

BAD COMPANY.

Dr. Talmage on the Evils of Improper Associations.

Bad Results Due to Fellowship Contact With Sinful Persons—Dangers of Too Much Idleness and Pleasure—Compensations to Be Avoided.

In a recent sermon at Brooklyn on the subject of Evil Associations Dr. Talmage took his text from Proverbs xlii. 20: "A companion of fools shall be destroyed."

This is but one of the thousand proofs that the companion of fools shall be destroyed. It is the invariable rule. There is a well man in the wards of a hospital where there are a hundred people sick with ship fever and he will not be so apt to take the disease as a good man would be.

In olden times prisoners were herded together in the same cell, but each one learned the vices of all the culprits, so that, instead of being reformed by incarceration, the day of liberation turned them out upon society beasts, not men.

We may in our places of business be compelled to talk and to mingle with bad men, but he who deliberately chooses to associate himself with vicious people is engaged in carrying on a courtship with a Delilah whose shears will clip off all the locks of his strength and he will be tripped into perdition.

Shrink back from idleness in yourself and in others if you would maintain a right position. Good old Aahbel Green at more than eighty years of age was found busy writing and some young man said to him: "Why do you keep busy?" It is time for you to rest.

Are you fond of pictures? If so I will show you the work of an old master. Here it is: "I went by the field of the slothful and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof and the stonewall there was broken down."

Again, I urge you to avoid the perpetual pleasure seeker. I believe in recreation and amusement. I need it as much as I need bread, and go to my daily exercise with as conscientious a purpose as I go to the Lord's Supper; and all persons of sanguine temperament must have amusement and recreation.

You will do well to avoid those whose regular business it is to play ball, skate or go boating. All these sports are grand in their places. I never derived so much advantage from any ministerial association as from a ministerial club that went out to play ball every Saturday afternoon in the outskirts of Philadelphia.

Each man will crowd around your desk or counter or work bench or seek to decoy you off. They will want you to break out in the midst of your busy day to take a ride with them to Coney Island or to Central park. They will tell you of some people you must see; of some excursion that you must take; of some Sabbath day that you ought to honor.

lity suggest to such persons that you have no time to give them during business hours. Nothing would please them so well as to have you renounce your occupation and associate with them. Much of the time they lounge around the club rooms or the doors of engine houses, or after the dining hour and upon the steps of a fashionable hotel or an elegant restaurant wishing to give you the idea that in the past times they were friends. But they do not die these. They are sinking down lower and lower, day by day.

Neither by day nor by night have any thing to do with the idlers. Before you admit a man into your acquaintance ask him politely: "What do you do for a living?" If he says, "No thing; I am a gentleman," look out for him. He may have a very soft hand and very faintness apparel, and have a high-sounding family name, but his touch is death. Before you know it you will find his presence has ashamed of your work days. Business will become to you draggery, and after awhile you will lose your place, and afterward your respectability, and out of all your soul idleness is next door to villainy.

Rather than enter the companionship of such, accept the invitation to a better feast. The promises of God are the fruits. The harps of Heaven are the music. Clusters from the vineyards of God have been pressed into the tankards. The sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty are the guests. While standing at the banquet, to fill the cups and divide the clusters and command the harps and welcome the guests, is a daughter of God on whose brow are the blossom of paradise, and in whose cheek is the flush of celestial summer. Her name is Religion.

Decide soon, young man, on what direction you will take. I am coming such a moment of final decision—why not this? One evening I saw a man at the street corner evidently doubting as to what direction he had better take, his hat lifted high enough so you could see he had an intelligent forehead, and he had a stout chest and a robust development. Splendid young man. Cultured young man. Honored young man. Why did he stop there while so many were going up and down?

The fact is that every man has a good angel and a bad angel contending for the mastery of his spirit, and there was a good angel and a bad angel struggling with that young man's soul at the corner of the street. "Come with me," said the good angel; "I will take you home; I will sweep my wing over your pillow; I will lovingly escort you all through life under supernatural protection; I will bless every cup you drink out of, every couch you rest on, every doorway you enter; I will consecrate your tears when you weep, your sweat when you toil and at the last I will hand over your grave to the bright angel of a Christian resurrection. In answer to your father's petition and your mother's prayer I have been sent of the Lord out of Heaven to be your guardian spirit. "Come with me," said the good angel in a voice of unearthly sympathy. It was music like that which drops from a lute of Heaven when a seraph breathes on it.

"No, no," said the bad angel, "come with me; I have something better to offer. The wines I pour are from chalices of bewitching colour. The dance I lead is over floor tessellated with unrestrained indulgence. There is no God to frown on the temples of sin where I worship. The skies are Italian. The paths I tread are through meadows daisied and primrose-hued. Come with me." The young man hesitated at a time when hesitation was ruin and the bad angel smote the good angel until it departed, spreading wings through the starlight upward and away, until a door flashed open in the sky and forever the wings vanished. That was the turning point in that young man's history; for, the good angel flows, he hesitated no longer, but started on a pathway which is beautiful at the opening, but blasted at the last. The bad angel, leading the way, opened the gate of the garden, and at each gate the road became rougher and the sky more lurid, and what was more peculiar, as the gate slammed that it came to with a jar that indicated that it would never open. Passed a chamber, there was a grinding of locks and a shoving of bolts; and the scenery on either side the road changed from gardens to deserts, and the June air became a cutting December blast, and the bright wings of the bad angel turned to sackcloth, and the eyes of light became hollow with hopeless grief, and the mountains, that a' heretofore had tossed with wine, poured forth bubbling tears and foaming blood, and on the right side of the road there was a serpent, and the man said to the bad angel: "What is that serpent?" and the answer was: "That is the serpent of stingy remorse." On the left side of the road there was a lion, and the man asked the bad angel: "What is that lion?" and the answer was: "That is the lion of all devouring despair." A vulture flew through the sky, and the man asked the bad angel: "What is that vulture?" and the answer was: "That is the vulture waiting for the carcasses of the slain."

And then this man began to try to pull off him the folds of something that had wound him round and round, and he said to the bad angel: "What is it that twists me in this awful convulsion?" and the answer was: "That is the worms that never die!" And then the man said to the bad angel: "What does all this mean?" I treated in that you said at the corner of the street that night; I trusted it all, and why have you thus deceived me?" Then the last deception fell off of the charmer, and it said: "I was sent forth from the pit to destroy your soul; I watched my chance for many a long year; when you hesitated that night on the street I gained my triumph, now you are here. Hal! Hal! You are here. Come, now, let us fill these two chalices of fire and drink to darkness and woe and death. Hal! Hal!"

O, young man, will the good angel sent forth by Christ or the bad angel sent forth by sin get the victory over you soon? Their wings are interlocked this moment above you, contending for your destiny, as above the Apennine eagle and condor fight mid-sky. This hour may decide your destiny. God help you. To hesitate is to die!

"Why do you wear such a mannish-looking cloak?" asked one fair damsel of another as they strolled down State street together this morning. "Well, you see," was the reply, "I ride on railway cars a great deal and like to have a seat all to myself. So I sit down and fling this coat over the back of the seat beside me. Every one thinks it is a coat belonging to some gentleman who will soon return from the smoking car and act as my escort. In consequence I am always comfortable without having to be impolite."

Each man will crowd around your desk or counter or work bench or seek to decoy you off. They will want you to break out in the midst of your busy day to take a ride with them to Coney Island or to Central park. They will tell you of some people you must see; of some excursion that you must take; of some Sabbath day that you ought to honor. They will tell you of exquisite wines that you must take; of costly operas that you must see; of wonderful dancers that you must see; but before you accept their convoy or their companionship remember that while at the end of a useful life you may be able to look

back to the kindness done, to honorable work accomplished, to poverty helped, to a good name earned, to Christian influence exerted, to a Saviour's cause advanced—these pleasure seekers on their deathbed have nothing better to review than a torn playbill, a ticket for the races, an empty tankard and the cast out rinds of a gourmet; and as in the delirium of their final days they clutch the goblet and press it to their lips, the drops of the cup filling upon their tongue will begin to hiss and scrool with the address of an eternal poison.

Cast these men out from your company. Do not be intimate with them. Always be polite. There is no demand that you ever sacrifice politeness. A young man accosted a Christian Quaker with: "O d chap, how did you make all your money?" The Quaker replied: "By dealing in an article that those mayest deal in if thou wilt—civility." Always be courteous, but at the same time firm. Say no as if you meant it. Have it understood in store and shop and street that you will not stand in the companionship of the skeptic, the idler, the pleasure seeker.

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JANET.

Oh, my false, false-hearted Janet! She was false and she begun it. For she turned her eyes upon me coming homeward from the school.

Looked at me and blushed and faltered: That I seemed so strangely altered— Was it any thing that she had done that made me seem so cool?

This was thirteen years ago, sir, In the spring, and we grew closer Through the dandelion season and the daisy-scented weeks, And we two were found together, sunny skies or stormy weather, Wandering through the hoary woodlands and beside the crystal creeks.

We were young; had we been older Our devotion had been colder, Hand in hand we had not wandered then with feet all brown and bare: We were ten; had we been twenty Surely I should not have plenty Of daisy dandelion blossoms plucked from Janet's tangled hair.

But ere I had learned to whisper, Passion moved, or to lip her Soft replies of doubt or confidence, The summer time had fled; And when came the winter cover On the hills, another lover Drew my false, false-hearted Janet on a crimson-colored sled.

—H. S. Tomer, in N. Y. Mail and Express.

A LUCKY DETECTIVE.

Chance Enabled Him to Make Some Important Arrests.

Going for a Shave and Catching a Murderer—Luck Plays a More Important Part Than Shrewdness in Detective Work.

The luck and ill luck of detective life is something wonderful. The luck we hear of every day. The ill luck is suppressed as much as possible. In the month of June, 1887, I was spending a few days with relatives of mine on a farm near Oberlin, Ohio. I had been in detective business about five years. I drove into the town one day. On the way in I got out of the wagon and picked up a copy of a Cleveland paper which was lying on the highway. The first thing I saw was an account of a murder at Peru, Indiana, several days before. An old man had been murdered and robbed of a large amount of money. Not the slightest clue of the murderer had been discovered. No one could say whether he was old or young, white or black, or which way he had gone. It seemed a hopeless case, and I felt a bit sorry for the two Chicago officers who had been sent for to work the case out.

The first call I made after reaching Oberlin was at the post-office. I then visited a barber shop, but the two chairs were occupied, and I had to wait about ten minutes. Having nothing to occupy my mind, I looked the two barbers over in detail, and then turned my attention to the customer in the nearest chair. I began at his feet first. He wore No. 8 gaiters, and they were a new pair; indeed, they had never been blackened. His trousers were frayed about the bottom, and, as I came to look closer, I saw that they were old and threadbare. On the left leg, which was nearest me, between the knee and the ankle, were several stains. They might have been made by either blood or acid. When the man sat up straight after his shave I saw that his coat was also old, and I looked over to his hat on the hook to find it very rusty. The barbers were not speaking to either of the men, so that both must be strangers in the town. My man had reddish hair, which he had clipped close before I came in. His neck was sunburned and dirty, and, after looking him over from toe to crown, I said to myself:

"This chap has all the looks of a professional tramp. That suit was probably given him, but ten to one he stole those gaiters. Wonder if he can scrape up enough to pay the barber." The bill was thirty-five cents. The man gave me a furtive look as he got out of the chair, and while being brushed he felt in his pockets for change. He had two ten-cent shillings, but as these were not enough he half turned from me and fished a greenback out of his pocket. The barber had to go out to change it, and the man was so impatient and nervous that he could not stand still. When the barber returned he had the change for a twenty-dollar note. He began to count it out, but the stranger muttered his confidence that it was all right, and reached out for the pile and crammed it into his vest pocket. He was about to go, when I rose up and said:

"My friend, I want to have a few words with you, if you are not in a big hurry." "But I am!" he replied, trying to push past me without looking me in the face. "But you'll have to wait just the same. I want to know who you are." There was a back door to the shop. He wheeled and sprang for it, but it was locked. As he turned on me again he pulled a revolver from his bosom and leveled it on me and fired a shot which went over my head and through the window. Before he could fire again I had him jammed against the wall, one hand hold of the weapon and the other on his throat, and I choked him until he sank down in a heap. Who did he turn out to be? The Indiana murderer who had been dodging about the country for six days, and who had run the gamut of a hundred officers. It was blood on his trousers, though we did not have to prove it, as he made a full confession. It was simply my good luck.

About fifteen years ago, while connected with the force in Chicago, a jewelry house on State street was robbed of \$12,000 worth of jewelry. Aside from this there was a package of Government bonds amounting to over \$17,000, which had been deposited in the safe for security. The robbery was

committed by professional cracksmen, who left their tools behind but no clue. I was at this time at Bowling Green, Kentucky, after a counterfeiter. I got a false clue, which led me down to Franklin, and when I started to return I took an accommodation train. It was at night, and there was but one coach on the train, and that contained only five passengers beside myself. Three of these were natives, sure enough, while the other two talked about a coal mine in Tennessee, and seemed to own land in that State. I gave them little attention, being three seats in the rear, and was talking with the conductor on general matters, when the two men suddenly became interested in something one of them held in his hand. Their heads were together, and they were evidently deeply interested, when the report of a pistol was heard, followed by a cry of agony and a yell of alarm. The object of their curiosity was a derringer, and it had accidentally been discharged, the bullet entering the leg of one of the men just above the knee. In his pain and fright the wounded man sprang up, and turned fiercely on the other with the exclamation:

"Curse you, but you did that on purpose! You wanted all the swag to yourself." The conductor and I were beside them in a minute. The wounded man fell back on the seat, and he evidently regretted the break he had made a few seconds before, for he said, as we came up:

"Tom, old fellow, I had my own finger on the trigger, and pulled it off. You are not a bit to blame." "But what about the 'swag'?" I demanded, as I stood over them. "He meant our coal mine," replied the one called Tom. "Yes; we are partners in a coal mine," added the wounded man. "O, that's it. Well let's see what can be done for you?"

It was a bad wound—so bad that I knew his leg would have to come off, as the big bullet had shattered the bone, and I suggested to the conductor that he make as fast time as he dared to Bowling Green, where medical attendance could be had. To my surprise the men asked to be put off at some highway crossing, near a farmhouse, saying that a country doctor could manage the case well enough, and that the quietness of the country would be best for the patient. This satisfied me that they were suspicious characters, and I assumed the authority to remove the one and handcuff him to a seat at the rear of the coach, and to search both. There was a revolver and the other the derringer, and before I was through searching I brought to light all the stolen bonds and jewelry. It was sheer luck again. Four of our men were out on their trail, but on false scents. They were supposed to have gone East, while I picked them up in the South. The fellow who was shot not only lost his leg but his life. The other was returned to Chicago, and he received a long sentence for his crime. There was a great deal of newspaper talk about my shrewdness, but I didn't deserve a word of praise. The case simply came to me. The ripe fruit dropped into my hands. Things fall that way to a lucky man, no matter what business he is engaged in.

One of the bits of luck which fell to me several years ago, and which was much talked about at the time, came about in a very singular way. I had been sent down to Augusta, Ark., to identify a man who had been arrested there, and was supposed to be a robber wanted in Chicago. He did not prove to be the man we hoped he was, and I was making ready to return when a resident of the town, who was an old acquaintance of mine, put forward a speculation. He had just purchased a saw mill a few miles down White river, and he believed there was big money to be made in buying a large tract of timber contiguous to the mill. This tract was for sale at a low figure, but my friend could not raise the cash. The result of our talk was that we took a boat next morning and were left at the mill landing. While he was overseeing some change of machinery I started out to get some idea of the value of the timber. The first thing I knew I was lost in the forest, and I did just what all other people do under the circumstances—headed the wrong way. Instead of going toward the river, I went away from it. It was in July, and although the mosquitoes nearly drowned me, there was no danger of suffering from the inclemency of the weather.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning when I started out, and by mid-afternoon I had walked at least ten miles, and knew that I was entirely bewildered. I couldn't keep a straight course for the creeks and swamps, and the day was so cloudy and the forest so dense that there was no sighting the sun to guide me. It was just five o'clock in the afternoon when I reached a good-sized stream, and the first thing I saw was an old house boat tied to the bank. There was smoke coming out of a stovepipe thrust through the roof, and I congratulated myself that I had reached shelter and something to eat. There was a plank reaching from the boat to shore, and I ascended it and entered the cabin unannounced. A white man and a negro were sitting in the rude room, and a fire had just been kindled in the cook stove. There was a door at the other side of the boat. It stood wide open, and the instant the men caught sight of me both sprang for the door. In the rush they bumped into each other and both rolled to the floor. The white man was the quicker of the two, and while I stood looking and wondering he scrambled up and

flung himself into the water and swam to the opposite shore. "Don't shoot! For de Lawd's sake don't kill me!" yelled the negro as he rolled over and over on the floor. "What does this mean?" I demanded. "It means dat I surrenders!" he replied.

"Very well. Now sit up and tell who you are and what you are doing here." "I had to come along, boss. I didn't want to, but dey said dey would dun kill me." "Who owns this boat?" "Why, dat Harding gang, in co'se." "And what are you doing here?" "Dun hidin' out, I's pose."

I was so stupid that I did not realize what luck had come to me until the negro gave it away. Then I secured him against escape and searched the boat, and in that old hulk I found over \$6,000 worth of dry goods, clothing, boots and shoes, jewelry, hardware and other stuff, the proceeds of a dozen big robberies along the river. There was a gang of four men engaged in the work, and the negro was their cook. The boat was hidden away in a branch of the White River to wait for a rise of water to get down to the Mississippi, and three of the gang were off that day to spot a country store some seven miles distant.

The negro and I stood guard all night, for I soon found that I could trust him, but if the fellows returned to the neighborhood we did not see them. Next day we got the boat down to the mill, which was hardly four miles away, and from thence she was taken to Ciarendon and the goods returned to their owners, as far as possible. The robbers were all identified by name and person by the negro, and within a few weeks were either captured and sent to prison or run into the swamp and shot down.—N. Y. Sun.

WINGED SCAVENGERS.

How the Crows Are Respected in Omaha for Their Good Works.

The city of Omaha has in its service a force of thousands of scavengers who draw no pay, report to no official, but are protected by law from molestation. They are the crows who flock in town as regularly as cold weather comes, stay during the winter and vanish in the spring. Each evening as the shadows fall legions of crows wing their way in a seemingly endless flight to the willow copes and clumps of small cottonwood trees on the banks of the Missouri, where they roost for the night. A favorite haunt is at the bend of the river between Cut-off and Florence Lakes, where the banks shelter the northwest wind. The air is thick with sable wings and resonant with hoarse caws there after sunset each night, as the scavengers settle down among the branches to dream of back area lunches and carrion spreads. With the break of day the sable flock bestirs itself. Each member hops about to warm its chilled legs, stretches its shiny wings and leads back toward the city. The vast flock breaks into small groups and they alight here and there on the tree-tops and survey the back yards and alleys until they can pick out foraging places. Then they descend and in short order the remains of the breakfasts, the scraps of meat from markets and the rats killed by household dogs and cats are gobbled up. Some crows do scavenger work about the residences. Others might cautiously in the alleys, and others are attracted to the stock-yards and packing-houses at South Omaha. They fight shy of the business blocks. The crow who inhabits the Missouri is of the same breed with the crow who pulls up the farmer's corn in Vermont. In the East he is a nuisance. The granger shoots him on sight, tries to frighten him with scarecrows and dips the corn into coal tar before he plants it, in the hopes that it will spoil the pretty raven's appetite. Two healthy New England crows can devastate a twenty-acre corn field if unmolested. But the crow who migrates to the West becomes a respected resident, and nobody asks, "What was your name back East?" or asks how he stood with the farmers. He mates with a chipper Dinah crow in a clump of willows on the bottoms, and in due time they hatch out a nest of hungry crows. The father rustles for grasshoppers, bugs and toads, while the youngsters are growing their pin feathers. As soon as they can fly their mother leads them away from the contaminating influences of the city into the pure, green country, and the whole family turns loose upon the vermin and insects. None of them ever trouble the corn-fields, and none of the farmers ever trouble them. During the fall they pick up the loose grain, and now and then play free-lunch fiend on the corn-fields. In the West much of the corn is left standing in the fields during the winter, while in the East it is stored in the barn before snow falls. Perhaps this apparent generosity on the part of the farmer in Nebraska has something to do with improved conduct of the bird. However this may be, the bird in the Missouri Valley does not rely upon the corn-field, summer or winter, for subsistence. Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri crows rendezvous largely at Peru, in this State. It is a famous roost for them, and has attracted the attention of naturalists. Prof. Taylor, of the Normal School at Peru, has made a close study of the habits of these crows, and is writing a series of papers on that subject. Meantime the sable crew continues to spend its summers in the country and his winters in the city, following the fashion which his wealthiest biped patrons set for themselves.—Omaha World.

The secret of the gossamer and the work of several men for half a year are required to make a cashmere shawl a yard and a half wide.