

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

Topic for the Week Beginning Jan. 19. Comment by Rev. S. H. Doyle. Topic.—Secrets of strong lives.—Luke vii, 29-35. (A temperance meeting suggested.)

The strong life or character that is set before us in our topical reference as our model for finding the secrets of strong lives is that of John the Baptist. Hardly could a better have been chosen, particularly to apply the subject of temperance. We not only have the life of John as testimony of the nobility of his character, but we have a remarkable declaration of the Lord Himself in favor of this opinion. This is a pleasant testimony, too, from the fact that it came as a tribute to John just after he had intimated his doubts concerning Christ.

One secret of a strong life, as illustrated in John, is the willingness to accept privation. John lived for years in the wilderness, with nothing to gratify taste, with barely sufficient to sustain life and with only the roughest kind of dress. This privation was necessary that he might perform the work which God had for him to do.

Another secret of strength illustrated in John is moral courage. John had the courage of his convictions. He even denounced the king and queen for their sins, as well as the common people. Moral courage is an absolute necessity to guard against the evils of intemperance.

Another secret is willing submission to the will of God. John did to the very best of his ability the work which God had laid out for him to do. He was faithful, even to death, to the work committed to his charge. If we follow the path that God lays out for us in life, in His way, our lives will be strong indeed.

THE SIN EATER.

A Curious Funeral Rite Which Formerly Obtained in Wales.

The principality of Wales has within living memory possessed an official known as the "sin eater," says a London journal. It was the practice for a relative—usually a woman—to put on the breast of a deceased person a quantity of bread and cheese and beer, and the sin eater was sent for to consume them and to pronounce the everlasting rest of the departed. It was believed that in doing this he absolutely ate and appropriated to himself the sins symbolized by the viands, and thereby prevented their disturbing the repose of the sinner who had committed them.

Again, it is natural to ask what happened at the decease of a popular or "fashionable" sin eater. Would any one among his professional brethren undertake to eat his sins, even in the first flush of satisfaction produced by stepping into his shoes? If so, then, indeed, has the epithet of "gallant" been rightly bestowed upon little Wales. It is as though one doctor succeeding to another's practice should consent to assume the moral responsibility for his late colleague's treatment of all his deceased patients in addition to his own similar burdens.

We yield to none in admiration of the quiet and homely heroism of the medical profession, but we doubt whether it would enable them to face such an ordeal as this. As to the Welsh practitioners to whom we have compared them, we shrink from pursuing the analysis further. It is evident that, as in the schoolboy game of "conquerors," where a stone which can smash the smasher, of say, 48 other stones takes over all its conquests, and becomes itself a "forty-fourer," so the responsibilities of these unhappy men might accumulate at an alarming rate.

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DEADLY SHOTS FIRED BY THE SUN.

In One Instance an Innocent Man Was Sentenced to Be Hanged.

In a recent paper appeared an account of a strange accident in which a man was killed by the discharge of a gun while lying asleep on a lounge in his room, the weapon being discharged by reflected rays of the sun falling upon the cartridge chamber of the firearm.

Since the publication of the story a correspondent from York, Pa., writes concerning the accident and refers to a similar case, in which, through the efforts of a clever Cincinnati lawyer named G. C. Wallis, the person accused of murder and sentenced to be hanged was set at liberty, the circumstantial evidence on which he was convicted being entirely exploded by a witnessed demonstration as to how the accident really occurred.

The York correspondent referred to volume 13 of The Criminal Law Magazine, page 697, on which a full account of the case appears. The case was that of the state of Tennessee against Avery, tried in Henry county, that state, and is one of the most remarkable in the history of criminal jurisprudence.

In June, 1887, Charles Ensley, the cousin of a man of the name of Avery, was killed in his room while lying on a lounge, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The weapon which caused the death was a small rifle, sending a .22 caliber ball through Ensley's brain. No one was in the house at the time but Ensley. An empty rifle was found lying on a rack on a wall of the room in which the killing occurred, and the bullet fitted the tube.

Avery was arrested for the crime, as he was the only living close relative to Ensley, and by his death profited to the amount of about \$100,000. Avery was tried, pleaded not guilty, but was convicted of murder in the first degree and sentenced to be hanged. He appealed to the supreme court and engaged Mr. Wallis to defend him. The supreme court remanded the case back to the circuit court on technical errors.

Eight witnesses were in the room, and a few minutes after 3 o'clock a puff and a report occurred, and the ball struck the outlined form back of the ear in the exact location where Ensley was shot, and the theory of circumstantial evidence went to pieces. The incident, being witnessed and sworn to, readily explained itself to the jury.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Horace and His Garden. The poet loved the country, yet moped when he was there. All his life Horace had wished for a piece of land which contained a garden, a stream and a copse, and in the Sabine valley he found all three.

Horace was shot, and the theory of circumstantial evidence went to pieces. The incident, being witnessed and sworn to, readily explained itself to the jury.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

QUEER JAMAICA WAYS.

How One Woman Felt in Rome to Do as the Romans Do.

"When in Rome, do as the Romans do," says the old dictum, but in those days of universal travel it is somewhat necessary to know beforehand the manners and customs of the native inhabitants of the countries that are visited.

"I have eaten with chopsticks with a mandarin's wife and daughter in China and sat cross legged with the Persian ladies in Teheran and smoked nargiles," said an American woman who was nothing if not cosmopolitan, "but I never failed to adapt myself successfully to the customs of the country until I reached Jamaica, in the West Indies. I had letters to one of the magistrates there, and upon delivering them I received a prompt invitation to breakfast and to spend the day. The hour was not mentioned, but as the people were French I supposed of course it was 12 o'clock, a la fourchette, at which time I presented myself, only to find that I had been expected at 8. However, my entertainers were most hospitable, and their usual frugal luncheon of cake, wine and fruit was evidently supplemented by more substantial viands for my benefit.

After luncheon I was asked if I would like to take a nap. As I had just arrived I assured my hosts that I never slept in the daytime and proceeded to make myself as agreeable as possible. My entertainers endeavored to be cheerful, but there was something in the atmosphere that made me aware that I had committed a solecism, and that I had guessed rightly was very apparent in the relieved looks of the family when I said that I thought I did feel tired and would be glad to repose myself a little. I was immediately conducted to an apartment which had evidently been arranged with the expectation that I would go regularly to bed, and wishing me a good rest the lady and gentleman of the house left me for the whole afternoon.

About 5 one of the daughters came to fetch me in a fresh toilet, looking very nice and making me feel very tumbled and untidy in consequence. So after I had been shown the gardens, which were really lovely, I began to make mesadenze. "But you must stop to dinner," they urged; "we quite expected you." But I thought they had had enough of me and persisted in my refusal. I thought they parted from me rather stiffly, and in driving over the long avenue which led up to the house I met a number of smartly dressed people, who, I afterward learned, had been invited especially to meet me. So I missed it all around and gave no end of trouble and offense, all because I did not just know Jamaica habits.—New York Tribune.

THE CODE OF HONOR.

Duelling as It Was in France in the Time of Richelieu.

The passion for duelling, which had cost France, it was said, between 7,000 and 8,000 lives during the 20 years of Henry IV's reign, was at its height when his son came to the throne. The council of Trent in 1545 had solemnly condemned the practice of single combat, impartially including principals, seconds and spectators in its penalty of excommunication. In 1602 an edict of Henry pronounced the "damnable custom of duelling introduced by the corruption of the century" to be the cause of so many piteous accidents, to the extreme regret and displeasure of the king and to the irreparable damage of the state, "that we should count ourselves unworthy to hold the scepter if we delayed to repress the enormity of this crime."

A whole series of edicts followed to the same effect, but it was easier to make edicts than to enforce them. Degradation, imprisonment, confiscation of property, loss of civil rights and death were the penalties attached to the infringement of the laws against duelling, and still the practice prevailed. In 1629 Richelieu published a milder form of prohibition. The first offense was no longer capital, a third only of the offender's property was to be confiscated, and the judges were permitted to recognize extenuating circumstances.

A few months later the Comte de Bonteville thought fit to test the minister's patience in this direction. The Place Royale had long been a favorite duelling ground, and De Bonteville traveled from Brussels to fight his twenty-second duel here, in the heart of Paris, in deliberate defiance of the king's authority. The result was not encouraging. Montmorency though he was, the count went with his second to the scaffold, and the marked decrease from that time in the number of duels may be attributed either to the moderation used in framing the law or to the inexorable resolution with which it was enforced.—Macmillan's Magazine.

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A Difficult Guest.

When Dickens first met Hans Christian Andersen in a London drawing room, he asked his fellow novelist to pay him a visit at Gadshill. The invitation was promptly accepted and the guest remained a long time.

Upon many occasions during his protracted visit Dickens found his patience put to the test by his new friend.

In spite of Hans Christian's many merits and good qualities, his very marked peculiarities made him an exceedingly difficult person to entertain.

He was extremely sentimental and emotional, and frequently, for no apparent reason, would burst into a flood of wondrous tears and run away to his room.

A few days after his arrival he rang the bell and asked to see the eldest son of the house.

The eldest son was away, and when Dickens himself went to see what his guest desired he found that Anderson wished the eldest son to shave him, that being the custom of his own country.

Dickens explained that in the first place young Charles was absent, and that, secondly, it would be an experiment fraught with danger for him to attempt the desired service, as, with the very best intentions, he would probably nearly decapitate his illustrious guest.

Under these most untoward circumstances Hans Christian, weeping, betook himself to the nearest barber shop and had his beard attended to professionally.

A Sure Cure.

Mrs. Minks—Doctor, my husband is a terrible sufferer from insomnia, and some nights cannot sleep a wink. Can you do anything for him?

Doctor—Certainly, madam. In the first place, he must go to bed not later than 10 o'clock.

"He does that."

"Very well. Wait until he appears to be in a dose, and then suddenly give him a shake and tell him it is time to go down and fix the kitchen fire. He'll turn over, give a grunt, and sleep like a log till morning."—New York Weekly.

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A small daughter was taken to visit the Museum of Natural History the other day. "Oh, mamma," she said, upon her return, "I've been to a dead circus."

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