

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

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 ix., 39.

Christians of Joppa! Impressed as I am with your meekness, the first I ever saw, 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 oxen drawing the logs through this very town on the way to Jerusalem, nothing can make me forget that this Joppa, the birthplace of the sewing society that has blessed the poor of all succeeding ages in all lands. The disasters to your town when Judas Maccabaeus set it on fire, and Napoleon had five hundred prisoners massacred in your market-place, 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 am glad that there is not a page of the world's history which is not a record of female benevolence. God says to all lands and people, Come now and hear the widow's 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 amidst the rabble and took a stick and struck the door as a signal that they might all strike it. When she went the prison door and out came the prisoners. Queen Matilda, the wife of Henry I., went down amidst the poor and washed their sores and administered to their cordials. Mrs. Retson, at Matagorda, appeared on the battlefield to the wife of a slain soldier, and was crying around, and cared for the wounded. There was a man or woman who has ever heard of the Civil War in America who has not heard of the women of the Sanitary and Christian Commission, 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 handsome farms, but there was no grief at their departure like that at the death of Dorcas. There was not more turmoil and upturning in the Mediterranean Sea, dashing against the wharves of this seaport, than there were surging to and fro of grief because Dorcas was dead. There are a great many who go out of life and are unmourned. There may be a very large funeral; there may be a great many carriages and a plumed hearse; there may be high sounding eulogies; the bell may toll at the cemetery gate; there may be a 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 lost nothing, the world has lost nothing. It is only a woman who is missed, it is only a property that is lost, it is only an idler stopped yawning; it is only a dissipated fashionable parted from his wine cellar; while, on the other hand, no useful Christian leaves the world without being missed. The church of God cries out in the prophetic language, "The tree for the cedar has fallen." Widowhood comes and shows the garments which the departed had made. Orphans are lifted up to look into the calm face of the sleeping one in the 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 the story of history that on that day there were ten thousand of the poor of Joppa who followed her coffin, weeping and wailing until the air rang again. Because when they lost Josephine, they lost their last earthly friend. Oh, who would not rather have such obsequies poured in the lachrymatory that have been exhumed from ancient cities. There may be no mass for the dead; there may be no costly sarcophagus; but in the damp cellars of the city, and through the lonely huts of the mountain gipsy, the people are 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.

I am glad that you, Dorcas the resurrected, the apostle came to where she was and said: "Arise, and she sat up." In what a short compass the great writer put that—"She sat up." Oh, what a time there must have been around this town, when the apostle brought her out among her old friends! How the tears of joy must have started! What clapping of hands there must have been! What singing! What laughter! Sound it all through that lane! Shout it down that dark street! Let all Joppa hear it! Dorcas is resurrected!

You and I have seen the same thing many a time; not a dead body resurrected, but the deceased coming up again after death in 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 on earth will continue till the world ceases. Services rendered for Christ never stop. A Christian woman toils for the upbuilding of a church through many anxieties, through many self-denials, with prayers and tears, and then she dies. It is fifteen years since she went away. Now the spirit of God descends upon that church; hundreds would stand up and confess the faith of Christ. Has that Christian woman, who went away fifteen years ago, nothing to do with these things? I see the flowering out of her noble heart. I hear the echo of her footsteps in all the songs of our sin forgiven, in the psalms, in the hymns, in the words 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 needles forever. After making garments for others, some one will make garments 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 from your last room 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 and an angel of God guarding it, and through all the long night no rude foot will disturb the dust. Sleep on, sleep on! Soft bed, pleasant shadows, undisturbed repose! Sleep on!

go into the asylums of the suffering and destitute hearing that Gospel which is sight for the blind, and healing for the deaf, and which makes the lame man leap like a hart, and brings the dead to life, immortal health bounding in their pulses. 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 her time idly planning how the poor of your city of Joppa were to be relieved; she took her needle and relieved them. She was not like those persons who sympathize with imaginary sorrows, and go out in the street and laugh at the boy who has upset his basket of cold victuals, or like that charity which makes a rousing speech on the benevolence of reform, and goes out to kick the beggar from the street crying: "Huzza! your miserable howling!" The sufferers of the world want not so much theory as practice; not so much tears as dollars; not so much kind wishes as loaves of bread; not so much sympathy as shoes. "Huzza! your 'God bless you!' as jackets and frocks. I will put one earnest Christian man, hard working, against five thousand mere theorists on the subject of charity. There are a great many who have fine ideas about the architecture who never in their life have tried 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.

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Parliament and the royal family to sit in. There was a great audience to witness the distribution of the medals. A Colonel who had lost both feet in the battle of Inkerman was pulled in on a wheel chair; others came in 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 these to the wounded men and the wounded officers, the bands of music struck up the national air, and the people with streaming eyes joined in the song:

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

And then they shouted "Huzza! huzza!" Oh, it was a proud day for those returned warriors! But a brighter, better and gladder day will come when Christ shall gather those who have toiled in His service, good soldiers of Jesus Christ. He shall rise before them, and in the presence of all the glorified of heaven He will say: "Well done, good and faithful servant!" and then He will give them the medals of eternal victory, not inscribed with words of righteousness which we have done, but with those four great battles, dear to earth and dear to heaven, Bethlehem! Nazareth! Getsemane! Calvary!

Courage in Battle.
Colonel James M. Thompson, of St. Louis, says in the *Globe-Democrat*: "The quality of courage in battle I regard as being to a large extent a physical attribute. I have heard a good deal of talk about the nonchalance of men in action, and their ease and composure after the first gun had been fired, but I never took much stock in it. I went through the war in the army, and it was my fortune to be in a portion of the service in Virginia where there was a good deal of hard fighting to do, and there was no creditable way to get out of it, either. I saw service in twenty-eight battles, and I can truly say that I for one never got 'used to it.' I never went into a fight without an all-pervading sense of danger, and was always glad when it was over. "Of course moral courage, high patriotism and the military spirit kept the great majority of men right up to the mark, but there were notable instances of men whose physical natures simply failed to respond when called on. A clear head and a full conception of the enormous consequences of cowardice to themselves failed to spur them to the staying point, and on the first whiz of a bullet their signals of distress were visible to all in sight. A well-known New York Colonel, a perfect gentleman, a scholar, a patriot and a really noble fellow, was so weak in point of courage and his humiliation so great at really being afraid to face danger that he was forced to retire from the army, went away to Washington, pined away and died in a few weeks. I knew another prominent officer whose friends, out of consideration for his well-known failing, used to manage on one pretext or another, to keep him out of engagements and thus shield him from exposure. Men like that are to be pitied, not blamed. They want to fight, but their bodies actually refuse to obey their will."

What Water Costs.
From an article on New York's "New Croton Aqueduct," by Charles Barnard, in the *Century*, we quote the following: "It is a curious commentary on the demands of modern civilization to observe the effect of building this dam. The million people in the city need a reserve of drinking water, and twenty-one families must move out of their quiet rural homes and see their hearths sink deep under water. The entire area to be taken for the reservoir is 1471 acres. Twenty-one dwellings, three saw and grist mills, a saw and blind factory and a carriage factory must be torn down and removed. A mile and a quarter of railroad track must be relaid, and six miles of country roads must be abandoned. A road twenty-three miles long will extend around the two lakes, and a border or 'safety margin' three hundred feet wide will be cleared all around the edge to prevent any contamination of water. This safety border will include a carriage road, and all the rest will be laid down to grass. As the dam rises, the water will spread wider and wider over fields, farms, and roads. Every tree will be cut down and carried away. Every building will be carted off, and the cellars burned out and filled with clean soil to prevent any possibility of injury to the water. Fortunately there is no cemetery within the limits of the land taken for the reservoir. Had there been one it would have been completely removed before the water should cover the ground. Fifty-eight persons and corporations, holding one hundred and eleven parcels of land, will be dispossessed in order to clear the land for the two lakes and the dams, roads, and safety borders."

The Phonograph.
A machine has been patented that promises to make ducks and drakes of typewriters, phonographs, graphophones and all previous inventions. The new invention, which is named the "phonograph," is about the size of a large cigar box and weighs 54 pounds. There are two immense advantages possessed by the "phonograph." First, it will reproduce sound with perfect accuracy upon a flat surface, and, second, it can be produced and sold for \$5. The Edison phonograph has this disadvantage as a means of conducting correspondence. In Edison's invention the impression of the words spoken into it is made upon a cylinder, which is inconvenient to send through the post. In the "phonograph" the impression is made upon a flat sheet of paper, which can be doubled up and sent through the post like an ordinary letter in any ordinary envelope—the paper, of course, having to be specially prepared for the purpose. The very highest hopes are entertained as to the universal success of the "phonograph," full descriptions of which will, no doubt, shortly appear in the technical journals. Its prospects may, in fact, be gauged when it is remembered that in the United States no less than \$30,000,000 are invested in the present phonograph and graphophone. One hundred thousand of those machines are already in use and they are rented out for an annual payment of \$40 each.—*London Truth*.

Origin of the Diamond.
Some theories about the origin of the diamond are very ingenious and interesting, though the amount of truth they embody remains to be proved. It has been suggested that the vapors of carbon during the coal period may have been condensed and crystallized into the diamond; and again, the itacolumite, generally regarded as the matrix, was saturated with petroleum, which, collecting in nodules, formed the gem by gradual crystallization. Newton believed it to have been a coagulated, unctuous substance, of vegetable origin, and was sustained in the theory by many eminent philosophers, including Sir David Brewster, who believed the diamond was once a mass of gum, derived from certain species of wood, and that it subsequently assumed a crystalline form. Dana and others advance the opinion that it may have been produced by the slow decomposition of vegetable material and even from animal matter. Burton says it is younger than gold and suggests the possibility that it may still be in process of formation, with capacity of growth. Specimens of the diamond have been found to inclose particles of gold—an evidence, he thinks, that its formation was more recent than that of the precious metal. The theory that the diamond was formed immediately from carbon by the action of heat is opposed by another, maintaining that it could not have been produced in this way, otherwise it would have been consumed. But the advocates of this view were not quite on their guard against a surprise, for some quick-witted opponent has found by experiments that the diamond will sustain great heat without combustion.—*American Analyst*.

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