

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN N. B., MAY 28, 1903

THE TELEGRAPH'S PULPIT.

Rev. B. N. Nobles' Sermon to Readers Gives "New Light on Excuses."

Take xiv—18: "And they all with one consent began to make excuse."

Many of you will recall the connection in which these words are found. They occur in the parable of the great supper. Our Lord meant the story to be illustrative of the refusal of the Jewish nation to come to the feast of gospel blessings, and of the subsequent enjoyment of these blessings by the Gentile world. I shall not spend time in speaking of the work of our Lord in this matter and the ample provision he has made for all the spiritual needs of men, Jew or Gentile, but will pass on to notice the nature and effects of the excuses offered. One said: "I have bought a piece of ground and I must needs go and see it; I pray Thee have me excused." Another said: "I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to prove them; I pray Thee have me excused." Another said: "I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come." Did you ever think of the nature of these excuses?

These pleaded blessings of life as excuse for their refusal of gracious hospitality proffered them. It was surely a good thing for these men that, needing the land and the oxen, they had the money or the credit with which to make the purchase. The land and the oxen meant improved conditions and better facilities for business and labor, and the wife meant home and companionship. Such blessings should have tended to make these men neighborly and considerate of the kindness of Him who provided the feast. But if it were so that He who provided the supper was the one through whom it had been made possible for the land and oxen to be purchased and the marriage consummated, then especially should they have shown appreciation and gratitude and attended the feast. To accept and enjoy one's benefactions and then plead them as excuse for rejecting His grace and refusing the respect and obedience due the benefactor is unworthy any one. Yet such is the treatment the gracious Lord received at the hands of the Jews, and such is the treatment men in gospel lands accord Him whose beneficent bestowals are enjoyed by the sons of men, and for whose further good he has spread the gospel feast and bidden them come and partake.

Here is one who neglects gospel privileges, neglects the House of the Lord, neglects the Bible school, neglects the prayer meeting. Another excuse pleaded is his home, his home. The husband says: "I must share the home burdens with my wife. If she could go and enjoy these blessings I would go, but as it is, I must stay as much as I can in the home with her." The wife says: "I have so many home cares—the cooking has to be done, the home has to be kept, and the children have to be cared for." So home is pleaded an excuse for their neglect of religious privileges. "I have children, I have wife, I have husband; therefore I pray Thee have me excused." Brother, sister, should you not praise the Lord for home, children, companion, and obey rather than put these forward as excuses for disobedience? If these are in the way of your soul's highest good what will you say if he takes these blessings from you? If they are proving injurious, if the blessing is proving a curse should it not be withdrawn? I have known this to be done. What will you have to say if the Lord breaks up this home that is so much in the way of your serving him as you should and takes wife or child from you? You tremble at the thought, but if these blessings are harmful—keeping you from spiritual good, would it not be kindness to withdraw them?

Here is another who pleads his business or his work an excuse for neglecting religious life and privilege and blessing. "I plod along six days in the week and sometimes seven. I have no time to think of religion. My hours are long and my work exacting. When Sunday comes I feel I must rest and sleep or spend it in recreation. I am too tired to go to the Lord's House or to give attention to the concerns of religion." Man, did you never think of it that you should be thankful that you have work or business or trade or profession to which you can apply yourself, and that instead of pleading it as excuse for refusing the call and will of God, you ought on this very account to seek in every way His pleasure. How would you feel if your business failed or if there was no work to be had, and while your family asked for food and raiment and shelter, you had to walk the streets in idleness? God has graciously given you a business to conduct, or in His good providence you have employment that insures your wage; yet you will plead your neglecting His house, His salvation, His work! Suppose He gives you rest from these things which you are saving militia against your spiritual good. Suppose hard times are ushered in and work becomes scarce and business fails. Think of what you are doing when to the Lord, yourself or any other you offer as excuse for your sin the benefactions of His hand.

Sometimes young people when urged to attend the services of the Lord's House and put themselves in the way of spiritual blessings, answer: "We have so many studies that we don't have time to think of anything but our books." So the school is put forward as an excuse for their neglect of their spiritual interests. I am sure our school life in towns and cities is lived too fast. Ours is an age of rush and bustle and our common school life suffers from it. Our boys and girls are hustled along. Grade after grade must be passed on schedule time. The ambitious boy or girl feels that failure to grade discounts their abilities in the eyes of others, so all push on in competition at any cost. Thus our young people are being robbed of childhood and youth and rushed on prematurely through our schools, while their bodily health is being impaired and their spiritual life circumvented and stricken. These conditions ought not to obtain in our educational system, nor should our young people permit their studies to interfere with their religious life and work. For our free public schools and for the privilege and opportunity of attending them, our youth should be grateful. For faculties of body and mind capable of being educated, and for the knowledge they are getting, they should bless God. And instead of these things being obstacles they should become incentives to a life in harmony with the will and word of Him at whose hand such grace is enjoyed. Suppose, my young friends, you had no free schools; suppose your faculties were impaired and you had no capacity for knowledge—what a calamity that would be! Therefore as thanksgiving for such favor, praise the Lord and obey Him, and turn not away from the feast of good things to which His Gospel bids you.

If you will read the parable from which the text is taken you will see that these, who pleaded the blessings of life as excuse for their refusal of gracious hospitality, were left to themselves, and others chosen. So it was with the Jews. They refused to come to the feast of gospel blessing and the Lord turned from them to the Gentiles. All through the centuries we see the Gentile nations coming in and enjoying the blessings of the gospel. But the Jews—they refuse, starve their souls and perish, while they busy themselves with houses and lands and home and business. So also may it come to be with those of our own generation who turn away from their benefactor, and refuse His grace in salvation while they plead in excuse His daily benefactions. Marion Lawrence told the story the other day, of an oil operator who, everytime they made ready to sink a new well on his farm, prayed: "Lord, make it only a dry hole in the earth if the oil we are seeking shall interfere with any relation to Thee." That man made business and his cares secondary in his religious life. I was once pastor to a mother whose family consisted of five children—from three to sixteen years of age. Her husband kept hotel in the town. Her life was full of care. But she rarely missed the weekly prayer service, and every Sunday morning she, with her family, filled their pew as reverent listeners. That woman, to whom God had given her home and little ones, was determined that these blessings should not become hindrances in her religious life. "Here I am," cried an old man, "with snow in my hair, winter in my blood and ice in my soul, waiting for the stroke that will soon cut me down. Oh, for the sensibility I once had when every sermon seemed like a sword-thrust, and every appeal rang in my soul like a thunderclap." That man had trifled with his spiritual concerns so long, had stifled his feelings, violated his conscience and gone wrong so long, that he had lost the capacity for God and goodness and blighted and ruined his life. Oh, brothers! younger, older, will you not learn wisdom. What if God shall leave any of you who are excusing yourselves for one reason and

A \$500,000 DREDGE FOR ST. JOHN WORK

The Digger Now Being Built at Sorel Will Be Ready Next Year.

BOYS AND CIGARETTES.

Lads Under 16 Will Be Unable to Buy Them Soon—Bill for the Safety of Ships to Be Introduced; The Main Point is the Deckload.

Ottawa, May 19—(Special)—Hon. G. Fitzpatrick, minister of justice, has given notice of a bill to amend the criminal code for the purpose of making it an offence to sell cigarettes to boys under sixteen years of age.

At the opening proceedings of the house today, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that a commission would be appointed shortly to look into the Treadgold concession and other leases in the Yukon.

A bill was introduced by Hon. Mr. Prefontaine in regard to the safety of ships. He said that it was to make the Canadian law identical with the British law. The chief point was that in reference to the deckload.

The house then went into committee on public works estimates. Mr. Sutherland stated that the new dredge now under construction at Sorel for the maritime provinces, would cost \$500,000 and would be ready for the work next season.

Hon. Mr. Fielding has given notice for the purpose of establishing penny banks.

The Philippine War not Over Yet. Manila, May 19.—The situation in some of the districts of Cebu is regarded as serious. It is reported that the total of the bands of insurgents in the field exceeds 1,500. Col. Taylor, of the constabulary, reports that the enemy's forces are dispersing. He says the constabulary is capable of suppressing the disorders and predicts an improvement in the situation. It is believed here that the adoption of energetic measures will be necessary to suppress the disturbances.

Numerous armed bands of hostile Moros from Bacolod and Taraca, island of Mindanao, have gathered in the vicinity of Pantar, north of the lake, and have made threatening demonstrations against the American troops.

A check is checked. Major Bullard with a strong force is at Pantar and is capable of dealing with the rebels.

Sixty per cent of the lake Moros have accepted American sovereignty. Col. Taylor, with a force of constabulary, defeated several bands of fanatics in the interior of Cebu island, May 14, killing twenty and wounding several of them. A few of the constabulary were wounded. Lieut. Walker is missing. The fanatics repeatedly charged the constabulary line.

A hurricane devastated Santa Maria, Batavia, Luzon, on Saturday, May 16, shocks were felt and during the progress of the storm the great stone barraca collapsed, killing one and injuring seven native coolies.

An Ottawa Man's Tragic Death. Ottawa, Ont., May 19—(Special)—Allan Gilmore, a retired lumber man, 50 years of age, was found dead in the attic of his own house in Cooper street, late this afternoon.

Mrs. Gilmore was out for a walk, and when she came home, a dog that always followed Mr. Gilmore, would not leave her alone until he got her to follow him to the attic of the house where she found her husband dead, with a rifle by his side and a bullet through his head. A doctor was sent for and gave a report of accidental death.

Although the exact way in which Mr. Gilmore met his death will never be made clear, as no human eye saw it, still the theory is that he was arranging to go fishing and that while he was putting down a tackle, it came in contact with his Lee-Metford sporting rifle and it let him the top of his head off.

Although the servants were in the kitchen, they did not hear the shot. Deceased leaves a widow, but no family. John Gilmore, of Gilmour & Hueston, the prominent lumber firm, is a brother, and so is David Gilmore, of Trenton.

The body will be taken to Quebec City from where the family came many years ago.

Dr. B. J. Kendall's CURE FOR SPINAL CURVATURE. I have cured many cases of Spinal Curvature, and I have cured many cases of Spinal Curvature, and I have cured many cases of Spinal Curvature.

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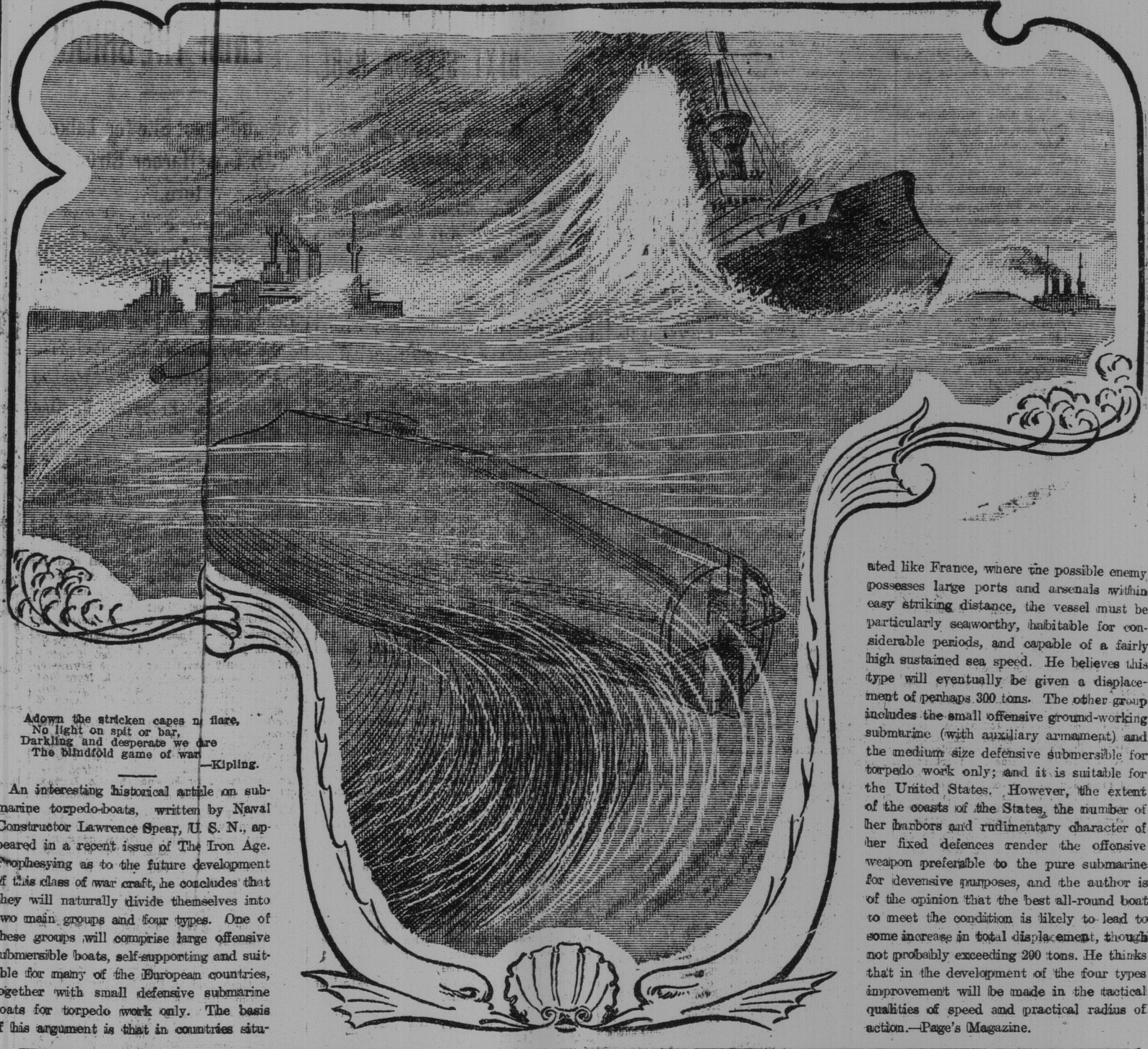
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SUBMARINE TORPEDO BOAT IN ACTION



Wit and Slang from -I- Ade's New Comic Opera

George Ade's clever lines and lyrics in Peggy from Paris, Henry W. Savage's newest production, which has just begun its Boston engagement, are just as strikingly original as are his fables in Slang.

When it was announced that Mr. Ade was to write the lyrics for the new opera, which is now being produced by Henry W. Savage, the author of the new opera, was just as strikingly original as are his fables in Slang.

When the Hickey boy starts to make love to Lily Ann Lynch he says: "Lily, come lean against me and see if it will make me mad. When it comes to love making, I'm the original town blacksmith."

Later Hickey says: "Mr. Fish, I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I think this comic opera of yours is a Bernice."

He means it's an onion," explains Lily Ann Lynch.

Many of the best lines in "Peggy" occur in the prologue, which introduces Alonzo Plummer, the village dignitary of Hickory Creek, and most of them are given to Plummer to say. After his daughter, Lottie, has sung "Highland Lullaby," contracted at the Galesburg conservatory, the old man observes:

"Lottie, I suppose it's the duty of a parent to be proud of his offspring, but all I can say about this attack you've just had is that it is, perhaps, a good deal better than it sounds."

"Lottie—didn't you like that?" Plummer—didn't care so awful much for the tune and I couldn't catch the words—but the rest of it was all right.

"Lottie—I won a prize in Galesburg for singing that song."

Plummer—Well, you may fool 'em in Galesburg, but here in Hickory Creek we want music. I paid \$150 to have your voice gone over and snuffed and put in first-class condition, and I want you to sing that song."

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Premier Bond SERIOUSLY ILL.

St. John's, Nfld., May 20—The colonial legislature was closed this afternoon. The governor, Sir Cavendish Boyle, in the speech from the throne, congratulated the colony on the prosperity in all branches of the colony's industries. Sir Robert Bond, the premier, is seriously ill and was unable to be present at the closing of the legislature. It is understood in official circles that the Bond-Hay treaty negotiations will be revived next fall, prior to the reassembling of the legislature. Sir Robert Bond is said to have received favorable communications from prominent American statesmen.

Galleo's first telescope was made from part of a lead water pipe, in each end of which he cemented common spectacle glasses.

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DIGBY COUNTY FIRES STILL BURNING.

Digby, May 19—The fires still continue in the neighboring woods and rain is much needed. Some one lighted another fire near H. T. Warner's lumber camp, Shubenubide Road, Sunday. It was extinguished after many hours' hard fighting.

A Pipeful "Anch Plug" Smoking Tobacco will burn 75 minutes. "Test it!" Save the Toss they are valuable.

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