

## BLUE MONDAY.

**Self-Abnegation Enforced.**

A YOUNG minister who had been recently ordained arranged to preach his first sermon in a country church in an outlying district in Lancashire, England, where he was an entire stranger. With the full flush of youthful energy, and with the confidence inspired by the fact that he was entirely unknown in those regions, he determined to preach his first sermon extempore, and as far as possible disguise from his audience the fact that he was but a fledgling in the ministry. Being a clergyman of the Church of England, he read the prayers attired in a surplice, and during the singing of a hymn proceeded to the vestry to assume the black gown. The Sunday-school of which he had been a vigorous and efficient superintendent had presented him with a magnificent black corded silk robe with wide flowing Geneva sleeves, and one of the ladies of the parish had given him a pair of snowy white bands, such as were worn in those days, worked with her own fingers. After the old woman who had charge of the robes of the vestry placed upon the shoulders of the young divine the beautiful silken robe, and had adjusted the white bands, she watched him emerging from the vestry door, and then she timidly pulled him by the skirt of his gown and whispered, "You have forgotten your sermon, sir;" to which the young cleric haughtily replied, "Oh, I am an extempore preacher." Confident in his self-conceit, the young parson mounted the pulpit stairs, as his black silk gown rustled to the charm of his rustic congregation. Opening his Bible, he gave out the text, and proceeded to preach entirely without the assistance of notes or manuscript; but his presence of mind forsook him. The galleries of the church seemed to whirl round with velocity, and the upraised countenances of the congregation who had come to hear "the strange minister" were but a confused mass. The young man found the

saliva of his mouth dried up, and his poor brain lapsed into complete vacuity. He had neither the power to think nor the ability to speak. Dropping upon his knees, he muttered the benediction, and then stepped down the pulpit stairs a crestfallen and humiliated man. When he had reached the vestry the old woman, as she assisted him in taking off the Geneva gown, exclaimed: "Ah, sir, if you had but gone up as you came down, you might have come down as you went up."

**Dormi Secure.**

A RECENT contributor to the London *Vegetarian* says that sleepiness frequently steals over a congregation, which must be a sort of hypnotism, arising probably from the voice of the preacher. It reminds one of a collection of old sermons, entitled "Dormi Secure," "Sleep at Ease," which were intended to convey such peace of mind to the reader as to secure a Sabbath night's rest. It also brings to our recollection a story related by Hugh Latimer. The good bishop tells us of a gentlewoman in London city whose neighbor met her in the street. "Mistress, whither go ye?" "Marry," she replied, "I am going to the Church of St. Thomas of Acres, to hear the sermon. I could not sleep at all last night, and now I am going thither, for I never fail of getting a nap there."

**Death, and Hell Following Behind.**

THE celebrated Scotch preacher of the Grayfriars was returning from church one Sunday afternoon when he met Hugo Arnot, the Scotch infidel, who was a man of so emaciated appearance that he was often compared to a walking skeleton, riding on a white horse. "Doctor," said the infidel, "I wonder that a man of your sense should preach to a parcel of old wives Sunday after Sunday. What was your text this afternoon?" "The text," replied Dr. Erskine, looking askance at the emaciated infidel, "was in the sixth chapter of Revelation, 'And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death; and hell followed with him.'" Arnot quickly gave rein to his horse, and galloped off without answering a word.