

our teachers are on a higher platform than those of years gone by. Ability of the highest order is a necessity, but along with it is wanted holy fire. God's Spirit alone can touch the heart, but God blesses the means used. Passion is a great lever, and if used will call forth earnestness on the part of the scholar. If we have a spark of fire in our hearts may it be fanned into a flame. It is difficult to quench a fire, and so is it difficult to dispel the words of an earnest, loving teacher.

A Timely Warning.

I HOPE Shakspeare's spirit will forgive me for slightly altering his words about finding "sermons in stones," and putting them in this shape,—“A sermon on a stone,”—for such I once found in a most unexpected place. I was walking down Ludgate Hill (many years since), and I noticed that in the middle of the roadway of Farringdon Street there had been set up a broad and strong slab of stone, with a ledge, on which the numerous porters and burden-bearers, who throng up and down, could lay down their parcels for a rest,—a token of consideration for the weary that it did one's heart good to see. Lest, however, the kindness should lead to mischief, there was inscribed on the slab the significant warning, “DO NOT LEAVE YOUR GOODS.” I should imagine that the benevolent men who provided the relief had noticed some cases in which a thoughtless man, when resuming his journey, had forgotten a part of his burden, and left it behind to be the spoil of the first finder, and carried off before he had discovered his loss and retraced his steps.

The warning is one of wide application; for if these days are noted for the activity and speed of business,—if the tide of life seems to run faster, and the great wheels of the chariot of commerce whirl round with ever-increasing rapidity, it is on the other hand no less true that the provision for relaxation and pleasure-taking is wonderfully larger and more abundant. We know (and with sorrow) that there still are large and important branches of the community that have not yet felt the

benefit of this, and to whom neither Saturday nor Sunday brings the relief demanded alike by body and by spirit. But take the question as a whole, and no one can deny that the hours of labor are sensibly shortened, and that the happy possessor of an evening or a half-holiday has many more chances of enjoyment than were within reach twenty or thirty years back.

Let me dismiss at present all arguments as to what amusements are hurtful, which are simply neutral, and which are truly improving. I do not want to go into details, but I want to put up the Stone Sermon, and say to all holiday-makers, “Do not leave your goods.”

Some innocent pleasures, carried to excess, bear their own condemnation. I remember reading of a young fellow who, after years of sedentary life, had a fortnight's holiday given him. He went into the country on a walking tour, to do his twenty miles daily! The unaccustomed strain broke down his health, and he had a serious illness. This perhaps was an extreme case, but it illustrates my argument. Boating, football, cricket, athletics, are noble uses of a holiday,—but nevertheless, my friend, “do not leave your goods.” Neither spend more money than you can afford, nor suffer your mind to be so engrossed with the enjoyment that the next day's business is badly done.

The warning applies still more powerfully to all evening amusements. The world cannot yet prove the old-fashioned maxims as to health to be unsound. The four fine rules for preserving that health, which were once defined thus,—“Keep the head cool and the feet warm, take a light supper, and go to bed early,” will never lose their value. How they interfere with some modern pleasures let my young readers reflect. The hot, throbbing brow, the heavy dull headache of a morning, tell tales of imprudence (without anything more serious), and show that the pleasure-seeker has left some of his goods behind.

Do not suppose these few remarks are intended to curtail harmless enjoyments. Recreation is one of our human necessities; and when pursued with prudence and moderation, and above all with a remembrance of our accountability to our