

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

The Eminent Washington Divine's Sunday Sermon.

Story of the Three Taverns—The Ruin wrought by Liquor—Crimson Wave of Dissipation Has Destroyed More Sailors Than the Ocean—Mankind's Curse.

Text: "They came to meet us as far as Apollon and the Three Taverns."—Acts xviii, 15.

Seventeen miles south of Rome, Italy, there was a village of unfortunate name and bibulous suggestion. A tavern is a place of entertainment, and, in our time, part of the entertainment is a provision of intoxicants. One such place you would think would have been enough for that Italian village. No! There were three of them, with doors open for entertainment and obfuscation. The world has never lacked stimulating drinks. You remember the condition of Noah on one occasion, and of Abigail's husband, Nabal, and the story of Belshazzar's feast, and Benhadad, and the new wine in old bottles, and whole paragraphs on prohibition enactment thousands of years before Neal Dow was born, and no doubt there were whole shelves of inflammatory liquid in these hotels which gave the name to the village where Paul's friends came to meet him; namely, the Three Taverns. In vain I search ancient geography for some satisfying account of that village. Two roads came from the sea coast to that place; the one from Actium and the other from Puteoli, the last road being the one which Paul traveled. There were, no doubt, in that village houses of merchandise and mechanics' shops and professional offices, but nothing is known of them. All we know of that village is that it had a profusion of inns—the Three Taverns. Paul did not choose any one of these taverns as the place to meet his friends. He certainly was very abstemious, but they made the selection. He had enlarged about keeping the body under, though once he prescribed for a young theological student a stimulating cordial for a stomachic disorder; but he told him to take only a small dose—"A little wine for thy stomach's sake."

One of the worst things about these Three Taverns was that they had special temptation for those who had just come ashore. People who had just landed at Actium or Puteoli were soon tempted by these three hotels, which were only a little way up from the beach. Those who are disordered of the sea (for it is a physical disorder), instead of waiting for the gradual return of physical equipoise, are apt to take artificial means to brace up. Of the one million sailors now on the sea, how few of them coming ashore will escape the Three Taverns! After surviving hurricanes, cyclones, icebergs, collisions, many of them are wrecked in harbor. I warrant that if a calculation were made of the comparative number of sailors lost at sea and lost ashore, those drowned by the crimson wave of dissipation would far outnumber those drowned by the salt water.

Alas! that the large majority of those who go down to the sea in ships should have twice to pass the Three Taverns, namely: Before they go out and after they come in. That fact was what aroused Father Taylor, the great sailors' preacher, at the Sailors' Bethel, Boston, and at a public meeting at Charlestown he said, "All the machinery of the drunkard-making, soul-destroying business is in perfect running order, from the low grog holes on the docks, kept open to ruin my poor sailor boys, to the great establishments in Still House Square, and when we ask men what is to be done about it, they say 'you can't help it,' and yet there is Baker Hill, and you say you can't stop it; and there are Lexington and Concord." We might answer Father Taylor's remark by saying, "The trouble is not that we can't stop it, but that we won't stop it." We must have more generations slain before the world will fully wake up to the evil. That which tempted the travelers of old who came up from the seaports of Actium and Puteoli is now the ruin of seafaring men as they come up from the coasts of all the continents, namely, the Three Taverns.

There are streets in some of our cities where there are three or four taverns on every block; here, where every other house is a tavern. You can take the Arabic numeral of my text, the three, and put on the right hand side of it one cipher, and two ciphers, and four ciphers, and that reinforcement of numerals will not express the statistics of American rummies. Even if it were a good, healthy business, supplying a necessity, an article superbly nutritious, it is a business mightily overdone, and there are three taverns where there ought to be only one.

The fact is, there are, in another sense, Three Taverns now; the gorgeous tavern for the affluent, the medium tavern for the working classes, and the tavern of the slums, and they stand in line, and many people, beginning with the first, come down, through the second, and come out at the third. At the first of the three taverns, the wines are of celebrated vintage, and the whiskies are said to be pure, and they are quaffed from cut glass, at marble-side-tables, under pictures approaching master-pieces. The patrons pull off their kid gloves, and hand their silk hats to the waiter, and push back their hair with a hand on one finger of which is a cameo.

But those patrons are apt to stop visiting that place. It is not the money that a man pays for drinks, for what are a few hundred or a few thousand dollars to a man of large income; but their brain gets touched, and that unbalances their judgment, and they can see fortunes in enterprises surcharged with disaster. In longer or shorter time they change taverns, and they come down to tavern the second, where the pictures are not quite so scrupulous of suggestion and the small table is rougher and the castor standing on it is of German silver and the air has been kept over from the night before and that which they sip from the pewter mug has a larger percentage of benzine, ambergris, or opote, benzene, strychnine, prussic acid, coculus indicus, plaster of paris, copperas, and nightshade. The patron may be seen almost every day, and perhaps many times the same day at this tavern the second, but he is preparing to graduate. Brain, liver, heart, nerves, are rapidly giving way. That tavern the second has its dismal echo in his business destroyed and family scattered and woes that choke one's vocabulary. Time passes on, and he enters tavern the third; a red light outside, a blushing and besotted group inside. He will be dragged out of doors about 2 o'clock in the morning and left on the sidewalk, because the bartender wants to shut up. The poor victim has taken the regular course in the college of degradation. He has his diploma written on his swollen, bruised, and blotched physiognomy. He is a regular graduate of the Three Taverns. As the police take him up and put him in the ambulance the wheels seem to rattle with two rolls of thunder, one of which says, "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it moveth itself aright in the cup, for at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." The other thunder roll says, "All drunkards shall have their place in the lake that burneth with fire and with brimstone."

I am glad to find in this scene of the text that there is such a thing as declining successfully great Tavernian temptations. I can see from what Paul said and did after he had traveled the following seven-tenths miles of his journey, that he had received no damage at the Three Taverns. How much he was tempted I know not. Do not suppose that he was superior to temptation. That particular temptation has destroyed many of the grandest, mightiest, noblest statesmen, philosophers, heroes, clergymen, apostles of law and medicine and government and religion. Paul was not physically well under any circumstances; it was not in mock depreciation that he said he was "in bodily presence weak." It seems that his eyesight was so poor that he did his writing through an amanuensis, for he mentions it is something remarkable that his shortest Epistle, the one to Philemon, was in his own penmanship, saying, "I, Paul, have written it with my own hand." He had been thrown from his horse, he had been stoned, he had been endueged, he had had his nerves pulled on by preaching at Athens to the most scholarly audience of all the earth, and at Corinth to the most brilliantly prodigal assemblage, and been howled upon by the Ephesian worshippers of Diana, tried for his life before Felix, charged by Festus with being insane, and crawled up on the beach, drenched in the shipwreck, and much of the time had an iron hand cuff on his wrist, and any man needed stimulus, Paul needed it, but with all his physical exhaustion, he got past the Three Taverns undamaged, and stepped into Rome all ready for the tremendous ordeal to which he was subjected. Oh! How many mighty men, feeling that they must brace up after extraordinary service, and prepare themselves for other service, have called on the spirit of wine for inspiration, and in a few years have been sacrificed on the altar of a Moloch, who sits on a throne of human carcases. Shall I call the names of fifty of the victims, all of them illustrious in American history? No! It would not be wise, or kind, or Christian to call their names in public, but you call them out of your own memory. Oh, how many splendid men could not get past the Three Taverns.

Long ago an arch fiend arrived in our world, and he built an invisible cauldron of temptation. He built that cauldron strong and stout for all ages and all nations. First he squeezed into the cauldron the juices of the forbidden fruit of paradise; then he gathered for it a distillation from the harvest fields and the orchards of the hemispheres; then he poured into this cauldron capsiem and logwood and assaullant and battery and vitriol and opium and rum and murder and sulphuric acid and theft and potash and cochineal and red carrots and poverty and death and hops. But it was a dry compound, and it must be moistened and it must be liquefied, and so the arch fiend poured into the cauldron the blood of twenty thousand assassinations. And then the arch fiend took a shovel that he had brought up from the furnaces beneath, and he put the shovel into this great cauldron and began to stir, and the cauldron began to heave and rock and boil and sputter and hiss and smoke, and the nations gathered around it with cups and tankards and demijohns and kegs, and there was enough for all, and the arch fiend cried: "Aha! Champion fiend am I! Who has done more than I have for coffins and graveyards and prisons and the populating of the lost world? And when this cauldron is emptied I'll fill it again, and I'll stir it again, and it will smoke again, and that smoke will join another smoke—the smoke of a torment—that ascendeth for ever and ever. I drove fifty ships on the rocks of Newfoundland and the Skerries and the Goodwins. I have ruined more Senators than will gather next winter in the national councils. I have ruined more Lords than will be gathered in the House of Peers. The cup out of which I ordinarily drink is a bleached human skull, and the upholstery of my palace is so rich a crimson because it is dyed in human gore, and the mosaic of my floors is made up of the bones of children dashed to death by drunken parents, and my favorite music, sweeter than Te Deum or triumphal march—my favorite music is the cry of daughters turned out at midnight on the street because father has some home from a carousal, and the seven-hundred-voiced shriek of the sinking steamer because the captain was not himself when he put the ship on the wrong course. Champion fiend am I! I have kindled more fires, I have wrung out more agonies, I have stretched out more midnight shadows, I have opened more Golgothas, I have rolled more Juggernauts, I have damned more souls, than any other emissary of diabolism. Champion fiend am I. Ha! ha! ha! ha!"

But what a glad time when the world comes to its last Three Taverns for the sale of intoxicants. Now there are so many of them that statistics are only a more or less accurate guess as to their number. We sit with half-closed eyes and undisturbed nerves and hear that in 1872 in the United States there were 1964 breweries, 6340 distilleries, and 171,693 retail dealers, and that, possibly by this time these figures may be truthfully doubled. The fact is that these establishments are innumerable, and the discussion is always disheartening, and the impression is abroad that the plague is so mighty and universal it can never be cured, and the most of sermons on this subject close with the Book of Lamentations, and not with the Book of Revelations. Excuse me from adopting any such infidel theory. The Bible reiterates it until there is no more power in inspiration to make it plainer that the earth is to be, not half, or three-quarters, but wholly redeemed. On that rock I take my triumphant stand and join in the chorus of Hosannas.

One of the most advantageous movements in the right direction is taking this whole subject into the education of the young. On the same school-desk with the grammar, the geography, the arithmetic are books telling the lads and lasses of ten and twelve and fifteen years of age what are the physiological effects of strong drink, what it goes with the tissue of the liver and the ventricles of the brain; and whereas other generations did not realize the evil until their own bodies were blasted, we are to have a generation taught what the viper is before it stings them, what the hyena is before it rends them, how deep is the abyss before it swallows them. Oh! boards of education, teachers in schools, professors in colleges, Legislatures, and Congresses, widen and augment that work, and you hasten the complete overthrow of this evil.

It will go down. I have the word of Almighty God for that in the assured extirpation of all sin. But shall we have share in the universal victory? The liquor saloons will drop from the hundreds of thousands into the score of thousands, and then from the thousands into the hundreds, and then from the hundreds into the tens, and then from the tens to Three. The first of these last three taverns will be where the educated and philosophic and the high-up will take their dram, but that class, aware of the power of the example they have been setting, will turn their back upon the evil custom and be satisfied with two natural beverages that God intended for the stimulus of the race—the Java coffee-plantations furnishing the best of the one and the Chinese tea the best of the other. And

some day the barroom will be crowded with people at the vendue and the auctioneer's mallet will pound at the sale of the apparatus.

The second of these last three taverns will take down its flaming sign and extinguish its red light and close its doors for the working class will have concluded to buy their own horses and furnish their own beautiful homes and replenish finely the wardrobe of their own wives and daughters, instead of providing the distillers, the brewers, and liquor sellers with wardrobes and mirrors and carriages. And the next time that second tavern is opened it will be a drug store, or a bakery, or a dry goods establishment, or a school. Then there will be only one more of the Three dissipating Taverns left. I don't know in what country, or city, or neighborhood it will be, but look at it, for it is the very last. The last inebriate will have staggered up to its counter and put down his pennies for his dram. Its last horrible adulteration will be mixed and quaffed to eat out the vitals and inflame the brain. The last drunkard will have stumbled down its front steps. The last spasms of delirium tremens caused by it will be struggled through. The old rookery will be torn down, and with its demolition will close the earth's abominations. The last of the dissipating Three Taverns of all the world will be as thoroughly blotted out as were the Three Taverns of my text.

In this battle the visible troops are not so mighty as the invisible. The Gospel campaign began with the supernatural—the midnight chant that woke the shepherds, the hushed sea, the eyesight given where the patient had been born without the optic nerve, the sun obliterated from the noonday heavens, the law of gravitation losing its grip as Christ ascended; and as the Gospel campaign began with the supernatural, it will close with the supernatural; and the winds and the waves and the lightnings and the earthquakes will come in on the right side and against the wrong side; and our ascended champions will return, whether the world sees them or does not see them. I do not think that those great souls departed are going to do nothing hereafter but sing psalms, and play harps, and breathe frankincense and walk seas of glass mingled with fire. The mission they fulfilled while in the body will be eclipsed by their post-mortem mission, multiplied; and it may have been to that our dying reformer referred when he said: "Long to be free!" There may be bigger worlds than this to be redeemed, and more gigantic abominations to be overthrown than this world ever saw; and the discipline gotten here may only be preliminary drill for a campaign in some other world, and perhaps some other constellation. But the crowned heroes and heroines, because of their grand achievements in greater spheres, will not forget this old world where they prayed and suffered and triumphed. Church militant and Church triumphant, but two divisions of the same army—right wing and left wing.

One army of the living God,
At His command we bow.
Part of the host have crossed the food
And part are crossing now.

CYCLING NOTES.

A San Francisco railroad line provides racks for bicycles and makes a charge of five cents each for their transportation.

The bicycle is a good thing in itself, but a still better thing in that it tends to improve the roads in all parts of the country.

William Wortman, of Passaic Falls, N. J., has just returned from a bicycle trip around the country. He says he has ridden over eight thousand miles.

The Touring Club of Belgium is making rapid strides and is now said to have 13,350 members. The Cycle Touring Club of France is said to have over 50,000 members.

The reckless scorcher runs great risk of detection in St. Petersburg, Russia, where every bicycle is required to have affixed to the back of the machine a metal plate, on which the registered number is displayed in figures large enough to be legible from a considerable distance.

As France taxes bicycles and tricycles the number of machines used in that country is known exactly. On January 1, 1897, there were 329,814, an increase of nearly 74,000 over 1895, which had shown an increase of 53,000 over the preceding year. The revenue obtained in 1896 was 3,273,339 francs.

It is said that the largest sum which a French racing man can earn in a season amounts to about \$14,000. This sum represents the amount pocketed by such men as Morrin and Jacquelin. It is made up of the fixed salary contributed by the manufacturer who hires stars to ride for him, the allowance granted by the track managers from the gate receipts and the purses won.

William Rayman, a Yankee cycling tramp, twenty-eight years of age, has just passed through England. He rode an old solid tire Rudge safety, weighing about fifty pounds, on which he carried 206 articles, adding forty pounds to his outfit. He claimed to the English riders that he covered 20,000 miles in this country. Before leaving England he was presented with a cushion tire machine.

Very frequently when riding a speck of dust will be blown into the eye of the cyclist. Tobacco dust may also lodge beneath the lid if he is smoking while pedaling along. To get rid of these things use a small camel's hair brush. Moisten it in the mouth, push it well under the lid of the eye at the corner nearest the nose and wipe over the ball slowly and out at the opposite corner. One application will generally suffice.

Zimmerman, who is probably an authority on training, says that he strongly advises against riding early in the morning before partaking of food. He says: "You might as well try to drive a steam engine without any steam as to ride a bicycle without first partaking of strength-giving food." Probably if you want to ride early in the morning it will do you no harm to ride a few miles after eating some fruit—orange preferred—and folk that with a bath and hearty breakfast. In fact, after taking this ride you will be surprised at your own appetite.

FIGHTING IN INDIA.

British Fall into an Ambuscade and Have Fifteen Killed.

Two squadrons of the British Ninth Bengal Lancers fell into an ambuscade in the hills between Bars and Mamanni in India. A native officer and fourteen sowars were killed, seven sowars were wounded and twenty-seven horses were killed.

In the fighting between the brigade of troops commanded by General Sir Yeatman Biggs and the insurgent tribesmen from Chagru, on the Samana Range, Major Jennings Bramley and two privates of the Gordon Highlanders were killed, Lieutenant Pears and fourteen privates of the King's Own Borderers were wounded, seven native soldiers were killed, and thirty-eight native soldiers were wounded. The loss of the enemy was severe.

ROOF OF THE WORLD.

AN UNKNOWN COUNTRY AND ITS STRANGE INHABITANTS.

Lassa, in the Land of the Lama, the impenetrable Mountain Realm of Thibet—its People Are Savage and Depraved.

A few years since, two Russian explorers, MM. Menkhoudjinnoff and Oulanoff, arrived at Shanghai after a journey of two years and nine months through Thibet, in the course of which they penetrated to the capital, Lassa, and had actually had an interview with the great Dalai Lama himself. The wonderfulness of this feat can only be appreciated in the light of the knowledge that no European has ever before entered Lassa within the memory of the living world. The few explorers who have dared the perils of the wild and snowy changes, lofty plateaus, the robber Dokpas or dwellers in black tents, the Chinese guards and the Thibetan soldiery, have only succeeded in struggling through dreary miles of deserts and along monsoon-swept marshes, and have returned with only half-glimpsed descriptions of the innumerable monasteries, the prayer-mills or rattles and the buttered tea of this unique and most unknown country.

This impregnable barred Lassa is the dwelling place of the Dalai Lama, the chief priest of Thibet and Mongolia. This religious pretender is worshipped as the earthly incarnation of Buddha. Incense is burned to him before a gigantic idol of the god of Jambua, a monstrous image of clay and gilt with jeweled head, which sits enthroned in the great white palace of the Potala. Lamaism is a hybrid Buddhism, just as Mohammedanism is a hybrid Christianity.

The utter exclusion of all foreigners from this strange land has been and is undoubtedly due to the fear of the Thibetan hierarchy of priests that this absurd imposition of their red and yellow religion, which has completely enslaved the Thibetans, might be speedily overthrown by the Christian "devils." They are afraid the wealth of the monasteries would be revealed. At present the priests own Thibet as absolutely as though they held fee-simple to every foot of its ground. The Chinese empire holds a nominal temporal sway, but dares not—if it would—disturb the Dalai Lama and his army of priests. MM. Menkhoudjinnoff and Oulanoff are the first travelers who have gazed upon and entered that city hitherto as inaccessible as the north pole.

The immense territory of Thibet is almost completely surrounded by mountain ranges of appalling magnitude, which, especially along the southern, western and northern frontiers, constitute formidable barriers against ingress. From the Pamir plateau, in the extreme west, ("the world's backbone") radiate the great natural ramparts, which shut out India on the one hand and the Tartar countries of Bokhara and Turkestan on the other. No Asiatic or western conqueror has ever dared to penetrate this mountain world, and even Genghis Khan, the scourge of Asia, whose ravages extended from Peking in the east to Moscow in the west, was obliged, when invading northern India, to take the circuitous route via Kashghar and Afghanistan, instead of crossing Thibet. Secure on their lofty plateau, and practically isolated from the rest of the world, the people have remained undisturbed for ages, and have developed characteristics for which we would vainly search in any other race of the globe.

The Thibetans occupy a very low position in the scale of human advancement, especially if judged from our western standard of civilization. Their culture is inferior to that of most semi-barbarous races, comparing unfavorably even with that of certain Indian tribes of the American continent, such as the Pueblos, Zunis, etc. In physiognomy and general appearance they strongly resemble the inhabitants of Swedish Lapland, as well as the Eskimos of Northern Siberia, being short-sized, broad-shouldered and possessed of the same angular Mongolian features. Indeed, the Thibetans are, perhaps, the most ill-favored of Turanian races. A close interbreeding during many centuries of isolation has produced a striking facial similarity, and has developed a peculiarly repulsive normal type of countenance. A broad, very low forehead, excessively prominent cheek bones, oblique eyes, and coarse bristly black hair are characteristics which do not materially enhance the beauty of the "human form divine," but the most singular peculiarity of the Thibetan face is the almost total absence of the bridge of the nose. Among a dozen Thibetans, chosen at random, hardly one will be found whose nasal organ is not so completely flattened or sunk in the middle as to be practically level with the eyes. Seen in profile such a face presents a ludicrous appearance; there is one continuous line of cheek bone, with the tip of the nose sticking out like a solitary beacon. But a compensatory providence has added to the ears what is lacking in proboscis circumference, and it is but fair to state that the auricular appendages of the average Thibetans are of generous size.

The Thibetans are absolutely without gratitude. They will demand tre-

mendous rewards for feeble services, steal everything within sight, regard politeness and gentleness as indications of cowardice, and merely refrain from stabbing their guests because their courage fails them. Poisoning is popular, and the Thibetan is so suspicious of his own countryman that he will drink and eat nothing until his host partakes plentifully before him. The character of all the Thibetans, settled and nomadic is the same—cowardly, faithless and immoral. They are servile to the brave, insolent to the fearful and mere tools in the hands of the lamas, or monks. They are false to their best friends, as is witnessed by their desertion of the French missionaries who have been their most constant helpers.

Their physique is notably good, and they stand cold and hunger admirably. They are active, and at first view, lighthearted and genuine; but in reality are cunning, foul and unlovable. They are very unclean, rarely or never bathing their persons. The dress of the common people consists of a very dirty, greasy sheepskin robe which they use as bedding at night. The taste for trading is very strongly developed, and they seize every opportunity to make money. Vast quantities of tea are consumed by them, and they enjoy it, especially when mixed with butter and salt. Their tea is sold in bricks and is of a very inferior quality. During all discussions of state and in their ordinary assemblies, each man has a cup before him which is continually replenished.

The population of Thibet proper and Chinese Thibet is 8,000,000. Looking at the enormous stretch of country over which these millions are distributed, it is apparent that the country is very sparsely populated.—Boston Transcript.

A DECLINING INDUSTRY.

Same Skill No Longer Required in Making Famous Straw Hats.

A strike in the gentle, smiling valley of the Arno, says a Rome correspondent of the Pall Mall Gazette, has drawn attention to the straw-plait industry there. It is one that is greatly affected by change of fashions, and has its periods of prosperity and depression. The days have gone by when the property about Florence was divided among a few manufacturers of straw hats (what the English call Leghorns), who when marrying their daughters gave them a dot of several thousand of scudi, (each scudi being worth four shillings), and a straw hat, the strands of which, less than a millimetre in width, were made of straws so fine that, after being woven, a magnifying glass was needed to distinguish them. Now rich travelers travelling through Florence go no more to the Via Porta Rossa to pay 100 francs each (£22 for a straw hat to take home as a present.

Fashion has transformed the Florence straw industry. The profit now comes from the quantity, not the quality; and consequently the hand work at one time sought after and well paid has gradually decreased in price until the wages of the workers are infamous. When the wholesale price of a hat, all made and sewed, is a penny or two—and there are those at even a lower price—it is easy to imagine what compensation the straw-workers get for the twenty-five to thirty-five yards of made strands which are necessary for one hat.

The skill formerly required in the plaiting is, however, no longer required. Once it was an art, now every one can do it—the boys and girls who drive the cattle to pasture, the women at home, beggars, all those who have nothing else to do. In the mountains the men who break stones have been seen at work plaiting in their few leisure moments, and even men who drive coal carts. This "vulgarization" and overproduction will, in the end, be the death of the industry. There have been immense exportations, especially to America, and, consequently, an overstocked market; and until some means are found of diminishing the production the industry will go from bad to worse, with the gravest consequences to those who live by it.

There are exporters who buy the straw plait in bulk, paying if not sufficient for the work, more than is warranted by their own profits, and who only continue the business out of charity for the poor people of the district. But this in many cases does not prevent them from being accused of profiting by the necessities of the workers. Hence the strike.

Another misfortune for this industry is the new United States tariff, which raises the duty on worked straw from 25 to 35 per cent of its value. Besides the Italian productions have to struggle, in America, against the competition, increasing day by day, of the Japanese and Chinese straw. The outlook is indeed dark, for no matter how the poor Florentine straw-plaiters protest and strike, they have no remedy. It is a question of overproduction for a constantly diminishing market.

A paper in Western Ontario is being sued for libel because it asserted that a member of the local baseball team could not play baseball.

The breaking of the bottle liberates a certain amount of gas, and the heat of the fire generates more, thus working its own destruction.