

and add to them the picture of a tall stout man, in a rough great-coat, and with a large comforter round his neck, buffeting through the wind and storm. The darkness is coming rapidly, as a man with a basket on his head turns the corner of the street, and there are two of us on the opposite sides. He cries loudly as he goes 'Herrings! three a penny! red herrings, good and cheap, at three a penny!' So crying he passes along the street, crosses at its end, and comes to where I am standing at the corner. Here he pauses, evidently wishing to fraternize with somebody, as a relief from the dull time and disappointed hopes of trade. I presume I appear a suitable object, as he comes close to me and commences conversation:

"Governor, what do you think of these 'ere herrings?"

"As he speaks, I note that he has three in his hand, while the remaining stock are deftly balanced in the basket on his head.

"Don't you think they're good?" and he offers me the opportunity of testing them by scent, which I courteously but firmly decline; "and don't you think they're cheap as well?"

"I assert my decided opinion that they are good and cheap.

"Then, look you, governor, why can't I sell 'em? yer have I walked a mile and a half along this dismal place, offering these good and cheap unqs; and nobody don't buy none!"

"I do not at all wonder at that," I answer.

"Tell us why not, governor; tell us why not."

"The people have no work at all to do, and they are starving; there are plenty of houses round here that have not had a penny in them for many a day," was my convincing but unsatisfactory reply.

"Ah! then governor," he rejoined, "I've put my foot in it this time; I knew that they was werry poor, but I thought three a penny 'ud tempt 'em. But if they haven't the ha'pence, they can't spend 'em, sure enough; so there's nothing for it but to carry 'em back, and try and sell 'em elsewhere. I thought by selling cheap arter buying cheap, I could do them good, and earn a trifle for myself. But I'm done this time."

"How much will you take for the lot?" I inquired.

"First a keen look at me—then down came the basket from his head—then a rapid calculation—then a grinning inquiry—

"Do you mean profit an' all, governor?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll take four shillin', and be glad to get 'em."

"I put my hand in my pocket, produced that amount, and handed it to him.

"Right! governor, thank'ee! What'll I do with 'em?" he said, as he quickly transferred the coins to his own pocket.

"Go round this corner into the middle of the road, shout with all your might, "*Herrings for Nothing!*" and give three to every man, woman, and child that comes to you, till the basket is emptied."

"On hearing these instructions, he immediately reproduced the money, and carefully examined it piece by piece. Being satisfied of its genuineness, he again replaced it, and then looked very keenly and questioningly at me.

"Well," I said, "is it all right and good?"

"Yes," said he.

"Then the herrings are mine, and I can do as I like with them; but if you don't like to do as I tell you, give me my money back."

"All right! governor, an' they are yours; so if you says it, here goes!"

"Out of sight myself, I stood at the corner to watch his progress; and speedily he neared the house where a tall woman I knew stood at the first floor window, looking out upon him.

"Here you are, missus," he bawled, "herrings for nothing! a fine chance for yer; come an' take 'em!"

The woman shook her head unbelieving, and left the window.

"You're a fool!" said he, "but they won't be all so. Herrings for nothing!" A little child came out to look at him, and he called to her, "Yer, my dear, take these into yer mother, tell her how cheap they are—her-

rings for nothing.' But the child was afraid of him and them, and ran indoors. So down the street, in the snowy slush and mud, went the cheap fish, the vendor crying loudly as he went, 'Herrings for nothing!' and then added savagely, 'Oh, you fools!' Thus he reached the very end; and then turning to retrace his steps, he continued his double cry as he came, 'Herrings for nothing!' and then in a lower but very audible key, 'Oh, you fools!'

"Well!" I said to him calmly, as he reached me at the corner.

"Well!" he repeated, "if yer think so! When you gave me the money for herrings as yer didn't want, I thought you was training for a lunatic 'sylum! Now I think all the people round here are fit company for yer. But what'll I do with the herrings, if yer don't want 'em and they won't have 'em?"

"We'll try again together," I replied; "I will come with you this time, and we'll both shout."

"Into the road we both went; and he shouted once more and for the last time, 'Herrings for nothing!'

"Then I called out loudly also, 'Will any one have some herrings for tea?'

"They heard the voice, and they knew it well; and they came out at once, in twos and threes and sixes, men and women and children; all striving to reach the welcome food. As fast as I could take them from the basket, I handed three to each eager applicant, until all were speedily disposed of. When the basket was empty, the hungry crowd who had none was far greater than those that had been supplied; but they were too late; there were no more 'Herrings for nothing!'

"Foremost among the disappointed was a tall woman of a bitter tongue, who began vehemently, 'Why haven't I got any? ain't I as good as they? ain't my children as hungry as theirs? Why haven't I got any?'

"Before I had time to reply, the vendor stretched out his arm towards her, saying, 'Why, governor, that's the very woman as I offered 'em to first, and she turned up her nose at 'em.'

"I didn't," she rejoined passionately; "I didn't believe you meant it!"

"Yer goes without for yer unbelief!" he replied. "Good-night and thank'ee, governor!"

As I told the story upon the sea-beach, the crowd gathered and increased, and looked at each other; first smiled, and then laughed outright.

It was my time then! and I said, "You cannot help laughing at the quaint story, which is strictly true. But are you sure you would not have done as they did; been as unbelieving as they? Nay! are you sure you are not ten thousand times worse than they? Their unbelief only cost them a hungry stomach a little longer; but what will your unbelief cost you?—God—not man—God has sent His messenger to you repeatedly for many years, to offer pardon for nothing! peace for nothing! salvation for nothing! He has sent to your houses, your home, your hearts, the most loving and tender offers that even an Almighty God could frame; and what have you replied? Have you taken the trouble to reply at all? Have you not turned away in scornful unbelief, like the woman? or ran away in fear like the little child?"

"Take warning by that disappointed crowd of hungry applicants. When they were convinced the offer was in good faith, and would have gladly shared with their fellows, they were too late!"

"Let it not be so with you! Do not you be in that crowd of disappointed ones, who will be obliged to believe, when belief will not help them."

As I looked earnestly upon that vast crowd upon the sea-shore, the laughter was utterly gone, and an air of uneasy conviction was plainly traceable upon many faces.

"Will you not come to God by Jesus now?" I entreated. "He is waiting, watching for, pleading with you! there is salvation, full, free, and eternal, uttermost, complete redemption—all for nothing!"

Though we had no place to retire to, it was good to walk up and down on the beach, showing the way of God more perfectly to some who were attracted and impressed by this commencement of a sermon by the sea.

THE SABBATH.

The fifty-two Sabbaths of rest, with which the year is interspersed, are like patches of verdure watered by ever-springing fountains, that dot the inhospitable wilderness and invite its fainting travellers to exhilaration and repose. O! precious day!—the workman's jubilee—the shield of servitude—the antidote of weariness. How it smooths the brow of care. How it brightens the countenance of gloom. How it braves the enervated limbs of labour. How it revives the drooping spirit. How it gives wings to the clogged affections and aspirations of the soul. How it lifts the groveller from his low pursuits and fills him with a noble self-respect.

Companions of labour! Have you ever attempted to compute the value of the Sabbath, even in this lowest of its uses, as a provision of rest for the body? O! glorious Sabbath, almoner and nurse of health. We, the children of toil, flee to the shadow of thy protection. Thou standest beside us like some guardian spirit, casting over us the shield of thine excellency, enfolding our jaded powers in Thy sustaining arms, and saying to the encroaching tide of human selfishness: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. May Thy bulwarks, notwithstanding all hostile assaults, stand strong among us as the everlasting hills and be in all coming ages for a refuge and a covert to the children of men."

A really sanctified Sabbath throughout the world would present one of the most interesting spectacles that could be witnessed on earth.

Look forth on a Sabbath morning when all is peaceful and quiet, as God designed the Sabbath to be, and behold! the delectable representation of the Sabbath—rest! Then every sound would breathe softer; every tint gleam brighter; every scene would appear fresher, and we might read in every softened feature of nature the sweet tranquility of Sabbath-rest. The gates of the Temple of Mammon are shut and the gods of silver and gold are forsaken by their week-day devotees.

The chiming bells, sounding alike across country and towns, are calling upon all men to cut the cords of their earth-bound thoughts and low cares and go up to worship at the footstool of Jehovah.—*A. Printer, Prize Essay on the Sabbath.*

The Preacher and Homiletic Monthly.

New York: The Religious Newspaper Agency.

The September number of the "Preacher and Homiletic Monthly" closes the volume. Among the contents are the following sermons:—"Sowing and Reaping in the Kingdoms of Nature and Grace," by James McCosh, D.D., LL.D., delivered before the Graduating Class at Princeton College and revised for this publication; "Reverence and Godly Fear," by Henry J. Van Dyke, D.D.; "The Testimony of our Conscience," by J. H. Rylance, D.D.; "The Human Side of Christ's Person," by Rev. David Winters. The four sermons just mentioned are given in full. There are a number of sermons given in abridged form from Drs. Van Doren, Tyng, Horatio Bonar, Herrick Johnson, Foss and others. Besides the Sermons, the number contains much other matter designed to unfold and illustrate the principles of Homiletics. Dr. William M. Taylor furnishes his fourth paper on "Expository Preaching;" Dr. Tilley, a paper on "Some Essentials of Successful Preaching." Then we have "Studies in the Book of Revelation," by Rev. D. C. Hughes; "Science in the Pulpit," by Rev. John Moore; "Prayer-Meeting Service," by Rev. Lewis O. Thompson; "Sermonic Criticism," etc.

DR. BLODGET, of Peking, writes to the "Missionary Herald" some cheering news from that city. He says eleven persons have just been received by baptism, including a family of six from Ho-kein-fu, who were relieved last year as famine sufferers. One of the baptized was a Buddhist priest, surnamed Meng, who surrendered his certificate of priesthood, his sacred bowl, and his sacred garments, and lost withal a very comfortable income.