



REV. C. T. PHILLIPS, D.D.

A MAPLE LEAF

AND OTHER SKETCHES

— BY —

REV. C. T. PHILLIPS, D. D.

(THADDEUS)

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

— BY —

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INTRODUCTION

BY PROF. W. C. KIERSTEAD, M.A., PH.D.

This little volume is a compilation of articles which, in the form of letters or sermonettes, appeared in the "Religious Intelligencer" or in the daily press of the city of St. John. They were written at odd moments and often very hastily, as a diversion and partial recreation from a busy ministry, and they lack the continuity and, at times, the finish one would expect in material prepared with the intention of publication in permanent form. But they will be welcomed and treasured very highly by those whose rare privilege it was to share his friendship and fellowship, and by the large number of people throughout this province who have been benefited and blessed through his ministry. And there is a charm about them that will appeal to a wider circle of readers. They manifest an insight into life, they betray a fineness of feeling, they breathe a wholesome spirit of helpfulness, and appeal to the higher sentiments of brotherly love and

duty, of religious hope and trust. There is a quaintness of expression that attracts us, and an artistic blending of the finer feelings with the lighter veins of wit and humor which gives a pleasing emotional variety and amuses and entertains as it inspires and instructs.

The intimate friends of Dr. Phillips will detect in these selections a dominant note of his ministry, and elements which were essential in his own temperament and character. He was a man of deep, broad sympathies, and his entire life was a ministry of unselfish helpfulness. He was genuinely and intensely human, finding humanity within himself, able to sound the whole gamut of human emotions and needs, sharing the aspirations and ideals of the heroic and prophetic, and yet feeling with keenness the impulses, temptations, conflicts, ambitions, weaknesses and sins of men. It was this fine insight of real sympathy and its interpretation of life that gave his ministry its moving, persuasive power. He would often describe and interpret the inner conflicts of his hearers with such vividness and accuracy that many would go away confident that some one had disclosed to him the history of their private lives.

But this sympathetic unity with men, so essential to true success in the Christian ministry, is, at the same time, very enervating and exhausting. He was a true disciple of the Master, and, like Him, he knew what it was to have the energies of life flow out of him to give vitality to others. His relation to his people was not a mere professional one, but the ties that united them were intimate and vital, and developed into exalted and sacred friendships. And his interests and sympathies were too human and too fundamental to be bounded by his congregation or limited by his denomination. His parish was the community, and his ministry was to human need. He fed and clothed the poor, he visited the sick, comforted the sorrowing and mourning, gave courage and hope to the dying, brought penitence to the sinful, and revealed the Christ to all. He won men by his message and found them by his ministry because he linked his life with their lives and divided their burdens with them.

It is no wonder that with this constant drain upon his sympathies and energies he suffered at times physical weariness and mental and

emotional exhaustion. There was, however, another prominent element in his temperament that gave partial relief from this strain, and that was the saving grace of wit and humor. He was able to see the humorous side of every situation. He saw the sombre side of life and it made a mighty appeal to him, but he felt, as well, the sunshine of its humor. He felt the comedy as well as the tragedy of life; and what he saw for himself he was able to communicate to others. It was just such a blending of sympathy and humor that enabled Abraham Lincoln to bear the terrible burden which the nation rolled upon him. Such a man was Dr. Phillips; he ranged through the fields of literature and history and appreciated the heroic, the beautiful, the ideal. He had the appreciations and tastes of the man of culture. But he appreciated also the men and women among whom he lived and with whom he toiled and labored. He saw the divine in the human, the sacred in the commonplace, and the heroic and beautiful in everyday life and conduct. He was incapable of envy or jealousy, of littleness and pettiness. He rejoiced with those

who did rejoice as truly as he wept with the weeping. But along with this divine quality of sympathy went a keen sense of humor, the rare faculty to enjoy the comedy of things. He laughed at the absurdity, the pretention, the ridiculous role of sin even when it seemed triumphant. And in the service of his wit went a keen satire and fine irony. He did not denounce or drive; there was no harshness in his message; it was tender, suggestive, sympathetic, wooing,—inspiring and winning men; and it was humorous, touched with satire, pricking with irony at times. He would laugh us out of our littleness, he would point the shaft of ridicule at our meanness until we became ashamed of it, and would inspire us with ideals of nobility and truth.

These selections carry to a degree the charm of his personality and the attractiveness of his ministry. We catch the fragrance of his sympathy and spirit of helpfulness; we feel the prick of his irony, the keen edge of his satire against our folly and weakness; but he appeals to the highest within us, or he ludicrously caricatures our meanness, because he

loves us and means to help us. This little volume may win new friends for its author, but it will be cherished by many more because of their affection for him; and his abiding memorial is in the hearts and lives of many who have been ennobled by his friendship and sanctified by his ministry.

THE MAPLE LEAF AND OTHER SKETCHES.

THE MAPLE LEAF.

THE MAPLE was planted the day he brought home his bride. She held it while he carefully put the earth about it; and all that hot thirsty summer she watered and watched it as though it were a child, and she was afraid the child might die. But the tree lived and grew; and the next summer a robin brought his bride to it, and for many a summer they made it their home and there brought up their children and sent them out into the world to find other trees for their homes.

When the baby was old enough to go out to play, her playground was beneath the maple her father and mother had planted. She would play there content for hours, talking with the leaves, for she said, when the winds rustled them, they were "talking to her."

It was beneath the tree she plighted her troth, and his name and her's (intertwined) were carved into the bark.

When her lover went to South Africa with the first Canadian contingent it was beneath the maple boughs they parted, and there she sat on sunny days and moonlight nights, and dreamed (as maidens will of absent lovers) and hoped and prayed that God might bring him back to her.

One autumn day when the woods were aflame with colors so beautiful that the soul of an artist would glow within him at the sight, she stood beneath the branches of her maple tracing with her fingers the name so dear to her, when a crimson leaf fluttered down upon her coal black hair. For a moment it rested there and then she placed it in the letter and sent it across two seas to one whose heart would thrill at the sight of the emblem of his "Own Canadian Home." If she pressed it to her lips before she sent it on its long journey, that was her secret, and "that is another story."

Months after, as the soldiers were gathered around the camp fire, the Canadian mail came

in and as the names of the men were called out for whom there were letters, those who had none could scarcely bear their disappointment, and then would gather around those who were reading their letters and beg for a crumb of news from home. As one soldier opened his letter a crimson maple leaf fluttered out from its folds and before it could be hidden a dozen quick eyes had seen it and they shouted, "A maple leaf!" "The Mapie Leaf Forever!" It was passed from hand to hand, and most of the homesick men turned away from the little leaf with the tears wiping the powder off their cheeks; then the band played and the men sang—for it was before the "Good Queen" died—"God Save Our Queen," and "Heaven Bless the Maple Leaf Forever." "The Maple Leaf, our Emblem dear, the Maple Leaf Forever!"

That night Boer bullets ended the lives of more than a score of Canadians; they had looked their last upon the maple leaf.

They found the soldier of the maple leaf at dawn, crimson blood dyeing the veldt, and over the white lips a crimson maple leaf, that had been touched by a Canadian girl's lips, lightly

rested, but there was no breath to move the leaf.

As they laid him away to wait for the last reveille the soldiers bared their heads and softly sang, "The Maple Leaf Forever!"

"WITHOUT ARE DOGS."

THE other day I saw a little boy weeping bitterly because his dog was dead; he had just been killed by accident. The lad was overwhelmed by his loss; and I confess to feeling that my own eyes were getting wet and that I must move on, after I had expressed my sympathy for the boy whose world was dead. I heard the story of the boy and his dog a few days later, and I do not know when I have been more indignant than when I learned that the little boy had gone to his minister for comfort, and with the question, "Has Bonnie gone to heaven?" and was told by that tactless and heartless man, who was never called to the ministry I am sure, "that it was very wrong to cry because a dog was dead; no, dogs don't go to heaven. What

nonsense!" And then he quoted the detached text at the head of this story, "Without are dogs," and proved by his misquotation that neither his study of theology nor of life had been exhaustive. I learned that the dead dog had been a very intelligent Scotch collie, that he had been brought up with his little master, had watched over him when he was a baby in the cradle, and was his constant companion and playmate, and had by his marvellous intelligence and courage saved his young master's life.

When the minister told the little boy that his dog had not gone, and could not go, to heaven, "Then I don't want to go to heaven. I want to go where Bonnie is, wherever that is," said the poor little fellow, who was having his first taste of the bitterness of unbelief.

Why did not that foolish minister tell the little boy that his dog had gone to heaven, and let the years teach him that the faithfulness, the courage, the love of his dog had come from heaven and is of heaven, and therefore cannot die?

The longer I live and the better acquainted I get with men and dogs, the more respect and love I have for dogs.

How faithful they are! "Old dog Tray is ever faithful, blows cannot drive him away." How loving he is; he will follow his master when his master is in rags, and the millionaire cannot whistle him away. How forgiving he is; beat him, abuse him, and only rarely does he resent it, but forgives and kisses the hand that smites him. What courage he has. Near me as I write is a little Skye terrier. He is a thoroughbred; from the tips of his silky ears to the tip of his bushy tail, which he carries so proudly, there is not a drop of plebeian blood; his ancestors for many generations were of the land of the heather and blue bells. This little aristocrat would scarcely tip the scales at ten pounds, and yet what a fighter he is, though never quarrelsome, fighting in defence of his master or mistress to the death. How honest he is, too. He would starve rather than steal. What keen intuitions he has (yes, intuitions my critic, if he is a dog), for he discovers the man who is not to be trusted as unerringly as any detective can. How proud a Scotchman would be of this brave looking little dog from the far northern Skye.

"He has gone to the dogs," or "is fast going there," is about the worst thing one can say of a man. And yet there are men (plenty of them) who would get ir better company if they were literally to go to the dogs. Many a snob who cuts his poor relations would learn a lesson from the dogs. Many, or at least some, Christians could learn how to forgive an injury by going to the dogs.

THY FRIEND'S FRIEND.

"THY friend has a friend, and thy friend's friend has a friend; be discreet."—*The Talmud.*

YOU had better read that over again unless you have caught its meaning at the first reading. Who is there who will not wish he had met that wisdom from the Talmud years ago, and taken the advice given? It would have saved us many a heartache if we had been more discreet in our confidences. When the lights were low we have been in a communicative mood and have told our friend things we wished we had never told, for we forgot that our "friend had a friend," and that some time in the twilight there would

be another confidence given and the story would be told and told again and again, for each friend had a friend, and so the story had gone on and on.

And last year's friend is not this year's friend; and we grieve because we have given our confidence and revealed our weakness to an estranged friend who will be no more discreet than we have been.

Many a young schoolgirl who has sworn "eternal" friendship with another girl, has, years after the "eternal" friendship was dead, blushed red and then turned cold, alone in the darkness, at the remembrance of some confidence given to a friend who had a friend, and married him; and she tortures herself with the thought that "she has told her friend, and he has told his friend, and his friend's friend has told the story, to my everlasting shame and discredit." It may have been only the telling and exchanging of their innocent "puppy-love" stories; and of course neither of them marries those particular puppies. They are old and gray—if they are not bald—and have forgotten all about the little girls in short skirts with whom they ex-

changed candy kisses; but the girls have not forgotten, even though they have girls of their own, and often wish they had not been so indiscreetly confidential when they were children.

Many a fortune has been lost because men have forgotten that the friend to whom they told their business plans had a friend, and that friend had no scruples about taking advantage of the information, and made the fortune for himself.

Elections have been lost because men talked too much about their plans to their friend who had friends.

Battles have been lost because generals who planned midnight attacks have been indiscreet enough to tell what they intended to do to some one who told it to someone else.

Reputations have been lost because men and women have been indiscreet enough to tell their abandoned and repented of sins and weaknesses to a friend who had a friend.

If you would save yourself from heartache and ruin, print these words where you can see them every day, no matter how white your life. "Thy friend has a friend; thy friend's friend has a friend. Be discreet."

FATHERLESS BOYS.

THERE are many fatherless boys in this city and in many other cities. Boys whose fathers are living and boys whose fathers are dead; and I think the boys whose fathers are living are the most to be pitied.

The active business man whose house is a restaurant and lodging house, not a home, is less acquainted with his boys than his neighbors are.

What chance has the average business man to get acquainted with his children? He has to work all the time and over time for them, he sees them for a few minutes in the morning, and if he lunches down town sees them perhaps in the evening for a few minutes. As for knowing his boys, he knows no more of them than of the men he passes on the street. I have no doubt that many a father regrets that he knows so little of his boys and would know them better if he could, but he has so little time at home that he really does not know their capabilities, limitations or temptations.

God help fatherless boys; for if they have not the best friend good or bad boy ever had—a loving, capable mother—then the chances are that some day they will break their parents' hearts.

The fatherless boy is a boy who is not acquainted with his father and does not know that he is his best friend, and that it is because the father loves his boy that he works so hard.

The fatherless boy is the boy who does not make a confidant of his father, who does not have him for a playmate when he is a little fellow, and an admirer and counsellor when he thinks he is a man.

Another fatherless boy—and he is more to be pitied than any other boy—is the boy whose father is better acquainted with the club or the saloon than with his home, whose habits are so bad that no boy can imitate him without becoming bad.

The fatherless boy is the boy who cringes as though he had received a blow when some one says to him, "I know your father."

The boy whose father died and left him the legacy of an honored name, is not fatherless;

for the men who knew his father will, for his father's sake, protect him. When men say, "I knew your father, and for his sake I will befriend you," that boy may well stand straighter and carry himself more proudly, for the dead hand of his father has decorated him.

If it were not that these fatherless boys have such good mothers they would more frequently go to recruit the criminal classes than they do.

Some of the most successful men I know were fatherless boys, and I wondered at their success until I read in an old book this promise, "I will be a father to the fatherless, and the widow's God."

MOTHERLESS GIRLS.

THERE ARE many motherless girls whose mothers are not dead. Mothers who have never won the confidence of their daughters. The mother who has not won the confidence of her girls is not worthy to be a mother; she ought never to have worn the crown of motherhood. The mother who does not have heart

to heart talks with her girls will find out some sad day that they have not been as ignorant or innocent as she imagined.

The term mother does not mean to some girls what it ought to mean—the utmost confidence and the strongest love. They have more respect and deeper, stronger love for father than for mother. They would rather have father know of their indiscretions than mother, not that he is weaker and more indulgent than their mother, for he is stronger in every way, and has truer affection. Such girls are what I call in my heart “motherless girls.”

There are fashionable women to whose home girl babies are as unwelcome as to the home of a Hindoo. God pity such motherless girls, for they are more to be pitied in their homes of luxury than the children of the poor who have the luxury of love, if they have none of the luxuries of wealth.

Other motherless girls are those whose mothers died when they were babes or young children, and have never known the counsel and protection that only a good mother can give. One would naturally think that a poor, motherless girl

would find a protector in every woman and man coming in contact with her life, and yet there are men, and women, too, who are watching for defenseless girls that they may accomplish their ruin.

Today I heard the story of a motherless young girl that made my heart ache. It was told me by the nurse who was with the girl of eighteen when her babe was born. The old story—a mother and not a wife. That girl's mother died when she was only three years old. Her father is not a man to help his girl bear her shame. She is afraid of him, and already he taunts her and tells her how she has disgraced herself and him. And that poor little girl has prayed to die. If she were not afraid that she would not meet her mother were she to end her life, she would rush into the river on whose banks she had played, for she is "mad with life's misery, glad of death's mystery, anywhere, anywhere out of the world."

And you white handed, jeweled women of our churches, who stone the woman who is a sinner, will welcome to your homes, and, if he has wealth, let him marry your daughters—the black-hearted seducer who made her a sinner.

"I MUST SAVE THE CHILDREN."

I NEVER saw the brave teacher who said that. I don't know how she looked, though I saw her newspaper picture. I do not even know whether she was young or in the border land between youth and maturity, whether she was pretty or plain, and yet her last words tell me how she looked to God. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

I know that she was an efficient, successful teacher, for she had the two great requisites for successful teaching, love and self-sacrifice. How she must have loved the children to think of them and their safety first, and not of herself. I do not know how she ranked among the teachers of the school or city, but I know she did her duty by her scholars from day to day, or she would not have died for them. I do not know how regularly she attended her church, nor what her pastor thought of her piety, but I know I would rather have those words to my credit as I start upon my last long journey than

a selfish, hysterical prayer for mercy forced from me by terror. In that last moment when the first impulse—which comes to all—to save one's self was put aside and she said to her soul, "No, I must save the children"—whatever her previous spiritual experience may have been, in that supreme moment was she "born again," she "sold all and gave to the poor," and won eternal life. The "heresy hunter" may hunt me and catch me and burn me for this theology, but that will amuse him and will not hurt me.

I am glad to believe that in our city schools and all over the land there are teachers as heroic as the one in Montreal who gave her life to save the children. God forbid that the time shall ever come when this statement shall have to be proven, but if the need should ever be, God will have His heroine ready.

I am glad that a memorial will tell the story of the brave girl to future generations. I would like to see a tablet in every school room, and every church, and every home, with the words: "I must save the children from impurity, by being pure myself. I must save the children from the saloon and the corrupting influence

of the street." "I must save the children, as far as I can by wise legislation," should be the watchword of the statesman.

That the words of the brave girl on the threshold of eternity may be the means of saving many children in the years to come, will be the prayer of all who love them.

UNSHED TEARS.

I SAW a little girl the other day who had been disappointed or rebuked—I don't know what the trouble was—but she wanted to cry, and if she had been alone she could have found relief in tears; but to cry before strangers who might mock her tears was what that little tot of three or four years had said to her brave little soul she would not do, and she fought back the tears that filled her eyes, and not one drop ran over the brimming lids.

That little girl and her unshed tears brought to my remembrance a picture I saw when a little boy. It was in the "good old time" when funeral sermons were preached, and the minister

who could make the "mourners cry the hardest" was in the greatest demand.

I remember one minister who was always wanted at funerals. He would, after his long sermon, address the mourners one by one, commencing with the eldest and finishing with the youngest. If it was the funeral of a wife and mother, husband and children were told that they would never see mother again, they would go back to their lonely home and find no mother there, they would go from room to room, from the parlor to the kitchen, from the bedroom to the pantry; no mother. By the time that good but tactless minister got through with his picture of the lonely home, there would be such hysterical sobbing all over the "meeting house" that he could scarcely be heard, and the widower, if he had by his scolding and nagging and stinginess shortened his wife's life, was almost sorry that he had killed her.

In front of the high pulpit was a "deacons' seat," between that and the pulpit was a table on which the coffin with its black pall was placed; on the deacon seat the chief mourners sat, and the minister did his best to make them

sense their loneliness and loss. And it was not considered unkind in those good old times; it was the proper thing to do.

One funeral I shall never forget. It was the funeral of one with whom I had played the week before, a loving, winsome little girl of seven, and I thought when she suddenly died that my heart was broken. Ah me, how often our hearts break! Facing the casket sat the father and mother. The mother was weeping, not silently but noisily, hysterically, and I did not wonder at her loud sobbing; but I did wonder for many days how the father could sit there so unmoved. A large, strong, stern-looking man he was, and he sat as quietly as though he were carved in stone, and there was not a tear in the eyes that to my boyish ones seemed cold, but that I now know were unutterably sad. The mother's grief was wept out in a week; his went through his life. I have learned that "unshed tears are the hardest to bear."

What tragedies are hidden away in hearts we cannot read. How charitable, how patient we would be, if we knew this man and that woman as God knows them.

I have tried to study the characters of men and women from what their eyes have told me. They may laugh ever so lightly and seem ever so care free, but there comes a time when the mask they wear falls down for a moment, and in the eyes of the man you thought so care free, and in the eyes of the woman you thought so gay, you catch the glimmer of unshed tears they are fighting back with all their strength. Why cannot we bury our dead? Or why must their ghosts haunt us, go where we will? We thought they were laid for ever. But they go with us through the night. We climb the mountains, and they stand at our side. We sit in church and the one beside us thinks the song or the sermon has flushed our cheek or paled it, but our thoughts have been a thousand miles away. We are saying good bye to the old life. We are burying our dead.

There are many kinds of tears, and only some of them are very sad. The tears of children are soon dried; they are but April showers. Tears come very readily to the eyes of the aged; they are the tears of weakness. Hysterical tears irritate us. The maudlin tears of the drunken disgust us.

But God must pity man or woman whose heart bleeds and aches like an inward wound, and the tears that would bring relief must not, cannot fall.

HOW AN EXTRA FIFTY DOLLARS MADE HIM POOR.

THERE ARE few people (outside of a circus) who would accept the gift of an elephant with the proviso that they were to keep it. But there are few people who would not accept an increase of salary gladly. And yet I have known a number of people who could (if they would) trace their financial descent to the time when they were given something extra for extra work. Here is the story of one of them.

They had just been married. His salary was a very modest one—so modest that it was always blushing—and they were saving and prudent and said they would live well within their income and save something every month for the house they were planning.

They had laid by in the savings bank about a foot of the lot they intended to buy, and seven

or eight bricks and nearly a bunch of shingles for the house they were going to build. One night he came home from his work jubilant with the news that he was to get fifty dollars a year for doing some work that he could easily do in less than an hour a week. All the way home he had been planning what he would do with the extra fifty dollars. The first thought (and the best) was: "I will put it in the bank for the building fund." But the second thought—which is very often the worst—was: "No, we have made provision for the building of the house. This is an extra and will give us some luxury, and we will be none the poorer as we will not touch the salary."

A dozen or more ways for spending the "extra" were planned and rejected before he got home to tell his wife the good news. "Wife will think of something and we will discuss it this evening," he said to himself. All that evening and into some of the night they discussed the best way to spend that fifty dollars.

"I think," said the wife, "that fifty dollars (with care) will help you in clothes, and we can put fifty more out of the salary into the building fund."

"No," said the husband, "this is an 'extra' and we must have a few luxuries."

The next night they went to the theatre, where they had not gone since their honeymoon, because they could not afford it. Modest seats at the theatre and a modest lunch at the restaurant afterward, made a three dollar hole in the extra fifty.

The next week his wife had a birthday. The first thought (the best that time) was that he would get her a birthday present, something useful, like a dress, or hat, or bit of fur. "No," he said, "she would get those anyway, and she ought to have something she could not get if it were not for the extra fifty." And so he took her home a modest piece of jewelery that took half of the fifty.

"The carpet is getting shabby," the wife said, one day. "I wish we could get another, but we cannot afford it, I suppose."

"Oh yes, we can," said the husband. "There is that extra fifty. It will be like getting a carpet for nothing."

The carpet was put down and its newness and brightness made the curtains look worn

and old. "Do you think we could afford new ones?" asked the wife. "Of course we can," he said. "Don't forget that we are getting fifty dollars extra this year." So the new curtains were bought.

When he had his two weeks' holiday he said to his wife one day: "I think that instead of going down to the farm to father's this year we can afford to use that extra fifty and take that trip we have so long been dreaming about."

They took the trip and went to a more expensive hotel than they needed, because, as he carefully explained to his wife, they could afford it as they had fifty dollars extra this year.

When he went over his books at the end of the year, six months after they came into their fortune, he found that they had spent three hundred dollars more than they had expected, and that the inch of land they had paid for on their building lot, and the bricks and the shingles for the new house were all gone. Their extra fifty dollars had cost them nearly five hundred.

And that is our story. We found ten dollars and found no owner, and spent twenty and more because we had ten dollars we never expected.

We won a hundred dollars on the race, and spent two hundred more than we would if we had not won. And that is why we always lose when we bet, even when we win.

We were paid a debt we thought we had lost, and spent two or three times the amount to celebrate its being paid.

The moral of this is—well find out for yourselves. I cannot preach and practice both—on the salary I get.

Said the Deacon: "I have been reading about the 'sermon taster' of Drumtochty. I think we are all sermon tasters, and every one of us sure his judgment is infallible. Asked about farming, lumbering, business of one kind and another, men not acquainted with these things readily admit that they are not judges. But I have yet to meet the man or woman who is not ready to pass judgment on a sermon and the man who preaches it."

Scolding is the weapon of the weak.

THE NEW THEOLOGY.

(With apologies to Dooley).

MR. FLANNIGAN and Mr. Finnegan were eating their lunch in the shadow of the big building they were "constructin'," as Mr. Flannigan put it.

"What's this noo theology I hears 'em talkin' about?" asked Mr. Finnegan, as he began filling his pipe.

"I don't know as I kin tell ye so as ye kin understan' it, Finnegan, fur yer haven't the meterfysical moind to comprahind it; and I only knows what it isn't," said Flannigan.

"What kind o' moind is the meterfysical moind?" asked Finnigan.

"I suspect," said Flannigan, "as thar's fissick intil it; it's the koind of moind the docthors git at college."

"Wil, Finnigan, this noo theology isn't a noo kind o' brakefust food, fer ye can't ate it, and it wouldn't agra with ye if ye cud, fur ye culdn't digist it."

"Maybe it's a noo koind of otermobile," said Finnigan.

"Naw," said Flannigan, "it's no otermobile, but it kin bate an otermobile an' John Sullivan, too, in knockin' people down and out."

"Maybe it's a noo boom the anerkest fellers have invinted, or a noo koind o' blastin' powther," said Finnigan.

"You're gittin' warrmer, as the kids say," said Flannigan. "It's loike dinermite fur danger to thim that handels it, fur it's not fur byes nor min without expayryince to have any thing to do with it. Some byes got to playin' wid it in churrch wan day an' it knocked the minister out of the poolpit, an' threw some dakins out of the windey, and tore the Bible so it isn't bigger nor a good sized tract.

"I'll have nothin' to do wid it," said Finnigan.

"Yure wise," said Flannigan, "fur the way-farin' man if he's a fool betther not touch it. It's as dangerous as stricknine an' Mike Nolen's whisky."

"It'll not come inter ginerall use thin, if fools can't use it," said Finnigan, "and you'd betther

not touch it yersilf, Flannigan. But I don't know what it is yit, Flannigan."

"Nayther do I, Finnigan, but I'm tellin' ye all about it as fasht as I can."

"As near as I kin find out," continued Flannigan, as he lighted his pipe, "it's this way thay found out."

"Whose thay?" asked Finnigan.

"The Wise Men," said Flannigan.

"Frum the East?" asked Finnigan.

"No, from the West," — (Chicager) — said Flannigan. "Thay found out that whin the Bible was made some byes got medlin' with the types and put in more Bible than was needed."

"I always thought we could do with less commandmints," said Finnigan.

"And they tuk out the"—and Mr. Flannigan whispered—"they tuk out the Vargin Mary; and said her Blessed Son is not her son. He was only a very foine man."

"I'll hear no more," said Finnigan, "it's blasfeemy. A foine man indade. I tells yer, Flannigan, He was not a foine man if He was not more than that, iver so much more than

that; He was what the Jews said; He was 'a daycaver,' for He said He and the 'Father were one.' It's blasfeemy yer telling about."

"No," said Flannigan. "It's Higher Creeticism."

"An' thar's no hell in the noo theology," added Flannigan.

"That's foine," said Finnigan.

"An' no purgatory ayther," said he.

"I hardly loike that," says Finnigan. "It sames to me I'd loike to change my close and have a good tubbin before goin' into such foine company as thar must be up in Hivin."

"But thar's no Hivin in the noo theology," said Flannigan, "or you got to make your own hivin."

"Oh my! Oh my!" ejaculated Finnigan. "It's a foine Hivin I'd make after payin' the rint and feedin' an' clothin' the missus an' childer on two dollars a day."

"But Hivin's not a place, it's a state."

"An' it's a moighty fine state I'm in," said Finnigan. "Luk at me pants. It's worse then any state in the Union."

"An'," and Flannigan's voice was full of

awe and despair as he whispered, "an' thar's no Saviour, ye got to save yersilf."

"An' that's worse than all," said Finnigan. "It's mighty bad news fur them that's had no chanct, an' fur lazy min, an' it's a good deal like liftin' yursel' over the ditch by yure boot strhaps."

"I'm thinkin' the noo theology is not as young as thay say it is. It's sames to me it's as ould, as ould as the divil, Flannigan."

AN IDEAL CHURCH.

I HAD BEEN looking for it for years, but when I found it I had given up looking for it, and I found it where I never thought of looking for it.

I am not going to tell any of the pastors where I found it, for if I did they might send in requests for "a call." The ideal church is not "calling." It does not have "itching ears," and when pastor and church unite—like all good marriages—it is "until death do them part."

The church edifice appealed to me. It is of stone. It has always seemed to me that a church

building, if possible, should be a sermon in stone; and, whatever its style of architecture, it ought to convey the idea of solidity, of permanence.

The congregation came promptly; every person was in his or her place before the service began; there was no waiting for the "preliminaries" to be over before they came in to hear the sermon. As it was not in the country, there was no lingering at the doors, no sitting on the fences. Not a man asked another if he was through with his spring ploughing, nor suggested that it was a late spring, nor asked his neighbor what he would take for that colt of his—if it were not Sunday.

It was not in the city, for the men did not look as if their wives had brought them to church, and that they would rather be home reading their papers. As they came in they did not linger at the door to say a word about the tariff, or ask each other what they thought about reciprocity; they reverently uncovered their heads and walked quietly to their pews.

It was a remarkable congregation in another respect—there were more men than women,—at least ten, perhaps twenty, to one. They

were good singers; there were few that did not sing, and they sang as if their hearts were in the songs of praise. The voices of the women blended with the stronger voices of the men, adding a sweetness that was very pleasing. The congregation dressed very plainly and neatly. The men apparently patronized the same tailor. The sisters did not try to outdress each other, and did not look at each other's bonnets and make remarks. One reason, perhaps, why they did not was because they did not wear bonnets or hats.

The pastor and congregation read responsively, and when the pastor offered prayer every head was bowed and many joined with him in prayer. The sermon was plain and practical, and was listened to very attentively. If any one had "dropped a pin" you might have heard a noise. The minister did not scold the absent members; he made no announcements; he evidently knew they all would be there next Sunday. There was no collection and no reference to arrears in salary. The congregation remained quietly until the benediction was pronounced; there was no putting on of rubbers or overcoats.

In the vestibule there was no voice heard saying, "Pretty dry, eh," or "He gave it to you today, old fellow." No one said, "It is about time we had a change, is it not? He is getting old and we ought to have a younger man."

The congregation never complains about the pastor not calling on them. When they are in need of his help they send him word, or call on him at his room on certain days. I was present when the pastor met some of his parishioners. I was going out, but he asked me to remain. I am glad I did, for I heard a good and tactful man talk so plainly, and yet so gently and sympathetically, to his people who came to him for help, that I am sure they left some of their burdens behind them. So true is it that the good God helps men who want to help men.

I came near forgetting to say that this "ideal church" has ideal officers. The deacons look after the "temporal affairs" of the church; the sick and the poor are never neglected. The buildings are kept neatly and in good repair. And, listen to this, every month the pastor gets a check for his salary. No, I cannot tell you poor checkless pastors where this church is located. You must guess.

Talk about church union and federation! It has gone mad, the ultra othodox would say, for two churches as wide apart as the poles worship in the same building. The seats are reversible, like car seats, or the reversing falls. Turn them one way and you face Rome, the Vatican, the Catacombs. Turn them the other way, and you face the Boyne water, the siege of Derry and the twelfth of July.

TRUE FRIENDSHIP.

HE WAS always called "the Deacon," but I do not think he had ever belonged to any church. His title of deacon was an honorary one, like that of Colonel, which it was once proposed to confer on Canadian civilians for a consideration. If a civilian can be a colonel without having a regiment, I suppose one may be called a deacon without belonging to a church.

The deacon's appearance, and sometimes his language, was not in accordance with that of the typical deacon. He was short and stout, and

his eye had a shrewd, worldly twinkle that would have shocked an orthodox church. His shortness was not against him, for I have known some short deacons whose prayers and exhortations were long enough. The deacon is so bellicose that I could recommend him for a colonel when colonels are appointed by government for reasons of state. When I come to think of it, I have known real deacons who were as belligerent as colonels.

Much can be learned from a man who is a shrewd observer, and who is combative enough to attack what he believes to be wrong, even though he knows and you know that his warfare is useless. The deacon, like most combative men, was at least half right in his criticisms of men and measures, but his denunciations were so fierce and unqualified that he frequently injured the cause he championed, and did but little injury to the evil he attacked. I have known politicians, even, who have made the same mistake. The opposition that opposes always, and commends never, will sit on the cold opposition benches for many a wintry moon.

The newspaper that never quotes its contem-

porary, except for attack, will advertise that contemporary and increase its circulation more effectively than many of its friends can do.

My enemy, who sees no good in me and is always denouncing me, cannot injure me, but my other enemy who is more shrewd and poses as my friend and says more than half the time that "I am a good fellow—but—" is the one of whom I am afraid.

The deacon called to see me the other evening, and this is what he told me as we sat in the twilight. I had greeted him cordially, saying I was glad to see him, and called him my friend. The term "friend" evidently gave him a theme—"Friendship." After he went away I jotted down the substance of what he had said; and I hope it will do you as much good as it did me.

"I am sixty-nine years of age," said the deacon, "and with the exception of my mother—my father died before my birth—I never had but one friend, and he has been dead for many a year."

Of course I dissented from what I then considered his cynical statement, that he had "never

had but one friend;" but since his explanation, and after I have given the subject some thought, I have had my doubts about the cynicism.

"No," he said, "to my knowledge I have never had but one friend, and I imagine I have been richer by that one than many a man who counts them by hundreds. Friendship is a delicate flower and blossoms only when the conditions are perfect. Few men and few women are capable of strong, true friendship. Egoism and friendship are incompatible, and excessive love of self is almost universal. We all have friends by the score, and many of them will follow us over rough fields, but how few of them will follow us to the last ditch! How many of us have friends who will not criticize us behind our backs, and say things about us they would not dream of saying to us."

"I know of nothing that equals the friendship that sometimes is found between two strong men. I knew one man who would turn his other cheek if you struck him, but who would knock you down if you said anything against his absent friend."

The deacon warmed up when he mentioned

the returning Canadian volunteers. "There are our boys," said he, "just getting home from the war; and they are meeting worse enemies than the Boers. I have known some of them that tried very hard to get home sober to their mothers and sisters, but they met their 'friend the enemy,' and they were brave indeed who escaped the foe that hid behind the bar—a worse enemy far than the Boer who hid behind the rock."

After a pause the deacon said, "Let me tell you of my one friend, and then you will know what I mean when I say that few are capable of enduring friendship." He was silent for a moment, and it seemed as if memory was bringing to him that which was unpleasant. Then, with a sigh, he told me of the faithfulness of his dead friend.

"Many years ago, when I was a young man, I was about to take a step that I know now would have wrecked my life if I had taken it. I had friends and relatives who knew of my intention, but none of them had the courage to come and tell me. They talked among themselves, saying how foolish I was and that I would

ruin myself, but not one word did they say to me. They were afraid that I would resent their interference and that they would lose my friendship. They loved themselves much more than they loved me. But my friend—my Jonathan,—came to me, making a long journey to do it, when he heard that I proposed to do what he knew would be a ruinous blunder. I can see his strong, true face now, as he stood before me, white to the lips, and pleaded with me not to do the thing I proposed, if I valued my future. I turned upon him with hot, angry words, and asked him by what right he presumed to interfere with my private business. 'By the sacred right of friendship,' he said, as he turned sorrowfully away. I thought he had gone, but looked up to see his grief-stricken face and wet eyes turned to me in mute farewell. And I never saw him again. I paced the floor until my anger burned out, and then my good Angel came to me, and I fought the battle of my life, and won my Waterloo. And now, when I am tempted to wrong-doing, that sad face rises before me, and again I hear the tremulous voice of my dead friend as he pleaded with me to be true though

the heavens should fall. I wrote him that night as penitently and humbly as I could, but he never read what I had written, for he was killed in the terrible accident on the———line that very night on his way home."

"I hope," he added, "sometimes I think, that he knows now."

And as the deacon went away I thought of what I had read at some time,

"Hast thou a friend, both true and tried?
Then bind him to thyself with bands of steel.
Poor thou canst never be, no matter what is lost,
If but one friend remains to thee.

A CHRISTMAS TRAGEDY.

HE HAD PROMISED his dying wife two things—to be kind to their little boy, and not to drink any more. Drink had kept them poor and often given his wife an aching heart.

The day before Christmas she died, and on Christmas day he and his boy, just two years old, were alone with their dead.

For a year he had kept his pledge. It was Christmas eve, the anniversary of his wife's

death, and the memory of her death was upon him. But though the memory of his loss was keen he had a glow of gladness in his heart, for he had kept the pledge made to his dying wife. No father in the city had been more kind than he, "and he had not drunk a drop," he said to himself.

The old lady who prepared their meals and cared for the boy when he was at his work, was to leave on the six o'clock train to go to her son's in the country to spend Christmas. She waited as long as she could, wondering why the father had not come home early, as he had said he would; but thinking he was detained by his Christmas shopping and would be home in a few minutes, and that the child would be safe, she gave the boy his supper, and telling him that his father and Santa Claus would soon be home, kissed him good-bye "for his mother," she said, and left him alone.

The man had finished his simple shopping—a few things for the home, a train of cars and a shaggy dog for the boy, and then he started home. It was striking five; the saloons were alight, and men were hurrying in out of the

cold for their Christmas eve drinks. The fumes of the liquor came strong and tempting to the man as he passed the opening doors, and the tiger, that was not dead but had only been sleeping, was aroused. An old chum, entering a saloon, saw him, and grasping him by the arm half forced him, saying: "My treat, old man, just one drink; Christmas comes but once a year." The man went in. Forgotten was his boy and his promise to his dead wife.

It was the old story. One drink led to many, and moneyless and drunk he was turned out.

It was nearly noon that Sunday Christmas when he woke from his drunken stupor in the police cell. Where was he? What had happened? When he realized where he was, and his broken pledge, and his little boy home (perhaps alone), and that it was Christmas day, the man was half crazed. He would have gone mad but for the hope that the old lady had not left the boy alone. "She has stayed, or got some one to stay with him. The boy will be all right," he tried to make himself believe. But what if she had gone, thinking that the boy's father would soon be home and that he would only be alone a few minutes?

When the policemen on guard heard the frantic shrieks of the "drunk" down stairs, he simply said "horrors," and went on with his work. But the shrieks were so persistent, and perhaps a humane (Christmas) impulse came to him, that he went grumblingly down to the cell.

I suppose the toys appealed to the policeman more than the man's frantic words, for he had a little boy at home, and yielding to the prisoner's entreaties he reluctantly 'phoned to his chief. The police magistrate had just finished his Christmas dinner when he was called to the 'phone. "There is a half crazed man in the police station who says that his little boy is home alone, freezing and starving, and he begs pitifully to be allowed to go home." "The same old story—with variations," said the magistrate. "Let him stay there until Monday morning."

"His story may be true," said the policeman, "for he has some toys, a train of cars and a little woolly dog. They look as though they may be for a little boy."

"They are for the naughty man's little boy; let him go home," said the magistrate's little

girl, who had followed her father to the 'phone and whose quick ears had heard all that had been said.

"Another Christmas present for you, dear," said the magistrate (for many of them have hearts). "The 'naughty man' will be the little boy's Christmas present from you."

The little boy contentedly played for a while, then tiring of play he went to the window to watch for his father. The sun went down, the early twilight came quickly that short winter's day, and still the boy watched for his father. Many times he thought he saw him and ran to the locked door to meet him.

The home was in an alley where the electric light could scarcely reach it. The street was dark and he could not see, nor scarcely hear the few who passed that way. Darkness filled the room and the baby boy began to be afraid. The mice in the old house nibbled at a crust and ran across the room. In an agony of fear he beat at the door until his little hands were numbed and bleeding. Of that night of agony only God can tell.

With the dawn came hunger and cold. He:

tried to build a fire, but he did not know how, and the last spark went out. He tried to reach a half-loaf of bread, but it was out of his reach. He stood upon a chair, but his baby fingers could only touch, not take it. But the boy hungered for his father more than for the bread.

A man going by late that night, or early Christmas morning, heard the screaming of a child, but as he was half drunk he gave it no thought. A woman in the next tenement thought she heard the moaning of a child, as if in pain, but as it might be the moaning of the wind she gave it no heed.

At three o'clock the father ran and stumbled up the stairs. His hand trembled so that at first he could not get the key into the lock. He listened, but there was no sound in the room. Had his boy been taken away? The locked door said no. Was he asleep or dead? He was not asleep—he was not dead, he was in a stupor, lying upon the floor, one hand beneath his head, the other clotted with blood, his cheeks were swollen with crying and covered with grimy tear stains. The boy was almost dead.

The father has long been dead. He died a

penitent man. His God and his boy forgave him, but he never forgot and never forgave himself.

The boy is a prosperous man. He has wealth and political power. His wife says there is one business he loathes and one class of men he hates, and one day in the year he dreads—Christmas Day.

WHAT UNCLE HIRAM SAID ABOUT ANGELS.

IN THE "old coaching days" Uncle Hiram had driven his four and six horses over the roughest roads in a rough country. And it was the ambition of every boy on his route, who was neither sickly nor silly, to be a stage driver and drive his horses as skilfully as Uncle Hiram.

In his old age, Uncle Hiram drove tourists over country roads and from boat and train to the big summer hotel. He could neither read nor write, but I doubt if anyone who came to know him for a week ever thought of him as an ignorant man.

He had driven the mail coach for more than thirty-five years, and as his passengers were from almost all climes and classes, he had picked up a large fund of information, and even knew enough of French, German and Spanish to talk fairly well with natives of those countries. But of churches he knew little, and of the manner of talking about sacred things less, and he never knew that some persons might think him irreverent. He talked about sacred things in the plain matter of fact way he talked about everything else. A silent man in the company of strangers, few of his passengers realized that the stage driver who handled the reins so deftly and knew his horses so well, knew anything else.

I had gained his confidence in some way, and it was like reading a book to listen to his quaint talk and shrewd remarks. We were driving alone one moonlight night, and I suppose some thought of the old hymn must have been in his mind, "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," for he began talking about angels.

"I drove a young preacher over the hills the

other day," he said, "and I asked him if the angels ever visited us and carried good news up to heaven, and helped poor folks when they could. And he said something about them not being 'cognersent of terrestil things,' and he guessed if they took news over the divide they would have so much bad news to take that they would not be allowed to take any. 'Perhaps they did, perhaps they didn't.' And I didn't know any more than I did at first," said Uncle Hiram. "But I hev been thinkin' it over and I've come to the conclusion that angels are real kind-hearted people, and if they told the shepherds about the baby and how to find Him, I am sure they'd tell all the good news they could to the people up in heaven. I don't believe they just loaf 'round here listening to a feller when he swears at his hosses, and peek round the door when he takes a drink for his rheumatiz, and then fly off and blat it all over heaven.

"I know a nice lot of good news that would make 'em mighty glad up thar," pointing with his whip to the blue sky above us. "Ole Deken Jackson's boy broke his father's heart drinkin',

cussin' an' doin' all sorts o' deviltry. Arter the funeral that boy just settled down stedly as a preacher, an' he's dekinin' in his old father's place today. Just took up his father's job, an' is workin' as stedly at it as the old dekin did. Don't you s'pose that the dekin would drop his harp and jest laff and shout an' cry to hear news like that?

"Ole Mrs. McEouon's girl went off to the city and just went to the bad. Her mother kept pinin' away and prayin' after she heard that; but when she was dying she said her girl would come back some day, and to be good to her an' tell her that her mother always loved her little girl. That girl nussed me in the hospital when I broke my head and ribs, an' is a sister of mercy, or something good.

"Don't you s'pose an angel would be pretty mean to keep that news from her mother, and do you s'pose they got anything in heaven would make her happier than that?"

Oh, why must some saints be so disagreeable, and some sinners so agreeable?

ABOUT PASTORAL VISITING.

"I SEE by the papers that your pastor has resigned," said the deacon, as he took off his overcoat.

"Yes," I replied,— "they—I mean a few of us — asked him — I mean suggested that we thought it was time we had a change. We thought a younger man would do us better, one who could do more visiting. Our late — I mean our ex-pastor, is nearly sixty."

"Our pastor has resigned too," said the deacon.

"The same old story, I suppose, he did not visit enough."

"No," said the deacon, with a sigh, "it was something worse than that."

I was beginning to enjoy the deacon — I smelled scandal, and the odor of violets was not more pleasant to me. Scandal to the average man, and the below and above average woman, is as grateful as the smell of venison to the hungry hunter.

"What is there worse than for a minister to neglect his visiting?" I eagerly asked.

"Visiting too much. Our ex-pastor visited too much."

I suppose I fainted then, for they were sprinkling me and fanning me when I regained consciousness and faintly gasped the deacon's last words, "visited too much;" that was the first time I ever heard a minister charged with that. "And yet," I said in a feeble voice, "about everything they get has to be charged."

As my strength came back I thought I had a position to defend, and I would defend it; so I told the deacon that I could not understand how a pastor could visit too much, unless his flock was very small, one of not more than two or three families, and he a very large, strong, energetic man with an abnormal appetite, who called before breakfast, and came back to dinner and then thought, as it was getting too late to make another call, he might as well stop to supper. Such a pastor, under such conditions, might visit his people to death. "But," I continued, "a pastor in these days has from fifteen to a hundred or more families under his

care, and how can he visit them too much? Why they are never satisfied. They are like Oliver Twist, always crying 'more, more;' so you see, deacon, that a pastor to satisfy the demands of his people must visit if he would retain his hold of them. And, then, the pastor has Apostolic precedent for unceasing visitations. Paul went from house to house, you know."

I think the deacon must have felt that I had the best of the argument, for instead of making any objection, he seemed to change the subject, and became reminiscent.

"When I was a boy," said he, "pastoral visiting was a good deal like house cleaning, but it has degenerated"—and he sighed. "We knew the minister was coming, for we could see his gig and the white-faced horse as he came over the hill a half mile away. There were calls to be made before he could get to our house. If we had by chance missed seeing him as he came down to our sheep-fold,—alas! I fear there were a few goats among the sheep—some Tom Sawyer would shout to some Huckleberry Finn, 'The minister is coming,' and then there was hurrying to and fro; faces were

scrubbed until they shone, tangled heads were combed, mother had counted us to see if any had escaped (there were large families in those days), and then were we marshalled into the best room and seated in a row, and by the time the minister knocked at the door the little platters were outwardly clean,— but inwardly? How fast the buttons on the little jackets rose and fell— over the hearts that even mother could not wash clean. How we wished that we had been better boys, for we were sure the keen eyes of the minister read our hearts and knew all about our misdeeds— that we had been disobedient and selfish, and that Tom and I had just been fighting. He shook hands with us all and asked our names, and 'Who made us,' and 'What was the chief end of man,' and did we know the Commandments and the Beatitudes? And then, how he talked to mother, as if he knew how we worried her, for he told her how much she needed divine wisdom to teach her children. And when he prayed he mentioned us all by name; and if the names were scriptural, as they mostly were, he prayed that Moses might be patient and lead other

boys right and not wrong; that Joseph might be kept pure and good even though he had to go to prison; that Caleb and Joshua (the twins) might get into the promised land; that Thomas might believe and not doubt, (I used to remind Tom of that prayer when he would say of something I told him, 'That's a whopper'); that Dorcas might help mother with her sewing; and that Martha and Mary (the other twins) might both 'choose the good part,' and so on for all the rest.

"And, when he bade us good bye he shook hands with us all again, and then laid his hand upon our heads and prayed, 'God bless the lads,' gave us his benediction, and was gone. But the gracious influence was left; it lingered for many a day. Mother went about her work with a lighter step, and a brighter smile upon her face; and as for us boys,—well, we were boys still and did wrong and got into mischief, but we were better boys for that pastoral visit. Although that old minister has been in heaven for many a year, there are times when I can feel his hand upon my head and hear again his tremulous voice as he prays, 'God bless the lads.'"

The deacon bowed his head upon his hands, and seemed far away, but when he looked up his eyes were wet.

"That was pastoral visiting," he quietly said, "and there can never be too much of it. But the modern, up-to-date minister has two sermons to prepare every week, in addition to his other work. He has to be teacher, and how can he be teacher from 'house to house' and in the pulpit if he does not study? With unexpected calls and callers to take the time; with many funerals, and a few — all too few — weddings, Saturday night often finds the weary pastor wading through his 'sixthly' and his 'sixteenthly,' and the 'lastly' and 'in conclusion' seem as far off as the payment of the debt on the church."

"Do not neglect the sick, the aged, the poor, and do not neglect your sermon; if there is any time left after that, give it to the others," was the advice given to a young minister by an aged one, of ripe and varied experience.

"Have a distinct object before you in your pastoral visitations," says another authority. "Go to help. If comfort and consolation they need, give it to them. If they have neglected

prayer meeting tell them of their neglect. If they are mean, tell them of their meanness; if unclean, of their uncleanness; if proud, tell them of their pride; if they are spoiling their children tell them that. Deal faithfully with your people in their homes, and they will not complain of your not visiting them enough. Once a year will satisfy the most of them, especially the mean man; one visit will cure him of fault-finding about visiting if it does not cure him of his meanness."

The deacon rose to put on his coat, and I thought it was time.

"I will tell you when a pastor visits too much," he said. "When he visits at the expense of his sermon — unless he visits the sick. 'Charity covers a multitude of sins,' and over-much visiting covers a multitude of poor sermons. When my pastor is ringing door bells all the week and I see the worn, hunted look on his face, I think of 'hash' for next Sunday."

"He visits too much, when he thinks more of holding his people by the flattery of his visit than of helping them. He visits too much when he sees that a member of another church

has a grievance against his pastor, and takes advantage of that grievance to win him to his own church by visiting him. And he visits too much when he visits families that do not rightfully belong to him."

WHEN SANTA CLAUS STRUCK.

I HAD HEARD that my old friend St. Nicholas was not feeling very well, and so I went down to see him and cheer him. As I neared "Santa Claus Town" in the early twilight I was surprised at the strange quietness of the usually bustling town. The streets were deserted and no cheery light shone out from factory and warehouse. Only one dim light could be seen shining from the unpretentious, old fashioned home of my old friend.

With nervous haste, fearing the worst, I beat a quick tattoo on the oaken door with the old brass knocker, and then waited with scant patience for its opening. After a long time I heard the shuffling, feeble steps of old age coming

down the creaking stairs and through the long dimly lighted hall, and then trembling hands shoved back the rusty bolts and undid the chain, and the door was opened at last and I went in.

At first I thought a stranger had opened the door, for in the dim light and with the changed appearance of Mrs. Santa Claus I had failed to recognize her. She looked haggard and care-worn, and when I asked for her husband and enquired about his health she dolefully shook her head and wiped her tear swollen eyes. "He's very poorly," she said, "and acts so strangely and seems so different that I sometimes fear he has softening of the brain, and that he will not live through another Christmas. But come and see him. I am glad you have come; I hope you will cheer him, for he is very despondent and talks about his 'work being done,' and says it is time for him to die."

I felt very badly to hear such sad news of my old friend, and asked how long he had been complaining. "Oh! a long time," she said. "I can see now that he has not been himself for years. It was a great shock to him when the old-fashioned fire places were

taken out, and it was a long time before he got used to the hot air and steam registers; but I think the telephones were the hardest on him. He always likes to get letters, but when they began telephoning him, 'Central' would get him all mixed up, for it was 'hello 'hello Santa!' from morning to the next morning, 'I want—I want,—' and Central would shut him off and the boy would finish what the girl was saying. Oh, it was awful! He was all broken up after last Christmas, for a girl—not very young—had telephoned for a husband, and a divorcee who had had three husbands got the man, and the old girl got a boy's rocking horse, and she has not spoken to Santa Claus since.

"Santa says the children of these days are not as nice and well behaved as the children were at one time. They know too much and see too much now. He caught a severe chill last Christmas waiting out in the cold until the children got to sleep, for they were bound to keep awake until Santa came.

"It is largely the fault of the 'grown-ups,'" continued the old lady, "for some of them

who have no more imagination than a wheelbarrow tell their children that there is no Santa Claus, and some children do not even hang up their stockings."

Just then I heard a quavering, complaining voice calling, so unlike the cheery voice of Santa Claus that I would never have known it. We hurried up the stairs and entered his room and found the old man propped up in bed and shivering as if with the ague. Not one of his friends would have recognized him. His eyes had lost their old-time sparkle and twinkle, his cheek had lost its ruddy bloom, the once rotund form was shrunken, and his long white hair and beard were unkempt.

"You have come to see the last of me," said Santa Claus, with a feeble, querulous voice.

"Oh, no," I said, "your work will never be finished as long as children are born into the world."

"The children," said he, with the first bit of cynicism I had ever heard from his lips—"the children are not born as they used to be. Once the old nurse and the doctor brought

them, but the children know too much now. Why, half of them don't believe there is any St. Nicholas. I passed a school the other day at recess and I heard the boys discussing me; they were teasing and ridiculing one little fellow who told them that I was going to bring him something. 'There's no Santa Claus, softy,' they shouted, 'father said so.'

"I have felt for a long time that I would have to go out of business," said Santa, "there is so much skepticism and materialism these days that people are getting to believe only in the 'golden calf' they worship. It has been all the fault of the Higher Criticism," added the old man, dolefully. "When they get to doubting and pruning and cutting up the Bible, and adding to the number of the prophets, and substracting some of them, I need not complain when they get to doubting me. If Moses can stand it I suppose I can. Some of the smart reporters started the report that I was dead. I quoted from our mutual friend Mark Twain, who told them when they reported that he was dead, 'that the report was greatly exaggerated.'

"And then the people are getting so extravagant and exacting that they have about ruined my business. It's diamonds and furs now, and furs are away up; the presents instead of being simple and expressive of good-will, and within the means of the givers, are simply questions of bargaining and bartering. When one gives furs, diamonds are expected in return.

"And the children are asking for more expensive presents every year. There was a time when an apple, a striped stick of candy and a cheap Noah's ark would keep a boy happy for a year, and a cheap doll would keep a little girl happy until she got married. Now the boy wants a live horse, and the girl wants a doll that can walk and talk and sing and has a Paris outfit.

"And there was a time when I could make peace and goodwill last all the year—and hatchets were buried so deep that they could not be found again. Now there are feuds all the year round and hatchets are buried in the snow with the handles up, and when the first thaw comes they are ready for angry hands again.

"Then wages got so high and raw material for

my goods went up so that I had to run my factories on half time. And when I found that many people were dreading my coming and that others did not believe in me, I closed the factories, and since they reported me dead I thought I would help that reporter out who was a little premature in his announcement of my death, and make his story true. And the 'new people' wanted me to get an automobile. I hate the pesky things. They said my deers were old and slow, and I was often late in getting around."

How we encouraged disheartened Santa Claus and got him on his feet again is "another story." But the year that Santa Claus "struck" will never be forgotten. Not a stocking was filled, not a present was given that year. The minister's family went without their Christmas dinner, no feuds were wiped out, no children went home to spend Christmas, and no gifts were sent to the old folks. The far away children sent curt, cold letters saying that "times were hard," they could not go home nor send presents. The poor sat and shivered over fireless grates. Prisoners were

sullen, and beggars were desperate, for no person tossed them a penny. Oh! there were hard times that year. The deluge had come; the world was dead; Santa Claus had struck.

How the world learned its lesson, how thankful children were for the most inexpensive toys, how gifts were given without expecting more expensive gifts in return—are these things not written in the Chronicles of Saint Nicholas?

ABOUT POLITICS.

“I am going into politics,” said the deacon, abruptly, as he came in the other night. “And I want your support,” he added.

As I thought the deacon was on the right side, I readily promised to do all I could for him. But when, a few minutes later, I found that he was not on “our side,” but on the corrupt side, *i. e.* the “other side,” it came to me like a flash of light that it was wrong, very wrong, for the deacon to go into politics.

“I don't think, deacon,” I said, “that it is right for a church member, especially a deacon, to have anything to do with politics. Politics

are corrupt and corrupting, especially your pol—, I mean, I—I mean your party. Besides, I understand that it takes a great deal of money to elect a man, more than you can afford, perhaps. For these reasons, and others that I need not mention, I think, as a friend, I ought to tell you that I cannot consistently support you; indeed, it will be my duty to oppose you and use my influence against you. Of course I do so on purely moral grounds. Personally, I would like to support you, but my conscience must be considered."

"That is a very elastic conscience you are carrying about with you," said the deacon. "You were ready to support me when you thought I supported your party. Then I was a true and brave man, doing my duty to my country. But when you find that I am not pledged to endorse what your party may do—good or bad, you think it wrong for me to have anything to do with politics."

There was fire in the deacon's eye, and fierceness in his tone, as he went on,—

"Such men as you should be ashamed of yourselves. What transparent self-deception you are guilty of. The trouble with you and

your kind is that you have no moral sense in your political thinking and acting. You seem to think you must endorse any corruption if it is done by your party; and, then, you are foolish enough to think that you can square the wrong-doing with the Lord by going to church Sunday and praying once-in-a-while. You may fool yourself, but you cannot fool the Lord. And you are not fooling the people around you, either. The rumsellers and the political tricksters and all the fellows who practise political corruption for their own profit, laugh in their sleeves at the ease with which they lead you to help them. And that isn't the worst of it: the young men are watching you, and are saying, 'If these men who call themselves Christians can be parties to such gross corruption, either it isn't very wrong, or they are not so good as they ought to be.' And the wicked are saying, 'Why they are just like us when it comes to an election.'"

The deacon stopped. He leaned his head on his hand a few moments — it seemed a long time though, and there was an uncomfortable stillness in the room. When he looked up

there was a softness in his look — his eyes were moist. He spoke quietly, and there was a sound of heart-ache in his tone, as he said,—

“I don't like to be severe. Forgive me if I have seemed harsh. I wouldn't hurt your feelings, or anybody's, unnecessarily. But the bondage of partyism is such that good-meaning men are allowing themselves to wink at and endorse the grossest wickedness, and think they must do it for the sake of party success. Because of this I am sometimes moved to great plainness of speech. Surely it is time that Christian men and all who love cleanness, no matter what their party preferences, should unite to cleanse the political pool. Surely they should believe and feel strongly that it is a sin against their country and against their God for men to buy or sell their franchise. And feeling this, it is clearly their duty not only to refrain from buying and selling, but to refuse to countenance those who rely, in any degree, upon such things for success.”

The deacon was silent again for two or three minutes. Then, rising to go, he said,—

“The good time is coming, brother — it's coming. Help it along. Good night!”

WHAT ABOUT JERRY?

HE WAS always called Jerry, but his name was something else. He was six feet three, so he was always called "shorty." He was thin and bony and looked very solemn, and strangers thought him a little stupid and slow.

It was a favorite pastime of the wags about town to intimate to some "chesty" commercial traveller, or visiting dude, that if they wanted to see "moving pictures" or a nickel's worth of "vaudeville" they could get their amusement out of Jerry. And then the wicked boys would chuckle and sit back for the performance to begin.

As not one of those boys dared to peep when Jerry was on the war path, you can imagine how they enjoyed seeing the stranger caricatured, ridiculed, laughed at until he wanted to break away and go home.

And when he did get away he wondered how Jerry came to know his weaknesses and his sins so well.

It was a wonder to many another what occult

power enabled him to find the weak points in our armor.

Jerry — like all great men — had his church, to which he was a strong adherent. His minister was a meek little soul who was made without "the savin' sense o' humor" and could not see a joke if it were illustrated, and thought that all that was not sighed and groaned over was sinful. He complained in a meek kind of way that the kindling wood Jerry had brought him "would not kindle, in fact was very wet and depressing."

"It will be dry enough, elder," said Jerry, "if you get your sermons up over it."

As the elder's sermons were supposed to be "kiln dried," it was the unkindest thing I ever knew Jerry to say, but fortunately the simple little preacher saw neither humor nor sarcasm, but simply remarked to his wife, "Bro. Jerry thinks the wood will dry as I get up my sermons."

The minister had officiated at Jerry's father's funeral, and Jerry handed him a two dollar bill as a slight remuneration for his service. "I could not take it for a slight service like that," said the minister. "I will see that the treasurer

credits you with the amount." "And take it in preaching?" said Jerry. "If I live as long as father did I may get my pay." As his father had lived past ninety, Jerry's estimate of the worth of the preaching was quite apparent.

Like that of some other church members, Jerry's religion was not always equal to a strenuous election campaign.

One year the election had been a very hot, close one; "the resources" were very much in evidence. Jerry had not been to prayer meeting, much to the grief of his pastor, for several months following the election. But one evening, to the joy of the pastor, Jerry came in. When the meeting was near its close Jerry rose. This in substance was what he said:

"I have been all wrong. I have been on the judgment seat. I have been finding fault with my brethren and everybody; but one day, alone, as I was saying to myself, 'this one is wrong and that one is wrong,' a voice seemed to say to me, 'What about Jerry?' Brethren, I don't know about other folks, but I know Jerry is wrong."

Now when I hear one man talking about another I query, "What about Jerry?"

When newspapers call each other names, I ask, "What about Jerry?"

When a woman talks about another I always think, "What about Mrs. Jerry?"

"JUST FOR FUN."

IT IS strange what things strike some people as amusing, and out of which they get, as they say, "lots of fun."

Eugene Sue tells that two old creatures, a man and his wife, would cut a foot off a miserable cat, and then laugh to see the poor creature try to get away from them. Later, when the sufferings of a cat failed to afford them amusement, they teased and whipped and tortured a little child, "just for fun."

When I see a poor dog with a tin can tied to his tail, or a poor forlorn kitten chased and stoned by thoughtless, cruel boys, I think of Sue's old man and woman.

There are men and women so queerly constructed that they get a lot of fun out of teasing

children. The new baby has "cut out" the other children, and they are going to "steal it," and so on until the teased child is in a panic of fear, and sometimes gets a dislike for the teaser that lasts a life time.

Others are constructed on such vulgar lines that they get a world of fun out of the bad grammar of uncultured people. When I hear them I always know that their grammar is as new as the fine clothes they are so conscious of.

"Just for fun." The coarse and vulgar caricature the oddities of old people, and laugh at deformity.

"Just for fun." A heartless young man "paid attention" to a young girl, who never dreamed he was only flirting, until he won her affections, and rode away leaving a heart that ached for many a day, and a pillow wet with tears for many a night.

"Just for fun." She flirted with a manly young boy until she had his heart in her keeping, and when he told her one moonlight night in June that she had changed the world for him and that he would try and make himself worthy of her, and asked would she wait for him?—"and so

on and on the foolish boy babbled." And she, just a little bit remorseful, laughed and told him she thought that all the walks and drives and lingering good nights were "only fun."

Well, the boy will get over it and will be glad in years to come that she was "only in fun," for he will marry a better girl. But he will never be quite the same; he will be a trifle cynical for a while, and when the right girl looks at him and faintly returns the pressure of his hand in just the same way as the wrong girl did, he will often feel skeptical, and wrong her by asking himself if she means it, or did she look that way "just for fun?"

When I see young people flirting, playing at love, if they are both of a kind it may not matter so much if they do get their wings singed—the silly moths who play with the flame of love. But if one knows nothing of such arts, and the other is a past master or mistress in fooling, then I think of the two old wretches torturing the kitten "just for fun."

The fool who "rocks the boat," and his twin fool who points the "I did-not-know-it-was-loaded" pistol at you, ought to be imprisoned for life, "just for fun."

NOSTALGIA.

I KNOW of no sickness to compare with it. Sea-sickness is bad, but it has its compensations; when you are sea-sick you are not afraid to die.

We have all been homesick — at least all of us who have had homes and been away from them. There may be another class, but they are scarcely worth counting — a small, insignificant class, who have shallow heads and shallower hearts. The biggest headed and biggest hearted have all known the pangs of home sickness. Moffat, Livingstone and Stanley suffered from it, and some of the most pathetic pages in their journals — written hundreds of miles in the interior of Africa — are those in which you read between the lines how homesick they were. Stanley was asked by an intimate friend, just a few weeks before he died, what he suffered from most in Africa, and he answered "homesickness," and changed the subject.

It is a disease not confined to any age or class. Little children have it badly. We can all remember — all of us at least who have had a

grandfather — how we were promised (if we were good) a visit to grandfather's. We wished afterwards that we had not been so good. At last the morning came when we were to go for our two week's visit. We slept little the night before and ate but little breakfast, and then we were ready and impatient for our plunge out into the world, ten or twenty miles away. Father and mother kissed us good-bye and told us to be good. Then the first pang came; but everything was new and strange, and grandfather and grandmother were so kind that we forgot the pang of parting. The next day the newness began to wear off, and that night we were a little lonely and missed mother's good night kiss. The second day we thought about home the most of the time, and the next we went away and cried; and when grandmother saw our swollen eyes and asked if we were sick, we told our first fib. How long the days were. We could not eat, and sobbed ourselves to sleep. We envied the sparrows as they flew over the hill, and wished we had wings so that we could fly home. And then grandmother became alarmed and took us home, and for a long time we did not want to leave its shelter.

Our soldiers fought the hunger and the thirst and the Boer bravely, but homesickness conquered them; the doctors said they were dying from nostalgia, and after a while we found out that nostalgia was just plain, old-fashioned homesickness.

Our immigrants suffer from it — the best of them -- and although they come from poor homes and many hardships, they have learned that,—

“ Be it ever so humble
There is no place like home.”

I knew an old Scotch lady who came from the Highlands when she was a young bride. Her children and children's children were born in Canada. The children never dreamed that their strong, self-possessed mother had been homesick all the years. When she came to very old age and mental weakness she babbled of the braes and heather of her Highland home, and just before she died, in the twilight of a summer night, she said, as if talking to her young love who had been dead for twenty years, “I hae kept my tryst, Robbie, I came tae ye in the gloamin’.”

I saw a fair young bride who loved her young husband well enough to go to the ends of the earth with him. Her beautiful home is in British Columbia, but there are many times, as she looks at the mountains through a mist of tears, that she would fly to home and mother and brother in this good New Brunswick, if she could, and leave for a little while the husband she loves with all her heart.

I know an old man, more than ninety years of age. He tells me he is homesick. All the people he knew and loved in his young manhood have gone "Home," and he thinks of home and dreams of home,— not the home of his boyhood, but the "Home of the Soul."

"MOTHER, SAVE ME, I AM DROWNING."

THAT WAS the strongest cry that was heard above the storm when the ship *Hestia* was wrecked. It was a cry that will never be forgotten by those who heard it.

Did the mother hear it? I think she did. Asleep, a thousand miles away—or dead—she heard, for what is distance, or life, or death, when soul speaks to soul?

The cry went up to God as a slight young girl going through a lonely wood was grasped by two men. "Mother, Mother!" The mother heard though far away, or dead, for one, less brutal than the other, said, "Let the girl go;" and though the other stormed and swore, he still persisted, "Let her go, I say; I, too, have a mother."

They had just pulled an engine driver out from the wreck of his engine. He was dying. "Can I do anything for you, my poor man?" said a motherly woman whose heart was full of sympathy, as she bent over him to hear his faintly spoken words. "Mother,—I want mother," he said,—and died.

His mother had been dead for many a year; he was in mid life; he had children of his own, and yet he wanted his mother when he came to die.

Why is it that, no matter how long we live, we think of mother when we come to die? "Mither, mither," cried Dr. McClure, "I have said my psalm, 'And in My Father's House,'" and the good doctor went to his "mither" and his mither's God!

THE TIN CUP MAN.

WHEN I was a boy a half demented man (as he was thought to be) used to travel through our section of country every summer. In November he disappeared, and we would not see him until near the end of the next May. Where he spent the late autumn, the winter and the early spring was a mystery.

We boys learned to expect his coming as regularly and surely as the coming of the birds, and he and the birds never disappointed us.

He was apparently on the shifting line of middle life. A common-place looking man, save for his eyes, which were large and very gentle and of uncertain color. His mouth was hidden by a beard, but I am sure that the lips must have been sensitive and kind. In spite of his work and his travelling in all kinds of weather, he was clean and neat. His clothes were old and patched (he did it himself), but never ragged.

That he was better bred than we boys dreamed I know now, as I remember his cleanly

habits and his invariable courtesy to women. No matter how poor and lowly she might be, when he met a woman off came his old hat and he stood holding it until she passed.

I have seen a squaw, to whom he had shown the courtesy of a gentleman, turn and look back to see the first man who had ever taken off his hat to her and waited for her to pass on.

He came to be known as the "Tin Cup Man," for he carried a number of half pint cups, which he hung near the road-side springs. His route was along the St. John River as far as Grand Falls, I think. He not only cleaned out springs and placed cups beside them, but he removed from the road the worst of the movable stones and sticks.

Fifty years ago robbing birds' nests, killing birds, and cruelty to animals generally, was not considered the sin it is today. Many a boy had his first lesson in kindness to animals from the "Tin Cup Man."

He was especially fond of horses and dogs. He would stroke them and pat them, and I do not think a horse ever leered, or a dog ever growled at him, for with unerring instinct they knew he was their friend.

Children trusted him. Little ones who were afraid of strangers went fearlessly to him, for their keen intuitions told them he loved them.

The last summer he went through the country some one asked him why he went about cleaning out springs and hanging up cups for strangers to use who would never know him or thank him. He reverently raised his hat, and, with a look and gesture the man never forgot, said: "A cup of cold water for Him."

Another asked him why he cleared the stones from the road, since it would not do him any good and he would not pass that way again. "But the other will," he answered.

The Tin Cup Man has long been dead, we say in our careless way, and yet he is living. He lives in the lives of the many boys who heard from his lips and saw in his life the Gospel of helping the other fellow.

When he died, where and how, and where he is buried none can tell. Creedless and churchless he may have lived and died, but whoever shall enter the land where the creed of helping another counts for more than the creeds of earth, will see the "Tin Cup Man."

SMALL PEOPLE.

THE DOCTOR who doesn't like you because you do not employ him.

The trader who is cool toward you because you do not buy from him.

The politician who won't speak to you because you did not vote for him.

The man who cuts you when he meets you in your working clothes, and does not notice you when he is with more influential friends.

The man who takes an unfair advantage of his foe.

The man who is not glad when his friend succeeds, even if he does not.

The men and women who depreciate and belittle your house, horse, hat, baby.

The man who insinuates that the reason you made a success of your business is that you were not as honest as he.

The men and women who never enjoy hearing another commended.

The man who takes advantage of your friend's estrangement to make a friend for himself.

The man who is silent when an absent friend is criticised unkindly.

The man who is not bigger than his church.

The man who steals from another church to enlarge his own.

The man who insists on doing your thinking for you, politically and theologically.

MANNERS COUNT.

"We often do right things in the wrong way."
—*Emerson.*

"Manners sometimes count for more than morals. Most of us would rather pass an evening with a well bred highwayman than an hour with a clownish saint."
—*Guesses at Truth.*

We may feed the hungry by throwing bread at them. The starving will not complain, if they can get bread in no other way. But the crust would be more palatable if given with a smile and a kind word, than the bountiful meal given with a scowl and harsh words.

We often give good advice, but with such a sense of superiority and patronage that we do no good, but much harm.

We may fight the devil in a wrong spirit. It doesn't hurt the devil, but it does hurt us.

I wonder if there are clownish saints? I have no doubt about the "clownishness," but I have doubt about the "saintship." Saints are gentlemen—when they are not ladies—men who are gentle. Imagine a male saint not a gentle-man!

"Manners count for more than morals." Is that not often the reason why sin seems so attractive? It is not the sin per se that is attractive, it is the sinner.

Why must so many men who are good look so bad, so gloomy, so unlovely? And when we do not love them they think—Oh! blind egoists—that it is the truth we do not love, and pharisaically quote that we "love darkness rather than light."

I am sure the most of us would rather spend an evening with a saint than an hour with a highwayman, if the saint did not eat with his knife and offend with his grammar and almost make homicides of us with his whine and his cant.

Oh, purblind saint—go, learn that "we only learn from those we love."

NOT THE FAULT OF THE HERO.

"No man is a hero to his valet."

If that musty proverb is true it is not the fault of the hero; it is the fault of the valet.

There are few valets who know heroes when they see them. It takes a hero to recognize a hero. It takes goodness to recognize goodness. Nazareth did not know the Christ. "A prophet has honor save in his own country."

It takes ability to recognize ability. Homer begged for bread in the city where he wrote his immortal epic. And since Homer's day poets, if they have not written "Iliads," have written songs that will live, and they died and did not know their songs were sung.

The New World waited long for Columbus. Inventors have not often been enriched by their inventions. Discoverers have received more odium than glory. Read the story of Galileo, of Jenner, of hundreds of others.

"No man a hero to his valet!" All the worse for the valet. The proverb tells the

truth; it meant a lie. It meant that the hero in his every day clothes, and under a servant's eye, reveals weaknesses. If the valet were something of a hero he would recognize the heroic in his master.

If you have the "Divine Fire," paint your picture, sing your song, tell your story, and it will not matter to you that you will never know from your "valet world" how well you painted, how sweet was your song, how helpful was your story.

HOW OLD?

I MUST have been a little off in my head the other day, for I asked a man no longer young how old he was. "Well," he said, "that depends; if it were not for mirrors and fool questioners I would think myself about thirty. When I look in a mirror I think I am fifty. When some idiot asks me my age I think I am ninety."

I think I have learned my lesson. And I do not ask men or women how old they are

unless I know them to be a hundred at least. When they reach the century mark, or near it, they are vain of their age and generally add to it just as they subtracted from it when the thought first came, "I am no longer young."

The man or woman who meets you, after months or years of separation, and greets you with, "Why! how old you are looking! Let me see, you are about fifty-five or sixty!" ought to be arrested and fined or imprisoned.

Such people are not only public nuisances, but they shorten lives, for it is like telling an invalid he is not looking well:—"Most gone! hardly get through the spring, will ye?"

A man who is reminded by mirrors and fools that he is not looking well and is getting old, ages rapidly thereafter.

Do not think of your age, my elderly friend, and you will do better work and live longer than if often saying to yourself, "I have had my day, I will have to give place to younger men."

You are just as old as you think you are, and just as young. It is not wholly a question of years. Some men are old and worn out at

thirty-five, and others are young at sixty, for they have not worried, nor drawn upon their capital.

The next bore who asks you how old you are, just tell him "fifteen years younger than you are."

Avoid mirrors and idiots, and stop saying to yourself, "I am getting old," and you will live long enough.

DEVIL'S MUSIC FOR CHURCHES.

"The devil has had these tunes long enough," said an old revivalist, in justification for welding dance-hall music to sacred songs.

Good as the evangelist might have been, he had evidently not read Tolstoi's "Kreutzer Sonata," and knew nothing of the philosophy of music.

That the devil's people can make better music than God's people for evangelistic purposes is an admission that few evangelists—when asked the question—would care to make; and yet they say it, and say it most emphatically,

when they do what they are commanded not to do, "Go down into Egypt for help."

Do they get help that really helps when other than the means God ordains is used? That men are moved by means of which God does not approve, and are moved to temporary reformation, is not questioned, but are men really made better by the means frequently resorted to by evangelists of the sensational type?

Hysterical men, women and children are swayed at the will of some man who, perhaps unconsciously, hypnotizes and magnetizes, with the aid of hypnotic music, and the operators and the subjects fancy they have been under the influence of power from above when it was power from beneath.

There are few people who cannot be moved by music—some animals are susceptible to it—and there is music that will touch every chord of the human heart.

Martial music will stir men to brave deeds, who were unconscious of any heroism. Thoreau says, "When I hear music, I fear no danger, I am invulnerable, I see no foe."

When Heaven speaks to the soul in music, then the best in man responds to it. When hell speaks to the soul in music, then the worst in man responds to it.

Music is the servant of the gambling hell and of the brothel. It can be sensuous and sensual. It can make the vilest suggestions. It can suggest seduction. It can prepare for seduction.

Leander says in "Pericles and Aspasia," "O music; how it grieves me that imprudence, intemperance, gluttony, should open their channels into thy sacred stream."

"Music," says Charles Kingsley, "is a sacred, a divine, a God-like thing, and was given to man by Christ to lift our hearts up to God, and make us feel something of the glory and beauty of God, and of all which God has made."

"See deep enough," says Carlyle, "and you see musically; the heart of nature being everywhere music, if you can only reach it."

"The best sort of music," says Coleridge, "is what it should be—sacred; the next best, the military, has fallen to the lot of the devil."

I passed by a church the other night. I know it was a church, for it had a steeple.

But I thought, until I saw the steeple, that it was a dance hall, for through the open door there came the lilt of a waltz that I had heard at Coney Island. I could not see the devout worshippers, but I saw again—though far away—the crowd of men and women on the dance floor that jutted out into the street. I saw the wine-flushed faces of the women and the sensual faces of the men. And I thought: Oh, the pity of it, that Coney Island and kindred places should, with their tunes and all their reeking associations, be helping or hindering these good but misguided men in their laudable work of making men better. And, oh the waste of it; that people who might have taste for good music cultivated so that they could enjoy the best, are having their musical taste perverted, and that by men whose motives are pure, but whose results are not.

Mixed races' marriages are bad; and we forbid the banns when tunes that reek of every bad association seek marriage with sacred words and the sacred name of the Crucified.

THE MAN AT THE GATE.

"Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's gate."

An old friend of Carlyle's was sitting with him at his fireside one evening at twilight. The lamps were not lighted. The old philosopher was in a reminiscient and communicative mood. "I can see him now as I close my eyes," said the friend who tells the story. "The flickering flames from the coals in the grate would light up for a moment the grand head with its shock of rough hair, and then it would be in shadow again "

"I have been thinking of Sandy McPherson to-night," said Carlyle; "you never knew him, but we were boys at school together, and Sandy was always beating me at my lessons, and in every way was showing his superiority. Sandy's copy book was always neat, mine was always untidy; Sandy's lessons were always well learned, mine were scarcely ever learned; Sandy was always alert and industrious,

I was absent-minded and in the clouds. The master was continually telling me to copy after Sandy McPherson, until I came to hate his name. We went to college together, and Sandy easily beat me there. After the second year his father died, and he went home to carry on his father's grocery business. The years went on. I graduated with but a scanty honor, and commenced my literary work. And you know the rest. I went up to London, and the great world was kind to me. Well, I never won a victory but I wondered what Sandy would think of it. After a while, when my name and work were getting well-known, I went to Glasgow; the city gave me a reception, and I made a speech. Just as I was closing my address I happened to see Sandy McPherson, who had entered the hall. I was wondering what Sandy thought of it all, when I caught his eye, and then I knew. He looked so cynical and contemptuous that he disconcerted me and I stammered out a few concluding sentences and sat down. The papers in their reports said that my peroration was very fine, and that the memories of my boy-

hood had so impressed me that I was overcome by my emotions. If they had only known, it was Sandy McPherson, the grocer, who had done it. The next morning, walking through the old familiar streets I saw the name, Sandy McPherson, over a grocery, and, acting on a sudden impulse, I went in. Sandy was weighing out sugar for a bare-footed lassie; he nodded and went on with his work. I waited until his customer went out, and then stepped up to my old school-mate expecting a warm greeting, but he looked at me as if he wondered what I wanted. Thinking that he might not have recognized me, I said: 'Mr. McPherson, I think we went to school together, my name is Thomas Carlyle.' 'I know ye well, Tommy, and what can I do for you this morn?' he answered in a crisp, business-like tone, as if he were ready to wait on me if I needed groceries. I don't know what I said, but I went out feeling and seeing his contemptuous look, with the back of my head. Well, I never did anything after that, that the world talked about, but I wondered what Sandy thought of it and if I had won him yet. Once a friend

of mine met him, and Sandy told him 'that London couldn't tell brains when they saw them. They were making a great fuss over Carlyle up there, (pointing towards London), but he was always a dunce. I was always at the head of the class, and he at the foot.' "

Sandy McPherson was the "man at the gate" of Carlyle. His opinion seems so insignificant—a man with only the imitative faculty, without originality, so destitute of intellectuality that he could not understand nor recognize the greatness of such a man as Carlyle—that we wonder how the grand old philosopher could, for a moment, be moved by the opinion of such an insignificant figure at his "gate." And the world is full of Sandy McPhersons, who let their Homers beg for bread because they recognize them not.

At every man's gate there is either a Mordecai or a Sandy McPherson. If Mordecai sits there and bares not his head and gives you no reverent greeting, then look to your ways and examine your heart and repent of your sins, for Mordecai has recognized the Haman within you. If you are living false, if you do not

ring true, dread a good man's eye, the "Spirit" within him can read you through and through.

Do not be afraid of the Sandy McPhersons. They cannot harm you; and you cannot get rid of them any more than you can of your shadow.

I have known ministers to change their churches every two years, to get away from Sandy McPherson, but as they drove up to the new parsonage gate, there sat Sandy to welcome them. Sandy is ubiquitous. There is not a gate at the entrance of any path you take but there is a seat, and on it sits Sandy McPherson

Do not think you are the only man or woman who is afflicted with Sandy. You are in a goodly company, for he says that Spurgeon cannot preach, that Patti cannot sing, that Litz is no pianist, that Wellington was no general, and that Gladstone was no statesman.

Sometimes the man at the gate is a woman (Sandy's wife, perhaps), and she can out-Sandy Sandy in little meannesses, in sneers, and in bitter sarcasms. She sneers at your new bonnet and dress, at your housekeeping, and at your management of the children.

When she sits at the gate of the church, she is continually underrating its work and workers. The pastor and deacons and Sunday School workers get self-conscious and are always wondering what Mrs. McPherson will say about them and their work.

Sandy knew you and your father, and your name is never mentioned in approval but he says, "I knew him well, and there is na gude in him, I easily beat him myself." Make up your mind that one of two men (sometimes both) will sit at your gate. Sandy will always be there, and he will never do you reverence. Preach your sermon, sing your song, paint your picture, and care only for the approval of Mordecai. If you are a philosopher, and not a Christian, you may comfort yourself with Tennyson's philosophy: "Scorned I to be scorned by one that I scorn. Is that a calamity hard to be borne, that a matter to make me fret?"

If you are a Christian you can comfort yourself as Paul did, "None of these things move me."

Kleptomania, like gout and appendicitis, is a disease that rarely attacks poor people.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS.

When I come to a new year I think of my first copy book. I had been promoted from slate and pencil, pot hooks and cranes, to pen and paper, and I felt as important as a newly appointed justice of the peace, or a girl with her first beau. I said that I would keep that copy-book clean and free from blots, but before the first line was written an unsightly blot had sullied its whiteness.

Now you see the parallel between a copy book—a boy's copy book—and a new year.

How that boy tried to keep his copy book clean, and failed, and how his crude writing was a caricature of the copy, is a story as old as the first boy.

I am glad even now — after I have spoiled more copy and more years than I will tell you — that with every clean white page before me and with every new copy book I tried to keep the pages clean. No matter how unsightly the other pages were, dog-eared and blotted, I said to myself: "I will keep this one clean."

I remember how far away the beautiful

"copy plate" seemed. Could I ever write like that? Would my strokes and curves be as bold and graceful? My attempts looked like the wanderings of a man drunk the night before. No, I could never write like that. The poor man who sets up this copy knows how true that is; but I believed I could write better, and I would not give up. After all the years I have a glow at my heart as I remember that I always tried, no matter how often I failed, to "make good copy."

There are two classes of people I am sure the devil loves. One class says, "My work is perfect, it cannot be made better."

The other class says, "What is the use, I never can do any better." "That's so," says the devil, "don't try again."

If you want to please the devil do not "resolve" any more; just commence the new year as you ended the old, swearing, drinking, loafing. Don't throw your pipes behind the woodshed, don't break your whiskey flasks, don't stop beating your wife, and you will soon go to the devil you serve.

Take my advice and swear off again. Even if you fall, do not stay down.

WRITE THAT LETTER TODAY.

SHE HAS been looking for it for two years, your poor old, white-haired, widowed mother. She told me about you when I first met her two weeks ago, and although I never saw you, and she has only a photo taken when you were a little boy, I know how you look, for your mother painted your picture for me that day. You are six feet by this time, for you were five feet eleven inches when you went away; you are straight and strong, your hair is dark and curly, and you have laughing hazel eyes and ruddy cheeks, and — and you are just such a hoy as any mother would idolize, and of whom she would be very proud.

I have made allowance for a mother's coloring, and I hope you are not the Apollo she painted. But though you are good enough looking, you are not a good boy, or you would not break her heart by your neglect.

I saw her today and her face was shining, for she had heard from you. I did not know until afterward that she had only indirectly

heard from you; you had not written, but she knew you were alive and talked of coming home. I was almost disappointed that you had not died, for death is the only excuse for a boy when he does not write to his mother when he has been a long time from home. If hearing about you made her glad, what would hearing from you do?

The old postmaster told me about your mother; he told me that when you went away her hair was black, with not a white thread in it. Now there is no black to mingle with the white. You whitened your mother's hair.

The postmaster told me, also, how often she came for the expected letter, and her fear that they might be overlooked or lost. It became hard for him to say, "nothing for you today," and see her turn and walk slowly, sadly away. In one year, he said, she aged ten. So you see you have been slowly, yet surely, killing your mother by your cruel neglect.

If you want to save your mother's life write her at once, and then come and see her. Although you cannot take the white out of her hair, nor straighten her bent form, you can

take the ache out of her heart and bring — if not the flush of youth to her cheek — the flush of joy to it.

And that is the story (with variations) of hundreds of boys and girls and their mothers. They are torturing by neglect. And yet they do not mean to be unkind; they are thoughtless and they forget. That neglected mother of whom I have been writing is not imaginary. I saw her yesterday, and her care-worn face haunts me and I am hoping that her boy in the Northwest may see this.

“Lest we forget,” write that letter today. If it is a business one, you will lose by your neglect if you fail to answer promptly. If it is a letter of condolence, your friend wants the sympathy today. If it is to an absent friend, neglect kills friendship more surely than quarrels do. Neglect can never be forgotten or condoned.

The man who says “charge it,” and the man’s wife, often get things they could do without and not suffer discomfort.