

Again. The Saviour, illustrating, by the parable of the "Great Supper," the bounteous provision of mercy in the Gospel, enjoins, by direct command, the duty of out-door preaching: "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."

The greatest sermon of our Divine Teacher on record was preached on a mountain. Many others of which we have full accounts, were preached by the seashore, on the decks of ships, and in the streets of Capernaum. He preached, to be sure, in the temple and in the synagogues, but of His sermons on those occasions there is less recorded than of His "out-door sermons." We believe that He established, by His own example, the precedents He designed to be practically operative through all time, namely, to get all we can into the synagogues and churches, and there preach to them, and then to "go out into the streets and lanes of the cities, and into the highways and hedges," and hunt up all the rest, and preach to them also. The apostles acted accordingly. The great apostle to the Gentiles was celebrated as an out-door preacher.

One Sunday morning in October, 1851, says the Rev. W. Taylor, in his "Street Preaching," I preached to a large audience on "Long Wharf," from the parable of the Sower. Illustrating how "Satan cometh immediately and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts," I said of Satan, that "Just at the moment the good seed would take effect, he excites in the heart of the hearer opposing passions, or diverts his attention by presenting to his mind some attractive scheme or train of thought while he devours the seed; or by sending a waggon-load of calves through the midst of the audience, to the great annoyance of attentive listeners"—(a load of calves for the market at that moment was passing through the crowd.)


The audience so blocked the street sometimes from side to side with a living mass of humanity that it was difficult for a man to get through. A waggon or dray would therefore be subjected to considerable delay in making a passage through, and I frequently took advantage of the opportunity, and gave them a little "grape" as they passed. Once when a lean-looking man, driving a poor horse, was trying to urge his way through the crowd, I said, "Look at that poor man! Working seven days in the week is bringing him rapidly down to his grave. A man cannot break the law of the Sabbath without violating a law of his own constitution. Look at his sunken, sallow cheeks, and his dim eyes! How the sin of Sabbath-breaking is telling on him. He'll die soon if he don't reform. Look at his poor old horse. The Lord ordained a Sabbath for that horse, but his merciless master is cheating him out of it. See there, how he beats him. After all, I had rather be the horse than the man, if he dies as he lives."

I always tried to follow such scenes by the most solemn appeal the subject in hand would allow. The sudden surprise of such appeals sometimes produces a

thrilling effect for good. An important end is accomplished when a sleepy congregation is by any legitimate means fairly waked up. First melt, and then mould the metal.

When due care is used, the preaching of the Gospel in the open air is sure to have good results. "That day" will only declare how many souls have heard the truth in the streets, and having received it into "honest and good hearts," have brought forth "in some thirty, in some sixty, in some a hundred fold." May the number of wise, faithful open-air witnesses be greatly multiplied!

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

 An eminent lawyer was once led to acknowledge the Divine origin of the Scriptures by simply meditating on the Decalogue. For a long time, in spite of the exhortations of a faithful friend, he persevered obstinately in his unbelief. One day, however, when this friend came to see him, he said, with much emotion, "I am a believer."

"How is this?" asked his friend, as much surprised as rejoiced at the news.

"I will tell you. I read over the law of the ten commandments, and after examining it with all the rigour of an advocate seeking for the flaws in his adversary's case, I found it to be perfection itself. The Decalogue begins with our duty towards God. That is just and right. For if there exists a Divine Creator and Legislator, we owe to Him our highest obligations, and all others must depend upon them.

"The first commandment forbids us to have any other gods before God. That is right. A divided adoration would be a profanation, and unworthy of Jehovah.

"The second commandment forbids to make any graven image, or any likeness of God. That is right. For material images would very soon lead man to idolatry.

"The third commandment forbids us to take the name of God in vain. That is right. Respect in language is one of the firmest guarantees for the reverence of the heart.

"The fourth commandment enjoins us to consecrate one day in seven to God. That is right. The interval ordained is not too long, nor too short, and it was needful to set apart some time for religion if it was to exist in the world.

"Then come our duties towards our neighbour; and the second table is not less admirable than the first. The fifth commandment, first of all, lays the foundation of family union by insisting on filial piety. That is right. For the family is the basis of all human relations; without it society is impossible. The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth commandments are intended to protect life, conjugal fidelity, the rights of property, and the reputation of our neighbour. All this, too, is right. A better order could not be conceived in the recital of our obligations, nor one more complete.

"Finally, the tenth commandment is intended to repress covetousness. This also is right and good. Evil thoughts must be attacked in the depths of the