QUEEN LILY'S REALM.

Dr. Talmage Preaches About the Angels of the Grass, the Flowers.

Four Things Which They are Good For—A Lesson of God's Providential Care.

Flowers at the Bridal and the Grave—An Easter Morning Sermon.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., April 1.—The platform and galleries of the Tabernacle were this morning profusely decorated with flowers. On the previous evening the church had been open to prepare the decorations, for which the congregation had been invited to bring flowers.

The immense audience room is not large enough to contain the people on ordinary occasions; it must be left to the imagination to suggest the throngs, both inside and outside the church, on this great festival day.

The Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D. D., took for his text Luke xii, 28: "If then God so clothe the grass which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will He clothe you." He said:—

The lily is the queen of Bible flowers. The rose may have disputed her throne in modern times, and won it; but the rose originally had only five petals. It was under the long-continued and intense gaze of the world that the rose blushed into its present beauty. In the Bible train, cassia and hyssop, and frankincense and myrrh, and spikenard and camphire and the rose follow the lily. Fourteen times in the Bible is the lily mentioned; only twice the rose. The rose may now have wider empire, but the lily reigned in the time of Esther, in the time of Solomon, in the time of Christ.

Cæsar had his throne on the hills. The lily had her throne in the valley. In the greatest sermon that was ever preached there was only one flower, and that a lily. The Bedford dreamer, John Bunyan, entered the House of the Interpreter, and was shown a cluster of flowers, and was told to "consider the lilies."

We may study or reject other sciences at our option. It is so with astronomy, it is so with chemistry, it is so with jurisprudence, it is so with physiology, it is so with geology; but the science of botany Christ commands us to study when He says: "Consider the lilies." Measure them from root to tip of petal. Inhale their breath. Notice the gracefulness of their poise. Hear the whisper of the white lips of the Eastern and of the red lips of the American lily.

Belonging to this royal family of lilies is the lily of the Nile, the Japan lily, the Lady Washington of the terrace, the Golden Band lily, the Giant lily of Nepaul, the Turk's Cap lily, the African lily from the Cape of Good Hope. All these lilies have the royal blood in their veins. But I take the lilies of my text this morning as typical of all flowers, and this Easter day, garanded with all this opulence of floral beauty, seems to address us, saying: "Consider the lilies, consider the azaleas, consider the hollyhocks, consider the geraniums, consider the roses, consider the hyacinths, consider the heliotropes, consider the chrysanthemums. With differential and graceful and intelligent and worshipful sons, consider them. Not with insipid sentimentalism, or with sophomoric vaporing, but for grand and practical and everyday, and, if need be, homely uses consider them.

The flowers are the angels of the grass. They all have voices. When the clouds speak, they thunder; when the world-winds speak, they scream; when the cataracts speak, they roar; but when the flowers speak, they always whisper. I stand here to interpret their message. What have you to say, O ye angels of the grass, to this worshipful multitude?

This morning I mean to discuss what flowers are good for. That is my subject: What are flowers good for?

1—I remark, in the first place, they are good for lessons of God's providential care. That was Christ's first thought. All these flowers seem to address us to-day, saying: "God will give you apparel and food. We have no wheel with which to spin, no loom with which to weave, no sickle with which to harvest, no well-sweep with which to draw water, but God slakes our thirst with the dew, and God feeds us with the bread of the sunshine, and God has apparelled us with more than Solomonic regalia. We are prophesies of adequate wardrobe. If God so clothed us, the grass of the field, will He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

Men and women of worldly anxieties, take this message to me with you. How long has God taken care of you? Quarter life journey or half life? half the journey of life? three-quarters the journey of life? Can you not trust Him the rest of the way? God does not promise you anything like that which the Roman Emperor had on his table at his evening repast, the hundred nightingales' tongues—but he has promised you the care of you. He has promised you the necessities, not the luxuries. Good bread, not cake. If God so adorns the grass of the field, will He not provide for you his living and immortal children? He will.

No wonder Martin Luther always had a flower on his writing-desk for inspiration. Through the cracks of the prison floor a flower grew up to cheer Picciola. Mungo Park, the great traveler and explorer, had his life saved by a flower. He sank down in the desert to die, but seeing a flower near by, it suggested God's merciful care, and he got up with new courage and traveled on to safety. I said the flowers are the angels of the grass. I add now they are the evangels of the sky.

2—If you insist on asking me the question: What are flowers good for? I respond they are good for the bridal day. The bride must have them on her dress, and she must have some in her hand. The marriage altar must be covered with them. A wedding without flowers would be as inappropriate as a wedding without music. At such a time they are for congratulation and prophecies of good. So much of the path way of life is covered up with thorns, we ought to cover the beginning with orange blossoms.

Flowers are appropriate on such occasions, for the ninety-nine out of the hundred cases it is the very best thing that could have happened. The world may criticise and pronounce it an inapt-title, and may lift its eyebrows in surprise and think it might suggest something better; but the God who sees the twenty, forty, fifty years of wedded life before they have begun arranges all for the best. So that flowers in almost all cases, are appropriate for the marriage day. The divergences of disposition will become correspondences, recklessness will be one prudence, frivolity will be turned into practicality.

There has been many an aged widowed soul who had a carefully locked bureau, and in the bureau a box, and in the box a folded paper, and in the folded paper a half-blown rose, slightly fragrant, discolored, carefully pressed. She put it there forty or fifty years ago. On the anniversary day of her wedding she will go to the bureau, she will lift the box, she will unfold the paper, and to her eyes will be exposed the half-blown bud, and the memories of the past will rush upon her, and a tear will drop upon the flower; and suddenly it is transfigured, and there is a stir in the dust of the author, and it rounds out, and it is full of life, and it begins to tremble in the process of uplift, and the church aisle, and the dead music of a half century ago comes through throbbing the air; and vanished faces reappear, and right hands are joined, and a manly voice promises: "I will for better or for worse," and the wedding march thunders a salve of joy at the departing crowd; but a sight of that an hour's study day scatters the scene. Under the deep-fleeched breath the altar, the flowers, the congratulating groups are scattered, and there is nothing left but a trembling hand holding a faded rose-bud, which is put into the paper, and then into the box, and the box carefully placed in the bureau, and with a sharp, sudden click of the lock the scene is over.

Ah, my friends, let not the prophecies of the flowers on your wedding day be false prophecies. Be blind to each other's faults. Make the most of each other's excellences. Above all do not both get mad at once! Remember the vows, the ring on the third finger of the left hand, and the benediction of the calla lilies.

3—If you insist on asking me the question, What are flowers good for? I answer: They are good to honor and comfort the obsequies. The worst grass ever made into the side of our poor earth is the grass of the grave. It is so deep, it is so incurable that it needs something to cover it up. Flowers for the casket, flowers for the hearse, flowers for the cemetery.

What a contrast between a grave in a country churchyard, with the fence broken down and the tombstones askew, and the neighboring cattle browsing amid the mullein stocks and the Canada thistles, and a June morning in Greenwood, the wave of roseate bloom rolling to the top of the mounds, and then breaking into foaming crests of white flowers all around the pillows of rest. It is the difference between sleeping under rags and sleeping under an embroidered blanket. We want Old Mortality to have some flowers to scatter in the palm of his cold hand.

"Oh," you say, "the dead don't know it, makes no difference to them." I know it, you are mistaken. There are now so many steamers and railroad trains coming to any living city as there are convoys coming from heaven to earth; and if there be instantaneous and constant communication between this world and the better world, do you not suppose your departed friends know what you do with their bodies? Why has God planted "golden rod" and wild flowers in the forest and on the prairie where no human eye ever sees them? He planted them there for invisible intelligences to look at and admire, and vast invisible intelligences come to look at the wild flowers of the woods and the table lands, will they not also come to see and see the flowers which you have planted in affectionate remembrance of them?

When I am dead, I would like to have a handful of violets—anyone could pick them out of the grass, or some one could lift from the edge of the pond a water lily—nothing rarely expensive or ostentatious display, as sometimes at funeral rites where the display taxes the breath from the children's mouths, and tears clothes from their backs, but something in the great democracy of flowers. Rather than imperial catafalque of Russian czar I pass some one who I may have helped by gospel sermon or Christian deed to gather a sprig of arbutus or a handful of Canada asters.

It was left for modern times to sell people for the departed and to meet the bereaved in letters of floral language. Instead of flowers meaning rest on the pillow of one who has got to the end of his journey, a sheaf of flowers with a wheel on it may mean that one who has just started on a journey to the realms of glory, or a cross of flowers, signifying that the Christian's sins were scourged.

If I had my way, I would empty all the dreadful hearses and pens, and have a golden chariot, or, if the body weather a king's mausoleum or potter's field, with radiant and aromatic angels of the grass, the flowers, to keep the sweet watch of resurrection.

4—If you insist on asking me the question: What are flowers good for? I answer for religious symbolism. Have you ever studied scriptural flora? The Bible is an arboretum, it is a divine conservatory, it is a herbarium of exquisite beauty. If you want to illustrate the brevity of the brightest human life, you will quote from Job: "A man cometh forth as a flower and is cut down." Or you will quote from the Psalmist: "As the flower of the field, so he perisheth; the wind passeth over it, and it is gone." Or you will quote from Isaiah: "All flesh is grass, and the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field." Or you will quote from James the Apostle: "As the flower of the grass, so he passeth away." What graphic Bible symbolism.

All the cut flowers of this Easter day will soon be dead, whatever care you take of them. Though morning and night you baptize them in the mercy of the shower, the baptism will not be to them a saving ordinance. They have been fatally wounded with the knife that cut them. They are bleeding to death away; they are dying now. The fragrance in the air is their departing and ascending spirits.

O yes! flowers are almost human. Botanists tell us that flowers breathe, they take nourishment, they eat, they drink. They are sensitive. They have their likes and dislikes. They sleep, they wake. They live in families. They have their ancestors and their descendants, their birth, their burial, their cradle, their grave. The zephyr rocks the one, and the storm digs the trench for the other.

The cowslip must leave its gold, the lily must leave its silver, the rose must leave its diamond necklace of morning dew. Dust to dust. So we come up, we prosper, we spread abroad, we die, as the flower—as the flower!

> Change and decay on all around I see;
> Oh, thou who changest not abide with me.

Flowers also afford mighty symbolism of Christ, who compared himself to the ancient queen, the lily, and the modern queen, the rose, when he said: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." Redolent like the one, humble like the other. Like both, appropriate for the sad who want sympathizers, and for the rejoicing who want banqueters. Hovering over the marriage ceremony like a wedding bell, or folded like a chaplet on the pulseless heart of the dead.

Oh, Christ! let the perfume of thy name be wafted all around the earth—lily and rose, lily and rose—until the wilderness of crimson into a garden, and the round earth turn into one great bud of immortal beauty but against the warm heart of God. Snatch down from the world's banners eagle and lion, and put on only lily and rose, lily and rose.

But, my friends, flowers have no grander use than when on Easter morning we celebrate the resurrection of Christ from the catacombs. All the flowers of to-day spell resurrection. There is not a nook or corner in all the building but is touched with the incense. The women carried spices to the tomb of Christ, and they strewed spices around about the tomb, and from those spices have grown all the flowers of Easter morn. The two white-robed angels that hurled the stone away from the door of the tomb, hurled it with such violence down the hill that it rolled in the door of the world's sepulchers, and millions of the stark and cold shall come forth.

However lofty the mausoleum, however costly the sarcophagus, however architecturally grand the necropolis, flowers beautifully partake of the family grounds, we want them all broken up by the Lord of the resurrection. The forms that we laid away with our broken hearts must rise again. Father and mother they must come out. Husband and wife—they must come out. Brothers and sisters—they must come out. Our darling children—they must come out. The eyes that with trembling fingers we closed must open in the dawn of resurrection morn. The arms that we folded in death must fall down in embrace of reunion. The beloved voice that was hushed must be returned. The beloved form must come up without its infirmities, without its fatigues—it must come up.

Oh, how long it seems for some of you. Waiting—waiting for the resurrection. How long! how long! I see for your broken hearts comes a cool, soft bandage of Easter lilies. Last night we had come to the church a beautiful Easter card, on the top of it a representation of that exquisite flower called the "trumpet creeper," and under it the inscription: "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised." I comfort you this day with the thought of resurrection.

When Lord Nelson was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral in London the work of all ages and was started. The procession moved on and the solemnity of a national. There were thirty trumpeters stationed at the door of the Cathedral with instruments of music in hand, waiting for the signal, and when the illustrious dead arrived at the gates of St. Paul's cathedral these thirty trumpeters gave one blast and then all was silent. Yet the trumpets did not wake the dead. The sleep rolled on.

But I have to tell you, what thirty trumpeters could not do for one man one trumpet will do for all nations. The sleep is rolling on, and the clock of the world's ages strikes 9, 10, 11, 12, and time shall be no longer!

Behold the archangel hovering. He takes the trumpet, points it this way, puts its lips to his lips, and then blows one long, loud, terrific, thunderous, resurrecting and resurrected blast. Look! look! They rise! The dead! the dead! Some coming forth from the family vault, some from the city cemetery, some from the country graveyard. Here a sheet is joined to its body, and there an eyeball is joined to its socket, and tendons to tendons, and muscles to muscles, and the clothes and the coffins are shaken off, and the graves in form as bright and as pure.

The storm begins to burn the long roll of a great victory. All reality now for the possession of reconstructed immortality! Upward and away! Christ leads and all the Christian dead follow, battalion after battalion, nation after nation. Up, up! On, on! Forward, ye ranks of God Almighty! Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates, and let the conquerors come in! Resurrection! Resurrection!

And so I twist all the festal flowers of this church with all the festal flowers of chapels and cathedrals of all christendom into one great chain, and with that chain I bind the Easter morning of 1888 with the closing Easter of the world's history—Resurrection! May the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will.

For the Press and Carolinian.

Thoughts Upon Voting.

MR. EDITOR:—I am blamed by my brethren for what they call an *ultra* position upon Prohibition, but for my life I cannot see where the *ultra* comes in. I am neither a politician nor a lawyer, yet I am neither wholly ignorant of the principles of government, nor of those that underlie proper laws. I am sure that man is a moral agent as well as an intellectual being; and that every act which he performs that is not an instinctive act, contains moral element within it, and must be measured by moral law. In the very nature of things there can be no right or wrong in the action *per se*, because the act itself is non-intelligent. The moral element must lie in the agent and must be either subjectively right or subjectively wrong; or it may be so reversed as to be subjectively right and objectively wrong; or subjectively wrong and objectively right.

Now, sir, when I apply this mode of reasoning to our voting, I ask myself the question: "Suppose I vote for men who will certainly legislate to sustain the liquor traffic by either opposing its suppression under the false pretense that such legislation would be *sumptuary*, or by making direct laws to license men to manufacture and sell alcoholic liquors to the people, what is the prompting motive in that act? and what is its moral element? Will I, in this act, meet moral obligation so that the true end of government shall be attained in bringing the greatest amount of happiness and good to our race?" I leave your good sense, Mr. Editor, to determine this question. The act cannot be subjectively right, because every thinking man knows that its results will be most terribly wrong in the objective sense; hence the voter is, whether he sees it or not, *particeps criminis* in all the results that follow.

But some one will say: "Of two evils, we must choose the less." To what evils does he refer? Does he mean that, unless all good men who call themselves Democrats stick together and vote for drunken, wicked nominees, the Republicans will again get into power? That is the teaching of the editor of the Age. If such a thing could take place, which needs not be, if all the Democrats of the State would unite upon a good man, yet it would be only a *physical* evil; whereas, if manufacturing and selling alcoholic liquors are legalized throughout the State, the act objectively becomes a terrible *moral* evil, and no one can choose a *moral* evil and be guiltless. We have the right of choosing between two *physical* evils, but to make choice of a *moral* evil, under any circumstance, is to conflict with heaven.

These are some of the reasons that drive me towards a third party. I cannot vote for men who sustain the liquor traffic. Let the Democratic party in North Carolina incorporate Prohibition in its platform of principles, and every Prohibitionist in the State will unite with it. If it does not do that, the third party will take North Carolina in less than one decade, as sure as God lives in heaven.

R. L. ABERNETHY.

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE.

HAVING qualified as administrator of the estate of Calvin Abernethy, deceased, notice is hereby given to all persons indebted to said estate to make immediate payment and save costs, and all persons having claims against said estate are notified to present them to me duly proven, for payment, within the time prescribed by law, or this notice will be plead in bar of their recovery.

H. D. ABERNETHY, Administrator.

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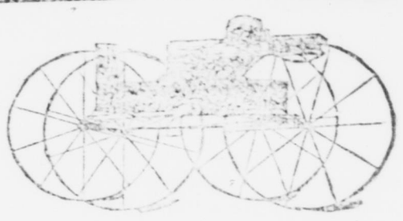

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