

Selections.

HOW A WOMAN CHEATED THE DEVIL.

A happy couple in Wiltshire, in humble life, recently had their family enlarged by the addition of twins; but in a few days one of the babies sickened and died, and alarming symptoms foretold the speedy departure of the other. In these distressing circumstances, the parents sent for the clergyman of the parish, in order that the dear little ones might be fitted for the kingdom of heaven. On his arrival a sad state of things was disclosed. He, of course, soon made the living child "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," but what to do with the dead child was past his comprehension. The distressed mother first entreated him to let a few drops of the "holy water" fall upon the dead child's face, but that could not be; then she prayed him that as they were both born together, so in case of the second death, they might be both buried in the same coffin, or at least in the same grave. This very natural wish did not harmonize with the theology of the Wiltshire parson, and so it was not granted. The second child died, the funeral was arranged, the two coffins were brought forth, but only one of the babes was committed to the earth in the "sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life," and when the distressed parents inquired, where the other child was to be interred, the reply was to the effect that it must be buried at night in unconsecrated ground, without service or ceremony, as it had not been baptized. Here, however, a new chapter opened, for the mother declared that the buried child was the unbaptized one, and that being now committed in "sure and certain hope" he was safe: while she claimed Christian burial for the other, on the ground of this having been made "a member of Christ," &c. In this dilemma the parson, in no measured terms, denounced the woman as a cheat, and charged her with cheating God, cheating the church, and cheating him also. The reply was a nonplus. "I am very sorry," sobbed the woman, "if I have done wrong; I did not wish to cheat God nor the church, but I confess I had no scriptures about cheating the devil!"—*Christian Treasury.*

FOOLISH TALKING AND JESTING.

An Incident in the Life of Rosenius, a Swedish Evangelist.

"Oh! how we must watch," Rosenius said, "over our conversation, even among those who are of our own household, to avoid hurting both them and ourselves! I will relate," he continued, "something out of my own experience to illustrate this. At one time foolish and frivolous talking and jesting had become a practice among us when gathered at table. My conscience smote me for it, yet this little sin became a habit, and got the better of me. By and bye I became really troubled about it, and tried to break through the custom, praying to God for forgiveness and help; but in vain. We had all been led far into the sin, and now I emptied each other. I became alarmed, and asked God to show whatever means He chose to deliver us from this fault, and to bring us back to that holy

earnestness and peace of conscience which we had for a long time missed. And what happened? God heard my prayer; but not in the way expected, not in the way I had wished. He let my darling child become ill and die. Now at once the 'foolish jesting' fled away of itself, and now at once in the whole house there was seriousness and sorrow. When the first anguish of grief was over, and I became myself again, I thanked my God most heartily, though with tears, for this wonderful answer to my prayers."—*Family Treasury.*

THE COMPOSITION OF SERMONS

A sermon properly consists of two parts—exposition and application. The truth lies in the text like a sword in the scabbard. The business of the minister is first to draw the sword—that is exposition; next to cut and thrust with it on the right hand and on the left—that is application. The hearers must be first of all see what is the mind of God in the text, and then that mind of God is to be used for their reformation. It is not enough that the preacher preach the truth; the hearers must also know for themselves that it is the very truth of God. The power does not lie simply in the truth, but in the truth perceived to be of God. When this point has been gained, then the power of preaching is the power of God. Hence careful exposition, showing beyond all question what is the mind of God in the text, is the indispensable first thing in every sermon. Without this the sword of the Spirit is not there. The sword sheathed is of no avail. Let it be drawn by exposition, and then let it be wielded with a will.—*Dr. Chalmers.*

HE THAT WILL NOT WORK, NEITHER LET HIM EAT.

Mr. Moody, in a recent address to reformed drunkards in Boston, said:— "These are hard times I know, and it is hard to get work, but Spring has come and if you cannot get work in the city, start out into the country. A great many farmers want men now. It is not degrading to go out and hoe and shovel in the field. It is noble, I think. I do not believe there is a man in this city that really wants work but can get it in the country. If you haven't money to ride, walk out. You can foot it on a good pleasant day like this, ten or fifteen miles a day. Besides, you will have a better chance walking than if you passed the farmers' places on a train. If you're looking for work not beg. Ask for something to do. If you are offered anything without work do not take it. They will give you some wood to saw or some work for do that will pay for what you get. Your meals will taste a good deal sweeter when you have earned them by the sweat of your brow. If you will not beg or steal men will respect and help you. It may be a hard chance to get the first footing, but if you hold right on God will open a way for you, and if need be send down a legion of angels to help you. 'What would you do with a man that would not work?' I think Paul was right."

"If a man will not work, he shall not eat." I think we are doing these men a great injury if we help them when they won't work. Some of these men have professed, but there is no difference between profession and being regenerated. We are living in days of shame—and they see others come out, and that they are getting fed, and getting new clothes, and they say: 'These men are making a good thing out of it; I guess I'll reform too.' When I was President of the Young Men's Christian Association in Chicago, we used to have

those men coming in all the time. They would tell about their suffering and how they had no work and wanted help. At last I got two or three hundred cords of wood and piled it in a vacant lot, and got some saws and sawbucks and kept them out of sight. A man would come and ask for help. 'Why don't you work?' 'I can't get any.' 'Would you go if you could get any?' 'Oh, yes, anything.' 'Would you really work in the streets?' 'Yes.' 'Would you saw wood?' 'Yes.' 'All right,' and then we would bring out the saw and sawbuck and send them out, but we would have a boy to watch and see that they did not steal the saw. Then the fellow would say, 'I will go home and tell my wife I have got some work,' and that would be the last we should see of him. Out of the whole winter I never got more than three or four cords of wood sawed. We heard from our friend Dr. Tyng last week that we want a good deal of mother in this work; yes, and we want some father, too. If you are always showering mercy on these men, and giving them food and raiment, they will live in idleness, and not only ruin themselves, but their children. It is not charity at all to help them when they will not work. If a man will not work let him starve. They never die. I never heard of them really starving to death. You may say that is harsh, but we need a little of that now. It says in the fifteenth chapter of Proverbs, 'The way of the slothful man is hedged with thorns.' I never knew them to get out till they worked their way out. I had charge of the relief in Chicago for a number of years, and I was brought into contact with these lazy men, and I say there is no hope for a man that will not work. Talk about their conversion, it is only just put on to get a little money out of you without work. Some of you ladies think you are doing God's service by giving them money, but you are really injuring them. It says in Ecclesiastes, tenth chapter and eighteenth verse, 'By how slothfulness the building decayeth.' You see many young men in Boston soft, decayed from idleness. You cannot keep the body healthy without work. We are commanded to earn our bread by the sweat of our brows. Get something to do. If it is for fifteen hours a day all the better, for while you are at work Satan does not have so much chance to tempt you. It is these men that are out of work that Satan tempts.

A CHRISTIAN GROCER DESTROYING HIS WINES.—Mr. Wilson, missionary at Redruth, Cornwall, relates:—"A Christian tradesman in this town, who sold a quantity of British wine, had so laid upon his mind the evil of the liquor traffic that he resolved not to renew his license. As this would not expire for months, he could not wait, and one day I was called in to see the destruction of the stuff, when he ordered every bottle to be uncorked, and the whole was thrown into the cesspool. On beholding this I felt constrained to give out Mr. Moody's favourite hymn in the shop, 'Rejoice and be glad, the Redeemer is come.' The Lord has made it up to him, for although this was done a few days before the Christmas market, when the sale of wines would be an important item, his receipts and sales were quite equal to former years, if not more. He is now an active worker in the Gospel temperance work in our town. Let us pray that the Lord may lead many others to go and do likewise."

"MONEY I give me money, or I shall be driven to a deed my soul abhors." The coin produced a handful of silver with tremulous alacrity, and it then occurred to him to inquire what particular form of felony his benevolence had defeated. "Work," muttered the wanderer, as he fobbed the coin and passed away.

CHANGE OF TITLE.—From *The Priest in Abnegation to Absolute Pollution in the Priest.*—PUNCH.