

A GOSPEL MESSAGE.

Subject: Good Influences—The Mission of the Writer's Inkhorn—How It Makes For the World's Betterment—The Inkhorn of the World's Evangelization.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—In a new way and from a peculiar text Dr. Talmage discourses of good influences brought to bear for the world's improvement.

Ezekiel 5: 2. "And thou man among them who is clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side."

The poem from which my text is taken is epic, lyric, dramatic, weird and overflowing. It is more than Homeric or Dantesque. No one ever had such divine dreams as Ezekiel. In a vision this prophet had seen wrathful angels, destroying angels, each with a sword, but in my text he sees a merciful angel with an inkhorn. The receptacle for the ink in olden time was made out of the horn of a cow or a ram or a roebuck, as now it is made out of metal or glass.

Here and there a sheet of paper, and there a Declaration of Independence or a Magna Charta or a treaty was signed has been kept in literary museum or national archives, but for the most part the pens, whether as of old made out of reed or later of wing of bird or still later of metallic substance, have disappeared, while the liquid which the pens took from the inkstand remained, let it dip or dip together, would be large enough to envelop the round world.

For moral, for religious, for eternal purposes, I speak of the mission of "the writer's inkhorn."

First, I mention that which is purely domestic. The inkhorn is in every household. It awaits the opportunity to express affection or condolence or advice. Father uses it; mother uses it; the sons and daughters use it. It tells the home news; it announces the marriage, the birth, the departure, the accident, the sickness, the death. The house inkhorn that a mission it has already executed, and what other missions will it yet fulfill! May it stand off from all insincerity and all meanness. Let it tell only the truth, which it would be well to read after the hand that wrote it and the hand that received it can write no more. Dip out of that inkhorn only that which is paternal, maternal, filial, fraternal, brotherly. Sacred let it be, not to what are sometimes called the "household gods," but to the one and only God who "setteth the solitary in families." Dip out of that inkhorn only that which is of the descending grade of years and encouragement for those who are climbing the steps.

The carvers and glass blowers are ever busy making elegant and skillful bowls for the ink, but not one of them will be so sacred as the old-fashioned inkhorn out of which was dipped the liquid for the making of the family record on the blank leaves in the Bible between the Old and the New Testaments, not so many leaves now blank as before recent years made birthday or mortality insertions. From that home inkhorn, the child dips out material for those large and awkward letters that one always makes when learning to write, and from it are taken the trembling letters that show the wringing hand is gradually forgetting its cunning.

Oh, ye who have with recent years set homes of your own, out of the new home inkhorn write often to the old folks, if they be still living. A letter is more to them than to us, who are amid the activities of life and to whom postal correspondence is more than we can manage. They await the coming of the letter. Unshakable no great thing, life without their advice. Old people for counsel, young people for action. Even though through decadence they may be incompetent to give valuable opinions, still their counsel may be compliment them by asking their counsel. It will do them good; it will make their last days exhilarant. Make that home inkhorn a source of rejuvenescence to those who are near the end of their earthly journey. Domestic correspondence is not attended to at once. The newspaper, joining with the telegraph, bears the tidings of all the family, but the sweetest and revolving wheel of modern printing press and quickest flash along the electric wires can never do the sympathetic work of the home inkhorn. As the merciful angel of my text appeared before the broken altar with the inkhorn at his side in Ezekiel's vision, so let the angel of filial kindness appear at the altars of the old homestead.

Furthermore, the inkhorn of the business man has its mission. Between noon and the hour of your demise, O commercial man, O professional man, there will not be a day when you cannot dip from the inkhorn a message that will influence temporal and eternal destiny. There is a rash young man running into wild speculation, and with as much ink as you can put on the pen at one time you may save him from the Niagara rapids of a ruined life. On the next street there is a young man started in business who through lack of patronage or mistake in purchase of goods or want of adaptation is on the brink of collapse. One line of ink from your pen will save him from being an underling all his life and start him on a career that will win him a fortune which will enable him to become an endower of libraries, an opener of art galleries and builder of churches.

The most largely successful and useful men of our time are not an old coat because they could not afford a new one and got wages less than that which they pay their cook or butler. It will be a mighty thing if out of your inkhorn you can dip a man's earthly and everlasting fortune. Dip out of that inkhorn not one word of disheartenment. People have enough burdens to carry without your adding one ounce to the heft. From your inkhorn put not one blot on an honest ambition. Keep all the whole of your factory spinning rays of sunshine. If you are a Christian man, put into your business letters an adroit, moral, religious suggestion that will keep the receiver thinking after he has left the counting room for his home and far on into the night when he lies upon a wakeful pillow. Tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock, as you begin to answer your letters, you will have on the nib of your pen enough ink to save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.

Furthermore, great are the responsibilities of the author's inkhorn. The people, or nearly all the people, read, and that which they read decides their morals or immorals, their prosperity or failure, their faith or their unbelief, their purity or corruption, their heaven or hell. Show me any man's library, great or small, and after examining the books, finding those with leaves uncut, but displayed for sake of the binding, and those worn with frequent perusal, and without ever seeing the man or knowing his name, I will tell you his likes and his dislikes, his morals, good or bad or indifferent, his qualifications for business or artistic or professional or mechanical life. The best index to any man's character is the book he prefers above all others. Oh, the power of a book for good or evil!

Abraham Lincoln in early life read Paine's "Age of Reason," and it so influenced him that he wrote an essay against Christianity. But afterwards, some Christian books came into his hands and gloriously changed his mind and made him a most ardent friend of the Bible and a man of prayer. A letter in Mr. Lincoln's own handwriting is in my house, the letter in response to some resolutions passed by a Methodist conference, saying: "In response to your address allow me to attest the accuracy of its historical statements, and to thank you in the nation's name for the sure promise it gives. Nobly sustained as the Government has been by all the churches, I would wish that no iniquity might in the least appear invidious against any. Yet without this it may fairly be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church, not less devoted than any other to the cause of the most important of all, it is no fault in others that the Methodist church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospital and more convalescents to the home than any other. God bless the Methodist church, bless all the churches, and blessed be God, who in this, our great trial, giveth us the churches."

What a great thing it was that the Christian books which Mr. Lincoln read obliterated from his mind the infidel literature! William Carey became a missionary by reading "The Holy Living and Holy Dying." There are books in your library or lying on your parlor table secreted in some place by your child that will decide for two worlds, this and the next, the character of its reader.

When a bad book is printed, you do well to blame the publisher, but most of all blame the author. The malaria rose from his inkhorn; the poison that caused the moral or spiritual death dropped in the fluid from the tip of his pen. The manufacturer of that ink, the printer, who it is made of tannin and salt of iron and tannin and green vitriol, but many an author has dipped from his inkhorn and handed out maliciousness, as from a fountain of death.

Among the most important are the editorial and reportorial inkhorns. The thick ink on the printer's roller is different from the ink into which the writer dips his pen and is compounded of linseed oil and lampblack and made thick by boiling or burning. But the editorial and reportorial pens are responsible for that which the printer's ink roller impresses upon the flying sheets. Where one man reads a book, 5000 men read a newspaper. What change of opinion in regard to the printing press since the day when the great Addison wrote concerning it, "One cannot but be sorry that such a pernicious machine is erected among them," and when, under the reign of Charles II., one newspaper, the London Gazette, was allowed to be printed, and that only on Mondays and Thursdays! Not until the judgment day, when the forces which have influenced the world shall be compared and announced, will be known the power of the modern newspaper.

Thomas Guthrie dipped into it and brought up "The Gospel of the Kingdom." Canning dipped into it and brought up "The Apocalypse." Oh, the influence of Christian literature! Oh, the mighty streams of evangelistic power that have poured from the writer's inkhorn that appeared in Ezekiel's vision!

While you recognize the distinguished ones who have dipped into the inkhorn of the world's evangelism, do not forget that there are hundreds of thousands of unknown men and women who are engaged in inconspicuous ways doing the same thing. How many anxious mothers writing to their boys in the army! How many sisters writing encouragement to brothers far away! How many invalids bolstered up in bed, the inkhorn on the stand at their side writing letters of condolence to those worse off than themselves! How many are flying all the time kind words, gospel words, helpful words, saving words.

Call the evangelistic inkhorn into service in the early morning. When you feel well, and you are grateful for the protection during your sleeping hours, and write before you retire at close of day to those who all night long will be saying, "Would to God it were morning." How many bruised and disappointed and wronged souls of earth would be glad to get a letter from you! Stir up that consolatory inkhorn.

All Christendom has been waiting for great revivals of religion to start from the pulpit and prayer meetings. I now suggest that the greatest revival of all may start from a concerted and organized movement, the writing of letters of all Christendom, each writer dipping from the inkhorn nearest him a letter of gospel invitation, gospel hope, gospel warning, gospel instruction. This movement is ready on a hundred thousand tables, and beside it are the implements with which to dip it out. Why not through such means have millions of souls brought to God before next summer? By a letter you could make the invitation more effective than by word of mouth. The invitation from your lips may be argued back, may evoke querulous reply, may be answered by a joke, but a good, warm, gospel letter, written in prayer, and started with prayer, and followed by prayer, will be read over and over again and cannot be answered in a frivolous way.

Within arm's reach of where you sit there may be a fluid that you may put on with message of light and love. Oh, for the swift flying angel of mercy which Ezekiel saw in vision "with a writer's inkhorn by his side."

The other angels spoken of in my text were destroying angels, and each had what the Bible calls a "slingshot" in his hand. It was a lance or a battle-axe or a sword. God hasten the time when the last lance shall be shivered, and the last battle-axe dulled, and the last sword sheathed, and the angel of the text, who Matthew Henry says was the Lord Jesus Christ, shall from the full inkhorn of His mercy give a saving call to all nations. That day may be far off, but it is helpful to think of its coming.

As Dr. Raleigh declared that when thirty-six miles at sea off the coast of New England the cattle on board the ship as well as himself scented the clover on the New England hills, so we amid all the tossing waves of the world's controversies inhale the redolence of the white lilies of universal peace. If our Bible is true—and no other book that was ever printed is as true as that book, which Moses began and John finished—then the time will come when all the weapons of cruelty will stop, and the inkhorns of evangelization will have their way. In the museums of the world the carbine and the cannon and the bomb will be kept as curiosities, and children will be incredulous as parents tell them that civilized nations once employed such instruments of death, and more incredulous when told by their parents that the army that killed the most men was considered the most glorious army. The red horse of carnage that St. John saw in vision and the black horse of famine and the pale horse of death will be stabled, and the white horse of prosperity and peace, mounted by the King of Kings, will be the great army with banners. Through the convicting, converting, sanctifying power of the Eternal Spirit may we all march in that procession! Hail, thou Mighty Rider of the white horse in the final triumph! Sweep down and sweep by, thou Angel of the New Covenant, with the inkhorn of thy world's evangelization! "The mountains and the hills shall break forth in singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fig tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

TO PRUE, WITH VIOLETS.

These flowers from a sinner, sweet, To go to church with you; He would not dare to enter there, But if his name comes in your prayer Perchance they'll hear it, Prue.

But let them breathe the message first He charged them bear to you— So sweet a thing he dare not bring His rude lips to his whispering; Perchance they'll tell you, Prue, —Harper's Bazar.

HUMOROUS.

He—Let us get married and live in a flat. She—Are you serious, or just a flatterer?

Blobs—Bjones rules his household with a rod of iron. Slobbs—Yes; even the cook is afraid of him.

Property Owner—I have all my houses rented except one. Prospective Tenant—Ah, last, but not least.

Sillicus—A girl seldom marries her ideal. Cynicus—No; she usually marries some other girl's ideal, just out of spite.

Wigwag—Hello! Harduppe. Raising a beard, eh? Harduppe—Yes; it's easier than raising the price of a shave every day.

Guest—Say, why do you call that thin bellhop buttons? Clerk—Because he is falling off every day, and there is so much brass about him.

Mrs. Buggins—The cook has asked for higher wages just because I asked her to do the baking. Mr. Buggins—Well, I suppose you'll have to give it to her if she needs the dough.

Business Man—What is your name, sir? Applicant—Thomas J. J. Jones. "What does the 'J. J. J.' stand for?" "Nothing. The man who stood for me when I was christened stuttered."

Tatterdarn Torne—I see a lady dismounting, what must 'a' took me for a mermaid. Wragton Tatters—Dat so? Tatterdarn Torne—Yep. She asked me if I didn't feel's if I wanted a bath. Visitor—Is the puzzle editor in? Office Boy—We ain't got no reg'lar puzzle editor, but you might see that bald-headed man over in the corner. He's tryin' to figger out just where we stand on de baseball situation.

"Good morning, Mr. Black," said the affable man. "But I am not Mr. Black. My name is White," replied the other. "Of course, of course," said the affable man. "I trust you will pardon my mistake. You see, I am a trifle color-blind."

"How is the table here? Good?" inquired the new boarder. "Really, I don't know," replied the other. "I thought you had been here some time." "So I have, but I've never seen enough on the table to test it thoroughly. However, I never heard it groan."

A Chinese Mother-in-Law Story.

"The Experiences of a British Pharmacist in China" was the title of an address by Mr. Frank Browne, who was introduced as the government analyst at Hong Kong. As illustrating the Chinese regard for filial piety, the lecturer told an interesting mother-in-law story. A man and his wife maltreated the husband's mother. As a punishment the scene of the act was openly cursed, the active agents were put to death and the mother of the wife was banished, branded and exiled for her daughter's crime. The house in which the offenders lived was dug up from the foundations. Moreover, the scholars of the district were precluded from attending public examinations, and even the magistrates were deprived of their office. These drastic measures were designed to render the empire filial.—London News.

First Appearance of Wire Nails.

When wire nails first made their appearance they were bought only by furniture manufacturers and makers of cigar boxes. They were put in packages of from one to five pounds, and when an order for 25 pounds for any one size came in, it was considered a big one. At first, from 15 to 20 cents per pound was paid for wire nails, and 29 cents per pound for wire cigar box nails. The makers did not clear as much profit, even at these figures, as might be supposed, as they were compelled to buy their iron wire at 50 percent off list—at that time 10 cents per pound for No. nine etc., and while the production was of necessity small and limited, the expenses of introducing the new article were quite large.—Hardware Dealers' Magazine.

Marquis of Bute's Generosity.

Few people have known anything about one instance of generosity on the part of the late Marquis of Bute. He it was who purchased the remains of the historic chapel raised at Roscoff, in Brittany, and dedicated to St. Ninian by Mary Queen of Scots as commemorative of her first landing, in 1548, on the shores of France, to be affianced to the Dauphin. The marquis was only just in time, for the municipal council coveted the spot, in order to build a school upon the site. He not only rescued the ancient chapel—he presented to the town a plot of ground for the school.

Famous Fathers Fond of Sons.

One of the most characteristic things in the relationship of Justin McCarthy and his son, Justin Huntly McCarthy, is their very strong affection for each other, an affection that has its parallel in the cases of Mr. Chamberlain and Austen Chamberlain and of Sir William Harcourt and his son and private secretary, "Lulu" Harcourt. Mr. McCarthy and his son used to occupy seats at opposite ends of the same bench in the House. Their method of communication, which was frequent, was by nods and signs.

A Frenchman's Predicament. A few weeks ago a noted minister went to one of the local railroad stations to meet a friend, says a Cleveland paper. Upon entering the station and looking around he saw an elegantly dressed woman, who apparently was about to board a train. She was carrying a number of parcels in her arms, and besides had with her three or four children that with great difficulty she was trying to help along. The clergyman approached the lady and offered his assistance, which she accepted, afterward thanking him very graciously for the kindness. The train moved out of sight, and he went on his way thinking of the endless opportunities one has for doing good, when all at once he discovered that he was carrying a beautiful silk umbrella with pearl and gold trimmings. The reverend gentleman is now enduring distress of mind, fearful that the victim of his absent-mindedness may some day discover him in the pulpit.

Public Requests Made Last Year. During the year recently ended the total amount of public requests in this country was \$26,461,644, against \$79,749,965 in 1899. The amount given to educational institutions in 1900 was \$34,932,644; to charities, \$13,621,722; to churches, \$5,800,905; to museums and art galleries, \$2,145,333, and to libraries, \$2,961,000.

Distribution of Victoria's Wealth. It is reported in England that Queen Victoria's will bequeathes \$700,000 each to the Duke of Connaught, Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, Princess Louise and Princess Beatrice, and includes liberal legacies for the Duchess of Albany and a number of the late queen's grandchildren. The bulk of her private fortune, however, goes to King Edward, and both Balmoral and Osborne houses are given to the king. Two small houses on the Osborne estate are given to Princess Beatrice.

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DEATH begins in the bowels. It's the unclean places that breed infectious epidemics, and it's the unclean body—unclean inside—that "catches" the disease. A person whose stomach and bowels are kept clean and whose liver is lively, and blood pure, is safe against yellow fever, or any other of the dreadful diseases that desolate our beautiful land. Some of the cleanest people outside are filthiest inside, and they are the ones who not only "catch" the infections, but endanger the lives of all their friends and relatives. There's only one certain way of keeping clean inside so as to prevent disease and that is to take CASCARETS. Perfect disinfectant and bowel strengtheners. All diseases are PREVENTED BY Cascarets LIVER TONIC BEST FOR THE BOWELS NEVER SOLD IN BULK. 10c. 25c. 50c. ALL DRUGGISTS. CURE all bowel troubles, appendicitis, biliousness, bad breath, bad blood, wind on the stomach, bloated bowels, foul mouth, headache, indigestion, pimples, pains after eating, liver trouble, sallow complexion and dizziness. When your bowels don't move regularity for the chronic ailments and long years of suffering that come afterwards. No matter what ailment you suffer from, take Cascarets to-day, for you will never get well and be well all the time until you put your bowels right. Take our advice; start with CASCARETS to-day, under an absolute guarantee to cure or money refunded. GUARANTEED TO CURE! Five years ago the first box of CASCARETS was sold. Over six million boxes a year, greater than any other medicine in the world. This is absolute proof of great merit, and our best testimonial. We have faith and will sell CASCARETS absolutely guaranteed to cure any ailment connected with the bowels, and if you are not satisfied, after using one 50c. box, return the unused 50c. box and the empty bottle to us by mail, on the 15th of the month when you purchased it, and get your money back for both boxes. Take our advice—no matter what ailment you suffer from, start with CASCARETS to-day, under an absolute guarantee to cure or money refunded. Address: STEWART BERRY CO., NEW YORK or CHICAGO.

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