

THE HOUGHTON BOOM.

The Rev. Mr. HOUGHTON, of New-Haven, declares that his motives have been misunderstood by the press. This we do not believe. There was probably not a newspaper office in which the motive of Mr. HOUGHTON, in preaching a detective sermon about the murder of ROSE AMBLER, was not promptly discerned to be to "whoop up" the Rev. Mr. HOUGHTON's congregation and to start a local "boom" for its estimable preacher. This purpose has been thoroughly attained, for in the report of the second sermon it is set forth that "the church was crowded." Mr. HOUGHTON had probably not achieved that result while he confined himself to inculcating religion and morality in the manner of the persons whom he now elegantly describes as "blear-eyed preachers, who sit like owls on the rafters of the temple of Zion." He took the ground of the late Artemus Ward's partner, Billson by name, who, after playing the great moral drama of the "Drunkard, or the Fallen Saved," to empty benches for thirty nights, exclaimed, "Hang it, Ward, let's give 'em some immoral dramy." Mr. HOUGHTON's benches are no longer empty.

Mr. HOUGHTON seems to understand but imperfectly the legal liabilities he has incurred by his variety of "immoral dramy." To denounce a man as a murderer, or to express the opinion that he is a murderer, in advance not only of his conviction, but of his arraignment, indictment, or arrest, is a slander for which the slandered person may take civil or criminal proceedings against the slanderer, as it is to be hoped that LEWIS may do.

It is perfectly possible that the Rev. Mr. HOUGHTON may have considered himself to be serving the cause of religion and morality by denouncing LEWIS. There are men who feel that they are doing their duty by pointing out that a man who chews tobacco is probably a horse-thief, and that if anybody has missed any horses he should suspect a notorious tobacco-chewer of stealing them. This is the logic by which the Rev. Mr. HOUGHTON endeavored to prove LEWIS a murderer. LEWIS used profane language, "patronized beer saloons," and made love to another man's wife. A man who would do these things would commit murder if he had a motive. Therefore, a man who did these things did commit murder without any assignable motive.

This logic is not rigorous, but it was good enough for Mr. HOUGHTON, and the exposition of this "theory of the case" sufficed to fill his church. Nevertheless, the law does not hold it to be a sufficient defense for denouncing a man as a murderer that the man swore and drank beer and chewed tobacco. Mr. HOUGHTON is in the way to find out that there are ways and means of filling a church which are prohibited by statute, repugnant as the statute may be to his private code of ethics. He had better omit murder cases hereafter from his list of topics, and work his boom by sermons safer and equally sensational. We commend to him "The Jay-Eye-See and St. Julien Race," or a review of the base-ball season in a thrilling discourse on "The Christian Short-stop." He will not get himself into trouble with these, and he will be in no danger of competition from the blear-eyed owls that sit on the rafters of the temple of Zion.