SUNDAY'S SERMON.

ONE OF REV. DR. TALMAGE'S STERLING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "The Battle of Creeds."

TEXT: *"He that passeth by and meddleth with strife belonging not to him is like one that taketh a dog by the ears."*—Proverbs xxvi., 17.

Solomon here deplores the habit of rushing in between contestants, of taking part in the antagonisms of others; of joining in fights which they ought to shun. They do no good to others and get damage for themselves. He compares it to the experiment of taking a dog by the ears. Nothing so irritates canines as to be clutched by the lugs. Take them by the back of the neck and lift them and it does not seem to hurt or offend; but you take the dog by the ear, and he will take you with his teeth. In all the history of kennels no intelligent or spirited dog will stand that. "Now," says Solomon, "you go into quarrels or controversies that are not yours and you will get lacerated and torn and bitten. 'He that passeth by and meddleth with strife belonging not to him is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.'"

This is the time of resounding ecclesiastical quarrels. Never within your memory or mine has the air been so full of missiles. The Presbyterian Church has on hand a controversy to great that it finds it prudent to postpone its settlement for at least one more year, hoping that something will turn up. Somebody might die or a new general assembly may have grace to handle the exciting questions. The Episcopal Church has cast out some recalcitrants, and its digestive organs are taxed to the utmost in trying to assimilate others. "Shall women preach?" "Or be sent as delegates to conferences?" are questions that have put many of our Methodist brethren on the "anxious seat." And the waters in some of the great baptisteries are troubled waters. Because of the controversies throughout Christendom the air is now like an August afternoon about five o'clock, when it has been steaming hot all day, and clouds are gathering, and there are lions of thunder with grumbling voices and flashing eyes coming forth from their cloudy lairs, and people are waiting for the full burst of the tempest. I am not much of a weather prophet, but the clouds look to me mostly like wind clouds. It may be a big blow, but I hope it will soon be over. In regard to the Battle of the Creeds, I am every day asked about it. I want to make it so plain this morning what I think that no one will ever ask again.

Let those who are jurymen in the case—I mean those who in the different ecclesiastical courts have the questions put directly before them—weigh and decide. Let the rest of us keep out. The most damaging thing on earth is religious controversy. No one ever comes out of it as good a man as he goes in. Some of the ministers in all denominations who before the present acerbity were good and kind and useful, now seem almost swearing mad. These brethren I notice always open their violent meetings with prayer before devouring each other, thus saying grace before meat. They have a moral hydrophobia that makes us believe they have taken a dog by the ears. They never read the imprecatory Psalms of David with such zest as since the Briggs and Newton and MacQueary and Bridgman and Brooks questions got into full swing. May the rams of the sheepfold soon have their horns sawed off! Before the controversies are settled a good many ministers will, through what they call liberalism, be landed into practical infidelity, and others through what they call conservatism will shrink up into bigots tight and hard as the mummies of Egypt which got through their controversies three thousand years ago.

This trouble throughout Christendom was directly inspired by Satan. He saw that too much good was being done. Recruits were being gathered by hundreds of thousands to the Gospel standard. The victories for God and the truth were too near together. Too many churches were being dedicated. Too many ministers were being ordained. Too many philanthropies were being fostered. Too many souls were being saved. It had been a quiet time in the nether world, and the arrivals were too few. So Satan one day rose upon his throne and said, "O powers of darkness, hear!" And all up and down the caverns they cry out, "Hear! Hear!" Satan said: "There is that American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. It must either be demolished or crippled, or the first thing you know they will have all nations brought to God. Apollyon the Younger! You go up to Andover and get the professors to discussing whether the heathen can be saved without the Gospel. Divert them from the work of missions and get them in angry convention in a room at Young's Hotel, Boston, and by the time they adjourn the cause of foreign missions will be gloriously and magnificently injured. Diabolus the Younger! You go up and get Union Theological Seminary of New York and the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church at Detroit at swords' points and diverted from the work of making earnest ministers of religion, and turn that old Presbyterian Church, which has been keeping us out of customers for hundreds of years, into a splendid pandemonium on a small scale. Abaddon the Third! You go up and assault that old Episcopal Church, which has been storming the heavens for centuries with the sublimest prayers that were ever uttered—church of Bishop Leighton, Bishop White and Bishop McIlvaine, and get that old denomination discussing men instead of discussing the eternities. Abaddon the Fourth! You go up to that old Methodist Church, which has through her revival, sent millions to heaven which we would otherwise have added to our population: the church of Wesley and Matthew Simpson, against which we have an especial grudge, and get them so absorbed in discussing whether women shall take part in her conference that they shall not have so much time to discuss how many sons and daughters she will take to glory."

What amazes me most is that all people do not see that the entire movement at this time all over Christendom is satanic. Many of the internal attacks are sly and hidden and strategic and so ingenious that they are not easily discovered. But here is a bold and uncovered attempt of the powers of darkness to split up the churches, to get ministers to take each other by the throat, to make religion a laughing stock of earth and hell, to leave the Bible with no more respect or authenticity than an old Almanac of 1823, which told what would be the change of weather six months ahead and in what quarter of the month it is best to plant turnips. In a word, the effort is to stop the evangelization of the world. It seems to me very much like this: There has been a railroad accident and many are wounded and dying. There are several drug stores near the scene of casualty. All the doctors and druggists are needed and needed right away. Bandages, stimulants, anæsthetics, medicines of all sorts. What are the doctors and druggists doing? Discussing the contents of some old bottles on the top shelf—bottles of very uncertain which some doctors and druggists mixed two or three hundred years ago. "Come doctors" "Come druggists!" cry the people, "and help these wounded and dying!" Not a bit of it. They are too busy with the contents of those old bottles. Some say that these bottles were brought from the timbers of the crushed rail train. In a little while it will be too late. Come for God's sake! Come right away!" "No," says the doctor, "not until we have settled whether the medicine on that top shelf was rightly mixed." Others say there were too many drops of laudanum in it, and this other man says there were too many drops of camphire, we must get this question settled before we can attend to the railroad accident."

And one doctor takes another doctor by the collar and pushes him back against the counter, and one of the druggists says, "If you will not admit that I am right about that one bottle I will smash every bottle in your apothecary store," and he proceeds to smash. Meanwhile, on the lower shelf, plainly marked and within easy reach are all the medicines needed for the helping of the sufferers by the accident, and in that drawer, easily opened, are bandages and splints for the lack of which fifty people are dying outside the drug store. Before I apply this thought every one sees its application. Here is this old world, and it is off track. Sin and sorrow have collided with it. The groan of agony is fourteen hundred million voiced. God has opened for relief and cure a great sanitarium, a great house of mercy, and all its shelves are filled with balsams, with catholicons, with help—glorious help, tremendous help, help so easily administered that you need not get upon any step ladder to reach it. You can reach it on your knees and then hand it to all the suffering, and the sinning, and the dying. Comfort for all the troubled! Pardon for all the guilty! Place for all the dying! But while the world is needing the relief and perishing for lack of it, what of the church? Why, it is full of fighting doctors. On the top shelf are some old bottles, which several hundred years ago Calvin or Arminius, or the members of the synod of Dort, or the formers of the Nicene creed filled with holy mixtures, and until we get a revision of these old bottles and find out whether we must take a teaspoonful or tablespoonful, and whether before or after meals, let the nations suffer and groan and die. Save the higher shelves for others to fight about, and take the two bottles on the shelf within easy reach, the two bottles which are all this dying world needs; the one filled with a potion which is for the cleansing of all sin, the other filled with a potion which is for the soothing of all suffering. Two Gospel bottles! Christ mixed them out of His own tears and blood. In them is no human admixture. Spend no time on the mysteries! You, a man only five or six feet high, ought not to try to wade an ocean a thousand feet deep. My own experience has been vivid. I devoted the most of my time for years in trying to understand God's eternal decrees, and I was determined to find out why the Lord let sin come into the world, and I set out to explore the doctrine of the Trinity, and with a yardstick to measure the throne of the Infinite. Bottles by all means, if you cannot save anything else.

Now, what part shall you and I take in this controversy which fills all Christendom with clamor? My advice is, take no part. In time of riot all mayors of cities advise good citizens to stay at home or in their places of business, and in this time of religious riot I advise you to go about your regular work for God. Leave the bottles on the shelf. As with all my professors, the attempt was a dead failure. For the last thirty years I have not spent two minutes in studying the controverted points of theology, and if I live thirty years longer I will not spend the thousandth part of a second in such exploration. I know two things, and these I will devote all the rest of my life to proclaiming—God will through Jesus Christ pardon sin, and He will comfort trouble.

Creeds have their uses, but just now the church is crowded to death. The young man entering the ministry are going to be launched in the thickest fog that ever settled on the coasts. As I am told that in all our services students of Princeton and Union and Drew and other theological seminaries are present, and as these words will come to thousands of young men who are soon to enter the ministry, let me say to such and through them to their associates, keep out of the bewildering, belittling, destroying and nauseating controversies abroad. The questions our doctors of divinity are trying to settle will not be settled until the day after the day of judgment. It is such a poor economy of time to spend years and years in trying to fathom the unfathomable, when in five minutes in heaven we will know all we want to know. Wait till we get our throne. Wait till the light of eternity flashes upon our newly exonerated spirits. It is useless for ants on different sides of a molehill to try to discuss the comparative heights of Mount Blanc and Mount Washington. Let me say to all young men about to enter the ministry that soon the greatest novelty in the world will be the unadulterated religion of Jesus Christ. Preach that and you will have a crowd. The world is sick to regurgitation with the modern quacks in religion: The world has been swinging off from the old Gospel, but it will swing back, and by the time you young men go into the pulpits the cry will be coming up from all the millions of mankind, "Give us the bread of life; no sweetened bread, no bread with sickly raisins stuck here and there in it, but old-fashioned bread as God our mother mixed and baked it!"

Now, what is the simple fact that you in the pew and Sabbath-school class and reformatory association and you in the pulpits have to deal with? Is is this: That God has somewhere, and it matters not where, but somewhere, provided a great heaven, great for quietness for those who want quiet; great for vast assemblage for those who like multitudes; great for architecture for those who like architecture; great for beautiful landscape for those who like beautiful landscape; great for music for those who like music; great for processions for those who like armies on white horses, and great for anything that one especially desires in such a rapturous dominion; and through the doings of one who was born about five miles south of Jerusalem and died about ten minutes' walk from its eastern gate all may enter that great heaven for the asking and heartfelt asking. Is that all? That is all. What, then, is your work and mine? Our work is to persuade people to face that way and start thitherward and finally go in. But has not religion something to do with this world as well as the next? Oh, yes; but do you not see that if the people start for heaven on their way there they will do all the good they can? They will at the very start of the journey get so much of the spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of kindness and self sacrifice and generosity and burden bearing and helpfulness, that every step they take will resound with good deeds. Oh, get your religion off of stilts! Get it down out of the high towers! Get it on a level with the wants and woes of our poor human race! Get it out of the dusty theological books that few people read, and put it in their hearts and lives. Good thing is it to profess religion when you join the church, but every day, somehow, we ought to profess religion.

A peculiar patchwork quilt was, during the Civil War, made by a lady and sent to the hospitals at the front. She had a boy in the army, and was naturally interested in the welfare of soldiers. But what a patchwork quilt she sent! On every land of the quilt was a message of Scripture or hymn or a verse of poetry. The quilt was a wonder. The soldiers were delighted. The hospitals were crowded with the patients who had been wounded and were convalescent. One soldier had lain and suffered and died. But one morning the hospital nurse saw a patient under the blanket kissing the figure of a leaf in the quilt, and the nurse supposed that he was only wandering in his mind. But no; he was the son of the mother who had made the quilt and he recognized that figure of a leaf as part of a gown his mother used to wear, and it reminded him of home. "Do you know where this quilt came from?" he asked. The nurse answered, "I can't tell you for sure, but it was a card planed fast to it, and I will find that." Sure enough, it confirmed what he thought. Then the nurse pointed to a passage of scripture on the block of the quilt, the passage which says, "When he was yet a great ways off his father saw him and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." "Yes," said the dying soldier, "I was a great way off, but God has met me and had compassion on me." "Shall I write to your mother and tell her that the lost one is found and the dead is alive again?" He answered, "I wish you would, if it would not be too much trouble." Do you suppose that woman who made that quilt and filled it with scripture passages had any trouble about which Melchisedek was, or how the doctrine of God's sovereignty can be harmonized with man's free agency, or who wrote the Pentateuch or the inconsistencies of the Nicene creed? No, no; go to work for God and suffering humanity and all your doubts and fears and mysteries and unbeliefs put together will not be heavy enough to stir the chemist's scales, which is accustomed to weighing one-fiftieth part of a grain of chamomile flowers. Why stop a moment to understand the mystery of God, there are so many certitudes? Why spend our time exploring the dark garrets and cellars of a great palace which has above ground one hundred rooms flooded with sunshine? It takes all my time to absorb what has been revealed, so that I have no time to upturn and root out and drag forth what has not been revealed. The most of the effort to solve mysteries and explore the inexplicable and harmonize things is an attempt to help the Lord out of theological difficulties. Good enough intention, my brother, no doubt, but the Lord is not anxious to have you help Him. He will keep His throne without your assistance. Don't be afraid that the Bible will fall apart from inconsistencies. It hung together many centuries before you were born, and your funeral sermon will be preached from a text taken from its undisturbed authenticity.

Do you know that I think that if all ministers in all denominations would stop this nonsense of ecclesiastical strife and take hold the word of God, the only question with each of us being how many souls we can bring to Christ and in how short a time, the Lord would soon appear for the salvation of all nations? Why not all at once light all the torches of Gospel invitation? Why not ring all the bills of welcome? Why not light up the long night of the world's sin and suffering with bonfires of victory? Why not unlimber all the Gospel batteries and let them boom across the earth, and boom into the parting heavens. The King is ready to land if we are ready to receive Him. Why cannot we who are now living see His descent? Must it all be postponed to later ages? Has not our poor world groaned long enough in moral agonies? Have there not been martyrs enough, and have not the lakes of tears and the rivers of blood been deep enough? Why cannot the final glories roll in now? Why cannot this dying century feed the incoming tides of the oceans of heavenly mercy? Must our eyes close in death and our ears take on the deafness of the tomb, and these hearts beat their last throb before the day comes in? O Christ? Why tarriest Thou? Will Thou not, before we go the way of all the earth, let us see Thy scarred feet under some noonday cloud coming this way? Before we die let us behold Thy hands that were spiked, spread out in benediction for a lost race. And why not let us, with our mortal ears, hear that voice which spoke as never man spoke? Let it come up, speak pardon and emancipation and love and holiness and joy to all nations as Thou comest down?

But the skies do not part. I hear no rumbling of chariot wheels coming down over the sapphire. There is no swoop of wings. I see no flash of angelic appearances. All is still. I hear nothing but the tramp of my own heart as I pause between these utterances. The King does not land because the world is not ready and the church is not ready. To bear the way for the Lord's coming let us devote all our energies of body, mind and soul. A Russian general riding over the battlefield, his horse treading amid the dying and dead, a wounded soldier asked him for water, but the officer did not understand his language and knew not what the poor fellow wanted. Then the soldier cried out "Christ!" and that word meant sympathy and help, and the Russian officer dismounted and put to the lips of the sufferer a cooling draught. Be that the charmed word with which we go forth to do our whole duty. In many languages it has only a little difference of termination. Christ! It stands for sympathy. It stands for help. It stands for pardon. It stands for hope. It stands for heaven. Christ! In that name we were baptised. In that name we took our first sacrament. That will be the battle shout that will win the whole world for God. Christ! Put it on our banners when we march! Put it on our lips when we die! Put in the funeral psalm at our obsequies! Put it on the plain slab over our graves! Christ! Blessed be His glorious name forever! Amen!

Concluded Not to Die.

A few days ago the friends of a prominent society woman were startled by a report that she was dangerously ill, says the Louisville *Commercial*. The "Town Talker," in speaking of her to a particular friend of the lady, brought out the cause of her illness. She is allowed by her husband so much a month for dresses. During the last social season she bought so many handsome ball costumes that her allowance only seemed a drop in the bucket toward paying for them. Her costumes attracted so much attention that her vanity was excited and she endeavored with each succeeding dress to surpass the last. This she succeeded in doing. Every action must have a corresponding reaction. Her pleasure, caused by being the best-dressed woman in Louisville, has given place to her sorrow, caused by her having the largest millinery bills of any woman in Louisville. The bills were sent to her amounting to $2,200. She immediately retired to her bed. Doctors were sent for, but for a week she continued to grow worse. Her husband became alarmed and told her if she would just get well he would do anything for her. She said she could not. At last in despair she told him if he would just pay her bill and forgive her she would try and get well. He promised. He paid the bill. From that moment she began to recuperate, and in a few days was almost entirely well. She then confessed to her husband, who forgave her. She has promised to live within her allowance, which he has sanctioned. So they are happy birds.

THE HUMMING-BIRD.

How It Feeds and Trains Its Young for Flight.

In a study of a humming-bird, in the Atlantic, Bradford Torrey describes the humming-bird's feeding and training of its young for a first flight. He says:—

At seven o'clock when I made my second visit the mother was in the midst of another day's hard work. Twice within five minutes she brought food to the nestling. Once the little fellow—not so very little now—happened to be facing east, while the old bird alighted, as she had invariably done, on the western side. The youngster, instead of facing about, threw back his head and opened his beak. "Look out, there!" exclaimed my fellow-observer, "you'll break his neck if you feed him in that way." But she did not mind. Young birds' necks are not so easily broken. Within ten minutes of this time she fed Number One, giving him three doses. They were probably small, however (and small wonder), for he begged hard for more, opening his bill with an appealing air. The action in this case was particularly well seen, and the vehement jerking, while the beaks were glued together, seemed almost enough to pull the young fellow's head off. Within another ten minutes the mother was again ministering to Number Two. Poor little widow! Between her incessant labors of this kind and her overwhelming anxiety whenever any strange birds came near, I began to be seriously alarmed for her. As a member of a strictly American family, she was in a fair way, I thought, to be overtaken by the "most American of diseases," nervous prostration. It tired me to watch her.

With us, and perhaps with her likewise, it was a question whether Number Two would remain in the nest for the day. He grew more and more restless; as my companion—a learned man—expressed it, he began to "ramp round." Once he actually mounted the rim of the nest, a thing which his more precocious brother had never been seen to do, and stretched forward to pick at a neighboring stem. Late that afternoon the mother fed him three times within an hour, instead of once an hour, or thereabouts, as had been her habit three weeks before. She meant to have him in good condition for the coming event; and he, on his part, was active to the same end—standing upon the wall of the nest again and again, and exercising his wings till they made a cloud about him. A dread of launching away still kept him back, however, and shortly after seven o'clock I found him comfortably disposed for the night. "He is now on his twenty-first day (at least) in the nest. To-morrow will see him go." So end my day's notes.

Twenty-four hours later, as I stood in the orchard, I heard a hum of wings, and found the mother over my head. Presently she flew into the top of the tree, and the next instant was sitting beside one of the young ones. His hungry mouth was already wide open, but before feeding him she started up from the twig and circled about him so closely as almost or quite to touch him with her wings. On completing the circle she dropped upon the twig at his side, but immediately rose again, and again flew round him. It was a beautiful and beautiful beyond the power of any words of mine to set forth; an expression of maternal ecstasy, I could not doubt, answering to the rapturous caresses and endearments in which mothers of human infants are so frequently seen indulging. Three days afterwards, to my delight, I saw it repeated in every particular, as if to confirm my opinion of its significance. The sight repaid all my watchings thrice over, and even now I feel my heart growing warm at the recollection of it. Strange thoughtlessness, is it not, which allows mothers capable of such passionate devotion, tiny, defenseless things, to be slaughtered by the million for the enhancement of woman's charms!

Never Speaks to His Wife.

In the northwestern part of the city live a couple who for twenty-two years never addressed a word to each other. In 1869 the husband was a man of means, owning considerable property, but through peculiarities more than generosity he became a sort of "Coal Oil Johnny." Houses and ground were given away without an instant's consideration. The wife expostulated, but in vain. Finally nothing was left except the little cottage which was then and is now their place of abode. Fortunately this stood in his wife's name, and though he used every effort to secure possession of it, pleading with her and using violence and tenderness by turns, she remained firm and would not let him have it. As a consequence he swore a tremendous oath that he would never speak to her as long as he lived, and up to the present time he has kept his word. From prosperity they have sunk to abject poverty. He makes what he can out of a news-stand which he keeps. The old couple have two children, both daughters. One has been married for some years to a man of wealth, while the other lives at home with her parents, and seems to take the responsibility of both on herself. It is a painful sight to see the old man every evening at six o'clock distributing his papers to the very houses which twenty-two years ago were his own, and by the gift of which he has made neat little fortunes for many whose heirs are in total ignorance of his existence. Year after year he toils on, daily becoming feebler, "forgetting the world and by the world forgot."—[Philadelphia Record.

A Prehistoric Vault.

Some rude masonry was disclosed to view while cutting the lot of D. A. Purviance, on North Jefferson street, Huntington, Ind., to a proper level the other day. About six feet below the natural surface of the earth a pile of stones was encountered which seemed to have been laid with a purpose. They formed an irregular hemispherical mass about six feet in diameter and three feet high, beneath which were formed layers of flagging, each layer formed by a dozen stone six inches thick, six feet wide and eight feet long. Below the mass of masonry and the flagstones was an empty vault. The stones were of the limestone variety, and were a kind that is never found in this vicinity unless they have been brought here. What the structure had been intended for is a mystery, but it is thought to have been the work of the mound builders.—[Cincinnati Commercial-Gazette.

IN A MINER'S CAMP.

Reminiscences of Pioneer Life in California.

In The Century are reminiscences of the pioneer life by old miners from which we take this incident:

In 1851 Mokelumne Hill was one of the worst camps in California. "Who was shot last week?" was the first question asked by the miners when they came in from the river or surrounding diggings on Saturday nights or Sundays to gamble or get supplies. It was very seldom that the answer was, "No one."

Men made desperate by drink or losses at the gambling table would race up and down the thoroughfares, in single file, as boys play the game of "follow my leader," each imitating the actions of the foremost. Selecting some particular letter in a sign they would fire in turn, regardless of everything but the accuracy of the aim. Then they would quarrel over it as though they were boys playing a game of marbles, while every shot was likely to kill or wound some unfortunate person.

The gambling tents were large and contained not only gaming tables but billiard tables. At one of these I was once playing billiards with a man named H——. A few feet from us, raised upon a platform made for the purpose, were seated three Mexican musicians, playing guitars; for these places were always well supplied with instrumental music. The evening wore on, passed without disputes, and pistols were quickly drawn to settle quarrels. Upon any outbreak men would rush from all parts of the room, struggling to get as near as possible to the scene of action, and often they paid the penalty for their curiosity by being accidentally shot. While Mr. H—— and I were engaged in our game, we could hear the monotonous appeal of the dealers, "Make your game, gentlemen, make your game. Red wins and black loses." Suddenly bang, bang, bang went the pistols in a distant part of the tent. The usual rush followed. Bang, bang, again, and this time the guitar dropped from the hands of one of the unoffending musicians, who fell forward to the ground with a bullet through his neck. His friends promptly undertook to carry him past us to the open air. Our table was so near the side of the tent that only one person at a time could go between it and the canvas. H—— was standing in the way, just in the act of striking the ball with his cue, when one of the persons carrying the wounded man touched him with the request that he move to one side. He turned and saw the Mexican being supported by the legs and arms, the blood flowing from his neck; then with the coolest indifference he said, "Hold on, hold on, boys, till I make this shot," then, resuming his former position, he deliberately finished his shot.

Nature Versus Art.

"I'm planning a little fishing excursion again this year," said a Board of Trade man, "but I propose to take a little different tack than usual. I'm going to place more dependence in nature and less in art. In short, I shall try to learn something of woodcraft and let science go to blazes. Last year I spent a short vacation among the trout streams of Michigan. A friend who went with me and who claimed to know everything about the art of angling posted me about the best sort of fishing tackle to buy, and I invested $100 in rods and reels and flies.

"When we arrived at the trout grounds we prepared to wage deadly warfare, but the battle was entirely one-sided—no trout were hurt. In vain we whipped the streams and made herculean efforts to demonstrate the worth of our patent apparatus. At sunset we had no positive evidence that there was a trout in the State of Michigan.

"But just as we were about to leave the field in unspeakable disgust, two little Indian urchins came along, and after watching our efforts with ill-concealed contempt for a few minutes, one of them pulled out a piece of white twine, tied a bent pin to it and baited it with a live cricket. We staid there about ten minutes, but it was long enough to see the little fellow haul out a half dozen fine trout. I'm going fishing again this year, but my sixty-dollar outfit is for sale."—[Chicago Mail.

Damming the Nile.

The Egyptian Department of Public Works, at Cairo, is actually engaged on the question of storage reservoirs. Since the completion of the barrage the Nile has ceased to flow into the Mediterranean for three months in the year. Mr. Willcocks has examined the whole valley of the Nile, from Cairo to Assouan, and reports that no water can be stored north of the First Cataract. He has designed a dam, which might be built at Philo, but, unfortunately, this would only give one-third of the quantity of water required and, besides costing $3,750,000, involves the destruction of the well-known ruins at Philo, which would be wholly submerged.—[American Agriculturist.

To Contributors.

Taverner, of the Boston *Post*, makes a suggestion which may be commended, with some reserve of allowance, to all contributors to *The Companion*. "I doubt," he says, "if Shakespeare himself would have furnished good copy if he had attempted to put down his plays with a pencil and a pad," and he continues:

The late Phillip Welch, who flooded all the comic papers and some of the serious ones, with the most original, the most concise and pointed paragraphs, wrote each one—they were always short—in the middle of a sheet of good, thick note paper.

Thus he secured two advantages. Having a sheet of paper for each joke, he was under no temptation to lengthen his witticism to suit the page; and the nature of his material, such as one would use for an invitation to an evening party, naturally led him to be concise and finished—to have a beautiful *ton mot* in the middle of a beautiful expanse of white.

I will only add that I make these observations chiefly for the benefit of my friend Penloper, whose comparative failure as a humorist I attribute to his use of cheap yellow paper, and an ill-sharpened pencil.

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HOLY WELLS.

What a Traveler Saw in Benares India's Sacred City.

One of the most interesting sights for foreigners in Benares is an observatory erected about 170 years ago, and still in a good state of preservation. It was built by the order of Jaya Singh a Rajputana chief, and rises high above one of the ghats or flights of stone steps from the river to the top of the cliff. The instruments were also constructed under the immediate guidance of Jaya Singh. They are of vast size, built of solid masonry, and covered with a fine and durable plaster, which gave to the surface of the instruments when new the appearance of enamel. One of the instruments is called "Yantra Samrat," or "prince of instruments." It consists of a wall 36 feet long, 4½ feet broad, exactly in the plane of the meridian. The wall stones from the southern end, where it is 6 feet 4½ inches high, up to the northern end, where it is 22 feet 3½ inches high, and points directly to the north pole. In the centre of the wall are stone steps to ascend to the top of it. On the eastern and western sides of this wall there is a mural quadrant 5 feet 11 inches broad and 7½ feet thick. Both sides of each of the arcs are marked with divisions of six degrees each, each of which is subdivided into six equal parts, and each 2 inches in breadth. The radius of the lower edge of each of the arcs is 9 feet 8½ inches. By means of this instrument the distance from the meridian and the declination of any planet or star and the sun and also the right ascension of a star may be known.

Benares contains several wells and tanks, square or oblong in shape. Each of the four sides is bounded by flights of stone steps along the whole length. All these wells are regarded as sacred. There are several, such as the Well of Fate, the Well of Virtue, and the Well of Serpents, etc. The Manikarnika Well, or Well of the Ear Jewel, is the most wonderful. It consists of a large oblong excavation, the four sides of which are flights of stone steps leading down twenty-five or thirty feet to the water of the well. On the north side of the steps is an image of the god Vishnu, and close to the water on the west side are sixteen small altars, all in a row, on which pilgrims and others place offerings to their ancestors. The well contains only a few feet of water, except in the rainy season; on account of the important use of it by thousands it is exceedingly foul. All pilgrims on their annual visit to Benares inquire anxiously for this well. They believe that by plunging beneath its filthy waters all their sins, however heinous, will undoubtedly be washed away.

There is no place in Benares or in India, I suppose, held in such superstitious reverence as this well. The legend regarding its origin is so silly that it is hard to believe how it could have been written in earnest. It is known from the legend given in the Kashi Khanda, a Sanscrit book, that the god Vishnu dug the well with his discus, and instead of water filled it with the perspiration from his own body. He then went to the north side and began to practice austerities. In the meantime the god Mahades arrived, and looking into the well saw in it the beauty of a hundred millions of suns, and was so enraptured that he at once broke out into loud praises of Vishnu. In his joy Mahades declared that whatever gift he might ask of him he would grant. Pleased at the offer, Vishnu replied that his request was that Mahades should always reside with him. Mahades hearing this was greatly flattered, and his body shook with delight. From the violence of the motion an earring fell from his ear into the well. From this circumstance Mahades gave it the name of Manikarnika Keep—Weil of the Ear Jewel.—[New York Times.

Wild Riders.

From "A Miner's Sunday in Coloma," in the Century, we quote as follows: Suddenly there was a great noise of shouting and hurrahing away up the street, and the crowd heaving and separating upon either side, on came a dozen half-wild, bearded miners, fine, wiry, strapping fellows on foaming horses, lashing them to the utmost and giving the piercing scalp-halloo of the Cosumnes chief. They suddenly halted in front of Winter's hotel, and while the greater number dismounted and tumultuously entered the bar-room for refreshment a few of the remainder made themselves conspicuous by acts of daring horsemanship—picking up knives from the ground while at full gallop, Indian-like whirling on the sides of their steeds, then up and off like the wind and, while apparently dashing into the surrounding crowd, suddenly reining in the horses upon their haunches, and whirling them upon their hind legs, then without a stop dashing off as furiously in the opposite direction. These few proved to be Doniphan's wild riders, who even excelled the Mexican caballeros in their feats of horsemanship. At last, all together once more they came sweeping down the street, apparently reckless of life and limb. As they passed, the scurrying footmen cheered them on with great good nature. The crowd closed again and in a brief time everything was as restless as ever.

Primitive Farming in Chili.

The Chilean farmer, as a rule, still ploughs with a sharp-pointed piece of wood, sometimes shod with iron, sometimes not, and has never known any better harrow than a bundle of brush, while all the threshing of his enormous crop is done by the primitive method of driving horses to and fro over the grain.—[New York Post.

Such a crop outlook as that now presented has not been known in the West for ten years.

THE JINRIKISHA.

Japan's Favorite Mode of Transportation Quite a Recent Invention.

A two-wheeled vehicle called the jinrikisha, now seen on every road and in every village of Japan, says a writer in *Scribner's Magazine*, is a new invention, not yet quite a quarter of a century old. No one positively knows who introduced it, but it struck great root that in Tokio alone there are at present between 30,000 and 40,000 of these two-wheeled chairs, and they have spread to China and Malay, employing numbers of the working population, and adding an immense convenience to public life. Jinrikisha signifies "man-power vehicle," and if you have two men to pull you the phrase for that is "ni-rin riki," the letters being a little altered by what Japanese grammar calls "Nigori." The Tokio citizens call their little cab "kuruma," which means "a wheel," and the cooly who pulls it is termed a kurumaya. He must bring to his business lungs of leather and sinews of steel; nor does one cease to wonder at the daily endurance of these men. In hot and cold weather alike, streaming perspiration or pelted with snow and sleet, they trundle you along, apparently incapable of fatigue; always cheerful, always, in my experience, honest and easily satisfied; sufficiently rewarded for running a league with a sum equivalent to three of your dimes. The natives, who make bargains with them before starting, go immense distances for incredibly small fares, and constantly ride two together in the same conveyance. I have seen a kurumaya cheerfully wheeling along a father and mother with three children, to say nothing of the flower-pots, bird-cages, and bunches of daikon—the great and dreadful radish of the country—carried in the family laps.

At the end of a long run a cup of pale tea, a whiff at the little brass pipe, and, perhaps, a slice of bread dipped in treacle, start them off again, fresh and ready, for another stiff stretch. The men who took me to Nikko from Utsunomiya ran the entire twenty-five miles in four hours with ease, though much of it was up-hill, and would have returned, had we desired it, the same day. A jinrikisha man in good case and fairly paid is not at all afraid of forty or fifty miles day after day; nor is it the work their work makes them specially short-lived, so far as my inquiries have gone. I am persuaded that very advantageous use could be made of this kind of transport in a campaign. A kuruma can go wherever there is a path, and to draw munitions, provisions, stores, or to convey the sick and wounded, a corpse of jinrikisha men would be invaluable to an army.

There is more catarrh in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years doctors pronounced it a local disease, and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment, pronounced it incurable. Science has proven catarrh to be a constitutional disease, and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer $100 for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials. Address F. J. CHENEY & Co., Toledo, O.

Sold by Druggists, 75c.

The Indians do not show any great anxiety to enlist in the army.

It is estimated that 10,000 settlers now occupy land in the Cherokee strip.

In the "Guide to Health and Etiquette" will be found much useful advice on both subjects; this book is sent free for two 2c. stamps, by the Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass.

Missouri has 826,000 men available for military duty, according to recent figures.

FITS stopped free by Dr. Kline's Great Nerve Restorer. No fits after first day's use. Marvelous cures. Treatise and $2 trial bottle free. Dr. Kline, 931 Arch St., Phila., Pa.

A Portland (Oregon) Chinaman left property worth $200,000.

A leading actress remarked to a reporter, "The last time I played here I was worn out, but Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has since made a new woman of me."

The timber on our railroads amounts to 516,000,000 ties.

How to Make Money.

Dear Sir—Having read Mr. Sargent's experience in plating with gold, silver and nickel, I am tempted to write of