

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject "The Sunshine of Religion."

TEXT: "Her ways are ways of pleasantness."—Proverbs iii., 17.

You have all heard of God's only begotten Son. Have you heard of God's daughter? She was born in heaven. She came down over the hills of our world. She had queenly step. On her brow was celestial radiance. Her voice was music. Her name is Religion. My text introduces her. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

But what is religion? The fact is that theological study has had a different effect upon me from the effect sometimes produced. Ever since I read another leaf from my theology until I have only three or four leaves left—in other words, a very brief and plain statement of Christian belief.

An aged Christian minister said: "When I was a young man, I knew everything; when I got to be thirty-five years of age, in my ministry I had only a hundred doctrines of religion; when I got to be forty years of age, I had only fifty doctrines of religion; when I got to be sixty years of age, I had only ten doctrines of religion; and now I am dying at seventy-five years of age, and there is only one thing I know, and that is that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And so I have noticed in the study of God's word and in my contemplation of the character of God and of the eternal world that it is necessary for me to drop this part of my belief and that part of my belief as being nonessential, while I cling to the one great doctrine that man is a sinner, and Christ is his Almighty and Divine Saviour.

Now I take these three or four leaves of my theology, and I find that, in the first place, and dominant above all others, is the sunshine of religion. When I go into a room I have a passion for throwing open all the shutters. That is what I want to do this morning. We are apt to throw so much of the sepulchral into our religion and to close the shutters and to pull down the blinds that it is only through here and there a crack that the light streams. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is a religion of joy in indescribable and unutterable. Wherever I can find a bell I mean to ring it.

If there are any in this house this morning who are disposed to hold on to their melancholy and gloom, let them now depart this service before the fairest and the brightest and the most radiant being of all the universe comes in. God's Son has left our world, but God's daughter is here. Give her room. Hail, princess of heaven! Hail, daughter of the Lord God Almighty! Come in and make this house thy throngroom!

In sitting forth this idea the dominant theory of religion is one of sunshine. I hardly know where to begin, for there are so many thoughts that rush upon my soul. A mother saw her little child seated on the floor in the sunshine and with a spoon in her hand. She said, "My darling, what are you doing there?" "Oh," replied the child, "I'm getting a spoonful of this sunshine!" Would God that to-day I might present you with a gleaming chalice of this glorious, everlasting Gospel sunshine!

First of all, I find a great deal of sunshine in Christian society.

I do not know of anything more doleful than the companionship of the mere tun-makers of the world—the Thomas Hoods, the Charles Lambs, the Charles Matthews of the world—the men whose entire business it is to make sport. They make others laugh, but if you will examine their autobiography or biography you will find that down in their soul there was a terrific disquietude. Laughter is no sign of happiness. The mania laughs. The hyena laughs. The lion among the Adirondacks laughs. The drunkard, dashing his decanter against the wall, laughs.

There is a terrible reaction from all sinful amusement and sinful merriment. Such men are across the next day. They snap at you on exchange, or they pass you, not recognizing you. Long ago I quit mere worldly society for the reason it was so dull, so insane and so stupid. My nature is voracious of joy. I must have it.

I always walk on the sunny side of the street, and for that reason I have crossed over into Christian society. I like their mode of repartee better; I like their style of amusement better. They live longer. Christian people, I sometimes notice, live on when by all natural law they ought to have died. I have known persons who have continued in their existence when the doctor said they ought to have been dead ten years. Every day of their existence was a defiance of the laws of anatomy and physiology, but they had this supernatural vivacity of the Gospel in their soul, and that kept them alive.

Put ten or twelve Christian people in a room for Christian conversation, and you will from 8 to 10 o'clock hear more resounding glee, see more bright strokes of wit, and find more thought and profound satisfaction than in any merely worldly party.

Now, when I say a "worldly party" I mean that to which you are invited, because under all the circumstances of the case it is the best for you to be invited, and to which you go because under all circumstances of the case it is better that you go, and leaving the shawls on the second door you go to this parlor to give formal salutation to the host and the hostess, and then move around spending the whole evening in the discussion of the weather, an apology for trading on long trails, and in effort to keep the corners of the mouth up to the sign of pleasure, and going around with an idiotic he-he about nothing, until the collation is served, and then after the collation is served going back again into the parlor to resume the weather, and then at the close going at a very late hour to the host and hostess and assuring them that you have had a most delightful evening, and then passing down off the front steps, the slam of the door the only satisfaction of the evening.

Oh, young man, come into the country to spend your days in city life, where are you going to spend your evenings? Let me tell you, while there are many places of innocent worldly amusement, it is most wise for you to throw your body, mind and soul into Christian society. Come to me at the close of five years and tell me what has been the result of this advice. Bring with you the young man who refused to take the advice and who went into sinful amusement. He will come dissipated, shabby in apparel, and disposed to look any one in the eyes, moral character eighty-five per cent. off. You will come with principle settled, countenance frank, habits good, soul saved and all the inhabitants of heaven, from the lowest angel up to the archangel and clear past him to the Lord God Almighty, your coadjutors.

This is not the advice of a misanthrope. There is no man in the house to whom the world is brighter than it is to me. It is not the advice of a dyspeptic—my digestion is perfect; it is not the advice of a man who cannot understand a joke or who prefers a tuncal; it is not the advice of a worn-out man, but the advice of a man who can see this world in all its brightness, and, considering myself competent in judging what is good cheer, I tell the multitudes of young men in this house this morning that there is

nothing in worldly associations so grand and so beautiful and so exultant as in Christian society.

I know there is a great deal of talk about the self-denials of the Christian. I have to tell you that where the Christian has one self-denial the man of the world has a thousand self-denials. The Christian is not commanded to surrender anything that is worth keeping. But what does a man deny himself who denies himself the religion of Christ. He denies himself a portion of sin; he denies himself peace of conscience; he denies himself the joy of the Holy Ghost; he denies himself a comfortable death pillow; he denies himself the glories of heaven. Do not talk to me about the self-denials of the Christian! Where there is one in the Christian life there are a thousand in the life of the world. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness."

Again, I find a great deal of religious sunshine in Christian and divine explanation. To a great many people life is an inexplicable tangle. Things turn out differently from what was supposed. There is a useless woman in perfect health. There is an industrious and consecrated woman a complete invalid. Explain that. There is a bad man with \$30,000 of income. There is a good man with \$800 of income. Why is that? There is a foe of society who lives on, doing all the damage he can, to seventy-five years of age, and here is a Christian father, fat in his every department, who at thirty-five years taken away by death, his family left helpless. Explain that. Oh, there is no sentence that oftener drops from your lips than this: "I cannot understand it. I cannot understand it."

Well, now, religion comes in just at that point with its illumination and its explanation. There is a business man who has lost his entire fortune. The week before he lost his fortune there were twenty carriages that stopped at the door of his mansion. The week after he lost his fortune all the carriages you count on one finger. The week before financial trouble began people all took off their hats to him as he passed down the street. The week his financial prospects were under discussion people just touched their hats without anywise bending the rim. The week that he was pronounced insolvent people just jolted their heads as they passed, not tipping their hats at all, and the week the sheriff sold him out all his friends were looking in the store windows as they went down past him.

Now, while the world goes away from a man when he is in financial distress, the religion of Christ comes to him and says: "You are sick and your sickness is to be moral purification; you are bereaved; God wanted in some way to take your family to heaven, and He must begin somewhere, and so He took the one that was most beautiful and was most ready to go." I do not say that religion explains everything in this life, but I do say it lays down certain principles which are grandly consolatory. You know the merchant in San Francisco telegraphs to the merchant in New York certain information in ciphers which no other man in that line of business can understand, but the merchant in San Francisco has the key to the cipher, and the merchant in New York has the key to the cipher, and on that information transmitted there are enterprises involving hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Now the providences of life sometimes seem to be a senseless riddle, a mysterious cipher, but God has a key to that cipher, and the Christian a key to that cipher, and though he may hardly be able to spell out the meaning, he gets enough of the meaning to understand that it is for the best. Now is there not sunshine in that? Is there not pleasure in that? Far beyond laughter, it is nearer the fountain of tears than boisterous demonstration. Have you never cried for joy? There are tears which are eternal rapture in distillation.

There are hundreds of people in this house who are walking day by day in the sublime satisfaction that all is for the best, all things working together for good for their soul. How a man can get along through this life without the explanation is to me a mystery. What is that child going for? Are you never to get it back? Is your property gone forever? Is your soul to be bruised and to be tried forever? Have you no explanation, no Christian explanation, and yet you are a maniac? But when you see the religion of Jesus Christ in your soul, it explains everything so far as it is best for you to understand. You look off in life, and your soul is full of thanksgiving to God that you are so much better off than you might be.

A man passed down the street without any shoes and said: "I have no shoes. Isn't it a hardship that I have no shoes? Other people have shoes; no shoes, no shoes." Then he saw a man who had no feet. Then he learned a lesson. You ought to thank God for what He does, instead of grumbling for what He does not. God arranges all the weather in this world—the spiritual weather, the moral weather as well as the natural weather. "What kind of weather will it be to-day?" said some one to a farmer. The farmer replied, "It will be such weather as I like." "What do you mean by that," asked the other. "Well," said the farmer, "it will be such weather as pleases the Lord, and what pleases the Lord pleases me."

Oh, the sunshine! the sunshine of Christian explanation! Here is some one bending over the grave of the dead. What is going to be the consolation? The flowers you strew upon the tomb? Oh, no! The services read at the grave? Oh, no. The chief consolation on that grave is what falls from the throne of God. Sunshine, glorious sunshine. Resurrection sunshine.

Again, I find a great deal of sunshine in this Bible and our religion in the climatic joys that are to come. A man who gets up and goes out from a concert right after the opening voluntary has been played, and before the prima donna sings, or before the orchestra begins, has a better idea of that concert than that man who supposes that the chief joys of religion are in this world. We here have only the first note of the eternal orchestra. We shall in that world have the joy of discovery and the joy of the scientists, the philosophers of all ages, who so far surpassed us in this world. We can afford to adjourn astronomy and geology and many of the sciences to the next world, because we shall there have better apparatus and better opportunity.

I must study these sciences so far as to help me in my work, but beyond that I must give myself to saving my own soul and saving the souls of others, knowing that in one flash of eternity we will catch it all. Oh, what an observatory in which to study astronomy heaven will be, not by power of telescope, but by supernatural vision; and if there be something doubtful 10,000,000 miles away, by one stroke of the wing you are there, by another stroke of the wing you are back again, and all in less time than I tell you, catching it all in one flash of eternity.

And geology! What a place that will be to study geology, when the world is being picked to pieces as easily as a schoolgirl in botanical lessons pulls the leaf from the corolla! What a place to study architecture, amid the thrones and the palaces and the cathedrals—St. Mark's and St. Paul's rookeries in comparison. Sometimes you wish you could make the tour of the whole earth, going around as others have gone, but you have not the time; you have not the means. You will make

that tour yet during one musical pause in the eternal anthem. I say these things for the comfort of those people who are obliged in their opportunities—those people to whom life is a humdrum, who toll and wear, and toil and work, and aspire after knowledge, but have no time to get it, and say: "If I had the opportunity, which other people have, how I would fill my mind and soul with grand thoughts!" Be not discouraged, my friends. You are going to the university yet. Death will only matriculate you into the royal college of the universe.

What a sublime thing it was that Dr. Thornwell, of South Carolina, uttered in his last dying moments! As he looked up he said, "It opens; it expands; it exalts." Or as Mr. Topady, the author of "Rock of Ages," in his last moment, or during his last hours, looked up and said, as though he saw something supernatural, "Light!" and then as he came nearer the dying moment, his countenance more luminous, he cried, "Light!" and at the very moment of his departure lifted both hands, something supernatural in his countenance as he cried, "Light!" Only another name for the word "Light" is "Light." Only another name for the word "Light" is "Light." Only another name for the word "Light" is "Light."

Besides that we shall have all the pleasures of association. We will go right up in the arms of God without any frigate. All our sins gone, there will be nothing to be frightened about. There our old Christian friends will troop around us. Just as now one of your sick friends goes away to Florida, the land of flowers, or to the south of France, and you do not see him for a long while, and after a while you meet him, and the howls under the eyes are all filled, and the appetite has come back, and the crutch has been thrown away, and he is so changed you hardly know him. You say, "Why, I never saw you look so well!" He says, "I couldn't help but be well. I have been sailing these rivers and climbing these mountains, and that's how I got this elasticity. I never was so well."

Oh, my friends, your departed loved ones are only away for their health in a better climate, and when you meet them they will be so changed you will hardly know them—they will be so very much changed, and after awhile, when you are assured that they are your friends, your departed friends, you will say: "Why, where is that cough? Where is that paralysis? Where is that pneumonia? Where is that consumption?" And he will say: "Oh, I am entirely well! There are no sick ones in this country. I have been ranging these hills, and hence this elasticity. I have been here now twenty years, and not one sick one have I seen—we are all well in this climate."

And when you stand at the gate of the celestial city to see the procession come out, and I see a long procession of little children with their arms full of flowers, and then I see a procession of kings and priests moving in celestial pageantry—a long procession, but no black tasseled vehicle, no mourning group, and I say: "How strange it is! Where is your Greenwood? Where is your Laurel Hill? Where is your Westminster Abbey?" And they shall cry, "There are no graves here."

And then listen for the tolling of the old bellies of heaven, the old bellies of eternity. I listen to hear them toll for the dead, but they toll not for the dead. They only strike up a silvery chime, tower to tower, east gate to west gate, as they ring out, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Oh, unglue your hand and give it to me in congratulation on that score! I feel as if I would shout. I will shout halleluiah! Dear Lord, forgive me that I ever complained about anything. If all this is before us, who cares for anything but God and heaven and eternal brotherhood? Take the crape off the doorbell. Your loved ones are only away for their health in a land ambrosial. Come, Lowell Mason; come, Isaac Watts, and give us your best hymn about joy celestial.

What is the use of postponing our heaven any longer? Let it begin now, and whosoever hath a harp let her thrum it, and whosoever hath a trumpet let him blow it, and whosoever hath an organ let him give us a full diapason. They crowd down the air, spirits blessed, moving in cavalcade of triumph. Their chariot wheels whirl in the Sabbath sunlight. They come. Halt, armies of God! Halt until we are ready to join the battalion of pleasures that never die.

Oh, my friends, it would take a sermon as long as eternity to tell the joys that are coming to us. I just set open the sunny door. Come in, all ye disciples of the world who have found the world a mockery. Come in, all ye disciples of the dance, and see the bounding feet of this heavenly gladness. Come in, ye disciples of worldly amusement, and see the stage where kings are the actors, and burning worlds the footlights, and thrones the spectacular.

Arise, ye dead in sin, for this is the morning of resurrection. The joys of heaven surge over your souls. I put on the trumpet stop. In your presence there is a fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

Blessed are the saints beloved of God; Washed are their robes in Jesus's blood; Brighter than angels, lo! they shine, Their glories splendid and sublime.

My soul anticipates the day, Would stretch her wing and soar away To the throne of the Father, And bow the chief of sinners there.

Oh, the sunshine, the glorious sunshine, the everlasting sunshine!

PAYMENTS OF PENSIONS.

Treasury Officials Advocate the Abolition of the Pension Agencies.

The proposition now before Congress, of having pension payments made direct from the United States Treasury instead of through pension agencies, as at present, meets with general support by officials of the Treasury Department. The Secretary recently requested the views of the bureau officials directly affected in the matter and ascertained that they were nearly all in favor of the change, as being in the interests of economy and a better service generally. The present system entails an annual expense of \$501,000, whereas the same service, it is intended, could be performed in a better manner under the plan proposed at an annual expense of \$35,000. A change would involve the abolition of eighteen pension agencies in different parts of the country and an increase in the present working force of the Treasury Department, resulting, however, in an annual saving of \$150,000. Under the plan proposed the Treasury Department would deal directly with the pensioners instead of through the agents as at present, and the payments would be made by means of checks mailed to the pensioners in the same way as the payments of interest checks on Government bonds are now made.

STANBOL'S performance of 2,074, made on the Stockton (Cal.) track November 23 last, a mile that crowned him king of trotting stallions, has been rejected by the American Trotting Register Association, Kramlin, which covered a mile at Nashville, Tenn., in 2,074, on November 13, according to the register is the acknowledged trotting king.

Horseish For Food.

In Europe, where the horse is every year more used as human food, the animals are not allowed to become a mass of skin and jagged bones, as old horses often do here. They are fattened, and even an old horse can be made quite fat if given succulent food mixed with ground grain. It is no more difficult to fatten an old horse than it is to fatten an old cow.—Boston Cultivator.

An Expert's Opinion.

Our readers have doubtless noticed the numerous discussions by the scientists and hygienists as to the relative value of the various baking powders. A careful sifting of the evidence leaves no doubt as to the superiority of the Royal Baking Powder in purity, wholesomeness and strength, from a scientific standpoint. An opinion, however, that will have perhaps greater influence with our practical housekeepers, is that given by Marion Harland, the well known and popular writer, upon matters pertaining to the science of domestic economy, of housekeeping, and of home cooking. In a letter published in the Philadelphia Ladies' Home Journal, this writer says:

"I regard the Royal Baking Powder as the best manufactured and in the market, so far as I have any experience in the use of such compounds. Since the introduction of it into my kitchen I have used no other in making biscuits, cakes, etc., and have entirely discarded for such purposes the home-made combination of one-third soda, two-thirds cream of tartar.

"Every box has been in perfect condition when it came into my hands, and the contents have given complete satisfaction. It is an act of simple justice, and also a pleasure, to recommend it unqualifiedly to American housewives. MARION HARLAND."

Repulsive Alaskan Customs.

"The natives of Southeastern Alaska," said ex-Governor A. P. Swinford, of Alaska, to the Star representative, "are rapidly falling into the customs of Americans, particularly as to their dress, some of the better class of natives dressing even better than the American residents. It was formerly the custom in Southeastern Alaska for the women to wear a 'labret' or short piece of bone or steel in their lower lip by way of ornament. Now one observes it only among the old women. Along the Bering Sea the men thus puncture their lips. They begin with a small piece of steel or bone no larger than a needle and gradually increase the size until it measures nearly an inch in diameter. The bigger the 'labret' the more pleased and important feels the native. Men and women alike plaster their faces with a thick coating of black paste obtained from grinding a sort of soft rock. They say it keeps the features warm in winter and protects them in summer from the attacks of insects and troublesome flies. As a race the people are under size and not personally attractive, though at Sitka one may see some splendid specimens of muscular development among the men, while some of the young women are good looking. There are now four newspapers published in the Territory and it is progressing satisfactorily. My stay there was very pleasant and I made many warm friends."—Washington Star.

Horticulture at the World's Fair.

Chief Samuels values plants at present on hand at the World's Fair grounds in Chicago at \$200,000, and he is credited with declaring that the collection of large decorative plants has not its equal in the United States. The giant ferns from Japan and Australia, groupen in the center of the rotunda, have developed their fronds, increasing rapidly in circumference. The rotunda contains also a number of Japanese maples, a pine 200 years old, cinnamon trees, etc. This exhibit is rapidly increased by new consignments arriving almost daily.

In the greenhouse are nearly four thousand primroses grown from seed sent from Italy, Germany, France, Great Britain and the United States. Of pansies Germany and France have made special exhibits, also Belgium and Holland. Another green house division contains thousands of Persian violets and South American orchids; among the latter are rare cow's horn from Costa Rica. In connection with the horticultural exhibit 40,000 hardy roses have been planted on the wooded island and 40,000 more of tender varieties are promised for next summer.—New York World.

"The Help Yourself Hotel."

American ingenuity and enterprise have invaded the staid old town of Frankfort on the Main, Germany. A syndicate has purchased several lots opposite the chief railway depot with the intention of building a large hotel, which will be conducted on a unique plan. There will be 106 compartments, all equally large and furnished in the same style. An excellent name for it would be "The Help Yourself Hotel." Each guest will be required to attend to his wants in person, thus doing away with fee hungry servants, waiters and others of their ilk. As the hotel is intended for the benefit of those who are not blessed with financial plethora the guests will have to brush their own clothes and shoes in a spacious courtyard, or, if they so prefer, they may have it done for them by paying the small sum of ten pennings. On the ground floor will be a restaurant, containing one large circular table, where tea, coffee or chocolate with cake may be obtained for less than fifteen cents. The hotel is now in process of construction, and will soon be ready for occupation.—New York Press.

Why They Are Speckled.

Charley Wilcox was in the burg the other day exercising his team of speckled colts. The way the animals happened to be speckled happened in this way: While their mother was at Hat Creek drinking, one day, she was seized by the lip by a trout weighing at least twenty pounds. The fish had to be killed with an ax before it would release its hold and when the twin colts were born they were speckled like trout. They are an extra fine team and are peculiarly fond of water.—Burney Valley (Cal.) Bulletin.

The output of the Minneapolis flour mills for 1892 will exceed 9,750,000 bushels, against 7,878,000 bushels for 1891.

The Languedoc Ship Canal, in France, by a short passage of 148 miles, saves a sea voyage of 2000 miles by the Straits of Gibraltar.

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"Words are powerless to express the gratitude I feel toward Hood's Sarsaparilla, for under God, I feel and know that to this medicine I owe my life. Twelve years ago I began to bloat, followed by nausea at the stomach, and later with swellings of the limbs, and finally with dropsy. This gradually grew worse until three years ago. Physicians told me the trouble was

Caused by a Tumor
For several months I had been unable to retain any food of a solid nature. I was greatly emaciated, had frequent hemorrhages, and was satisfied the doctors were right in saying my life was nearly over. One day a friend suggested that I try Hood's Sarsaparilla. I did so, and for 3 or 4 days I was sicker than ever, but I kept on and gradually began to feel better.

I Began to Feel Hungry
Could, after a time, retain solid food, increased in weight, the saffron hue left my skin, the bloating subsided, and I felt better all over. For the past two years my health has been

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quite good, and I have been able all the time to do the housework for my family." Mrs. OGDEN SNYDER, No. 10 Judson St., Albany, N. Y.

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