

THE PULPIT TREASURY.

AN EVANGELICAL MONTHLY.

VOL. III.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER, 1885.

No. 6.

→*SERMONS*←

THE RELIGION OF NATURE AND OF CULTURE.

BY REV. P. S. HENSON, D.D., FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, CHICAGO, ILL.

The way of Cain.—JUDE II.

GOD created Adam in His own image, crowned him with glory and honor, and constituted him the vicegerent of heaven, in this then fair world so lately launched.

By his own transgression Adam fell—fell from his allegiance to God—fell from his high throne of power. He broke away from God, and nature broke away from him. He lost his self-control, and lost control of that magnificent domain, of which the Almighty had made him lord.

Not only so, but he lost God's image, and his whole being, henceforth, was marred and mutilated, and wrecked and ruined. And Adam was the head of the human race, so that the stream of life was poisoned at its very source, and all its waters became tainted and turbid, and so they will ever continue to be until at last they empty themselves into the wide, deep sea, unless grace interpose to make the waters pure and sweet.

Adam begat a son in his own likeness—not God's—that was gone—but his own—and his own bore the imprint of the evil one, to whose subtle agency he had sinfully succumbed. Thus the first man born into the world was not only the child of Adam, but also, in some sense, the child of the devil, and demonstrably our brother, though it be not either politic or pleasant flatly to affirm it. It has been the custom to cast stones upon his grave, as did the

less. Nothing is so easily disturbed as the Angel of faith. Watch the question-gate.

Who put the next question? It was put by Jehovah in Gen. iii., 9: "Where art thou?" Did He who formed the eye not see? But "where" does not always relate to locality. It is a wide word full of solemn and tender suggestion. A man may stand face to face with you but be separated in heart. This is not a question relating to measurable points. Where art thou in purpose, in supreme desire, in settled and chastened motive? A man may be in the sanctuary yet far from the altar. Everything depends upon our answer to this inquiry. Temptation had not long been in the world before judgment followed it. The question-asking cannot all be on one side. Is there any more question-asking?

The angels ask the next question in reply to human unbelief: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Gen. xvii., 14.) We soon forget this solemn lesson. We follow our eyes and call it faith. What we have to consider in the difficult circumstances of life is the Lord's

power. The door is thick, the key is lost, we cannot escape, and we suffer the circumstances to be bounded by our personality. But is anything too hard for the Lord? He gives, He takes away, He shakes the prison, He conducts the ministry of human life. Bounded on all sides by necessity—there is the divine sphere. If we persist in doing something God will not work. He waits until we are dead asleep, and then works some wonder for us. Thus we have had three interrogatives, the serpent's, Jehovah's, and the angels'. Will not man ask some little question? There are human questions in the Bible, as for example in Gen. xviii., 23: "Wilt thou also destroy the righteous?" This question is being asked to-day. It does seem as if Providence was marked by indiscriminatives. The righteous are being thrown down in the streets, and the wicked have plundered them and passed on. These are mysteries that are to be adjudged by the help of Christian faith, and if the midnight is not sunny, it is so full of stars that it cannot be called darkness.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

The Sabbath and Liquor-Selling.

BY T. DEWITT TALMAGE, D.D. (PRESBYTERIAN), BROOKLYN, N. Y.

When I asked a Rocky Mountain locomotive engineer, as I was riding with him, "Why do you switch off your locomotive on a side track and take another?"—as I saw he was about to do—"it seems to be a straight route;" he replied: "Oh, we have to let the locomotive stop and cool off, or the machinery would very soon break down!" The manufacturers of salt were told if they allowed their kettles to cool one day in seven they would have immense repairs to make; but the experiment was made and the contrast came, and it was found that those manufacturers of salt who allowed the kettles to cool once a week had less repairs to make than

those who kept the furnaces in full blast and the kettles always hot. What does all this mean? It means that intellectual man and dumb beast and dead machinery cry out for the Lord's day.

A manufacturer declared that the goods his men manufactured in the early part of the week and right after the Sabbath rest were always better than the goods manufactured in the latter part of the week and when his men were tired. The Sabbath comes, and it soothes the nerves, and it puts out the fires of anxiety which have burned all the week. The fact is, *we are seven-day clocks*, and we have to be wound up once a week or we will run down into the grave. The Sabbath is a savings bank into which we gather up our resources of physical and mental strength to draw on all the week. That man gives a mortgage

to disease and death who works on the Sabbath, and at the most unexpected moment the mortgage will be foreclosed and the soul ejected from the premises. Every gland, every cell, every globule, every finger-nail cries out: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy!"

A London banker says, "I came to London thirty years ago, and I have had a great deal of observation, and I have noticed that the bankers who went to their places of business on the Sabbath, and attended to affairs and settled up their accounts, failed, and without one exception." A Boston merchant says: "I have observed a long while, and I have noticed when out on the Long Wharf merchants kept their men busy loading vessels on Sunday, and at work from morn until night on the sacred day—I noticed that all those merchants came to nothing." "Gentlemen," said a merchant, although he is a man of the world—"Gentlemen, it don't pay to work on Sunday."

While the flail and the axe and the yardstick have not been able to destroy the Sabbath, and the vast majority of people, from sanitary reasons, have about concluded it best to rest on the Sabbath, there is an attempt to destroy the Lord's day, on one side by the grog-shops, and on the other by secular amusements. We have a law in this State most positively forbidding the sale of intoxicating drinks on the Sabbath day. That law is every Sabbath broken. Some say: "Let it be repealed; a law on the statute-book not executed—better drive out the law." Instead of that we say we want the law to continue on the statute-book, and *we mean to have it executed*. There are three thousand liquor-dealers in Brooklyn banded together to put down this law, and they are moving upon the State Legislature, and they propose to have the law broken down and cast out from the statute-book.

When one of our reformers comes up before a justice of the peace and reports some of these Sabbath-breakers, the justice of the peace looks over, and in almost every case excuses the criminal. Why? Because he knows there are three thousand liquor-dealers in Brooklyn who have their eyes on him, and they will remember it

at the next election. Now, what we want is, on the other hand, to have ten thousand good, honest, upright citizens banded together in some excise league, demanding the execution of the law, so when a justice of the peace with a criminal before him remembers that there are three thousand liquor-sellers who want him to discharge the criminal, he will have a vivid remembrance at the same time of the ten thousand honest citizens who demand the execution of the law; and these reformers who have been roughly jostled and caricatured and kicked out will be differently treated in times that are to come from the way they have been treated in the times that are past.

Take the Sixteenth Ward of Brooklyn. In that Ward are six churches, two public schools, five breweries, three hundred and twenty-three liquor-saloons. Out of three hundred and twenty-three liquor-saloons in the Sixteenth Ward, how many observe the Sabbath law? One! and three hundred and twenty-two are this moment breaking it. What a state of things this is for the City of Churches! All these mouths of hell this moment open, breathing death and destruction upon this city of Brooklyn. I say it is time for all good citizens, whether they are temperate men or not—it is time for all honest citizens, and all men who have a pride in their homes, to rise up and put down this infamous business, at any rate one day of the week. Certainly, if they have full swing Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, they ought to give us at least one day of rest from this awful evil which is abroad amid the nations.

Oh, to many of our citizens the best day is the worst day! They get their salaries, and they get their wages on Saturday night, and then they are inveigled into these places, and that which ought to have gone for the livelihood of the family goes for their own destruction. Who are you, the men who deal in cloth and hosiery and hardware and groceries, who are you who sell bread and shoes, that you should bow down to the liquor traffic? Your places of business closed up to-day, theirs open. Will you take off your hat to them? Is

their business better than yours? Why should the law give especial privilege to these men who are trafficking in the bodies and souls of men? If a baker should sell bread he would be very apt to be arrested. It is not safe to have loaves of bread going through the streets on the Sabbath. If a man should sell shoes and

boots it would be a very dangerous thing; he might be arrested. But all these places open on the Sabbath. If the front door is not open, the back door is open. I tell you, fellow-citizens, there is something awfully wrong in this town when such things are allowed.

→* SUNDAY SCHOOL CAUSE *←

LIGHT ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

BY JOSEPH SANDERSON, D.D., NEW YORK.

October 4,

Elisha at Dothan.—II. KINGS vi., 8-23.

1835.

After the healing of Naaman, which formed the subject of a recent lesson, Elisha wrought the miracle of causing the iron axe-head to float on the water in behalf of a poor member of a school of the prophets. Another of his wonderful performances we are now to consider.

I. War with Syria. V. 8. Benhadad, King of Damascus and the smaller Syrian states around, after an interval of a few years' peace, made incursions into the kingdom of Israel and was approaching Samaria, its capital, with the object probably of capturing its king, Jehoram. James tells us in his Epistle (iv., 1) whence come wars.

II. The Syrian defeated by the aid of the prophet Elisha. Vs. 8-12. The Syrian king directed this war in person, and told where to pitch camp or to form an ambuscade, but that was no sooner done than Elisha, being instructed by God, warned the King of Israel to avoid such places. How blessed to have such an adviser. The Bible is such a one. Jehoram was a bad king, but he had done one good thing in putting away Baal the idol, and God would encourage him by good advice to go on and do better. Jehoram tested Elisha's advice (v. 10), and found it good. No one has ever regretted following good advice. Vs. 11, 12. The King of Syria thought there must be traitors in his camp who conveyed the plan of his stratagem to the enemy. But God knows the thoughts and plans in every heart. How important to have God on our side. He can communicate knowledge to whom He will, and by various methods.

III. The attack on Elisha at Dothan. Vs. 13-15. Naaman it was, probably, who intimated to the Syrian king that Elisha might be the informant of his plans to the King of Israel. Therefore Benhadad sought to capture him, at Dothan, where he then was—a village about eleven miles north of Samaria. A great host was sent by night to capture one man (see Ps. xxxiii., 15)! No one can surprise or take by stratagem any one of God's people, if God wills it otherwise. Elisha's servant was terrified on beholding the condition of things in the morning. He was new and had but little experience with Elisha.

IV. Elisha's defenders. Vs. 16, 17. What encouragement to know that God's people are always surrounded with countless defenders. The Syrian host, come to capture Elisha, surrounded the base of the mountain, and these angelic hosts encompassed the prophet as a body-guard and protected him from the enemy on every side. See what Christ said (Matt. xxvi., 53). The man of faith sees more than other men. Those who are for the Christian are always more than those who are against him.

V. Elisha's victory over the Syrians. Vs. 18-23. The Syrian army moved on to Dothan to capture Elisha. Then was God's opportunity to defeat them. The effect of a good man's prayer in this case is evident, comforting to the good and discomfiting the bad. They were probably mentally as well as visually bewildered, and thus were easily led away from Dothan to Samaria to be placed there at the disposal of the King of Israel. Having