

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.—Ecl. xi. 9.

“WHY GADDEST THOU ABOUT SO MUCH.” Jer. ii. 36.

LN the swallow you have a creature abundantly busy, up in the early morning, ever on the wing, as graceful and sprightly in his flights as he is bashful in the haunts which he selects. Look at him zig-zagging over the clover-field, skimming the limpid lake, whisking round the steeple, or dancing gaily in the sky. Behold him in high spirits—shrieking out his ecstasy as he has bolted a dragon-fly, or darted through the arrow-slits of the old turret, or performed some feat of agility; and notice how he pays his morning visits, alighting elegantly on some house-top, and twittering politely by turns to the swallow on either side of him, and after five minutes conversation, off and away to call for his friend at the castle. And now he has gone upon his travels; gone to spend the winter at Rome or Naples, to visit Egypt or the Holy Land, or perform some *recherche* pilgrimage to Spain or the coast of Barbary. And when he comes home next April, sure enough he has been abroad: charming climate—highly delighted with the cicadas in Italy, and the bees on Hymettus, or locusts in Africa—on the whole, pleased with his trip, and returned in high health and spirits.

Now, dear friends, this is a very proper life for a swallow, but is it a life for you? To flit about from house to house; to pay futile visits, where, if the talk were written down, it would amount to little more than the chattering of the swallow; to bestow all your thoughts on graceful attitudes, and nimble movements and polished attire, to roam from land to land without any information in your head, and so little taste for the sublime and beautiful in yoursoul, that could a swallow publish his travels and did

you publish yours, we should probably find the one a counterpart of the other: the winged traveller enlarging on the discomforts of his nest, and the wingless traveller on the miseries of his hotel or of his chateau: you describing the places of amusement, or enlarging on the vastness of the country and the abundance of the game, and your rival eloquent on the self-same things.

Friends, this thought is not ridiculous but appalling. If the earthly history of some of our brethren were written down; if a faithful record were kept of the way they spend their time; if all the hours of idle vacancy or idle occupancy were put together, and the very small amount of useful diligence deducted, the life of a beast of the field or a fowl of the firmament, would be a truer one—more worthy of its powers and more equal to its Creator's end in forming it. Such a register is kept, though the trifler does not chronicle his own vain words and wasted hours, they chronicle themselves. They find their indelible place in that book of remembrance with which human hand cannot tamper, and from which no erasure but one can blot them out. They are noted in the memory of God.

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.—Mat. xii. 36-37.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.—2 Cor. v. 10.

YOUNG MEN!
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BIBLE CLASS
Conducted by the GENERAL SECRETARY
EVERY THURSDAY EVENING
AT 8 O'CLOCK.

C O M E :