

REV. DR. TALMAGE

The Eminent Washington Divines' Sunday Sermon.

Subject: "Boaz and Ruth."

Text: "And she went and came and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and her hand was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech."—Ruth II, 3.

The time that Ruth and Naomi arrive at Bethlehem is harvest time. It was the custom when a sheaf fell from a load in the harvest field for the reapers to refuse to gather it up. That was to be left for the poor who might happen to come along that way. If there were handfuls of grain scattered across the field after the main harvest had been reaped, instead of raking it, as farmers do elsewhere, it was left for the poor of the land, left in its place so that the poor, coming that way, might glean it and get their bread. But you say, "What is the use of all these harvest fields to Ruth and Naomi? Naomi is too old and feeble to go out and toil in the sun, and can you expect that Ruth, the young and the beautiful, should tan her cheeks and blister her hands in the harvest field?"

Boaz owns a large farm, and he goes out to see the reapers gather in the grain. Coming there, right behind the swarthy, sun-browned reapers, he beholds a beautiful woman gleaning—a woman more fit to bend to a harp or sit upon a throne than to stoop among the sheaves. Ah, that was an eventful day!

It was love at first sight. Boaz forms an attachment for the womanly gleaner for the attachment full of undying interest to the church of God in all ages, while Ruth, with an ephah, or nearly a bushel of barley, goes home to Naomi to tell her of her success, and adventures of the day. That Ruth, who left her native land of Moab in darkness, and traveled through an undying affection for her mother-in-law, is in the harvest field of Boaz, is affianced to one of the best families in Judah, and becomes in after time the ancestress of Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. Out of so dark a night did there ever dawn so bright a morning!

I learn in that place from this subject how trouble develops character. It was bereavement, poverty and exile that developed, illustrated and announced to all ages the sublimity of Ruth's character. That is a very unfortunate man who has no grief, no sorrow that made John Bunyan the better dreamer, and Dr. Young the better poet, and O'Connell the better orator, and Bishop Hall the better preacher, and the better healer, and Kitto the better encyclopedia, and Ruth the better daughter-in-law.

I once asked an aged man in regard to his pastor, who was a very brilliant man, "Why is it that your pastor, so very brilliant, seems to have so little heart and tenderness in his sermons?" "Well," he replied, "the reason is our pastor has never had any trouble. When misfortune comes upon him, his style will be different. After while the Lord took a child out of that pastor's house, and though the preacher was just as brilliant as he was before, oh, the warmth, the tenderness of his discourse! The fact is that trouble is a great educator. You see sometimes a musician sit down at an instrument and his execution is cold and formal and unfeeling. The reason is that all his life he has been prosperous. But let misfortune or bereavement come to that man, and he sits down at the instrument, and you discover the pathos in the first sweep of the keys.

Misfortune and trials are great educators. A young doctor comes into a sickroom where there is a dying child. Perhaps he is very rough in his prescription and very rough in his manner and rough in the feeling of the pulse and rough in his answer to the mother's anxious question. But as he rolls on, and there has been one dead in his own house, and now he comes into the sickroom, and with fearful eyes he looks at the dying child, and he says, "Oh, how this reminds me of my Charlie!" Trouble, the best educator of sorrow—I see its touch in the grandest painting, I hear its tremor in the sweetest song, I feel its power in the mightiest argument.

Grecoan mythology said that the fountain of Hippocrene was struck out by the foot of the winged horse Pegasus. I have often noticed in life that the brightest and most beautiful fountain of Christian education and spiritual life have been struck out by the shod hoof of disaster and calamity. I see Daniel's courage best by the flash of Nebuchadnezzar's flames, I see Paul's prowess best when I find him on the ponderous rocks under the glare of the lightning in the breakers of Melita. God crowns his children amid the howling of wild beasts and the chopping of wood spewed gullitine and the cracking fire of martyrdom. He took the persecutions of Marcus Aurelius to develop Polyarp and Justin Martyr. It took all the hostilities against the Scotch Covenanters and the fury of Lord Claverhouse to develop James Hewitt and Andrew Melville and Hugh McCall, the glorious martyrs of Scotch history. It took the stormy sea and the December blast and the desolate New England coast and the war whoop of savages to show forth the prowess of the pilgrim fathers.

When amid the storms they sang, And the stars heard, and the sea, And the sounding aisles of the dim wood Rang to the anthems of the free.

It took all our past national distresses, and it takes all our present national sorrows, to lift up our nation on that high career where it will march long after the foreign aristocracies have mocked and tyrannies that have feared, shall be swept down under the omnipotent wrath of God, who hates despotism and who, by the strength of his own red right arm, will make all men free. And so it is individually, and in the family, and in the church and in the world, that through darkness and storm and trouble men, women, churches, nations, are developed.

Again, I see in my text the beauty of unflinching friendship. I suppose there were plenty of friends for Naomi while she was in prosperity, but of all her acquaintances who were willing to tudge off with her toward Judah, when she had to make that lonely journey? One—the heroine of my text. One—absolutely one. I suppose when Naomi's husband was living, and they had plenty of money, and all things went well, they had a great many callers, but I suppose that after her husband died, and her property went, and she got old and poor, she was not troubled very much with callers. All the birds that sang in the bower while the sun shone have gone to their nests now the night has fallen.

Oh, these beautiful sunflowers that spread out their color in the morning hour! But they are always asleep when the sun is going down. Job had plenty of friends when he was the richest man in Uz, but when his property went and the trials came then there were none so much that perished as Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite.

Life often seems to be a mere game, where the successful player pulls down all the other men into his own lap. Let suspicious arise about a man's character, and he becomes like a bank in a panic, and all the importations rush on him and break down in a day that character which in due time would have had strength to defend itself. There are reputations that have been half a century in building which go down in one push, as a vast temple is consumed by the touch of a sulphurous match. A hog can overturn a century plant.

In this world, so full of heartlessness and hypocrisy, how thrilling it is to find some friend as faithful in days of adversity as in days of prosperity? David had such a friend in Hushai; the Jews had such a friend in Mordecai; who never forgot their cause; Paul had such a friend in Onesiphorus, who visited him in jail; Christ had such a friend in the Marys, who adhered to Him on the cross; Naomi had such a friend in Ruth, who cried out, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and whither thou lodgest I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also. If I should be left without thee, my death would be swift." Again, I learn from this subject that paths which open in hardship and darkness often come out in places of joy. When Ruth started from Moab toward Jerusalem to go along with her mother-in-law, I suppose the people said, "Oh, what a foolish creature to go away from her father's house; to go off with a poor old woman toward the land of Judah. They won't live to get across the desert. They will be drowned in the sea, or the jackals of the wilderness will destroy them." It was a very dark morning when Ruth started off with Naomi. But behold her in my text in the harvest field of Boaz, to be affianced to one of the lords of the land and become one of the grandmothers of Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. And so it often is that a path which often starts very darkly ends very brightly.

When you started out for heaven, oh, how dark was the hour of conviction; how Sinai thundered and the devils tormented and the darkness thickened! By the custom of the pious you ever saw when you first found out your sins. After awhile you went into the harvest field of God's mercy. You began to glean in the fields of divine promise and you had more sheaves than you could carry as the voice of God addressed you saying, "Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven and whose sins are covered. A very bright ending in the pardon and the hope and the triumph of the gospel!"

So, very often in our worldly business or in our spiritual career we start off on a very dark path. We must go. The flesh may shrink back, but there is a voice within, or a voice from above, saying, "You must go." And we have to drink the gall, and we have to carry the cross, and we have to traverse the desert, and we are pounded and flailed of misrepresentation and abuse, and we have to urge our way through 10,000 obstacles that have been slain by our own right arm, and we have the river, we have to climb the mountain, we have to storm the castle, but, blessed be God, the day of rest and reward will come. On the tip top of the captured fortifications we will shout the victory; or in the fields of the world, then that world where there is no gall to drink, no burdens to carry, no battles to fight. How do I know it? Know it! I know it because God says so: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to living fountains of water, and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes."

It was very hard for Noah to endure the scoffing of the people in his day, while he was trying to build the ark and was every morning quizzed about his old boat that would never be of any practical use, but when the deluge came and the tops of the mountains disappeared like the backs of sea-monsters, and the elements, lashed up in fury, clapped their hands over a drowned world, Noah in the ark rejoiced, and his own safety and in the safety of his family and looked out on the wreck of a ruined earth.

Again, I see in my subject an illustration of the beauty of female industry. Behold Ruth toiling in the harvest field under the hot sun or at noon taking plain bread with the reapers or eating the parched corn which Boaz handed to her. The customs of society, of course, have changed, and without the hardships and exposure to which Ruth was subjected every intelligent woman will find something to do.

How there is a sickly sentimentality on this subject. In some families there are persons of no practical service to the household or community, and though there are so many words all around about them in the world they spend their time languishing over a new pattern or bursting into tears at midnight over the story of some lover who shot himself. They would not deign to look at Ruth carrying back the barley on her way to her mother-in-law, Naomi. All this fastidiousness may seem to do very well while they are under the shelter of their father's house, but when the sharp winter of misfortune comes, what of these butterflies? Persons of indulgent parentage may get upon themselves habits of indolence, but when they come out into practical life their soul will recoil with disgust and chafing.

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Folks are so awkward, things so impolite, they're elegantly pained from morning until night. Through that gate of indolence how many men and women have marched, useless on earth, to a destroyed eternity! Spinoza said to Sir Horace Vere, "Oh, what did your brother die?" "Of having nothing to do," was the answer. "Ah," said Spinoza, "that's enough to kill any general of us!" Oh, can it be possible in this world, where there is so much suffering to be alleviated, so much darkness to be enlightened and so many burdens to be carried, that there is any person who cannot find anything to do?

Mrs. de laet did a world of work in her time, and one day, while she was seated amid instruments of music, all of which she had mastered, and amid manuscript books which she had written, some one said to her, "How do you find time to attend to all these things?" "Oh," she replied, "these are not the things I am proud of. My chief boast is in the fact that I have seventeen trades, by any one of which I could make a livelihood if necessary." And, if in secular spheres there is so much to be done, in spiritual work how vast the field! How many dying all around about us without one word of comfort! We want more Abnegals, more Hannabys, more Rebecca, more Marys, more Deborahs, more consecrated, body, mind, soul, to the Lord who bought them.

Once more I learn from my subject the value of gleaning. Ruth going into that harvest field might have said: "There is a straw, and there is a straw, but what is a straw? I can't get any barley for myself or my mother-in-law out of these separate straws." Not so said beautiful Ruth. She gathered two straws, and she put them together, and more straws, until she got enough to make a sheaf. Putting that down, she went and gathered more straws, until she had another sheaf, and another, and another, and then she brought them together, and she threshed them out, and she had an ephah of barley, nigh a bushel. Oh, that we might all be gleaners!

Elihu Burritt learned many things while toiling in a bookshop. Abercrombie, that world renowned philosopher, was a philosopher in Scotland, and he got his philosophy, or the chief part of it, while as a physician he was waiting for the door of the sickroom to open. Yet how many there are in this day who say that are so busy they have no time for mental or spiritual improvement. The great duties of life cross the field like strong reapers and carry off all the hours, and there is only here and there a fragment left that is not worth gleaning. Ah, my friends, you could go into the busiest day and busiest week of your life and find golden opportunities, which, gathered, might make a whole sheaf for the Lord's garner. It is a stray opportunity and the stray privileges which, taken up and bound together and beaten out, will at last fill you with much joy.

There are a few moments left worth the gleaning. Now, Ruth, to the field! May each one have a measure full and running over! Oh, you gleaners, to the field! And if there be in your household an aged one or a sick relative that is not strong enough to come forth and toil in the field, let Ruth take home to feel Naomi this sheaf of gleaning. "He that sooth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." May the Lord God of Ruth and Naomi be our portion forever!

Russell Free, a three-year-old boy of Chicago, burned out the eyes of his infant brother and then laughed over it. The children were left alone in the kitchen and Russell, taking a stove poker, heated it and then poked it into the eye of the baby. The latter screamed with pain and his mother came into the room to find Russell standing over him, with the poker still in his hand, laughing at his awful work.

Harpooning Driftwood.

The Italian quarter in the Sixth ward, Brooklyn, possesses some strange people. How they exist is a mystery to the uninitiated.

One of the favorite pursuits is harpooning drift wood. Wherever the set of the tide carries the flossam and jetsam of the river into a slip, there is sure to be a group of Italians. Each is armed with a pole with a sharp spike. A long, light cord is fastened to the pole. The fisher casts his harpoon at a piece of wood, and when the spike strikes it, hauls it in and hoists his prize ashore. The wood is then carted home and dried in the yard of the owner. Some Red Hook residents have made considerable money in this way.

Perhaps the most unsavory method of making a living is that of the pickers on the Twelfth Ward dumps. Where the city's contractors deposit the refuse of the streets, scores of men, women and children work from morning till night. Every scrap of rag, bone, wood, coal, iron or any other object that can be turned into money is eagerly sought out. Children with ash-grimed faces hunt for coal and rags, but the most eagerly sought articles are empty fruit cans. These are collected in great heaps and then sold by the hundred to men engaged in another branch of the business. The latter melt the tin and solder from the cans and sell it to dealers in metal. Discarded tin roofing is highly prized for the same purpose. The iron, denuded of its tin and solder, is then pounded into lumps and sold to be remelted, and is then made into sash weights.—New York Journal.

Measuring the Earth.

The longest distance ever encompassed by the human vision, so far as the records go, is 183 miles, between the Uncompahgre Peak in Colorado and Mount Ellen in Utah. This feat was accomplished by the surveyors of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, who are now engaged, in conjunction with representatives of other nations, in making a new measurement of the earth. The observers on the Pacific Coast have been able to signal from Mount Shasta to Mount Helena, a distance of 190 miles, but have never been able to get a response. Between the two peaks communication has been continuous for an hour or more on several occasions. The Uncompahgre is 14,300 feet in height, while Mount Ellen is 13,400 feet. The longest distance that the human eye ever reached until this record was made was between Algiers and Spain, 168 miles. The measuring of the earth which is now going on, is no simple task. The width of the ocean can only be ascertained by astronomical observations. The observers at Greenwich and at Washington note each night the exact moment of the rising of certain stars, and then, by mathematical calculations, turn the difference in time into distance. This is corrected and corroborated by other observations upon other stars, and by a series of experiments, which furnish an average that is approximately accurate. The difference is seldom more than a small fraction of a second and is attributed to atmospheric phenomena. The Pacific ocean is measured in a similar manner by joint observations with the Lick telescope in California and that of the Imperial University of Japan at Tokio.—New York Tribune.

Like a Fairy Tale.

There has just been erected in twenty-four hours in Chicago, a house of worship that will hold three thousand persons, with organ, furniture, and other equipment, ready for use. This rivalled the activity of the late Mr. Aladdin's familiar.

Now And Then

When Martha Washington was first lady of the land the Puritan element was contending with the tendency to aristocracy and had not given up the struggle. We are told by careful biographers that Mrs. Washington received from eight to ten every Friday evening. Afternoon receptions were not in vogue then. Her levees were numerous attended by all in fashionable and elegant society. She founded the first republican drawing room after the only model then known, the court of France. None were permitted to attend except those who had high social and diplomatic rank. And, writes the historian, "full dress was required of all who passed the ordeal of social inspection." When Mrs. Madison was wife of a President in 1815, she was described as in the meridian of her life and beauty. Radiant and vivacious, she dispensed hospitality and exchanged courtesies with unrivaled grace. She looked and moved a queen. One of her characteristics was that, like Mrs. Cleveland, she never forgot a face. Her quick sympathy was shown in every word she uttered. Mrs. James K. Polk was designated "the mother of the Republic" when she entered the White House in 1845. She was popular with all classes and a regally beautiful woman. Neither cards nor dancing were permitted in the White House under Mrs. Polk's rule. Once, when requested to allow dancing she said: "Surely you would not dance in the house of the President?" Mrs. John Quincy Adams was in ill-health when called upon to fill the position of first lady of the land, and could preside only at public functions. Her manners were elegant, and she had received all the benefit of foreign travel, as well as the best education that could be given at that day. It is worth noting that each of these ladies filled her high position with dignity, and each was glad to return to private life. There was no lack of splendor in those days, simple as they seem when compared with ours, and six horses were not considered too many to convey a president and his family from one scene of festivity to another: The hospitality of the table was paramount, and what the cuisine lacked in quality it made up in quantity. Airy notions formed no part of a Southern woman's diet then, and the wife of a foreign woman stigmatized Dolly Madison's table as "something like a harvest-home supper."

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Playin' Possum.

"Playin' possum" comes from the fact that the possum will feign sleep or death when pushed into sudden danger of being captured. But pains and aches never play that kind of a game. They never try to fool anybody, and go to work to wake up people, leaving no chance to feign sleep. On the other hand, there is a remedy known as St. Jacobs Oil that will kill a pain or an ache so that it won't wake up again in the cure that follows its use. Pains and aches are great or less in intensity just in degree as we treat them. Prompt treatment with the best remedy—St. Jacobs Oil—prevents their return. Everything is gained by taking pains and aches in time for a prompt and permanent cure, and there is nothing better than the use of St. Jacobs Oil.

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Swearing may make a fire burn, or it may make a deck hand bustle, but it won't help Tetter, or Hiccupus. If you use Tetterine, it will make you comfortable and save wearisome words. 50 cents at drug stores, or by mail for 50 cents in stamps from J. T. Shuptrine, Savannah, Ga.

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SILENT SUFFERERS.

Women do not Like to Tell a Doctor the Details of Their Private Ills.



The reason why so many women suffer in silence from the multiple disorders connected with their sexual system is that they cannot bear to broach the subject to a man, even if he is a physician.

No one can blame a modest, sensitive woman for this reticence. It is unnecessary in these times, however, for a woman makes to all afflicted women a most generous offer. Mrs. Pinkham of Lynn, Mass., bids every woman who suffers to write to her and confide every symptom that annoys her, and she will give her advice without charge, and that advice is based upon the greatest experience ever possessed by man or woman in this country, and extends over a period of twenty-three years, and thousands upon thousands of cases. Why suffer in silence any longer, when you can get help for the asking? Don't fear to tell her everything.

The case of Mrs. Colony, whose letter to Mrs. Pinkham we publish, is an illustration of the good to be received from Mrs. Pinkham's advice; here is a woman who was sick for years and could get no relief—at last in despair she wrote to Mrs. Pinkham—received in return a prompt, sympathetic and interested reply. Note the result and go do likewise.

"I was troubled with such an aching in my back and hips, and I felt so tired all the time, and had for four years. For the last year it was all I could do to drag around. I would have such a ringing in my head by spells that it seemed as though I would go crazy. I ached from my shoulders to my feet and was very nervous. I was also troubled with a white discharge. I wrote to Mrs. Pinkham at Lynn, Mass., received a prompt reply and followed her advice, and now I have no backache and begin to feel as one ought; in fact, I never felt better in ten years than I do now. I thank God that I went doctoring with Mrs. Pinkham when I did, for if I had not I know I would have been in my grave."—MRS. NELLIE E. COLONY, Nahma, Mich.

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