

SATURDAY NIGHT TALKS

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE KINGDOM.

International Bible Lesson for Jan. 23, 1910—(Matt. 5:1-16).



The Sermon on the Mount is a magnificent temple of truth the portico to which is an eight-columned arcade. Let us examine these stupendous pillars.

The first thing arresting our attention is their unique and unparalleled construction. They are

the direct opposites of the popular conception of what constitutes blessedness. The world says, "Blessed are the rich, blessed are the powerful, blessed are the proud, blessed are the beautiful, blessed are those who have everything their own way." But these giant columns read, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are they that mourn, blessed are the meek, blessed are the hungry for righteousness, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure, blessed are the peacemakers, blessed are the persecuted."

This is altogether a new voice on the earth, and they sounded just as strangely in Jewish and Roman circles when they were enunciated as they do to-day. What a contrast they present to our modern hero worship and our glorification of "muscular Christianity!" Things are topsy-turvy in the moral world when physical courage and brute force elicits admiration at the expense of milder virtue. A dog has boldness, a cock can crow, a peacock can strut, a tiger can fight, and many qualities of martial prowess such as the unthinking admire are the marks of low grade. On the contrary these beatitudes, like the flashing facets of a diamond, are the characteristics of a religious gentleman.

It must not be overlooked that this portico is interconnected. It is not eight separate and distinct pillars; it is an eight-fold structure, no part of which can be eliminated, all of which is necessary to make up the structure. On the fourth hinges the three preceding, and the following are logical sequences of all that have gone before. The spirit of the first note of this octave runs through the whole, culminating in the last. Or to change the figure yet again, we are enthroned in humility, and diademed in persecution.

These beatitudes ought to cheer every poor man's heart and sanctify every rich man's palace. For there are proud poor men and humble rich men. It is possible to be proud even of our humility and make a god of our lowliness. We are not to make Urah Heeps of ourselves, stooping and cringing and apologizing for existence, making a show of humility. Diogenes jumped upon Plato's bed saying, "Thus I stamp on Plato's pride," but he did it with still greater pride. True humility is a beautiful trait, it is the first pillar in the portico.

The same is true of those that mourn, who are not ashamed of tears, and who do not brazenly go through life confessing no fault. If to err is human, it is certainly manly to repent. The tears that fall from eyes of sincere mourners, like summer showers, fertilize the soil of the heart so that it blooms and blossoms in flowers.

There are some who think the element of meekness is only another name for weakness. But the meek are the lords of the earth. Real dominion is only given to the meek. Meekness delivers from super-sensitiveness. You will not be thin-skinned enough to get hurt at every slight. You will not have to be always running around looking after your reputation. Your dignity will not suffer so much. The Apostle Paul tells us to "put off the old man" but he does not tell us when we have done that, to put on the old woman. Meekness is not weakness.

So also it is with the merciful. The merciful man will be merciful to everybody and everything and will be merciful all the time. Merciful to his employees, merciful to his wife and children, merciful to his dog and his horse and his cat. "The quality of mercy is not strained."

"For the dear God who loveth us, He made and loveth all."

Purity of heart is also demanded. Materialism says, "The circumstances are wrong." Christ says the trouble is in the heart. The heart pure, every activity of the life will be pure. If the spiderweb troubles you kill the spiders. You will not have to spend so much time on their work.

These beatitudes teach us that the animal will not always rule over the ethereal. Guns and swords will be dropped in the good time coming, and men will learn that sunshine is more potent than lightning, though it is not heralded by salvos of thunder. Not Napoleon with his artillery, but Christ with his beatitudes is the real ruler of the world.

Surely the Mount of Beatitudes is a great advance on Mount Sinai.

EFFECT OF WATER ON COAL.

How It Assists Combustion—Does not Make the Coal Last.

It is often asserted that water on bituminous coal both aids combustion and "makes the coal last." Housewives, office men who live where this coal is used, and who are compelled to maintain stove or furnace fires, are firm believers, as a rule, in this paradox. That water on coal cannot do both, these people would know if they but thoughtfully considered it a minute.

The facts are these (and any one may easily verify them): In a light fire, that is to say, a stove or house furnace, water sprinkled on large lump coal really causes it to burn more rapidly. It soaks into the strata, into the porous surface, and being there converted into steam becomes corrugated and cavernous, thus offering a larger area of carbon to the active oxygen of the air. If the water is in excess of the amount which will do this, it then no longer aids combustion, but retards it. Again, if the coal is fine, a small dampness, nothing approaching wetness, however, may increase combustion by holding the particles apart, thus permitting the air to be admitted.

In short, says the Scientific American, water on coal favors combustion, when it does favor it, only by assisting the oxygen of the air to find more ready access to the surface of the carbon.

No Common Offender.

"See here, your Honor!" protested the irate young aristocrat, in city court, "just because my auto happened to run over somebody's pet cur dog and toss its carcass free of the road, this bungling policeman arrests me for exceeding the auto-speed limit; and then, besides embarrassing me before my guests by refusing to take my word of honor that I would appear in court without his escort, he tramples upon my dignity by dragging me out of my auto then and there. Sir, I'm a gentleman and not a common offender!"

"Never mind," calmly returned the judge, with becoming dignity; "I'll not treat you as a common offender. I'll fine you \$100!"—Illustrated Sunday Magazine.

Barrel Organ for Church Music.

A curiosity in church organs, is now in use at Brightling Church, England. It is a barrel organ, which has been in use there since the early part of the eighteenth century, possessing an exceptionally good tone, declared equal if not superior to that of the average pipe organ, which it closely resembles from the point of view of the congregation.

Considerable skill is required to play it, for it has six stops, which have to be manipulated with the left hand, while the right is turning the handle, and the wind is being pumped in with the left foot.

There are two rolls of music, each containing twelve tunes, comprising Easter hymns and selections suitable for voluntaries.

Doctors Thick in New York.

The proportion of physicians to the general population is probably greater in New York city than anywhere else in the country. In the United States, for example, taking the estimated population of the Census Bureau for 1908 as a basis, there is one licensed physician to every 769 persons; in New York State there is one to 672, and in New York city one to only 653.

It has been estimated that the physician in general practice must have a clientele of 750 persons, or 150 families, to support himself and his family in comfort, so if this estimate is accurate the New York doctor is short an average of 100 patients, and many of course are further behind than that.

Kaiser Obeyed Scene Shifter.

A story is told in Berlin newspapers which places the Kaiser in a somewhat curious light. Recently he visited a theatre and strolling behind the curtain became liberal of advice to the manager, actors and even scene shifters, who listened in awed silence. Presently the Emperor lighted a cigar, puffing as he talked. On both sides of him were flimsy draperies and on the floor heaps of paper.

One of the scene shifters stepped forward and pointed politely to a printed notice: "No smoking allowed." For a moment the Kaiser flushed, then smiling, he put out his cigar, remarking as he did so: "Thank you, friend. It would be bad business if your Emperor taught you to disobey the law."

Beribboned Flowers.

The use of ribbons with flowers has a great field and enhances the beauty and value of them. A bunch or basket with an appropriate bow artistically placed makes it worth as much again, if you are not simply selling merchandise.

But put the ribbon where it belongs, where the eye suggests the need of something being tied. To put a red necktie on an araucaria is as bad taste as chaffing an azalea with a lot of fussy stuff puffing out here and there. It does not do the azalea any good and wastes the ribbon.

You can use some receptacle with the plant that offers an excuse to tie on a bow of ribbon and you at once have the satisfying effect on the eye.

Curiosity Gratified.

Former Customer (after a long absence)—What has become of the pretty blonde that used to feed the hungry at this lunch counter?

Dark-skinned Walter Girl—I'm her. What you goin' to order, sir?

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