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VOL. XVII.--NO. 1.

DURHAM, N. C., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 1888.

\$1.50 PER ANNUM.

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NOT AS I WILL.

Blindfolded and alone I stand, With unknown thresholds on each hand; The darkness deep as I grope, Afraid to fear, afraid to hope; Yet this one thing I learn to know Each day more surely as I go, That doors are open, ways are made, Burdens are lifted or are laid, By some great law unseen and still Unfathomed purpose to fulfill, "Not as I will."

"RECREATIONS."

Dr. Talmage's Sermon, Preached Sunday, December 18, 1887.

Texts: They that use this world, as not abusing it, for in such manner as they have received it, they shall give account. And they shall call for damnation on the ground that they have received it, and he made them sport.—Judges xvi, 25.

We are entering the gayest season of the year. The winter opens before us the gate of a thousand amusements, some of them good and some bad.

One of my texts will show you that amusements may be destructive, my other text will show that amusements may be under the Divine blessing and direction.

There were three thousand people assembled in the temple of Dagon. They had come to make sport of eyes Samson. They were all ready for the entertainment. They began to clap and pound, impatient for the amusement to begin, and they cried: "Fetch him out! Fetch him out!"

Yonder I see the blind giant coming, led by the hand of a child into the very midst of the temple. At his first appearance there goes up a shout of laughter and derision. The blind old giant pretends he is tired and wants to rest himself against the pillars of the house; so he says to the lad who leads him: "Show me where the main pillars are."

The lad does so. Then the strong man puts his right hand on one pillar and his left hand on another pillar, and with the mightiest push that mortal ever made, throws himself forward until the whole house comes down in thunderous crash, grinding the audience like grapes in a wine press.

"And so it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said: Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made them sport."

In other words, there are amusements that are destructive, and bring down disaster and death upon the heads of those who practice them. When they laugh and cheer, they die. The three thousand who perished that day in Gaza are as nothing compared with the tens of thousands who have been destroyed by sinful amusements.

But the other text I have read implies that there is a lawful use of the world, as well as an unlawful abuse of it; and the difference between the man Christian and the man un-Christian is that in the former case the man masters the world, while in the latter case the world masters him.

For whom did God make this grand and beautiful world? For whom this wonderful expenditure of color, this graceful mosaic of line, this mosaic of the ground, this fresco of the sky, this glowing fruitage of orchard and vineyard, this full orchestra of the temple, in which the tree branches flute and the winds trumpet and the thunders drum and all the splendors of earth and sky come clashing their cymbals!

For whom did God spring the arched bridge of colors resting upon buttresses of broken storm cloud? For whom did he gather the upholstery of fire around the windows of the setting sun? For all men, but more especially for his own dear children.

If you build a large mansion and spread a great feast after it to celebrate the completion of the structure, do you allow strangers to come in and occupy the place, while you thrust your own children in the kitchen or the barn or the fields? Oh, no. You say: "I am very glad to see strangers in my mansion, but my own sons and daughters shall have the first right there."

Now, God has built this grand mansion of a world, and he has spread a glorious banquet of life around the world, and he has made it a banquet for all men, but more especially for his own children, those who are the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, those who through grace can look up and say: "Abba, Father." You cannot make me believe that God gives more advantages to the world than He gives to the Church bought by His own blood.

If, therefore, people of the world have looked with dolours sympathy upon those who make profession of religion, and have said: "Those new converts are going down into privation and into hardship. Why did they tarry a little longer in the world, and have some of its enjoyments and amusements and recreations?"

I say to such men of the world: "You are greatly mistaken," and before I get through I will show that those people who stay out of the kingdom of God have the hardships

and self-denials, while those who come in have the joys and the satisfactions.

This morning, in the name of the King of Heaven and earth, I serve a writ of ejectment upon all the sinful and polluted who have squatted on the domain of earthly pleasure as though it belonged to them, while I claim, in behalf of the good and the pure and the true, the eternal inheritance which God has given them.

Oh, therto, Christian philanthropist, clerical and lay, have busied yourselves chiefly in denouncing sinful recreations; but I feel we have no right to stand before men and women in whose hearts there is a desire for recreation amounting to positive necessity, denouncing this and that and the other thing, when we do not promise to give, them something better. God helping me, this morning, and with reference to my last account, I shall enter upon a sphere not unusual in sermonizing, but a sphere which I think ought to be presented at this time. I propose now to lay before you some of the recreations which are not only innocent, but positively helpful and advantageous.

In the first place, I commend, among indoor recreations, MUSIC, VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL.

Amid the first things created was the bird, so that the earth might have music at the start. This world, which began with so sweet a serenade, is finally to be demolished amidst the ringing blast of the archangel's trumpet, so that as there was music at the start, there shall be music at the close. While this heavenly art has often been dragged into the uses of superstition and dissipation, some of them good and some bad, one of my texts will show you that amusements may be under the Divine blessing and direction.

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IN NORTHERN SAXONY.

The Plant's Letter From The Old World.

Southern Saxony, as I have intimated in former letters, is a rolling, mountainous region—picturesque often, but rarely romantic.

Eastern Saxony is likewise a mountainous country, much more rugged though not so elevated as the section in the neighborhood of Johannegeorgstadt and Annaberg.

The central and northern parts of this little country, however, are hilly, with a gradual slope towards the flat, sandy land of Prussia. This section is, therefore, in its geological formation, much less interesting than are many other parts of the country. Still, I have had interesting things wherever I have looked for them.

Leipzig, which is in the northeastern corner of Saxony, is only 37 feet above the level of the Baltic; while Dresden is still less.

It was a warm, sunny morning when we alighted from the train at Waldheim on the Zschopau. Waldheim is a pretty little dorf on the direct line of railway connecting Chemnitz and Berlin. The Germans have a very dull kind of humor. They say a great many go to Waldheim involuntarily that go of their own accord. One of the largest penitentiaries in Germany is situated there. We were, fortunately, among those who go of their own accord.

Waldheim is a long, straggling village, situated on both sides of the Zschopau. Like most German towns it seems so loathe to stop straggling that it wanders off and diffuses itself into a dozen dirty little equally straggling villages, which, in turn, lose themselves completely in the shallow, winding valleys, where they have existed, perhaps, for ages.

A rapid walk through the Markt Platz and a narrow alley which led beneath the glass-strewn walls of the prison, satisfied our curiosity in regard to the village of Waldheim. We accordingly sauntered out of the town by means of a shady, well-beaten path, which for a long time followed the river valley.

At length we espied in the distance, rising above the trees which capped a high hill, the graceful turrets of a Rittergut, or knight's residence. Opposite this, on the side of another hill, stood the perpendicular yellow walls of an ancient castle. We accordingly hastened our steps and at length stood before the castle gate.

Looking beneath an arched entrance we caught sight of an interesting old courtyard, but alas! before our eyes in plain black and white, stood the notice, "Der Eintritt ist Verboten," which is equivalent to our terse expression "No Admittance."

The day was very warm and we were in despair. After all our walk we were to be thus baffled? Yet, when we raised our eyes they rested upon the floating banner of the proprietor, red and white perpendicular stripes, with a lion rampant surmounted by a gilt crown. This is the European way of saying that the Baron, Count, King, or whatever is visiting his castle, and on occasions of this kind it is not customary to admit strangers.

My friends lost patience. What were our best castles for? What right had one man to monopolize what was as free born American citizens designed to wish to see—ay, to such an extent that he had walked three miles to see it? I tried to persuade my friend that any man had a right to his own house, but I could not convince him to admit the truth of this principle when applied to castles. He argued that castles were not houses and that the proprietor showed a lack of common sense by not building a modern house for himself and either turning the castle into a summer boarding house, or charging foreigners—and especially Americans—a modest fee for the privilege of ransacking the place from garret to dungeon.

Arguing in this way we soon reached the castle of Kriebstein—the castle is known as the Kriebstein and sat down to rest.

To settle the matter I called the waiter and made some inquiries concerning the castle and its owner. Yes, said the swallow-tailed Ganyemede, the Herr Count was at home and no one was admitted at such times. Did he suppose the Herr Count would allow us to see his castle? I would send him my card? Ganyemede shrugged his shoulders as much as to say that he doubted whether such travel-stained persons as ourselves had any cards to send.

This miffed us; so I told him to take my card and compliments to the Herr Count and tell him we wished to see what was to be seen.

Awaiting the return of our envoy, we solaced and cooled ourselves with a villainous mixture of claret and seters water and discussed the general subject of feudalism and decayed institutions. By and by, Ganyemede stood before us and bowed much more respectfully than at first. The Herr Count was at dinner, but we could see the castle at three o'clock, if we wished.

Accordingly, at a few minutes after three, we entered the castle yard and were met by a young man who informed us that he "speaks English," so we pushed on in search of something more exciting. In a moment this appeared in the shape of a worthy person in a white vest and pan-tailed coat who was no doubt the general factotum and manager of the place. A smile covered the greater part of his flabby red face as he doubled himself and told us that his master had instructed him to show us everything. Up a narrow staircase and down another, round a corner and up another staircase—and we were ushered into a large

salon furnished elegantly in blue. Our guide proved loquacious if not reliable. History, I imagine, was not his strong point; or else Kriebstein had had more than its share of adventures. In the red salon he stopped before a large painting. This picture, he said, represented an historical occurrence. In the middle ages the castle was captured and a beautiful young countess carried away through a window. Somehow the picture did not seem in sympathy with the story, however. The female in the painting was neither young nor pretty, nor was she being carried through a window. She appeared to be a huge Amazon who was eloping with a poor little warrior whose ma was not along to protect him.

From the sitting-rooms with their pictures and bric-a-brac we went in pursuit of our worthy guide down another flight of steps into the chapel. This proved to be the most interesting feature of the castle. It was a low square room with grained wood on the floor and an apartment undoubtedly been taken from the solid rock. On one side stood an altar surrounded by an ancient altar-piece painted on wood, representing the apostles and evangelists. How old is this castle? I asked. It was built in the eighth century, replied our conductor. Passing over this absurd statement, I returned to my examination of the picture. The wood on which it was painted was oak, but so great was its age that it crumbled readily in our fingers like decayed cork. For the chapel windows a sheer precipice of a hundred and fifty feet separated us from the sparkling waters of the river. Going again up the stairway, which also was cut from the solid rock, we passed through the private rooms and sleeping chamber where the Count's friends live when they visit him in the hunting season. In some of these ancient armor and weapons are placed side by side with those of more modern date. In a window lay a breastplate which the present count wore in the France-Prussian war, and directly over where his heart must have been there is a deep dent which was made by a French bullet.

In an adjoining room hung the pictures of an old count and countess. In the innocence of his heart our guide informed us that these were the parties who had built the castle in the eighth century. But, alas for the anachronism! The count's costume was that of the time of Louis XIV, white silk stockings and all.

After a quiet inspection of the dining hall, where we found two most beautiful chandeliers, made entirely of the antlers of deer, we dropped a thaler into the outstretched hand of our glib-tongued guide and, passing through a gateway where stood a line of gates such as were in use three hundred years ago, we passed in front of the main door, a heavy oaken affair, every inch of whose surface was covered with the wings and skeletons of large birds. Ten minutes later we were walking through the forest on our way back to Waldheim.

Two Strings to Her Bow. (Washington Star.) A Wilton woman tried to get a pension but failed, because her marriage took place subsequent to her husband's discharge from the army. Nothing daunted, she began to look around, and found that her first husband had served in the Mexican war. Her case was presented, and a few days ago she received a pension of \$8 per month.

"Consumption Cure" would be a truthful name to give to Dr. Pierce's "Golden Medical Discovery," the most efficacious medicine yet discovered for arresting the early development of pulmonary disease. But "consumption cure" would not sufficiently indicate the scope of its influence and usefulness. In all the many diseases which spring from a derangement of the liver and blood the "Discovery" is a safe and sure specific. Of all druggists.

Like a Democratic Plank. (Washington Post.) The Indianapolis News, an independent Republican journal, put a great truth into this strong sentence: "The foundations of government are swept away when it is concluded that public men are to be chosen on the basis of expediency rather than on the basis of principle."

How often is the light of the household clouded by signs of melancholy or irritability on the part of the ladies. Yet they are not to be blamed, for they are the result of ailments peculiar to that sex, which men know not of. But the cause may be removed and joy restored by the use of Dr. Pierce's "Favorite Prescription," which, as a tonic and nerve for debilitated women, is certain, safe and pleasant. It is beyond all compare the great healer of women.

Well, Well, the Doctors Differ. (Augusta Gazette, Dem.) The proper thing to do with Senator Blair's educational bill is to put it to death. The best summary method will be the best.

Bucklen's Arnica Salve. The Best Salve in the world for Cuts, Bruises, Sores, Ulcers, Salt Rheum, Fever Sores, Tetter, Chapped hands, Chilblains, Corns, and all Skin Eruptions, and positively cures Piles, or no pay required. It is guaranteed to give perfect satisfaction, or money refunded. Price 25 cents per box. For sale by R. Blacknall & Son.

John Jacob Astor has contributed \$1,000 to the pension fund for the New York policemen.

PEOPLE TALKED ABOUT.