

Dr. Talmage on Gambling.

Dr. Talmage in a recent sermon alluded as follows to the gambler:

Shall I sketch the history of the gambler? Lured by bad company he finds his way into a place where honest men ought never to go. He sits down to his first game but only for pastime and the desire of being thought sociable. The players deal out the cards. They unconsciously play into satan's hands who takes all the tricks and both the players' souls for trumps—he being a sharper at any game. A slight stake is put up just to add interest to the play.

Game after game is played. Larger stakes and still larger. They begin to move nervously on their chairs. Their brows lower and eyes flash, until now they who win and they who lose, fired alike with passion, sit with set jaws and compressed lips and clenched fists, and eyes like fire-balls that seem starting from their sockets, to see the final turn before it comes: if losing, pale with envy and tremulous with unuttered oaths cast back red-hot upon the heart—or winning, with hysteric laugh—"Ha! ha! I have it! I have it!"

A few years have passed and he is only the wreck of a man. Seating himself at the game ere he throws the first card, he stakes the last relic of his wife, and the marriage ring which sealed the solemn vows between them. The game is lost, and staggering back in exhausting he dreams. The bright hours of the past mock his agony, and in his dreams fiends with eyes of fire and tong of flame circle around him with joined hands, to dance and sing their orgies with hellish chorus, chanting "Hail! brother!" kissing his clammy forehead until their loathsome locks, flowing with serpents, crawl into his bosom and sink their sharp fangs and suck up his life's blood, and coiling around his heart pinch it with chills and shudders unutterable.

To a gambler's deathbed comes no hope. He will probably die alone. His former associates come not nigh his dwelling. When the hour comes his miserable soul will go out of a miserable life into a miserable eternity. As his poor remains pass the house where he was ruined, old companions may look out a moment and say: "There goes the old carcass—dead at last," but they will not get up from the table. Let him down into his grave. Plant no tree to cast a shade there, for the long deep, eternal gloom that settles there is shadow enough. Plant no "forget-me-nots" or eglantines around the spot, for flowers were not made to grow on such a blasted heath. Visit it not in the sunshine, for that would be mockery, but in the dismal night when no stars are out and the spirits of darkness come down horsed on the wind, then visit the grave of the gambler.

How to Make a Horse Laugh

Bet you a dollar I can make that horse laugh," said a man with a white hat, as he patted a demure-looking beast on the flank.

"Never saw him before in my life."

"Is he the same as any other horse?"

"Just the same, so far as I can see."

"Well, I'll bet you a dollar for luck."

The man with the white hat passed his hand over the nostrils of the naimal, and then stepped back upon the pavement. A moment later the eyes of the horse began to roll, and then his upper lip shrivelled up so high that seven teeth sprang into view.

"See him laugh?" yelled the man with the white hat, as he danced a Lancashire step on the flagging. Tears leaped to the eyes of the horse, and his respirations came heavy and fast as he lifted his head into the air and uttered a loud guffaw.

"Give me the money, I win the bet," exclaimed the man with the white hat, amid a series of sneezes and snorts from the laughing animal. The sad-eyed man gave up his dollar and passed on. Just as the animal was about to drop down from exhaustion the man with the white hat pulled a blue-bottle fly from his victim's nostrils.

"That makes a V I have won today," he said, giving the horse a congratulatory slap. "It's rather tough on the critters, but a fellow must live, you know. You can use a fly for one experiment only, but when you have a bottle full, as I have here in my pocket, you do not mind the loss."

