

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"DISSIPATION OF THE RACE-COURSE" THE SUBJECT.

Golden Text: Hast Thou Given the Horse Strength? Hast Thou Clothed His Neck With Thunder?—Job, Chapter 39, Verses 19, 21, 25.

WE have recently had long columns of intelligence from the race-course, and multitudes flocked to the watering-places to witness equine competition, and there is lively discussion in all households about the right and wrong of such exhibitions of mettle and speed, and when there is a heavy abroad that the cultivation of a horse's fleetness is an iniquity instead of a commendable virtue—at such a time a sermon is demanded of every minister who would like to defend public morals on the one hand, and who is not willing to see an unrighteous abridgement of innocent amusement on the other. In this discussion I shall follow no sermonic precedent, but will give independently what I consider the Christian and common-sense view of this potent, all-absorbing and agitating question of the turf.

There needs to be a redistribution of coronets among the brute creation. For ages the lion has been called the king of beasts. I knock off its coronet and put the crown upon the horse, in every way nobler, whether in shape, or spirit, or sagacity, or intelligence, or affection, or usefulness. He is semi-human, and knows how to reason on a small scale. The centaur of olden times, part horse and part man, seems to be a suggestion of the fact that the horse is something more than a beast. Job in my text sets forth his strength, his beauty, his majesty, the panting of his nostrils, the pawing of his hoof, and his enthusiasm for the battle. What Rosa Bonheur did for the cattle, and what Landseer did for the dog, Job with mightier pencil does for the horse. Eighty-eight times does the Bible speak of him. He comes into every kingly procession, and into every great occasion, and into every triumph. It is very evident that Job, and David, and Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and Jeremiah, and John were fond of the horse. He comes into much of their imagery. A red horse—that meant war. A black horse—that meant famine. A pale horse—that meant death. A white horse—that meant victory. Good Mordecai mounts him while Haman holds the bit. The Church's advance in the Bible is compared to a company of horses of Pharaoh's chariot. Jeremiah cries out: "How canst thou contend with horses?" Isaiah says: "The horse's hoofs shall be counted as flint." Miriam claps her cymbals and sings: "The horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea." St. John describing Christ as coming forth from conquest to conquest represents him as seated on a white horse. In the parade of heaven the Bible makes us hear the clicking of hoofs on the golden pavement as it says: "The armies which were in heaven followed him on white horses." I should not wonder if the horse, so banded, and bruised, and beaten, and outraged on earth, should have some other place where his wrongs shall be righted. I do not assert it, but I say I should not be surprised if, after all, St. John's descriptions of the horses in heaven turned out not altogether to be figurative, but somewhat literal.

As the Bible makes a favorite of the horse, the patriarch, and the prophet, and the evangelist, and the apostle stroking his sleek hide and patting his rounded neck, and tenderly lifting his exquisitely formed hoof, and listening with a thrill to the champ of his bit, so all great natures in all ages have spoken of him in encomiastic terms. Virgil in his Georgics almost seems to plagiarize from this description in the text, so much are the descriptions alike—the description of Virgil and the description of Job. The Duke of Wellington would not allow anyone irreverently to touch his old war horse, Copenhagen, on whom he had ridden fifteen hours without dismounting, at Waterloo, and when old Copenhagen died, his master ordered a military salute fired over his grave. John Howard showed that he did not exhaust all his sympathies in pitying the human race, for when sick he writes home: "Has my old chaise horse become sick or spoiled?" There is hardly any passage of French literature more pathetic than the lamentation over the death of the war-charger, Marechegay. Walter Scott has so much admiration for this divinely honored creature of God that in "St. Ronan's Well" he orders the girl slackened and the blanket thrown over the smoking flanks. Edmund Burke, walking in the park at Beaconsfield, musing over the past, throws his arms around the worn-out horse of his dead son, Richard, and weeps upon the horse's neck, the horse seeming to sympathize in the memories. Rowland Hill, the great English preacher, was caricatured because in his family prayers he supplicated for the recovery of a sick horse, but when the horse got well, contrary to all the prophecies of the farmers, the prayer did not seem quite so much of an absurdity.

But what shall I say of the maltreatment of this beautiful and wonderful creature of God? If Thomas Chalmers in his day felt called upon to preach a sermon against cruelty to animals, how much more in this day is there a need of reprehensive discourse. All honor of the memory of Prof. Bergh, the chief apostle for the brute crea-

tion, for the mercy he demanded and achieved for this king of beasts. A man who owned four thousand horses, and some say forty thousand, wrote in the Bible: "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." Sir Henry Lawrence's care of the horse was beautifully Christian. He says: "I expect we shall lose Conrad, though I have taken so much care of him that he may come in cool. I always walk him the last four or five miles, and as I walk myself the first hour, it is only in the middle of the journey we get over the ground." The Ettrick Shepherd in his matchless Ambrosial Nights speaks of the maltreatment of the horse as a practical blasphemy. I do not believe in the transmigration of souls, but I cannot very severely denounce the idea, for when I see men who cut and bruise and whack and welt and strike and maul and outrage and insult the horse, that beautiful servant of the human race, who carries our burdens and pulls our ploughs, and turns our threshers and our mills, and runs for our doctors—when I see men thus beating and abusing and outraging that creature, it seems to me that it would be only fair that the doctrine of transmigration of souls should prove true, and that for their punishment they should pass over into some poor miserable brute and be beaten and whacked and cruelly treated, and frozen and heated and over-driven; into an everlasting stage-horse, an eternal traveler on a tow-path, or tied to an eternal post. In an eternal winter, smitten with eternal epizootics! Oh, is it not a shame that the brute creation, which had the first possession of our world, should be so maltreated by the race that came in last—the fox and the fish created on the fifth day, the horse and the cattle created on the morning of the sixth day, and the human race not created until the evening of the sixth day? It ought to be that if any man overdrives a horse, or feeds him when he is hot, or recklessly drives a nail into the quick of his hoof, or rowels him to see him prance, or so shoes him that his fetlocks drop blood, or puts a collar on a raw neck, or unnecessarily clutches his tongue with a twisted bit, or cuts off his hair until he has no defense against the cold, or unmercifully abbreviates the natural defense against insectile annoyance—that such a man as that himself ought to be made to pull and let his horse ride!

But not only do our humanity and our Christian principle and the dictates of God demand that we kindly treat the brute creation, and especially the horse; but I go further, and say that whatever can be done for the development of his fleetness and his strength and his majesty ought to be done. We need to study his anatomy and his adaptations. I am glad that large books have been written to show how he can be best managed, and how his ailments can be cured, and what his usefulness is, and what his capacities are. It would be a shame if in this age of the world, when the florist has turned the thin flower of the wood into a gorgeous rose, and the pomologist has changed the acid and gnarled fruit of the ancients into the very poetry of pear, and peach, and plum, and grape, and apple, and the snarling cur of the Orient has become the great mastiff, and the miserable creature of the olden times barnyard has become the Devonshire, and the Alderney, and the Shorthorn, that the horse, grander than them all, should get no advantage from our science, or our civilization, or our Christianity. Groomed to the last point of soft brilliance, his flowing mane a billow of beauty, his arched neck in utmost rhythm of curve, let him be harnessed in graceful trappings and then driven to the furthest goal of excellence, and then fed at luxuriant oat bins, and blanketed in comfortable stall. The long tried and faithful servant of the human race deserves all kindness, all care, all reward, all succulent forage and soft litter and paradisaical pasture field. Those farms in Kentucky and in different parts of the North, where the horse is trained to perfection in fleetness and in beauty and in majesty, are well set apart. There is no more virtue in driving slow than in driving fast, any more than a freight train going ten miles the hour is better than an express train going fifty. There is a delusion abroad in the world that a thing must be necessarily good and Christian if it is slow and dull and plodding. There are very few good people who seem to imagine it is humility to drive a spavined, galled, glundered, spring-baited, blind-staggered jade. There is not so much virtue in a Rosinante as in a Hucphalus. We want swifter horses, and swifter men, and swifter enterprises, and the Church of God needs to get off its jog trot. Quick tempests, quick lightning, quick streams; why not quick horses? In the time of war the cavalry service does the most execution, and as the battles of the world are probably not all past, our Christian patriotism demands that we be interested in equinal velocity. We might as well have powder guns in our arsenals and clunker ships in our navies rather than our cavalry saddles and before our parks of artillery cower horses. From the battle of Granicus, where the Persian horse drove the Macedonian infantry into the river, clear down to the horses on which Philip Sheridan and Stonewall Jackson rode into the fray, this arm of the military service has been recognized. Hamlicar, Hannibal, Gustavus Adolphus, Marshal Ney were cavalrymen. In this arm of the service, Charles Martel at the battle of Poitiers bested the Arab invader. The Cretan cavalryman, with the loss of only seven hundred men, overthrew the Roman army with the loss of seventy thousand. In the same way the Spanish chivalry drove back the Moorish hordes. The best way to keep peace in this country and in all countries is to

be prepared for war, and there is no success in such a contest unless there be plenty of light-footed chargers. Our Christian patriotism and our instruction from the Word of God demand that first of all we kindly treat the horse, and then after that, that we develop his fleetness and his grandeur and his majesty and his strength.

But what shall I say of the effort being made in this day on a large scale to make this splendid creature of God, this divinely honored being, an instrument of atrocious evil? I make no indiscriminate assault against the turf. I believe in the turf if it can be conducted on right principles and with no betting. There is no more harm in offering a prize for the swiftest racer than there is harm at an agricultural fair in offering a prize to the farmer who has the best wheat, or to the fruit-grower who has the largest pear, or to the machinist who presents the best corn-thresher, or in a school offering a prize of a copy of Shakespeare to the best reader, or in a household giving a lump of sugar to the best behaved youngster. Prizes by all means, rewards by all means. That is the way God develops the race. Rewards for all kinds of well-doing. Heaven itself is called a prize: "The prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." So what is right in one direction is right in another direction. And without the prizes the horse's fleetness and beauty and strength will never be fully developed. If it cost \$1,000 or \$5,000 or \$10,000, and the result be achieved, it is cheap. But the sin begins where the betting begins, for that is gambling, or the effort to get that for which you give no equivalent, and gambling, whether on a large scale or a small scale, ought to be denounced of men as it will be accursed of God. If you have won fifty cents or \$5,000 as a wager, you had better get rid of it. Get rid of it right away. Give it to some one who has lost in a bet, or give it to some great reformatory institution, or if you do not like that, go down to the river and pitch it off the docks. You cannot afford to keep it. It will burn a hole in your purse, it will burn a hole in your estate, and you will lose all that, perhaps ten thousand times more—perhaps you will lose all. Gambling blasts a man or it blasts his children. Generally both and all.

What a spectacle was at Saratoga, or at Long Branch, or at Brighton Beach, or at Sheepshead Bay, the horses start, and in a flash fifty or a hundred thousand dollars change hands! Multitudes ruined by losing the bet, others worse ruined by gaining the bet; for if a man lose in a bet at a horse race, he may be discouraged and quit, but if he win the bet he is very apt to go straight on to hell!

An intimate friend, a journalist, who in the line of his profession investigated this evil, tells me that there are three different kinds of betting at horse races, and they are about equally leprous: by "auction pools," by "French mutuels," by what is called "bookmaking"—all gambling, all bad, all rotten with iniquity. There is one word that needs to be written on the brow of every pool-seller as he sits deducting his 3 or 5 per cent, and slyly "ringing up" more tickets than were sold on the winning horse—a word to be written also on the brow of every book-keeper who at extra inducement scratches a horse off of the race, and on the brow of every jockey who slackens pace that, according to agreement, another may win, and written over every judge's stand, and written on every board of the surrounding fences. That word is "swindle." Yet thousands bet. Lawyers bet. Judges of courts bet. Members of congress bet. Professors of religion bet. Teachers and superintendents of Sunday schools, I am told, bet. Ladies bet, not directly, but through agents. Yesterday, and every day they bet, they gain, they lose, and this summer, while the parades swing and the hands clap and the huzzas deafen, there will be a multitude of people cajoled, and deceived, and cheated, who will at the races go neck and neck, neck and neck to perdition. Cultivate the horse, by all means, drive him as fast as you desire, provided you do not injure him or endanger yourself or others; but be careful and do not harness the horse to the chariot of sin. Do not throw your jewels of morality under the flying hoof. Do not under the pretext of improving the horse destroy a man. Do not have your name put down in the ever-increasing catalogue of those who are ruined for both worlds by the dissipations of the American race course. They say that an honest race course is a "straight" track, and that a dishonest race course is a "crooked" track—that is the parlance abroad; but I tell you that every race track, surrounded by betting men, and betting women, and betting customs, is a straight track—I mean straight down! Christ asked in one of his Gospels: "It is not a man better than a sheep?" I say, yes, and he is better than all the steeds that with lathered flanks ever shot around the ring at a race course. That is a very poor job by which a man in order to get a horse to come out a full length ahead of some other racer, so lames his own morals, that he comes out a whole length behind in the race set before him.

A Hopeful View.
Dr. Griffith John, one of the greatest of living missionaries, expresses this opinion: "There are at present in China about 55,000 communicants, which shows a remarkable increase since 1859. There can be no doubt as to the marked increase of these five to six years. If the next five be as prosperous, our China communicants will, at the close of 1890, number not far short of 60,000. We are on the eve of great changes, and great changes for the better also."

If you see a load of empty barrels, it is going to rain.

FARM AND GARDEN.

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO AGRICULTURISTS.

Some Up-to-Date Hints About Cultivation of the Soil and Yields Thereof—Horticulture, Viticulture and Floriculture.

LENTILS have never been raised in this country by gardeners to the extent that the demand for them would seem to warrant, writes S. W. Chambers in Rural Canadian. The German lentils have been imported for years, and even today the large grocery stores depend upon the imported ones for their trade. The Italians and Germans have created such a demand for them that they are becoming introduced here, and many Americans are taking them up as an article of food. In the south of Europe the lentils are eaten very generally. So distinguished an authority as Edward Atkinson has said concerning them that "here is a plant, which in the nitrogen element furnishes the cheapest variety of food known—from which very delicious soups can be made—which, when baked, is more delicious than the best New England baked beans—which is a good food and forage

CHONDRILLA JUNCEA.



The report of the United States Department of Agriculture says: This plant grows to the height of two or three feet, having strong, deeply spreading roots, and slender, twig-like stems, more or less branching above and apparently destitute of leaves, or with a few slender thread-like leaves. The leaves are mostly in a cluster at the base of the stem, where they have an irregular jagged shape, much like those of the Dandelion. The bare twigs become sparingly clothed during the summer with sessile flowers of the order composite; in appearance much like those of Lettuce. This unsightly perennial weed has been introduced into Maryland, Virginia and other Southern states, where it is spreading along roadsides and over dry, uncultivated fields. Complaints have

been received from Virginia of its aggressive nature, and of the difficulty of its extermination. It is a native of the southern half of Europe and the adjoining countries of Asia. Over most of France it is common on sandy soils. It has not yet entered England and the other northern countries of Europe, and therefore it is not expected that it will become prevalent to any extent in our Northern states. For the eradication of this pest, summer following with frequent plowing and harrowing will be necessary. This method, succeeded by a hoed crop, will probably relieve the field of its presence. At the same time the greatest care should be taken to exterminate it from the roadsides and neglected fields, where it is liable to maintain a foothold. The plant is illustrated on this page.

Best Products Pay.—In the overcrowded professions and in business enterprises it has become a trite saying that there is always room at the top, and that exceptional ability and application will command success, while with less than average qualifications failure is quite likely to be the result. The same principle is equally applicable in the productive industries, and the aim should be to produce commodities that are in demand at the highest market prices. Farm products of the best quality can alone be made to pay when transported to distant markets under ordinary conditions of supply and demand and better prices are accordingly realized than for average or inferior products, for which there is no foreign demand from the large proportion of their value used up in the cost of transportation.—Michigan Farmer.

Fall Rains.—As a general rule farmers conclude that they have no use for water after the crop is made, but this is a great mistake. It will pay to water lands thoroughly before the fall plow-

Bee-Keeping for Farmers.

The most painstaking farmer who is not provided with at least a small apiary is guilty of tolerating three serious leaks in the economics.

Leak 1.—The entire removal of all bees and similar insects from a neighborhood would insure an entire failure of more than one farm crop. Experience has shown this and experiment has proved it time after time. Many garden and orchard products depend almost wholly upon the visits of pollen-carrying insects for their fertilization, and some of the field crops are better for these visits. It has more than once been noticed that after a wet season of fruit bloom, when the bees are kept in doors by the rain, there is less fruit and a greater proportion of imperfect fruit. The same is also noticeable in the clover field. This fact has now been so well established and the absence of the bees is so noticeable that in several places where, under the old idea of bees injuring fruit, state laws had practically banished them, a popular clamor has secured the repeal of the laws and the return of the bees.

The fact once established that bees are essential to the proper fertilization of certain farm crops it at once becomes apparent that the farmer who does not himself keep them must depend upon chance or the enterprise of his neighbors for full crops of this kind. Hence, by not providing his own flower fertilizers he is harboring a serious leak in the quality and quantity of both seed and fruit.

Leak 2.—Probably no farm of 50 acres or more is wholly without honey-producing flowers. In some cases the supply would be too small for the bees to be self-supporting. In others a great deal less than 50 acres might produce several thousands of pounds. This at from 10 to 15 cents always obtainable for comb honey, represents an important cash value that may be saved without one particle of extra drainage to land or crop, but that otherwise goes annually to loss. As high as 50 pounds of honey have been made by one colony in 10 days. This, at 12 cents, is over \$1 per day per colony and from a generally wasted source. Of course such runs are not common nor long continued. Still it shows what possibilities are stored up in these honey producers. No grain crop is always profitable.

Leak 3, and perhaps the largest of all.—Life on the farm is accompanied by enough privations to warrant every possible effort being made for the fullest possible enjoyment of its advantages. Young people in particular feel shut in and neglected both from a social and intellectual standpoint when given occasional glimpses of the sweets of city life without discovering its bitterness. They grow discontented with the country and the farm, their discontent appearing, perhaps, in little outbursts of complaint against the plain fare at table. The remedy is to interest them absorbingly in something pertaining to farm life; not in work, but in something that is really interesting. Nature herself is the very best of companions from an intellectual standpoint, and she never made a more interesting study of insect life than bee-keeping. It is hardly reasonable to expect all to become interested in this subject at once, but many will. Some may first have their interest awakened through the bees themselves; others through a good textbook on the subject. Both should be provided for them as supplements to each other. And in the meantime, while the study is progressing, there will be preparing for the table a very dainty addition to liven up the tedious bill of fare.

The greatest leak of all upon the farm is that through which the interest of the sons and daughters pour into other channels. And you who still refuse to provide some of these pleasant sideplays like bee-keeping, may live to see your farm drained of its young blood, a domestic waste, and yourself alone in your old age.—Wilder, *Graham in Farmers' Home*.

A New Grape Disease.—A new grape disease known as "shelling" made its appearance in the vineyards of western New York last year. It consisted of the strange dropping of fruit from the bunches and was undoubtedly due to the lack of available potash. The grape requires a large amount of potash to perfect its fruit, and the heaviest call for this mineral comes as the seeds are forming. Very dry weather came on last year just at this time and the vines dropped the fruit that they could not perfect. It is not likely that this disease will continue to plague the grape-grower. The remedy, plenty of potash with enough water to make it available, is always within his reach.—*American Cultivator*.

The Vitality of Seeds.—A remarkable instance of the vitality of seeds comes from Jones county, Iowa, where Miss Jennie Boncher in the year 1855 made a wreath by using fine wire and stringing different kinds of garden seeds on the wire in old and fantastic shapes. It required a great deal of patient labor to complete the work, and when it was completed she presented it to her aunt, Mrs. Flora Moore, of Webster City. Mrs. Moore kept the wreath for many years, but some ten or twelve years ago gave it to her niece, Mrs. George Nichols. Lately the wreath in which the wreath was kept fell, and it was useless as an ornament. Last spring Mrs. Nichols, out of curiosity, planted some of the seeds and they are growing.—*EX*.

Decrease of Crop Area in England.—The Agricultural Returns of Great Britain show that the wheat area is even smaller than any estimate has made it. The area for 1895 is 1,417,544 acres, or 519,321 acres less than that of 1894, and 479,883 less than that of 1890. Barley, oats, and potatoes show small increases, and hay and hops small decreases. With respect to live stock, it is gratifying to notice an increase of 7,223, though it is only one-tenth of 1 per cent, and there is a remarkable increase of 2.7 per cent in the number of pigs, but sheep have fallen off in number by 69,795, or three-tenths of 1 per cent.—*Agricultural Gazette*.

Pink Oils.—The New Hampshire law which requires all imitation dairy products to be colored pink, has stood the test of the courts and is now being vigorously enforced. A more recent law, making a solicitation for orders for all fraudulent butter illegal, is also being carried into effect, and a great improvement is noticed in the sale of the genuine dairy product.—*EX*.

Outdoor Life.—There is nothing better for a nervous, low-spirited nature than outdoor life and a genuine love for growing things. To go out as soon as one is up to see how many new weeds buds have opened, or what is to be the color of the new pansies, or what variety there is in the sweet peas.