

LOOK AT THE BEST SIDE.

That is Rev. Dr. Talmage's Advice to All Mankind.

A Cheery Application of a Melancholy Subject—The Dread of Death a Mistake—Charming Glimpse of the Future Life.

The following roscate sermon by Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage will have a tendency to dispel the gloom in the lives of the sick and sorrowing by stirring up a healthful spirit of anticipation. The text is Job 37: 21: "And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds."

Windcast, barometer falling, storm signals out. Ship reefing main topsail! Awnings taken in. Prophecies of foul weather everywhere. The clouds congregate around the sun, proposing to abolish him. But after a while he assails the flanks of the clouds with flying artillery of light, and here and there is a sign of clearing weather. Many do not observe it. Many do not realize it. "And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds."

You may have wondered at the statistics that in India, in the year 1875, there were over 19,000 people slain by wild beasts, and that in the year 1876 there were in India over 20,000 people destroyed by wild animals. But there is a monster in our own land which is year by year destroying more than that. It is the old bear of melancholy, and with gospel weapons I propose to chase it back to its midnight caverns. I mean to do two sums—a sum in subtraction and a sum in addition—a subtraction from your days of depression and an addition to your days of joy. If God will help me I will compel you to see the bright light that there is in the clouds, and compel you to make the best of everything.

In the first place, you ought to make the very best of all your financial misfortunes. During the panic a few years ago you all lost money. Some of you lost it in most unaccountable ways. For the question, "How many thousands of dollars shall I put aside this year?" you substituted the question, "How shall I pay my butcher, and baker, and clothier, and landlord?" You had the sensation of rowing hard with two oars, and yet all the time going down stream.

You did not say much about it because it was not politic to speak much of financial embarrassment; but your wife knew. Less variety of wardrobe, more economy at the table, self-denial in art and tapestry. Compression; retrenchment. Who did not feel the necessity of it? My friend, did you make the best of this? Are you aware of how narrow an escape you made? Suppose you had reached the fortune toward which you were rapidly going? What then? You would have been as proud as Lucifer.

How few men have succeeded largely in a financial sense and yet maintained their simplicity and religious consecration. Not one man out of a hundred. There are glorious exceptions, but the general rule is that in proportion as a man gets well off for this world he gets poorly off for the next. He loses his sense of dependence on God. He gets a distaste for prayer meetings. With plenty of bank stocks and plenty of government securities, what does that man know of the prayer, "Give me this day my daily bread?" How few men largely successful in this world are bringing souls to Christ, or showing self-denial for others, or are eminent for piety? You can count them all upon your eight fingers and two thumbs.

One of the old covetous souls, when he was sick, and sick unto death, used to have a basin brought in—a basin filled with gold, and his only amusement and the only relief he got for his inflamed hands was running them down through the gold and turning it up in the basin. Oh, what infatuation and what destroying power money has for many a man. Now, you were sailing at 30 knots the hour toward these voracious of worldliness—what a mercy it was, that honest defalcation! The same divine hand that crushed your store-house, your bank, your office, your insurance company, lifted you out of destruction. The day you honestly suspended in business made your fortune for eternity.

As you sat this morning at your breakfast table, and looked into the faces of your children, perhaps you said within yourself: "Poor things! How I wish I could start them in life with a competence! How I have been disappointed in all my expectations of what I would do for them!" Upon that scene of pathos I break with a psalm of congratulation, that by your financial losses your own prospects for Heaven, and the prospect for the Heaven of your children is mightily improved. You may have lost a toy, but you have won a palace.

"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven." What does that mean? It means that the grandest blessing God ever bestowed upon you was to take your money away from you. Let me here say, in passing, do not put much stress on the treasures of this world. You cannot take them along with you. At any rate, you cannot take them more than two or three miles; you will have to leave them at the cemetery. Attila had three coffins. So fond was he of this life that he decreed that first he should be buried in a coffin of gold, and that then that should be enclosed in a coffin of silver, and that should be enclosed in a coffin of iron, and then a large amount of treasure should be thrown in over his body. And so he was buried, and the men who buried him were slain, so that no one who might know where he was buried, and no one might there

interfere with his treasures. Oh, men of the world, who want to take your money with you, better have three coffins!

Again, I remark, you ought to make the very best of your bereavements. The whole tendency is to brood over these separations, and to give much time to the handling of mementoes of the departed, and to make long visitations to the cemetery, and to say, "Oh, I can never look up again; my hope is gone; my courage is gone; my religion is gone; my faith in God is gone! Oh, the wear and tear and exhaustion of this loneliness!" The most frequent bereavement is the loss of children. If your departed child had lived as long as you have lived, do you not suppose that he would have had about the same amount of trouble and trial that you have had? If you could make a choice for your child between 40 years of annoyance, loss, vexation, exasperation, and bereavements, and 40 years in Heaven, would you take the responsibility of choosing the former? Would you snatch away that child's hands the cup of many bereavements? Instead of the complete safety into which that child has been lifted, would you like to hold it down to the risks of this mortal state? Would you like to keep it out on a sea in which there have been more shipwrecks than safe voyages? Is it not a comfort to you to know that that child, instead of being beset and dung into the mire of sin, is swung clear into the skies? Are not those children to be congratulated that the point of celestial bliss which you expect to reach by a pilgrimage of 50 or 60 or 70 years, they reached at a flash? If the last 10,000 children who had entered Heaven had gone through the average of human life on earth, are you sure all those 10,000 children would have finally reached the blissful terminus? Besides that, my friends, you are to look at this matter as a self-denial on your part for their benefit. If your children want to go off in a May day party; if your children want to go on a flowery and musical excursion, you consent. You might prefer to have them with you, but their jubilant absence satisfies you. Well, your departed children have only gone out in a May day party, amid flowery and musical entertainment, amid joys and hilarities forever. That ought to quell some of your grief, the thought of their gloe.

So it ought to be that you could make the best of all bereavements. The fact that you have so many friends in Heaven will make your departure very cheerful. When you are going on a voyage everything depends upon where your friends are—if they are on the wharf that you leave or on the wharf toward which you are going to sail. In other words, the more friends you have in Heaven the easier it will be to get away from this world. The more friends here the more bitter good-byes, the more friends there the more glorious welcomes. Some of you have so many brothers, sisters, children, friends in Heaven that I do not know hardly how you are going to crowd through. When the vessel came from foreign lands and brought a prince to our harbor, the ships were covered with bunting, and you remember how the men-of-war thundered broadsides, but there was no joy there compared with the joy which shall be demonstrated when you sail up the broad bay of Heavenly salutation. The more friends you have here the easier your own transit. What is death to a mother whose children are in Heaven? Why, there is no more grief in it than there is in her going into a nursery amid the romp and laughter of her household. Though all around may be dark, see you not the bright light in the clouds—that light the irradiated faces of your glorified kindred?

From my observation, I judge that invalids have a more rapturous view of the next world than well people, and will have higher renown in Heaven. The best view of the delectable mountains is through the lattice of the sick room. There are trains running every hour between pillow and throne, between hospital and mansion, between bandages and robes, between crutches and palm branches. Oh, I wish some of you people who are compelled to cry, "My head! my head! my foot, my foot! my back, my back!" would try some of the Lord's medicine. You are going to be well anyhow before long. Heaven is an old city, but has never yet reported one case of sickness or one bill of mortality. No ophthalmia for the eye. No pneumonia for the lungs. No pleurisy for the side. No neuralgia for the nerves. No rheumatism for the muscles. "The inhabitants shall never say, I am sick." "There shall be no more pain."

Again, you ought to make the best of life's finality. Now, you think I have a very tough subject. You do not see how I am to strike a spark of light out of the flint of the tombstone. There are many people who have an idea that death is the submergence of everything pleasant by everything doleful. If my subject could close in the upsetting of all such preconceived notions, it would close well. Who can judge best of the features of a man—those who are close by him, or those who are afar off? "Oh, you say, 'those can judge best of the features of a man who are close by him!'"

Now, my friends, who shall judge of the features of death—whether they are lovely or whether they are repulsive? You? You are too far off. If I want to get a judgment as to what really the features of death are I will not ask you; I will ask those who have been within a month of death, or a week of death, or an hour of death, or a minute of death. They stand so near the future they can tell. They give unanimous testimony, if they are Christian people, that death, instead of being demoralizing, is cherishing. Of all the thousands of Christians who have been carried through the gates of the cemetery, gather up their dying experiences, and you will find they nearly all bordered on jubilate. How often have you seen a dying man join in the psalm being sung around his bedside, the middle of the verse opening to let

his ransomed spirit free—long after the lips could not speak, looking and pointing upward.

Some of you talk as though God had exhausted himself in building this world, and that all the rich curtains he ever made he hung around this planet, and all the flowers he ever grew he has woven into the carpet of our daisied meadows. No. This world is not the best thing God can do; this world is not the best thing that God has done.

One week of the year is called blossom week—called so all through the land because there are more blossoms in that week than in any other week of the year. Blossom week! And that is what the future world is to which the Christian is invited—blossom week forever. It is as far ahead of this world as Paradise is ahead of Dry Tortugas, and yet we stand shivering and fearing to go out, and we want to stay on the dry sand, and amid the stormy petrels, when we are invited to arbors of jessamine and birds of paradise.

One season I had two springtimes. I went to New Orleans in April, and I marked the difference between going toward New Orleans and then coming back. As I went down toward New Orleans, the verdure, the foliage, became thicker and more beautiful. When I came back, the further I came toward home the less the foliage, and less and less it became until there was hardly any. Now, it all depends upon the direction in which you travel. If a spirit from Heaven should come toward our world, he is traveling from June toward December, from radiance toward darkness, from hanging gardens toward icebergs. And one would not be very much surprised if a spirit of God sent forth from Heaven toward our world should be slow to come. But how strange it is that we dread going out toward that world when going in from December toward June—from the snow of earthly storm to the snow of Edenic blossom—from the arctic of trouble toward the tropics of eternal joy.

Oh, what an ado about dying! We get so attached to the malarial marsh in which we live that we are afraid to go up and live on the hilltop. We are alarmed because vacation is coming. Eternal sunlight, and best programme of celestial minstrels and hallelujah, no inducement. Let us stay and keep cold and ignorant and weak. Do not introduce us to Elijah, and John Milton, and Bourdaloue. Keep our feet on the sharp cobblestones of earth instead of planting them on the bank of amaranth in Heaven. Give us this small island of a leprous world instead of the immensities of splendor and delight. Keep our hands full of nettles, and our shoulder under the burden, and our neck in the yoke, and hoppers on our ankles, and handcuffs on our wrists. "Dear Lord," we seem to say, "keep us down here where we have to suffer, instead of letting us up where we might live and reign and rejoice."

I am amazed at myself and at yourself for this infatuation under which we all rest. Men you would suppose would get frightened at having to stay in this world instead of getting frightened at having to go toward Heaven. I congratulate anybody who has a right to die. By that I mean through sickness you cannot avert, or through accident you cannot avoid—your work consummated. "Where did they bury Lily?" said one little child to another. "Oh," she replied, "they buried her in the ground." "What! in the cold ground?" "Oh, no, no; not in the cold ground, but in the warm ground, where ugly seeds become beautiful flowers." "But," says someone, "it pains me so much to think that I must lose the body with which my soul has so long companioned." You do not lose it. You no more lose your body by death than you lose your watch when you send it to have it repaired, or your jewel when you send it to have it reset, or the faded picture when you send it to have it touched up, or the photograph of a friend when you have it put in a new lock. You do not lose your body. Paul will go to Rome to get his. Payson will go to Portland to get his. President Edwards will go to Princeton to get his. George Cookman will go to the bottom of the Atlantic to get his, and we will go to the village churchyards and the city cemeteries to get ours, and when we have our perfect spirit rejoined to our perfect body, then we will be the kind of men and women that the resurrection morning will make possible.

So you see you have not made out any doleful story yet. What have you proved about death? What is the case you have made out? You have made out just this—that death allows us to have a perfect body, free of all aches, united forever with a perfect soul free from all sin. Correct your theology. What does it all mean? Why, it means that moving day is coming, and that you are going to quit cramped apartments and be mansioned forever. The horse that stands at the gate will not be the one lathered and bespattered, carrying bad news, but it will be the horse that St. John saw in Apocalyptic vision—the white horse on which the king comes to the banquet. The ground around the palace will quake with the tires and hoofs of celestial equipage, and those Christians who in this world lost their friends, and lost their property, and lost their health, and lost their life, will find out that God was always kind, and that all things worked together for their good, and that those were the wisest people on earth who made the best of everything. See you not now the bright light in the clouds?

About Telegraph Poles. The number of poles used for telegraph wires per mile varies from 20 to 25 on minor lines, to 30 to 50 on main lines. These poles are of regulation height, in order that the lowest wire shall not be less than 15 feet from the ground, and as the poles are set into the ground from four to six feet, they measure from 20 to 25 feet in length. The sag or dip varies, of course, with the number of poles per mile, and the condition of the atmosphere, but the average is about 14 feet.

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ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE. In the matter of the estate of John B. Heckman, late of Gregg township, dec'd. The undersigned having been granted letters of administration on said estate, notice is hereby given to all persons knowing themselves indebted to the decedent to make immediate payment, and those having claims or demands against the same will present them without delay for settlement, to the undersigned. J. M. HECKMAN, Administrator. Wm. G. B. HECKMAN, Administrators.

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE. Estate of Jonathan Tressler, dec'd, late of Harris township. Letters of administration on said estate having been granted to the undersigned, all persons indebted thereto are requested to make immediate payment, and those having claims or demands against the same will present them without delay for settlement, to the undersigned. JOSEPH TRESSLER, DANIEL TRESSLER, Administrators. Pleasant Gap, Pa.

CHARTER NOTICE. Notice is hereby given that an application was made to the Hon. J. M. Lutz, President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Centre county, on the 7th day of June, A. D. 1898, at 10 o'clock a.m. for the incorporation of a corporation to be called The Fairview Cemetery Association, the character and object of which are the maintenance of a place for the burial of the dead for the community in which said association is to be located, to wit: Fairview, Boggs Township, Centre county, Pennsylvania. April 28th 1898. OWENS, BROWN & OWENS, Solicitors for Applicants. No. 18.

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