

"This has been a very mysterious affair," continued the doctor, musingly; "surely a 'horse is a vain thing for safety.' One is almost tempted to believe that demoniacal possession is not wholly a thing of the past. Indeed, I could not think of anything else while Hally was acting so viciously and unaccountably."

"I agree with you," responded Haldane, gravely; "she certainly did come down the street like the devil."

The doctor was a little shocked at this putting of his thoughts into plain English, for it sounded somewhat profanely. But he was in no mood to find fault with his companion, and they got on very well together to the end of their brief journey. The young scrape-grace was glad, indeed, that it was brief, for his self-control was fast leaving him, and, having bowed a rather abrupt farewell to the doctor, he was not long in reaching one of his haunts, from which during the evening, and quite late into the night, came repeated peals of laughter, that grew more boisterous and discordant as that synonym of mental and moral anarchy, the "spirit of wine," gained the mastery.

The tidings of her son's exploit in rescuing the doctor were not long in reaching Mrs. Haldane, and she felt that the good seed sown that day had borne immediate fruit. She longed to fold him in her arms and commend his courage, while she poured out thanksgiving that he himself had escaped uninjured, which immunity, she believed, must have resulted from the goodness and piety of the deed. But when he at last appeared, with step so unsteady and utterance so thick that even she could not mistake the cause, she was bewildered and bitterly disappointed by the apparent contradictoriness of his action; and when he, too far gone for dissimulation, described and acted out in pantomime the doctor's plight and appearance, she became half hysterical from her desire to laugh, to cry, and to give vent to her kindling indignation.

This anger was raised almost to the point of white heat on the morrow. The cause of the old mare's behaviour, and the interview which had led to the practical joke, soon became an open secret, and while it convulsed the town with laughter, it also gave the impression that young Haldane was in a "bad way."

It was not long before Mrs. Haldane received a note from an indignant fellow church-member, in which, with some disagreeable comment, her son's conduct was plainly stated. She was also informed that the doctor had become aware of the rude jest of which he had been the subject. Mrs. Haldane was almost furious; but her son grew sulien and obstinate as the storm which he had raised increased. The only thing he would say as an apology or excuse amounted to this:

What else could he expect from one whom he so emphatically asserted was a sinner?

The mother wrote at once to the doctor, and was profuse in her apologies and regrets, but was obliged to admit to him that her son was beyond her control.

When the doctor first learned the truth, his equanimity was almost as greatly disturbed as it had been on the previous day, and his first emotions were naturally those of wrath. But a little thought brought him to a better mood.

He was naturally delicate in tact, and his long habit of dwelling upon abstract and systematic truth had diminished his power of observantly and intuitively gauging the character of the one with whom he was dealing. He therefore often failed woefully in adaptation, and his sermons occasionally went off into rarified realms of moral space, where nothing human existed. But his heart was true and warm, and his Master's cause of far more consequence to him than his own dignity.

As he considered the matter maturely, he came to the conclusion that there must have been something wrong on both sides. If he had presented the truth properly the young man could not have acted so improperly. After recalling the whole affair, he became satisfied that he had relied far too much on his own strong logic, and it had seemed to him that it must convince. He had forgotten for the moment that those who would do good should be very humble, and that, in a certain sense, they must take the hand of God, and place it upon the one whom they would save.

Thus the honest old clergyman tried to search out the error and weakness which had led to such a lamentable failure in his efforts; and when at last Mrs. Haldane's note of sorrowful apology and motherly distress reached him, his anger was not only gone, but his heart was full of commiseration for both herself and her son. He at once sat down and wrote her a kind and consolatory letter, in which he charged her hereafter to trust less to the "arm of flesh" and more to the "power of God." He also enclosed a note to the young man, which his mother handed to him with a darkly reproachful glance. He opened it with a contemptuous frown, expecting to find within only indignant upbraidings; but his face changed rapidly as he read the following words:

"MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—I hardly know which of us should apologize. I now perceive and frankly admit that there was wrong on my side. I could not have approached you and spoken to you in the right spirit, for if I had, what followed could not have occurred. I fear there was a self-sufficiency in my words and manner yesterday, which made you conscious of Dr. Marks only, and you had no scruples in dealing with Dr. Marks as you did. If my words and bearing had brought you face to face with my august yet merciful Master, you would have respected Him, and also me, His servant. I confess that I was very angry this morning, for I am human. But now I am more concerned lest I have prejudiced you against Him by whom alone we all are saved.

"Yours faithfully,
"ZEBULON MARKS."

(To be continued.)

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WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

We have recently been calling the attention of our readers to the evils of that flood of debasing literature for the young that is so abundantly poured forth. Now let us ask, What is the remedy? Remedy we believe there is, but it must be applied, and that right speedily.

The remedy will be found, first of all, in parental vigilance. The parent is bound to know not simply that his boy reads, but what he reads. Cultivate the boy's confidence, and lead him, if possible, to bring to you for your approval what he would peruse. That is the best way, certainly. But in any way and at all hazards you must know what he is reading. A great part of this evil comes from the fact that so many parents are utterly careless as to what intellectual food their boy is taking in—careless rather as to whether it be food or poison. "My boy is a great reader," they say fondly and even proudly; "he almost always has some book or paper about." That is enough, they think; of the character of the book or paper they are ignorant. Such ignorance is culpable. There must be perpetual parental vigilance. You are careful to put arsenic or Paris green out of your children's reach. This literature is unspeakably more harmful to the moral nature than arsenic or Paris green to the physical.

Another point where the remedy may be applied is in the way, as in so many other things, of overcoming evil with good. It is a good thing for a boy to have a taste for reading, when that taste has not become morbid. But if he has that taste it is utterly folly to attempt to control it by mere repression. Give him plenty of healthful intellectual food. He has indulged to some extent, we will suppose, in this sensational literature. It has awakened more or less of a craving in his nature for a further supply. He would be a very exceptional boy if, having read some of these wildly adventurous tales, he did not long to read more. But that longing is unhealthy, and will likely lead to evil. How shall you overcome it? It will not do simply to forbid any further acquaintance with the trash. Justice to the boy demands more than this. Forbid it, of course, and give him the reasons for so doing. Do not be a tyrant even in doing a right thing. But go further than this; give the boy good in place of the evil you forbid. There is abundance of wholesome, healthfully stimulating literature. There are periodicals, both weekly and monthly, which are full of good things. There are books of history, of travel, of biography, of real adventure, that will do any one good to read. Provide these for your boy, in your home or through the circulating-library. Encourage him to read the right things, and give him opportunity of doing so. Club with your neighbours in taking periodicals and books and exchanging them among yourselves, if you have no circulating-library accessible. Any of the periodicals noticed from time to time in this paper may be advantageously taken by any family. The point is to provide such a supply of wholesome reading that there will be no room left for a craving for that which is hurtful.

A good deal of responsibility rests with those who manage the libraries and reading-rooms, particularly in our smaller places. The librarian, under such circumstances, can have much influence in suggesting as to the choice of books, or even in withholding unsuitable books from young applicants. We do not advocate the exclusion of all works of fiction from the library-shelves, but we do advocate the endeavour to interest young readers in other things besides fiction, and this can be done. The free library of Germantown, Penn., as we are informed, excludes all novels from its shelves, but works on science, manual occupations, history, travels, natural history, biography, and poetry, are readily accepted by the young readers. This shows, what we believe to be the fact, that with care and painstaking a healthy literary appetite can be cultivated in the young. But it will not be found without cultivation.

Lastly, we call attention to the fact that part of the remedy for the evil of which we speak lies with publishers. Many of them are doing excellent work. The religious publishing societies, denominational and otherwise, are sending out healthful streams, which, flowing through Sabbath schools, accomplish much good. Many of the private publishing houses are doing a like good, though not distinctively religious work. We need more of what we have in part, a literature for the young that is instructive without being tedious, stirring without being morbidly exciting, stimulating without being untrue to nature. We need a literature that shall interest and absorb, and incite, while at the same time it instructs and educates. We need a literature that shall picture life as it is, and that shall give emphasis to the moral virtues even where it does not distinctively teach religion. We have a good body of such literature now; a part of the remedy against the evils of the sensational literature of which we complain lies in having that which is pure indefinitely increased.—*New York Christian Weekly.*

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The rains have been unusually heavy this year in India. The Ganges at Cawnpore is reported as being very high, the country being under water for three or four miles along the river bank from the Oudh and Kohilund Railway, and many villages being destroyed. At Bareilly and Shahjehanpore the railway track was destroyed.

"EVEN the very hairs of your head are all numbered." These are Christ's words. How divinely expressive of our Heavenly Father's care of His children! No mother ever so tenderly and affectionately cares for her offspring. "Even the very hairs"—as though Jesus was Himself astonished at the special tenderness of the Father in counting and providing for that which seems to be only the ornament of the head, and is in no way essential to life. "All are numbered." God does His work perfectly. No hair is forgotten by Him. How much more then will He provide for the soul? Will He lose sight of a single soul-want? No, never. Trust Him fully.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

HENRY M. STANTON has arrived at Sierra Leone from Zanzibar. He will explore the Congo River.

It has been predicted that in forty years France will be Protestant. But perhaps the obstacles were never greater than now.

BISMARCK and Andrassy have concluded an agreement that Germany and Austria shall firmly support each other in every event.

HEAVY rains in Jamaica during the past month have stopped sugar making on the south side of the island. The prospects are favourable for the next crop.

THE Secretary of the Central Evangelical Society of Paris states that if they had the means they could found a new Protestant Church in France every week.

PRESIDENT MCCOSH has dismissed five students from Princeton College "for ungentlemanly conduct at Trenton lately." They were drunk and disorderly.

CRUYWAGEN has been sent to Cape Town. At a great meeting of chiefs at Ulundi, Zululand has been divided among them and conditions imposed upon them by Sir Garnet Wolseley.

THE Japanese government has given permission to a native publisher to print an edition of Genesis in Chinese. This is the first time it has authorized any portion of Scripture to be published.

THE ministers of the Free Church of Scotland have been enjoined by the General Assembly to discountenance raffish or jazaar lotteries, and other similar methods of raising money for religious purposes.

THE following are the amounts George Eliot is reported to have received for some of her novels: For "Scenes of Clerical life," £300; "Adam Bede," £3,000; "Romola," £2,000; "Middlemarch," £8,000.

THE Conference of the Evangelical Alliance at Basle, Switzerland, was much larger than it was expected to be, no less than 1,600 delegates being present. Of these, Germany sent 506, France 20, and England and America 400.

A HOLY war, to protect Afghanistan against English invasion, is being preached in the Khost Valley and among the Mongols. It is said that the rebels are making great preparations and that vigorous resistance may be expected at Cabul.

IN the Frith of Forth, where shoals of herrings are rarely to be seen, steamers have literally of late had to plough their way through myriads of closely-packed fish, and the Volunteer Artillery have received orders not to practice, lest the reports of the guns should disturb them.

PRUSSIA has eighteen prisons for tramps and vagrants. In 1874 there were 4,600 commitments to these institutions, but the number has increased every year, and for 1878 was 9,000. Of these 8,000 were men and 1,000 women. They cost the country \$650,000, but earned while in durance \$275,000.

THE Belfast (Ireland) Presbytery is gravely discussing the question whether in the parish of Newtonbrea a special service in which a harmonium is used should longer be tolerated. The special service has a larger attendance than either of the two regular services, where no instrumental music is allowed.

THE Rev. David Macrae is preaching to large congregations in churches belonging to the Kirk. The committee of the U. P. Church in Dundee, whereof the late Mr. Gilliland was pastor, have had another interview with Mr. Macrae, and report that the negotiations are progressing favourably.

RUMOURS of trouble between China and Japan continue to augment. It is reported that both countries are making warlike preparations. The native papers report the Russian steamer Nordenskjold lost at Nemoro, on the east coast of Yeasoon, on the 5th of August, on her way with stores for the Swedish Arctic expedition. There are considerable transactions in silk, the market closing quieter.

THERE is a good work going on in Calcutta. For three years past there has been preaching in English to educated natives in the Free Church of Scotland. Rev. W. Milne says: "There are more than 12,000 educated natives in Calcutta who understand English perfectly, and it is thought the Gospel should now be preached to them in the same simple, full and direct way that it is preached to those who are nominally Christians."

THE Russians are not having it all their own way in Central Asia. The loss of 700 men and a retreat of their advance column is confirmed. The check will, however, only be temporary, for there are conscripts enough to replace all who have been or will be killed in this aggressive warfare. The empire will be extended eastward, but many a poor peasant will yield his life in a cause in which neither he nor his can have the slightest interest.

THERE is considerable discussion among the Episcopalians of Ireland about laxness in receiving candidates for ordination. It is charged that, owing to the fewness of properly qualified candidates, some have been accepted without regard to their learning or fitness. One of the church papers says "it would raise the tone of a diocese at once if it were known that one man were rejected." It commends the example of the Methodists, who out of a list of 140 candidates sent back 35.

CALCULATIONS are already being made as to the amount of loss which the farmers of England will experience owing to the bad season. An estimate published a few days ago puts down the amount below an average on the corn crops alone at \$125,000,000, and \$140,000,000 if beans, peas and rye are added. Potatoes show a loss of \$75,000,000, hops of \$6,250,000, and hay of \$75,000,000. Here is a total loss of little less than \$300,000,000. It is further said that there will have to be imported at least 125,000,000 bushels of wheat, against 116,800,000 last year. If these figures can in any way be relied on—and there is too much reason to fear they can—there is no reason for further inquiry as to how it comes about that the British manufacturers are fairly alarmed at the prospects of the home trade.