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DR. J. H. DANIEL, Editor and Proprietor. "PROVE ALL THINGS, AND HOLD FAST TO THAT WHICH IS GOOD." $1.00 Per Year In Advance.

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## REV. DR. TALMAGE.

### THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject: "Suicide."

TEXT: "He drew out his sword and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm." Acts xvi., 27, 28.

Here is a would be suicide arrested in his deadly attempt. He was a sheriff, and according to the Roman law a bailiff himself must suffer the punishment due an escaped prisoner, and if the prisoner breaking jail was sentenced to be endungeoned for three or four years then the sheriff must be endungeoned for three or four years, and if the prisoner breaking jail was to have suffered capital punishment then the sheriff must suffer capital punishment.

The sheriff had received especial charge to keep a sharp lookout for Paul and Silas. The government had not had confidence in bolts and bars to keep safe these two clergymen, about whom there seemed to be something strange and supernatural.

Sure enough, by miraculous power they are free, and the sheriff, waking out of a sound sleep and supposing these ministers have run away, and knowing they were to die for preaching Christ, and realizing that he must therefore die, rather than go under the executioner's ax on the morrow and suffer public disgrace resolves to precipitate his own decease. But before the sharp, keen, glittering dagger of the sheriff could strike his heart one of the unloosened prisoners arrests the blade by the command, "Do thyself no harm."

In olden time, and where Christianity had not interfered with it, suicide was considered honorable and a sign of courage. Demosthenes poisoned himself when told that Alexander's embassador had demanded the surrender of the Athenian orators. Isocrates killed himself rather than surrender to Philip of Macedon. Cato, rather than submit to Julius Cæsar, took his own life, and after three times his wounds had been dressed tore them open and perished. Mithridates killed himself rather than submit to Pompey, the conqueror. Hannibal destroyed his life by poison from his ring, considering life unbearable. Lycurgus a suicide, Brutus a suicide. After the disaster of Moscow Napoleon always carried with him a preparation of opium, and one night his servant heard the ex-emperor arise, put something in a glass and drink it, and soon after the groans arouse all the attendants, and it was only through utmost medical skill he was resuscitated from the stupor of the opiate.

Times have changed, and yet the American conscience needs to be toned upon the subject of suicide. Have you seen a paper in the last month that did not announce the passage out of life by one's own behest? Defaulters, alarmed at the idea of exposure, quit life precipitately. Men losing large fortunes go out of the world because they cannot endure earthly existence. Frustrated affection, domestic infelicity, dyspeptic impatience, anger, remorse, envy, jealousy, destitution, misanthropy, are considered sufficient causes for absconding from this life by Paris green, by laudanum, by belladonna, by Othello's dagger, by halter, by leap from the abutment of a bridge, by firearms. More cases of "felo de se" in the last two years of the world's existence. The evil is more and more spreading.

A pulpit not long ago expressed some doubt as to whether there was really anything wrong about quitting this life when it became disagreeable, and there are found in respectable circles people apologetic for the crime which Paul in the text arrested. I shall show you before I get through that suicide is the worst of all crimes, and I shall lift a warning unmistakable. But in the early part of this sermon I wish to admit that some of the best Christians that have ever lived have committed self destruction, but always in dementia and not responsible. I have no more doubt about their eternal felicity than I have of the Christian who dies in his bed in the delirium of typhoid fever. While the shock of the catastrophe is very great, I charge all those who have had Christian friends under cerebral aberration step off the boundaries of this life to have no doubt their happiness. The dear Lord took them right out of their dazed and frenzied state into perfect safety. How Christ feels toward the insane you may know from the kind way he treated the demoniac of Gardara and the child lunatic, and the potency with which he hushed the tempests either of sea or brain.

Scotland, the land prolific of intellectual giants, had none grander than Hugh Miller, great for science and great for God. He came of the best Highland blood, and he was a descendant of Donald Roy, a man eminent for his piety and the rare gift of second sight. His attainments, climbing up as he did from the quarry and the wall of the stonemason, drew forth the astonished admiration of Buckland and Murchison, the scientists, and Dr. Chalmers, the theologian, and held universities spellbound while he told them the story of what he had seen of God in the old red sandstone.

That man did more than any being that ever lived to show that the God of the hills is the God of the Bible, and he struck his tuning fork on the rocks of Cromarty until he brought geology and theology accordant in divine worship. His two books, entitled "Footprints of the Creator" and the "Testimony of the Rocks," proclaimed the banns of an everlasting marriage between genuine science and revelation. On this latter book he toiled day and night, through love of nature and love of God, until he could not sleep, and his brain gave way, and he was found dead with a revolver by his side, the cruel instrument having had two bullets—one for him and the other for the gunsmith who, at the coroner's inquest, was examining it and fell dead. Have you any doubt of the beatification of Hugh Miller after his hot brain had ceased throbbing that winter night in his study at Portobello? Among the mightiest of earth, among the mightiest of heaven.

No one ever doubted the piety of William Cowper, the author of those three great hymns, "Oh, For a Closer Walk With God!" "What Various Hindrances We Meet!" "There Is a Fountain Filled With Blood"—William Cowper, who shares with Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley the chief honors of Christian hymnology. In hypochondria he resolved to take his own life and rode to the river Thames, but found a man seated on some goods at the very point from which he expected to spring and rode back to his home and that night threw himself upon his own knife, but the blade broke, and then he hanged himself to the ceiling, but the rope parted. No wonder that when God mercifully delivered him from that awful dementia he sat down and wrote that other hymn just as memorable:

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.
Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His work in vain.
God is His own interpreter.
And He will make it plain.

While we make this merciful and righteous allowance in regard to those who were plunged into mental incoherence, I declare that the man who in the use of his reason, by his own act, snaps the bond between his body and his soul goes straight into perdition. Shall I prove it? Revelation xxi., 8, "Murderers shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." Revelation xxii., 15, "Without are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers and murderers." You do not believe the New Testament? Then perhaps you believe the Ten Commandments. "Thou shalt not kill."

Do you say all these passages refer to the taking of the life of others? Then I ask you if you are not as responsible for your own life as for the life of others? God gave you a special trust in your life. He made you the custodian of your life as he made you the custodian of no other life. He gave you as weapons with which to defend it two arms to strike back assailants, two eyes to watch for invasion and a natural love of life which bought ever to be on the alert. Assassination of others is a mild crime compared with the assassination of yourself, because in the latter case it is treachery to an especial trust, it is the surrender of a castle you were especially appointed to keep, it is treason to a natural law, and it is treason to God added to ordinary murder.

To show how God in the Bible looked upon this crime I point you to the rogues' picture gallery in some parts of the Bible, the pictures of the people who have committed this unnatural crime. Here is the headless trunk of Saul on the walls of Bethshan. Here is the man who chased little David—ten feet in statue chasing four. Here is the man who consulted a clairvoyant, witch of Endor. Here is a man who, whipped in battle, instead of surrendering his sword with dignity, asks his servant to slay him, and when the servant declines then the giant plants the hilt of the sword in the earth, the sharp point sticking upward, and he throws his body on it and expires, the coward, the suicide! Here is Ahithophel, the Machiavelli of olden times, betraying his best friend, David, in order that he may become prime minister of Absalom and joining that fellow in his attempt at parricide. Not getting what he wanted by change of politics he takes a short cut out of a disgraced life into the suicide's eternity. There he is, the ingrate!

Here is Abimelech practically a suicide. He is with an army bombarding a tower, when a woman in the tower takes a grindstone from its place and drops it upon his head, and with what life he has left in a cracked skull he commands his armor bearer, "Draw thy sword and slay me, lest men say a woman slew me." There is his post mortem photograph in the book of Samuel. But the hero of this group is Judas Iscariot. Dr. Donne says he was a martyr, and we have in our day apologists for him. And what wonder in this day when we have a book revealing Aaron Burr as a pattern of virtue, and in this day when we uncover a statue to George Sand as the benefactress of literature, and in this day when there are betrayals of Christ on the part of some of His pretended apostles—a betrayal so black it makes the infamy of Judas Iscariot white! Yet this man by his own hand hung up for the execration of all the ages, Judas Iscariot.

All the good men and women of the Bible left to God the decision of their earthly terminus, and they could have said with Job, who had a right to commit suicide if any man ever had—what with his destroyed property, and his body all aflame with insufferable carbuncles, and everything gone from his home except the chief curse of it—a pestiferous wife—and four garrulous people pelting him with comfortless talk while he sits on a heap of ashes scratching his scabs with a piece of broken pottery, yet crying out in triumph, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come."

Notwithstanding the Bible is against this evil and the aversion which it creates by the loathsome and ghastly spectacle of those who have buried themselves out of life, and notwithstanding Christianity is against it and the arguments and the useful lives and the illustrious deaths of its disciples, it is a fact alarmingly patent that suicide is on the increase. What is the cause? I charge upon infidelity and agnosticism this whole thing. If there be no hereafter, or if that hereafter be blissful without reference to how we live and how we die, why not move back the folding doors between this world and the next? And when our existence here becomes trouble-one why not pass right over into Elysium? Put this down among your most solemn reflections and consider it after you go to your homes—there has never been a case of suicide where the operator was not either demented, and therefore irresponsible, or an infidel. I challenge all the ages, and I challenge the whole universe. There never has been a case of self destruction while in full appreciation of his immortality and of the fact that that immortality would be glorious or wretched according as he accepted Jesus Christ or rejected Him.

You say it is business trouble, or you say it is electrical currents, or it is this, or it is that, or it is the other thing. Why not go clear back, my friend, and acknowledge that in every case it is the abdication of reason or the teaching of infidelity which practically says, "If you don't like this life, get out of it, and you will land either in annihilation, where there are no notes to pay, no persecutions to suffer, no gout to torment, or you will land where there will be everything glorious and nothing to pay for it." Infidelity always has been apologetic for self immolation. After Tom Paine's "Age of Reason" was published and widely read there was a marked increase of self-slaughter.

Rousseau, Voltaire, Gibbon, Montaigne, under certain circumstances, were apologetic for self immolation. Infidelity puts up no bar to people's rushing out from this world into the next. They teach us it does not make any difference how you live here or go out of this world, you will land either in an oblivious nowhere or a glorious somewhere. And infidelity holds the upper end of the rope for the suicide, and aims the pistol with which a man blows his brains out, and mixes the strychnine for the last swallow. If infidelity could carry the day and persuade the majority of people that it does not made any difference how you go out of the world you will land safely, the rivers would be so full of corpses the ferrymen would be impeded in their progress, and the crack of a suicide's pistol would be no more alarming than the rumble of a street car.

Ah, infidelity, stand up and take thy sentence! In the presence of God and angels and men, stand up, thou monster, thy lip blasted with blasphemy, thy cheek scarred with lust, thy breath foul with the corruption of the ages! Stand up, satyr, filthy goat, buzzard of the nations, leper of the centuries! Stand up, thou monster infidelity, part man, part panther, part reptile, part dragon, stand up and take thy sentence! Thy hand is red with the blood in which thou hast washed, thy feet crimson with the human gore through which thou hast waded. Stand up and take thy sentence! Down with thee to the pit and sup on the sobs and groans of families thou hast blasted, and roll on the bed of knives which thou hast sharpened for others, and let thy music be the everlasting miserere of those whom thou hast damned! I brand the forehead of infidelity with all the crimes of self immolation for the last century on the part of those who had their reason.

My friends, if ever your life through its abrasions and its molestations should seem to be unbearable, and you are tempted to quit it by your own behest, do not consider yourselves as worse than others. Christ Himself was tempted to cast Himself from the roof of the temple, but as He resisted so resist ye. Christ came to medicine all our wounds. In your trouble I prescribe life instead of death. People who have had it worse than you will ever have it have gone songful on their way. Remember that God keeps the chronology of your life with as much precision as He keeps the chronology of nations.

Why was it at midnight, just at midnight, the destroying angel struck the blow that set the Israelites free from bondage? The 430 years were up at 12 o'clock that night. The 430 years were not up at 11, and 1 o'clock would have been tardy and too late. The 430 years were up at 12 o'clock, and the destroying angel struck the blow, and Israel was free. And God knows just the hour when it is time to lead you up from earthly bondage. By his grace make not the worst of things, but the best of them. If you must take the pills, do not chew them. Your everlasting rewards will accord with your earthly perturbations, just as Caius gave to Agrippa a chain of gold as heavy as had been his chain of iron. For your asking you may have the same grace that was given to the Italian martyr, Algerius, who, down in the darkest of dungeons, dated his letter from "the delectable orchard of the Leonine prison."

There is a sorrowless world, and it is so radiant that the noonday sun is only the lowest doorstep, and the aurora that lights up our northern heavens, confounding astronomers as to what it can be, is the waving of the banners of the procession come to take the conquerors home from church militant to church triumphant, and you and I have 10,000 reasons for wanting to go there, but we will never get there either by self immolation or impenitency. All our sins slain by the Christ who came to do that thing, we want to go in at just the time divinely arranged, and from a couch divinely spread, and then the clang of the sepulchral gates behind us will be overpowered by the clang of the opening of the solid pearl before us. O God, whatever others may choose, give me a Christian's life, a Christian's death, a Christian's burial, a Christian's immortality!

## RELIGIOUS READING.

### A WISH.

By Helen Thorneycroft Fowler.

When the world to thee is new,
When its dazzling dreams deceive thee
Ere they pass like morning dew—
Faith retrieve thee!

When the glory fades away,
When of light the clouds bereave thee,
When the shadows mar the day—
Hope relieve thee!

When despair's destroying breath
Come at eventide to grieve thee
With the bitterness of death—
Love reprieve thee!

When the bells at curfew toll,
When the lingering sunbeams leave thee,
When the night o'erwhelms thy soul—
God receive thee!

—The Quiver.

### THE POWER OF THE BIBLE.

The Rev. Robert Newton of England, when on a visit to this country a few years ago, advocated at an anniversary of the American Bible Society, the cardinal principle of that noble institution, the circulation of the scriptures without note or comment.

Illustrative of the sufficiency of the Bible to convert the soul, with God's blessing on its perusal, he related the following anecdote: A woman considerably advanced in years, who had heard unmoved from Sabbath, to Sabbath, the thunders of Sinai, and the affecting appeals of Calvary, called one day on the pastor of the church which she attended, and to his astonishment and joy, apprized him that she had found "the pearl of great price."

To his probing question she gave clear and satisfactory replies; and he was convinced that the work was the Holy Spirit's. In tracing the changes to its source, he asked her under which sermon of his she had been converted. "Sermon!" she cried, it was no sermon that converted me, it was the text. Before you had well begun your sermon I was a converted sinner. The Lord carried this truth home to my heart with mighty power; and I dwelt and dwelt upon his own blessed words until I found peace and joy in believing. The precious text was, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3:16. Blessed be God for his unspeakable gift.

I have read many interesting accounts of the conversion of souls in solitary places by the simple reading of the Bible; but a few on the desert ocean, where the voice of the living teacher was not; and these facts should stimulate us to more systematic and untiring efforts to circulate the Book of Life. The duty is imperious; the encouragement great; and the rewards—through grace—such as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," to conceive.

### DIVINE COMMUNION.

There is no possible way of finding comfort amid the providences that come to us in life but in intimate and habitual commmunion with God. Much as we may desire to avoid providences often of an afflictive and disciplinary character, our heavenly Father sees it wise to administer his government over us in a manner that often hides his love to our human thought. Doubtless in this way he would keep us from pride and vanity, impress upon us our absolute dependence upon his guidance, instil a deeper religious conviction in our minds, perfect more fully our ideals of true life and clarify our vision of spiritual things. But theorizing thus, as we often do, how few accept his way with unruffled composure, rejoicing that we are in his hands! Such blessed rest in God comes to us only through one well-trodden path—the path of holy prayer. We do not mean an approach to the mercy seat merely at stated times and in formal utterances, but a constant drawing near to him in the silent depths of devotion, in the soul's unuttered supplications, in the hourly spiritual contact of the human with the divine heart. But this power to pause amid conflicting uncertianties, and let God give light upon the path in his own good time, is not the product of human philosophy. This ability to wait until he shall solve the problem belongs only to souls that are constantly closeted in his presence. Helping him to decide difficult questions is one of his ways of "rewarding them openly." And who will say that this is not a rich reward for obeying our Lord's command. "Enter into thy closet?" Can anything surpass such comfort as is found here? Toiling, weary pilgrim, wherever thou art found, enter into the enclosure of prayer, and abide very near to him who "seeth in secret." Oh, what safety is here! —Christian Advocate.

### UNTIL HE FINDS IT.

A pleasant incident is recorded of General Garibaldi. One evening he met a Sardinian shepherd, who had lost a lamb out of his flock, and was in great distress because he could not find it. Garibaldi became deeply interested in the man, and proposed to his staff that they should scour the mountains and help to find the lost lamb. A search was organized, lanterns were brought, and these old soldiers started off full of eager earnestness to look for the fugitive. The quest was in vain, however, and by-and-by all the soldiers returned to their quarters.

Next morning Garabaldi's attendant found the general abed and fast asleep, long after his usual hour for rising. The servant aroused him at length, and the general rubbed his eyes and then took from under his bed coverings the lost lamb, bidding the attendant to carry it to the shepherd. Garibaldi had kept up the quest through the night until he had found the lamb. This illustration helps us to understand how Jesus Christ seeks lost souls in the world of sin, continuing the search long after others have given it up, seeking until he finds.—Rev. J. R. Miller, D. D.

### DELIVERED FROM TEMPTATION.

When Wendell Phillips was a boy fourteen years of age, in the old church at the North End, Boston, he heard Lyman Beecher preach on the theme: "You belong to God." He went home after service, threw himself on the floor in his room, with locked doors, and prayed: "O God, I belong to thee; take what is thine own. I ask this that whenever a thing be wrong it may have no power of temptation over me; whenever a thing be right, it may take no courage to do it." From that day on, he testified that whenever he knew a thing to be wrong it held no temptation; and whenever he knew a thing to be right, it took no courage to do it.

Prayer is so mighty an instrument that no one ever thoroughly mastered all its keys. They sweep along the infinite scale of man's wants and of God's goodness.—Hugh Miller.

IF you will never drink your first glass, all the subsequent ones won't hurt you.

## SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

Soft music has a hypnotic effect.

Milk is about eighty-seven per cent. water.

London has street car lines eighty feet below the surface.

Canary birds are greatly subject to pneumonia and pleurisy.

A scheme is on foot to utilize the current of the Bosphorus to illuminate Constantinople, Turkey.

The great artesian well at Passy, one of the suburbs of Paris, flows steadily at the rate of 5,600,000 gallons a day.

By an English invention camel's hair, cotton plant and chemicals are being substituted for leather in machinery belting with considerable success.

A caterpillar in the course of a month will devour 6000 times its own weight in food. It will take a man three months to eat an amount of food equal to his own weight.

In the country surrounding Caracas there grows a strange plant called the moon flower. Its petals remain closed during the day, but at night, when the moon is shining, they open and nod twenty times to the minute.

In the manufactures of Great Britain alone the power which steam exerts is estimated to be equal to the manual labor of 4,000,000,000 of men, or more than double the number of males supposed to inhabit the globe.

One of the best bandages for wounds is made from the inner bark of the "punk" tree. It is pounded with a hammer until it becomes soft and feels like velvet. Its astringent properties caused the lips of a wound to be drawn together.

Plants often exhibit something very much like intelligence. If a bucket of water during a dry season be placed a few inches from a growing pumpkin or melon vine the latter will turn from its course, and in a day or two will get one of its leaves in the water.

The latest thing out is a pulseometer, by which the life insurance examiners can tell to a fraction the exact condition of an applicant's heart beat. An electric pen traces on prepared paper the ongoings, haltings, and precise peregrinations of the blood, showing with the fidelity of science the strength or weakness of the telltale pulse.

It appears that the cheese mite undergoes a metamorphosis, passing through a "hypopus" stage. The mite originally soft and easily killed by heat or exposure, in this stage suddenly become, hard and able to endure great changes and also to live a long time without food; it is also then provied with special adherent organs, so that attached to insects it can be widely distributed, though exposed to the most adverse circumstances.

A Danish chemist has invented a new agent of destruction which revolutionizes entirely the present modes of warfare. A peculiarly constructed gun discharges a certain chemical which turns to vapor as soon as it strikes the air. This vapor has such an effect on the risible muscles that the enemy breaks into loud laughter. The mirth is so violent that the soldiers are unable to handle their weapons and fall easy victims to their antagonists.

### Grave of a Hero.

The grave of Sam Houston is located in a little cemetery at Huntsville, Texas, and according to a writer in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, it is greatly neglected. "One would certainly expect," says the writer, "that a monument or shaft would mark the spot where lie the bones of the great statesman and patriot. Not so, however. An unpretentious marble slab is all that tells of his last resting place, and there was not a grave in the entire cemetery of neglected and forgotten graves that has received less attention than that of the great commoner. The slab, on which was inscribed simply his name, the date of his birth and death, was ready to fall into the sunken grave. There was no guard or rail around it, and the plank fence which surrounded the silent city was ready to topple over and decay. Huntsville is a small village of a few hundred people, where one of the penitentiaries of the State is located. It is distant some ten or twelve miles from the main line of the International and Great Northern Railroad, and is reached by a spur. There has been a proposition before the Texas Legislature several times to remove the bones of Huston to Austin, the State capital, and erect a monument over them, but it has been defeated every time on constitutional grounds. They will probably remain there for all time unless something is done in the way of popular subscription. The city of Houston has agitated the subject of removal again and again, but it all ended in talk."

### Miners' Superstitions.

Miners in all parts of the world have many odd superstitions. The mines of Germany are supposed to be haunted by little old men, not over two feet high, dressed as miners. Sometimes they are malevolent and sometimes otherwise. Goblin miners, known as "knockers," inhabit the mines of Wales. They make strange noises, and the tapping of their picks can be heard in ore bodies not yet reached by the human workmen. The dreaded Ladder Dwarf is a malicious hunchback of frightful appearance who kicks out the rungs of ladders in mines just before an accident occurs. Vegetables growing in mines are believed to have talismanic virtues. In Sardinia an ancient lead mine has been deserted and permitted to fill up with water for dread of a small and venomous species of spider that inhabits it.—Washington Star.

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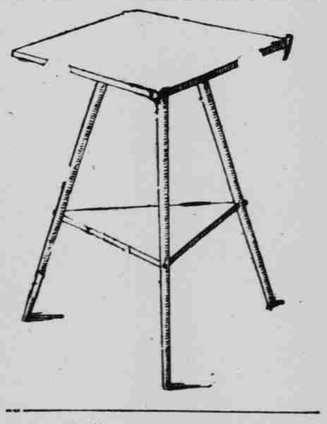
#### A Broomstick Table.

Very few boys might think that three broomsticks, a square and triangular piece of board and a few nails, if used in the right places, would produce a table.

Saw the sticks from three old brooms of the same size, making the cut close to the broom, obtain a square and a triangular piece of board; the square



one should be twelve inches and the triangular one twelve inches on a side.

With a bit the size of the large end of a broomstick, bore three holes in the under side of the top or square board at an angle, so the legs will stand off at the bottom, fasten the sticks in these holes and nail or screw them securely from the top with screws passed through the broomsticks; secure the triangular piece half way between the top and the floor to form a sort of undershelf, and, with a coat of paint the finished table will look like the illustration.

### A THOROUGH CONFESSION.

"Herbert," she said, "tell me one thing, and tell me truthfully. Were you ever intoxicated?"

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"What do you mean?"

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