SUNDAY'S SERMON.

ONE OF REV. DR. TALMAGE'S STERLING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "Gospel of the Weather."

TEXT: "*Hath the rain a father?*"—Job xxxviii., 28.

The Book of Job has been the subject of unbounded theological wrangle. Men have made it the ring in which to display their ecclesiastical pugilism. Some say that the Book of Job is a true history; others, that it is an allegory; others, that it is an epic poem; others, that it is a drama. Some say that Job lived eighteen hundred years before Christ, others say that he never lived at all. Some say that the author of this book was Job; others, David; others, Solomon. The discussion has landed some in blank infidelity. Now, I have no trouble with the Book of Job or Revelation—the two most mysterious books in the Bible—because of a rule I adopted some years ago.

I wade down into a Scripture passage as long as I can touch bottom, and when I cannot then I wade out. I used to wade in until it was over my head and then I got drowned. I study a passage of Scripture as long as it is a comfort and help to my soul, but when it becomes a perplexity and a spiritual upturning I quit. In other words, we ought to wade in up to our heart, but never wade in until it is over our head. No man should ever expect to swim across this great ocean of divine truth. I go down into that ocean as I go down into the Atlantic Ocean at East Hampton, Long Island, just far enough to bathe; then I come out. I never had any idea that with my weak hand and foot I could strike my way clear over to Liverpool.

I suppose you understand your family genealogy? You know something about your parents, your grandparents, your great-grandparents. Perhaps you know where they where born, or where they died. Have you ever studied the parentage of the shower, "Hath not the rain a father?" This question is not asked by a poetester or a scientist, but by the head of the universe. To humble and to save Job God asks him fourteen questions: About the world's architecture, about the refraction of the sun's rays, about the tides, about the snow crystal, about the lightnings, and then He arraigns him with the interrogation of the text, "Hath the rain a father?"

With the scientific wonders of the rain I have nothing to do. A minister gets through with that kind of sermons within the first three years, and if he has piety enough he gets through with it in the first three months. A sermon has come to me to mean one word of four letters, "help." You all know that the rain is not an orphan. You know it is not cast out at the gates of heaven a foundling. You would answer the question of my text in the affirmative.

Safely housed during the storm, you hear the rain beating against the window pane and you find it searching all the crevices of the window sill. It first comes down in solitary drops, pattering the dust, and then it deluges the fields and angers the mountain torrents, and makes the traveler implore shelter. You know that the rain is not an accident of the world's economy. You know it was born of the cloud. You know it was rocked in the cradle of the wind. You know it was sung to sleep by the storm. You know that it is a flying evangel from heaven to earth. You know it is the gospel of the weather. You know that God is its father.

If this be true, then how wicked is our murmuring about climatic changes. The first seven Sabbaths after I entered the ministry it stormed. Through the week it was clear weather, but on the Sabbaths the old country meeting house looked like Noah's ark before it landed. A few drenched people sat before a drenched pastor; but most of the farmers stayed at home and thanked God that what was bad for the church was good for the crops. I committed a good deal of sin in those days in denouncing the weather. Ministers of the Gospel sometimes fret about stormy Sabbaths or hot Sabbaths, or inclement Sabbaths. They forget the fact that the same God who ordained the Sabbath and sent forth his ministers to announce salvation also ordained the weather. "Hath the rain a father?"

Merchants, also, with their stores filled with new goods, and their clerks hanging idly around the counters, commit the same transgression. There have been seasons when the whole spring and fall trade has been ruined by protracted wet weather. The merchants then examined the "weather probabilities" with more interest than they read their Bibles. They watched for a patch of blue sky. They went complaining to the store and came complaining home again. In all that season of wet feet and dripping garments and impassable streets they never once asked the question, "Hath the rain a father?"

So agriculturists commit this sin. There is nothing more annoying than to have planted corn rot in the ground because of too much moisture, or hay all ready for the mow dashed of a shower, or wheat almost ready for the sickle polished with the rust. How hard it is to bear the agricultural disappointments. God has infinite resources, but I do not think He has capacity to make weather to please all the farmers. Sometimes it is too hot, or it is too cold; it is too wet, or it is too dry; it is too early, or it is too late. They forget that the God who promised seed time and harvest, summer and winter, cold and heat, has promised all climatic changes. There is one question that ought to be written on every barn, on every fence, on every haystack, on every farmhouse, "Hath the rain a father?"

If you only knew what a vast enterprise it is to provide appropriate weather for this world we would not be so critical of the Lord. Isaac Watts ten years ago formed a company that he did not like the hymns that were sung in the English chapel. "Well," said his father, "Isaac, instead of your complaining about the hymns, go and make hymns that are better." And he did go and make hymns that were better. Now, I say to you it you do not like the weather get up a weather company and have a president, and a secretary, and a treasurer, and a board of directors, and ten million dollars of stock, and then provide weather that will suit us all. There is a man who has a weak head, and he cannot stand the glare of the sun. You must have a cloud always hovering over him.

I like the sunshine; I cannot live without plenty of sunlight, so you must always have enough light for me. Two ships meet in mid-Atlantic. The one is going to Southampton and the other is coming to New York. Provide weather that, while it is abaft for one ship, it is not a head wind for the other. There is a farm that is dried up for the lack of rain, and there is a pleasure party going out for a field excursion. Provide weather that will answer the farmer and the pleasure excursion. No, sirs, I will not take one dollar of stock in your weather company. There is only one Being in the universe who knows enough to provide the right kind of weather for this world. "Hath the rain a father?"

My text also suggests God's minute supervisal. You see the divine Sonship in every drop of rain. The jewels of the shower are not flung away by a spendthrift who knows not how many he throws or where they fall. They are all strung, strung, strung. They all have eternal lineage. They are all the children of a king. "Hath the rain a father?" Well, then, I say if God takes notice of every minute raindrop He will take notice of your insignificant affair of my life. It is the astronomical view of things that bothers me.

We look up into the starry heavens, and we say, "World! worlds!" and how insignificant we feel! We stand at the foot of Mount Washington or Mont Blanc, and we feel that we are only insects, and then we say to ourselves, "Though the world is so large, the sun is one million four hundred thousand times larger." "Oh!" we say, "it is no use, if God wants that great machinery through immensity He will not take the trouble to look down at me." Infidel conclusion. Saturn, Mercury and Jupiter are no more rounded and weighed and swung by the hand of God than are the globules on a lilac bush the morning after a shower.

God is no more in magnitudes than He is in minutiæ. If He has scales to weigh the mountains, He has balances delicate enough to weigh the infinitesimal. You can no more see Him through the telescope than you can see Him through the microscope; no more when you look up than when you look down. Are not the hairs of your head all numbered? And if Himalaya has a God, "Hath not the rain a father?" I take this doctrine of a particular Providence, and I thrust it into the very midst of your everyday life. If God fathers a raindrop, is there anything so insignificant in your affairs that God will not father that?

When Druyse, the gunsmith, invented the needle gun, which decided the battle of Sadowa, was it a mere accident? When a farmer's boy showed Blutcher a short cut by which he could bring his army up soon enough to decide Waterloo for England, was it a mere accident? When Lord Byron took a piece of money and tossed it up to decide whether or not he should be affianced to Miss Milbank, was it a mere accident which side of the money was up and which was down? When the Christian army was besieged at Baziers, and a drunken drummer came in at midnight and rang the alarm bell, not knowing what he was doing, but waking up the host in time to fight their enemies that moment arriving, was it was accident?

When in one of the Irish wars a starving mother, flying with her starving child, sank down and fainted on the rocks in the night and her hand fell on a warm bottle of milk, did that just happen so? God is either in the affairs of men or our religion is worth nothing at all, and you had better take it away from us, and instead of this Bible, which teaches the doctrine, give us a similar book, and let us, as the famous Mr. Fox, the member of parliament, in his last hour, cry out: "Give us the eighth book of Virgil."

Oh! my friends, let us rouse up to an appreciation of the fact that all the affairs of our life are under a king's command and under a father's watch. Alexander's war horse, Bucephalus, would allow anybody to mount him when he was unharnessed, but as soon as they put on that war horse, Bucephalus, the saddle and trappings of the conqueror he would allow no one but Alexander to touch him. And if a soulless horse could have so much pride in his owner, shall not immortal souls feel that they were made into weeping they could have endured it. There have been times in your life when you would have given the world, if you had possessed it, for one tear. You could utterly, you could blaspheme, but you could not cry; Have you never seen a man holding the hand of a dead wife, who had been all the world to him? The temples livid with excitement, the eye dry and frantic, no moisture on the upper or lower lid. You saw there were tears in your Christian comforter, he said, "Don't talk to me about God; there is no God, or if there is I hate Him; don't talk to me about God; world! take back all your gifts!" Then he staggered out into the storm and fainted in the inclement air. But God pitied him, and sent him home to his children.

But a few hours or days after, coming across some letters which he had written in life, or some letters which she wrote when he was away from home, with an outcry that appals, there burst the fountain of tears, and at the windows of Bethel cancellation strikes that fountain of tears, you find out that it is a tender-hearted, merciful, pitiful and all compassionate God who was the father of the rain. "Oh," you say, "it is absurd to think that God is going to watch over tears." No, my friends. There are three or four blades of them that God counts bottles and sterilizes. First, there are all parental tears, and there are more of these than any other kind, because the most of the race die in infancy, and that keeps parents mourning all around the world. They never get over it. They may live to shout and sing afterward, but there is always a corridor in the soul that is silent, though it once resounded.

My parents never mentioned the name of a child who died fifty years before without a tremor in the voice and a sigh, oh, how deep fetched! It was better she should die. It was a mercy she should die. She would have been a lifelong invalid. But you cannot argue away a parent's grief. How often you hear the moan: "Oh, my child, my child!" Then there are the filial tears. Little children soon get over the loss of parents. They are easily diverted with a new toy. But where is the man that has come to thirty or forty or fifty years of age, who can think of the old people without having all the fountains of his soul stirred up? You may have had to take care of her a good many years, but you never can forget how she used to take care of you.

There have been many sea captains come into our church, and the peculiarity of them was that they were nearly all prayed ashore by their mothers, though the mothers went into the dust soon after they went to sea. Have you never heard an old man in delirium of some sickness call for his mother? The fact is we get so used to calling for her the first ten years of our life we never get over it, and when she goes away from us it makes deep sorrow. You sometimes, perhaps, in days of trouble and darkness, when the world would say, "You ought to be able to take care of yourself"—you wake up from your dreams finding yourself saying, "Oh, mother! mother!" Have these tears no divine origin? Why, take all the warm hearts that ever beat in all lands, and in all ages, and put them together and their united throb would be weak compared with the throb of God's eternal sympathy. Yes, God also is father of all that rain of repentance.

Did you ever see a rain of repentance? Do you know what it is that makes a man repent? I see people going around trying to repent. They cannot repent. Do you know no man can repent until God helps him to repent? How do I know? By this passage, "Him hath God exalted to be a prince and a Saviour to give repentance." Oh, it is a tremendous hour when one wakes up and says: "I am a bad man. I have not sinned against the laws of the land, but I have wasted my life; God asked me for my services and I haven't given those services. Oh, my sins; God forgive me!" When that prayer starts it thrills all heaven. An angel cannot keep his eyes off it, and the church of God assembles around it, there is a commingling of tears, and God is the Father of the rain, the Lord, long suffering, merciful and gracious.

In a religious assemblage a man arose and said: "I have been a very wicked man; I broke my mother's heart. I became an infidel, but I have seen my evil way, and I have surrendered my heart to God, but it is a grief that I never can get over that my parents should never have heard of my salvation; I don't know whether they are living or dead." While he was yet standing in the audience a voice from the gallery said, "Oh! my son, my son!" He looked up and he recognized her. It was his old mother. She had been praying for him a great many years, and when at the foot of the cross the prodigal son and the praying mother embraced each other, there was a rain, a tremendous rain, of tears, and God was the Father of those tears. Oh, that God would break us down with a sense of our sin, and then lift us up with an appreciation of His mercy. Tears over our wasted life. Tears over a grieved spirit. Tears over an injured father. Oh, that God would move upon this audience with a great wave of religious emotion!

The king of Carthage was dethroned His people rebelled against him. He was driven into banishment. His wife and children were outrageously abused. Years went by, and the king of Carthage made many friends. He gathered up a great army. He marched again toward Carthage. Reaching the gates of Carthage the best men of the place came out barefooted and bareheaded and with ropes around their necks, crying for mercy. They said, "We abused you and we abused your family, but we cry for mercy." The king of Carthage looked down upon the people from his chariot and said: "I came to bless, I didn't come to destroy. You drove me out, but this day I pronounce pardon for all the people. Open the gates and let the army come in." The king marched in and took the throne, and the people all shouted, "Long live the king!"

My friends, you have driven the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the church, away from your heart; you have been maltreating Him all these years; but He comes back to day. He stands in front of the gates of your soul. If you will only pray for His pardon He will meet you with His gracious spirit and He will say: "Thy sins and thy iniquities I will remember no more. Open wide the gate I will take the throne. My peace I give unto you." And then, all through this audience, from the young and from the old, there will be a rain of tears, and God will be the father of that rain!

"It is surprising" said a young but very successful doctor, "how many people there are in New York who are amply able to pay their doctors' bills and who simply will not do it. This particular variety of bilks are, of course, always changing their physicians, so that the newest doctor to settle in any neighborhood is apt to get the not very profitable custom of a number of them. And the poor people who would pay if they could, and any young doctor may call himself lucky if he collects even 50 per cent. of his bills. But just as soon as a man conquers a place as a special list he has no such trouble. While I was a general practitioner I lost thousands of dollars of book debts. Since developed a specialty I have made only one bad debt." All of which does not speak very well for the honesty of New York people who indulge in the luxury of being ill.

EVERY one has an ax to grind; the man who is turning the handle for you is waiting with patience the time when he will have power to make you turn it twice as long for him.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

A CINCINNATI judge says of man who drink from twenty to fifty glasses of beer per day and still apparently keep their heads: "They are simply benumbed with drunkenness, even though they can talk and work, and are in no sense responsible to the law as adults. I could not hold such a man responsible any more than if he had been proven idiotic or crazy." The public must look out for itself.

WITHIN two weeks," says a Buffalo physician, "I have been called on to prescribe for seven men afflicted with raging headaches, due in every instance to poisonous coloring matter extracted by perspiration from the lining bands of their hats absorbed through the open pores of their foreheads. What these poisons are I have not had time to determine, but I would advise nobody to wear a hat which discolors the brow, especially if the discoloration be of a yellowish or brownish tint."

THE Scotch census, which is the last of all to come in, shows the same increase in the town and decrease in the rural population which the whole civilized world is becoming familiar with. For the first time Scotland has passed its fourth million in the upward climb, which brings it very near the point at which stand, in her particular direction from 8,000,000, now stands. In another ten years, if the existing rate of increase in the one and decrease in the other is maintained, Scotland will actually exceed Ireland in population.

AN editor tells a story to show how the most glaring errors can be made, can be overlooked and almost get into print. A correspondent, probably writing hurriedly, spoke of a man who was injured in his "right foreleg." The editor who read the copy skipped over that "right foreleg" of a man as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world to meet four-footed men. The compositor "set up" the "foreleg" and it was the ever-watchful proof-reader who came into the room with a broad grin on his face to ask how many legs men usually had.

A CONSULAR report on the trade of Klung-Chow during 1890 makes mention of a very strong "silk," which is made from a grub called the "celestial silkworm," or, locally, "paddy insect," and feeds on a sort of maple tree. The insect, when fully grown, is thrown into boiling vinegar, on which the "head" of the gut or "silk" appears. This is sharply torn out with both hands drawn apart, and is as long as the space between them, say five feet. The silk is "so strong that one single thread of it is sufficient to make a line with which to catch the smaller kinds of fish."

THE Supreme Court of Michigan has decided that ambulances are not to be driven through the streets of a city at a rate of speed prohibited in the case of vehicles generally. The municipal ordinances of Detroit forbid driving within the limits of that city, faster than six miles an hour. It was argued that this did not apply to ambulances, whose business it is to respond to an emergency call as quickly as possible. The Court does not accept this view. "The public interests," it says, "do not demand that in order to afford prompt relief to one person requiring the use of an ambulance other persons may be run down and injured by the fast and reckless rate of speed of the ambulance in going to the assistance of the person injured."

A DRUGGIST says in the New York Independent that "the proper place to radically cure inebriety is the inebriate asylum, and there ought to be more of such institutions. Then, again, in large cities there ought to be places where drinking men could go as a sort of refuge. A great many really good men drink to excess sometimes through some influence or other—sickness, sorrow, a death in the family, something of that kind. There ought to be some place where they could go and recuperate. Many a man, for the want of such a place, has gradually drifted into confirmed inebriety. If such men go to a hotel the temptation of the cafe is there. If they go to a Turkish bath they will find there the opportunity to indulge in liquor. They are not inebriates fit for an asylum; to use a common expression, they have got 'off' for the time being, and they simply want the chance of returning to their normal physical state."

A. H. McGUFFEY, the author of the famous McGuffey's School Reader, is still alive and is still a well-known lawyer of Cincinnati. He is a modest and retiring gentleman of the old school, courtly in his manner and well informed on all literary matters. "No other book," says the Cincinnati Times-Star, "has had such a general perusal in this country as McGuffey's School Reader. Almost the land over people of all ages are more familiar with its pages than those of any other book ever printed, perhaps. Their early ideas were nurtured by it. It could not but be that a publication of any force with such a constituency of readers must exert a tremendous influence. The pages of this text-book have always been full of sentiments of a lofty order. Through it the spark of American patriotism has been made to glow in millions of youthful breasts. Who cannot recall having, his quick young blood fired by schoolroom perusal of 'Give me liberty or give me death!' or 'Strike for your altars and your fires!' and other like ringing lines?"

JUDGE HOMER, of Broken Bow, Neb., issued a judgment the other day that has created a sensation. That is the region where the farms are being sold to pay off mortgages. The judge said: "We are asked to turn 100 farms over to money lenders, and 500 women and children over to pauperism. It shall never be done in this district while I am judge. The people are not able to pay, and I will not assist in their being robbed." Judge Homer will stand until a crop can be raised and confidence restored, and all will come out all right. If money lending on an INCH of living off of it, and trying to cultivate it, he should have the reward of his work. I will never consent to sell one inch of the land. When the people are compelled to ask aid to procure seed, it would be cruel mockery to deprive them of the fruit of the seed they sow. I have a right not to confirm sale when the property sold does not bring two-thirds of its actual value, and in these cases it has not brought that amount. The sale is not confirmed."

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER, in the "Editor's Drawer" of Harper's Magazine, illustrates some curious inquiries regarding the influence of climate upon veracity. "We are accustomed to say," he remarks, "that the Americans are generally a truthful people. Is it owing to our climate? That has great extremes. The mean is fair, and produces national veracity. Whence comes, then, the habit of playful exaggeration, usually harmless, and perfectly understood as humorous? Is it the result of the extremes of heat and cold, especially of heat? Observation ought to tell us whether we are more truthful in the winter than in the summer, and whether the national habit of using ice-water for a beverage is an attempt to counteract the veracity-destroying power of a high temperature. There is no doubt that we unbend in summer; moral forms relax; the city churches are closed; society falls into a flirtatious way, and only round no to seriousness of intention with the advent of the bracing autumn. Apparently it is the first frost that tones us up into veracity. It is a humiliating dependence."

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL has earned something of a reputation as a writer on bookish subjects. He is a Member of Parliament and a clever man withal. Addressing a Scotch audience the other day he had something suggestive and interesting to say about libraries. There were, he said, in the public libraries of Europe more than 21,000,000 printed volumes, and, "astonishing to relate," in those of America 50,000,000, while Australia had 1,000,000—about 72,000,000 in all. The private libraries of these countries would, he thought, bring the total number of books in use up to the enormous number of 100,000,000. Within the last decade England has made great advances in the establishment of public libraries, but she is still far behind the United States in this respect. Indeed, the superior facilities for popular education from this source which this country offers as compared with European countries may well be described as "astonishing." But even more astonishing, perhaps, is the fact that the greatest city of this country, New York, stands almost alone among its fellows in that it has no free public library of a size proportionate to the needs of its people.

The Frog's Bony System.

The frog's bony system is very simple. It has only nine vertebræ—fewer, I believe, than any other animal, and it possesses no ribs at all. Thus it is obliged to literally swallow by gulps the air it breathes instead of projecting its chest as we do and creating a vacuum for the atmosphere to pour into. Its hind legs are very peculiar in one respect, the two bones which form the heel in man being greatly elongated, so as to give an extra joint in the middle of the big "splay" foot, besides the pelvis hinges on to the backbone, so as to give a joint in of middle of the back. How much these extra hinges assist in leaping you can see if you take a strip of stiff paper and fold it several times. Press the folds together and you will find that the paper strip has a spring to it. Three or four folds give a certain amount of spring, five or six folds make the spring much stronger, and every additional fold adds so much spring power. It is the same way with the frog, which, besides having enormously long and muscular hind legs, is assisted by jumping by a hinge in his back and another in his foot, which you and I don't have. If you were built like a frog you would think nothing of leaping across Pennsylvania avenue at one hop. In the scientific phrase, the frog is 'modified' for jumping, that being his method of progression. He has no knee pan, the bones of the upper and lower leg being connected by a hinge of cartilage merely. On each hind foot he has a sixth toe, that has become rudimentary. The fore feet have only four toes each, the thumb being absent. Evolutionists say that in the development of species the thumb is the first digit to disappear, next goes the little finger, next the forefinger and lastly the fourth or 'ring' finger. Thus they assert the horse originally had five toes on each foot, losing four of them one after another until now only the middle toe is left, upon the nail of which the animal walks. Similarly the cloven-footed beasts have come down to two toes.—[Washington Star.

Remedies for Mosquito Bites.

Now that many of us intend to hie ourselves away for the summer, some to the hills and some to the coast, it would be well to remember our buzzing enemies, who make night and our bodies alike hideous. In such calamity as this a little bottle of witch hazel will be a great convenience to those who remember to take it with them; so, also will camphor. But if neither of these is at hand, soap rubbed over the bite in a good lather and allowed to dry there is said to be as good as anything for taking away the sting and allaying the itching.—[New York Sun.

The silver-leaf disease has become serious in North Carolina.

SOMEWHAT STRANGE.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE.

Queer Episodes and Startling Adventures Which Show that Truth Is Stranger than Fiction.

A STRANGE case of human duality has been exhibited in Paris to a number of eminent medical and literary men. The phenomenon consists of twin sisters joined together at the lower part of their bodies. They were born at Bohemia, and are fourteen years of age. They are not united by a mere ligature, like the Siamese brothers, but resemble rather in their formation Millie-Christine, well-known in this country and Europe. Millie-Christine, however, had only one stomach, so that the two sisters experienced the feelings of hunger and thirst at the same time. It is not so with Rosa and Josepha, who, having two stomachs, have distinct tastes in the matter of food and drink. M. Maurice Lefevre—a member of the Figaro staff, who introduced the young ladies in a few brief and bright remarks—told an amusing story of how, after they had tasted champagne for the first time, both were ill. Josepha made up her mind she would not touch the dangerous wine again, and she had kept her word, whereas Rosa still indulges in the beverages she prefers. When one was ill the other was very angry at having to go to bed, and insisted on feeding in her usual way. They are thus quite different beings so far as sensations, inclinations, mind and heart are concerned. The children are quite pretty. They are healthy in appearance and they appear to be very amiable and good-tempered. On their way to Paris a curious question was raised. The officials wanted to reckon them by heads, whereas the manager insisted on an opposite decision, and he gained his point, so they came for a single fare.

A CURIOUS freak is being talked about in Berlin medical circles which would undoubtedly make a fortune for any enterprising showman who could be lucky enough to acquire its possession. This is a girl twenty-six years old who was introduced at the last meeting of the Berlin Medical Society by Dr. Snafeld, not only because she is so remarkable, but with the more humane idea that in that assembly of great skill and ingenuity something might be done to alleviate the poor under which she lives at present. She is the counterpart of the "death's-head-faced woman" who was described by the renowned surgeon Deefenbach, in 1875. The patient has been suffering from lupus for the last ten years and has been treated by every method which is known to science by Professor Biltroth and other celebrated physicians. Her body is perfectly sound, but her face looks like that of a corpse which has been buried for three months. The doctors went carefully into all the details of her case, and after much consideration they were reluctantly compelled to conclude that nothing they could suggest would be likely to have any effect in changing her appearance or modifying the spread of the disease. They only thing they could do for her they did, and that was to subscribe a sum of money to help her and also to enable her to buy a mask with which she could hide her face, and so save those with whom she came in contact from the pain which was caused by the gruesome appearance she presents.

JOSEPH TROWSDALE, of Crapaud, Prince Edward Island, is troubled with a disease which manifests itself in a somewhat peculiar and annoying way. It has the appearance of fever and ague, the fever being the most pronounced. He perspires so freely that he is compelled to change his underclothing ten or twelve times a day. So profusely does the sweat roll off his body that when he does not at the proper time change his underwear his garments become drenched, and even his boots will fill with the perspiration. Strange to say, too, it takes place more in a cool or cold climate or season of the year than when it is warmer. It is the dampness, too, occasioned by the clothing becoming wet which causes the chills he experiences. Mr. Trowsdale's peculiarities, so far as the physicians who have examined him can determine, is occasioned by blood-poisoning. About four years ago in March he found that the potatoes and turnips in his cellar were rotting badly. So much was this the case that the dampness caused large beads of water to accumulate on the cellar beams and underneath the house floor. He began feeding off the turnips to his stock as fast as possible. Mr. Trowsdale and his son spent some days in this damp and fetid atmosphere picking over the potatoes. During these days the disease was contracted. Mr. Trowsdale has been attended by local doctors and by six doctors in Boston, who never in their experience came across such a strange case.

A BLACK snake about three feet long was seen swimming in Tomlinson's Run, W. Va., with a fish, commonly known as bullhead, in its mouth. The fish was nearly eight inches long. The snake had succeeded in swallowing the fish, beginning at the tail, up to just back of its head, where its forward fins are reinforced by strong horns or spines. Beyond this point the snake's jaws could not go, for as long as the fish survived just so long would it instinctively raise its fins and horns whenever it felt the end of the snake's jaws touching them. With a strong forked stick the snake was lifted out of the water, whereupon the fish fell out of the snake's mouth. Evidently it had been there some time, for it was lacerated, lively in spots, still in life blood seemed to have been horribly sucked out of it, leaving the most of its body pallid and colorless. When released it sank head first to the bottom of the pool, then revived and came to the surface, and afterward swam slowly and laboriously away.

JUST before a heavy shower at Nashville, Tenn., several gentlemen were sitting in front of a store in West Nashville when one of the party observed a large turkey buzzard that was sailing majestically across the sky, and remarked that if the buzzard did not look out he would get wet. Their attention was thus called to the bird, and all were lazily watching its flight, when suddenly, just as it was opposite and above them, they were blinded by a flash of lightning, which seemingly exploded on the back of the buzzard. They were astonished somewhat, but recovered themselves and looked for the buzzard, but the bird was out of sight. All that was left of him was a few black tail feathers, which fluttered pathetically to the ground.

How many people know that among the Bedouin Arabs respect for woman is so great that at her command the combatants uplifted to strike must fall harmless. A murderer or a thief cannot be touched if he is under the protection of a woman, and the right of their power to pardon is recognized so completely that in some tribes, where the women never appear before the men and have their own separate tents, the thief who is being pursued can save himself by getting close to the tent and calling out: "I am under the protection of a harem!" As this is very loudly said the women hear it, and they call out together: "Fly from him!" And that man, even if he has been condemned to death by the prince himself, is pardoned at once and can go at large.

A REMARKABLE story of a fierce fight with rats comes from Lebanon, Penn. A well was being dug on the property of Henry Plonkuch and a couple of rats fell in. Their cries brought a swarm of other rodents, which fell headlong in the hole. At daylight they found a hiding place under the buckets used in excavation. When George Dall, one of the laborers, descended in the morning he was at once attacked by the rats, which jumped at his face and bit him in various parts of the body. A terrier was lowered to his assistance, and the dog in a short time killed fifty-four rats and none too soon, for Dall was exhausted in fighting the animals off. Both Dall and the dog were covered with wounds.

In making the excavations for the new Trinity Lutheran Chapel, on North Sixth street, in Reading, Penn., it became necessary to remove the remains in several of the graves in the old cemetery. In one of the graves, which had been there seventy-four years, a perfect skeleton was found, under the head of which was a razor, the handle of which was rotted off. In the early days of the century it was customary to bury with the body the razor which deceased had used during life. The skeleton was in a good state of preservation. The contents of the other graves simply consisted of a little dust. Among the old graves is that of Gen. Francis Swaan, who was in the Revolutionary war and who died in 1820.

A SINGULAR freak of nature has manifested itself at Saratoga. Mrs. Mary Francis, when she was young and also while she was in the prime of life, had very black eyes and a beautiful head of very black hair. She is about 70 years old now, in good health, and a rich widow. When she was about 50 her hair began to turn white, and in a few years the whole of it was as white as snow and so remained until about a year ago, when it began to turn black again, and has now, without the use of any artificial means and purely as a freak of nature, almost wholly returned to its original color, and is as long and silky as when she was a young woman.

IN the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society Lieut. H. E. Barnes gives some interesting particulars about the house sparrows of Western India. At Deesa he found that a pair had built their nest in the antlers of a sambur in the verandah, and another pair appropriated a soap-box in the bath-room, and although their nest was destroyed several times they persisted in building a fresh one until they were left alone out of compassion. Lieut. Barnes also states that these sparrows attack their own image in a looking-glass, and will fight with it all day long, "only leaving off when darkness sets in."

ROBERT PACKARD and wife, living on a farm near New Hartford, Ia., are the parents of twenty-nine living children. The eldest, a man 49 years old, is married and lives on a farm adjoining the parental homestead. The other twenty-eight are still single and live at home. Only one of the family is a girl. The first child was born single; the next five births produced triplets. The others were sets of twins. The youngest child is 16 years old. Packard and his wife are healthy and are enjoying a green old age in the midst of their numerous family.

A CURIOSITY was discovered at Swickley Station, on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, in the shape of an iron chain imbedded in the body of a big sycamore tree. The chain had been originally used for tying up a skiff. It was evidently placed there a number of years ago, and the bank on the opposite side from the river cut to hold it in position. Both the bank and the wood have long since grown over it, and the chain now passes completely through the trunk, nine inches from the surface. It is held as firmly as a rock.

A UNIQUE carpet is being made for the Church of Le Cœur de Jesus, Montmartre, in Paris, by some Parisian ladies. It will cost $30,000, and the names of the workers are to be embroidered around the border. The centre represents Montmartre, and there are to be the arms of the city of Paris.

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Mr. Lorenzo F. Sleeper is very well known to the citizens of Appleton, Me., and neighborhood. He says: "Eight years ago I was taken sick, and suffered as no one but a dyspeptic can. I then began taking August Flower. At that time I was a great sufferer. Everything I ate distressed me so that I had to throw it up. Then in a few moments that horrid distress would come on and I would have to eat and suffer again. I took a little of your medicine, and felt much better, and after taking a little more August Flower my Dyspepsia disappeared, and since that time I have never had the first sign of it. I can eat anything without the least fear of distress. I wish all that are afflicted with that terrible disease or the troubles caused by it would try August Flower, as I am satisfied there is no medicine equal to it."

The Great Sun Dragon.

It is the belief among both the ignorant and the educated classes of China that eclipses of the sun are caused by a great dragon which attempts to devour the centre of our solar system. The last eclipse which was