

THE IVORY PALACES.

Dr. Talmage on the Glories of the World to Come.

The Attractiveness of Christ, Who Opens the Way for His Faithful Followers—The Christian's Guide to Heaven.

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In this discourse Dr. Talmage sets forth the glories of the world to come and the attractiveness of the Christ, who opens the way; text, Psalms, 45:1: "All thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces."

Among the grand adornments of the city of Paris is the church of Notre Dame, with its great towers and elaborate rose windows and sculpturing of the last judgment, with the trumpeting angels and rising dead; its battlements of quatre foils; its sacristy, with ribbed ceiling and statues of saints. But there was nothing in all that great building which more vividly appealed to my plain republican tastes than the costly vestments which lay in oaken presses—robes that had been embroidered with gold and been worn by popes and archbishops on great occasions. There was a robe that had been worn by Pius VII. at the crowning of the first Napoleon. There was also a vestment that had been worn at the baptism of Napoleon II. As our guide opened the oaken presses and brought out these vestments of fabulous cost and lifted them up in the fragrance of the pungent aromatics in which they had been preserved filled the place with a sweetness that was almost oppressive. Nothing that had been done in stone more vividly impressed me than these things that had been done in cloth and embroidery and perfume. But to-day I open the drawer of this text, and I look upon the kingly robes of Christ, and as I lift them, flashing with eternal jewels, the whole house is filled with the aroma of these garments, which "smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces."

Your second curiosity is to know why the robes of Jesus are odorous with aloes. There is some difference of opinion about where these aloes grow, what is the color of the flower, what is the particular appearance of the herb. Suffice it for you and me to know that aloes mean bitterness the world over, and when Christ comes with garments bearing that particular odor they suggest to me the bitterness of a Saviour's sufferings. Were there ever such nights as Jesus lived through—nights on the mountains, nights on the sea, nights in the desert? Who ever had such a hard reception as Jesus had? A hostelry the first, an unjust trial in oyer and terminer another, a foul-mouthed, yelling mob the last. Was there a space on His back as wide as your two fingers where he was not whipped? Was there a space on His brow an inch square where he was not cut of the briars? When the spike struck at the instep, did it not go clean through to the hollow of the foot? Oh, long, deep, bitter pilgrimage! Aloes, aloes!

John leaned his head on Christ, but who did Christ lean on? Five thousand men fed by the Saviour. Who fed Jesus? The sympathy of a Saviour's heart going out to the leper and the adulteress; but who soothed Christ? He had a fit place neither to be born nor to die. A poor babe! A poor lad! A poor young man! Not so much as a taper to cheer his dying hours. Even the candle of the sun snuffed out. Was it not all aloes? Our sins, sorrows, bereavements, losses and all the agonies of earth and hell picked up as in one cluster and squeezed into one cup that pressed to His lips until the acid, nauseating, bitter draft was swallowed with a distorted countenance and a shudder from head to foot and a gurgling strangulation. Aloes! Aloes! Nothing but aloes! All this for Himself? All this to get the fame in the world of a martyr? All this in a spirit of stubbornness, because he did not like Caesar? No, no! All this because He wanted to pluck me and you from hell. Because He wanted to raise me and you to Heaven. Because we were lost, and He wanted us found. Because we were blind, and He wanted us to see. Because we were serfs, and He wanted us manumitted. O ye in whose cup of life the saccharine has predominated; O ye who have had bright and sparkling beverages, how do you feel toward Him who in your stead and to purchase your disenthralment took the aloes, the unsavory aloes, the bitter aloes?

Your third curiosity is to know why these garments of Christ are odorous with cassia. This was a plant which grew in India and the adjoining islands. You do not care to hear what kind of a flower it had or what kind of a stalk. It is enough for me to tell you that it was used medicinally. In that land and in that age, where they knew but little about pharmacy, cassia was used to arrest many forms of disease. So, when in my text we find Christ coming with garments that smell of cassia, it suggests to me the healing and curative power of the Son of God. "Oh," you say, "now you have a superfluous idea! We are not sick. Why do we want cassia? We are athletic. Our respiration is perfect. Our limbs are lithe, and on bright cool days we feel we could bound like a roe." I beg to differ, my brother, from you. None of you can be better in physical health than I am, and yet I must say we are all sick. I have taken the diagnosis of your case and have examined all the best authorities on the subject, and I have to tell you that you are "full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, which have not been bound up or mollified with ointment." The marasmus of sin is on us, the palsy, the dropsy, the leprosy. The man that is expiring to-night in the next street—the allopathic and homopathic doctors have given him up and his friends now standing around to take his last words—is no more certainly dying as to his body than you and I are dying unless we have taken the medicine from God's apothecary. All the leaves of this Bible are only so many prescriptions from the Divine Physician, written, not in Latin, like the prescriptions of earthly physicians, but written in plain English so that a "man, though a fool, need not err therein." Thank God that the Saviour's garments smell of cassia!

Suppose a man were sick, and there was a phial on his mantelpiece with medicine he knew would cure him, and he refused to take it, what would you say of him? He is a suicide. And what do you say of that man who, sick in sin, has the healing medicine of God's grace offered him and refuses to take it? If he dies, he is a suicide. People talk as though God took a man and led him out to darkness and death, as though He brought him up to the cliffs and then pushed him off. Oh, no! When a man is lost, it is not because God pushes him off; it is because he jumps off. In olden times a suicide was buried at the crossroads, and the people were accustomed to throw stones upon his grave. So it seems to me there may be at this time a man who is destroying his soul, and as though the angels of God were here to bury him at the point where the roads of life and death cross each other, throwing upon the grave the broken law and a great pile of misimproved privileges so that those going by may look at the fearful mound and learn what a suicide it is when an immortal soul for which Jesus died puts itself out of the way.

When Christ trod this planet with foot of flesh, the people rushed after Him—people who were sick and those who, being so sick they could not walk, were brought by their friends. Here I see a mother holding up her little child, crying: "Cure this croup, Lord Jesus! Cure this scarlet fever!" And others: "Cure this ophthalmia! Give ease and rest to this spinal distress! Straighten this club foot!" Christ made every house where He stopped a dispensary. I do not believe that in the 19 centuries which have gone by since, His heart has got hard. I feel that we can come now with all our wounds of soul and get His benediction. O Jesus, here we are! We want healing. We want sight. We want health. We want life. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Blessed be God that Jesus Christ comes through this assemblage of myrrh—that means fragrance—"and aloes"—they mean bitter sacrificial memories—"and cassia"—that means medicine and cure.

According to my text, He comes "out of the ivory palaces." You know, or, if you do not know, I will tell you now that some of the palaces of olden time were adorned with ivory. Ahab and Solomon had their homes furnished with it. The tusks of African and Asiatic elephants were twisted into all manners of shapes, and there were stairs of ivory and chairs of ivory and tables of ivory and pillars of ivory and windows of ivory and fountains of ivory that dropped into basins of ivory. Oh, white and overmastering beauty! Green tree branches sweeping the white curbs. Tapestry trailing the snowy floors. Brackets of light flashing on the lustrous surroundings. Silvery music rippling on the beach of the arches. The mere thought of it almost stuns my brain, and you say: "Oh, if I could only have walked over such floors! If I could have thrown myself in such a chair! If I could have heard the drip and dash of those fountains!" You shall have something better than that if you only let Christ introduce you. From that place He came, and to that place He proposes to transport you, for His "garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces." What a place Heaven must be! The Tuilleries of the French, the Wind-sor castle of the English, the Spanish alhambra, the Russian kremlin, are mere dungeons compared with it! Not so many castles on either side of the Rhine as on both sides of the river of God—the ivory palaces! One for the angels, insufferably bright, winged, fire-eyed, tempest charioted; one for the martyrs, with blood red robes from under the altar; one for the King, the steps of His palace the crown of the church militant; one for the singers, who lead the one hundred and forty and four thousand; one for you ransomed from sin; one for me, plucked from the burning. Oh, the ivory palaces!

To-day it seems to me as if the windows of those palaces were illumined for some great victory, and I look and see climbing the stairs of ivory and walking on floors of ivory and looking from the windows of ivory some whom we knew and loved on earth. Yes, I know them. There are father and mother, not 82 years and 79 years as when they left us, but blithe and young as when on their wedding day. And there are brothers and sisters, merrier than when we used to romp across the meadows together. The cough gone. The cancer cured. The cryspelas healed. The heartbreak over. Oh, how fair they are in the ivory palaces! And your dear little children that went out from you—Christ did not let one of them drop as He lifted them. He did not wrench one of them from you. No. They went as from one they loved well to one whom they loved better. If I should take your little child and press its soft face against my rough cheek, I might keep it a little while; but when you, the mother, came along it would struggle to go with you. And so you stood holding your dying child when Jesus passed by in the room and the little one sprang out to greet Him. That is all. Your Christian dead did not go down into the dust and the gravel and the mud. Though it rained all that funeral day and the water came up to the wheel's hub as you drove out to the cemetery, it made no difference to them, for they stepped from the home here to the home there, right into the ivory palaces. All is well with them. All is well.

Queer Collection of Buttons.

The wife of an English clergyman has made a collection of all the buttons placed in the offertory bags during the last two or three years and has fastened them to cardboard in various cunning shapes of animals, birds and flowers. As a bazaar is shortly to take place in connection with the church work, she has had these button pictures photographed and copies will be on sale at the fair.

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Regarding a Rat's Tail.

A rat's tail is a wonderful thing. The great naturalist Cuvier says that there are more muscles in this curious appendage than are to be found in that part of the human anatomy which is most admired for its ingenious structure—namely, the hand. To the rat, in fact, its tail serves as a sort of hand, by means of which the animal is enabled to crawl along narrow ledges or other difficult passages, using it to balance with or to gain a hold. It is prehensile, like the tails of some monkeys. By means of it the little beast can jump up heights otherwise inaccessible, employing it as a projectile spring.—N. Y. Herald.

They Ticket Japanese Workmen.

Every workman in Japan is ticketed, labels, attached to his cap and back, bearing his name, his business and his employer's name.

SPRING FASHIONS.

Notes of the Modes for Feminine Readers—Models for Gowns and Coats.

For the coming spring will be brought out some soft, delicate French silks, with a tiny dot and narrow chenille stripe, matching the dot in color. Some will have, for example, a background of pale stem green, with a chenille dot and stripe of moss-green, while other designs will show a stripe and dot contrasting in color with the silk background.

In advance models for spring tailor costumes fur, which adds so much to the rich effect of the gown, still adorns the outlines and edges of the tunics, overdresses, jackets and skirt flounces. The material is called kid cloth, so much does it resemble in velvety finish the surface of a suede glove. Other weaves are given a lustrous, luminous surface like satin. These are called satin cloths, and other tempting varieties are Venetian and ladies' cloth, French and German broadcloth, and soft, delicate, imperial reps, both in pale and deep colorings.

Nearly every model is absolutely without fullness in the back below the waist, and the figure is fitted in many cases by a deep side gore just as a hip gore is placed on the sides of the front. The underfolded fullness falls easily in soft lines below, where they flare gradually as they near the lower half of the trailing skirt. Velvet manipulated in novel, graceful and most ingenious ways, silk passermenteries en applique in wholly new designs, silk and chenille ruches, pipings, cloth flounces, silk-lined, with old rose, watermelon pink and many other colors, are among the new decorative effects in models for French tailor costumes designed for dress wear.

English walking skirts, as closely fitted in the skirt as a riding habit, with rounded, open or half-open fronts arching back towards the hips, represent the leading features of spring shapes prepared for general wear. Lengths vary greatly among these coats, the majority being of medium length.

A very good instance of color combination is given in a model recently exhibited. The Louis coat, with its open, rounded front, and a portion of the skirt, are of soft gray costume cloth, and what represents an underdress that shows at one side below the hem of the skirt proper and between the slashed portion, is of dark red cloth, crossed with lines of silk gimp of a still deeper tone. The revers and high-sloped collar are of dark red velvet, silk-dotted with green, and the vest is of red cloth trimmed with braid lacing cord and small enamel buttons. The cloth sleeves are very close-fitting coat shapes, with not a vestige of cap, puff or frill at the top, but with shaped cloth cuffs with not only a deep decided point reaching over the hand, but so curved at the top that the upper arching point reaches within a few inches of the elbow.—N. Y. Post.

RAISED FOR BRACELETS.

In the New Hebrides Pig Tusks Are Used by the Natives for That Purpose.

The natives of the New Hebrides islands in the Pacific ocean raise pigs for bracelets. The upper canine teeth of the pigs are removed and that gives the lower tusks a chance to grow as much as they wish. The lower teeth grow and, finding no resistance, attain a good length. The teeth grow in a spiral and the tip often lies beside the root of the tooth. Very rarely the point grows into the root of the tooth and makes a complete circle. Sometimes the tooth grows clear around twice and makes a coil.

The natives of the New Hebrides prize the boars according to the length of the tooth. A complete pig tooth bracelet is a very valuable jewel, which is worn around the wrist or attached to a string around the throat. The native man of wealth has many of these teeth and many more growing all the while. They pass current in barter as money of value. The boar with bracelet teeth is not killed till his teeth seem to have reached the limit of their length, and the killing is done at the "Sing Sing" feast, which corresponds to "hog-killing time" in various localities in America.

Squirrels, woodchucks and other rodents occasionally have accidents to one of their teeth which allows the tooth facing it to grow unobstructed to great length. Squirrels deprived of their food, which requires gnawing, starve to death, but the grass-eating woodchuck manages to exist for a considerable time. One woodchuck recorded had a tooth nearly six inches long, which curved down and back from his upper jaw to behind his ear. He was terribly emaciated, and would probably have soon starved to death. Queer effects could be produced in white mice and the like by a systematized training and deforming of their teeth.—Chicago Chronicle.

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