

NO TIME TO SHILLY SHALLY.

The Chicago horror has brought before the whole civilized world the question of the theater and kindred amusements, in a most startling manner.

It is very significant that it came at an hour when something was needed to call attention to the worldly trend of church life and to arouse slumbering consciences. With the prosperous times the amusement craze has become a serious menace to the church and the home and consequently to the welfare of society. It has infected the church like a deadly leprosy. Church members and even ministers of the gospel patronize the theater in spite of their solemn vows and there is not enough of piety or stamina in the church to discipline them. So strong has the love of worldly amusements become that a movement is on foot to remove the embargo on amusements from the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was almost carried at the last General Conference, and a hot fight has commenced in the New York Preachers' Meeting over the issue.

The ecclesiastical atmosphere had become sickly and enervating; the height of the pleasure season had been reached in the holidays, when right at its climax in the best modern equipped play-house the blow fell like lightning out of a clear sky. Seventeen hundred spectators had gathered to witness the performance of a silly play that bordered on the nude and vulgar. The majority of them it is said were church members, including ministers of the gospel, prominent laymen, college instructors, school teachers and professional men, when with hardly a moment's warning more than half a thousand were ushered into eternity and hundreds were injured. We have nothing but sadness and pity in our heart as we reflect upon its horror. We do not believe God had to cause it. He allowed man's stupidity and sin to take its course. He did not prevent it as he might. There will be some one who will say God was not in it, and that he did not speak. But if he did speak he certainly spoke at the fitting time when men heard him whether they would or not.

We believe he did speak.

The saddest thing was that preachers of the gospel and leading, prominent lay men were caught in the awful disaster. There is a maudlin sentiment and fulsome charity that would bid us pass this act over in silence, but we have a duty to the living. All the civilized world knows it and Christianity is not helped but sadly hurt if these things be whitewashed over. The whole world is waiting to see what the church has to say about it. Spiritual people have not only grieved and shed tears over the victims of the fire but also over the bleeding cause of Jesus Christ. While we have been filled with grief and chagrin, infidelity has exulted in the assertion that there is no difference between them and the church, either in living or dying. God has set this question now fairly before the church. It must meet the issue. It must either close the flood-gates of worldliness that is sweeping away the spirituality of Zion or the torrent will increase after this temporary check until it sweeps all spirituality before it and God has to raise up some other movement that will hold up the standard of spirituality.

It is an awful crisis hour. The church has come to its Kadesh Barnea. It can not dodge the issue. The world is looking on to see what the church is to do in the matter. There has never been a more solemn and trying hour for American Christianity. Slumbering consciences have been aroused to the awful drift of things. Will it be lasting? Will the church now, after this rude awakening, take its stand against the greedy, law-defying, Sabbath-breaking, godless theater, or will the theater convert the remainder of the church. Now is the time to face the issue that must be met. The church is on trial before both God and man.—Christian Witness.

A GOVERNOR'S REVENGE.

A few years ago, while Robert Stewart was Governor of Missouri, a steamboat man was brought in from the penitentiary as an applicant for a pardon. He was a large, powerful fellow, and when the Governor looked at him, he seemed strangely affected. He scrutinized him long and closely. Finally, he signed the document that restored the prisoner to liberty. Before he handed it to him he said: "You

will commit some other crime, and be in the penitentiary again, I fear."

The man solemnly promised that he would not. The Governor looked doubtful, mused a few minutes, and said:

"You will go back on the river and be a mate again, I suppose?"

The man replied that he would.

"Well, I want you to promise me one thing," resumed the Governor. "I want you to pledge your word that, when you are mate again, you will never take a billet of wood in your hand and drive a sick boy out of a bunk to help you load your boat on a stormy night." The steam boat man said that he would not, and inquired what the Governor meant by asking him such a question.

The Governor replied: "Because, some day, that boy may become a Governor, and you may want him to pardon you for a crime. One dark, stormy night many years ago, you stopped your boat on the Mississippi river to take on a load of wood. There was a boy on board who was working his passage from New Orleans to St. Louis, but he was very sick of fever, and was lying in a bunk. You had plenty of men to do the work, but you went to that boy with a stick of wood in your hand and drove him with blows and curses out into the wretched night, and kept him toiling like a slave until the load was completed. I was that boy. Here is your pardon. Never again be guilty of such brutality."

The man, cowering and hiding his face, went out without a word.

What a noble revenge that was, and what a lesson.—Selected.

SHOULD NOT BE POSTPONED.

In 1871 I preached a series of sermons on the life of Christ in old Farwell hall, Chicago, for five nights. I took him from the cradle and followed him up to the judgment hall and on that occasion I consider I made as great a blunder as ever I made in my life. It was upon that memorable night in October and the court-house bell was sounding an alarm of fire, but I paid no attention to it. You know we were accustomed to hear the fire bell often and it didn't disturb us much when it sounded. I finished the sermon upon "What shall I do with Jesus?" and said to the audience:

"Now I want you to take the question with you and think it over and next Sunday I want you to come back and tell me what you are going to do with Him."

What a mistake! It seems now as if Satan was in my mind when I said this. Since then I never have dared give an audience a week to think of their salvation. If they were lost, they might rise up in judgment against me. "Now is the accepted time."

I remember Mr. Sankey singing and how his voice rang when he came to that pleading verse:

"Today the Saviour calls,
For refuge fly!

The storm of justice falls,
And death is nigh."

After the meeting we went home. I remember going down La Salle Street with a young man and saw the glare of flames. I said to the young man:

"This means ruin to Chicago."

About 1 o'clock Farwell hall was burned; soon the church in which I preached went down and everything was scattered. I never saw that audience again.

My friends, we don't know what may happen tomorrow, but there is one thing I do know and that is, if you take the gift of God you are saved. If you have eternal life you need not fear fire, death or sickness. Let disease or death come, you can shout triumphantly over the grave if you have Christ. My friends, what are you going to do with Him? Will you not decide now?—D. L. Moody.

A PARODY—UP TO DATE.

The politician is my shepherd. I shall not want for any good thing during the campaign. He leadeth me into the saloon for my vote's sake, he filleth my pocket with cigars, my glass of beer runneth over. He prepared my ticket for me in the presence of my better judgement. Yea though I walk through the mud and rain to vote for him and shout myself hoarse, when he is elected, straightway he forgetteth me! lo! when I meet him in his own office he knoweth me not. Surely the wool has been pulled over my eyes all the days of my life, and I will kick myself forever. Amen.

RULES BY WHICH TO RISE.

"Success" gives these pithy maxims for ambitious young people:

Find your purpose and fling your life out to it. Try to be somebody with all your might.

What is put into the first of life is put into the whole of life. Start right.

The first thing to do, if you have not done it, is to fall in love with your work.

Don't brood over the past, nor dream over the future; but seize the instant and get your lesson from the hour.

Necessity is the priceless spur.

Don't wait for extraordinary opportunities; seize common occasions and make them great.

A great opportunity will only make you ridiculous unless you are prepared for it.

The lucky man is the man who sees and grasps his opportunity.

Don't dally with your purposes. Not many things indifferently, but one thing supremely.

The world always listens to a man with a will in him.

The man with an idea has ever changed the face of the world.

Find a way or make one. Everything is either pusher or pushed.

Not everything that succeeds is a success. A man may make millions and be a failure still.

EVANGELIST HOOPLE

I intend to be from business after the first of January. I expect to devote all my time to an aggressive campaign against sin, looking for the salvation of sinners and the entire sanctification of believers. The blessing of God in my own soul, and the success that has attended what work it has been my privilege to engage in in the past, and also the providential surroundings, have decided for me that this is the only one course open to me at present. I have hesitated about forcing myself into this work, not wanting to push myself in where the Lord did not want me, and I have waited until the Lord has shut every other door and left but this one way for me to go.

I would be pleased if you would mention the fact in your paper that I am going into evangelistic work, and would thank you if you will insert my name among the list of evangelists—William Howard Hoople, 1417 Dean street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Yours in Christ,

WM. HOWARD HOOPLE.

[We are happy to welcome so effective an evangelistic worker as Brother Hoople.—Editor.]—Christian Standard.

A NEAT REPROOF.

Wesley had for a fellow passenger in a coach a military officer, who was intelligent and agreeable in conversation, but unhappily profane. When changing coaches Wesley took the officer aside, and, after expressing the pleasure he had in his company, said, "I have a great favor to ask of you." The young officer said, "I will have great pleasure in obliging you; for I am sure you will not make an unreasonable request." "Then," said Wesley, "as we have to travel together some distance, I beg, if I should so far forget myself as to swear, you will kindly reprove me." The officer appreciated the gentle rebuke, and, smiling, said, "None but Mr. Wesley could have conceived a reproof in such a manner."—Sel.

Social or public prayer is like dwelling in the outer court; secret prayer is like entering the inner temple. None enters the inner temple who is not found in the outer court. Every want, every grief, every anxiety, every temptation, every friend and every foe should be objects of prayer. But prayer for spiritual blessings for ourselves and others is the essence of prayer. And spiritual blessing consists chiefly in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Nothing is given us but by the Holy Spirit. He is the messenger. He takes of the things of Christ and gives them to us.—Selected.

We never read the book, but the title of the novel was, "Snarleyow." A "holiness paper," whose main business is snarling at almost everybody and everything, would most appropriately share that name with that novel.—Christian Standard.

SIN DESTROYED.

Paul says that in the crucifixion of Christ was made a provision for the crucifixion of the old man, the body of sin, in order that it might be destroyed. Have you, my reader, had your time of death of the old man, when you were conscious of going down to the bottom and getting to the end of yourself, and then in response to faith consciously received your pentecost? Very many people professing the experience of entire sanctification are yet very ambitious to push to the front and are as sore and tender as others who deny the possibility of obtaining the blessing. So much shallow teaching of taking it by faith has wrought havoc in the ranks. What is called faith and never brings the definite conscious baptism with the Holy Ghost is all sham and presumption, for true faith always prevails with God. Let us be thorough at the altar, and not be satisfied until fire falls and conscious soul victory is obtained.

S. W. FESSENDEN.

AFRICA.

Even in the dark continent the world moves. For it is a scant twenty-five years since Stanley appeared on the Lower Congo, after a year's perils to reach the coast, and now there reaches our table an account of a conference of missionaries held at Leopoldville, January 19, representing four American and three European societies—two hundred of them coming from fifty stations and able to tell of six thousand native Christians with hundreds of schools and all that.—Northwestern Christian Advocate.

THE OPERATIC IN CHURCH.

It is an old story that after a highly paid soprano in the choir of a fashionable church had sung an operatic selection the pastor arose in his place and said, "We will now resume the worship of God by singing hymn number so and so." The pope evidently agrees with the mythical pastor, for he has recently issued a note on church music in which he condemns the transformation of church services into concerts, and expresses a preference for plain song.—Youth's Companion.

"BIBLE SUNDAY."

March 6th. will be observed all over the world as the centenary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which actually falls on March 7th. During the past century the society has distributed one hundred and eighty million volumes of the Scriptures, printed in nearly four hundred different languages, at a total expenditure of more than seventy million dollars. These are great figures—and they stand for vast results.—Youth's Companion.

NEWS ITEM.

The directors of the Douglas Camp Meeting Association met at the Pentecostal Church, Ashmont St., Providence, R. I. Dec. 8th. It was unanimously voted to push the battle for holiness at the coming camp meeting. They decided to offer such inducements to the saints as should insure a large attendance at the next camp meeting which will be held at Douglas, Mass. July 15—24, 1904. Among the inducements will be: devoted preachers and workers, spiritual meetings, tidal waves of salvation, fifty free family tents, extraordinary inducements to churches and missions.

Some religious experiences are like the old Franklin wood stove—one minute roaring, the next minute ashes. Better have the even anthracite coal fire heat. However, a "natural gas" fire is soon made—no dust, no ashes, even heat—will last till the well gives out. You can have either of these heats in your experience you choose.—Christian Standard.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN

PRAYER FOR GRACE.

"O what can little hands do
To please the King of heaven?
The little hands some work must try
To help the poor in misery;
Such grace to mine be given!

"O what can little lips do
To please the King in heaven?
The little lips can praise and pray,
And gentle words of kindness say;
Such grace to mine be given!

"O what can little eyes do
To please the King in heaven?
The little eyes can upward look
Can learn to read God's holy book;
Such grace to mine be given;

"O what can little hearts do
To please the King of heaven?
Young hearts if God His Spirit send
Can love and trust their Saviour,
Friend;
Such grace to mine be given!

"Though small is all that we can do
To please the King of heaven,
When hearts, hands and lips unite,
To serve the Saviour with delight,
They are most precious in His sight;
Such grace to mine be given!"
Amen.

Abbie C. Morrow's Prayer Book.

THE GREAT SECRET.

MRS. E. J. RICHMOND.

"You are always happy, Grace. It is like sunshine whenever you are near. I wish I knew your secret!" and Ellen Dane lifted her troubled face to the cheery-faced young girl who entered.

"How can one help being happy, Ellen? It is such a glorious thing to live, and then to know that the loving Friend is always near us, caring for us so tenderly." "Ah! If one could know this! If I could but know that he is mine, that I am truly saved."

Tears stood in the blue eyes. Ellen Dane threw her arms around her friend and kissed her cheek.

"Do you doubt that I love you, dear? And he is love. You cannot doubt his own words. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' And can you doubt his love who gave his life for you?"

"Surely I do not, but—but—I can not feel this, I am not happy as you always seem to be. I joined the church because I do believe, and I want to confess him before men. But he is so pure and holy, and—I am so faulty. I want the rest that you have found—rest in him."

"And he wants to give it to you. 'Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you,' are his words, but aren't you trying to earn what he offers as a free gift? Do you think a doctor would like to see his patient feeling the pulse and examining symptoms? I tried this way once, but I did not find healing and peace till I left all with my physician. He has given us directions in the Bible. We follow them and trust absolutely and all trouble flies away."

Ellen looked up eagerly.

"And this way you come into the sunshine? Simply letting go, instead of toiling?"

"Letting go of self, and clinging to Christ. He is the all sufficient Saviour—yours and mine. It is such joy to be constantly with him; to see his handiwork everywhere, in gold fringed cloud and delicate flower, in stately tree and feathered songster; for he made all things.

"My heart is lighter, Grace. We just forget self and trust him entirely. 'I'll follow your directions, and believe that I, too, will live in sunshine.'"

SISTER BOYER'S TESTIMONY ON HER 86TH BIRTHDAY.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,
—The Lord is good. How it would rejoice my heart to be with you in the prayer meetings, but I expect soon to meet with the church triumphant, "Glory, Glory." Pray for me that my faith fail me not, I am trusting in Jesus, and he helps me.

Your's saved and kept through faith in Jesus.
SISTER BOYER, aged 86 years old today
Hartland, Dec. 24th, 1903.