

In these days of very complicated political conditions and diversified social phenomena we hear a great deal said with reference to the preacher's attitude to politics and civic affairs. That he has some relations to public questions is conceded on all sides—that has become a commonplace of popular conviction. But just how far the preacher should go, and how far he can go, in any given case is a very nice question. Shall he have his say on all topics of national or local interest, or shall he (as far as his public ministry is concerned) remain an inscrutable sphinx? Questions of detail as to political duty can only be decided by the individual minister himself, if not just selfishly for himself. It is probable, however, that a consensus of opinion obtains among intelligent Christian people to the effect that it is entirely possible for the preacher to be a power in civic affairs without becoming a partisan of this or that political endeavor, or at any rate, without announcing his partisanship offensively from the sacred desk. Perhaps we may characterize this ideal of a preacher's civic opportunity as an argument, not so much for politics in the pulpit as for the influence of the pulpit in politics.

It is entirely unnecessary, and quite repugnant to the gospel purpose of sermonic address, to bring the passing problems and noisy discussions of the platform into the services of the sanctuary, while it is not inappropriate, but rather a bounden duty for the pulpit to make itself felt as a live, telling force in politics—as a practical power which must be reckoned with, because of (and not in spite of) the fact that it is a power which makes not only for a righteousness which is already in sight along the lower levels of the average politician's vision, but also for an ideal which far transcends humanity's ordinary quest. Can the pulpit be in politics as a force and permeative influence unless politics with its catchwords and party cries be voiced in the pulpit? Certainly; but in order to that result the pulpit must be manned not merely occupied by figureheads; and the gospel that is preached must be of that virile, practical type which announces its relations to time as well as to eternity, and to earth as well as to heaven. If the author of the epistle of James were to occupy any one of our pulpits for a few Sabbaths his influence upon the political situation would be immediately felt, even though he failed to quote the watchwords or to echo the rallying cries of any party. In time of great civic crises there may possibly be a demand for politics in the pulpit, but during the "off years" (and through all the year) there is call for the vigorous exertion of the influence of the pulpit in politics.

### HUGE TIDAL WAVES.

Those That Sweep the Coast of China at Least Twice Every Year.

Twice a year—at each equinox—the famous tides of the Tsen-Tang river, that flows from the borders of Kiangsi, Fukien, and Chekiang to Hang Chow bay, attain their greatest height, and a bore of sometimes over forty feet in height sweeps irresistibly up its shallow and funnel-shaped estuary, often producing tremendous havoc to the surrounding country—hence its name, "money-dyke," from the amount expended in successive centuries on its embankment.

It is seen at its best at Hang Chow, the prefectural city not far from its mouth. Twelve or fourteen minutes before it is visible a dull, distant roar is heard, momentarily swelling, until that wall of muddy water, tall as the bulwark of the biggest liner, as overwhelming as a glacier, sweeps into sight round the bend a mile away. Not a boat is to be seen on the lately crowded river; all are hauled up on the huge embankment, and moored fore and aft with a dozen rattan cables, for none but ocean-going steamers could stem the current, and even they would need skillful navigation. As the eagle nears the roar becomes deafening as a storm at sea, drowning the excited shouts of the thousands who line the walls, until finally it foams past in turbid majesty, hurrying toward the heart of China.

The Chinese annals tell how, a thousand years ago, Prince Wu Shu made 500 "daring" archers shoot half a dozen arrows each at the advancing flood, and then, after praying to Wu Tsz-si (the tutelary deity of the stream and originally an upright Minister, whose body was cast into the river after Wu had committed suicide), put the key of the dike water gate into an envelope and threw it into the stream, whereupon the waters retired! But as by that they would have flowed back in any case even the Chinese did not regard the experiment as very miraculous.

A couple of hundred years later the Emperor Kan Tsung had ten iron plates, each weighing about 150 pounds, sunk in the river by way of propitiating the spirits, but the water promptly carried away both charms and embankments. Only last century a Hang-Chow tea merchant leaped into the river, like another Marcus Curtius, to avert the annual disaster.

### To Prevent Tool Rust.

A good recipe for a preparation to keep tools from rusting is as follows: Dissolve one half ounce of camphor in one pound of melted lard, take off the seam and mix it in as much black lead or graphite as will give it an iron-gray color. Smear the tools with this mixture, and after 24 hours rub clean with a soft linen cloth.

### Christmas Bells.

Ring out the merry Christmas chime, Proclaim the message far and near, Peace and good will in every clime, To rich and poor sweet Christmas cheer.

Loudly proclaim o'er land and sea What love divine for men did plan, The setting of the captive free, The nobler brotherhood of man.

Surcease of grief to those that mourn, Rest to the weary, heaven to win, A fuller life beyond death's bourne To such as seek to enter in.

Peal forth with no uncertain tone That love leaves none beneath the ban, And they alone are blessed that own Their duty to their fellow man.

Proclaim as loudly as you can The tidings glad to old and young, Peace upon earth, good will to man, First by the angel chorists sung.

## Christmas Marriage.

Park Village East is a quiet street in London, near Regent's Park. The houses are small and old-fashioned, and one or two of them are so overrun with vines that not the slightest glimpse of the masonry of the walls is seen. These houses are small and old-fashioned, and Lywood Terrace, "The Lindens," or "Somner Villa." They are of picturesque, whimsical design, and one fancies they must originally have been peopled by picturesque, whimsical people. The present occupants of the street are musicians, actresses and singers, who come and go with amazing rapidity.

The denizens of Park Village enjoy almost absolute stillness, for the noise of the omnibuses on Albany street does not penetrate here; nor does the great traffic of Kentish Town and Camden Town that flows through Hampton Road in any wise disturb its peace. The milkman who enters this tranquil spot involuntarily "meows" in a lower key, and even that daring light-horseman, the butcher boy, reluctantly checks his pace on entering here, when he sees there is nothing to run over.

The residents are of a retiring nature, little disposed to trouble themselves with their neighbors' affairs. They dig in their gardens and trim their vines without a thought of what is going on next door. But though the days are quiet, the nights are not. The lights of hansom cabs flash in and out of the winding streets; they drive up to the houses at all hours; people get in or get out, and the cabs disappear in the Serpentine Road. The policeman walking his solitary beat trusts his lantern suspiciously in the gardens and peers over the walls, for the neighborhood offers every opportunity for thieves. The Albany street police station chronicles many a thrilling episode that has happened hereabouts. Behind the houses on one side of the street flows the sluggish waters of the canal, in whose muddy depths many unfortunate have ended their wretched lives.

In this locality resided Mrs. Polworth, an actress of much cleverness and considerable means. She had lived her greatest triumphs, and had now settled down to a life of retirement, devoting herself to deeds of charity and kindness.

Many years before the opening of this story a secret marriage occurred on Christmas Day at Bath, England. After the ceremony the young couple issued from the church and were about to enter their carriage, when officers of the law arrested the bridegroom for some petty crime. The lady thus unceremoniously separated from her husband, cried a little at first; then, drying her eyes with her handkerchief, she slipped the wedding ring from her finger and returned home. Years passed, and she met a Mr. Polworth, whom she married, keeping silent about her secret marriage. They were said to be very devoted to each other.

On the morning of the opening of this tale, Mrs. Polworth, bent upon charity, came down her front steps, crossed the pretty garden, and, stylishly attired, stood in the gateway. She glanced up and down the winding street, and then, placing a silver whistle between her rosy lips, blew a shrill, loud tone. A cab responded from the head of the street. Mrs. Polworth was now considerably past the prime of life; her hair was touched with gray, but as she moved in a sprightly manner her bearing did not indicate that the burden of nearly fifty years rested on her shoulders.

"Kings' Road, Chelsea," she said. The cabman lashed his horse and drove along Great Portland Road into Oxford Circus, then turning into Bond street he would have proceeded through a network of small thoroughfares, but Mrs. Polworth called out:

"Go down Park Lane."

It was in the season, and the London social world was driving in Hyde Park. There was a glittering of harness and carriage wheels, intermingled with spots of color. Beyond were the distant trees, impalpable and quivering, as if they might vanish at any moment, while the people, too, seemed but creatures of a phantasmagoria that might pass away on the lifting of a wand. It was not long before she found herself at the Chelsea hospital for old soldiers. Mrs. Polworth left her cab and proceeded on foot down the long, pleasantly shaded road.

From the gardens can be seen the Chelsea barracks, and the old veterans no longer hear the sound of the trumpet, save when their failing senses catch the clarion tones that are wafted to them from the neighboring barracks. In sight of a present generation of soldiers, a former generation is slowly passing from existence. Day by day the old veterans see their comrades borne from the infirmary to the dead house and then to old Brompton cemetery, where a tract of land is reserved for them. The decadence of the Waterloo veteran is now complete, but there are many old soldiers left who tell the tale of Crimea. The lives of these old men become almost pastoral. They do not toil, but are here to end their existence as

peacefully as is possible for men whose bodies are racked by physical ailments. They sit in the court smoking and exchanging reminiscences; they play cards in the great hall; they work unmethodically in their gardens, selling their flowers or vegetables to visitors, and they move about the neighborhood at will, wandering along the embankment, watching the barges—sometimes even crossing the river and entering Battersea Park—or gazing into the shop windows on King's Road and Sloane street. The artists and sculptors in Chelsea frequently employ old men to sit to them as models, and the money thus earned they spend on tobacco and porter.

The birds were singing loudly in the gardens. In the shrubbery were many shades of green. Amid the tremor of delicate leaves stood a single great evergreen, whose branches hung motionless and heavy, its life of a more somber sort than the nervous vitality of the lighter foliage. Seated alone on a bench was an old man clad in the customary blue coat of the pensioner. He had a short white beard and his deeply-wrinkled face was pitted with the smallpox. He had lived thirty years in Africa and, strange to say, it seemed as if the character of his face had been affected by his residence there. The wings of his nose had become flattened and his lips were thick like a negro's. His face bore an expression of suffering and resignation.

The lady had distributed her crowns and half-crowns plentifully among the old soldiers, and was about to return when her glance fell upon the aged soldier. Then a vale was torn from the past. The secret marriage again came to her; she heard the words of the clergyman in the country church, and murmuring "My husband!" she turned and fled from the pathetic, lonely figure. She almost ran past the little gardens decorated with cockle-shells, and white and agitated, re-entered her cab.

The week that followed was like a dream; her youth and romance came to her as a bright vision and all that intervened vanished and faded away.

All London was asleep on that morning preceding Hospital Sunday. Along the embankment everything was hushed and the mighty river going out with the tide made no apparent sound as it washed against the solid stone bulwarks. In the east was indicated the breaking of day. The color changed on the face of the water and the houses along the riverside assumed a more vivid outline. The gas jets which followed the winding line of the embankment now began to glow pale.

Suddenly from Battersea Park a bird's note was heard, rising clear and penetrating out of the silence. Other songsters caught up the note until the whole park was filled with music. These sounds were wafted across the still water and then the birds in the Chelsea Hospital gardens resounded. As the light became more apparent in the east the melodies arose louder and louder, ringing out Nature's song in the very heart of London—redemption for all mankind. The first beams of the rising sun touched the housetops. Then the birds abruptly ceased to sing. The overture was done.

To-day the drama to be enacted by London is "Hospital Sunday." It appeals to everyone, for it is suffering that makes the whole world kin. Mrs. Polworth entered the gardens. Every old man stood near his small square of ground.

"Oh," said a visitor, "look at this garden with a pretty windmill." Mrs. Polworth trembled as an old man handed her a bunch of flowers.

"Thank you," she said in a low voice. At the sound of her voice he started.

"Carrie," he said in a bewildered way. The flowers fell to the ground. "Tom," she responded. "You know me?"

His lips moved as if about to speak, when suddenly he pressed his hand to his heart and without a groan sank to the ground. Mrs. Polworth fell upon her knees by his side and then all the fervor of a nature that had been repressed for years burst its bonds. She wept and pressed her lips to the old man's brow. The doctor was summoned, but his services could be of no avail. Toward nightfall a pensioner who had been an old comrade of Tom's made his way toward the dead-house. The door was locked, but standing on tip-toe, he peered through the window. A motionless form was lying on the pier and the aged face was as white as marble. "Poor Tom was a-cold!"

Two days later the pensioners followed the body to the grave, after their fashion when one of their number passes away. In the cemetery was the actress and celebrated woman. The grave was covered with flowers and when the pensioners filed sadly away, she alone remained on her knees.

### CHRISTMAS EVE IN PARIS.

Forget and Forgive is the Custom—Midnight Mass and the Family Supper.

On Christmas eve in the homes of Paris, when the children are fast asleep, with the bonnet to watch over them, the older ones and the parents go to the grand high mass, lasting from 10 o'clock till midnight. This is a very solemn service and is sung with great ceremony and with row upon row of white veiled nuns, whose narrow belts of blue, orange or red show their peculiar order, kneeling in the transept.

Just at midnight the mass ends, and the altar boys snuff the tall candles.

Then the family returns, and there is the reveillon, or the supper of waking—the one meal of the year at which are gathered the brothers and sisters to the home of the oldest married child. There are places for the grandparents, too, and, if a child has been lately born to swell the family circle, a seat of honor or next the grandmère for its mother, who is queen of the feast.

The "supper" is a great dinner, at which good will is the order, where are drunk innumerable glasses of harmless, unpoisoning grape wine, and where toasts are offered to every conceivable good luck, past and to come.

At the reveillon are discussed all the affairs of the family. If during the year the relations between two of its members have become strained, all is often forgiven and forgotten in this family love feast.

So with toast and rally and story the hours creep by until it is far into the small hours, when the party breaks up.

### The Best He Could Promise.

"Papa," said Benny Bloombumper, "I want a big brass drum for Christmas." "I'm afraid you can't have that," replied Mr. Bloombumper, "but you may have a big turkey drumstick."

## SOME QUEER HAPPENINGS

### ODD THINGS THAT HAVE RECENTLY OCCURRED.

Wentley People of Britain—Capital Punishment in Serbia—The Prisoner and the Judge—Petroleum a Cure for Snake Bite—An Italian Woman's Terrible Revenge—Woman's Rights in Burmah—Romantic Railroad Service, etc., etc.

A special edict lately issued by the police at Stuttgart, Germany, prohibits bicyclists from putting their legs on the handle bars while riding.

Li-Hung-Chang, Viceroy of China, maintains a private army of 10,000 soldiers.

In Great Britain sixty persons have each an annual income exceeding \$300,000, 2,000 more receive from \$40,000 to \$250,000 and 3,000 others can spend from \$25,000 to \$10,000 every year.

In Siam there is a species of small black ant officered by mounted "generals." Among the working troops move at regular intervals monster ants—elephants as compared to the others—and on each of these sits or rides one of the small ants, evidently in command.

The Japanese evidently mean to profit by their understanding of Western civilization. In Kobe and Osaka rare postage stamps are now counterfeited to perfection and readily disposed of to unsuspecting Europeans. A slight change in the inscription saves the counterfeiters from conflict with the law.

Four years ago a Hungarian judge named Moriz Revai married a very beautiful girl. The alliance proved a failure. Two months ago they parted in anger, the wife taking with her a \$5,000 insurance policy on her husband's life. Revai then committed suicide, avowedly out of spite, because thereby, under the clearly expressed conditions of the policy, the insurance company was released from all liability.

In Serbia capital punishment is by shooting. In the near future Stang Nihalovichs, a woman who killed her son with an axe while he was asleep, will be riddled with bullets according to law. She is the first woman sentenced to death under the reign of King Alexander.

A writer in the Chronik der Zeit says that in India snakes are not as plentiful as is generally supposed; but almost in the same breath he mentions that in 1886 the Government paid \$8,000 in premiums on 417,596 snakes killed or captured. He does not deny that death from cobra bite is almost instantaneous, and he admits that boas fifteen and twenty feet long are not at all rare in the Indian jungles.

The institution of life insurance in France seems to be a tempter everywhere. From Hodmezo-Varsarhely, Hungary, comes the news of the arrest of Mrs. Jaeger-Szalai, a midwife of that place, on the charge of having furnished the poison with which ten persons whose lives were insured by herself and others had been sent to the grave. The terrible woman has confessed that she sold "suitable" doses of poison at \$50.

It sometimes happens that violent prisoners fire missiles at their judges. Raffaello Giagnoni, who lately stood before the bar at Pistoia, Italy, can lay claim to originality in this line. When sentenced to several months' imprisonment he quickly pulled off one of his boots and hurled it at the magistrate's head. He hit him, too, and is now suffering for it.

Near Luga, Russia, the police discovered that a sect holding its meetings there had for some time past been sacrificing children. The bodies of many children, apparently two to four years old, were found in a vault under the church. Forty-five persons of both sexes are now in prison accused of murdering these innocents.

A German, for many years a resident of Brazil, affirms that petroleum is an infallible cure for snake bite. The best plan is to bathe the wound in the liquid, or rags soaked with petroleum may be laid over it. His nephew and his son-in-law were thus saved. He mentions several instances wherein persons were bitten far out in the woods, far away from the remedy, but even then relief was immediate as soon as the petroleum was applied.

It has been known for centuries that oil poured upon the angry bosom of the enraged ocean instantly allays its tempestuous heaving. Improving on the old method of applying the oil near the ship, a European genius has introduced a storm cannon, subduing the angry waves to a long distance. The projectile is hollow and filled with oil. During its flight from the cannon's mouth the soothing fluid is scattered through suitable orifices, thus opening a smooth road through the agitated coaters.

A woman in Catania Italy, lost her two little children by death, and somehow came to believe that they died through witchcraft. To revenge herself on those whom she believed guilty of this witchery, she decoyed their children, by promises of sweets and toys, to her house; there she gave them wine of phosphorus to drink, causing unspeakable tortures, ending in death. In this manner she poisoned twenty-three little ones.

Whenever a Seine steambot happens to sound its whistle a little longer than usual, near the Jardin des Plantes, Paris, the jackals moping there set up their dismal howl. The compass and pitch of the jackal's voice is truly awful—a jackal solo qualling a chorus of six drunken women and a howling dervish. The whistle and jackal concert is so horrible that at last many Parisians are also howling for relief. A little more and there'll be another revolution.

Burmah is the country of woman's rights par excellence. In that happy land law and religion and custom combine in placing a woman on a level with a man. A husband has no power over his wife. Divorce is easily obtainable, but there is not one divorce to one hundred marriages. Married or single, from her sixteenth or seventeenth year nearly every female has some occupa-

tion besides her household affairs; for instance, the retail trade of Burmah is almost wholly in the hands of women. Strangest of all, despite their absolute emancipation the Burmese women are pronounced the most womanly on earth, possessing to the highest degree the indefinable charms which enthral man.

Not long ago a four-year-old girl who was leaning out of a window in the third story of a house at Lausanne, Switzerland, lost her balance and fell, apparently to certain death, on the cobble-stone pavement. But fortunately the shutters of a window directly underneath happened to be half open, and the child's dress caught thereon. The flimsy garment did not support her weight long; but when she fell again she tumbled into the arms of a man who bravely ran to the rescue, and escaped without the slightest injury.

The railroad service in Asia Minor is as romantic as the unspeakable Turk. The Broussa "Officiel" relates that a short time since one of the trains running between Broussa and Mondiana stopped on reaching an extensive vineyard; the conductor and engineer then went to cutting grapes, filling tin cans after tin can, and desisted only after a long altercation with the guard of the place. It is further said that at one time a train stopped to let a brakeman pick up his tobacco pouch; at another time, to let a passenger run back and recover his hat.

### WINTER WHINKLES.

Hoax—What makes your son yell and shout about the house that way? Joax—He's getting in training to enter college next year.

Uncle 'Rastus—I done won dat turkey at de raffle to-night. Aunt Dinah—Yes, was lucky, eh? 'Rastus, I was po'ful lucky. While de res' was shakin' dice I 'soused myself.

Judge—Defendant, can you advance anything more towards your defense? Defendant—No, your honor. I had only \$1 and I have already given that to my lawyer.

Bacon—That lawyer you recommend is not a man of his word, Egbert—Why not? He told me I could talk freely to him, and look at the bill he's sent me!

I can't see why it is, said Bobby, that when little boys are cross, folks say they are naughty; and when papas and mamas are cross, folks say they are nervous.

I wonder if that diamond Mudge has is of the first water? I doubt it. It has been soaked so many times that it must be of the tenth or eleventh water by this time.

See how clean of snow Brown's sidewalk is and look at Jacobson's next door. Yes, but you don't understand. What? I saw Brown borrow Jacobson's snow shovel two hours ago.

See, here, waiter! Those eggs are not cooked properly. I know it, sir; but you said they were for your wife, and I knew if the lady was your wife she couldn't be very particular.

Mr. Henpect (anxiously)—Can I bring proceeding in court, Mr. Blackstone, to set aside my wife's will? Lawyer—Why, your wife isn't dead, man is she? Mr. Henpect—No; that's just the trouble.

Mrs. Snaggs (who was a school teacher before her marriage)—The scientific name of Turkey is Meleagris Gallopavo. Mr. Snaggs—We will abbreviate that name to "Dennis" for the time being.

Father, said the small boy, what makes piano-players wear their hair long? Don't bother me, Johnny. But, father, I wish to know. Oh—it's so the public won't be able to see how much their heads have swelled.

Are you going to give any Christmas presents? asked a friend of Spicer. Well, said Seth, thoughtfully, I should like to give the man next door, who is learning the flute, six months in the house of correction.

He pinned upon his overcoat—That sneering Johnny Power—A big chrysanthemum and said: "That's what I cauliflower."

What on earth have you been doing, my child? exclaimed Fannie's mother as the little girl came into the room with her hair all awry and her dress torn in a dozen places. Playin' shoppin', ma'am! was the reply.

Youth (with incipient beard).—I want a bottle of face lotion. Druggist—Do you want something to use after shaving? Youth (confidentially)—No! You see I'm raising a beard, and I want the face lotion for my fiancée.

You are worth your weight in gold to me, darling! he murmured. Then do go home early, George, dear, she replied, wearily, I've lost ten pounds since we became engaged, just sitting up with you. We can't afford such extravagance.

Dad of 10—I say, pa, what is the meaning of these numbers at the bottom of every picture? Look at this one: Shakespeare, 153. Perplexed Father (who has never been in a gallery before) O—ah—I expect that is his telephone number.

I love to hear you talk, my dear, said Mr. Bickers to his wife, when she paused to take breath at the end of the second column of a curtain-lecture, but your volubility is really a reflection on my wisdom. How so? Because a word to the wise is sufficient.

An Early Intimation—Johnny, said the boy's father, "I suppose that you are going to hang up your stocking next Christmas. No, I'm not, was the reply after some thought. Why not? Because, he answered, looking his father straight in the eye, you couldn't put a bicycle in my stocking.

Yes, said Dicky Stalate with a satisfied smile, that young woman is very fond of me. How do you know? I was calling on her yesterday evening and do you know she was so thoughtful of my comfort that she worried for two hours for fear I would miss the last car.

### THE TURKEY.

Although you are this time of the year The theme of many a roast From lips of those who love you dear, You also get a roast.

### Christmas Thoughts.

Christmas is almost in sight, and stockings are much longer than they were last year.

A praiseworthy Christmas decoration—lining the pockets of the poor with gold and silver.

Christmas comes but once a year, and when it does it sneaks up on every one unawares.