

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

HE TALKS ON THE PETTY ANNOYANCES OF LIFE.

The Hornet on Its Mission—Varieties of Insect Annoyances—Necessity for Little Troubles—They Are All Blessings in Disguise.

A World of Trouble.
Dr. Talmage Sunday chose for his discourse a theme that will appeal to most people—viz., "The Petty Annoyances of Life." His text was, "The Lord thy God will send the hornet." Deuteronomy vii, 20.

It seems as if the insect world were determined to extirpate the human race. It bombards the grainfields and the orchards and the vineyards. The Colorado beetle, the Nebraska grasshopper, the New Jersey locust, the universal potato bug seem to carry on the work which was begun ages ago when the insects buzzed out of Noah's ark as the door was opened.

In my text the hornet flies out on its mission. It is a species of wasp, swift in its motion and violent in its sting. Its touch is torture to man or beast. We have all seen the cattle run bellowing under the cut of its lance. In boyhood we used to stand cautiously looking at the globular nest hung from the tree branch, and while we were looking at the wonderful covering we were struck with something that sent us shrieking away. The hornet goes in swarms. It has captains over hundreds, and twenty of them alighting on one man will produce death.

The Persians attempted to conquer a Christian city, but the elephants and the beasts on which the Persians rode were assailed by the hornet, so that the whole army was broken up and the besieged city was rescued. This burning and noxious insect stung out the Hittites and the Canaanites from their country. What gleaming sword and chariot of war could not accomplish was done by the puncture of an insect. The Lord sent the hornets.

Small Annoyances.
My friends, when we are assailed by great behemoths of trouble, we become chivalric, and we assault them. We get on the high mettled steed of our courage, and if God be with us, we come out stronger and better than when we went in. But, alas, for these insect annoyances of life—these foes too small to slout—these things without any avoidable weight, the gnats, and the midges, and the flies, and the wasps, and the hornets! In other words, it is the small, stinging annoyances of our life which drive us out and use us up. In the best conditioned life, for some grand and glorious purpose, God has sent the hornet.

I remark, in the first place, that these small, stinging annoyances may come in the shape of a nervous organization.

People who are prostrated under typhoid fevers or with broken bones get plenty of sympathy, but who pities anybody that is nervous? The doctors say, and the family say, and everybody says, "Oh, she's only a little nervous; that's all." The sound of a heavy foot, the harsh clearing of a throat, a discord in music, a want of harmony between the shawl and the glove on the same person, a curt answer, a passing slight, the wind from the east, any one of 10,000 annoyances opens the door for the hornet. The fact is that the vast majority of the people in this country are overworked, and their nerves are the first to give out. A great multitude are under the strain of Leyden, who, when he was told by his physician that if he did not stop working while he was in such poor physical health he would die, responded, "Doctor, whether I live or die, the wheel must keep going round." These sensitive persons of whom I speak have a bleeding sensitiveness. The flies love to light on anything raw, and these people are like the Canaanites spoken of in the text or in the context—they have a very thin covering and are vulnerable at all points. "And the Lord sent the hornet."

Like Insects.
Again, the small insect annoyances may come to us in the shape of friends and acquaintances who are always saying disagreeable things. There are some people you cannot be with for half an hour but you feel cheered and comforted. Then there are other people you cannot be with for five minutes before you feel miserable. They do not mean to disturb you, but they sting you to the bone. They gather up all the yarn which the gossip spin and retail it. They gather up all the adverse criticisms about your person, about your business, about your home, about your church, and they make your ear the funnel into which they pour it. They laugh heartily when they tell you, as though it were a good joke, and you laugh, too—outside.

These people are brought to our attention in the Bible, in the book of Ruth. Naomi went forth heartily and with the finest of worldly prospects, and into another land, but, after awhile, she came back widowed and sick and poor. What did her friends do when she came to the city? They all went out, and instead of giving her common sense consolation, what did they do? Read the book of Ruth and find out. They threw up their hands and said, "Is this Naomi?" as much as to say, "How awful you do look!"

When I entered the ministry, I looked very pale for years, and every year, for four or five years, a hundred times a year, I was asked if I had not the consumption, and passing through the room I would sometimes hear people sigh and say, "Aah, not long for this world!" I resolved in those times that I never in any conversation would say anything depressing, and by the help of God I have kept the resolution. These people of whom I speak reap and bind in the great harvest field of discouragement. Some day you greet them with a hilarious "good-morning" and they come buzzing at you with some depressing information. "The Lord sent the hornet."

When I see so many people in the world who like to say disagreeable things and write disagreeable things, I come almost in my weaker moments to believe what a man said to me in Philadelphia one Monday morning. I went to get the horse at the livery stable, and the hostler, a plain man, said to me, "Mr. Talmage, I saw that you preached to the young men yesterday." I said, "Yes." He said, "No use—no use. Man's a failure."

Physical Ills.
The small insect annoyances of life sometimes come in the shape of local physical trouble, which does not amount to a positive prostration, but which bothers you when you want to feel the best. Perhaps it is a sick headache which has been the plague of your life, and you appoint some occasion of mirth or sociality or usefulness, and when the clock strikes the hour you cannot make your appear-

ance. Perhaps the trouble is between the ear and the forehead, in the shape of a neuralgic twinge. Nobody can see it or sympathize with it, but just at the time when you want your intellect clearest and your disposition brightest you feel a sharp, keen, disconcerting thrust. "The Lord sent the hornet."

Perhaps these small insect annoyances will come in the shape of a domestic irritation. The parlor and the kitchen do not always harmonize. To get good service and to keep it is one of the greatest questions of the country. Sometimes it may be the arrogance and inconsiderateness of employers, but, whatever be the fact, we all admit there are these insect annoyances vying their way out from the culinary department. If the grace of God be not in the heart of the housekeeper, she cannot maintain her equilibrium. The men come home at night and hear the story of these annoyances and say, "Oh, these home troubles are very little things." They are small, small as wasps, but they sting. Martha's nerves were all unstrung when she rushed in, asking Christ to scold Mary, and there are tens of thousands of women who are dying, dying by death by these pestiferous domestic annoyances. "The Lord sent the hornet."

These small insect disturbances may also come in the shape of business irritations. There are men here who went through 1857 and the 24th of September, 1890, without losing their balance, who are every day unshored by little annoyances—a clerk's ill manners, or a blot of ink on a bill of lading, or the extravagance of a partner who overdraws his account, or the underselling by a business rival, or the whispering of store confidences in the street, or the making of some little bad debt which was against your judgment, just to please somebody else.

The Lord Sends Hornets.
It is not the panics that kill the merchants. Panics come only once in ten or twenty years. It is the constant din of these everyday annoyances which is sending so many of our best merchants into nervous dyspepsia and paralysis and the grave. When our national commerce fell flat on its face, these men stood up and felt almost defiant, but their life is going away now under the swarm of these pestiferous annoyances. "The Lord sent the hornet."

I have noticed in the history of some that their annoyances are multiplying and that they have a hundred where they used to have ten. The naturalist tells us that a wasp sometimes has a family of 20,000 wasps, and it does seem as if every annoyance of your life brooded a million. By the help of God I want to show you the other side. The hornet is of no use? Oh, yes! The naturalist tells us they are very important in the world's economy. They kill spiders, and they clear the atmosphere, and I really believe God sends the annoyances of our life upon us to kill the spiders of the soul and to clear the atmosphere of our skies.

These annoyances are sent to us, I think, to wake us up from our lethargy. There is nothing that makes a man so lively as a nest of "yellow jackets," and I think that these annoyances are intended to persuade us of the fact that this is not a world for us to stop in. If we had a bed of everything that was attractive and soft and easy, what would we want of heaven? We think that the hollow tree sends the hornet, or we may think that the devil sends the hornet. I want to correct your opinion. "The Lord sent the hornet."

Then I think these annoyances come on us to culture our patience. In the gymnasium you find upright parallel bars—upright bars, with holes over each foot peg to be put in. Then the gymnast takes a peg in each hand, and he begins to climb, one lurch at a time or two inches, and getting his strength cultured, reaches after awhile the ceiling. And it seems to me that these annoyances in life are a moral gymnasium, each worriment a peg with which we are to climb higher and higher in Christian attainment. We all love to see patience, but it cannot be cultured in fair weather. Patience is a child of the storm. If you had everything desirable and there was nothing more to get, what would you want with patience? The only time to culture it is when you are lied about and sick and half dead.

"Oh, you say, 'if I only had the circumstances of some well-to-do man, I would be patient, too!' You might as well say, 'If it were not for this water, I would swim,' or 'I could shoot this gun if it were not for the charge.' When you stand chin deep in annoyances is the time for you to swim out toward the great headlands of Christian attainment, so as to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and to have fellowship with his sufferings.

So as by Fire.
Nothing but the furnace will ever burn out of us the dinkler and the slag. I have formed this theory in regard to small annoyances and vexations. It takes just so much trouble to fit us for usefulness and for heaven. The only question is whether we shall take it in the bulk or pulverized and granulated. Here is one man who takes it in the bulk. His back is broken, or his eyesight put out, or some other awful calamity befalls him, while the vast majority of people take the thing piecemeal. "Which way would you rather have it?" of course, in piecemeal. Better have five aching teeth than one broken jaw; better ten fly blisters than an amputation; better twenty squalls than one cyclone. There may be a difference of opinion as to allopathy and homeopathy, but in this matter of trouble I like homeopathic doses—small pellets of annoyance rather than some knockdown dose of calamity. Instead of the thunderbolt give us the hornet.

If you have a bank, you would a great deal rather that fifty men would come in with checks less than \$100 than to have five depositors come in the same day, each wanting his \$10,000. In this latter case you cough and look down to the floor, and you look up at the ceiling before you look into the safe. Now, my friends, would you not rather have these small drafts of annoyance on your bank of faith than some all staggering demand upon your endurance? But remember that little as well as great annoyances equally require you to trust in Christ for succor and a deliverance from impatience and irritability. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on thee." In the village of Hameln, tradition says, there was an invasion of rats, and these small creatures almost devoured the town and threatened the lives of the population, and the story is that a piper came out one day and played a very sweet tune, and all the vermin followed him—followed him to the banks of the Weser. Then he blew a blast, and then they dropped in and disappeared forever. Of course this is a fable, but I wish I could see the sweet fute of the gospel, draw forth all the nibbling and burrowing annoyances

of your life and play them down into the depths forever.

How many touched did Mr. Church give to his picture of "Cotopaxi" or his "Heart of the Andes"? I suppose about 50,000 touches. I hear the canvas saying: "Why do you keep me trembling with that pencil so long? Why don't you put it on in one dash?" "No," says Mr. Church, "I know how to make a painting. It will take 50,000 of those touches." And I want you, my friends, to understand that it is these 10,000 annoyances which, under God, are making up the picture of your life, to be hung at last in the galleries of heaven, fit for angels to look at. God knows how to make a picture.

Little Strokes Only.
I go into a sculptor's studio and see him shaping a statue. He has a chisel in one hand and a mallet in the other, and he gives a very gentle stroke—click, click, click! I say, "Why don't you strike harder?" "Oh," he replies, "that would shatter the statue. I can't do it that way. I must do it this way." So he works on, and after awhile the features come out, and everybody that enters the studio is charmed and fascinated. I call you a sculptor, and sometimes produce a work of art. It is the little annoyances and vexations of life that are chiseling out your immortal nature. It is click, click, click! I wonder why some great providence does not come and with one stroke prepare you for heaven. Ah, no. God says that is not the way. And so he keeps on by strokes of little vexations until at last you shall be a glad spectacle for angels and for men.

You know that a large fortune may be spent in small change, and a vast amount of moral character may go away in small degrees. It is the little troubles of life that are having more effect upon you than great ones. A swarm of locusts will kill a grainfield sooner than the incursion of three or four cattle. You say, "Since I lost my child, since I lost my property, I have been a different man." But you do not recognize the architecture of little annoyances that are hewing, digging, cutting, shaping, splitting and interjoining your moral qualities. Rats may sink a ship. One lucifer match may send a structure through a block of stone. Cassius M. Marcellus got her death from smelling a poisonous rose. Columbus by stopping and asking for a piece of bread and a drink of water at a Franciscan convent was led to the discovery of a new world. And there is an intimate connection between trifles and immensities, between nothings and everythings.

Now, be careful to let none of these annoyances go through your soul unarranged. Compel them to administer to your spiritual wealth. The scratch of a sapphire and sometimes produces a lockjaw, and the city of a man's indomitable annoyance may damage you forever. Do not let any annoyance or perplexity come across your soul without its making you better.

Our government does not think it belittling to put a tax on small articles. The individual taxes do not amount to much, but in the aggregate to millions and millions of dollars. And I would have you, O Christian man, put a high tariff on every annoyance and vexation that comes through your soul. This might not amount to much in single cases, but in the aggregate it would be a great revenue of spiritual strength and satisfaction. A bee can suck honey even out of a nettle, and if you have the grace of God in your heart you can get sweetness out of that which would otherwise irritate and annoy.

Faithful in Little Things.
A returned missionary told me that a company of adventurers rowing up the Ganges were stung to death by flies that infest that region at certain seasons. I have seen the earth strewn with the carcasses of men slain by insect annoyances. The only way to get prepared for the great troubles of life is to conquer these small troubles. What would you say of a soldier who refused to load his gun or to go into the conflict because it was only a skirmish, saying: "I am not going to expend my ammunition on a skirmish. Wait until there comes a general engagement, and then you will see how courageous I am and what battling I will do." The general would say to such a man, "If you are not faithful in a skirmish, you would be nothing in a general engagement." And I have to tell you, O Christian men, if you cannot apply the principles of Christ's religion on a small scale you will never be able to apply them on a large scale.

If I had my way with you, I would have you possess all possible worldly prosperity. I would have you each one a garden, a river flowing through it, geraniums and shrubs on the sides, and the grass and flowers as beautiful as though the rainbow had fallen. I would have you a house, a splendid mansion and the bed should be covered with upholstery dipped in the setting sun. I would have every hall in your house with statues and statuettes, and then I would have the four quarters of the globe pour in all their luxuries on your table, and you should have forks of silver and knives of gold, inlaid with diamonds and amethysts. Then you should each one of you have the finest horses, and your pick of the equipments of the world. Then I would have you live 150 years, and you should not have a pain or ache until the last breath.

Wisdom in All.
"Not each one of us?" you say. Yes. Each one of you. "Not to your enemies?" Yes. The only difference I would make with them would be that I would put a little extra gilt on their walls and a little extra embroidery on their slippers. But, you say, "Why does not God give us all these things?" Ah, I bethink myself he is wiser. He would make fools and slugs of us if he had our way. No man puts his best picture in the portico or vestibule of his house. God meant this world to be only the vestibule of heaven, that great gallery of the universe toward which we are aspiring. We must not have it too good in this world, or we would walk no heaven.

Polycarp was condemned to be burned to death. The stake was planted. He was fastened to it. The fagots were placed around him, the fires kindled, but history tells us that the flames beat outward like the canvas of a ship in a stout breeze, so that the flames, instead of destroying Polycarp, were only a wall between him and his enemies. They had actually destroyed him with the pondard. The flames would not touch him. Well, my hearer, I want you to understand that by God's grace the flames of trial, instead of consuming your soul, are only going to be a wall of defense and a canopy of blessing. God is going to fulfill to you the blessing and the promise, as he did to Polycarp, "When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned." Now you do not understand. You shall know hereafter. In heaven you will bless God even for the hornet.

Do right yourself, and you will help some other man to behave himself.

WHEN THE LEAVES TURN RED.

When the leaves are being painted
By the frost king's magic hand,
All the hues of nature's colors
Blended, tinted-like, and grand,
When the rare autumn berries
Hang in clusters o'er your head,
All my heart is tuned to music,
When the leaves turn red.

Every maple in the meadow,
Every elm along the way,
Bows obedient to the frost king,
And has nothing now to say;
Not a leaf defiant murmurs,
'Tis the silence of the dead,
For the autumn haze is hanging
Where the leaves turn red.

The sumach, lowly fellow,
Was the first to feel the breath
Of the magic king of colors,
He whose passage is of death;
In a night the verdant raiment
For a ruddy garb was shed,
And he masked in autumn's colors,
With the leaves a turning red.

Seems as though there's something creepy
In the autumn atmosphere,
And the hand of death is grasping
In the waning of the year.
Yet there's hope and faith a-beaming,
While to lofty thoughts we're led,
In the story and the glory
Of the leaves a-turning red.
—Utica Globe.

A PEST TO SOCIETY.

"You have proved yourself to be a callous and cruel-hearted scoundrel, without a single redeeming feature in your character. You are a pest to society, and I feel that I should be seriously lacking in my judicial capacity were I now to inflict a less lengthy term of imprisonment upon you than the utmost the law allows."

Thus did the judge preface his sentence. It seemed so natural to hear such words hurled at the head of a malefactor whose record testified to his apparent inability to live otherwise than by plunder.

Not a single look of pity; not a vestige of regret. How could sympathy be felt with one who was a pest to society? Besides, he was nothing to them. And had he been, his life was such that none would have openly claimed the relationship.

He was—it was to be hoped—without relatives. He might have friends, but the friends of such a man were not likely to be found within the precincts of a court of justice—at least, not as mere spectators.

And the prisoner stood in the dock, alone, friendless and uncared for. Throughout the trial his demeanor had been one of extreme indifference.

When the judge began his address to him, the words seemed to fall on deaf ears. It was only when the epithet, "a pest to society," was used to describe him, that the prisoner's hard, impassive countenance exhibited any change.

But that change was electrical. Instantly his eyes opened to their fullest extent, became fixed for a moment on the face of the judge, and then dropped to the ground.

Those words pierced his heart. Callous, crime-stained, shunned and hunted as he was, there was a remnant of self-respect even in his nature. And those words had roused it. "You are a pest to society."

Then followed the sentence, but he did not hear it. A hand was laid upon his shoulder, but, if he felt the grip, it had no effect upon him. The creaking of the dock gate, as it opened to permit his exit, seemed to echo the words applied to him.

On being left alone in his cell, he seated himself, as if in contemplation, and then, resting his elbows on his knees, buried his face in his hands, and—the felon, the pest of society—wept.

His mind wandered—wandered back to the past, until everything connected with it stood out clearly before him. He had sat on a mother's knee, and his life had once been full of promise—the world had held out glorious prospects. They were unrealized, but they rushed before him now.

An hour or two afterward he was introduced upon. His jailer, having secured his wrists, requested the convict to follow him.

A quick drive and the railway station was reached. The prisoner was rushed into a compartment of the waiting train, and his guard seated himself by his side.

The jailer looked at his companion. He was still absorbed in his thoughts, and manifested a desire to be left in sole possession of them. Taking out a paper, the representative of the law was speedily buried in its contents.

An hour passed. The jailer's paper



became monotonous. He laid it aside and endeavored to draw his prisoner into conversation.

"You seem mighty studious," said he. But there was no reply.

"The judge has given you a thumper this time, anyway," continued the officer, "and I'm not sorry it's you instead of me. But, then, if men won't go straight, it's their own fault if they're lagged, and they might as well take what's given 'em with a good grace. You're thinking of the past, p'raps, and—"

"And of the present," murmured the prisoner. "Well, ten years ain't—"

"And of what the judge said. Do you know what I am?" and the dejected man became animated and flung himself into an upright position. "I am a pest to society," he continued. "A pest, without the possibility of becoming anything else."

"You don't mean to say that you have any desire of amendment?" in genuine surprise.

"Amendment! If I could wash out that tittle with my life's blood, I'd do it. I would give the remainder of my life for an opportunity of becoming something other than what I am."

"Well, s'help me! If you'd only thought of that six months earlier, my hearty—but, great Scott! what's the matter with the train? We're driving along at a terrible rate."

The oscillation caused the passengers much discomfiture, and several heads were thrust out of the windows to ascertain if anything were wrong, amongst them that of the officer in charge of the prisoner. For some time nothing unusual was discernible. Then the jailer pulled his head into the carriage.

"If that signal we've just passed wasn't against us, I'm a Dutchman," he said. "I could have sworn that it was at right angles, and—Lor! did you see that? The man in that cabin we've just flown past was waving a red flag and dancing about as if to attract attention."

"Something is certainly wrong," said the prisoner. "That's the guard's brake—don't you hear it?"

The brake was undoubtedly at work, but it made very little impression on the flying train. Again the officer peered out of the window, but the engine at that moment dashed into a tunnel, and nothing could be discerned.

Then another cabin was passed. The guard's brake was sull on, and seethed and hissed against the wheels, while sparks, consequent on the friction, were scattered under the carriages in a shower. The man in the cabin was distinctly seen to be gesticulating wildly as the train rushed past.

The officer set rules at defiance now. The prisoner was at the window with him, leaning heavily upon him, in order to ascertain, if possible, what was going on. Just then, a curve in the line enabled them to obtain a clear view of the engine.

"Great heavens!" said the officer, agast, "look—look—see that! The driver and fireman are fighting!"

"There is something ahead of us—"

"There, see, they have thrown each other on the track!"

"The train must be stopped, and—at once," said the convict. "We must be going sixty miles an hour. In ten min-



utes we shall be at Pemberton Junction. It is there the danger lies, if I mistake not, and—"

"Man, you must be mad! Stop the train! Impossible. Did you not see those two fellows fall headlong on to the track? Who, then, can swing back the levers?"

"I can."

"You! Impossible. Ah, you see in this a possible opportunity of escaping—"

"I do, but not from justice. Unfetter my hands, quick; we have not a moment to lose."

"What do you intend doing? You will not escape?"

"Release me. Every moment is precious. I will climb to the top of our carriage and crawl along until I come to the engine. Quick, I—"

"You will not attempt to escape if you succeed?"

"I shall escape from being a pest to society. The opportunity is before me. Strike these chains from my wrists and let me seize it. If I perish I shall die happy in the thought that there will be some one who will not think me a—what I have been described."

The officer looked into the face of his prisoner for a moment. A flash of excitement sat on his cheeks, and his lips were tightly compressed.

"You are a brave man," said he, "and I'll trust you."

The next moment the manacles were laid on the seat. A few seconds, and, with cat-like agility, he reached the roof of the carriage. Then he was lost to sight.

The affrighted passengers, who had witnessed his coolness, sent up a faint cheer of encouragement as they realized his intention. Once only was he seen, and then a shudder passed through all who beheld him. It was when, in attempting to cross from one carriage to another, his foot slipped, and he would have fallen to instant death had he not succeeded in climbing to the heading.

A moment for recovery, then he safely climbed to the roof, and pursued his dangerous way. A few minutes elapsed—minutes which seemed like hours to the terrified passengers breathlessly awaiting the result of his courage.

Then they hissed their way through a tunnel. Afterward the junction came in sight, and a train was approaching them at full speed. There was a perceptible dimention in their speed. Still, on the train went, and nearer the two came together. Then slower, slower still. Had the driver of the other train observed them? Hands were clasped, and prayers, audible and unexpressed,

were offered for help. Slower still. Then they stopped.

Once more all heads were thrust out of the windows, and a fervent "Thank God!" ran the length of the train. The down train had also been pulled up within a few yards of them. Horrifiedly alighting, a rush was instantly made for the engine. But what a spectacle awaited them! Half laid, half reclining on the tender, with the lever still grasped tenaciously in his hand, they found the convict deluged in blood. He



was not dead, but consciousness had not remained long enough for him to witness the success of his noble act.

Evidently in passing through the tunnel he had come in contact with the coping. Grateful hands released him, and bore him tenderly to the station, where medical aid was soon forthcoming. But, poor fellow, he was past it.

"No, no," he murmured, "don't disturb me. I—I'm very comfortable, and—and you can do me no good. I—I want to lie here and—and dwell for a moment—on—the—fact—that—the judge was wrong."—London Tid-Bits.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY.

There was a Vast Difference in the Two Cases.

The other day at Montezuma, while two citizens were conversing at the depot, a negro approached and addressed one of them as follows:

"Kurnel, I h'ar yo' wants to git a man out on de plantashun."

"Yes, I want a man out there," replied the colonel as he looked the negro over. "Seems to me I've seen you before!"

"Reckon not, sah. I'ze new round here."

"But I'm sure I've seen you somewhere. Let's see. I was over at Perry the other day."

"Yes, sah, yo' was over to Perry."

"And while there I called at the jail."

"Yes, sah, yo' called at de jail. Dey has got a powerful nice jail ober to Perry."

"And you are the man," said the colonel as he laid his hand on the negro's shoulder.

"Jes' so, kurnel—jes' so. I was right in dat jail at Perry, an' I dun 'members of seein' yo' pass along. Curious what a mem'ry some white folks has in deir heads!"

"But you don't suppose I want a man who has been in jail for stealing, do you?" exclaimed the colonel.

"No, sah—no, sah. Of co'ss yo' don't. Dat's what I'ze here to displain about. Yo' got it all wrong 'bout dat hog, kurnel. De nussion who dun stole de hog was asleep when yo' called. I wasn't in dat jail for stealin' no hog. I'ze no such man as dat."

"Then what were you in for?"

"Why, dey said dem two bags er cotton seed meal what dey found in my cart was taken from de depo'."

"Oh, I see. Well, what's the difference?"

"What's the difference? Heaps o' difference, sah. On de one hand, I'ze loadin' up a bar'l o' salt arter dark, an' dem bags jes' tumbled into my cart while my back wuz turned. On de other hand, a pussion goes out by daylight and runs a hog aroun' de woods for ober two hours before he catches a hind leg. 'Sense me, kurnel, I did reckon I'd like to work on yo' plantashun, but if yo' am de sort o' a man who can't see de difference between a pussion restin' in jail to oblige de jury an' bein' sent to jail for stealin' a hog I couldn't trust my reputashun in yo' hands. Good mawnin', kurnel, good mawnin'!"—Atlanta Constitution.

A Fool on the Pulpit Steps.

Preaching in the abbey, Canon Wilberforce told a good story of the celebrated Welsh preacher, Christmas Evans, who dared publicly to express his thankfulness for Jenny Lind's beautiful singing. A member of his congregation, a straight-laced Calvinist, standing on the steps of the pulpit, asked the preacher whether a man dying at one of Jenny Lind's concerts would go to heaven. "Sir," replied Mr. Evans, "a Christian will go to heaven wherever he dies, but a fool remains a fool, even on the pulpit steps." Even the sober abbey congregation could hardly stifle its enjoyment of this repartee.—Westminster Gazette.

Shoots a Mad Lion.

"Dan," a man-eating African lion of huge proportions on exhibition at Toronto, went mad while having a tooth extracted. As the dentist was in the act of pulling the tooth the lion began to froth at the mouth, and with a fearful roar made a rush at him. Out Boone, the lion's keeper, was close by and shot the animal, killing him almost instantly.