TALMAGE AT ATHENS.

The Brooklyn Divine on His Pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

He Preaches a Sermon to the Athenians Based on Two Passages of Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians--The Profound Mysteries of Providence.

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D. D., preached recently at Athens, Greece, basing his discourse on the following two passages from the Pauline epistles: I. Corinthians, ii. 9: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," and I. Corinthians, xiii, 3: "For now we see through a glass, darkly." The sermon was as follows:

Both these sentences were written by the most illustrious merely human being the world ever saw, one who walked these streets, and preached from yonder pile of rocks, Mars Hill. Though more classic associations are connected with this city than with any other city under the sun, because here Socrates, and Plato, and Aristotle, and Demosthenes, and Pericles, and Herodotus, and Pythagoras, and Xenophon, and Praxitele wrote, or chiseled, or taught, or thundered, or sung, yet in my mind all those men and their teachings were eclipsed by Paul and the gospel he preached in this city and in your near by city of Corinth. Yesterday, standing on the old fortress at Corinth, the Acro-Corinthus, out from the ruins at its base arose in my imagination the old city, just as Paul saw it. I have been told that for splendor the world beholds no such wonder to-day as that ancient Corinth standing on the isthmus washed by both seas, the one sea bringing the commerce of Europe, the other sea bringing the commerce of Asia. From her wharves, in the construction of which whole kingdoms had been absorbed, war galleys with three banks of oars pushed out and confounded the navy yards of all the world. Huge-handed machinery, such as modern invention can not equal, lifted ships from the sea on one side and transported them across the isthmus, and set them down in the sea on the other side. The revenue officers of the city went down through the olive groves that lined the beach to collect a tariff from all nations. The mirth of all people sported in her Isthmian games, and the beauty of all lands sat in her theaters, walked her porticos, and threw itself on the altar of her stupendous dissipations. Column and statue and temple bewildered the beholder. There were white marble fountains into which, from apertures at the side, there rushed waters everywhere known for health giving qualities. Around these basins, twisted into wreaths of stone, there were all the beauties of sculpture and architecture, while standing, as if to guard the costly display, was a statue of Hercules of burnished Corinthian brass. Vases of terra cotta adorned the cemeteries of the dead—vases so costly that Julius Cæsar was not satisfied until he had captured them for Rome. Armed officials, the corinthari, paced up and down to see that no statue was defaced, no pedestal overthrown, no bas-relief touched. From the edge of the city the hill held its magnificent burdens of columns and towers and temples (1,000 slaves waiting at one shrine), and a citadel so thoroughly impregnable that Gibraltar is a heap of sand compared with it. Amid all that strength and magnificence Corinth stood and defied the world. O, it was not to realties who had never seen anything grand that Paul uttered one of my texts. They had heard the best music that had come from the best instruments in all the world; they had heard songs floating from morning porticos and melting in evening groves; they had passed their whole lives among pictures and sculpture and architecture and Corinthian brass, which had been molded and shaped until there was no chariot wheel in which it had not sped, and no tower in which it had not glittered, and no gateway that it had not adorned. Ah, it was a bold thing for Paul to stand there amid all that and say: "All this is nothing. These sounds which come from the temple of Neptune are not music compared with the harmonies of which I speak. These waters rushing in the basin of Pyrene are not pure. These statues of Bacchus and Mercury are not exquisite. Your citadel of Acro-Corinthus is not strong compared with that which I offer to the poorest slave that puts down his burden at that brazen gate. You Corinthians think this is a splendid city; you think you have heard all sweet sounds and seen all beautiful sights; but I tell you eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Indeed, both my texts, the one spoken by Paul and the one written by Paul, show us that we have very imperfect eyesight, and that our day of vison is yet to come. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. So Paul takes the responsibility of saying that the Bible is an indistinct mirror, and that its mission shall be finally suspended. I think there may be one Bible in Heaven fastened to the throne. Just as now, in a museum, we have a lamp exhumed from Herculaneum or Nineveh, and we look at it with great interest, and say: "How poor a light it must have given, compared with our modern lamps." So I think that this Bible, which was a lamp to our feet in this world, may lie near the throne of God, exciting our interests to all eternity by the contrast between its comparatively feeble light and the illumination of Heaven. The Bible, now, is the scaffolding to the rising temple, but when the building is done there will be no use for the scaffolding. The idea I shall develop to-day is, that in this world our knowledge is comparatively dim and unsatisfactory, but nevertheless is introductory to grander and more complete vision. This is eminently true in regard to our view of God. We hear so much about God that we conclude we understand Him. He is represented as having the tenderness of a father, the firmness of a judge, the pomp of a king, and the love of a mother. We hear about Him, talk about Him, write about Him. We lisp His name in infancy, and it trembles on the tongue of the dying octogenarian. We think that we know very much about Him. Take the attribute of mercy. Do we understand it? The Bible blossoms all over with that word—Mercy. It speaks again and again of the tender mercies of God; of the sure mercies; of the great mercies, of the mercy that endureth forever, of the multitude of His mercies. And yet I know that the views we have of this great being are most indefinite, confused and incomplete. When at death the gates shall fly open and we shall look directly upon Him, how new and surprising! We see upon canvass a picture of the morning. We study the cloud in the sky, the dew upon the grass, and the husbandman on the way to the field. Beautiful picture of the morning. But we rise at daybreak and go upon a hill to see for ourselves that which was represented to us. While we look the mountains are transfigured. The burnished gates of heaven swing open and shut, to let pass a host of fiery splendors. The clouds are all abloom, and hang pendant from arbors of alabaster and amethyst. The waters make pathway of inlaid pearl for the light to walk upon; and there is morning on the sea. The crags uncover their scarred visage; and there is morning among the mountains. Now you go home, and how tame your picture of the morning seems in contrast! Greater than that shall be the contrast between this Scriptural view of God and that which we shall have when standing face to face. This is a picture of the morning; that will be the morning itself.

Again: My texts are true of the Saviour's excellency. By image and rhythm of expression and startling antithesis, Christ is set forth—His love, His compassion, His work, His life, His death, His resurrection. We are challenged to measure it, to compute it, to weigh it. In the hour of our broken enthrallment, we mount up into high experience of His love, and shout until the countenance glows, and the blood bounds, and the whole stature is exhilarated, "I have found Him!" And yet it is through a glass, darkly. We see not half of the compassionate face. We see not half the warmth of that loving heart. We wait for death to let us rush into His outspread arms. Then we shall be face to face. Not a shadow then, but substance. Not hope then, but the fulfilling of all prefigurement. That will be a magnificent unfolding. The rushing out in view of all hidden excellency; the coming again of a long absent Jesus to meet us—not in rags and in penury and in death, but amidst a light and pomp and outbursting joy such as none but a glorified intelligence could experience. O, to gaze full upon the brow that was lacerated, upon the side that was pierced, upon the feet that were nailed; to stand close up in the presence of Him who prayed for us on the mountain, and thought of us by the sea, and agonized for us in the garden, and died for us in horrible crucifixion; to feel of Him, to embrace Him, to take His hand, to kiss His feet, to run our fingers along the scars of ancient suffering, to say: "This is my Jesus! He gave Himself for me. I shall never leave His presence. I shall forever behold His glory. I shall eternally hear His voice. Lord Jesus, now I see Thee! I behold where the blood started, where the tears coursed, where the face was distorted. I have waited for this hour. I shall never turn my back on Thee. No more looking through imperfect glasses. No more studying Thee in the darkness. But as long as this throne stands, and this everlasting river flows, and those garlands bloom, and those arches of victory remain to greet home Heaven's conquerors, so long I shall see Thee, Jesus of my choice, Jesus of my song, Jesus of my triumph—forever and forever—face to face."

The idea of my texts is just as true when applied to God's providence. Who has not come to some paths in life thoroughly inexplicable? You say, "What does this mean? What is God going to do with me now? He tells me that all things work together for good. This does not look like it." You continue to study the dispensation, and after awhile guess about what God means. "He means to teach me this. I think He means to teach me that. Perhaps it is to humble my pride. Perhaps it is to make me feel more dependent. Perhaps to teach me the uncertainty of life." But, after all, it is only a guess—a looking through the glass, darkly. The Bible assures us there shall be a satisfactory unfolding. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." You will know why God took to Himself that only child. Next door there was a household of seven children. Why not take one from that group instead of your only one? Why single out the dwelling in which there was only one heart beating responsive to yours? Why did God give you a child at all if He meant to take it away? Why fill the cup of your gladness brimming if He meant to dash it down? Why allow all the tendrils of your heart to wind around that object, and then, when every fiber of your own life seemed to be interlocked with the child's life, with strong hand to tear you apart, until you fall bleeding and crushed, your dwelling desolate, your hopes blasted, your heart broken? Do you suppose that God will explain that? Yes. He will make it plainer than any mathematical problem—as plain as that two and two make four. In the light of the throne you will see that it was right—all right. "Just and true are all thy ways, thou king of saints!" Here is a man who can not get on in the world. He always seems to buy at the wrong time and sells at the worst disadvantage. He tries this enterprise, and fails; that business, and is disappointed. The man next door to him has a lucrative trade, but he lacks customers. A new prospect opens. His income is increased. But that year his family is sick; and the profits are expended in trying to cure the ailments. He gets a discouraged look. Becomes faithless as to success. Begins to expect disasters. Others wait for something to turn up; he waits for it to turn down. Others, with only half as much education and character, get on twice as well. He sometimes guesses as to what it all means. He says: "Perhaps riches would spoil me. Perhaps poverty is necessary to keep me humble. Perhaps I might, if things were otherwise, be tempted into dissipation." But there is no complete solution of the mystery. He sees through a glass darkly, and must wait for a higher unfolding. Will there be an explanation? Yes; God will take that man in the light of the throne and say: "Child immortal, hear the explanation! You remember the failing of that great enterprise. This is the explanation." And you will answer: "It is all right!"

I see, every day, profound mysteries of Providence. There is no question we ask oftener than Why? There are hundreds of graves that need to be explained. Hospitals for the blind and lame, asylums for the idiotic and insane, almshouses for the destitute, and a world of pain and misfortune that demand more than human solution. Ah! God will clear it all up. In the light that pours from the throne no dark mystery can live. Things now utterly inscrutable will be illumined as plainly as though the answer were written on the jasper wall or sounded in the temple anthem. Bartimeus will thank God that he was blind; and Lazarus that he was covered with sores; and Joseph that he was cast into the pit; and Daniel that he denned with lions; and Paul that he was humpbacked; and David that he was driven from Jerusalem; and the sewing woman that she could get only a few pence for making a garment; and that invalid that for twenty years he could not lift his head from the pillow; and that widow that she had such hard work to earn bread for her children. You know that in a song different voices carry different parts. The sweet and overwhelming part of the hallelujah of Heaven will not be carried by those who rode in high places, and gave sumptuous entertainments; but pauper children will sing it, beggars will sing it, redeemed hod carriers will sing it, those who were once the offscouring of earth will sing it. The hallelujah will be all the grander for earth's weeping eyes, and aching heads, and exhausted hands, and scourged backs, and martyred agonies.

Again: The thought of my text is true when applied to the enjoyment of the righteous in Heaven. I think we have but little idea of the number of righteous in Heaven. Infidels say: "Your heaven will be a very small place compared with the world of the lost; for, according to your teaching, the majority of men will be destroyed." I deny the charge. I suppose that the multitude of the finally lost, as compared with the multitude of the finally saved, will be a handful. I suppose that a few sick people in the hospitals of our great cities, as compared with the hundreds of thousands of well people, would not be smaller than the number of those who shall be cast out in suffering, compared with those who shall have upon them the health of Heaven. For we are to remember that we are living in only the beginning of the Christian dispensation, and that this whole world is to be populated and redeemed, and that ages of light and love are to flow on. If this be so, the multitudes of the saved will be in vast majority. Take all the congregations that have assembled for worship throughout Christendom. Put them together, and they would make but a small audience compared with the thousands and tens of thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand, and the hundred and forty-four thousand that shall stand around the throne. Those flashed up to Heaven in martyr fires; those tossed for many years upon the invalid couch; those fought in the armies of liberty, and rose as they fell; those tumbled from high scaffoldings, or slipped from the mast, or were washed off into the sea. They came up from Corinth, from Laodicea, from the Red Sea bank and from Gennesaret's wave, from Egyptian brickyards and Gideon's threshing floor. Those thousands of years ago slept the last sleep, and these are this moment having their eyes closed, and their limbs stretched out for the sepulcher. A General expecting an attack from the enemy stands on a hill and looks through a field glass and sees in the great distance multitudes approaching. He says: "I can not tell any thing about them. I merely know that there are a great number." And so John, without attempting to count, says: "A great multitude that no man can number." We are told that Heaven is a place of happiness, but what do we know about happiness? Happiness in this world is only a half-fledged thing; a flowery path, with a serpent hissing across it; a broken pitcher, from which the water has dropped before we could drink it; a thrill of exhiliration, followed by disastrous reactions. To help us understand the joy of Heaven, the Bible takes us to a river. We stand on the grassy bank We see the waters flow on with ceaseless wave. But the filth of the city is emptied into it, and the banks are torn, and unhealthy exhalations spring up from it, and we fail to get an idea of the River of Life in Heaven.

We get very imperfect ideas of the reunions of heaven. We think of some festal day on earth, when father and mother were yet living, and the children came home. A good time, that! But it had this drawback—all were not there. That brother went off to sea, and never was heard from. That sister—did we not lay her away in the freshness of her young life, never more in this world to look upon her? Ah! there was a skeleton at the feast; and tears mingled with our laughter on that Christmas day. Not so with Heaven's reunions. It will be an uninterrupted gladness. Many a Christian parent will look around and find all his children there. "Ah!" he says, "can it be possible that we are all here—life's perils over? the Jordan passed and not one wanting? Why, even the prodigal is here. I almost gave him up. How long he despised my counsels! but grace hath triumphed. All here! all here! Tell the mighty joy through the city. Let the bells ring, and the angels mention it in their song. Wave it from the top of the walls. All here!"

No more breaking of heartstrings, but face to face. The orphans that were left poor, and in a merciless world, kicked and cuffed of many hardships, shall join their parents over whose graves they so long wept, and gaze into their glorified countenances, face to face. We may come up from different parts of the world, one from the land and another from the depths of the sea; from lives affluent and prosperous, or from scenes of ragged distress; but we shall all meet in rapture and jubilee, face to face.

Many of our friends have entered upon that joy. A few days ago they sat with us studying these gospel themes; but they only saw dimly—now revelation hath come. Your time will also come. God will not leave you floundering in the darkness. You stand wonder-struck and amazed. You feel as if all the loveliness of life were dashed out. You stand gazing into the open chasm of the grave. Wait a little. In the presence of your departed, and of Him who carries them in His bosom, you shall soon stand face to face. Oh! that our last hour may kindle up with this promised joy! May we be able to say, like the Christian not long ago, departing: "Though a pilgrim walking through the valley, the mountain tops are gleaming from peak to peak!" or, like my dear friend and brother, Alfred Cookman, who took his flight to the throne of God, saying in his last moment that which has already gone into Christian classics: "I am sweeping through the pearly gate, washed in the blood of the Lamb!"

Local Popular Sentiment.

Local popular sentiment may be right. It is so in some instances. But local popular sentiment is more likely to be wrong than to be right, especially on questions of morals and manliness. If local popular sentiment be known to be right on any given point, it is safe to be in accord with local popular sentiment so far; but the poorest reason in the world for deciding for or against a debatable question of morals or of manliness is the fact that local popular sentiment is in that direction. If a man finds that he is pretty generally in accord with local popular sentiment, he may take it for granted that he is wrong at many points—if not all.—S. S. Times.

—Paul was all things to all men that he might win some of them; and yet he was one of the truest and boldest men of whom we read in history. And this suggests that while he was polite, he was wisely so, and that in his soul there was the honor that made him superior to the love of dishonesty. The "all things" of some men means falsehood and deception.—United Presbyterian.

A GENEROUS SPASM.

But It Failed to Last for Any Great Length of Time.

The little four-year-old had gone to the grocer's with her grandmother, says the San Francisco Chronicle, and the grocer gave the child five little chocolate-drops. It was a hot day, and she took them in her tiny little hand and held them there until she got home. A spasm of generosity struck through her infantile heart, and she thought she would share the bonbons with her brother, sister and a small chum across the way. Chums are necessities of our vanity. We must have somebody to air ourselves to, and we select a somebody whom we are specially fond of because he or she listens to us. Just as soon as a chum begins to show that he's bored with our recital of our excellencies there's an end of the most sacred friendship. And this chum business begins very early in life, showing that vanity is coeval with hair. The small child held on to her five little chocolate-drops, and when she got home she sat down by her grandmother and opened her hand. The identity of the five drops was rather difficult to segregate by that time, but she managed to count them. She ate one and then she said:

"Grandma, I'se goin' to give one to Charlie, and one to Helen, and one to Alma, and I'll keep this one till I meet the children."

That was settled and she went about with the chocolate-drops in her hand, occasionally opening it to look at them. She gradually yielded to temptation and ate the one she was keeping for herself, leaving three. Fifteen minutes later she came to the grandma.

"Grandma, Alma's sick—awful sick."

"Is she?"

"Yes, she's awful sick. She hasn't been at school for two days."

"Dear, dear! I'm sorry."

"I think, grandma, Alma's mother would not like her to eat chocolate when she's so sick."

And she ate the second chocolate-drop. Fifteen minutes passed again and again she appears.

"Grandma, what was it Helen said about chocolate!"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Didn't Helen say that chocolate-drops got all dust an' made her throat sore?"

Then her grandma stopped her little game and made her stick to her first proposal.

SOUND PHILOSOPHY.

How to Make Married Life an Existence of Peace and Happiness.

The first year of married life is a most important era in the history of man and wife. Generally, as it is spent, so is almost all subsequent existence. The wife and the husband then assimilate their views and their desires, or else, conjuring up their dislikes, they add fuel to their prejudices and animosities forever afterwards.

"I have somewhere read," says Rev. Mr. Wise, in his Bridal Greetings, "of a bridegroom who gloried in his eccentricities. He requested his bride to accompany him into the garden a day or two after their wedding. He then drew a line over the roof of their cottage. Giving his wife one end of it he retreated to the other side, and exclaimed:

"'Pull the line!'

"She pulled it at his request, so far as she could. He cried:

"'Pull it over!'

"'I can't,' she replied.

"'But pull with all your might!' still shouted the whimsical husband.

"But vain were all the efforts of the bride to pull over the line so long as her husband held the opposite end. But when he came round, and they pulled at the same end, it came over with great ease.

"'There!' as the line fell from the roof, 'you see how hard and ineffectual was our labor when we both pulled in opposition to each other; but how easy and pleasant it was when we both pulled together! It will be so with us through life!'"

In this illustration, homely as it may be, there is a sound philosophy. Husband and wife must mutually bear and concede if they wish to make home a retreat of joy and bliss. One alone can not make home happy. There needs unison of action, sweetness of spirit and great forbearance and love in both husband and wife to secure the great end of happiness in the domestic circle. Home is no unmixed paradise of sweets; the elements of peace and true happiness are there, and so, too, are the elements of discord and misery; and it needs only the bitter spirit of the world without to make it a pandemonium, or the loving genius of harmony to make it the prompter of every affectionate impulse.

A Conscientious Lawyer.

An interesting anecdote of Berryer, the the great French lawyer, recently made public for the first time: Shortly after the war of 1870 the Duke of Brunswick, who had frequently employed Berryer in important cases, sent him a request that he should defend a suit brought against the Duke by his daughter, whom he had abandoned because she had abjured Protestantism. Fearful lest Berryer might not like the case, he added to the papers a retainer of 50,000 francs. Shortly afterwards he received the following letter: "Monseigneur: If I defended your Grace against the King of England and the powerful Princes of your family, it was because you were in the right. But I decline to defend your case to-day against the Comtesse de Civry, your daughter, because you are a hundred times in the wrong. Berryer." And the 50,000 francs were returned with the papers.

A Rake in a Bouquet.

The Queen of Holland, on her husband's recent birthday, presented him with an enormous bouquet of flowers of the kind used on benefit nights at opera in Italy, so heavy that it required several serving men to carry it. As it was brought close to the throne the old King stooped forward to examine it, when, amidst the flowers, the head of his little infant daughter popped out, to the surprise of the monarch and the amusement of the whole court.

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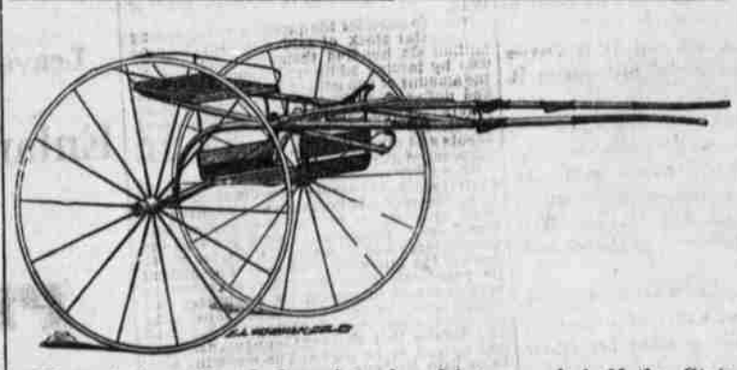

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