

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON.

The Brooklyn Divine's Sunday Sermon. Subject: "The Birthplace of Sewing Societies." Preached at Joppa.

TEXT: "And all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them." Acts 9: 39.

Christians of Joppa! Impressed as I am with your meek and lowly voice, and stirred as I am with the fact that your harbor once floated the great rafts of Lebanon cedar from which the temples at Jerusalem were built, Solomon's doves conveying the logs through this very town on the way to Jerusalem, nothing can make me forget that this Joppa was the birthplace of the sewing society. It has blessed the poor of all succeeding ages in all lands. The disasters to your town when Judas Maccabeus set it on fire and Napoleon had five hundred pressed sandals made in your neighborhood, cannot make me forget that one of the most magnificent charities of the centuries was started in this seaport by Dorcas, a woman with her needle embroidering her name ineffably in the beneficence of the world. I see her sitting in yonder home. In the doorway, and around about the building, and in the room where the sits, are the pale faces of the poor. She listens to their plaint, she pities their woe, she makes garments for them, she dresses and dresses, she sends to suit the best form of this invalid woman, and of the cripple that comes crawling on his hands and knees. She gives a coat to this one, she sends a shawl to that one. With the gifts she mingles prayers and tears and Christian encouragement. Then she goes out to be greeted on the street corners by those whom she blessed, and all through the street she is heard, "Dorcas is coming!" The sick look up gratefully in her face as she puts her hand on the burning brow, and the lost and abandoned start up with hope as they hear her gentle voice, as though an angel had addressed them; and as she goes out the lane, eyes half shut with pain, they see a halo of light about her, and a fragrance of glory in her pathway. That night a half-paid shipwright climbs the hill and reaches home, and sees his little boy well clad, and says: "Where are those clothes come from? And they tell him, "Dorcas has been here." In another place a woman is trimming a lamp; Dorcas brought the oil. In another place, a family is laid out, Dorcas has for many a week gathered wool, for Dorcas has brought bread.

go into the asphyxiated and desolated bearing that Gospel which is sight for the blind and hearing for the deaf, and which makes the lame man leap like a hart, and brings the dead to life. Immortal health sounding in their pipes. What a contrast between the practical benevolence of this woman and a great deal of the charity of this day! This woman did not spend time idly planning how she might beggar from the step, crying: "Hush your miserable howling!" The sufferers of the world want not so much theory as practice; so much tears as dollars; not so much kind wishes as loaves of bread; not so much smiles as shoes; not so much "God bless you!" as jackets and frocks. I will put one earnest Christian man here working against five thousand mere theorists on the subject of charity. There are a great many who have fine ideas about church architecture who never in their life helped to build a church. There are men who can give you the history of Buddhism and Mohammedanism, who never sent a farthing for their evangelization. There are women who talk beautifully about the suffering of the world, who never had the courage like Dorcas to take the needle and assault it. I am glad that there is not a page of the world's history which is not recast of female benevolence. God says to all lands and people. Come now and bear the widow's mite rattle down into the poor box. The Princess of Conti sold all her jewels that she might help the famine-stricken. Queen Blanche, the wife of Louis VIII. of France, hearing that there were some persons unjustly incarcerated in the prisons, went out among the rabble and took a stick and struck the door as a signal that they might all strike it, and down went the prison door and out came the prisoners. Queen Mary, wife of Henry I., went down amidst the poor and washed their sores and administered to them cordials. Mrs. Retson, of Matagorda, appears on the battle field while the mistles of death were flying around, and cared for the wounded. Is there a man or woman who has ever heard the Civil War in America, who has heard of the women of the Sanitary and Christian commissions, or the fact that, before the smoke had gone up from Gettysburg and South Mountain, the women of the North met the women of the South on the battlefield, forgetting all their animosities while they bound up the wounded, and closed the eyes of the slain? Dorcas the benefactress!

I come now to speak of Dorcas the lamented. When death struck down that good woman, oh, how much sorrow there was in this town of Joppa! I suppose there were women here with larger fortunes; women, perhaps, with palaces; but there was no grief at their departure like this at the death of Dorcas. There was no more turmoil and upturning in the Mediterranean Sea, dashing against the wharves of this seaport, than there were surges to and fro of grief because Dorcas was dead. There was a great many who go out of life and a great many who are buried in the earth; but there may be a very large funeral; there may be great many carriages and a plumed hearse; there may be high sounding eulogiums; the bell may toll as a dirge; there may be very fine marble shaft reared over the resting place; but the whole thing may be a falsehood and a sham. The church of God has had nothing, in this world, has lost nothing, is only a nuisance abated; it is only a grumbler ceasing to find fault; it is only an iller stopped yawning; it is only a dissipated fashionable removed from his wine cellar, while on the other hand, no useful Christian leaves this world without being missed. The church of God cries out like the prophet, "Howl, for the cedar has fallen, the oak has fallen, the cypress and the boxwood, the pine and the poplar, the departed had made. Orphans are lifted up to look into the calm face of the sleeping benefactress. Reclaimed vagrants, the kind and cold brow of her who charmed it away from sin, and all through the streets of Joppa there is mourning—mourning because Dorcas is dead.

When Josephine of France was carried out to her grave, there were a great many men and women of pomp and pride and position that went out after her; but I am most affected by her history. How the day there were ten thousand of the poor of France who followed her coffin, weeping and wailing until the air rang again, because, when she laid Josephine in the earth, they were their last earthly friend. Oh, who would not rather have such obsequies than all the tears that were ever poured in the lachrymals that have been exhausted from ancient times. There may be no mass for the dead; there may be no costly sarcophagus; there may be no laboring manœuvre; but in the damp vaults of the city, and through the lonely hills of the mountain glen, there will be mourning, mourning, mourning, because Dorcas is dead. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

And I have seen the same thing many a time; not a dead body resurrected, but a deceased coming up again after the fashion of the good accomplished. If a man labors up to fifty years of age, serving God, and then dies, we are apt to think that his earthly work is done. No, his influence will continue till the world ceases. Service rendered for Christ never stops. A Christian woman toils for the upbuilding of a church through many anxieties, through many self-denials, with gray hair and tears, and then she dies. It is fifteen years since she went away. Now the spirit of God descends upon that church; hundreds of souls stand up and confess the faith in Christ. Has that Christian woman, who went away fifteen years ago, nothing to do with these things? I see the lowering out of her noble hair, I hear the echo of her footsteps in all the songs over sin forgiven, in all the promises of the church. The good that seemed to be buried has come up again. Dorcas is resurrected.

After a while all these womanly friends of Christ will put down their needle forever. After making garments for others, some one will make a garment for them; the last robe we ever wear—the robe for the grave. You will have heard the last cry of pain. You will have witnessed the last orphanage. You will have come in worn out from your last round of mercy. I do not know where you will sleep, nor what your epitaph will be; but there will be a lamp burning at that tomb in the sky, and you will be shining through all the long night, so rude feet will disturb the dust. Sleep on, sleep on Soft bed, pleasant shades, undisturbed repose! Sleep on!

PARLIAMENT AND THE ROYAL FAMILY TO ASSIST IN BEARING THE BURDEN OF THE MEDALS. A Colonel who had lost both feet in the battle of Inkerman was pulled in on a wheel chair; others came limping on their crutches. Then the Queen arose before them in the name of her government, and uttered words of commendation to the officers and men, and distributed these medals inscribed with the four great battles, Alma, Balaklava, Inkerman and Sebastopol. As the Queen gave to the wounded men and the wounded officers, the band music struck up the national air, and the people with eyes moistened in the song:

God save our gracious Queen! Long live our noble Queen! God save the Queen!

COMFORT AND COST. A sketch showing two ways of living. How one family is miserable, where another is happy.

"Cheap and good." This is what most of us are wishing for. We desire the best of everything at the lowest prices. We would like to buy the best silks of Antwerp for the cost of a cotton saree; to procure the best of Delmonico's dinners for such a rate as a clerk could afford to pay.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON. SUNDAY DECEMBER 15, 1935. Solomon's Fall.

LESSON TEXT. Q Kings 11: 4-13. Memory verses, 9, 10, 11. LESSON PLAN. TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: Prosperity and Adversity.

THE DEAD FIREMAN'S BABY.

"What is the matter with my papa?" Steve Neall's five-year-old daughter had caught sight of her dead father in his coffin last Friday evening and asked the question of those who had gathered around the bier.