

REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON.

Subject: "Gleaners in Life's Field." (Preached at Glenwood, Col.)

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

Within a few weeks I have been in North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Michigan, Canada, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and they are one great harvest field, and no season can be more enchanting in any country than the season of harvest.

The time that Ruth and Naomi arrive at Bethlehem is harvest time. It was the old 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 that way. It was the custom of the land scattered across the field after the main harvest had been reaped, instead of making it, as farmers do now, it was by the custom of the land, left in its place, so that the poor might glean 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 toil 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 be 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 woman's gleaner—an 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 the successes and adventures of the day. That Ruth, who left her native land of Moab in darkness, and journeyed 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! Ought not she to be thought of as the woman who brought a morning?

I learn in the first 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 a character. It was the misfortune of an unfortunate man who has no trouble. It was 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 lock the better soldier, and Kitto the better encyclopedist, 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 you never see any of 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." The Lord took a child out of that pastor's house, and the preacher was just as brilliant as he was before, oh, the warmth, the tenderness, the discourses! The fact is that trouble is a great educator. You see a man sometimes sit down at an instrument, and his execution is cold and formal and unfeeling. The reason is that all his life he has prospered. But let misfortune or bereavement come to that man, and he sits down at the instrument, and you discover the pathos in the sweep of the keys. Misfortune and trials are great educators.

A young doctor comes into a sick room where there is a dying child. Perhaps he is very rough in his prescription, and very rough in his manner, and with iron and steel he looks at the dying child and he says, "Oh, how this reminds me of my Charlie!" Trouble, the great educator! Sorrow—I see its touch in the grandest painting; I hear its tremor in the sweetest song; I feel its power in the grandest sermon.

Greecian mythology said that the foundation 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 comfort and spiritual life have been struck out by the iron shoe hoof of disaster and calamity. I see Daniel's courage best by the foot of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace. I see Paul's progress best when I find him on the ground, and when he is on his feet, and it takes all our present national sorrow, to lift up our nation on that high career where it will march along after the foreign despots that have mocked and the tyrannies that have jeered shall be swept down under the omnipotent wing of God, who jates oppression, 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 unfeeling friendship. I suppose there were plenty of friends for Naomi while she was in prosperity. But of all her acquaintances, how many were willing to trudge 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, there was 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 sunbeams have gone to their nests, now the night has fallen.

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 Habel; 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 Marry, who adhered to Him on the cross, when all the world had forsaken Him; and there was a great many others, who cried out, "Ere thou goest, I will go; and where 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 I be buried; but death part thee and me."

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 starts very darkly ends very brightly.

It was very hard for Noah to endure the scolding 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 top of the mountains disappeared like the backs of sea monsters, and the elements, lashed up in fury, clapped their hands over a drowned world, then Noah in the ark rejoiced in his own safety and in the safety of his family, and looked out on the wreck of a ruined earth.

Christ, hounded of persecutors, denied a pillow, worse maltreated than the thieves on either side of the cross, human hate smacking its lips in satisfaction after it had been draining His last drop of blood, the sheeted form of the celestial watchman at His crucifixion. Tell me, O Gethsemane and Golgotha! were there ever darker times than those? Like the booming of the midnight sea against the rock, the surges of Christ's anguish beat against the gates of eternity, to be echoed back by all the thrones of heaven and all the dungeons of hell.

But the day of reward comes from Christ; all the pomp and dominion of this world are to be hung on His throne, uncrowned heads are to bow before Him on whose head there are many crowns, and all the celestial worship is to come up at His feet like the humming of the forest, like the rushing of the waters, like the thundering of the seas, while all heaven, rising on their thrones, best time with their scepters: "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Again, I learn from my subject that events which seem to be most insignificant may be momentous. Can you imagine anything more unimportant than the coming of a poor peasant from Moab to Judah? Can you imagine anything more trivial than the fact that this Ruth just happened to alight—as they say—just happened to alight on that field of Boaz? Yet all ages, all generations, have an interest in the fact that she was to become an ancestress of the Lord Jesus Christ, and all nations and kingdoms must look at that one little incident with a thrill of unspeakable and eternal satisfaction. So it is in your history and in mine; even that you thought of no importance at all have been of very great moment. That casual conversation, that accidental meeting—you did not think of it again for a long while; but how it changed all the current of your life!

It seemed to be of no importance that Jubal invented rude instruments of music, calling them harp and organ, but they were the introduction of all the world's minstrelsy. And as you hear the vibration of a stringed instrument, even after the fingers have been taken away from it, so all music is now of lute and drum and so on, all music is only the long continued strains of Jubal's harp and Jubal's organ. It seemed to be a matter of very little importance that Jubal learned the uses of copper and iron, but that rude foundry of ancient days has its echo in the rattle of Birmingham machinery and the roar and bang of factories on the Merrimack.

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 the hardships and exposure to which Ruth was subjected, every intelligent woman will find something to do. I know 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 no more I learn from my subject the value of gleaning. Ruth going into that harvest field might have said: "There is a straw I can't get any barley for myself or for my mother-in-law, and there is only one straw." 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 another, and then she brought them altogether and she threshed them out, and she had an ephah of barley, nigh a bushel. Oh, that we all might be gleaners!

Each one has many things while toiling in a blacksmith's shop. Abercrombie, the world-renowned philosopher, was a physician 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 sick room to open. Yet how many there are in this day who say they are so busy they have no time for mental or spiritual improvement; the great duties of life crowd the field like strong reapers and carry off all the hours, and there is only one herb and there is 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 at last make a whole sheaf for the Lord's garner. It is the stray opportunities 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 or a sick relative that is not strong enough to come forth and toil in the field, let Ruth take home to feed the fowls, let her glean, let her sow, let her go forth and weep, 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!

Musical Fish of Ceylon. Every bay and inlet on the coast of Ceylon abounds with musical fish. Their song, if it can be called a song, is not one sustained note like a bird's, but a multitude of tiny, soft, sweet sounds, each clear and distinct in itself, something like the vibrations of a wineglass when its rim is rubbed with the moistened finger. In the harbor at Bombay, India, there is a fish with a song like the sound produced by an Eolian harp.—St. Louis Republic.

Carrier Pigeon Spies. An officer of the German army says that several carrier pigeons have been caught near the Russian frontier bearing letters containing information about German military affairs, frontier fortresses, maps, etc. These pigeons are presumed to be in the service of the Russian Government. Similar discoveries have been made on the Austro-Russian frontier. An order has accordingly been given that all carrier pigeons found crossing the frontiers shall be shot.—Pittsburg.

Arabs in a New York trial called upon Allah to destroy their right eye if they were not telling the truth.

THE FARM AND GARDEN.

THE BEST GESE.

A Connecticut poultry man, who speaks from his own experience, distinctly states that: "No amount of good food will fatten geese of a mongrel type." The best and the quickest birds to-day of good flesh in his opinion are those produced by Embden geese crossed by the Toulouse. He feeds his geese with wheat and barley grain and barley meal with brewer's grains, all of which are good fattening foods. He also feeds turnip and marigold tops, which are greatly relished.—New York World.

A LONG TAIL ON COW.

W. H. Seelye, of Kalamazoo, Mich., a dairyman of long experience, says: "I know of no physiological reason why a long tail is a good sign in a dairy cow, but I do know that all our best cows have them." Mr. J. B. Knapp, of Portland, Ore., gave a corresponding opinion in the Dairyman not long ago. The Hollanders for hundreds of years have observed that their most promising and long-milking cows had long tails. Hence it becomes a settled thing with them that the tail should extend at least below the hock. The Dairyman says: "The long tail is an indication of nerve power, and that is a thing that is always to be desired in a cow. It is equivalent to what we call the 'staying power' in a race-horse."

BADLY EDUCATED CALVES.

Much of the trouble in dairies due to vices in cows is attributable to the bad education of the calves. The training of the calf should begin before it has got upon its feet. It should be wrapped in a sack and carried away to a comfortable pen at a distance from the cow. To prevent its recognition of the dam is the first step to make a docile calf. It relieves the cow from a source of much nervous excitement, to which quite often an attack of milk fever is due.

The cow is left in quiet, in a dark, lone pen if possible, for a few hours, when the acceptable meal of warm bran or oatmeal gruel is given having a pint of molasses in it. This is laxative and nutritious and settles the cow to a comfortable rest for a few hours, after which she is milked and the milk is at once fed to the calf. A little patience will suffice to teach the calf its first lesson, which is to drink the milk, and then a second one is given. This is to have a strap around its neck and to be tied in the pen. It will lie down and sleep quietly until the next milking time, which will be in twelve hours, when it will need a little more patient teaching to drink its next meal. By continuing such treatment the young thing will soon learn to drink, and the ninth meal should be of warm, sweet skimmed milk. To make a good calf its milk should be given warm as long as milk is given to it, which may be three or four months.—New York Times.

ROADS AND ROADMAKING.

The Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station at Auburn has issued an interesting bulletin on this subject from which the following extracts are taken: As an unnecessarily long road would increase the cost of construction, the cost of repairs, and the cost of time and labor in traveling over it, it should, other things being equal, be perfectly straight, but straightness should always be sacrificed to obtain a level or make the road less steep. This is one of the most important principles to be observed, and yet is most often violated. Roads should be made to curve sometimes for economy in construction, such as to avoid swampy or bad ground, or to avoid large excavations, or to reach points on streams better suited for the approach of bridges. Besides its substantial advantages, the gently curving road is much more pleasant to the traveler, for he is not fatigued by the tedious prospect of a long straight stretch to be traversed, but is met at each curve by a constantly varied view.

The proper width for a road depends of course upon the importance and the amount of travel upon it. The least width to enable vehicles to pass is assumed at sixteen and a half feet. In England the width of turnpikes approaching large towns is sixty feet. Ordinary turnpikes are thirty-five feet wide, and ordinary carriage roads across the country are given a width of twenty-five feet. In France the roads vary in width from sixty-six feet to twenty-six feet, and all have the middle portion ballasted with stone. In New York all public roads are laid out by the Commissioners of Highways and are not less than three rods wide between fences, and no more of them need be worked or formed into a surface for traveling than is deemed necessary.

The drainage of a road by suitable ditches is one of the most important elements. All attempts at improvement are useless till the water is thoroughly got rid of. These ditches are sunk to a depth of about three feet below the roadway, so as to thoroughly drain off the water which may pass through the surface of the roadway. In repairing roads the earth used should be as gravelly as possible and free from vegetable earth. Sod or turf, though at first tough, soon decays and forms the softest mud in wet weather. Stones of considerable size should not be used, as they will not wear uniformly with the rest of the road, and will produce hard bumps and ridges.

A gravel road carefully made, with good side ditches to thoroughly drain the road-bed, forms an excellent road. Some gravel roads are very poor, caused in a great measure by using dirty gravel, which is carelessly thrown on the road in spots, which causes the road to soon wear into deep ruts and hard ridges.—St. Louis Republic.

MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES. The American farmer must be a prompt man. He must do work at the right time and do it well, and have done with it. Our prevailing winds come over a dry continent and are hungry for

moisture, while the winds of Ireland, England and Western Europe pass over the Atlantic Ocean, warmed by the Gulf Stream, and are loaded with moisture. Here our roads are muddy to-day and dusty to-morrow, and some people gumble and call it a disagreeable climate to live in. Nothing of the sort. It is the best climate in the world for road making. But we must not let the roads get muddy. We must drain them. And in making hay our climate is the best, or worst in the world. Like fire, it is a good servant, but a bad master. We have seen grass in England that had been cut three weeks, and repeatedly turned, that was not wilted more than grass that had been cut here for three hours. And it did not seem to be injured very seriously. In our climate a few days of such exposure would make the hay fit only for the dung heap. Why this difference?

When grass and clover are growing the leaves and flowers are covered with a film of gum. Pull off a clover blossom and you find it sweet. If it were not for this film of gum or wax the rains and dews would wash out the sugar. When we cut the clover or grass and it dries rapidly, the film of wax cracks and then the rain can get at the sugar and wash it out. This is the one most understood fact to be clearly understood and observed in curing grass. The reason why the grass that had been cut so long in England was injured so much less than we should have supposed was due to the fact that the weather was so wet and the air so charged with moisture that the grass remained nearly as green and full of sap as if it had not been cut. The film of wax was still unbroken and the rain could not get at the sugar. If we cut a field of clover, and rain immediately follows, before the clover wilts, no harm is done. But if the clover is partially cured and is then allowed to lie out exposed to the rain or even to a heavy dew, much loss of sugar and other soluble matter will be sustained.

Our own plan of curing clover or a mixture of clover and grass is to start a couple of mowing machines in the afternoon, and not touch it again until next morning. While it is green the dew in the night will not injure it, and if it should rain in the night or the next morning little or no damage will be done. It is better not to touch the hay until there is a chance of getting it dry enough to put into cock. Fortunately, as soon as the rain is over and we have a clear sky and a brisk wind the hay will dry with wonderful rapidity. We want no eight-hour men on such a day, unless they do not commence work before noon. The hay must be got into cock before one leaves the field. It is then, if the cocks are well made, comparatively safe. We like to get hay in without rain. If it is not cut too early and has not been injured by rains or dews, it is astonishing how green it can be put in the mow without injury. The richer the sap the better it will keep. A few days of sharp fermentation will do no harm. The heat generated will kill the microbes, and decomposition will stop.

It should be remembered that there is quite a difference between internal and external moisture. Ordinary green clover or grass, when cut, contains seventy-five per cent. of water. In other words, a ton of grass contains 1500 pounds of water and 500 pounds of dry hay. A ton of dry hay, when growing, contains 6000 pounds of water. It is not necessary to get rid of all this water. If 5000 pounds are evaporated, the hay as put in the barn would contain thirty-three and one-third per cent. of water. If the heat generated in the mow evaporated 500 pounds more water the hay would then contain twenty per cent. of water. This is a little more than hay as sold or fed out usually contains.—American Agriculturist.

FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.

Pick the geese regularly during the summer to make them pay well.

Under ordinary management it costs about five cents a pound to grow chickens.

The Houdans are good layers and non-setters, and their flesh is considered very delicate.

Whenever young turkeys have made a sufficient growth they should be given a free range.

If the fowls begin to lose their feathers too soon change their food and do not give too stimulating diet.

The refuse of the crop from an acre of tomatoes contains more fertilizing material than similar remains of most other crops.

As hens require a deal of water, drinking only a small quantity at a time, it should be supplied abundantly, and kept clean and fresh.

Fowls are very fond of milk, and they thrive well upon it. Sour milk will bring better returns in eggs than in any other way it can be fed.

It is not economical to use the hoe if horse-power can be bestowed, but it is better to use the hoe than to allow weeds or grass to grow in the rows.

If a man wants to invest a cow with an aroma of greatness, give her a long name—fortieth Dutchess of Bunglestown, Queen Semiramis, or Pride of Beaconsfield's Barnyard. There is a great deal in a name, whether you believe it or not.

The more thought and care a farmer gives to live stock—cattle particularly—the better his general farming is pretty sure to be. Horses are sometimes petted and given extra care by poor and shiftless farmers, but such farmers rarely take much pains with cows.

Common purslane chopped up and mixed with scalded corn meal is excellent green feed for fowls that are confined. Corn and oats ground and fed to poultry is very fattening. After chicks are a month old cracked corn and wheat screenings is better for them than dough.

Reports of extraordinarily large eggs, or of smaller eggs incased in larger ones, are not uncommon. They simply indicate that the hens have been overfed, are very fat and in so condition for laying eggs of normal size.



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