to be so green. By this time you ought to have seen everything." And the temptations shall be mighty in dull times such as we have had, but which, I believe, are gone. I hear all over the land the prospect of great prosperity, and the railroad men and the merchants, they all tell me of the days of prosperity, they think are coming, and in many departments they have already come, and they are going to come in all departments, but those dull times through which we have passed have destroyed a great many men. The question of a livelihood is with a vast multitude the great question. There are young men who expected before this to set up their household, but they have been disappointed in the gains they have made. They cannot support themselves—how do they support others? And to the curse of modern society, the theory is abroad that a man must not marry until he has achieved a fortune, when the twin ought to start at the foot of the hill and together climb to the top. Unattractive Homes. Then the winter has especially temptations in the fact that many homes are peculiarly unattractive at this season. In the summer months the young man can sit out on the steps, or he can have a bonquet in the vase on the mantel, or the evenings being so short, soon after twilight he wants to retire anyhow. But there are many parents who do not understand how to make the long winter evenings attractive to their children. It is amazing to me that so many old people do not understand young people. To hear some of these parents talk you would think they had never themselves been young and had been born with spectacles on. Oh, it is dolorous for young people to sit in the house from 7 to 11 o'clock at night and to hear parents groan about their ailments and the nothingness of this world. The nothingness of this world? How dare you talk such blasphemy? It took God six days to make this world, and he has allowed 6,000 years to hang upon his holy heart, and this world has shone on you and blessed you and blessed you for these fifty or seventy years, and yet you dare talk about the nothingness of this world! Why, it is a magnificent world! I do not believe in the whole universe there is a world equal to it except it be heaven. You cannot expect your children to stay in the house these long winter evenings to hear you denounce this star lighted, sun warmed, shower bathed, flower strewn, angel watched, God inhabited planet. Oh, make your home bright! Bring in the violin or the picture. It does not require a great salary, or a big house, or chased silver, or gorgeous upholstery to make a happy home. All that is wanted is a father's heart, a mother's heart, in sympathy with young folks. I have known a man with \$700 salary, and he had no other income, but he had a home so happy and bright that, though the sons have gone out and won large fortunes and the daughters have gone out into splendid spheres and become princesses of society, they can never think of that early home without tears of emotion. It was to them the vestibule of heaven, and all their mansions now, and all their palaces now, cannot make them forget that early place. Make your home happy. You go around your house growling about your rheumatism and acting the lugubrious, and your sons will go into the world and plunge into dissipation. They will have their own rheumatism after awhile. Do not forestall their misfortunes. You were young once, and you had your bright and joyous times. Now let the young folks have a good time. I stood in front of a house and I said to the owner of the house, "This is a splendid tree. He said in a whining tone, "Yes, but it will fade." I walked round his garden and said, "This is a glorious garden you have." "Yes," he said, "but it will perish." Then he said to my little child, whom I was leading along, "Come and kiss me." The child protested and turned away. He said, "Oh, the perversity of human nature!" Who would want to kiss him? I was not surprised to find out that his only son had become a vagabond. You may groan people out of decency, but you can never groan them into it, and I declare in the presence of these men and women of common sense that it

is a most important thing for you to make your homes bright if you want your sons and daughters to turn out well. Arm Against Temptation. Alas, that old people so much misunderstand young folks! There was a great Sunday school anniversary, and there were thousands of children present. Indeed all the Sunday schools of the town were in the building, and it was very uproarious and full of disturbance, and the presiding officer on the occasion came forward and in a very loud tone shouted, "Silence!" and the more noise the presiding officer made the more noise the children made. Some one else rose on the platform and came forward and with more stentorian voice shouted "Silence!" and the uproar rose to greater height, and it did seem as if there would be almost a riot and the police have to be called in when old Dr. Beaman, his hair white as the driven snow, said, "Let me try my hand." So he came forward with a slow step to the front of the platform, and when the children saw the venerable man and the white hair they thought they would hush up that instant and hear what the old man had to say. He said: "Boys, I want to make a bargain with you. If you will be still now while I speak, when you get to be as old as I am I will be as still as a mouse." There was not another whisper that afternoon. He was as much a law as any of them. Oh, in these approaching holidays let us turn back our attitudes to what they were many ago and be boys again and girls again and make all our homes happy, God will hold you responsible for the influence you now exert, and it will be very bright and very pleasant if some winter night when we are sleeping under the blankets of snow our children shall ride along in the merry party, and hushing a moment into solemnity look up and say, "There sleep the best father and mother that ever made a happy new year." Arm yourself against these temptations. Temptations will come to you in the form of an angel of light. I know that the poets represent Satan as horned and hooped. If I were a poet and I were going to picture Satan, I would represent him as a human being, with manners polished to the last perfection, hair falling in graceful ringlets, eyes a little bloodshot, but floating in bewitching languor, hand soft and diamonded, foot exquisitely shaped, voice mellow as a flute, breath perfumed as though nothing had ever touched the lips but balm of a thousand flowers, conversation facile, carefully toned and Frenchy. But I would have the heart inside with the scales of a monster, and have it stuffed with all pride and hardness of desire and hypocrisy and death, and then I would have it touched with the rod of disenchantment until the eyes became the cold orbs of the adder, and to the lip should come the foam of raging intoxication, and to the foot the spring of the panther, and to the soft hand the change that would make it the clammy hand of the wasted skeleton, and then I would suddenly have the heart break up in unquenchable flames, and the affected lip of the tongue become the bisect of the worm that never dies. But until disenchantment, ringleted and diamonded and flute voiced and Frenchy, carefully toned and Frenchy.

Engage in High Pursuits. Oh, what a beautiful thing it is to see a young man standing up amid these temptations of city life in corrupt wild hundreds are falling. I will tell your history. You will move in respectable circles all your days, and some day a friend of your father will meet you and say: "Good morning. Glad to see you. You seem to be prospering. You look like your father for all the world. I thought you would turn out well when I used to hold you on my knee. If you ever want any help or any advice, come to me. As long as I remember your father I'll remember you. Good morning." That will be the history of hundreds of these young men. How do I know it? I know it by the way you start. But here's a young man who takes the opposite route. Voices of sin charm him away. He reads bad books, mingles in bad society. The glow has gone from his cheek, and the sparkle from his eye, and the purity from his soul. Down he goes, little by little. The people who saw him when he came to town while yet hovered over his head the blessing of a pure mother's prayer, and there was on his lips the dew of a pure sister's kiss, now as they see him pass cry, "What an awful wreck!" Cheek bruised in grouch fight. Eye bleared with dissipation. Lip swollen with indulgence. Be careful what you say to him; for a trifle he would take your life. Lower down, lower down, until, out-cast of God and man, he lies in the asylum, a blotch of loathsomeness and pain. One moment he calls for God, and then he calls for rum. He prays; he curses; he laughs as a fiend laughs, then bites his nails into the quick, then puts his hand through the hair hanging around his head like the mane of a wild beast, then shivers until the cot shakes with unutterable error, then with his fists fights back the devils or clutches for serpents that seem to wind around him, their awful folds, then asks for water which is instantly consumed on his cracked lips. Some morning the surgeon going his rounds will find him dead. Do not try to comb out or brush back the matted locks. Straighten out the limbs, wrap them in a sheet, put him in a box and let two men carry him down to the wagon at the door. With a piece of chalk write on top of the box the name of the destroyer and the destroyed. Who is it? It is you, O man, if yielding to the temptations of a dissipated life, you go out and perish. There is a way that seemeth bright and fair and beautiful to a man, but the end thereof is death. Employ these long nights of December, January and February in high pursuits, in intelligent socialities, in innocent amusements, in Christian work. Do not waste this winter, for soon you will have seen your last snow shower and have gone up into the companionship of him whose raiment is white as snow, whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten it. For all Christian hearts the winter nights of earth will end in the June morning of heaven. "The river of life from under the throne never freezes over. The foliage of life's fair tree is never frost-bitten. The festivities, the hilarities, the family greetings of earthly Christmas times will give way to larger reunion and brighter lights and sweeter garlands and mightier joy in the great holiday of heaven.

The Difference. Johnnie—What's the difference between a visit and a visitation? Pa—A visit, my son, is when we go to see your grandmother on your mother's side. "Yes." "A visitation is when she comes to see us."

Dancing in Japan. Dancing forms a very important part of the Japanese education of boys as well as girls. The dancing teacher comes to the family every day, and it is his unremitting drill that the pupil owes so much of her grace and beauty of bearing. It is a mingling of what we should call dancing with lessons in deportment, which American masters sometimes but not always give.

Too Much for Dr. Johnson. Johnson could not discover the derivation of the word amuck. To "run amuck" is an old phrase for attacking madly and indiscriminately, and has since been ascertained to be a Malay word. "Never marry a girl with the idea you are going to reform her, my boy," said Uncle Alonzo Sparks. "If she chews gum and giggles when she is a young woman, she will giggle and chew gum when she is married."—Chicago Tribune.

SAGACITY OF SNAKES.

They Know How to Prepare for the Advent of Cold Weather.

The student of animal life at the zoological gardens is startled frequently by the remarkable display of sagacity that is sometimes made by the inmates of that interesting place. What, for instance, could be more clever, more thoughtful or more amazing than the action of the indigo snakes when cold weather comes on. It was illustrated yesterday. The first breath of cold air that was wafted across the garden informed the indigo snakes that a cold wave was at hand. They could not hide their heads under their wings like the robin of the nursery book. They could not take violent exercise and warm up their blood, for their blood will not warm. So they sent the problem by swallowing each other in turn. One indigo snake will swallow his better half, for example, until she becomes thoroughly warmed up, and then she will swallow him and he feels comfortable. It is a very clever action on the part of these snakes. It vibrates their character. The fact that they swallow one another is usually put down as unthinking people to ignorance. They say that the indigo snake will swallow anything, even his friends. Perhaps that is the reason the snake story found always stations himself in front of the indigo snake's cage. He knows that no matter how big a lie he tells the snake will swallow it as nonchalantly as though it were a piece of garden hose or some such luxury. But more remarkable in sagacity than the indigo snake are the tropical birds in the aviary. They are probably the most wonderful geniuses ever seen at the "zoo." Coming as they did from India's coral strand and other places where the thermometer die of the fever and the iceberg is unknown, they find themselves unprepared for the rigor of the climate here. Such was the condition of the number of the new bird arrivals from India Saturday. They had nothing but their light summer pajamas with them, and when the biting winds came whistling into their cage they were chilled to the bone. Their bills chattered like a telegraph instrument on the night of a prize fight, and they shivered terribly.

Then their sagacity came to their rescue. They noticed that as the cooler weather drew near a large crop of down appeared on some of the other birds, who were more accustomed to the change of temperature. They wondered whether a similar growth would make its appearance on them, but like the youth who watches for his first mustache, they were disappointed. The down did not come. They consulted their tropical friends who had been at the "zoo" for more than a year. The latter winked and whispered a few words to them which raised hope in their troubled breasts. That night at twelve minutes past 12 these tropical birds went out in a body and attacked the other birds who had more down than they. With sharp bills the tropical birds plucked the down from their sleeping roommates. Little by little they pulled forth the feathers, until they had stolen all they possessed. Taking the down they interwove it so cleverly in their own feathers that it looked perfectly natural. This kept them warm and warm. Of course it made other birds down on them, but they didn't care so long as they had warm friends among each other. Philadelphia Press.

Pigeons and Postal Service. The most novel and successful instrument ever used in the postal service is the homing pigeon. During the Franco-German war, 1870-71, the ingenious French adopted this system of transmission of their correspondence. The communications were printed and then microphotographed onto thin films of collodion. Each pellicle contained the reproduction of sixteen folio pages of type, and was so light that fifty thousand messages could be carried by one pigeon. To insure safe transit the films were rolled up and placed in a quill which was fastened to one of the tail feathers of the pigeon. Upon arrival of the messenger at its destination the films were unrolled and thrown on a canvas by means of an electric lantern, copied by clerks, and dispatched to their destination. Later, sensitive paper was substituted for the canvas, and the letters were reproduced on it ready for mailing. Another production of French ingenuity was a balloon postal system with fifty-seven balloons. Each ascension cost about one thousand dollars, and, although Krupp had built several guns for the German army designed especially to bring down these aerial mail cars, only five of them were captured. They carried many tons of mail, as well as ninety-one passengers during the period of war.