

In the Study.

New Sermons and Lectures.

THE first place must be given to the 'Short Course' series. This is a series of volumes intended to offer examples of that form of preaching which now takes the place of the 'popular lecture.' It was called the popular lecture because it was addressed to the people, not because the people thronged to hear it. There was a time, no doubt, when it was popular in both ways, but after many a year it lost all its popularity, and had to be discontinued. It lost its popularity because of its monotony. The impatient modern mind would not wait until a preacher 'lectured' slowly through the whole Epistle to the Romans. But the lecture has a distinct place. And now it is tried and found very acceptable *in short courses*.

Three volumes of the 'Short Course' series have been issued. The Rev. R. H. Fisher, D.D., lectures on the Beatitudes, and *The Beatitudes* is his title. Professor John E. McFadyen, D.D., gives us the message of the Book of Amos. His title is *A Cry for Justice*. The Rev. John Adams, B.D., the energetic and accomplished editor of the whole series, expounds Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143, and calls his book *The Lenten Psalms*. The volumes are issued in a new and very effective form by Messrs. T. & T. Clark, at 2s. net each.

The three volumes at once cover the variety that may be looked for in such a series. Dr. Fisher is theological; Professor McFadyen is practical; Mr. Adams is homiletical. Mr. Adams has written his book for the pulpit; Professor McFadyen has written his book for the pew; Dr. Fisher has written his book for the man in the street.

How can a man who writes theologically write for the man in the street? In Dr. Fisher's way. Dr. Fisher does not delight in theology. He has no reverence and very little respect for it. But he never gets away from it. Up against it he comes at every turn of the road, and once more he has to explain it out of his way. Is not this to preach to the man in the street? Most humanly and with a strong impression of reality Dr. Fisher handles the Beatitudes. And if he were less theological he would undoubtedly be less acceptable to the man

to whom it is his deep desire to commend the Beatitudes for everyday living.

Of Professor McFadyen and of Mr. Adams we have left no room to speak. Let them speak for themselves. The trifle spent upon them will be well spent.

The Rev. Ramsden Balmforth has been in the habit of discoursing to his congregation in Cape Town on Sunday evenings on *The Ethical and Religious Value of the Novel*. These discourses he has now published under that title (George Allen; 5s. net). He is the very man to preach on the Novel, for he believes in it. He believes in its ethical and religious value. And one thing he has discovered about it. People say, 'Art for art's sake'; but he has discovered that the greatest artists, at least the greatest literary artists, do not write for art's sake. Dickens did not, Thackeray did not, George Eliot did not, Meredith did not. They write to do good by means of their writing. They write because there is something which they want to argue or laugh out of existence, something they want to argue or laugh into existence in its stead. Mr. Balmforth deals with eight novels: (1) George Eliot's *Adam Bede* and the supreme Moral Law; (2) Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and the Law of Retribution; (3) Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* and the Law of Atonement; (4) Mrs. Lynn Lynton's *The True History of Joshua Davidson* and the Law of Sacrifice; (5) Dickens's *Hard Times* and the Law of Service; (6) Oliver Wendell Holmes's *Elsie Venner* and the Law of Heredity; (7) Mrs. Humphry Ward's *Robert Elsmere* and the New Conception of Christ; (8) James Lane Allen's *The Increasing Purpose* and the Law of Development.

In the Time of Harvest is the title of a volume of sermons contributed by Canon Scott Holland, the Ven. E. E. Holmes, the Rev. W. S. Swayne, and other eight Church of England preachers. The volume is published by Mr. Allenson (2s. net).

The editor of *The Christian World Pulpit*, Mr. H. Jeffs, is already an author. But he has never offered us anything so substantial in appearance,

or for that matter so appetizing, in topic as the volume of studies in practical ethics which he has called *Concerning Conscience* (James Clarke & Co. ; 3s. 6d. net). That the things which concern the conscience are a frequent cause of perplexity is made very clear by the correspondence columns of the newspapers. And it is exactly as if he were the conductor of a correspondence column that Mr. Jeffs writes. Only he has the immense advantage of being able to lay a good foundation of ethical principles, and even discuss the qualifications of the conscience, before he brings his cases forward. More than that, he has freedom to introduce his 'cases' as he pleases, and he does not offer them on a string, but lets them rise naturally out of the narrative, so as to preserve the interest of his book to the end. One thing more: he has courage. He has the courage to speak, and he has the greater courage to refrain from speaking when questions of sexuality arise, saying, as he ought to say, that only a disciplined and responsible physician must handle such things whether at school, at home, or in the conflict of life.

Sermons to young men are ever in demand, and sermons to young women occasionally. The Rev. John Reid, M.A., in his new volume, *The Uplifting of Life* (James Clarke & Co. ; 2s. 6d. net), has given examples of both. For the most part, he has spoken to young men and young women together; sometimes he has kept them (at least in his own mind) apart. In either case he has spoken sincerely, courageously, wisely, memorably. It is scarcely conceivable that any young man or woman could listen to one of these sermons and depart unblest.

But they are not for youth alone. Middle age and old age will find encouragement in them. They are built on Christ; they are gold, silver, precious stones. Mr. Reid's teaching will stand the test of the Fire.

How many volumes of sermons are there in Everyman's Library? There is at least one volume. And it is notable. Who knows the sermons of the Rev. George Wade Robinson? Every man will know them now. The title is *The Philosophy of the Atonement, and Other Sermons* (Dent; 1s. net).

A volume of College Sermons delivered by

George Lansing Raymond, Professor of Esthetics in George Washington University, has been published by Messrs. Funk & Wagnalls under the title of *Suggestions for the Spiritual Life* (6s. net). By their title, and still more by the sermons themselves, we are offered a welcome change from the 'mere morality' sermon which young men and women are drenched with. Professor Raymond has had precisely the experience which Chalmers had. His rejection of the sermon which bids us be good is due to bitter experience of its failure. Now in greater variety and with surer touch he brings goodness out of the life which is hid with Christ in God.

The Silent Hour Booklets (Hodder & Stoughton; 1s. net each) are charming small quarto volumes, each containing one or two sermons. The authors of the eight volumes issued are Professor W. M. Clow, Dr. George Matheson, 'Ralph Connor,' Dr. Len G. Broughton, Mr. G. H. Morrison, and Mr. G. H. Knight.

It is inevitable that titles should recall titles; perhaps it is inevitable that they should repeat them. The title which the Rev. Henry Bickersteth Durrant, M.A., Principal of St. John's College, Agra, has given to his volume of sermons on First Corinthians, *The Mind of a Master-Builder* (Hodder & Stoughton; 2s. 6d. net), is evidently a recollection of Professor Lock's *St. Paul the Master-Builder*. And it is quite fit to be associated with that successful book. The selection of texts shows that the Epistle as a whole is clearly before the preacher's mind, not a verse being chosen that is not momentous in itself and illustrative of the Apostle's argument.

Canon Hensley Henson always (in newspaper English) 'keeps his finger on the pulse of time.' When the 250th anniversary of the Ejectment came near, he resolved to preach about it. For he considered it 'the meanest persecution which Christian History records'; and yet he was anxious that no use should be made of the anniversary 'to raise the temper of modern discussions, or to suggest a polemic for modern controversialists.' With that desire and that decided opinion he gave his six lectures in Westminster Abbey on Friday afternoons during Lent. And

now, issuing the lectures exactly as they were delivered, he adds three sermons on the same general subject and calls his book *Puritanism in England* (Hodder & Stoughton; 5s. net).

The Yale lectures on Preaching are a great succession. The latest lecturer is the Rev. J. H. Jowett, M.A., D.D. His book is published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton under the title of *The Preacher: His Life and Work* (5s.).

It is a book one can read through in a short autumn evening; but that is partly owing to its extreme lucidity. Its characteristics are simplicity and modesty. Dr. Jowett speaks out of his own experience as a preacher, and not once is there a hint of self-advertisement. There are anecdotes, which come when they should and as they should, to illustrate and be forgotten. His own illustrations are, as he says illustrations should be, 'like street-lamps, scarcely noticed, but throwing floods of light upon the road.' Dr. Jowett seems to cover the whole of the preacher's experience—the Preacher's call, the Perils of the Preacher, the Preacher's Themes, the Preacher in his Study, the Preacher in the Pulpit, the Preacher in the Home, the Preacher as a Man of Affairs.

Perhaps there is nothing in all the book that will come home more closely to the preacher who has done some preaching than the advice to let the sermon stand a little. 'When my grandmother was making cider she used to let it stand for long seasons in the sunlight "to give it a soul!" And I think that many of our sermons, when the preliminary work has been done, should be laid aside for a while before they are offered to our congregations. There are subconscious powers in the life that seem to continue the ripening process when our active judgments are engaged elsewhere. The subject "gets a soul," the sediment settles down, and in its lucidity it becomes like "the river of water of life, clear as crystal." Every preacher of experience will tell you that he has some sermons that have been "standing in the sun" for years, slowly maturing and clarifying, but not yet ready to offer to the people. One of my congregation in Birmingham once asked Dr. Dale to preach upon a certain text in the Epistle to the Romans, and he said he would seriously think about it. Long afterwards she reminded him of his promise, and she asked him when the sermon was coming.

Dr. Dale answered her with great seriousness: "It is not ready yet!" At another time he was asked by another of his people to preach a course of sermons on some of the great evangelical chapters in the book of the prophecies of Isaiah. He made the same reply: "I am not ready yet."

The Rev. David Fyffe, M.A., has separated what to him are *The Essentials of Christian Belief*, and written a discourse on each essential (Hodder & Stoughton; 3s. 6d. net). He has no crop-eared creed. It is full and rich. It touches every part of our personality. And, what is best of all, he shows that his creed, and every part of it, has rooted itself in his own life and been his making.

Have you come across any of the books of the Rev. Henry Howard? His little volume on *The Shepherd Psalm* was our first discovery, and it was evidence enough of a genuine exegetical gift. Since then, however, that impression has been deepened by the reading of *The Summits of the Soul* and *The Raiment of the Soul*. The new book is *The Conning-Tower of the Soul* (Kelly; 3s. 6d.). The conning-tower of the soul is the conscience; and in introducing his subject Mr. Howard uses Dr. Way's striking translation of 1 Ti 1¹⁹, 'Keeping fast your hold on faith and a good conscience. Some there are who have thrown the latter overboard, and so have in shipwreck lost the former.'

The publishers of the Rev. Percy C. Ainsworth's books are happy in being able to publish another. It contains two series of papers which he contributed to *The Methodist Times*, one on the Silences of our Lord, the other on the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Its title therefore is *The Silences of Jesus and St. Paul's Hymn to Love* (Kelly; 3s. 6d. net). There is not in these papers the riches of exegetical suggestion which his more elaborate sermons possess, there is not room for it; but the same felicitous hand is here both in the word and in the thought.

The first thing that will strike the reader of *Signs of the Times* (Macmillan; 2s. 6d. net) is the

statement in the prefatory note that three of the four sermons 'were preached without manuscript or note.' Where were they preached? In St. Mary's Church, Oxford. The Rev. E. M. Walker, Fellow and Tutor of Queen's College, was Select Preacher in 1911-12, and he spoke to the undergraduates face to face 'without note or manuscript.'

The next arresting thing is the sense of responsibility for his brother which this preacher feels. He uses the past for illustrations, and uses it freely and tellingly, but his whole soul is occupied with the pressure of the present. He has made this discovery, that 'few things are more permanent than the subtle influence of impressions formed in an early stage of one's intellectual development.' He therefore seeks to forestall Mr. Bernard Shaw and all his company.

What has he to forestall Mr. Bernard Shaw with? He has the belief and the life of Frederick Robertson of Brighton. That is the subject of the fourth sermon; that is the inspiration and standard of them all.

'Every Christian's Library' is becoming a considerable collection. The new volume is Dr. A. T. Schofield's *The Knowledge of God* (Pickering & Inglis; 1s. net).

Cura Curarum.

'Cura curarum, cura animarum.'

'A charge of souls does not mean helping the strong but the weak, and one must either not meddle with such work at all or give oneself wholly to it.'—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

'Surely it is harder work to cultivate souls than the roughest, most stoney land. The highest work of all is the direction of souls. You must not meddle with it unless you are prepared for a thousand troubles and trials. St. Paul, writing to Timothy, puts long-suffering before doctrine, because naught save patience answers with those who are hard to win.'—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

'There are no galley slaves in the Royal Vessel of Divine Love.'—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

'During the last few days I have seen the mighty mountains covered with snow and ice, and the

inhabitants of the neighbouring valley told me that one of their shepherds while seeking a stray heifer had fallen into a fissure and was killed. "O my God," said I to myself, "this poor shepherd sought his missing heifer with an ardour which the ice could not chill while he lived. Wherefore then am I so cold in seeking my sheep? My heart was deeply moved, and melted within me."—ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

'In all that concerned spiritual government Francis sought to deal with souls as God and His holy angels deal with them, by means of inspirations, suggestions, illuminations, remonstrances, prayers, entreaty. He stood with the Bridegroom at the heart's door knocking and gently urging that it might be opened; if successful, he entered joyfully; if entrance was denied, he waited patiently.'—JEAN PIERRE CAMUS.

'Be it ours

. . . to ask for that calm frame

Of spirit, in which we know and deeply feel

How little is the most which we can do,

Yet leave not so that little unfulfilled.'—

R. C. TRENCH.

'For we must share, if we would keep,

That good thing from above;

Ceasing to give we cease to have—

Such is the law of Love.'—R. C. TRENCH.

Virginibus Querisque.

The Rev. John A. Hamilton owes his reputation as a preacher to children to his recognition of the imagination. We must all be ready to be fools for Christ's sake: Mr. Hamilton is always ready to be as foolish as a child. His make-believe is often very daring, but so is the make-believe of all healthy-minded children. He has published another volume of children's sermons with the title of *The Giant and the Caterpillar* (Allenson; 3s. 6d.). The same publishers have also issued a new edition of *Sermons for Children* by John Mason Neale (2s. 6d. net), which is welcome, for the book had become difficult to find. But it is Mr. Hamilton that we shall take our example from.

THE INSURRECTION OF THE ANIMALS.

A Story of the Future.

In the year 19— an old man wandered about West Cornwall, whose strange doings were a frequent theme of tale and jest. He sat for hours on some out-jutting rock of the coast, surrounded by sea-birds; he roamed about the pastures, attended by the cattle, apparently on the best of terms with fierce old bulls; he stood in a field with horses gathered about him, as if in friendly converse. The old fellow seemed to have an understanding with all the beasts and birds of the countryside, both tame and wild. No one knew where the man had his home or how he lived. It was generally believed that he was a lunatic, but as he did no harm and gave no trouble he was not molested. The country-folk spoke of him as the 'Wanderer.'

Early in March 19— the inhabitants of Penzance were surprised by the appearance of placards on the hoardings, announcing that a strike of domestic animals would shortly take place, and that those who wished for further information on the subject might obtain it by attendance at a certain hall on the evening of that day. The printer of the bills stated, in answer to inquiries, that he had been employed by a person who resembled the Wanderer. Curiosity and some expectation drew a large audience at the time appointed, and the queer old man appeared on the platform to address the assembly. At the beginning, there was nothing like fun, for the Wanderer spoke of the sufferings endured by the animals which assist the labours, contribute to the support, or minister to the pleasure of mankind. His low but penetrating voice, his spare form and wrinkled weather-beaten face, his evidently intense feeling, were anything rather than comical, and the speech was intensely earnest. Common things took a new aspect as he described them. The audience listened while he spoke of slow torture of a bird caught in a trap, and its helpless, hopeless struggle for many hours. When the man said that he had in mercy killed outright hundreds of birds and beasts in such condition, the hearers felt something like relief and gratitude. When he told the tale of the daily endurance of a half-starved donkey under the power of a brutal owner, the man stirred everybody to sympathy. His way of putting the ordinary case of a 'pet' bird for-

gotten and dying of hunger and thirst made the flesh creep. When he related the sufferings of cattle on board ship, the audience cried 'Shame, shame!' vehemently. His account of what men inflict on horses, overloading, over-driving, flogging them, roused the people to a great pitch of excitement. He produced a handful of stones. 'See,' he said, 'these were taken from the intestines of a horse which a man whipped and kicked until the beast fell down dead. Think of the agony endured by the dumb creature! Think of the dulness and cruelty of the wretch who added blows and kicks to the inward pain!' And the speaker's frame quivered as though the pain were his own.

But the mood of the audience suddenly changed when the man went on to say that, despairing of any effectual remedy for the evil from the justice or compassion of mankind, he had for years been engaged in the work of instructing the animals how to secure some amelioration of their lot by their own efforts. Laughter long and loud greeted this announcement. When the laughter had subsided the speaker continued. He stated that he had acquired the power of communication with several species and of receiving communications from them, and was now in a position to direct a combination of animals. This statement encountered more derision than the former one. But the man waited patiently until the audience had quieted down, and then proceeded to declare that the bulk of domestic animals in the country, as well as many of the wild creatures, had resolved to strike a blow for their own emancipation. They did not seek revenge for past wrongs, nor did they intend to exert all their strength at first, but they had determined to give proof of their power in one district, that of West Cornwall, in the hope that the human inhabitants would meet them in a fair and reasonable spirit. This was too much for the gravity and patience of the folk. Laughter, hooting, mewing as of cats, yelping as of dogs, all sorts of noises imitative of those of animals mingled in a furious hubbub. The man disappeared, and the crowd dispersed. Everyone agreed that the Wanderer was mad, some lamenting that his wits had been overthrown by long brooding on the subject of animal woes, some immensely amused by the novelty and extravagance of his madness.

On the next day there was a little head-shaking and tongue-wagging in the streets, for nearly every dog and cat had disappeared from the town. Men

remarked that the occurrence was very odd, and wondered whether the old madman had anything to do with it. During the next evening and night the rats and mice grew extremely bold, as though they were aware of the absence of Pussie and Carlo. Housekeepers complained bitterly of the ravages done in larder and pantry, and mothers declared that they feared for their babies. A good many thefts and some burglaries were reported.

On the second morning there was a scarcity of milk, and the dairy farmers were in trouble. Quite old cows had taken to kicking. Many a pail of milk had been kicked over just as it had been filled. Several labourers had been gored by beasts hitherto perfectly gentle. Bulls and heifers had broken bounds and gone no one knew whither. The farm-dogs had left their homes, so the recovery of the stray cattle seemed the more difficult. Curiously enough, a silence had fallen on fields and woods. Not a caw or a chip could be heard. The rookeries were deserted. Certainly, the matter was of no great importance, people said, but it seemed queer. Could that crazy fellow influence beasts and birds in some way? Wise men answered that it was absurd to imagine anything of the kind. The coincidence was odd, and it might be that a human being who had lived among the lower animals was able to discern signs and tokens of disturbance such as would escape the notice of more civilized mortals, but the pretensions made by the Wanderer were simply ridiculous.

The third day brought a more remarkable development. When the grooms and carters went to harness their horses, every beast was vicious. Some of the men were severely bitten; some were lamed by kicks. Most of the horses escaped from the stable-yards and galloped madly along the streets, attacking everyone they met, until they gathered into one great herd, and scampered about the outlying district, breaking through hedges, devouring and trampling down the standing crops. In the course of the day it became known that all the horses in the villages and hamlets had mutinied like those of the town. Business came almost to a standstill. Building operations were suspended for want of horses to bring material. Provision merchants were obliged to send small supplies to their customers on hand-carts. The coal-dealers could not execute their orders, and the consequent inconvenience to many households, especially where

some members of the family were in feeble health, became privation and even danger of life. Vessels entering the port could not be unloaded; vessels outward bound could not complete cargo. There was a block at the railway station. Letters to and from the rural post-offices were delayed. Country produce failed for the needs of the town. The toils of the fishermen were thrown away, as their 'take' could not be conveyed to the railway. Urged by necessity, men attempted to drag or push heavy loads, but their strength soon gave out. Traction engines were engaged, but there were not many in the neighbourhood, and they proved inadequate to the work. In a single day, the loss and trouble and hardship involved in the mutiny of the horses were appalling. Before evening all doubt of the Wanderer's complicity had gone, and angry men vowed that they would lynch the scoundrel if they had the chance. In a few days the anger had risen to frenzy, for the situation became worse every hour. Horses and cattle imported into the town from a distance either joined the insurgent animals, or, if they could not do that, refused to work. No severity availed to compel them. They might be tortured, but they stubbornly resisted all efforts to force them to work. Then motors were brought into action, and the use of them served to mitigate the sufferings of the people to some extent, but not nearly so much as had been hoped. And a new cause of dismay appeared with the advance of the season. Farms and market-gardens were devastated by worms and caterpillars. Parks and private gardens shared the same fate. Unchecked by the feathered tribes, the vermin increased and multiplied to a sickening and horrible degree. The whole district was threatened with ruin.

Meetings were held, editorials were written, petitions were sent to the King and to Parliament, but nothing effectual could be done. Wealthy people left the neighbourhood, and relief in the shape of provisions was sent to the necessitous, but things grew steadily worse. At first the newspapers outside the afflicted area made light of the matter, and entirely scouted the notion that the Wanderer had part or lot in the business. Sapient editors mildly censured the people of West Cornwall for a tendency to superstition, but an outbreak of animal rebellion in East Kent, which had been predicted in letters sent to the press—letters which had been disregarded as the effusions of a madman

—somewhat altered the tone of editorial comment, and slightly alarmed the officials at the Home Office. A reward was offered for information which would lead to the apprehension of a person of unsound mind, who was causing annoyance to the public by predictions of occurrences similar to those which had happened in West Cornwall and East Kent.

Some of the newspapers gave publicity to a letter in answer to the proclamation signed 'The Chief of the Insurrection.' The 'chief' informed the British public that to arrest him would only serve to precipitate the general rebellion of all the animals in the country, as it had been arranged that such rebellion should take place whenever he refrained from issuing directions for a period of seven days, and that it should continue until brought to a close by reasonable concession on the part of the human inhabitants or the extermination of the rebels. He pointed out that he was the sole and only possible mediator between the public and the animals, and, consequently, that it was of more importance to the public than to the animals that his life and liberty should be preserved. He asked what likelihood there was of the apprehension of one who had as protectors and informers the whole animal world. Then he predicted a third outbreak, this time on Deeside, and a fourth, in case of obduracy, in London.

There ensued a remarkable correspondence between the Home Secretary and the Chief of the Insurrection, carried on through the columns of the *Times*. The demands of the Chief astonished the public by their moderation. He stipulated that a minister of justice to animals should be appointed, and offered his services in that capacity,

engaging to instruct his staff in the means of communication with the animals. Further, he required the appointment of an inspector of animals in every rural and urban district, to whom every person who employed or kept animals should apply for a licence, the licence to be revocable if the licence-holder should be guilty of ill-treating the animal or animals under his control, either in person or by deputy. Every inspector was to be a well-qualified veterinary surgeon. A lethal chamber was to be set up in every inspectorate, where alone it should be lawful to destroy the life of any animal other than those slaughtered for food, but the slaughter of such animals to be allowed only under the eye of the inspector, or by persons who had received authorization from him. In every school the pupils were to be instructed in the arguments against a flesh diet and in the duty of justice to animals.

Stag-hunting, fox-hunting, coursing hares or rabbits, pigeon-shooting, and, in short, all sports involving prolonged suffering to animals, were to be prohibited. This last provision excited a good deal of clamour, but the general interest of the public was strong enough to overcome the opposition of the sections of society which took pleasure in so-called sports—'survivals of barbarism,' as they were styled by the Chief of the Insurrection.

All the demands of the insurgent animals were conceded, and the Chief became the first Minister of Justice to Animals under the British Crown, and so ended the cruel old *régime* and began the happy and harmonious understanding between man and beast, which is extending rapidly throughout the civilized world.

The Call of Elisha.

BY THE REV. JAMES DONALD, D.D., KEITHHALL, ABERDEEN.

It is difficult to explain Elijah's movements on leaving Horeb. If 'thence' (1 K 19^{10a}) means 'from Horeb,' we feel that there is something wanting in order to bring the words, 'So he departed thence and found Elisha,' into harmony with the directions which he received (1 K 19^{15, 16}). It is probable that the road he took at first was the direct road from Arabia to Damascus ('the modern Pilgrim Road,' *D.B.* v. 368 and Map), and that he

was pursuing his journey with the intention of anointing Hazael king over Syria. But, while on the way, he appears to have received fresh instructions as to the order in which his three commissions were to be carried into effect. At all events, we find him breaking his journey, in order to cross the Jordan (1 K 19^{19b}, 'he passed over') at some point near to where Abel-meholah lay.

On his crossing the river, a busy, cheerful scene