

The Fireside.

A GOOD STORY.

REV. G. CAMPBELL MORGAN.

I remember some years ago conducting a mission, and one of the office-bearers of the church where I was, said to me:

"Mr. Morgan, I want you to come and see some people. A girl was married out of our Sunday-school three years ago, to a man who is a slave to drink and impurity and gambling. I would like you to come along and see her."

I went—it was in '85—on a cold February day, to see that girl. Oh, I cannot picture the home to you! It was one of those awful houses in the midlands of England, reached by passing through an entry between other houses, into a back court. When I got to the entry with my friend, some children who were hovering and shivering there, hearing our steps approaching, rushed away. We followed them and went into the house. I see that room now. There was a broken table standing there, a chair with the back broken off standing by it, no fire in the grate; upon the mantel-shelf a cup and saucer, broken; and not another article of furniture that my eye rested on in that room. And there stood a woman in unwomanly rags with a mark of a brutal fist upon her face, and three ill-clad bairns clinging to her gown. She said:

"Excuse the children running from you, but they thought it was father."

Oh, the tragedy of it!

When I got onto the rostrum that night to preach, my friend came to me and said:

"He is here."

I said: "Who is here?"

"That woman's husband; he is sitting right down in front of you."

Now, I don't often preach at one man, but I did that night. I put aside what I was going to talk about, and read the story of the prodigal, and I asked God to help me talk about it, and for about a solid hour I preached at that man. Do you think I hammered at him and scolded him? Not I. I told him God loved him, there and then; and when we got to our after-meeting, I asked, "What man is coming home to-night?" And he was the very first to rise. He came forward, and as I went down from the rostrum and gave that meeting into some one else's hands, and got my arm around him and prayed and wept with him, he entered into the kingdom of God.

My friend said to me one day about twelve months later, "I want you to go and see some people."

I said, "Who?"

He said, "Do you remember going to see a woman last year whose husband was converted? I want you to come and see those people."

I went. We hadn't gone far—it was February of the next year—before I said to him, "Friend, where are you taking me?"

"Oh, we are going to see those people."

"But," I said, "we are not going the same way."

"No," he said, "they have moved." Moved! Why did they move? Why, the man was converted, and he soon changed his dwelling place. The man was re-made, and he re-made his en-

vironment; and he had gone, not into a palace, but into a cottage in the main street.

If I could paint pictures, I would paint those two. I can see that home now. It was on Sunday, after the afternoon service, and he sat by the fire with his three bairns, who had run away from him a year ago. One was on his knee, another on his shoulder, and another stood by him; I had never heard a sweeter solo in my life than the solo the kettle sang on the hod that day. The woman that last year was dressed in unwomanly rags was clothed, and the sunlight of love was on her face.

This is how you must deal with the problem of environment. Begin at its middle. Touch the man who makes the beastly environment, and re-make him, and he will soon move out of the tenement house and out of the slum; he will soon find his way on to brighter levels. That is the way to gather men and women. Unless you are with Jesus Christ, you can try education and culture, but it all comes short of life, and without life there is no re-making of men.—*The True Estimate of Life.*

SUNDAY SICKNESS.

Doctor —, among other valuable papers, a few years ago published one describing this remarkable disease, which has not yet been treated in books of pathology:

1. This disease is of the intermitting kind; attacking the patient by violent paroxysms, which return every seventh day, "Lord's Day," and hence it is called Sunday sickness—but by the faculty it is known by no other name than *Die Domini Morbus*.

2. It partakes somewhat of the nature of ague, especially as it is attended with a degree of coldness. This coldness is at first apparent early in the morning of the Lord's day; in many cases seizing the patient before he has left his bed; but it begins in the region of the heart, and is attended with dullness of the head, followed by yawning.

3. The patient is sometimes deprived of the use of his limbs, especially the legs and feet, so that he is indisposed to walk to the house of God.

4. In some cases, this attack has come upon them after they have gone to the house of God, and has been attended with yawning and slumber.

5. In other cases, there has been great uneasiness in the house of God, and a disposition to complain of the length of the sermon, though they have been known to sit very contentedly in a play-house several hours at a time.

6. Persons affected with this disease never mourn on account of their confinement from public worship, as many afflicted with other diseases often do.

7. These persons often surprise neighbors with their great activity and health on Monday, however unfavorable the weather may be.

8. Most of the faculty agree that there is a low feverish heat, technically *febris mundi*, or fever of the world, which may be detected in these patients during the intervening days of the week.

9. There also seems to be a loss of appetite for savory food, and a want of relish for pain vitae, bread of life, which, in this case, is the indispensable remedy for the disease.

10. Persons afflicted with this disease generally have a disrelish for private religious exercises of the closet, and the reading of the scriptures.

11. This disease is also contagious; neighbors receive it from neighbors, and children from parents.—*The Chimes.*

AN OLD SKIPPER'S STORY.

A skipper who had lost his position on a fishing boat because he would not fish on Sunday, was placed in charge of a small smack hired by a few benevolent men in London, who charged him to catch more fish in six days than other men in seven, and to preach the gospel as he went. Dr. Grenfell, the missionary to the Labrador fishermen, told the story of his recent visit to Boston.

When he arrived at the fishing grounds he was boarded by the skippers of four other vessels, one of them being the "admiral" of the fishing fleet, who knew the character of his new enterprise and came prepared to despise it.

"Not this 'ere cant, but more whiskey is what we wants," they said.

The skipper of the mission ship had been sent on a hard enterprise. He believed himself able to catch more fish in six days than other skippers in seven, but the matter of preaching was what appalled him. However, he prepared to carry out the agreement and to lose no time, but to preach to these, his first visitors.

There was no grog on board, but the best pot of tea the old man could brew was hot in the cozy cabin, and four warm mufflers were laid out. These the skipper handed to his visitors, "Look yere," he said, and this was the introduction to his sermon, "do y' see them mufflers?"

They saw them, felt them, and knew they were warm and good.

"What do they cost, Bill?" asked the admiral.

"I'll give 'em to ye on one condition," said the preacher, progressing with his sermon.

"What's that?" asked the admiral, cautiously.

"That you'll admit there's love in 'em; for the ladies as knit 'em must 'ave loved ye, though ye never seed 'em."

"That's right," assented the audience.

"Well, then, take 'em. There they are." And so the sermon concluded. The four men wrapped themselves in the mufflers and spoke their thanks. But as they were leaving, Bill added this benediction: "'Ow much more Jesus must 'ave loved yer when 'e have himself for yer!"

Dr. Grenfell adds that his proved a most effective sermon, for three men out of the four resolved to return that love. The "admiral" became an effective missionary among his followers, and the skipper more than made his seven days' work in six, and preached his sermon many times.—*Youth's Companion.*

A CHESS TOWN.

The village of Stroebeck in Prussian Saxony is unique in its devotion to the game of chess. According to tradition, a Wendish prince, imprisoned by the local prince-bishop in 1011, whiled away the hours of his captivity with the aid of a set of chessmen carved by himself, and taught the game to the numerous peasants who served as his successive jailers, and who in turn imparted their knowledge to the other villagers. The

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tower in which the prince was confined is still standing and is called the Schachturm or chesstower.

However this may be, it is certain that the Stroebeckers, men, women and children, have for ages been renowned for chess-playing. Instead of dying out, the craze has become intensified in modern times, and instruction in chess now forms a part of the regular education of children. At the close of each school year, a chess examination, or tourney, is held under the supervision of the school and town authorities, and six prizes are awarded to the best players—three to boys and three to girls. The prizes are all alike, each consisting of a chess-board, inscribed "reward of diligence," which is forthwith installed in the place of honor in the "best room" at home, to inspire younger brothers and sisters with pride, envy and emulation.—*Die Woche.*

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