

# Sunday Reading.

IT IS NOW USED AS A BETHEL.

The Good Work Now Carried on in a Once Infamous Chicago Resort.

It is probable that no place in or about Chicago was devoted to so deep a sink of iniquity as was the bumboat of Black Jack Yattaw in the palmy days of that remarkable man. Yattaw himself was naturally an outlaw. He could not bind himself within the restraints of the rules by which other men's conduct were guided. He must do as he pleased. He found a delight in a species of vice that few other men would dare attempt. In other days and other localities he would have made the typical pirate of the rankest story books. With a strength of character, however depraved that character might be; with a shrewdness in the management of men; with a courage and a physical equipment known to a few of his kind, he was a veritable terror where he chose to range.

He was a sailor trained and as rough as the roughest of that hard employment. Naturally turned away from the virtues to vice, naturally thrown in with the vice, he came to be known as one who could excel. Naturally a hater of hypocrites, naturally scornful of those who wanted a thing but had not the courage or the strength to get it, he came to be known in the wilder days of Chicago as one who could be relied on to achieve ends wherein the lower and rougher classes were concerned that could be achieved by few if any others. By a strange choice he was made a deputy United States marshal when militarism was stronger in America than it is now. And, when he met a man that could not do as he wished at the polls one day, he shot him. That was the only way to execute the plan he had in mind. And if it were the only way, that fact was reason and defence enough for him. So he became an outlaw.

Later he became proprietor of the bumboat, a low, clumsy craft with a keel below and a roof overhead, which he tied up at the government pier and filled with all the attractions of the vicious. It was an eyesore to all that was respectable in the city. It was a place where the toughest men and the most abandoned women could go daily and nightly for orgies that could not be tolerated on shore. The place was filled often every hour of the twenty-four with a gang of rioters that would have been dispersed or arrested had their place of meeting been anywhere within the city. Local authorities tried to dislodge him, but he defied them. He resisted arrest. He would not go away. He laughed at every attempt on the part of the city to punish or stop him. Then the government was appealed to, and time and again the whole force of the naval vessels anchored here was ready to descend upon him. But with the luck of a daring man and the shrewdness of a clever man, he escaped a collision every time.

For years the bumboat laid out there at the pier, in plain sight from the shore, and received and entertained the lawless who cared to go there. In a certain way the place was always orderly, that is to say, if there was a fight Jack must be in it. No brawler from ashore would be allowed to abuse the visitors or those whose temporary homes were in the boat. No man could be robbed there. No murders were done—so far as is known. But the great room in the middle of the boat was filled with a constant succession of crowds of mingled men and women who could play cards, and drink all sorts of liquors.

But Black Jack died. No one of his associates could take his place. Surrender to the law was inevitable. The bumboat business was doomed. Black Jack had invested some of his winnings from the out-law business in a handsome yacht, and had become involved. Had he lived a few years he would have paid out. But his death and the settlement of the estate threw his belongings on the market. One of his creditors was a ship chandler, who had a tender heart for the needs of the sailors. He took the old bumboat on account and turned it over to the local managers of the Western Seamen's Friend Society and the place became a Bethel.

There was a transformation not often seen in these prosaic days. The place which had resounded to the songs of bacchanals now echoed to the hymns of religion. The windows which had looked on orgies where dissolute women and desperate men mingled in shameless confusion now stared in wonderment at trim-clad figures kneeling in prayer. The tables where cards were played are now loaded with good books, and men sit about and read them. In place of the fiery liquors served by the waiters in Black Jack's time pure water and cheering coffee are tendered to the thirsty. And the sacred names of Deity, which once were used in anathema, now rise to the ceiling of Jack's great drinking room from the fervent lips of those whose souls have been redeemed.

Rev. E. R. Pierce, chaplain of the society, is in charge of the work, and is devoting his days and his nights to building up here a place which shall be to the seamen of this city what similar institutions are to the sailors in other ports. Old John Hamilton, who was a shipmate of Yattaw on the Seneca Chief many years ago, is now shipkeeper on the Bethel, and, with his good wife, makes the place comfortable for all those who care to share its blessings. E. J. Franklin, son of the general manager of the society in the west, is Chaplain Pierce's assistant, and all hands are busy ministering to the wants of those for whom they labour and in the manual work of still further preparing the place for the service that is to come.

Shortly after the fire the New York branch of the work sent some \$17,000 to the society at Chicago, which sum provided a place for the sailors in the building at the corner of Lake and Desplaines streets. It will be well remembered by those familiar with that corner in all the years that followed the great fire. But a few years ago the lease of the place expired. There was no management that could take the initiative, and the headquarters of the Star brewery are now located where the refuge used to be. The loan of the New York brethren was to be paid in meals and lodgings to the needy sailors who should come with cards from the secretary of the Relief and Aid Society, so that long before the expiration of the lease the sum advanced had been liquidated. But there

was no foundation for work. The Bethel had to be begun at the beginning. Sailors are of a peculiar class. They do not "mix" well with men whose avocations are upon the land, excepting in those cases where the latter have associated interests—like lumber shovers and those of that kind. They are not overwell paid. In winter, when they are idle, there is no place where they can gather to spend an hour or an evening unless it be in a saloon. There is no place where they can be found if an employer should want to hire them unless it be in the employment offices, which are in some respects unfitted for a waiting place. There is no place where they can be paid so convenient as the saloons, in which each one is expected to spend a portion of his pay as a recompense for the privilege of being paid there. And in all these lines the Bethel will be of service to the men.

But there are other things. If there is anything in religion, the sailor is entitled to some of its beneficial influences. Yet they are quite beyond the reach of the influences now at work in that field. They do not go to the churches. They do not feel at home in the missions provided for landsmen. They need the services of those familiar with their craft and in sympathy with their experiences. They are naturally exposed to a good many temptations even in the busy season. In the winter they are absolutely defenseless. Yet all that is human within them is capable of help from Christian precept, sacred counsel and the songs that touch the heart of man.

Many of the sailors are married. There are many children in their families. Their wives are of the humblest in the whole laboring class of Chicago. They are the "sicks" for whom the good physician declared his services and the services of those who should follow him were divinely intended. These women need teaching, many of them in the commonest lines of needlework. In other cities they are gathered in weekly classes by good women, many of these latter wives of rich and influential men, and taught the simpler tasks of needlework.

And once a week men, women and children are gathered in the great room of the Bethels and they are entertained with religious talk, quite informal, by the chaplain, by music from singers whose voices at other times have cheered and elevated many who need their labors less, by quiet talks from women whose hearts are big enough to receive these humbler toilers in the grand sisterhood of the race.

Picture if you can one evening in the cabin of that old bumboat, turned Bethel. We will say there are a hundred of them men women and children. There are half a dozen men and women from the churches. The chaplain opens the meeting with a prayer. One of the ladies plays on the organ and the rest lead in singing a hymn that some of the sailors know and can join in singing.

But aside from the good that might be done for the men and those who are dear to them by the establishment of a Bethel, there are so many of them who in midwinter need a place where a cup of coffee in His name is as blessed as that cup of cold water which "one of the least of these" was by his necessities entitled to. There are so many to whom a bit of breakfast, a comfortable place of refuge during enforced idleness, a bed when no other resting place offered, who could be helped in a material way.

And in the accomplishment of these good things the perfection of that transformation from a bumboat to a Bethel will stand confessed.

## Messages of Help for the Week.

"I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day."—Psalm 42: 4.

"The Lord is on my side: I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"—Psalm 118: 6.

"Turn ye \* \* \* turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness."—Joel 2: 12, 18.

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision."—Joel, 3, 14.

"Seek ye the Lord and ye shall live: lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it."—Amos 5: 6.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."—Amos 8: 11.

"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."—Rev. 22: 17.

## Beginnings of Backsliding.

It can hardly be said too often or in too many ways that the beginnings of backsliding are in remissness about little things, and especially in unfaithfulness as to what are called closet duties. He who steadily reads the bible and bows quietly before God for self-examination and earnest supplication twice or thrice a day is not likely to go astray. He cannot keep up that custom without being brought back. He cannot omit that duty without great loss. May we not ask that they whose eyes fall on this brief reminder question themselves for a moment seriously as to whether they personally are getting out of the "still hour" what it holds for them, whether they ought not to institute an immediate reform at this point?

## A Wonderful Octogenarian.

Dr. James Martineau, the English Unitarian divine, is perhaps the most wonderful of the eminent octogenarians living. He is four years the senior of Gladstone and ten years of Bismarck. Yet, although he has not withdrawn from ministerial and professional life, not long back he delivered a long, closely-reasoned speech without the aid of a note, and he is still writing in the reviews on such abstruse questions as the origin of the newly discovered gospel of St. Peter.

## WAS THERE A FLOOD.

Discussion of the Subject from a Purely Scientific Standpoint.

One of the largest meetings ever held by the Victoria Institute of London, England, took place in the third week of March, to hear that well-known "Nestor among Geologists," Prof. Prestwich, F. R. S., read a paper on "A Possible Cause for the Origin of the Tradition of the Flood," in which he proposed to treat the subject "from a purely scientific standpoint." The chair was taken by the ex-president of the Royal Society, Sir George Stokes, Bart., F. R. S., the present occupant of that professional chair at Cambridge University once occupied by Sir Isaac Newton, and also the President of the Victoria Institute, whose aim is to investigate all scientific questions bearing on the truth of the Bible, and to associate all scientific men, and people generally, in the colonies and America, in aid of this work. The great hall was packed in every part, as those who arrived late found. The business was commenced by Captain F. Petrie, the Honorary Secretary, reading a letter from the Duke of Argyll, who was unable to be present; after which Prof. T. Rupert Jones, F. R. S., read the paper prepared by Prof. Prestwich, he not being sufficiently recovered from a severe cold to do so himself. In it the author described at considerable length the various phenomena which had come under his observation during long years of geological research in Europe and the coasts of the Mediterranean. Among these he specially referred to having found the flints of the drift to be of two classes, one with bones of animals, carved, and interspersed with the remains of man, and the other, which he termed the Rubble-drift, containing bones of animals of all ages and kinds in vast heaps. He cited the confirmatory opinions on this point of Prof. Geikie, F. R. S., a member of the Institute, and drew special attention to the geological surroundings of these strange deposits, and the manner in which the bones were found. He then referred to phenomena in regard to Raised Sea Beaches, and the constant occurrence of "Head," the large masses of transported rock, loam and Loess, covering the high plains in Hungary and Southern Russia, and the Ossiiferous Breccias in various localities. From the circumstances attending these and their surroundings he said he had been forced to the conclusion that all their phenomena were "only explicable upon the hypothesis of a widespread and short submergence followed by early re-elevation and this hypothesis satisfied all the important conditions of the problem," which forced on him the recognition that there had been a submergence of continental dimensions. The age of a Man was held to be divided into Palaeolithic and Neolithic and he considered rightly so. He concluded by suggesting that thus there seemed cause for the origin of a tradition of a flood.

The paper was followed by reference to a communication from Sir W. Dawson, F. R. S., who welcomed the paper as confirming his conclusion come to on geological and palaeontological grounds of a physical break in the anthropic age. The evidence for this was afforded by the cave remains and from a vast quantity of other sources. The discussion which ensued was commenced by Sir George Stokes, Bart., F. R. S., referring to the great value of the author's contribution to our knowledge and right understanding of the phenomena he had so long studied. Among those present were Mr. Huddleston, F. R. S., the present President. The latter proposed a cordial vote of thanks to his friend and teacher Dr. Prestwich, "the Nestor among Geologists," whose contributions to our knowledge of that science were recognized by all as greater, more far-reaching, and more valuable than those of any other in the present century. After sundry other remarks Sir Henry Howorth, Bart., F. R. S., spoke, urging the great importance of recognizing the value of the arguments in the paper and many others which had come under his own observation in Asia. Prof. McK. Hughes, F. R. S., of Cambridge University, followed with some criticisms, and bore warm testimony to the value of the paper, after which Professor Hull, F. R. S., late director of the Geological survey of Ireland, spoke strongly in favour of the scientific nature of the author's arguments. Professor Rupert Jones, F. R. S., in a few sentences replied to the speakers, and the brilliant gathering dispersed.

## THE HANGING OF HAMAN.

Commemoration by New York Hebrews of the Triumph of Esther and Mordecai.

A good many thousand executions occurred on the east side last week, and more gallows were erected in a single day than would suffice for several reigns of terror says the N. York, Sunday Sun.

The fact is that the trial occurred many, many centuries ago. It was the trial of Haman, the wicked councillor of Ahasuerus, the great king, which has been responsible for the executions. Ever since the lovely Esther and the wise Mordecai prevailed against Haman, and had him hanged on the 50-cubit gallows he had erected for Mordecai, the Jews all over the world have celebrated the anniversary of Haman's execution by feasting and merrymaking. On that anniversary the Jewish housewives give their children cakes representing Haman swinging from a gallows. Usually Haman has eyes and nose and mouth made of raisins or a piece of sweetened citron, and as the children pick these tidbits out of the figure they hear the story of how Esther and Mordecai averted the destruction of all the Jews living within the domains of Ahasuerus.

In this city the children of the reformed Jews, who are supposed to be more enlightened than the orthodox, do not get any Hamans swinging from a gallows. Their parents think it indecicate and unwise, probably, to foster any revengeful emotions. Instead they turn their thoughts to the great Purim ball, the proceeds of which are devoted to charity, and endeavor to make their offspring understand that gratitude is holier and better than vengeance.

But the children of the orthodox have a great deal of pleasure out of their Hamans, and watch their mothers eagerly as they mould them out of the dough, and beg them to make the features large, so that they may have plenty of raisins and citron. And as a matter of fact, very few of them think of revenge, although their pride is flattered by hearing the story of the wisdom

of their ancestor. A good many legends which do not appear in the biblical story of Esther appear in the writings of the rabbis and learned men, and every well-trained orthodox Jew knows most of these. They are usually told to the children on the evening preceding Purim, after the services in the synagogue.

## Italics in the Bible.

The idiomatic construction of the English language differs considerably from that of Hebrew and Greek, in which the bible was first written. A literal translation very often makes clumsy reading, and the English translators wisely determined to make the English version of the bible a model of literary style as well as linguistic accuracy. The words in italics in the bible, therefore, have no corresponding words in the original; but the translators have themselves supplied these words to render the sense of the passage in which they occur, in their opinion, more full and clear. The authorized version was prepared in the reign of James I. Fifty-four scholars most distinguished for learning, were selected for the work, and finally forty-seven undertook it. They were divided into six companies, to each of which a certain portion of scripture was assigned. Each person of a company was to prepare a translation of the whole portion committed to that company. When a company had in this way agreed upon their version, it was to be transmitted to each of the other companies, so that no part was to be without the sanction of the whole body. Two companies sat at Westminster, two at Oxford and two at Cambridge. The final revision of the whole was conducted in London by two delegates from each company. The work of translation and revision occupied from 1607 to 1610, and it came from the press of Robert Barker in 1611. The first book printed with italics was an edition of "Virgil," issued at Venice, by Aldo, in 1501; a copy of this book is preserved in the British Museum.

## God Not Responsible.

There is a great deal of cowardice under the words, "It was the Lord's doing." Without meaning to be irreverent would any one dare blame everything on his fellow-man as the majority of people do on God? If, for instance, I go out in the rain, catch cold, am ill, loose my business, and am a care and expense to my friends, have I any right to say to those who sympathize with me that I am submitting patiently to God's will? Had I not better say, "I was imprudent and am taking the consequences?" God makes certain rules and leaves it to ourselves to decide whether we will keep them. If He were here, ready to contradict us, we would not make so many statements about His will.—Donohoe's Magazine.

## Jerusalem for the Jews.

Jerusalem is likely again to become the city of the Jews. Fifty years ago the whole of the population of the place numbered less than 11,000 persons of Jewish descent, and about the same number of Gentiles.

## Only the Scars Remain.

"Among the many testimonials which I see in regard to certain medicines performing cures, cleansing the blood, etc.," writes HENRY HUDSON, of the James Smith Woolen Machinery Co., Philadelphia, Pa., "none impress me more than my own case. Twenty years ago, at the age of 18 years, I had swellings come on my legs, which broke and became running sores. Our family physician could do me no good, and it was feared that the bones would be affected. At last, my good old mother urged me to try Ayer's Sarsaparilla. I took three bottles, the sores healed, and I have not been troubled since. Only the scars remain, and the memory of the past, to remind me of the good Ayer's Sarsaparilla has done me. I now weigh two hundred and twenty pounds, and am in the best of health. I have been on the road for the past twelve years, have noticed Ayer's Sarsaparilla advertised in all parts of the United States, and always take pleasure in telling what good it did for me."



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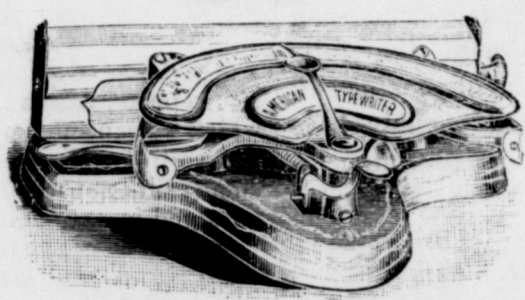
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