

IN HIS PROCLAMATION for a fast-day the Governor of Massachusetts exhorts ministers of the gospel on that day to feed their flocks with the Divine word and not to discourse upon political and other secular topics. Although there ought to be nothing irreverent in politics or other serious concerns of men, yet under party government it would be highly injudicious to discuss political questions before any audience convened for religious purposes. Governor Butler's advice is therefore not improper; yet now and then, in the history of nations, questions arise upon which it is almost impossible that good men can be divided, when preachers of righteousness ought to raise their voices for the right at all hazards.

THE AREA OF FLOOD in the Middle States has been moving south, and a rise in the Mississippi is expected to continue increasing for ten days from Monday last. Serious damage has been done to corn awaiting shipment on the river banks. On the twenty-second, Columbus, Kentucky, was ten feet under water owing to the levee breaking, and Belmont, across the river, was in a similar situation. Great loss of stock in bottoms has been reported, and a great many people will have to be fed by the relief committees. At Cairo, Illinois, the river reached fifty-two feet on the twenty-fourth, the highest ever known there. A despatch from Indiana says a thousand farm houses along the Wabash River have been washed away, and the small towns all along the river were submerged or surrounded by water.

A REVOLT IN THE PENITENTIARY at Sing Sing, New York, has lately been attracting attention. Forty-two convicts in the laundry department flung down their irons because twenty-six shirts to do up a day was too heavy a task, yet the authorities learned from several laundries in Troy that girls of sixteen did twenty-nine shirts a day easily. The men were put on bread and water to subdue them, and eighty men who rebelled in the shoe shops were locked up to the same fare, as also rioters in other departments, two hundred and thirty-two in all being thus disciplined. Two men who were selected to lead four hundred convicts in the foundries in a rising declined to do so and all went quietly to their work. The long term prisoners comprised the rebels, chiefly, and there were, frequently, terrible fights between them and the short term ones, who did not wish to extend their terms of confinement by bad conduct. A legislative committee had recently begun an investigation into the management of the penitentiary, and the accounts given by some of the convicts indicated most barbarous cruelty on the part of the keepers, but a good deal of discredit was cast upon their testimony by the evidence of a released convict and others. It is said that it was the investigation that led to the getting up of the revolt, the effect of which, however, has been to destroy any public sympathy for the convicts which the investigation may have created. A plot was formed by convicts in a penitentiary at Jefferson City, Missouri, to destroy the buildings and escape. The hospital was set on fire but was saved by volunteer and convict firemen, and the citizens of all classes turned out and surrounded the prison walls, prepared to shoot down any convict attempting to escape. Twenty-five convicts at work straightening the levee at Williams Place, Arkansas, disarmed their guard and escaped, and one of them shot and killed Major James Grant, who pursued them.

EARTHQUAKES AND VOLCANIC disturbances are unusually frequent in Japan.

ENGLISH HARVEST PROSPECTS are very dark, great tracks of farming lands being under water.

PROFESSOR BROOKS PHELPS, of Rochester, New York, has discovered a very large and brilliant comet.

It is **RUMORED** that troops in the State of Chiapas, Mexico, revolted, and that six of them were killed and nine wounded, and many escaped to Guatemala.

OPUM valued at fifteen thousand dollars has been seized on the steamer "City of Tokio" in San Francisco, and from the place in which it was concealed on the vessel it is believed the officers must have known something about it.

THE PRESIDENT of the British American Short Horn Association—Mr. Dryden, a member of the Provincial Legislature—in opening the last session of that body complained of the large number of spurious pedigrees which had been registered with the Agricultural and Arts Association of Ontario. The dishonest practice thus indicated will have the effect of destroying confidence in the register, and must injure the prices of really thoroughbred stock.

A NIHILIST has committed suicide in St. Petersburg, Russia, rather than murder Czar as ordered by a secret society. At Moscow preparations are being made on a vast scale for the coronation of the Czar. Eleven miles of tables are being put up on the plain, and eighty-five circular counters for the distribution of nine hundred thousand pies. Free beer is to be dispensed from immense vats, and the Kremlin—that is the square containing the chief public buildings—is to be illuminated with the electric light. It is said the Czar will shortly issue a manifesto offering loans to the peasantry for the purchase and improvement of land.

THE REPRESENTATIVES of Prince Edward Island in the Canadian Parliament are urging the fulfilment of the terms under which that Province entered the Dominion by the Government providing satisfactory communication with the mainland in winter. At present the only regular means of travel to and from the Island is by boats mounted on runners, which often have to be dragged over fields of floating ice. Except in fine weather with clear water the trip is hazardous in the extreme and only to be undertaken by persons in robust health and strength. Some years ago a steamer was built for the service, of a peculiar build to make her way through ice of all sorts, but she was not able to encounter solid ice of more than a few inches and was helpless in the midst of large floes. Under favorable circumstances, however, the "Northern Light" was of great service and did work that an ordinary steamer of many times her size could not do, but she is at present laid up. Probably the best that can be done is to provide a staunch steamer—either after the model of the "Northern Light" or the steamers employed in the seal fisheries, or perhaps one combining the good points of both—to ply between the nearest available headlands, Cape Tormentine on the mainland and Cape Traverse on the Island, about twelve miles apart, to both of which points railways are to run from the respective main systems.

MANY UNHAPPY PERSONS seem to imagine that they are always in an amphitheatre, with the assembled world as spectators; whereas, all the while, they are playing to empty benches.

HOW TO GUARD NEW YORK AGAINST FLOODS.

A N. Y. *Tribune* reporter had a conversation on Saturday with James T. Gardiner, Director of State Survey, regarding the bill recently passed by the Legislature of New York State reserving certain forest lands in the Adirondacks from sale with a view to repetition of the terrible floods which have devastated the West. Said Mr. Gardiner:

"I look upon the bill as only the first step in a series of necessary measures for the preservation of the forests and the springs and streams that supply the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers. It is necessary not only that the lands of the State in that region should be reserved from sale, but also that special steps should be taken to protect the forests on the lands from destruction by fire and by the invasions of lumbermen. The State ought also to recover possession of large tracts of forest land already sold, which have been completely stripped of trees. It is not possible for any one to say whether it would be necessary for the State to gain possession of the whole Adirondack wilderness in order to accomplish the protection of the river sources. What is needed is a careful examination of the region and a determination of what parts of the forests are needed to save the streams. When that is done the lands decided upon should be purchased and the forests on them should be systematically cared for like the forests of Europe. These lands ought to be made to produce large amounts of lumber without in any way injuring the forests. On the contrary, the forests would be greatly improved by cutting out such trees as have reached maturity and by thus giving the younger trees a chance to come forward. Such a system of management would bring in a large revenue; it would preserve the sources of all the great rivers and would make the Adirondack wilderness more enjoyable for its beauty than it is now.

"It is well understood, or it ought to be, at least, that the danger from such terrible floods as have just devastated the West increases rapidly every year with the cutting down of the forests about the headwaters of the springs and streams that feed the large rivers. Another danger that is not so well appreciated at present is that of increased drought in summer. The navigation of the Hudson and of the Erie Canal will be endangered if steps are not speedily taken to save the forests of the north."

DR. BEECHER AND THE WOOD SAWYER.

His wood-saw was a constant companion. When his own wood was sawed he would go out on the street for work. One day he took his saw, shouldered his buck, and went out in search of a job. Soon he met with a man at work on a large pile. "Halloo!" said the Doctor, "you have a large job on hand. I guess I'll give you a lift, as I have nothing else to do." And at it he went with a will. His saw was always keen, and it was always worked as if by steam power. "What! what a jolly saw you have," said the wood-sawyer. "Yes," replied his unknown helper, "I always keep my tools sharp for quick work."

The conversation was soon turned to the one great topic of the day, namely, the new preacher. "Have you ever heard old Dr. Beecher preach?" said the wood-sawyer. "Oh, yes, frequently," replied the stranger, putting still more vigor into his work. "Well, what do you think of him?" "Oh, I don't think so much of him as some do," was the reply. The conversation at length came so close home, Dr. Beecher stopped work and said, "I guess I must be going." "But where did you get that saw?" inquired the old man; "I wish I had one like it." "Well, if you wish, I'll swap with you." And so they swapped saws, and the Doctor shouldering his buck started back on a trot through the alley behind his own house. The old sawyer began to cogitate. A new idea loomed up before him. He followed at a safe distance, noted the back gate at which he entered, went round to the front and noted the number, and soon learned that it was no other than Dr. Beecher himself with whom he had been sawing and chatting. From that time that old wood-sawyer was one of the pastor's attendants and adherents. I knew him well, and have often seen him at church, sitting in the front row of the gallery, on the right hand side near the pulpit.—*Walter's Reminiscences.*

ARE WE ALL MAD!

An interesting lecture has been delivered by Dr. Ball in his course at the Paris Faculty of Medicine. The generally received opinion that folly and reason are separated by a strictly drawn mathematical line is, according to Dr. Ball, quite erroneous. There is a broad frontier, he says, between sanity and insanity, peopled by millions of inhabitants. Dr. Ball holds that the number of persons perfectly reasonable on all points throughout the entire period of their existence forms but a minority of mankind. The world abounds with people, he tells us, whom a strict scientific diagnosis would condemn as mad, or more or less "touched"; yet, at no time of their life would it be permissible to put them under restraint. Such people are to be seen occupying honorably and successfully every position in life and society; we brush against them when we take our daily walks abroad; we see them in the mirror which reflects ourselves. Dr. Ball proceeds to a classification of these "same madmen," and assigns the first place "in the order of merit" (from which point of view he does not specify) to those who suffer from unreasonable, and, in most cases, irresistible impulses. Naturally enough, the lecturer referred to the case of Dr. Johnson and the curious impulse which prompted him to touch each post as he walked along the streets, an impulse so strong that, if he passed one by without the usual touch, he felt irresistibly compelled to return and repair the omission. The overpowering impulse to laugh on occasions of peculiar solemnity is one which even the most serious persons have experienced. A still more morbid impulse is that which sometimes urges pious people to indulge in blasphemous or profane language. A great English divine, Bishop Butler, was tormented all his life long by this temptation, which he only mastered by strong and sustained efforts of the will. The impulse sometimes assumes a suicidal form.

A REMARKABLE ILLUSTRATION of the dangers of impure water is reported from England. Sixty-eight cases of typhoid fever occurred among persons who attended a regatta at Evesham, Worcestershire. Nearly every one of the affected persons was found to have partaken of lemonade at a particular refreshment stall. On investigation it was found that the proprietor of the stall had taken the water for the lemonade from a disused well which had been closed because it was known to be contaminated. The moral is obvious. Contaminated wells should be filled up by the authority which denounces them. And persons attending races or other public gatherings should take refreshment with them if possible.

THE FEARFUL LOSS OF LIFE at the burning of the Berditschiff circus a month ago is said to have been due in large measure to the fact that, it being New Year's day, half the audience and all the firemen were drunk. The fire originated in a large open cask of kerosene which stood at the entrance to the stables and from which the lamps were refilled as often as they went out. One lamp hanging above the cask fell into it, and in a moment the building was in a blaze.

KERN COUNTY, Cal. has a man who claims to have cured himself of dyspepsia and rejuvenated himself by living on a diet of fruit and a coarse ground meal from oats or barley, and also eaten raw. He says his wife and son also live on the same food, and that it costs a few cents a month to feed himself and family.

THE BEST THING to give to your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to a father, deference; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect; to all men, charity.—*Mrs. Balfour.*

THE ETERNAL BOBBING of the scales of life was illustrated at New York the other day in the arrest of a dirty, drunken, penniless rascal who figured once in New York politics as Senator Thomas J. Creamer—one of Tweed's lackeys, and then worth half a million.

THE YOUNG LADY who made 700 rods out of "conservatory" last fall has recently eloped. She will soon have the opportunity to ascertain how many new dresses she can make out of her old clothes.—*Lovell Wilson.*