

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON

Reformation of Evil Habits.

"When shall I awake, I will seek it yet again."—Prov. 23: 35.

WITH AN INSIGHT INTO HUMAN NATURE such as no other man ever reached, Solomon, in my text, sketches the mental operations of one who, having stepped

ASIDE FROM THE PATH

of rectitude, desires to return. With a wish for something better, he says: "When shall I awake? when shall I come out of this horrid nightmare of iniquity?" But seized upon by uneducated habit, and forced down-hill by his passions, he cries out: "I will seek it yet again. I will try it once more."

Our libraries are adorned with an elegant literature addressed to young men, pointing out to them all the dangers and perils of life—complete maps of the voyage, showing all the rocks, the quicksands, the shoals. But suppose a man has already made shipwreck; suppose he is already off the track; suppose he has already gone astray.

HOW IS HE TO GET BACK?

That is a field comparatively untouched. I propose to address myself this evening to such. There are those in this audience who, with every passion of their agonized soul, are ready to hear this discussion. They compare themselves with what they were ten years ago, and cry out from the bondage in which they are incarcerated. Now, if there be any in this house, come with an earnest purpose, yet feeling they are beyond the pale of Christian sympathy, and that the sermon can hardly be expected to address them, then, at this moment, I give them my right hand and call them brother. Look up. There is glorious and triumphant hope for you yet. I sound the trumpet of Gospel deliverance. The Church is ready to spread a banquet at your return, and the hierarchs of heaven to fall into line of banished procession at the news of your emancipation. So far as God may help me, I propose to show what are the obstacles to your return, and how to surmount those obstacles.

THE FIRST DIFFICULTY

In the way of your return is the force of moral gravitation. Just as there is a natural law which brings down to the earth anything which you throw into the air, so there is a corresponding moral gravitation. In other words, it is easier to go down than it is to go up; it is easier to do wrong than it is to do right. Call to mind the comets of your boyhood days—some of them good, some of them bad. Which most affected you? Call to mind the anecdotes that you have heard in the last five or ten years—some of them pure and some of them impure. Which the more easily sticks to your memory? During the years of your life you have formed certain courses of conduct—some of them good, some of them bad. To which style of habit did you the more easily yield? Ah! my friends, we have to take but a moment of self-inspection to find out that there is in all our souls a force of moral gravitation. But that gravitation may be resisted. Just as you may pick up from the earth something and hold it in your hand toward heaven, just so by the power of God's grace, a soul fallen may be lifted toward peace, toward pardon, toward heaven. Force of moral gravitation in every one of us, but power in God's grace to overcome that force of moral gravitation.

The next thing in the way of your return is the power of evil habit. I know there are those who say it is very easy for them to give up evil habits. I do believe them. Here is a man given to intoxication. He knows it is disgracing his family, destroying his property, ruining his body, mind, and soul. If that man, being an intelligent man, and loving his family, could easily give up that habit, would he not do so? The fact that he does not give it up proves it is hard to give it up. It is a very easy thing to sail down-stream, the tide carrying you with great force; but suppose you turn

THE BOAT UP STREAM.

is it so easy then to row it? As long as we yield to the evil inclinations in our hearts and our bad habits, we are sailing down-stream; but the moment we try to turn, we put our boat in the rapids just above Niagara, and try to row up stream. Take a man given to the habit of using tobacco, as most of you do, and let him resolve to stop, and he finds it very difficult. Twenty-one years ago I quit that habit, and I would as soon dare to put my right hand in the fire as once to indulge in it. Why? Because it was such a terrible struggle to get over it.

Now, let a man be advised by his physician to give up the use of tobacco. He goes around not knowing what to do with himself. He cannot sleep nights. It seems as if the world had turned upside down. He feels his business is going to ruin. Where he was kind and obliging he is scolding and fretful. The composure that characterized him has given way to fretful restlessness, and he has become a complete fidget. What power is it that has rolled a wave of woe over the earth and shaken a portent in the heavens? He has tried to stop smoking! After a while he says, "I am going to do as I please. The doctor doesn't understand my case. I'm going back to the old habit."

And he returns. Everything assumes its usual composure. His business seems to brighten. The world becomes an attractive place to live in. His children, seeing the difference, hail the return of their father's general disposition. What wave of color has dashed blue into the sky, and greenness into the mountain foliage, and the glow of sapphire into the sunset? What enchantment has lifted a world of beauty and joy on his soul? He has gone back to smoking. Oh, the fact is, as we all know in our own experience, that

HABIT IS A TASK-MASTER;

as long as we obey it, it does not chastise us; but let us resist, and we find we are to be lashed with scorpion whips, and bound with ship cable, and thrown into the track of bone-breaking Jug-

germuts. During the war of 1812 there was a ship set on fire just above Niagara Falls, and then, cut loose from its moorings, it came on down through the night, and tossed over the Falls. It was said to have been a scene brilliant beyond all description. Well, there are thousands of men on fire of evil habit, coming down through the rapids, and through the awful night of temptation, toward the eternal plunge. Oh, how hard it is to arrest them! God only can arrest them.

Suppose a man, after five or ten or twenty years of evil-doing resolves to do right. Why, all the forces of darkness are allied against him. He cannot sleep nights. He gets down on his knees in the midnight and cries: "God help me!" He bites his lip. He grinds his teeth. He clenches his fist in a determination to keep his purpose. He dare not look at the bottles in the windows of a wine store. It is one hour, bitter, exhaustive, hand-to-hand fight with an inflated, tantalizing, and merciless habit. When he thinks he is entirely free, the old inclinations pounce upon him like a pack of hounds with their muzzles tearing away at the flanks of one poor reindeer. In Paris there is a sculptured representation of Bacchus, the god of revelry. He is riding on a panther at full leap. Oh, how suggestive! Let every one who is spending on bad ways understand he is not riding a docile and well-broken steed, but he is riding a monster, wild and blood-thirsty, going at a death leap.

How many there are who resolve on a better life, and say: "When shall I awake?" but seized on by their old habits, cry: "I will try it once more; I will seek it yet again!" Years ago, there were some Princeton students who were skating, and the ice was very thin, and some one warned the company back from the air-hole, and finally warned them entirely to leave the place. But one young man with bravado, after all the rest had stopped, cried out: "One round more!" He swept around and went down, and was brought out a corpse. My friends, there are thousands and tens of thousands of men losing their souls in that way. It is the one round more.

I have also to say that if a man wants to return from evil practices, SOCIETY REPUSES HIM. Desiring to reform, he says: "Now, I will shake off my old associates, and I will find Christian companionship." And he appears at the church door some Sabbath day, and the usher greets him with a look as much as to say: "Why, you here? You are the last man I ever expected to see at church! Come, take this seat right down by the door." Instead of saying: "Good morning; I am glad you are here. Come; I will give you a first-rate seat, right up by the pulpit." Well, the prodigal, not yet discouraged, enters a prayer-meeting, and some Christian man, with more zeal than common sense, says: "Glad to see you; the dying thief was saved, and I suppose there is mercy for you."

THE YOUNG MAN, DISGUSTED, chilled, throws himself on his dignity, resolved he will never enter into the house of God again. Perhaps not quite fully discouraged about reformation, he slides up by some highly respectable man he used to know, going down the street, and immediately the respectable man has an errand down some other street. Well, the prodigal, wishing to return, takes some member of a Christian association by the hand, or tries to. The Christian young man looks at him, looks at the faded apparel and the marks of dissipation; instead of giving him a warm grip of the hand, he offers him the tip ends of the long fingers of the left hand, which is equal to striking a man in the face! Oh, how few Christian people understand how much force and gospel there is in a good honest hand-shaking! Sometimes, when you have felt the need of encouragement, and some Christian man has taken you heartily by the hand, have you not felt thrilling through every fibre of your body, mind, and soul an encouragement that was just what you needed? You do not know anything at all about this unless you know when a man tries to return from evil courses of conduct he runs against

REPULSIONS INNUMERABLE. We say of some man, he lives a block or two from the church, or half a mile from the church. There are people in our crowded cities who live a thousand miles from church. Vast deserts of indifference between them and the house of God. The fact is, we must keep our respectability, though thousands and tens of thousands perish. Christ sat with publicans and sinners. But if there come to the house of God a man with marks of dissipation upon him, people almost throw up their hands in horror, as much as to say: "Isn't it shocking?" How these *dainty, fastidious Christians* in all our churches are going to get into heaven, I don't know, unless they have an especial train of cars, cushioned and upholstered, each one a car to himself. They cannot go with the great horde of publicans and sinners.

Oh! ye who curl your lip of scorn at the fallen, I tell you plainly, if you had been surrounded by the same influences, instead of sitting to-day amid the cultured, and the refined, and the Christian, you would have been a crouching wretch in stable or ditch, covered with filth and abomination. It is not because you are naturally any better, but because the mercy of God has protected you. Who are you that brought up in Christian circles and watched by Christian parents, you should be so hard on the fallen?

I think men also are often hindered from return by the fact that churches are too anxious about their membership and too anxious about their denomination, and they rush out when they see a man about to give up his sin and return to God, and ask him how he is going to be baptized, whether by sprinkling or immersion, and what kind of a church he is going to join. Oh, my friends, it is

A POOR TIME TO TALK

about Presbyterian catechisms, and Episcopal liturgies, and Methodist love-feasts, and baptisteries to a man that is coming out of the darkness of sin into the glorious light of the Gospel. Why, it reminds me of a man drowning in the

sea, and a life-boat puts out for him, and the man in the boat says to the man out of the boat: "Now, if I get you ashore, are you going to live on my street?" First get him ashore, and then talk about the non-essentials of religion. Who cares what church he joins, if he only joins Christ and starts for heaven? Oh! you ought to have, my brother, an illumined face and hearty grip for every one that tries to turn from his evil way. Take hold of the same book with him, though his dissipation shake the book, remembering that "he that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins."

Now, I have shown you these obstacles because I want you to understand I know all the difficulties in the way; but I am now to tell you how Hannibal may scale the Alps, and how THE SHACKLES MAY BE UNRIVETED, and how the paths of virtue forsaken may be regained. First of all, my brother, throw yourself on God. Go to him frankly and earnestly, and tell him these habits you have, and ask Him if there is any help in all the resources of omnipotent love, to give it to you. Do not go with a long rigmarole people call prayer, made up of "Ohs," and "Ahs," and "forever and ever, amen!" Go to God and cry for help! help! help! and if you cannot cry for help, just look and live. I remember, in the late war, I was at Antietam, and I went into the hospitals after the battle, and said to a man: "Where are you hurt?" He made no answer, but held up his arm, swollen and splintered. I saw where he was hurt. The simple fact is, when a man has a wounded soul, all he has to do is to hold it up before a sympathetic Lord, and get it healed. It does not take any long prayer. Just hold up the wound. Oh, it is no small thing, when a man is nervous and weak and exhausted, coming from his evil ways, to feel that God puts two omnipotent arms around him, and says: "Young man, I will stand by you. The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but I will never fail you." And then as the soul thinks the news is too good to be true, and cannot believe it, and looks up in God's face, God lifts His right hand and takes an oath, an affidavit, saying: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Blessed be God for such a disciple as this! "Cut the slices thin," said the wife to the husband, "or there will not be enough to go all around for the children; cut the slices thin." Blessed be God, there is

A FULL LOAF FOR EVERY ONE that wants it! Bread enough and to spare. No thin slices at the Lord's table. I remember when the Master Street Hospital, in Philadelphia, was opened during the war, a telegram came, saying: "There will be three hundred wounded men to-night; be ready to take care of them;" and from my church there went in some twenty or thirty men and women to look after these poor wounded fellows. As they came, some from one part of the land, some from another, no one asked whether this man was from Oregon, or from Massachusetts, or from Minnesota, or from New York. There was a wounded soldier, and the only question was how to take off the rags the most gently, and put on the bandage, and administer the cordial. And when a soul comes to God, He does not ask where you came from or what your ancestry was. Healing for all your wounds. Pardon for all your guilt. Comfort for all your troubles.

Then, also, I counsel you, if you want to get back, to quit all your bad associations. ONE UNHOLY INTIMACY will fill your soul with moral distemper. In all the ages of the Church there has not been an instance where a man kept one evil associate and was reformed. Go home to-day, open your desk, take out letter paper, stamp and envelope, and then write a letter something like this: "My old companions, I start this day for heaven. Until I am persuaded you will join me in this, farewell."

Then sign your name, and send the letter by the first post. Give up your bad companions or give up heaven. It is not ten bad companions that destroy a man, nor five bad companions, nor three bad companions, but one. What chance is there for that young man I saw along the street, four or five young men with him, halting in front of a grog shop, urging him to go in, he resisting, violently resisting, until after a while they forced him to go in. It was a summer night and the door was not open, and I saw the process. They held him fast, and they put the cup to his lips, and they forced down the strong drink. What chance is there for such a young man?

I counsel you also, seek Christian advice. Every Christian man is bound to help you. If you find no other human ear willing to listen to your story of struggle, come to me and I will by every sympathy of my heart, and every prayer, and every toil of my hand, stand beside you in the struggle for reformation; and as I hope to have my own sins forgiven, and I hope to be acquitted at the Judgment seat of Christ, I will not betray you. First of all seek God, then

SEEK CHRISTIAN COUNSEL. Gather up all the energies of body, mind and soul, and appealing to God for success, declare this day, everlasting war against all drinking habits, all gaming practices, all houses of sin. Half-and-half work will amount to nothing; it must be a Waterloo. Shrink back now, and you are lost. Push on, and you are saved. A Spartan general fell at the very moment of victory, but he dipped his finger in his own blood and wrote on a rock near which he was dying; "Sparta has conquered." Though your struggle to get rid of sin may seem to be almost a death struggle, you can dip your finger in your own blood and write on the Rock of Ages: "Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Oh! what glorious news it would be for some of these young men to send some to their parents in the country. They go to the post-office every day or two to see if there are any letters from you. How anxious they are to hear! Nothing would please them half so

much as the news you might send home to-morrow that you had given your heart to God. I know how it is in the country. The night comes on. The cattle stand under the rack through which bursts the trusses of hay. The horses just having frisked up through the meadow at the night fall, stand knee-deep in the bright straw that invites them to lie down and rest. The porch of the hotel is full of fowl, their feet warm under the feathers. In

THE OLD FARM HOUSE AT NIGHT no candle is lighted, for the flames clap hands about the great backlog, and shake the shadow of the group up and down the wall. Father and mother sit there for half an hour, saying nothing. I wonder what they are thinking of. After a while the father breaks the silence and says: "Well, I wonder where our boy is in town to-night?" And the mother answers: "In no bad place, I warrant you; we always could trust him when he was home, and since he has been away there have so many prayers offered for him we can trust him still." Then at eight o'clock—for they retire early in the country—at eight o'clock they kneel down and commend you to that God who watches in country and in town, on the land and on the sea.

"Some one said to a Grecian soldier: 'What was the proudest moment of your life?' He thought a moment, and said:

THE PROUDEST MOMENT of my life was when I sent word home to my parents that I had gained the victory." And the proudest and most brilliant moment in your life will be the moment when you can send word to your parents in the country that you have conquered your evil habits, by the grace of God, and become eternal victors. Oh! despise not parental anxiety. The time will come when you will have neither father nor mother, and you will go around the place where they used to watch you, and find them gone from the house, and gone from the field, and gone from the neighborhood. Cry as loud for forgiveness as you may over the mound in the churchyard, they will not answer.

DEAD! DEAD! And then you will take out the white lock of hair that was cut from your mother's brow just before they buried her, and you will take the cane with which your father used to walk, and you will think and think, and wish that you had done just as they wanted you to, and would give the world if you had never thrust a pang through their dear old hearts. God pity the young man who has brought disgrace on his father's name. *God pity the young man who has broken his mother's heart.* Better if he had never been born—better if, in the first hour of his life, instead of being laid against the warm bosom of maternal tenderness, he had been confined and sepulchred. There is no balm powerful enough to heal the heart of one who has brought parents to a sorrowful grave, and who wanders about through the dismal cemetery, rending the hair and wringing the hands, and crying: "Mother! mother!" Oh, that to-day, by all the memories of the past, and by all the hopes of the future, you would yield your heart to God. May your father's God and your mother's God be your God forever.

BEATING ROTHSCHILD. A Porcelain Service That Was Cheap at Any Price. Among the various admirable productions of taste which the guests of Baron Rothschild never fail to admire, is a magnificent service of porcelain, of singular beauty, elegance of shape and finish, and remarkable for the artistic richness of its paintings. But the way in which the baron became possessed of it is worth relating. One day an old man, careworn, wrinkled, feeble, and apparently tottering on the verge of the grave, presented himself before M. de Rothschild, soliciting the honor of an interview with the famous banker. The aged visitor took from his bag a rich and beautiful plate, so splendidly wrought that the baron admired it exceedingly, and became greatly delighted with it. "Sir," said the patriarch, "will you buy this of me? I have a whole set, and it has struck me that a service so beautiful cannot find a more fitting place than in the mansion of the prince of financiers."

"It is indeed very fine," said the baron. "How much do you want for the service?" "I am bowed down with many years, and have not long to live. I am poor, and wish to end my days in comparative comfort. Will you in exchange for this valuable set of porcelain, give me an income for life of 100 francs a month?" The baron looked at the poor man, examined the plate again, and said: "Well, be it so; here is the first payment. Send me the service, and give me your name."

The splendid set of porcelain was delivered the same day to the baron, and a month afterward while he was seated in his counting house, a man entered and asked for the second payment of the promised income. But the man was young, scarcely 30 years of age, of a vigorous constitution and great muscular development, and looked as if he would live for a hundred years.

"But you are not the man!" exclaimed the astonished banker. "Excuse me, baron," said he, "I am indeed the man." "But you appeared at least 80 years old," said the baron. "I had wonderfully recovered," observed the man, "thanks to your generosity." The baron laughed heartily, and gave orders for the payment of the money, exclaiming: "Ah, you are an excellent comedian, and have taken me in thoroughly." "I am probably the first who has done so," replied the Jew, politely bowing to the millionaire.

There are some fond, foolish, trusting men who will read over a recipe for money and then think they really know what it is made of.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 1899.

Christian Watchfulness. LESSON TEXT. (Matt. 24: 42-51. Memory verses, 42-44.)

LESSON PLAN. TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: *Jesus the King in Zion.*

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: *But ye behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor.*—Heb. 2: 9.

LESSON TOPIC: *A Message Enjoying Watchfulness.*

LESSON OUTLINE: 1. The Obligation to Watchfulness, vs. 42-44. 2. The Rewards of Watchfulness, vs. 45-47. 3. The Perils of Heedlessness, vs. 48-51.

GOLDEN TEXT: *And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.—Mark 13: 37.*

DAILY HOME READINGS: M.—Matt. 24: 42-51. Watchfulness enjoined. T.—Matt. 24: 1-22. Troublesome times. W.—Matt. 24: 23-41. Vigilance essential. Th.—Matt. 13: 24-37. Reasons for watchfulness. F.—Luke 21: 25-38. Watch and pray. S.—Matt. 26: 36-46. Watchfulness neglected. S.—1 Pet. 4: 1-11. Watching against evil.

LESSON ANALYSIS. I. THE OBLIGATION TO WATCHFULNESS.

I. The Coming Lord: Your Lord cometh (42). I come again, and will receive you (John 14: 3). This Jesus... shall so come in like manner (Acts 1: 11). He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry (Heb. 10: 37). Ye: I come quickly (Rev. 22: 20). II. The Unknown Hour: If the master... had known... he would have watched (43). The Lord so cometh as a thief in the night (1 Thess. 5: 2). The day of the Lord will come as a thief (2 Pet. 3: 10). Thou shalt not know what hour I will come (Rev. 3: 3). Behold, I come as a thief (Rev. 16: 15). III. The Needful Watching: Be ye also ready (44). Watch therefore (Matt. 25: 13). It is high time for you to awake out of sleep (Rom. 13: 11). Let us watch and be sober (Thess. 5: 6). Be watchful (1 Pet. 5: 8).

1. "Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh." (1) The Lord cometh; (2) None knows when; (3) All should watch. 2. "He would have watched." (1) A disposition to watchfulness; (2) A neglect of watchfulness.—(1) Its need recognized; (2) Its observance neglected. 3. "Be ye also ready." (1) The nature of readiness; (2) The need of readiness; (3) The rewards of readiness.

II. THE REWARDS OF WATCHFULNESS. I. Commendation: The faithful and wise servant (45). Well done, good and faithful servant (Matt. 25: 21). Ye blessed of my Father (Matt. 25: 34). I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat (Matt. 25: 35). I have called you friends (John 15: 15).

II. Blessedness: Blessed is that servant (46). Blessed is the man... watching daily at my gates (Prov. 8: 34). He shall have abundance (Matt. 25: 29). Inherit the kingdom prepared for you (Matt. 25: 34). Blessed is he that watcheth (Rev. 16: 15).

III. Exaltation: He will set him over all that he hath (47). Them that honor me I will honor (1 Sam. 2: 30). I will set thee over many things (Matt. 25: 21). If any man serve me, him will the Father honor (John 12: 26). Where I am, there ye may be also (John 14: 3). 1. "That faithful and wise servant." (1) Faithful; (2) Wise; (3) Honored. (4) The way to advancement (1) Faithfulness; (2) Wisdom. 2. "Blessed is that servant." (1) In his personal character; (2) In his official standing; (3) In his prospective honors. 3. "He will set him over all that he hath." (1) Recognized ability; (2) Enlarged usefulness; (3) Deserved honor.

II. THE PERILS OF HEEDLESSNESS. I. Heedlessness: Shall say... My Lord tarrieth; and shall begin to beat (48, 49). Jethu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord (2 Kings 10: 31). My people doth not consider (Isa. 1: 3). As a horse that rusheth headlong in the battle (Jer. 8: 6). They made light of it (Matt. 22: 5).

II. Surprise: Shall come in a day when he expecteth not (50). Trembling hath surprised the goddess ones (Isa. 33: 14). How is... the praise of the whole earth surprised (Jer. 51: 41). At midnight there is a cry (Matt. 25: 6).

III. Destruction: Cut him asunder, and appoint his portion (51). The way of the wicked shall perish (Ps. 1: 6). He... shall suddenly be broken (Prov. 29: 11). The chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire (Matt. 3: 12). These shall go away into eternal punishment (Matt. 25: 46).

1. "But if that evil servant shall say in his heart." (1) Evil nature; (2) Evil surmising; (3) Evil deeds.—(1) An evil heart; (2) An evil thought; (3) An evil man. 2. "Shall cut him asunder." (1) Crime detected; (2) Opportunity ended; (3) Penalty enforced. 3. "The weeping and gnashing of teeth." (1) The weeping of remorse; (2) The gnashing of despair.

LESSON BIBLE READING. WATCHFULNESS.

A universal duty (Mark 13: 37). A constant duty (2 Tim. 4: 5). Against Satan (Eph. 6: 11). Against temptations (Matt. 26: 41, f. c.). Because of uncertainties (Mark 13: 35-36). Because of personal weakness (Matt. 26: 41, f. c.). To attain a proper walk (Eph. 5: 15, 16; 1 Thess. 5: 6). To attain steadfastness (1 Cor. 16: 12). Blended with prayer (Matt. 26: 41, f. c.; 1 Pet. 4: 7). Its observers blessed (Luke 12: 37).

LESSON SURROUNDINGS.

After the denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees came, in striking contrast, another incident, narrated only by Mark (Mark 12: 41-44) and Luke (Luke 21: 1-4), the praise bestowed on one poor widow who cast her mite into the treasury. Most harmonists think this was followed by events and sayings recorded in John 12: 20-50, since that passage implies that our Lord thus closed his public teachings. Certain Greeks desired to see him; his answer is then given, to which the evangelist adds some reflections of his own, before recording the final public utterance of our Lord.

The present lesson is taken from the great discourse (Matt. 24 and 25) respecting the destruction of Jerusalem and the second coming of our Lord. It was occasioned by a prediction of the total destruction of the temple (Matt. 24: 1, 2), called forth directly by questions as to time, etc. (Matt. 24: 3). The place was the mount of Olives, east of the temple, probably in view of it. The time was Tuesday evening, the 12th of Nisan (or beginning of the 13th, according to Jewish reckoning), April 4, year of Rome 783.—A. D. 30.

The persons present were the "four fishermen" (Mark 13: 3). The earlier part of the discourse refers to the destruction of Jerusalem; the central part to "the coming," and the latter part to "the end of the world." Where the division between these sections takes place is disputed; but the general movement from one topic to the other is indicated by the context in Matthew. Parallel passages: Mark 13: 33-37; Luke 21: 34-36.

The Ginger Vice.

Few people are aware of the effect of a peculiar kind of dissipation known as ginger drinking. The article used is the essence of ginger, such as is put up in the several proprietary preparations known to the trade, or the alcoholic extract ordinarily sold over the druggist's counter. Having once acquired a liking for it, the victim becomes as much a slave to his appetite as the opium eater or the votary of cocaine. In its effect it is much the most injurious of all such practices, for in the course of time it destroys the coating of the stomach and dooms its victim to a slow and agonizing death. The druggist who told me about the thing says that as ginger essence contains about 100 per cent. alcohol, and whisky less than 50 per cent., the former is therefore twice as intoxicating. In fact, this is the reason why it is used by hardened old toppers whose stomachs are no longer capable of intoxicating stimulation from whisky. They need the more powerful agency of the pure alcohol in the ginger extract.

He told me he had two regular customers, a woman, who had contracted the habit through employing the ginger on several occasions for stomachic pains. The relief it afforded her was so grateful that she took to it upon any recurrence of her trouble. She found, too, that the slight exhilaration of the alcohol banished mental depression. In this way she got to using it regularly, and finally to such excess that she was often grossly intoxicated. Large doses produce a quiet stupor; additional doses produce a profound lethargic slumber, which lasts in some cases for twenty-four hours. His other customer was a peddler, who came at a certain hour every morning, brought a four ounce bottle, and drank its contents by noon. The man craved the stuff so ardently that he was unable to go about his business until he had set the machinery of his stomach in operation, and started the circulation of the blood by means of the fiery draught. He says that the habit is well known to the drug trade.

He started.

A rag-peddler, who was driving up Gratiot avenue recently, had reached Hastings street when his horse balked. The usual number of smart Alecks were soon on hand with their advice, and one suggestion after another was tried in vain. The horse could neither be pulled nor pushed, and as he was blocking-ading traffic, the crowd began to grow very rapidly.

"What is it?" inquired a boy of twelve, who pushed his way into the circle.

"Balky horse," answered some one. "Walks the owner? Here, you man, can't you start this horse?"

"No, he doan't start oop."

"Wait a minute."

The lad ran up the street half a block and pulled a handful of hay out of a bale at a feed store, and when he returned he cleared a space in front of the horse, stood off about five feet, and extended his hand. The horse pricked up his ears, his eyes glistened and he at once advanced and followed the boy around the corner.

"According to the boss," explained the boy as the crowd cheered, "When a hay-fed horse balks he wants fire-crackers under him; when a horse who is fed on scrap-iron and gravel-rocks balks, a pinch of hay will lead him all over town."