

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject: "The Plague of Bad Books."

TEXT: "And the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt." And the magicians stood up before Pharaoh and said, "We will bring thee frogs as the frogs of Egypt."

There is almost a universal aversion to frogs, and yet with the Egyptian they were honored, they were sacred, and they were objects of worship while alive, and after death they were embalmed, and to-day their remains may be found among the sepulchres of Thebes. These creatures, so attractive once to the Egyptians, at divine behest became obnoxious and loathsome, and they went croaking and hopping and leaping into the palace of the king, and into the houses of the nobles, and the chambers of the people, and even the ovens, which now are uplifted above the earth and on the side of chimneys, but then were small holes in the earth, with sunken pottery, were filled with frogs when the magicians came to look at them. If a man sat down to eat a frog alighted on his plate. If he attempted to put on a shoe it was his head upon a pillow it had been taken possession of by a frog.

Frogs high and low, and everywhere; loathsome frogs, slimy frogs, besetting frogs, innumerable frogs, great plague of frogs. What made the matter worse the magicians could by slight of hand produce the same thing, and they seemed to succeed, for by slight of hand wonders may be wrought. After Moses had thrown down his staff and by miracle it became a serpent, and then he took hold of it and by directly it again became a staff, the serpent charmers imitated the same thing, and knowing that there were serpents in Egypt which by a peculiar pressure on the neck would become as rigid as a stick of wood, they seemed to change the serpent into the staff, and then throwing it down, the staff became the serpent.

So likewise these magicians tried to imitate the plague of frogs, and perhaps by smell of frog attracting a great number of them to a certain point, or by shaking them out from a hidden place, the magicians sometimes seemed to accomplish the same miracle. While these magicians made the plague worse, none of them tried to make it better. "Frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt, and the magicians stood up before Pharaoh and said, 'We will bring thee frogs as the frogs of Egypt.'"

Now that plague of frogs has come back upon the earth. It is abroad to-day. It is smiting this nation. It comes in the shape of corrupt literature. The greatest blessing that ever came to this nation is that of an elevated literature, and the greatest scourge has been that of unclean literature. This last has its victims in all occupations and departments. It has helped to fill insane asylums and penitentiaries and almshouses and dens of shame. The bodies of this infection lie in the hospitals and in the graves, while their souls are being tossed over into a lost eternity, an avalanche of horror and despair.

The London plague was nothing to it. That counted its victims by thousands, but this modern pest has already shrouded its millions into the charnel house of the morally dead. The long-range rail tracks that stretch over the Erie or Hudson tracks was not long enough nor large enough to carry the beastliness and the putrefaction which have been gathered up in bad books and newspapers of this land in the last twenty years. The literature of a nation decides the fate of the nation. Good books, good morals. Bad books, bad morals.

I begin with the lowest of all the literature, that which does not even pretend to be respectable—from cover to cover a blotch of leprosy. There are men whose entire business it is to dispose of that kind of literature. They display it before the school-boy on his way home. They get the catalogues of schools and colleges, take the names and postoffice addresses, and send their advertisements, and their circulars, and their pamphlets, and their books to every one of them.

In the possession of these dealers in bad literature were found nine hundred thousand names and postoffice addresses, to whom it was thought it might be profitable to send these corrupt things. In the year 1873 there were one hundred and sixty-five establishments engaged in publishing cheap, corrupt literature. From one publishing house there went out twenty whole copies of corrupt books. Although over thirty tons of vile literature have been destroyed by the Society for the Suppression of Vice, still there is enough of it left in this country to bring down upon us the just anger of an aroused God.

In the year 1868 the evil had become so great in this country that the Congress of the United States passed a law forbidding the transmission of bad literature through the United States mails, but there were large loops in that law through which criminals might crawl out, and the law was a dead failure—that law of 1868. But in 1873 another law was passed by the Congress of the United States against the transmission of corrupt literature through the mails—and under that law multitudes of these scoundrels have been arrested, their property confiscated and they themselves thrown into the penitentiaries, where they belonged.

Now, my friends, how are we to war against this corrupt literature, and how are the frogs of this Egyptian plague to be slain? First of all by the prompt and inexorable execution of the law. Let all good postmasters, and United States district attorneys, and detectives, and reformers concur in their action to stop this plague. When Sir Rowland Hill spent his life in trying to secure cheap postage not only for England, but for all the world, and to open the blessing of the postoffice to all honest business, and all professions of charity, kindness, and affection, for all healthful intercourse, he did not mean to make vice easy or to fill the mail bags of the United States with the scabs of such a leprosy.

It ought not to be in the power of every bad man who can raise a one-cent stamp for a circular or a two-cent stamp for a letter to blast a man or destroy a home. The postal service of this country must be clean, must be kept clean, and we must all understand that the swift retributions of the United States Government hover over every violation of the letter box.

There are thousands of men and women in this country, some for personal gain, some through innate depravity, some through a spirit of revenge, who wish to use this great avenue of convenience and intelligence for purposes of revengeful, malicious and diabolic. Wake up the law. Wake up the penalties. Let every court room on this subject be a blast-thunder and a flame. Let the convicted offenders be sent for the full term to Sing Sing or Harrisburg.

That gave themselves entirely to the publication of vile literature have been stopped or have gone into business less obnoxious. What has thrown off, what has kept on the raft through this country for some time nearly all the leprosy periodicals? Those of us who have been on the rail trains have noticed a great change in the last few months and the last year or two. Why? The vile literature which has been kept off the rail trains for some time back? Who effected it? These societies for the purification of railroad literature gave warning to the publishers and warning to railroad companies, and warning to conductors and wardens to newboys, to keep the infernal stuff off the trains.

Many of the cities have successfully prohibited the most of that literature even from going on the news stands. Terror has seized upon the publishers and the dealers to impure literature from the fact that over a thousand arrests have been made, and the aggregate time for which the convicted have been sentenced to the prison is over one hundred and ninety years, and from the fact that their circulars have been destroyed, and the business is not as profitable as it used to be.

How have so many of the news stands of our great cities been purified? By much of this inquiry has been asked? By much of this inquiry has been asked? Oh, no. You might as well go into the jungle of the East Indies and pat a cobra on the neck, and with profound argument try to persuade it that it is morally wrong to bite and sting and to poison. The only answer to your argument would be an uplifted head and a hiss and a sharp, rooking tooth struck into your arteries. The only argument for a cobra is a shogun, and the only argument for a cobra is to impure literature is the clutch of the police and the bean soup in a penitentiary. The law! The law! I invoke to consummate the work so grandly begun!

Another way in which we are to drive back this plague of Egyptian frogs is by dealers in impure literature is the clutch of the police and the bean soup in a penitentiary. The law! The law! I invoke to consummate the work so grandly begun!

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Why are fifty per cent. of the criminals in the jails and penitentiaries of the United States to-day under twenty-one years of age? Many of them under seventeen, under sixteen, under fifteen, under fourteen, under thirteen. Walk along one of the corridors of the Bunker Hill prison in New York and look for yourselves. Bad books, bad newspapers bewitched them as soon as they got out of the cradle. Beware of all those stories which end wrong. Beware of all those books which make the road that ends in perdition seem to end in Paradise. Do not glory the dirk and the pistol. Do not call the desperado brave or the libertine gallant. Teach our young people that if they go down into the swamps and marshes to watch the jack-of-lanterns dance on the decay and rotteness they will watch the malaria and death.

"Oh," says some one, "I am a business man, and I have no time to examine what my children read. I have no time to inspect the books that come into my household." If your children were threatened with typhoid fever, would you have time to go for the doctor? Would you have time to watch the progress of the disease? Would you have time for the funeral? In the presence of my God I warn you of the fact that your children are threatened with moral decay and rotteness, and that unless the thing be stopped it will be to them funeral of body, funeral of mind, funeral of soul. Three funerals in one.

My word is to this vast multitude of young people: Do not touch, do not borrow, do not buy a corrupt book or a corrupt picture. A book will decide a man's destiny for good or for evil. The book you read yesterday may have decided you for time and for eternity, or it may be a book that may come into your possession to-morrow.

A good book—who can exaggerate its power? Benjamin Franklin said that his reading of Cotton Mather's "Essays to Do Better for All the Rest of His Life." George Law declared that a biography he read in childhood gave him all his subsequent prosperity. A clergyman, many years ago, passing to the far west, stopped at a hotel. He saw a woman copying something from Dodd's "Rise and Progress." It seemed that she had borrowed the book, and there were some things she wanted especially to remember.

The clergyman had in his satchel a copy of Dodd's "Rise and Progress," and so he made her a present of it. Thirty years ago he died. His young son came that way, and he asked where the woman was whom he had seen so long ago. "She lives yonder in that beautiful house." He went there and said to her, "Do you remember me?" She said, "No, I do not." He said, "Do you remember the man who gave you Dodd's 'Rise and Progress' thirty years ago?" "Oh, yes; I remember. That book saved my soul." I loaned the book to all my neighbors, and they read it and they were converted to God, and we had a revival of religion which swept through the whole community. We built a church and called a pastor. You see that spire yonder, don't you? That church was built as the result of that book you gave me thirty years ago." Oh, the power of a good book! But, alas! for the influence of a

John Angel James, than whom England never had a holier minister, stood in his pulpit at Birmingham and said: "Twenty-five years ago I had loaned to me an anonymous book. It was not long but only fifteen minutes, and then I had to give it back, but that book has haunted me like a specter ever since. I have in agony of soul, on my knees before God, prayed that he would obliterate from my soul the memory of it, but I shall carry the damage of it until the day of my death." The assassin of Sir William Russell declared that he got the inspiration for his crime by reading what was then a new and popular novel, "Jack Sheppard." Homer's "Iliad" made Alexander the warrior. Alexander said so. The story of Alexander made Julius Caesar and Charles XII. both men of blood. Have you in your pocket, or in your trunk, or in your desk a business a bad book, a bad picture, a bad pamphlet? In God's name I warn you to destroy it.

Another way in which we shall fight back this corrupt literature and kill the frogs of Egypt is by rolling over them the Christian printing press, which shall give plenty of healthful reading to all adults. All these men and women are reading men and women. What are you reading? Abstain from all those books which, while they had some good things about them, had also an admixture of evil. You have read books that had two elements in them—the good and the bad. Which stuck to you? The bad! The heart of most people is like a sieve, which lets the small particles of gold fall through, but keeps the great cinders. Once in a while there is a mind like a loastons, which, plunged amid steel and brass filings, gathers up the steel and repels the brass. That is generally the opposite. If you attempt to plunge through a fence of burrs to get one blackberry, you will get more burrs than blackberries.

You cannot afford to read a bad book, however good you are. You say, "The influence is insignificant." I tell you that the scratch of a pin has sometimes produced lockjaw. Alas, if through curiosity, as many do, you pry into an evil book, your curiosity is a dangerous disease. What are you reading? Make a scratch into a gunpowder mill merely to see whether it would really blow up or not, in a menagerie a man put his arm through the bars of a black leopard's cage. The animal's hide looked so sleek and bright and beautiful. He just stroked it once. The

monster seized him, and he drew forth a hand torn and mangled and bleeding.

Oh, touch not the evil even with the faintest stroke! Though it may be glossy and beautiful, touch it not lest you pull forth your soul torn and bleeding under the clutch of the black leopard. "But," you say, "how can I find out whether a book is good or bad or suspicious about a bad book. I never knew an exception—something suspicious in the index or style of illustration. This venomous reptile almost always carries a warning rattle.

The clock strikes midnight. A fair form bends over a romance. The eyes flash fire. The breath is quick and irregular. Occasionally the color dashes to the cheek, and then a guardian spirit were trying to shake the deadly book out of the grasp. Hot tears fall. She laughs with a shrill voice, that drops dead at its own sound. Sweat on her brow is all the spray dashed up from the furnace of death. The clock strikes four, and the rosy dawn soon after begins to look through the lattice upon the pale form that looks like a detained specter of the night. Soon in a madhouse she will make her ringlets curling ornaments, and thrust her hands through the bars of the prison, and smite her head, rubbing it back as though to push the scalp from the skull, shrieking: "My brain! my brain!" go, stand off from me, and the reefs and warning buoys, when there is such a vast ocean in which you may voyage, all sail set!

We see so many books we do not understand that a book is. Stand in the measure it—the height of the hand commands the length of it, the breadth of it. You cannot do it. Examine the paper and estimate the progress made from the time of the impressions on clay, and then on the bark of trees, and from the bark of trees to papyrus, and from papyrus to the side of wild beasts, and from the hide of wild beasts on down until the miracles of our modern paper manufacturers, and then see the paper, white and pure as an infant's soul, waiting for God's inscription.

Examine the type of it. Examine the printing of it, and see the progress from the time when Solomon's laws were written on oak planks, and Hesiod's poems were written upon tablets of lead, and the clay commands the length of it, the breadth of it. You cannot do it. Examine the paper and estimate the progress made from the time of the impressions on clay, and then on the bark of trees, and from the bark of trees to papyrus, and from papyrus to the side of wild beasts, and from the hide of wild beasts on down until the miracles of our modern paper manufacturers, and then see the paper, white and pure as an infant's soul, waiting for God's inscription.

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Kalakaua and the Mind Reader.

J. Randall Brown, the mind-reader, once saw King Kalakaua in the Sandwich Islands. His Majesty during the interview, which was arranged in order to give Brown a chance to exhibit his powers, tried to foil the expert by doing his thinking in the native language, but Brown quickly translated the thoughts into English and explained the matters to the King. Kalakaua was then invited to secret a button anywhere in the room. Instead of hiding it in the room he concealed it in his mouth. Brown was puzzled for a moment, but finally told the King that the button was in his mouth. Determined not to let the mind-reader get ahead of him, King Kalakaua attempted to swallow the button. It was a task more difficult than His Majesty had anticipated and he narrowly escaped choking to death. His physicians and attendants were angry and indignant, and blamed Brown, but the King recovering, the mind-reader was allowed to leave the islands. Had King Kalakaua checked to death on the button, Brown would have been fortunate in making his escape. As it was, the King sent him a number of presents, and complimented him upon his triumphs.—Atlanta Constitution.

The California Legislature is to be asked to provide special legislation to encourage the culture of ramie in California.

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W. J. CHENEY & CO., Proprietors, Toledo, O. We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 15 years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions, and financially able to carry out any obligations made by their firm.

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ELY'S CREAM BALM Applied to Nostrils Quickly Absorbed, Cleanses the Head, Heals the Sores and Cures

CATARRH.

Restores Taste and Smell, quickly Believes Cold in Head and Headache. Sold by Druggists. ELY, RICH, 26 Warren St., N. Y.

A State of Siege

How many people there are who regard the coming of winter as a constant state of siege. It seems as if the elements sat down outside the walls of health and now and again, led by the north wind and his attendant blasts, broke over the ramparts, spreading colds, pneumonia and death. Who knows when the next storm may come and what its effects upon your constitution may be? The fortifications of health must be made strong. SCOTT'S EMULSION of pure Norwegian Cod Liver Oil and Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda will aid you to hold out against Coughs, Colds, Consumption, Scrofula, General Debility, and all Anemic and Wasting Diseases, until the siege is raised. It prevents wasting in children. Palatable as Milk.

SPECIAL—Scott's Emulsion is non-secret, and is prescribed by the Medical Profession all over the world, because its ingredients are scientifically combined in such a manner as to greatly increase their remedial value.

CAUTION—Scott's Emulsion is put up in salmon-colored wrappers. Be sure and get the genuine. Prepared only by Scott & Bowne, Manufacturing Chemists, New York. Sold by all Druggists.

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\$55.95 BUGGIES MURRAY \$5.95

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ONE ENJOYS

Both the method and results when Syrup of Figs is taken; it is pleasant and refreshing to the taste, and acts gently yet promptly on the Kidneys, Liver and Bowels, cleanses the system effectually, dispels colds, headaches and fevers and cures habitual constipation. Syrup of Figs is the only remedy of its kind ever produced, pleasing to the taste and acceptable to the stomach, prompt in its action and truly beneficial in its effects, prepared only from the most healthy and agreeable substances, its many excellent qualities commend it to all and have made it the most popular remedy known.

Syrup of Figs is for sale in 50c and \$1 bottles by all leading druggists. Any reliable druggist who may not have it on hand will procure it promptly for any one who wishes to try it. Do not accept any substitute.

CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO. SAN FRANCISCO, CAL. LOUISVILLE, KY. NEW YORK, N. Y.

The Vale of Cashmere.

Perhaps the most delightful place on the face of the earth, if we may give credence to travelers, is the far-famed vale of Cashmere, in Northern India. The valley of Cashmere is the seat of the manufacture of the famous shawls of that name, which for one hundred years or more were perhaps the most prized of all textile fabrics. They were, indeed, so highly valued that they have occasionally been used for the payment of tribute. For many years past, however, manufacture of these shawls has been a decaying industry, owing, probably, to the extinction of many of the native courts, and the decline therewith of the barbaric splendor associated with them.

We learn from Allahabad, under recent date, that though there has been a sudden development of trade between British India and Cashmere it has been accompanied by an equally rapid shrinkage in the export of shawls, as during the last four years the decline has been to the extent of 64 lakhs of rupees. All lovers of the beautiful in textile art would see its extinction with regret. Manchester (England) Textile Mercury.

The latest town to start a stock-yard and packing-house is Dubuque, Iowa. The capital stock of the company is \$500,000, and is supposed to be held mainly by Chicago parties.

The casualties from fast driving in London, England, last year were 250 persons killed and 5000 injured.

It is estimated that more than a million cattle and other animals died last winter in the extreme Western and Southern States and Territories of neglect and starvation, and probably thousands were frozen to death.

All who use Dobbin's Electric Soap praise it as the best, cheapest and most economical family soap made, but if you will try it once it will tell a still stronger tale of its merits. Please try it. Your grocer will supply you.

The mountain tribes of the Caucasus are emigrating in large numbers to Turkey.

Here is a chance to make money. I bought a machine for plating gold, silver and nickel, and it works splendidly. When people heard about it they brought more spoons, forks and jewelry than I could plate. In a week I made \$25, after a month \$87. My daughter made \$18 in five days. You can get a Plater for \$3 from the Lake Electric Co., Englewood, Ill., and will, we trust, be benefited as much as we have been. A READER.

Wise Mothers. Use Dr. Hoxie's Certain Croup Cure, the only remedy in the world that will cure a violent case of croup in half an hour. No opium. Sold by druggists or mailed on receipt of 25c. Address A. P. Hoxie, Buffalo, N. Y.

Money invested in choice one hundred dollar building lots in suburbs of Kansas City will pay from five hundred to one thousand per cent. the next few years under 10% interest. \$25 cash and \$5 per month without interest. Considerable profit. Particulars on application. J. H. Baerman & Co., Kansas City, Mo.

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Lee Wa's Chinese Headache Cure. Hoxie's Nerve Restorer. No other after first day's use. Free prepaid on receipt of \$1 per bottle. Adeler & Co., 222 Wyandotte, Kansas City, Mo.

Timber, Mineral, Farm Lands and Ranches in Missouri, Kansas, Texas and Arkansas. Four hundred and thirty-two pages. Price \$1.00. Adeler & Co., 222 Wyandotte, Kansas City, Mo.

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ACT LIKE MAGIC ON A WEAK STOMACH. 25 CENTS A BOX. OF ALL DRUGGISTS.

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