

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

The Eminent Washington Divine's Sunday Sermon.

Subject: "A Shattered Faith."

TEXT: "And some on broken pieces of the ship."—Acts xxviii, 14.

Never off Godwin's sands or the Skerries or Capo Hateras was a ship worse wrecked than that in the Mediterranean hurricane, was the grain ship on which 276 passengers were driven on the coast of Malta, five miles from the metropolis of that island, called Citra Vecchia. After a two weeks' tempest when the ship was entirely disabled and captain and crew had become completely demoralized, the old missionary took command of the vessel. He was small, crooked-backed and sore-eyed, according to tradition. It was Paul, the only unscarred man aboard. He was no more afraid of a Euroclydon tossing the Mediterranean sea, nor up to the gates of heaven nor slanting it to the gates of hell, than he was afraid of a kitten playing with a string. He ordered them all down to take their ration, and then he went to the fore-cabin, where he insured all their lives, telling them they would be rescued, and so far from losing their heads, they would not lose so much of their hair as you would think. He was not striking so heavily. At daybreak they saw a streak and in their eagerness resolved to make for it. And so they cut the cables, took in the two paddles they had on those of 10 boats and sailed the main-ail so that they might come with such force as to be driven high up on the beach by some fortunate billow. There she goes, tumbling towards the rocks, now prore foremost, now stern foremost, now rolling over to the starboard, now over to the larboard; now a wave dashes clear over the deck, and it seems as if the old craft had gone for ever. But up she comes again. Paul's arms around a mast, he cries: "All is well, my brethren, give me all those that sail with me as given me. I went the prow, with such force that it broke off the mast. Crash went the timbers till the sea rushed through from side to side of the vessel. She parts amidships, and into a thousand fragments the vessel goes, and the waves 276 immortals are precipitated. Some of them had been brought up on the beach and had learned to swim, and by their chins just above the waves and by the strokes of both arms and propulsion of both feet they put out for the beach and reached it. But alas for those others! They were never learned to swim, or they were wounded by the falling of the mast, or the nervous shock was too great for them. And others had been weakened by long sea-sickness.

Oh, what will become of them? "Take that piece of a rudder," says Paul to one. "Take that fragment of a spar," says Paul to another. "Take that image of Castor and Pollux," "Take anything I can find for the boat." "Take anything I can find for the beach." What a struggle for life in the breakers! Oh, the merciless waters, now they sweep over the heads of men, women and children, and now they hold them ashore. Keep up your courage. Remember what Paul told you. There the wrecking wave on the beach leaves in the sand a whole family. There crawls up out of the surf the centinel, there another plank comes in, with a life-preserving fast to it. Another piece of the shattered vessel, with its freightage of an immortal soul, they must by this time be saved. Yes, there comes in last of all, for the old missionary, who wrings the water from his gray beard and cries out, "Thank God, all are here!"

I do not understand the value of a great theological system, but where in all the Bible is there anything that says believe in John Calvin and thou shalt be saved? or believe in Arminius and thou shalt be saved? or believe in the system of Dort and thou shalt be saved? or believe in the Thirty-nine Articles and thou shalt be saved? A man may be orthodox and go to hell, or heterodox and go to heaven. The man who is in the deep affection of his heart accepts Christ is saved, and the man who does not accept him is lost.

I believe in both the Heidelberg and Westminster catechisms, and I wish you all did, but you may believe in neither, and I except the one idea, that Christ came to save sinners, and that you are one of them, and you are instantly rescued. If you can come in on the grand old ship, I would rather have you get aboard to-day, and only find a piece of wood as long as the man's body, or a piece as wide as the outspread human arms, or either of them is a piece of the cross, come in to-day, out of the Kingdom of God because they cannot believe anything.

I am a Unitarian with a man thoughtful about his soul who passed the night at Andover. He says to me, "I cannot believe that in this life the destiny is irrevocably fixed; I think there will be another opportunity of repentance after death." I say to him, "Brother, what has that to do with you? Don't you realize that the man who waits for another chance after death when he has no other chance to-day, that is a stark fool? Had not you better take a plank that may be visible hands be thrown to you after you are dead? Do as you please, but as for myself, with pardon for my sins offered me now, and all the joys of time and eternity offered me now, I instantly take them, rather than risk that they may be taken off or twisted out of a Scripture passage, and that has for all the Christian centuries been interpreted another way. You say, 'I do not ask you on board either of these great great ships, but on the one plank of the gospel that you do believe in and strike out for the pearl struck beach of heaven.'"

Says some other man, "I would attend to religion if I was quite sure about the doctrine of election and free agency, but that mixes me all up." Those things used to bother me, but I have no more perplexity about them, for I say to myself, "If I love Christ and live a good, honest life, I am elected to be saved, and if I do not love Christ and live a bad life I will be damned, and all the theological summaries of the universe cannot make it any different." I floundered a long while in the sea of sin and doubt, and it was as rough as the Mediterranean on the fourteenth night, when they threw the grain overboard, but I saw there was mercy for a sinner, and that plank I took, and I have been warming myself by the bright fire on the shore ever since.

While I am talking to another man about his soul he tells me, "I do not become a Christian because I do not believe there is any hell at all." Ah, don't you? Do all the good morals and bad morals go straight to a happy heaven? Do the holy and the debauched have the same destination? At midnight, in a hallway, the owner of a house and a burglar meet. They both die, and both are wounded. They both die in five minutes, and the owner of the house lives a week after. Will the burglar be at the gates of heaven, waiting when the house owner comes in? Will the debauchee and the libertine go right in among the families of heaven? I wonder if Herod is playing on the banks of the river of life with the children he massacred. I wonder if Charles Guiteau and John Wilkes Booth are now shooting at a mark. I do not now convert it, although I must say that for such a miserable heaven I

have no admiration. But the Bible does not say, "Believe in perdition and be saved." Because all are saved, according to your theory, that ought not to keep you from loving and serving Christ. Do not refuse to come ashore because all the others, according to your theory, are going to get shore. You may have different theories about chemistry, about astronomy, about the atmosphere from that which others adopt, but you are not therefore hindered from action.

Because your theory of light is different from others do not refuse to see your eyes. Because your theory of air is different you do not refuse to breathe. Because your theory about the stellar system is different you do not refuse to acknowledge the north star. Why should the fact that your theological theories are different hinder you from acting upon what you know? If you have a whole ship fastened in the theological drydock to bring you to wharves, you have at least a plank. "Some on broken pieces of the ship."

"But I don't believe in revivals!" Then go to your room, and all alone, with your door locked, give your heart to God, and join some church where the thermometer never gets higher than fifty in the shade. "I do not believe in baptism!" Come in without it and set your feet on the stones. "But there are so many inconsistent Christians!" Then come in and show them by a good example how a professor should act. But I don't believe in the Old Testament. Then come in on the New. "But I don't like the book of Romans." Then come in on Matthew or Luke. Refusing to come to Christ, you do not admit to be the Saviour of the world, because you cannot admit to other things you are like a man out there in the Mediterranean tempest and tossed in the Malta breakers, refusing to come ashore until he can make the pieces of the broken ship. I hear him say, "I won't go in on any of these planks until I know in what part of the ship they belong. When I can get the windlass in the right place, and the sails set, and that keel piece where it belongs, and that floor timber right, and the ropes untangled, I will go ashore. I am an old sailor, and I know all about ships for forty years, and as soon as I can get the vessel afloat in good shape I will come in." A man drifting by on a piece of wood overboard him and says, "You will drown before you get that ship re-squared. Better do as I am doing. I know nothing about ships, and never saw one before I came on board this, and I can not swim a stroke, but I am going ashore on this shivered timber." The man in the shilly, while trying to mend his ship, goes down. The man who trusted to the plank is saved. Oh, my brother, let your smashed up system of theology go to the bottom, while you come in on a splintered spar!

"Some on broken pieces of the ship." If you can believe nothing else, you certainly believe in vicarious suffering, for you see it almost every day in some shape. The steamship Knickerbocker, of the Cromwell line, running between New Orleans and New York, was in great storms, and the captain and crew saw the schooner Mary D. Cranmer, of Philadelphia, in distress. The waves mountain high, the schooner was on the beach, and a four men put out in a lifeboat to save the crew of the schooner, and reached the vessel and towed it out of danger, the wind shifting so that the schooner was saved. But the five crew of the steamship coming back, their boat capsized, yet righted again and came on, the sailors coated with ice. The boat was righted, and a line was thrown to the poor fellows, but their hands were frozen so they could not grasp it, and a great wave rolled over them, and they went down, never to rise again. The sea gives up its dead. Appreciate that heroic and self-sacrifice of the brave fellows all who can, and can not appreciate the Christ who put out into a more biting cold and into a more overwhelming surge to bring us out of infinite peril into everlasting safety. The wave of human hate rolled over him from one side and the wave of selfish fury rolled over him on the other side. Oh, the thickness of the night and the thunder of the tempest into which Christ plunged for our rescue!

Come in on the narrow beam of the cross. Let all else go and cling to that; put that under you, and with the earnestness of a swimmer struggling for his life put out for rescue. There is a great warm fire of welcome already built, and already many are standing far out as you are, and heaven is glad. The angels of God's roses are wading out into the surf to clutch your hand, and they know how exhausted you are, and all the redeemed prodigals of heaven are on the beach with their white robes to clothe all those who come in on broken pieces of the ship.

More because I was naturally skeptical, disposed to question everything about this life and the next, and was in danger of being farther out to sea than any of the 276 in the Mediterranean breakers, and I was sometimes the annoyance of my theological professor because I asked so many questions. But I came into a plank. I knew Christ was the Saviour of sinners, and that I was a sinner, and I got ashore, and I do not propose to go out of that sea again. I have not for thirty minutes discussed the controverted points of theology in thirty years, and during the rest of my life I do not propose to discuss them for thirty seconds.

I would rather in a mad sorrow try to under the worst eye that ever swept over the world, than risk my immortal soul in useless and perilous discussions in which some of my brethren in the ministry are indulging. They remind me of a company of sailors standing on the Bamagate pier head, from which the life-boats are usually launched, and coolly discussing the different styles of overcoats and how deep a boat ought to set in the water while a different style of overcoats and there are three or four hundred passengers going to pieces in the offing. An old tar, the muscles of his face working with nervous excitement, cries out, "This is no time to discuss such things, an the lifeboat! Who will volunteer? Out with her into the surf! Pull, my lads; pull for the wreck! Ha, ha! Now we have them. Lift them in and lay them down to bring them to. Put these barrels around their heads and feet, and I will pull for the shore. God help me! There! Land! Huzza!" When there are so many struggling in the waves of sin and sorrow and wretchedness, let all else go but salvation for time and salvation forever.

You admit you are all broken up, one decade of your life gone by, two decades, three decades, four decades, a half-century, perhaps three-quarters of a century. The hour hand and the minute hand of your clock of life are almost parallel, and soon it will be 12 and 12 again. Clear, clear, encouraged, are you? I admit it is a sad thing to give all of our lives that are worth anything to sin and the devil and then at last make God a present of a first rate corpse. But the best you cannot recover. Get on board that old ship you never will. Have you only one more year left, one more month, one more week, one more day, one more hour—comes in on that. Perhaps if you get to heaven God may let you go out on some great mission to some other world, where you can atone for your lack of service in this.

From many a deathed I have seen the hands thrown up in desolation something like this: "My life has been wasted. I had good mental faculties, and fine social position and great opportunity, but through worldliness and egotism, all has gone to waste save a few remaining hours. I now accept of Christ and shall enter heaven through His mercy, but alas, alas, that when I might have entered the haven of eternal rest with a full cargo, and been greeted by the waving hands of a multitude in whose salvation I had borne a blessed part, I must confess I had borne a blessed part, I must confess I now enter the harbor of heaven on broken pieces of the ship."

The United States dynamite cruiser Vesuvius ran the blockade of Charleston (S. C.) Harbor by Admiral Bane's fleet.

JOKER'S BUDGET.

bits and Yarns by Funny Men of the Press.

MARY'S LITTLE BIRD. Mary had a little wheel Which she rode to and fro, And when she put her foot on, That wheel was sure to go.

HE—Have you ever had your ears pierced? SHE—No, but I have often had them bored.

BLACK AS INDIAN. "I suppose the brightest moment in your life was when 'ack' proposed?" "Cora—Brightest? There wasn't a particle of light in the room!"

HER LEMONADE SELL. "She is a lovely woman." "I ovvy? She's soulful, man—soulful. Why, her soul is so strong it shines through her glass eye."

HIS HAND WORK. She—What charming teeth Mrs. High-ton has! He—You later me, ma'am. She—Oh, pardon you are her husband? He—Oh, no, only her dentist.

LIKE BATHS. Weary Watkins—Wot you think of thischeme of free baths? Hungry Higgins—They wot git none none. No man is going to git aie to aite without payin' me fer it.

AUDIENCE SLEPT IN THE SEAT. The Villain—We made a bad mistake last night. In the barnyard scene we for got the eggs. The Comedian—Yes, but the audience didn't.

HE THOUGHT IT WASN'T. Papa—Isn't Johnny a new knife sharp? Mama—I think it is. Why? Papa—E he cut out himself yet.

A LIGHT WEIGHT, STILL. "I see that fellow Dawsey got out his eye patient kites the other day, and person was taken up into the air sixty feet by them." "He must be crazy." "Not crazy—but certainly a very light weight."

A DECIDED ADVANTAGE. "Bigger—Ha! old man! Bigger—Excuse me, sir, you ha e the advantage of me." "Yes, I guess I have. We were engaged to the same girl, but you married her."

DEPRESSING. Practices—You perhaps wouldn't think it, but De Lomney, the musician over here, plays entirely by ear. "Practices—Is it possible? Is that what makes 'em so large?"

DREW THE LINE ON CHICKS. Tourist—I suppose you have the Australian love here? "Lawless Dick—I guess not, stranger. I ain't seen none around. We've got a couple of 'em here but we wouldn't let 'em cross the water."

GLAD TO LOOK HER. Ruth—She is to be married next month and she will live abroad. May—it will be hard for her parents to lose her. Ruth—Oh! I don't know. They've been trying hard to lose her for the last ten years.

A LIGHT TOUCH. As she gazed into the mirror her face glauced. Indeed, for a high color, the new complexion enamel seemed a profound success.

WHEN HOME DRINKED. "ay," observed the shade of Agamemnon, indignantly, "while you were playing in that fiddle what were the rest of the people doing?" "They? The shade of Ne o smiled. 'Oh, they were playing on the flames, sire."

ONLY ONE VOICE BETWEEN THEM. "Then," said Mr. Watts, describing the church entertainment to his wife, who had been too ill to go, "the Jones girls got up and sang a solo." "A solo?" asked Mrs. Watts. "How could two persons sing a solo?" "They only had half a voice apiece."

HE CIT SO HIGH. "I can get you a job at cutting ice if you want it," said the member of the Association for Extending Assistance to the Worthy Poor. "I'm much obliged," said Perry P. Peck, "but seeing as how I don't cut no ice socially, I guess I might just as well keep it up along other lines, and I not bust my reputation."

SWEETLY AMBIGUOUS. Mr. Fosdick.—And how is the lovely Miss Wilberforce? Is she as pretty as ever? Miss Temperer (sweetly and ambiguously).—Oh, yes; Mr. Fosdick. Miss Wilberforce is quite as handsome as she ever was.

"AND THE CAT CAME BACK." The kindly old gentleman had been telling them a story, but the bad boy, after the manner of his kind, had not been particularly attentive. "And after many years," said the kindly old gentleman, "Enoch Arden returned to his home." "Oh!" exclaimed the bad boy, suddenly waking up to the fact that something came back "I never knew the name of that cat before."

HIS DREADFUL REVENGE. Trivvet: Did you hear of the dreadful revenge Frothingham took on Miss Dimling when she refused his proposal? "No. What was it?" "He proposed to her mother, as Mrs. Dimling was a widow and now he wants a man come to the house to see his step-daughter."

First Recorded Land Sale. The first real estate transaction recorded was the purchase of the field of Macphelah by Abraham, in the cave of which he buried Sarah, his wife. Abraham paid 400 shekels of silver for the field.

POPULATION'S MOVE WESTWARD

About a Century Ago the Center Was Slightly East of Baltimore.

Nothing illustrates the marvelous growth of our country more graphically than the rapid yet steady pace which the center of population in the United States has made in its westward march. In 1790, the time of taking the first census, the center of population was twenty-three miles east of Baltimore. In the upper end of Chesapeake Bay. Between that time and 1800 it moved forty-one miles, or to a spot sixteen miles directly west of Baltimore. During the decade which ended 1810 the westward movement was not rapid, being only thirty-six miles which located the center of population at that time forty miles northwest by west of Washington. Between 1810 and 1820 it made marvelous strides and moved sixteen miles north of Woodstock, Va., which was fifty miles from the spot occupied by the "center" in 1810. During the decade which ended with 1830 it moved only thirty-nine miles, this taking it to a spot nineteen miles west southwest of Morsefield, W. Va. By 1840 it had moved west by south a distance of fifty-five miles, or to a place sixteen miles south of Clarksville, W. Va. Between 1840 and 1850 another move of fifty-five miles was made, and the census report of the latter year informed the curious reader that "the center of population is now twenty-three miles southeast of Parkersburg," which is now in the State of West Virginia.

When the census of 1860 was taken it was found that the center of population was at a spot in the middle of the Scioto River, twenty miles south of Chillicothe, Ohio. In 1870 it was still in Ohio, but had climbed out of the river and moved to a spot forty-eight miles east of north from Cincinnati. Between 1870 and 1880 the center of population passed almost directly through Cincinnati, moving west by south, and when the census was taken in the latter year it was located eight miles southwest of the city above named. Between 1880 and 1890 it moved into the Hoosier State, and was found, when the last decennial census was taken, to be twenty miles east of Columbus, Ind. The greatest distance the center moved during any ten years was between 1870 and 1880, when it traveled fifty-eight miles. The least was between 1800 and 1810, thirty-six miles. St. Louis Republic.

He Made a Sale. Druggist (to new clerk)—I am going out now, James, and I hope you will be careful while I am gone. You may throw off forty per cent. from the regular price if a customer stands out and won't buy without. But don't drop a cent below that. The business won't stand it. New Clerk (gleefully, upon return of his employer half an hour later)—I had only one customer while you were out. Mr. Squills, but I stuck him nicely. He was after postage stamps and he wanted to know if we allowed any discount in selling a quantity, and— Druggist (breaking in excitedly)—Great Moses! You didn't throw off 40 per cent. on postage stamps, did you? New Clerk (calmly)—Oh no. I saved you 15 per cent. on them. I told him he could have them for 75 cents on the dollar, and the great gump that he was never tried to beat me down another cent—just yanked out his pocket book and took all we had—yes, sir, every stamp in the place, a clean \$40 worth, at that figure. And—er—what's the matter, Mr. Squills? Hain't having a sale, are you?

And during the next fifteen minutes people passing the establishment got the idea that a cage of wild animals or a ward primary had broken loose inside of the place. But this was a mistake. It was only the proprietor explaining the sliding scale of prices more fully to the new clerk.—New York Herald.

Free Cook Books for Everybody. Alive to the signs of better times and to the best interests of the people, our large house in this country has taken business on its turn. It is now circulating among families a valuable publication known as The Charles A. Vogeler Company's Cookery Book and Book of Comfort and Health, which contains very choice information on the subject of cooking. Valuable recipes for the preparation of food, substantial and dainty alike, prepared especially for it by a leading authority, will be found in its pages. Its preparation and distribution much care has been taken, with the hope that it will be indispensable to housekeepers, and will be just the thing needed for the care of the health and household. It also contains full information in regard to the great remedies of this house, which prove a great bodily ailment, especially the master cure for pains and aches, St. Jacobs Oil. More than 200 tons of paper have been used in its publication, and at the rate of 100,000 a day it has taken several months for the issue.

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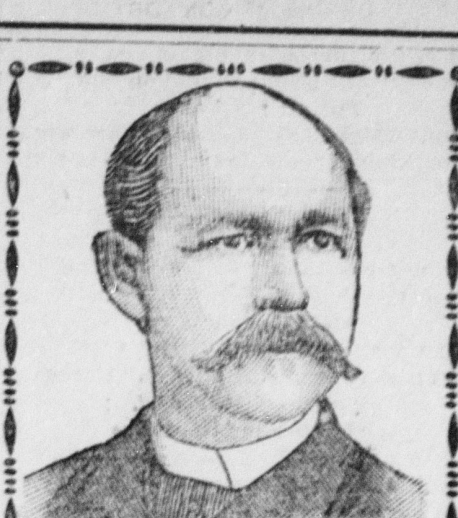
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