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HER BONNET.

Caught Abre While the Speaker Was Addressing an Audience. New York Sun: At a meeting of the Society for Political Study yesterday the bonnet worn by the speaker of the day, Mrs. Belle Gray Taylor, caught fire from a drop-light on the speaker's desk, and had it not been for the presence of mind and fleet-footedness of Mrs. Almon Hensley would have been totally destroyed. Mrs. Taylor said afterward that there was no insurance on the bonnet, although there were several other things, including gold braid, blue velvet and black ostrich tips. When the accident happened the speaker was prefacing her talk, which was on woman's intuition, with a few remarks about five-minute papers, she having been asked to prepare one of that length.

"A long, dull paper is intolerable in this rapid history-making age," she was saying, "while a long, good paper has so much in it that you wish to come!"

"Oh! Oh!" "Gracious me!" "Fire! Fire!" cried feminine voices from every part of the room, and the one man present looked at Mrs. Taylor's flaming headgear helplessly. He said afterward that he might have known what to do if a woman had been in danger in a burning building, but that he was absolutely paralyzed at sight of a burning bonnet. But no one better knows the value of a fine bonnet than Mrs. Hensley, and before the lona man had recovered sufficiently to open his mouth she rushed to the platform and smothered the flames.

"What is it?" asked the speaker, calmly, when the danger was passed. "Your best bonnet on fire," exclaimed many voices. "Well, for once I've created a sensation," retorted Mrs. Taylor. "For once I've been actually brilliant. Ladies, the last word I uttered was consume," and then she went on with the remarks that had been interrupted by the threatened conflagration.

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE EMINENT DIVINE'S SUNDAY DISCOURSE.

Subject: "The Acidities of Life"—The Cup of Vinegar Which Christ Took Is Typical of Life's Bitterness—This Is the Lot of the Distressed.

Text: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar,"—John xix. 30.

The brigands of Jerusalem had done their worst. It was almost sundown, and Jesus was dying. For some time he had lain on a stretcher on the ground, crying, begging, cursing, but Christ had been exhausted by years of maltreatment. Pillowed, poorly fed, flogged—his head over and tied to a low post. His back was inflamed with the scourges interlarded with pieces of lead and bone—and now for whole hours the weight of His body hung on delicate tendons, and, according to tradition, a violent stroke under the arm pits had been given by the executioner. Dizzy, nauseated, feverish—a world of agony in compressed in the two words, "I thirst!" O skies of Judaea, let a drop of rain strike on His burning tongue! O world, with rolling rivers and sparkling lakes and spraying fountains, give Jesus something to drink! If there be any pity in earth or heaven or hell, let it now be demonstrated in behalf of this royal sufferer.

The wealthy women of Jerusalem used to have a fund of money with which they provided wine for those crucified on the cross, and Christ would not take it. He wanted to die sober, and so He refused the wine. But afterward they go to a cup of vinegar and soak a sponge in it and put it on a stick of hyssop and then press it against the hot lips of Christ. You say the wine was an anesthetic and intended to relieve or deaden the pain. But the vinegar was an insult.

In some lives the saccharine seems to predominate. Life is sunshine on a bank of flowers. A thousand hands to clap approval. In December or in January, looking across their table, they see all their family present. Health rebounds. Skies ramboyant. Days resilient. But in a great many cases there are not so many sugars as acids. The annoyances and the vexations and the disappointments of life overpower the successes. There is a gravel in almost every shoe. An Arabian legend says that there was a worm in Solomon's staff, gnawing its strength away, and there is a weak spot in every earthly support that a man leans on. King George of England forgot all the greatness of his throne because one day, in an interview, Beau Brummel called him by his first name and addressed him as a servant, crying, "George, ring the bell!" Miss Landon, who honored all the world over for her poetic genius, is so worried over the evil reports set afoot regarding her that she is found dead, with an empty bottle of prussic acid in her hand. Goldsmith said that his life was a wretched being and that all that want and contempt could bring to it had been brought and cries out: "What, then, is there formidable in a jail?" Correggio's fine painting hung up for a tavern sign. Hogarth cannot sell his best painting except through a raffle. Andre del Sarto makes the great fresco in the Church of the Annunziata at Florence and gets for pay, as it is called, and there are annoyances and vexations in high places as well as in low places, showing that in a great many lives are the sorrows greater than the sweets. "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar!"

It is absurd to suppose that a man who has always been well can sympathize with those who are sick, or that one who has always been honored can appreciate the sorrow of those who are despised, or that one who has been born to a great fortune can understand the distress and the straits of those who are destitute. The fact that Christ Himself took the vinegar makes Him able to sympathize to-day and forever with the sharp acids of life. He took the vinegar.

In the first place, there was the sourness of betrayal. The treachery of Judas hurt Christ's feelings more than all the friendship of His disciples did Him good. You have had many friends, but there was one friend upon whom you put especial trust. You feasted him. You loaned him money. You befriended him in the dark passes of life, when he especially needed a friend. Afterward he turned upon you, and he took advantage of your former intimacies. He wrote against you. He talked against you. He microscopized your faults. He hung contempt at you, when you ought to have received nothing but gratitude. At first, you could not sleep at nights. You went about with a sense of having been stung. That difficulty will never be healed, for, though mutual friends may arbitrate in the matter until you shall shake hands, the old cordiality will never come back. Now I commend to all such the sympathy of a betrayed Christ. Why, they sold Him for less than our 200. They all forsook Him and fled. They cut Him to the quick, drank that cup to the dregs. He took the vinegar.

There is also the sourness of pain. There are some of you who have not seen a day for many years. By keeping out of drafts and by carefully studying dietetics you continue to this time, but, oh, the headaches, and the side aches, and the back aches, and the heartaches which have been your accompaniment all the way through! You have struggled under a heavy mortgage of physical disabilities, and in need of the placidity and once characterized by it. It is now only with great effort that you keep away from irritability and sharp retort. Difficulties of respiration, of digestion, of locomotion, make up the great obstacle in your life, and you tug and sweat along the path way, and wonder when the exhaustion will end. My friends, the brightest crowns in heaven will not be given to those who in strife dashed to the cavalry charge, while the General applauded and the sound of clashing sabers rang through the land, but the brightest crowns in heaven, I believe, will be given to those who struggle on amid chronic ailments which unweakened their strength, yet all the time maintaining their faith in God. It is comparative ease to fight in a regiment of a thousand and charging up the parapet to the sound of martial music, but it is not so easy to endure when no one but the nurse and the doctor are the witnesses of the Christian fortitude. All the pang of all the nations—all the ages compressed into one sour cup. He took the vinegar!

There is also the sourness of poverty. Your income does not meet your outgoings, and that always gives an honest man anxiety. There is no sign of destitution about you—pleasant appearance and a cheerful home—but God only knows what a time you have had to manage your private business. Just as the bills run up the wages seem to run down. You may say nothing, but life to you is a hard push, and when you sit down with your wife and talk over the expenses you both rise up discouraged. You abridge here and you abridge there, and you get things snug for doctor's bill to pay, or you have lost your pocketbook, or some debtor has failed, and you are thrown aboard. Well, Christ, you are in glorious company. Christ owned the house in which He stopped, and the coat on which He rode, or the boat in which He sailed. He lived in a borrowed house. He was buried in a borrowed grave. Exposed to all kinds of weather, yet He had only one suit of clothes. He breakfasted in the morning, and no one could possibly tell where He could get anything to eat before night. He would have been pronounced a bankrupt, had He had to perform a miracle to get money to pay a tax bill. Not a dollar did He own. Privation of comestive; privation of nutritious food; privation of a comfortable couch on which to sleep; privation of all worldly resources. The kings of the earth had chased chalcids out of which to drink, but Christ had nothing but a plain cup set before Him, and it was very sour, and it was very sour. He took the vinegar.

There were years that passed along before your family circle was invaded by death, but the moment the charmed circle was broken everything seemed to disintegrate. Hardly have you put the black apparel in the wardrobe before you have again to take it out. Great and rapid changes in your face and manner seem to disintegrate. One day the children romped through the house, you put your hand over your aching head and said, "Oh, if I could only have it still!" Oh, it is too late now. You lost your patience when the tops and the strings and the shells were left amid floor; but, oh, you would be willing to have the bricks scattered all over the floor again if they were scattered by the same power.

With what a ruthless plowshare bereavement rips up the heart! But Jesus knows all about that. You cannot tell Him any-thing in regard to bereavement. He had only a few friends, and when He lost one it brought tears to His eyes. Lazarus had often entertained Him at his house. Now Lazarus is dead and buried, and Christ breaks down with emotion, the convulsion of grief shuddering through all the ages of bereavement. Christ knows what it is to go through the house missing a familiar inmate. Christ knows what it is to see an unoccupied place at the table. Were there not four of them—Mary and Martha and Christ and Lazarus? Four of them. But where is Lazarus? Loney and adults of Christ, His growing eyes filled with tears! Oh, yes, yet! He knows all about the loneliness and the heartbreak. He took the vinegar!

Then there is the sourness of the death hour. Whatever else we may escape, the acid sponge will be pressed to our lips. I sometimes have a curiosity to know how I will behave when I come to die. Whether I will be calm or excited, whether I will be filled with reminiscence or with anticipation. I cannot say. But come to the point I must and you must. An officer from the future world will knock at the door of our hearts and serve us on the writ of ejection, and we will have to surrender. And we will wake up after these autumnal and wintry and vernal and summery glories have vanished from our vision. We will wake up to find again which has only one season, and that the season of everlasting love.

But you say: "I don't want to break out from my present existence. It is so chilly and so damp to go down the stairs of that vault. I don't want anything drawn so tightly over my eyes. If there were some way of breaking through the partition between this world and the next, I should like to see the face of the surgeon and the doctors cannot compound a mixture by which this body and soul can be kept together. Is there no escape from this preparation?" None, absolutely none. A great many men tumble through the gates of the future, as we were, and we do not know where they have gone, and the gloom and mystery to the passage, but Jesus Christ so mightily stormed the gates of that future world that they have never since been closed again. Christ knows what it is to leave this world, of the beauty of which He was more appreciative than we ever could be. He knows the exquisiteness of the phosphorescence of the glories of the midnight heavens, for they were the spangled canopy of His wilderness pillow. He knows about the lilies, and he told them into His sermon. He knows about the stars of the sky, and he knew they way through His discourse. He knows about the sorrows of leaving this beautiful world. Not a taper was kindled in the dark of His died physicians. "He died in cold sweat and dizziness and hemorrhage and agony, that have put Him in sympathy with all the dying. He goes through Christendom and gathers up the strings of all the dead pillows. He puts them under His own neck and head."

To all those to whom life has been an a-sorbity—a dose they could not swallow, to all that set their teeth on edge and a-rasp and a-pray each symptom of sympathy of Jesus Christ. The sister of Herschel, the astronomer, used to spend much of her time polishing the telescopes through which he brought the distant worlds nigh, and it is my ambition now this hour to clear the lens of your spiritual vision so that, looking through the dark night of your earthly troubles you behold the glorious constellation of a Saviour's mercy and a Saviour's love. Oh, my friends, do not try to carry all your ills alone! Do not put your burden on your own shoulders. Put them on the shoulders of the One who has a right to carry them, when you have a trouble of any kind, you rush this way and that way, and you wonder what this man will say to me. Well, my friends, say about it, and you try this prescription and that prescription and the other prescription. Oh, why do you not go straight to the heart of Christ, knowing that for our weaning and suffering race He took the vinegar?

There was a vessel that had been tossed on the seas for a great many weeks and was disabled, and the supply of water gave out, and the crew were dying of thirst. After many days they saw a vessel against the sky. They signalled it. When the vessel came nearer, the people on the suffering ship cried to the captain of the other vessel, "Send us what you can. We are dying for lack of water!" And the captain on the vessel that had responded: "Dip your buckets where you are. You are in the mouth of the Amazon, and there are scores of miles of fresh water all around about you and hundreds of feet deep!" And then they dropped their buckets over the side of the vessel and brought up the clear, fresh water and put out the fire of their thirst. So I hail you to-day, after a long and perilous voyage, thirsting as you are for pardon, and thirsting for comfort, and thirsting for the life of God, and I hail you to-day, and I hail you to-day in the use of your going in that death-struck state, while all around you is the deep, clear, white, sparkling flood of God's sympathetic mercy? Oh, dip your buckets and drink and live and be happy. "Water will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

Yet there are people who refuse this divine sympathy, and they try to fight their own battles, and drink their own vinegar, and carry their own cross, and their life, instead of being a triumphal march from victory to victory, will be a hobbling on from defeat to defeat until they make a final surrender to the victor. Oh, I wish I could to-day gather up in my arms all the woes of men and women, all their heartaches, all their disappointments, all their chagrins, and just take them right to the feet of a sympathetic Jesus! He took the vinegar. Nana Sahib, after he had lost his last battle in India, fell back into the jungles of their own country to fall of malaria that no mortal can live there. He carried with him also a rubby of great lustre and of great value. He died in those jungles. His body was never found, and the rubby has never yet been recovered. And I fear that to-day there are some who will fall back from this subject into the sickening, killing jungles of their sin, carrying a gem of infinite value—a priceless soul to be lost forever. Oh, that that rubby might flash in the eternal acronial! But, no. There are some, I fear, who turn away from this offered mercy and comfort and divine sympathy notwithstanding that Christ, for all who accept His grace, fringed the journey, and suffered the lacerating thorns, and received in His face the expostations of the filthy mob, and for the guilty, and the discouraged, and the discomforted of the race took the vinegar. May God Almighty break the infatuation and lead you out into the strong hope, and the good cheer, and the glorious sunshine of this triumphal gospel!

WHEELS AT THE PARIS FAIR.

Ample Preparations Being Made to Show Bicycles.

The wheel, according to the New York Herald, will occupy an honored place at the Paris exposition. No-where in the world are there more enthusiastic wheelmen than the members of the famous Touring Club de France, and they have not been slow to avail themselves of this opportunity to draw the attention of the civilized world to the modern wheel with all its latest improvements. A committee was appointed some time ago to see about the construction of a building in which the wheels could be exhibited, and about the selection of a suitable site, and now the news comes that an admirable site has been granted by the authorities in charge of the exposition, and that on it a stately building will be erected within a very short time. The site is near the Eiffel tower, and close to the entrance of the Champ de Mars. Anyone who knows Paris will see that no better site could have been selected. All the visitors to the exposition, whether they are interested in bicycling or not, will be sure to pass by this spot, and cannot help being attracted by the artistic edifice that is to be reared in honor of the ubiquitous wheel. The building has been designed by M. Gustave Rives, and is described by those who have seen his plans as a marvel of beauty. No pains will certainly be spared so far as ornamentation and other decorations are concerned. Contracts for this and all other necessary work will soon be awarded, and it is expected that the building will be completed at an early date. American as well as foreign wheelmen will doubtless spend many a pleasant hour in this building. Hardly a week passes that some attempt is not made to improve the bicycle in one direction or another, and if we would find out about these so-called improvements and learn how many of them are really worth anything we must study them at our leisure in this place. That thousands will do so is certain.

Unless the heart is in perfect sympathy with the head, the comprehension of any great work of art is impossible.—Goethe.

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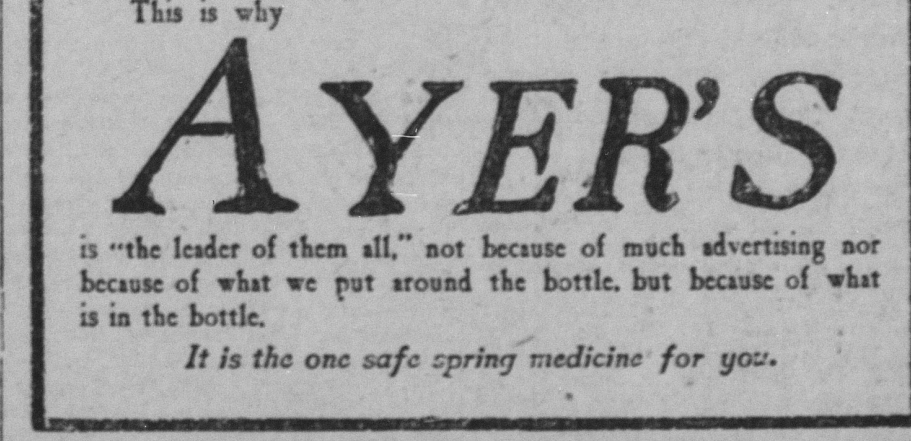
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